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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' BELIEFS AND THEIR CONSULTATIVE PRACTICE IN IN-SCHOOL TEAM MEETINGS

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education
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The Relationship Between Teachers' Beliefs and their Consultative Practice in In-School Team Meetings
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ABSTRACT

The focus of this inquiry was on the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their consultative practice as resource teachers within the context of the in-school team meeting. This work provided a detailed picture of the consultative practices of special education teachers set against a backdrop of their discussions regarding their personal beliefs. The following questions shaped this investigation:

1. What are these teachers' stated beliefs about students?
2. What are these teachers' stated beliefs about their consultative role?
3. What is the relationship between these teachers' stated beliefs and their consultative practice during in-school team meetings?

With the co-operation of three learning resource teachers (also referred to as special education resource teachers), this inquiry was structured around three distinct phases. Initially, an open-ended interview format was used to discuss with participants their individual beliefs regarding their consultative practice as well as their beliefs about students. The second phase involved the tape recording of diagnostic prescriptive team meetings (DPT's) in which these three teachers participated. Once this was completed, the relationship between these teachers' stated beliefs and their consultative practice during team meetings was explored in collaboration with participants.

What emerged were three portraits of the relationship between consultative practice and personal belief. Each participant's portrait was given a name by the author in
order to characterise the relationship between beliefs and practice. Each of these women struck a balance between practice and personal beliefs, a balance that illuminated their consultative role within in-school team meetings at its most basic and intimate level.

This assimilation of beliefs by participants was explored in the light of its importance in the area of teacher change.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This study examined the relationship between three educators' stated beliefs and their interactions at in-school team meetings. These interactions were examined as they related to their consultative/collaborative practice as learning resource teachers. The lack of information regarding the relationship between teachers' beliefs and teachers' consultative/collaborative practice during in-school team meetings at the school level was the catalyst for this inquiry.

The relationship between teacher beliefs and consultative/collaborative practice was set in the larger context of the relationship between teacher belief and change. It has been suggested that, as educators, "We have become so accustomed to the presence of change that we rarely stop to think what change really means as we are experiencing it at a personal level" (Fullan, 1991, p 30). To Fullan, "meaning" is a central component of change. He suggests that 'shared meaning', which he described as the interface between individual and collective meaning, is the standard by which the success or failure of change is measured. Furthermore he has argued that the difficulty in arriving at shared meaning rests in our lack of ability to quantify these meanings on a personal level for those persons involved in the change process.

In quantifying teachers' experience of change, examinations can centre on the physical manifestations of that change; for example, 'are teachers using a certain technique or curriculum?' A more subtle, yet equally important, component of teacher change is teachers' beliefs (Fullan, 1991; McGrevin & Rusher, 1992; Nespor, 1987). Pajares (1992) suggested that teachers' beliefs provide personal meaning through which teachers judge the relevance of what is presented and helps them define and understand
the world around them. These personal meanings are explored through the examination of beliefs. Unlike physical attributes, which can be observed, beliefs can only be inferred. Pajares suggested that this inference must take into account "the congruence among individuals' belief statements, the intention to behave in a predisposed manner and the behaviour related to the belief in question" (p. 326).

Within the last few decades, the field of education has been subject to a great many changes (Fullan, 1991). In the field of Special Education, a major shift in service delivery to students has occurred. This shift is currently termed inclusive education. Previous terms to describe this shift in service delivery have included mainstreaming and integration (Friend, Bursuck & Hutchinson, 1998). While inclusive education shares many of the practices associated with the terms integration and mainstreaming, the focus of the term inclusion refers to, as the name suggests, the inclusion of exceptional students as full participants rather than part-time participants in a regular classroom environment.

Due to the shift toward inclusive schools, school based teams have become an important part of the delivery of service to exceptional students (Friend, Bursuck & Hutchinson 1998). School based teams, as described by Friend, Bursuck and Hutchinson (1998), generally include classroom teachers, a principal, and a learning resource teacher whose goal is to present student data, make decisions regarding further assessment and intervention, and monitor the success of the student and support the teacher.

With the implementation of the Educational Amendment Act (1980), Ontario schools have moved toward a process that sees the identification and placement of exceptional students as the result of a committee process. The extension of this mandated committee, along with changes in our perception of how we deliver services to
exceptional students, have led us to a team problem-solving approach at the school level. The implementation of a team problem-solving model has proved to be a complex process. Pertinent issues examined in relation to this process have included such topics as administrative support, time, training, techniques and models, and the resistance of regular classroom teachers (Dettmer, Dyck, & Thurston, 1996; Friend & Cook, 1992). This inquiry, while being set in the context of these pertinent issues, looked more deeply at the learning resource teachers’ consultative/collaborative role through an examination of their stated beliefs in relation to their discussions during in-school team meetings. The image captured is one of assimilation of these resource teachers’ personal and professional belief systems into the interactive role they played as in-school consultants.

Within the context of this study, the words consultation and collaboration were used interchangeably. Varying definitions of these terms, as referred to in the existing literature, are reviewed later in this work. Within this study, the term consultation was defined using the definition and description provided by the school board in which these three women were employed. That definition was couched in the board's description of the in-school team which was as follows. A team was described as various personnel found within the school who acted as a program and resource group to assist classroom teachers and special education teachers in adapting programming within the classroom. According to the school board documents this school board saw the team as providing and sharing expertise and responsibility within the home school environment. Within the description of the process, it was noted that classroom teachers were responsible and accountable for all students including those who were exceptional, with a focus on early identification of needs and modification within the classroom. Thus in this work,
consultation was defined as an interaction among peers in a school setting which has as its focus shared problem-solving, accountability, and responsibility for exceptional students with an emphasis on the modification of program within the regular classroom.

My personal experience and training in the area of consultation is discussed later in this inquiry. It is important to note that one motivation for this study came out of my personal frustration with what seemed to be a lack of meaningful communication among teachers within team meeting settings. While the role of the learning resource teacher, as defined by evolving special education policy, was moving toward a consultative type model, little consideration was given to our interpretation of this new role. How would we, as teachers, find harmony with our changing role in relation to our existing belief systems and how would that affect our communication among peers?

**Describing the Context**

This study was set in the context of changes in special education service delivery, in which schools were moving from self contained class settings to the use of collaborative team based approaches with exceptional students within schools. This inquiry specifically focused on the relationship between special education teachers’ beliefs and the process of change.

**The Move Toward a Consultative Model of Service Delivery**

In education, specifically special education, the requirement to provide service to a broad spectrum of students in a wide variety of settings has moved educators toward a more team-oriented form of decision making. Concomitant with these increased demands was an emphasis on maintaining exceptional students in the regular classroom.
In Ontario, the service delivery to students with special needs has shifted from an emphasis on segregated settings for exceptional students to the maintenance of many exceptional students in the regular classroom. From the years 1985 to 1990, the Province of Ontario has seen an increase from 53% to 66% of the number of exceptional students enrolled in regular classes during the school day (Ministry of Education Enrolment reports 1990-91). Along with this growth in numbers was a clear message from the Ministry of Education and Training that the number of children in regular classrooms would continue to increase.

The model employed to maintain these students in the regular class requires the participation of both regular and special education teachers in a problem solving type format. This format is often referred to as an in-school team. The in-school team, as defined by Weber (1993), is a support or assistance team of staff members whose purpose is to consult with the individual teachers who require assistance regarding students perceived as having special needs.

**Shift in the Role of the Resource Teacher**

In the past, special education teachers utilised an approach to service delivery based mainly on the withdrawal of students from the regular classroom setting (Weber 1993). Those children not housed in self-contained special education classes, yet still considered exceptional, were withdrawn from the regular class for remedial instruction. The emphasis was on 'fixing' the child rather than adjusting the child's learning environment to accommodate the learner's needs. With the movement toward the integration of exceptional students in the regular class, the special educator's role has
been reconceptualised as consultative/collaborative. Certainly the literature has reflected this change in emphasis. The past decade or so has seen tremendous growth in the area of teacher consultation (Friend, 1985; Huefner, 1988; Idol and West, 1987; Jordan, 1994). Models have arisen that require the role of the special education teacher to be more collaborative and consultative in nature (Huefner, 1988; Strawderman & Lindsey, 1995). Despite this shift in role expectation, little is known about teachers' personal experiences with this evolution of their role.

The Problem

Given the dramatic changes that have taken place in special education and the impact on the role of the special education teacher (learning resource teacher), little information existed on these teachers' beliefs as they relate to the process of change within their role. With the move toward a consultative/collaborative model of service delivery within schools, attempts have been made to examine this shift in service delivery on a variety of levels. The literature on consultation is extensive and often flavoured by academic bantering in attempts to clarify the construct. Information abounds regarding such issues as models of consultation (Dettmer, Dyke, & Thurston, 1996), time spent on consultation (Bennett, 1991; Mills, 1994; Zable, 1988) and definitions of consultation (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1996; Idol & West, 1987; Wilson, 1989). Often, questionnaire or survey type instruments were used in consultation research to assess the components of successful consultation (Idol-Maestas & Ritter, 1985; Miller & Sabatino, 1978; Whitten & Dieker, 1993).

One level that has received little attention is the impact of teachers' beliefs on this change process. Fullan (1991) described three main components that are necessary for
change. These components are the possible use of new or revised material, new teaching approaches and possible alteration of beliefs. He suggested that in order for change to be successful, teachers must understand themselves and be understood by others. In order for us to understand change the impact of teachers' beliefs in relation to change cannot be ignored. Depree (1988), as cited by McGrevin and Rusher (1992), stated that "beliefs come before policies, standards or practices" (p. 353). Research in preservice teacher education (Mahlois & Maxon, 1995), early childhood education (Smith & Shepard, 1988), curriculum implementation (Battista, 1994) and special education (Schumm Vaughn, Gordon, & Rothlein, 1994; Wilson & Silverman, 1991) have shown a clear relationship between teacher practice and teacher beliefs.

In examining the link between beliefs and knowledge, Pajares, (1992) noted that beliefs and knowledge are two distinct areas with beliefs wielding the most influence. Within Pajares' conclusions about beliefs was the observation that "knowledge and belief are inextricably intertwined, but the potent affect, evaluative and episodic nature of beliefs makes them a filter through which new phenomena are interpreted" (p. 324). Information on preservice teachers' beliefs supported this notion. Mahlois and Maxon (1995) noted that the beliefs that preservice teachers carry with them into teacher training serve as a filter that shapes their interpretation of what they are taught. The lack of faculty knowledge about the beliefs held by their students was seen to be detrimental to the success of teacher training. An examination and discussion of these beliefs as part of teacher training was suggested as a solution.
Research regarding beliefs of teachers has suggested that these beliefs may have effects on the teachers' perceptions of their role, as well as their beliefs about students (Christenson, Ysseldyke, Wang & Algozzine, 1983; Pajares, 1992; Tollefson, 1988).

In discussing the collaborative approach, Friend and Cook (1992) used the term "frame of reference" to describe differences between the views of educators which may be based on their differing professional training or experience. In discussing what they consider prerequisites for successful consultation, Friend and Cook noted:

The message for professionals who engage in collaborative activities is clear. Your own frame of reference may prevent you from understanding someone else's. You can become more aware of your own frame of reference and learn to consider multiple frames of reference by constantly challenging yourself to develop alternative explanations for other's statements. (p. 37)

This inquiry examined the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their consultative practice in in-school team meetings by addressing the following questions:

1. What are these teachers' stated beliefs about students?
2. What are these teachers' stated beliefs about their consultative role?
3. What is the relationship between these teachers' stated beliefs and their consultative practice during in-school team meetings?

In chapter 2 of this thesis I provided an overview of the field of consultation in relation to education. I discussed pertinent issues in the consultative field. I also provided an overview of the relationship between teachers' beliefs and practice. In the final section of chapter 2, the questions that emerged and were addressed as a result of this inquiry were articulated. In chapter 3, I described the methods used in the collection and analysis of data in this inquiry. Three categories of information were provided in this section: beginning with myself (in this section, along with other information, was an
overview of my consultative training, experiences and beliefs); methods used; planning for trustworthiness. In chapter 4, I presented the stories of the three participants. The information presented in these stories centres on each participant's beliefs about children and their consultative practice in relation to their interactions at in-school team meetings. In the final chapter, I revisited the questions posed in this study and re-examined the literature presented in this inquiry in relation to the three participant's stories. To conclude, I examined directions for future research and provided for some concluding reflections and thoughts.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature reviewed in this section encompassed three broad areas. The first was an overview of the field of special education service delivery that has led to a consultative model. The second area looked specifically at consulting/collaboration. This explored consultation/collaboration models, the various definitions of consulting/collaborating, and described the role of the consultant in relation to pertinent issues in the field. The third area discussed focused on the relationship between teachers' beliefs and practice.

Overview of the Field

Special education in North America has been at the centre of a major evolution, perhaps revolution, during recent years. In the past decade, the United States has passed and has been in the process of implementing PL 94-142, legislation creating the entitlement to education for all exceptional children. With the legislation came requirements for schools to provide accessibility of education to exceptional students, for children to be placed in the least restrictive environment, for meaningful multidisciplinary assessment practice and for the development of individual education plans for students (Lilly & Givens-Ogle, 1981; Gartner & Lipsky, 1987). The United States has seen the introduction of the Regular Education Initiative (REI). Davis has defined REI as:

the movement advocating that the general education system assume unequivocal primary responsibility for all students in our public schools - including identified handicapped students as well as those who have special needs of some type. (p. 440).
Since the introduction of the REI by Assistant Secretary of Education Madeline Will in 1986, controversy has heightened over the suggestion that regular and special education form a partnership that would create what Bauwens, Hourcade and Friend, (1989) described as a situation where responsibility is shared for all students, regardless of individual characteristics. This partnership of special education and regular education is not a new idea. In a discussion of the need for special education to be a facilitator of educational change, Deno (1970) asked:

Does special education need to exist as a separate administrative system? Further, if it needs to exist now because of the conditions that prevailed in education in the past and may still exist at this time, should special education assume it must always exist as a separate service delivery system? (p. 233).

Advocates of the proposed partnership between special and regular education called for a dissolving of the dual system of education and a move toward a more inclusive system that serves all children (Reynolds, Wang & Walberg 1987; Stainback & Stainback 1984). Accompanying this were discussions of the need to review and restructure the present special education funding systems to better facilitate and maintain the proposed merger (Conoley & Conoley, 1982; Reynolds, Wang & Walberg, 1987; Wang & Reynolds, 1985). Those opposed to this merger remained cautious and perhaps tempered the enthusiasm of those in favour by citing important considerations to be examined in light of the proposition. These considerations included the fear that this merger could threaten the already meagre services now available for exceptional students (Braaten, Kauffman, Braaten, Polsgrove & Nelson, 1988), the lack of any research base on the effects of such a merger (Davis, 1989), and finally, the possible unwillingness of regular educators to 'buy into' this merger (Lieberman, 1985). Lieberman (1985) characterised this last
concern using the analogy of a wedding to describe the merger of regular and special education. He saw regular educators as being unwilling participants in this wedding. This assumption may be challenged by more recent findings (Davis & Maheady, 1991) that reported that there is teacher support for the movement as well as acceptance of classroom techniques necessary for the implementation of REI. Despite the debate over the merger, Davis (1989) suggested that, through the impact of PL 94-142, this ‘wedding’ has already taken place and the question is not whether it should take place, but how to make that marriage work.

A more recent offshoot of the REI is what educators term an inclusive school. While many of the tenets are the same as the REI, inclusive schools are characterised by the elimination of the segregation of students along special education lines. The notion that diversity exists for all students and that programming should address the varying needs of those students is central to the philosophy of inclusive schools, (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1994; Dettmer, 1996).

Canadian provincial special education legislation and policies have also seen development in recent years. In Ontario, the passage of the Education Amendment Act in 1980 guaranteed, for all exceptional students, the following five principles: universality of access; education at public expense; due process; individual program plans; ongoing identification, continuous assessment and review (Wilson, 1988). Wilson (1988) described the amended act as being relatively non-prescriptive in comparison with PL 94-142. This non-prescriptive format has allowed for a wide diversity of service delivery models to be implemented to meet the mandates set out by the legislation. These service
delivery models and, ultimately, the legislation itself, have been and are continuing to be influenced by the appeals procedure provided by the amended act (Wilson, 1988).

The province of Newfoundland and Labrador developed and implemented its own special education policy. This policy, published in 1987, contained provisions encouraging a non-categorical philosophy in dealing with exceptional children. It called for integration, the development of individual program plans through the use of program planning teams, assessment focusing on the individual strengths of individual students and due process considerations in areas such as parents' right to appeal (Wilson, Cleal, Godsell & Sheppard, 1988). Bennett (1991) pursued an examination of the impact of this legislation on consultation in her reporting of the allocation of time by Special Education teachers in Newfoundland. Results indicated that since the implementation of legislation, 28% of teachers' time was spent in a consultative type role.

These movements in the field toward integration of exceptional students into the regular class have produced changes in service delivery models that have resulted in a more consultative type resource room setting to service exceptional children. In this type of setting, exceptional children are maintained in the regular class with special education teachers providing consultative services to regular classroom teachers within the school. This increase in consultation has resulted in a changing role for special education teachers (Dettmer, Dyck & Thurston, 1996; Friend, 1984; Huefner, 1988).

**Issues in the Delivery of a Consultative Model**

Within the literature on consultation are a variety of issues that have a direct impact on the delivery of this type of service. This next section focused on these issues.
The literature highlighted in this section related to the types of information that arose within this inquiry.

**What Does Consultation Mean?**

The definition of the word consultation has had somewhat of an evolution within the literature on school-based consultation. Initially, consultation was described as a service to exceptional students emphasising the need for special programs to complement and supplement regular classroom programs. This approach focused on a separate but complementary service delivery aimed at meeting the needs of exceptional students outside the regular class (Sterng, 1953: as cited by Lilly & Givens-Ogle, 1981). Later, the definition of consultation was expanded within the context of school consultation to reflect the growing partnership between regular and special educators with consultation being viewed as a process of collaborative planning by a group of teachers, parents and other professionals (Idol, 1986). Friend and Cook (1992) defined the term collaboration as a style for direct interaction between two equal parties voluntarily engaged in shared decision making as they work toward a common goal. In their view, Friend and Cook (1992) argued that consultation can be collaborative, but that this is not always the case and that the terms collaboration and consultation should not be used interchangeably. Jordan (1994) discussed the goal of consultation as being the supplying of another person, the client, with the skills to work with children in new and different ways. With the field continuing to move toward shared ownership of the responsibility for the educational needs of exceptional students, definitions continue to focus on collaboration between teachers. The focus of this collaboration is on a shared
problem solving model involving school personnel as described by Dettmer et al. (1996). They described collaborative school consultation as:

   an interaction in which school personnel and families confer and collaborate as a team within the school context to identify learning and behavioural needs, and to plan, implement and evaluate educational programs for serving those needs. (p. 17)

Coben, Thomas, Sattler, and Morsink (1997) note that while the term consultation has received much attention in previous years, the process of consultation has taken on many collaborative characteristics. It is those collaborative components of the consultative event that have led to the term consultation being replaced (at least in some circles) with the term collaboration.

   Given the proliferation of definitions, it is important to revisit the definition of consultation/collaboration used in this inquiry. Consultation/collaboration, as described in the introduction of this study was set in the context of the in-school team. Consultation/collaboration was seen as an interaction among peers in a school setting which has as its focus shared problem solving, accountability, and responsibility for exceptional students with an emphasis on the modification of program within the regular classroom.

**Who is the Consultant?**

   Central to the goal of defining consultation was the question, "Who is the consultant?". From a historical perspective, early literature in the area of school consultation focused on those 'experts' trained in areas such as visual impairment and speech and language difficulties (Lilly et al. 1981). The integration of children with these
types of difficulties highlighted the need to teach techniques and methods of working with these students to regular classroom teachers. Lilly et al. (1981) cited the first evidence of consultation in the area of learning problems as emerging in the 1960's, in the form of mental health consultation for emotionally disturbed children. In these cases the consultants were clinical psychologists, psychiatrists and social workers. Schneider and Garcia (1970) (as cited by Lilly et al., 1981) were among the first to describe the consulting teacher in their description of a training course for teachers as consultants. Since that time there has been a dramatic increase in the literature describing the teacher as consultant (Dettmer et al., 1996; Evans, 1980; Friend & Cook, 1992; Hudson & Glomb, 1997; Idol & West, 1987; Jordan, 1994; Larsen, 1976; Lilly et al., 1980). Larsen (1976) described the special education teacher as being actively involved in the planning and conducting of strategies with the regular classroom teacher in the regular class. Evans (1980) suggested that the resource room teacher is the most available and best-equipped person to implement a consultation service delivery. Idol-Maestas (1985) discussed consultants as specially trained teachers in the area of consulting that provide service to client and consultee both within and outside the regular classroom. Huefner (1988) defined the consulting teacher in terms of what they are not. They are not special education or resource room teachers, though these people are not excluded from the possibility of becoming a consulting teacher. Huefner saw the consulting teacher as providing purely indirect service to students. Bauwens, Hourcade and Friend (1989) described co-operative teaching as being directly derived from the collaborative /consulting model. The focus of co-operative teaching involves joint co-operation and sharing of expertise and skills to service a client (the child). Thus, the consultant may
become the consultee at different times depending upon the particular needs of a situation or setting. Dettmer (1996) defined a consultant as:

a facilitator of effective communication and co-ordination who confers and collaborates with other school personnel and families as one of a team to serve the special learning and behavioural needs of students.

**Models of Consultation**

Conoley and Conoley (1982) discussed four popular models of consultation. These models were mental health consultation, behavioural consultation, process consultation and advocacy. Mental health consultation was described as being further subdivided into four approaches: client-centred; consultee-centred; program; administrative. The distinction lies in the differing goals and targets for each (Caplan, 1970 as cited by Conoley et al., 1982). West and Idol (1987) described the goal of mental health consultation as being "the degree to which the consultation expands the consultee's capacity to diagnose, cope with and solve emotional or technical problems of the consultee or client" (pg. 392). Behavioural consultation stresses the use of behavioural or social theory to address problems (Conoley et al., 1982; West et al., 1987). Conoley et al. (1982) described the task of the behavioural consultant in terms of "isolating the environmental variables that prompt or support the target behaviour, and devising environmental manipulations that reduce the probability of the continuation of the behaviours" (pg. 6). Process consultation was defined as an examination of organisational functioning, understanding the process phenomena and process observation (Conoley et al., 1982; West et al., 1987). Advocacy was described by Conoley et al. (1982) as a model for consultation though it contains within it the
implication that an advocate sides with one person to the possible detriment of the other. Conoley and Conoley (1982) counted this implication by arguing that all consultation is a form of advocacy given that the process usually secures for the participant (client, consultee, consultant) a desired aim or goal.

West and Idol (1987) expanded the number of models presented by Conoley and Conoley (1982) in their discussion of organisational, clinical, program, education/training and collaborative consultation. Collaborative consultation, as described by West and Idol (1987), is based on "a triadic model of consultation with both participants possessing specialised knowledge in certain areas and working together to develop a relationship between regular and special education that results in shared ownership of the problems of special education children in the regular class" (pg.394).

Friend and Cook (1992) discussed collaboration within team settings. They differentiated between the term consultation (which may, in their view, be characterised by an unequal relationship between participants) and collaboration, which they saw as having the following characteristics:

- Collaboration is voluntary
- Collaboration requires parity among participants
- Collaboration is based on mutual goals
- Collaboration depends on shared responsibility for participation and decisions
- Individuals who collaborate share their resources
- Individuals who collaborate share accountability for outcomes

The models of consultation addressed in the previous sections are those which are central to any discussion of consultation. What follows are other areas of concern and discussion that provide perspective on some of the concerns and issues faced by participants in this inquiry.
Training

There seems to be little disagreement that training in the area of consultation would have a positive effect on consultation skills and practice. Huefner (1988) saw the training of educators in the area of consulting as essential to ensuring the success of the consultation model. She stated that teachers, especially those currently in the resource role, need specialised training in the area. Training in the area of consultation has been shown to have a positive effect on the amount of time spent consulting (Friend, 1985). Buck, Morsink, Griffin, Hines and Lenk (1992) in their review of pre-service training for teachers, suggested that interns should be required to participate in collaborative problem solving.

Working with thirteen elementary school teachers, Zins and Ponti (1996) examined the effectiveness of training in consultative problem solving. Teachers were trained in problem solving and interpersonal skills. The problem-solving model taught followed a cyclical structure based on identification of problem, generation of a plan review and follow-up. Results indicated that, in comparison with untrained control group teachers, those teachers who were trained utilised more problem clarification techniques. The authors suggested that direct training makes consultation more acceptable as familiarity with the process leads to greater acceptance.

While training may be beneficial, the availability is scattered and the quality of training in the area of consultation is, for the most part, untested. In an early review of preparation programs, Idol-Maestas (1985) reported that, in the United States, only ten programs were listed for those people who wanted to specialise in consultation.
In a more recent review of pre-service training, Buck, Morsink, Griffen, Hines and Lenk (1992) found a growing trend toward teacher training in the area of consultation. They did note that training in the area of consultation varies considerably, from simulations to what they termed full-scale multidisciplinary experiences. The authors also cautioned that the effectiveness of many of these programs has not been ascertained. Strawderman and Lindsey (1995) reported that universities are beginning to emphasise collaboration in their training programs centring on consultation. These programs are characterised by joint faculty teaming in the planning and teaching of courses.

The question of what should be included in training programs has also been discussed. Friend (1985) suggested that, to develop an effective teacher training program in consultation, researchers should look at the following four areas: what type of consultations are presently being performed, an examination of consultative interaction to isolate variables that effect the process, an exploration of what skills are deemed valuable by consultants, and the impact of training on practices. Idol and West (1987) also discussed this question. Through the use of a panel, it was agreed that fifty-one competencies essential to the training of consultants and consultees were chosen. These competencies were divided into nine areas listed as follows:

1. Consultation theory/models,
2. Research on consultation theory, training and practice,
3. Personal characteristics,
4. Interactive communication,
5. Collaborative problem solving,
6. Systems change,
7. Equity issues and value/belief systems,
8. Staff development,

(Idol and West, 1987, p. 479)
Dickens and Jones (1990), in their description of a masters component at Fayetteville State University, described training in consultation as being broken into the following areas: entry and approach, problem statement, contract development, plan implementation, and evaluation. Selected outcomes within the program include, among other things, consultation role/skills, intervention approaches, problem solving strategies, communication skills, conflict resolution, response styles as well as changing school climate and inservice.

**Personality Traits**

The field of consultation has examined the question of whether or not personality factors affect the success of the consultation process. Idol-Maestas (1985) reported that feelings of insecurity about being in the minority as a teacher consultant may discourage teachers from becoming consultants, especially young, inexperienced teachers. Wilson (1989), reported that, to consult, teachers need to be self-assured and to possess a high level of personal and professional growth. McLoughlin and Kass (1978) in their description of the resource teacher's role, stated:

"Whenever one tries to list the personal qualities needed for the role of a resource teacher, it sounds like a scout's oath; yet these intangibles are frequently so vital. We certainly know we do not need people who are uncooperative, inflexible, impatient, etc. On the contrary, lack of interpersonal skills can be the source of problems, particularly in respect to liaison consultant activities of resource teachers." (p. 60).

Friend and Cook (1992), in their discussion of personal qualities of a successful consultant, noted "the personal qualities you have and that others perceive you have will in part determine whether you can convince others of your point of view". They cited
Kenton (1989) in listing the qualities for credibility. They included goodwill and fairness, expertise, prestige, and self-presentation. The latter of these referred to such things as confidence, energy and verbal ability.

**Experience**

The experience of a consultant, or a person considering becoming a consultant, is also a factor to be considered. Dickens and Jones (1990) stated that expert special educators are required to take on a special education consultative role. In their opinion "there is no short cut to the development of quality consultants" (p.222). In a description of the resource/consulting teacher-training program at the University of Illinois, Maestas (1981) cited as an admission requirement that applicants must have valid teaching certification and have had some teaching experience. Huefner (1988), in a discussion of educational reforms in the United States, cited the Holmes report (1986) and the Carnegie report (1986) as being in support of the concept of the master teacher in the area of consultation. This master teacher would be recognised not only for seniority or certification but also for the ability to intervene and improve educational effectiveness.

While suggesting that the focus of attaining status as a master teacher would not be dependent on experience, it would seem logical that experience would have to be a contributing factor in the attainment of teaching skills at such a level. As mentioned earlier in this inquiry, Wilson (1989) described a consulting teacher as needing to possess a high level of personal and professional growth. This 'growth' would seem to be, at least in part, a result of experience in the field. From the perspective of the school system, experience of the consultant may be a very important factor in deciding to
implement this service delivery model. The same author, in a later discussion of consultation (Jordan, 1994), noted that a teacher's credibility can be judged as a component of seniority rather than expertise. She noted that, while expertise can at times inhibit the consultative process, in the ideal each participant brings to the consultative event a particular type of experience that enhances the transfer of information.

**Teacher Resistance**

Lack of consultation in the school has been linked with resistance on the part of the regular classroom teacher to join in the collaborative/consultative enterprise. Graden (1989) noted the importance of empowering regular and special education teachers to work together. Included in the literature are references to teachers' feelings of insecurity, confusion over their role and unwillingness to open up to the consultation process (Huefner, 1988; Wilson, 1989).

Resistance on the part of teachers can be manifested in various ways. Friend and Cook (1992), in their discussion of teacher resistance, identified a number of behaviours that can be recognised as resistance. One of the most direct and easiest to identify is teacher refusal. Other behaviours were more subtle and included surface agreement with no real commitment to change, displacing responsibility, deferring to another time and relying on past practice. These forms of resistance may seem like solutions to the team. For example, while the decision to look at a student again later may be an appropriate strategy, it can indeed be a delay tactic to avoid dealing with the issue. Jordan (1994) reviewed possible causes for teacher resistance. They included lack of support, lack of special education training, concerns about the other children in the class, time constraints,
and feelings of exclusion from the process. She recommended the following steps to deal with resistance: recognise resistance, resist a defence response, ask yourself "Why is the teacher resisting?" and express the underlying concern.

**Administrative Support**

The allocation of time for consultation can be linked directly to administrative support for the process (Gradn, Casey & Christenson, 1985; Idol-Maestas & Ritter, 1985). In investigations of teachers' allocation of time for consulting (Evans, 1980; Sargent 1981; Zabel, Peterson & Smith 1988; Zabel, Peterson, Smith & White 1983) teachers have reported spending between 5% and 20% of their time in consultation related activities. Concerns such as lack of adequate time within the school day for consulting and lack of priority for consulting opportunities have been central.

Teachers rated administrative support as a very important factor in the use of consultation in the school (Idol-Maestas & Ritter, 1985). The perceptions of administrators and consultants have been found to differ over what the role and responsibilities of the consultant are. This difference of perception can create difficulties (Dugoff, Ives & Shortel, 1985). Phillips and McCullough (1990) suggested that administrative support for consultation needs to shift from a managerial focus to one of action oriented participation.

**Summary**

This chapter began with an overview of the field of special education that has led to the development of a consultative style of service delivery. With that in mind, consultation was discussed in relation to defining consultation and an exploration of some
of the predominant models. The presentation of information then focused on the following current issues in consultation: training of consultants, personality traits, experience, teacher resistance and administrative support. The next section of this review of literature discusses teachers' beliefs and the impact that those beliefs can have on practice, specifically consultative practice.

**Teacher Beliefs**

Teachers and schools are utilising the consultative model of service delivery in order to address the growing demands for service to exceptional students and to complement the evolving philosophies toward integration in the field. While the information discovered provided a relatively comprehensive overview of the field, personal accounts of teachers' perceptions of consultation were lacking. As the focus of this inquiry was the examination of the relationship between teachers' beliefs and the consultative practice, this review of literature continues with a look at some of the research on teachers' beliefs in relation to practice.

The necessity of exploring teachers' beliefs in relation to practice was noted by Walhlstrom, Jones and Regan (1978) in their discussion of student assessment and its relationship to teachers' beliefs about assessment. The authors noted the importance of being aware of the notion that particular beliefs not only have an effect on both the selection of procedures and goals but also on the climate of the classroom and the self-concept of the student. They ended by saying, "teacher beliefs are perhaps the most powerful determinants of teacher behaviour and practice" (p. 8).
Fourteen years later, Pajares (1992) noted that "...the implicit interest and fascination that educators and researchers have in beliefs has not become explicit". Perhaps, as suggested by Pajares, the complexity of the field has impeded its progress. Despite this, the desire to determine the relationship between belief and practice has not diminished. As noted by Pajares, (1992);

Attention to the beliefs of teachers and teacher candidates can inform educational practice in ways the prevailing research agendas have not and can not. (p.307)

In his discussion of change within education, Fullan (1991) stated that the development of a clear belief system is an essential part of the process of change. Without this clarification there are no criteria for planning and decision making. The relationship between beliefs and the practice of consultation was the focus of the next section. This relationship between beliefs and practice, within the context of this inquiry, related to two areas of interest. The first was the relationship between teachers’ beliefs about students and how those beliefs affect practice. The second area was that of teachers’ beliefs about the consultation process itself.

**Teachers' Beliefs About Children.**

Teachers' beliefs regarding students have been shown to have direct effects on students (Christenson, Ysseldyke, Wang & Algozzine, 1983; Cooper & Verger 1980; Sol, 1988; Stoller, Algozzine & Ysseldyke, 1981; Tollefson & Chew, 1988). A teacher's beliefs about children can affect a variety of practices, including decisions about retention, mainstreaming, predictions for future success and the consultative approach in which the teacher chooses to engage.
In their study of teachers' belief systems, Smith and Shepard (1988) categorised the beliefs of kindergarten teachers regarding their students' success or failure along the lines of nativism (internal or organismic process not related to environment) and environmentalism. The researchers examined teachers' theories of how children learn in relation to the retention of students in kindergarten. Results of the study suggested that those teachers holding beliefs consistent with the nativist view tended to have a greater rate of retention of students than those holding beliefs congruent with the environmentalist view. Those with high retention rates shared a greater degree of grade segregation while schools with low retention rates showed more integration, co-operation and consultation among teachers. Mahlios and Maxon (1995), in their examination of preservice teachers beliefs, found that students in preservice faculties enter their training with pre-existing beliefs regarding children and that these beliefs have an influence on the type of learning that occurs in teacher training.

The notion of teachers' attribution of the causes of student success or failure and its effects on students has been a central component of the research into teacher attribution. Much of the recent research regarding attribution of student success or failure, in the field of education, has been derived from Weiner's (1985) attribution-based model of achievement. Underlying this model are four factors which relate to failure or success: effort, ability, task difficulty and luck. These four factors were considered along three dimensions; causality (whether causes are seen as internal or external), stability (enduring or subject to change), and controllability (degree of voluntary control one has over the cause). Thus, if a teacher were to attribute a student's success to the student's
ability, this factor would be characterised within the dimensions of internal, stable and uncontrollable by the student.

Studies examining attribution of students' success or failure have focused on the area of teachers' predictions for future success, retention of students, referral, time on task, classroom activities and affect (Christenson et al., 1983; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Smith & Shepard, 1988; and Stoller et al., 1981 Tollefson, 1988). Studies in attribution of students' success or failure have shown generally that teachers tend to attribute failure of students externally to themselves (the teachers) and/or internally to the child (Christenson et al., 1983; Superaxo, Perrez and Kramis, 1987).

Teachers' attitudes toward mainstreaming students have been directly linked to the types of instructional techniques used in the classroom with exceptional students. Bender, Vail and Scott (1995) had 127 participants in 11 schools complete questionnaires regarding their background teaching experiences and about identified students in their classes. A six question Likert scale was used to assess these teachers' attitudes and beliefs about mainstreaming. Teachers' efficacy was assessed using the Teacher Effectiveness Scale (Gibson & Dembo 1984) which focused on the teachers' beliefs that a teacher can or cannot make a difference in students' learning. In order to ascertain the use of instructional strategies, researchers used the Bender Structure Questionnaire (1992) which assesses utilisation of strategies in the classroom. Their results revealed that teachers generally do not use strategies that are known to facilitate student academic achievement. Those teachers who did use more effective strategies were those who were in favour of mainstreaming. This particular study saw no overlap between efficacy and attitude towards mainstreaming.
A teacher's belief regarding the etiology of a child's learning as existing internally or externally to that child has an impact on the consultative type of service delivery that is enacted by a consulting teacher (Jordan, 1994). As of 1997, the terms "pathognomonic" (naming the pathology) and "interventionist" replace restorative and preventive. (Jordan & Stanovich, 1997)

In discussing the belief systems of teachers, Jordan (1994) characterised a continuum of belief systems ranging from what she termed pathognomonic to interventionist. The pathognomonic end of this continuum was characterised by a set of practices that are similar to what is termed the "medical model", which assumes that educational problems result from organic or inherent characteristics within the child. Jordan further described this pathognomonic model as relying upon identification of the child's problem, usually by an 'expert', and the placement of this student in a special education setting usually involving withdrawal or full-time placement outside of the regular classroom. Teachers who hold interventionist beliefs differed from those with pathognomonic beliefs in that the child's learning is thought to be affected by the environment and that the modification of this environment can have a positive effect on the student. Problems may be viewed as short term if handled properly, with the onus for teaching being on the regular classroom teacher with support. The emphasis is on keeping the child within the regular classroom. Assessment is multidisciplinary and involves the parents. The purpose of this assessment is to provide instruction and intervention. The presence of a category is seen only as an administrative necessity and not as a means of identifying the student. The focus of the interventionist model is on
mainstreaming and integration. Regular and special education are not seen as different, merely as differing in rate of teaching, modifications and adjustments. Aspects of the interventionist model include; sharing between resource room and regular class teachers to arrive at a collaborative solution, attempts between special education teacher and regular class room teacher to address the problem before formal referral to special education, assessment based on environmental factors, review of modifications to the learning environment, and a priority for the integration and mainstreaming of the exceptional child in the regular class (Jordan, 1994).

**Teachers' Beliefs About Consultation**

The information presented above discussed the relationship between teachers' beliefs about students and how those beliefs may effect practice. The following information examines what specific information we have regarding the relationship between teachers' beliefs and consultation.

Pajares (1992) suggested that teacher behaviour is a result of beliefs being filtered through experience. Studies related to the field of consultation have focused on teachers' beliefs and how they affect the consultation process.

In interactive situations, attribution was considered in light of responsibility for a problem and responsibility for a solution (Brickman et al. 1982). Brickman et al. (1982) theorised four different models that relate to the way people will behave in situations where they are involved in helping individuals. The models ranged from the individual attributing responsibility for the problem and the solution to themselves, to the opposite view, taking responsibility for neither. The researchers suggested that these differing
attributions between help giver and recipient result in both parties working at cross-purposes and thus accomplishing a less than desirable outcome.

Rosenfield (1985) suggested that difficulties in consultation arise from differences in attributions of those involved in the process of interaction. She emphasised the importance of participants attempting to share a common frame of reference in order to facilitate effective communication. Rosenfield also noted the danger of not considering fully one's attributional assumptions and the effects these assumptions may have on action. In examining people's evaluation of teachers' patterns of attribution, Tetlock (1980) found that respondents rated most highly those teachers who attributed failure of a student partially to themselves and partially to the student. Subjects gave very low ratings to teachers who were depicted as attributing failure totally to a student. Results suggested that the presence or judgements of others may influence teacher attribution.

Friend and Cook (1992) used the same term 'frame of reference' to refer to the collection of beliefs, personal qualities, experiences, attitudes and feelings of an individual. They also suggested that it can be differences between individuals' frames of reference that lead to miscommunication and have a negative impact on teacher communication.

In their investigation of the effect of training teachers in problem solving and consultative skills, Zins and Ponti (1996) analysed teacher attributions for student-related problems during the consultative event. The authors defined attribution as, " those statements that contained a teacher's explanation, assumption, or inference about why something happened when the teacher had no data to support such a notion" pg. 373. Results indicated that while direct training had a positive effect on the utilisation of
consultative type skills, the training had no significant effect on the attributions made by teachers regarding students.

The notion of the importance of individuals' underlying perceptions within interactional events can be found in the work of Kelly (as cited in Adams-Webber 1979) in his review of what is termed personal construct theory. Personal construct theories, according to Kelly, are inventions we create as individuals to explain our reality. Central to this line of thought is that a person responds to his/her environment on the basis of his/her interpretation of that environment. Given this premise, we may assume that individuals involved in what would seem a similar process may indeed be acting under different assumptions. This has interesting implications in terms of assessing the quality of communication. As stated by Adams-Webber (1979)

If we assume with Kelly that each individual relies on a unique system of personal constructs to interpret his environment and regulates his own behaviour according to these interpretations, then it follows that specific information about the content and structure of an individual’s construct system should provide others with some basis for understanding his psychological processes and predicting his behaviour. (p. 17)

The present inquiry looked at the beliefs of three teachers in relation to their consultative role. This role for these three teachers was new for them and their staff. The implementation of this type of service delivery is difficult on a practical level, such as finding time and assigning responsibilities (Coben et al., 1997). On a more subtle but equally important level, this implementation is also difficult because of the impact of beliefs within this change process (Fullan, 1991). While the beliefs of all teachers participating in a consultative process within an in-school team should have an impact on how this service is delivered, it is the learning resource teacher that shoulders the brunt of
responsibility. This inquiry sought to find that "frame of reference", the filter through which these three teachers viewed the process of consultation.

Summary

The literature reviewed in this chapter has examined factors related to the consultative/collaborative practice of teachers such as training, resistance and administrative support. Review of the literature related to teacher beliefs has established that a person's beliefs, frame of reference, attributions and personal constructs have an impact on practice. While the investigation of the relationship between teacher beliefs and consultation/collaboration practices surrounding exceptional students in the school setting has begun (Jordan, 1994), much of this territory remains uncharted. This research added existing information in this area and suggested new avenues for exploration.

At this point it is important to review those questions that were addressed within this inquiry. Those questions were as follows:

1. What are these teachers' stated beliefs about students?
2. What are these teachers' stated beliefs about their consultative role?
3. What is the relationship between these teachers' stated beliefs and their consultative practice during in-school team meetings?
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

One important goal of this inquiry was to portray three women's experiences and perspectives as close to the actual events as possible. Taylor and Bogdan (1984) described participant observation as research that involves the social interaction between researcher and participant in the milieu of the latter, during which data are systematically and unobtrusively collected. Essential to this process is the attempt to understand people from their own frame of reference. In keeping with this consideration, this study was conducted using qualitative research methodologies, which adhered to the theoretical orientation of Symbolic Interactionism. Hammersley and Atkinson (1990), in their discussion of the philosophical and sociological roots of naturalism, described Symbolic Interactionism as converging on the belief that the social world cannot be understood from a perception of the existence of all-encompassing social laws. They stated rather, that “human actions are based upon, or infused by, social meanings, intentions, motives, attitudes and beliefs” (p.7). They further stated that at the heart of Symbolic Interactionism is the rejection of the stimulus-response model and the adoption of the idea that people interpret stimuli and continue to do so in an active living process that continually influences their actions.

Symbolic Interactionism, as defined by Blumer (1969), is a qualitative methodology that focuses on the examination of the perceptions of the individual. Symbolic Interactionism rests on the following three premises:

1. Human beings act toward things on the basis of the meaning that the things have for them.
2. The meaning of such things is derived from or out of the social interactions one has with one's fellows.

3. These meanings are handled in, and modified through an interpretative process used by the person dealing with the things encountered. (p. 2)

Symbolic Interactionism differed from other approaches of the time in that it saw meaning not as intrinsic to an object but rather as brought to a situation by a person’s perceptions. “Meanings are seen as social products, as creations that are formed in and through the defining activities of people as they interact.” (p. 5)

Integral to this process of analysis was the reality that the tenets of Symbolic Interactionism applied to me. Meaning as a social product and as the result of the process of interaction were important considerations as I interacted not only with participants but with their words (transcripts) as well. The provision of a framework from which to portray these women's experiences and perspectives to the reader proved an ongoing challenge. Even into my second draft, the presentation of these women's stories lacked, for me, a frame of reference for presentation.

My search for a perspective from which to bring these women to life ended with my discovery of the work of Erving Goffman. In his book The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, Goffman (1959) used performance to refer to "all the activity of an individual that occurs during a period marked by his continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers" (p. 22). Given the consultative role of a learning resource teacher, this seemed apropos. Goffman saw us as actors either knowingly or unknowingly performing to an audience. We present from our social place which he defined as,
A status, a position, a social place is not a material thing, to be possessed and then displayed; it is a pattern of appropriate conduct, coherent, embellished, and well articulated. Performed with ease or clumsiness, awareness or not, guile or good faith, it is none the less something that must be enacted and portrayed, something that must be realised.

Goffman, 1959 (p. 75)

These women were not presented in whole, they were presented in part. The role they played was framed by their stage (the school), the audience (their peers, students and even myself) and the expectations of the "culture" in which they were performing.

**Procedure**

Lincoln and Guba, (1981), (as cited by Merriam) defined qualitative research not as an attempt to measure but rather to emphasise, describe, judge, compare, portray, evoke images and create for the reader a sense of being there. The choice to present this investigation in a case study format was made to enable the reader to relate to each individual case through the use of detailed accounts, as a means of understanding the particular set of events, circumstances and interactions that took place during the period in which the data were collected. The focus of this method was aptly defined by Patton, (as cited by Merriam, 1985) in his discussion of the use of case study method:

"It is an effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as a part of a particular context and the interactions there. This understanding is an end in itself so that it is not attempting to predict what may happen in the future necessarily, but to understand the nature of the setting.... and in the analysis be able to communicate that faithfully to those who are interested in that setting". (pg. 16)

Merriam (1988) suggested that, when presenting the methodology of a case study, three major components should be included; first, information regarding the investigator
including training, experience, philosophical orientation and biases; second, a description of the methods used; third, a description of the measures used to increase the probability of a trustworthy study. In this chapter I addressed these three areas in order to provide a clear and detailed picture of the process undergone to present the three stories involved in this investigation.

**Beginning With Myself**

To begin with myself, I would have to focus on one word, teacher. My training began with a degree in Education followed by an additional degree in Special Education. Following my undergraduate degrees, I spent six years teaching in the area of special education, first as a resource teacher and then as a learning disabilities consultant. If I were to try and determine the roots of this study, I would have to say that it was my experiences as a consultant that laid the groundwork for this investigation.

My first experiences in consulting as a teacher came, of course, in my first year of teaching. Until that time, because of the nature of my teacher training, which included very limited exposure to schools in this country, I had not had an opportunity to participate in consultative events as defined in this inquiry. While my training had been very extensive in the various areas of special education, none of the courses taken dealt directly with consultation. My first year of teaching might, by some standards, be unusual but in terms of fleshing out my consultative experiences it is important to describe. From a communication point of view, this year was characterised by a meeting of like minds. The teachers on staff all ranged from the ages of 21 to 35. All of us were there for a relatively few number of years and none of us was from the community itself. This was not an unusual scenario
given the isolation of the community. Ideas flowed freely, initiatives were met with enthusiasm and the atmosphere was supportive. Consultation/collaboration centring on programming for the special education students that I saw during the week did not occur. In the school, special education practices were a reflection of the times. At that time, special education was the strict domain of special education teachers and regular classroom teachers remained separate from the programming administered there. This was not a negative situation but merely the norm.

My second year of teaching was characterised by the same withdrawal approach to special education service delivery. Regular and special education remained very separate. Other aspects of the job, in terms of setting up initiatives and planning activities for the school were more limited. I had moved to a school in the city where the teachers were very senior. They had lived and worked in the area for many years and the rules and practices were well established. In my fifth year of teaching, I went to a board level position within the same board, where I and a colleague were asked to set up a clinic for learning disabled students in the school board. The model we created would have its emphasis on participation of classroom teachers through regular consultation/collaboration with the clinic staff. Students were withdrawn to the clinic twice a week, for six weeks. The mandate of those working in the clinic was to assess students' learning needs, come up with programming ideas and communicate that information to the teacher. This job gave me my first experience of being an "outsider" (a person working at a board level, who was not part of a class or school). I still recall my surprise that, when meeting with teachers, we often seemed to be coming from different perspectives when referring to the same student. What seemed like a good idea to me, (for example, a program modification) did not always seem
like a good idea to them. In retrospect, I feel a deep gratitude for the two years of patience a great number of classroom teachers gave that naive young teacher who thought she knew how to consult. Those experiences, some of them negative, interested me in the process of consulting and the expression of differing beliefs in an interactional setting. The frustrations and successes of these experiences made me more aware of the impact that my beliefs had on the way that I interacted with others. Even my perception of my role as a consultant differed from the perception of others involved in these interactional events. It was during this consultative type job that I took a year's leave to pursue a master's degree and continued on to the doctoral program. When I initially went back to full time school as a student, I remember very clearly that feeling of becoming immersed in ideas and theory. The practical realities of teaching slipped away. From a consultative perspective, this was an opportunity for me to study my craft.

When I went back to full time teaching, I taught in a behaviour adjustment class. This class was for students who had been removed from their home school because of poor behaviour. This class also employed a full time educational assistant. Her philosophies and mine were very similar and we worked together cohesively. Very often we knew what to do without asking. Relations with the staff in terms of integrating the students were more complicated. I had grown in my knowledge of consulting and perhaps lost some of the arrogance of youth and I approached consulting from a much different standpoint. Instead of focusing on what I thought the students needed, I focused on the teachers' concerns and workload. A considerable amount of time was spent building trust and becoming involved in the activities of teachers, lending a hand where possible. This building of trust and respect for their needs worked well and my students all had maximum integration as the
months passed. I then went to work as a board wide resource person for behaviour and academic needs of students. I was an outsider again. This time I knew it and worked within that definition. I avoided the presumption that I knew better and had the answers. What I had were options, ideas and some additional resources. I would remind the teachers that I was their resource person and thus they should use me. Despite this belief on my part, not all teachers allowed me that role. In his discussion of audience, Goffman (1959), pointed out that as we act out our roles sometimes it is the expectations of the audience that shapes the performance. While I saw myself as a collaborator, some saw me as expert. Many of those consultative/collaborative encounters were characterised by mistrust and conflicting viewpoints. The perception of being from the "board" is difficult to overcome. Because of the intervening years between my earlier and later consultative roles, the position served as an excellent position from which to view my participation in these interactive settings and the impact of my belief systems on those events.

I realised with surprise that many of the beliefs that I held regarding students and my consultative role were relatively unchanged. I still had a strong belief that student failure and success were dependent upon compatibility with program and that, if you break the program down, modify, you can find a way to allow the child to learn. From my perspective, I was there to help teachers help themselves. The one major change that I found from my previous teaching experience was that, rather than imposing my ideas on others, I was much more aware of the interactional nature of problem solving. I had little faith in providing ideas and suggestions for teachers that were not compatible with their belief systems, as I perceived them to be. A healthy respect for where others were coming from and a modification of my communication to consider that perspective were necessary in
order to find a productive meeting point. This proved to be a sophisticated dance that to some seems unnecessary but to me seems paramount. Real change, in my mind, is dependent on real understanding and compromise.

Methods used

Entry and Access: Who are the Gatekeepers?

"Even the most friendly and co-operative of gatekeepers or sponsors will shape the conduct and development of the research"

Hammersley and Atkinson (p.73)

Participants for this investigation consisted of four resource teachers currently employed by a large school board in an urban area. Formal entry into this research setting began in the summer of 1990. With the assistance of a member of my thesis committee, contact was established with the superintendent of the participating school board. I was granted permission to contact special service personnel at the board level and discuss my plans with their representative.

The school board representative that I contacted was extremely open and seemed excited about my ideas for research in the board. Having completed a doctoral dissertation using qualitative methodology himself, there was little difficulty with the concept that the research process would, in some ways, lead itself. Also understood was the need for entry into a school level environment where participants would be interested and willing to let me explore the research that I was proposing. We shared the awareness that what was crucial was access to schools first for me as a researcher and secondly for the research project itself. I needed them to open their doors to me.
I met with the contact person and he proceeded to mail me a list of eight schools that might be willing to host this particular research project. He also phoned these schools and informed the principal that I would be contacting them and provided me with a letter of introduction (see appendix I). I proceeded to contact the principals of these schools over the fall months and set up meetings to explain my research proposal. I created a mini version of the proposal (see appendix II) for them to examine and made an appointment with each principal.

Meetings with principals took a variety of forms. Some had a very clear idea of who I was and why I had come to their school. Others had only a vague memory of having spoken to the contact person regarding my proposal. There were meetings which both the principal and the special education teachers attended and others in which the principal spoke to me first and then allowed me to speak to the teacher in private. Having met with all eight schools, I went with my "instincts" regarding the interviews with the teachers and chose those teachers with whom I felt the most rapport and where I believed honest enthusiasm for the project had been present.

I chose four schools with which to work. The first of these schools was chosen for the initial phases of the study to help develop the process that would be used in the other settings. In this setting, two teachers were sharing the resource teacher role.

Approximately a month prior to the start of data collection this site was visited and an initial version of a questionnaire protocol was presented to the teachers. The discussions leading from this protocol served to reshape the information gathering technique that would be used later. It was initially considered that this school, while contributing the formative part of the study, would also be used as a site for the collection of data. Interviews did
proceed and team meetings were recorded. As it turned out, one of the teachers that was performing the role of the LRT felt that the time commitment was too great to continue her involvement. The other teacher, while committed to the process, was also constrained by time and work considerations. Interviewing became difficult to maintain, because of the realities of yard duty and coverage for other teachers and was often interrupted or rescheduled. Another component of the scheduling difficulties was the infrequency of team meetings. Over the course of the term, only two meetings were recorded. The transcription of these meetings led to the realisation that the conversations to be analysed were affected by the fact that two people were sharing the same role and that their opinions and suggestions were intertwined. Following discussions with them we mutually agreed that this site would not be included as a case study.

Of the three remaining schools, the three teachers chosen to participate all had similar training and experience and worked with similar populations of children. Viewing these three women as “gatekeepers”, I made connections to the settings through them. Their support in obtaining access for me to the team meetings as well as access to their personal thoughts was essential. I had entered the gate; how far I could proceed would be defined through our interaction, shared experiences, and the nature of the investigation. As time passed, the three relationships developed well beyond that initial willingness to participate into varying forms of friendship.

**Collecting Data: Where to begin and how to end?**

What is recorded and how, will depend in a large part on the purposes and priorities of the research and the conditions under which it is carried out.

Hammersley and Atkinson (p.173)
**Tools of the trade.** Information for this study was collected through the use of a small tape recorder. In order to tape record the interviews and team meetings, I had chosen a Walkman tape recorder as a recording device, in part because of its recording sound quality and in part because of its small size. I had hoped that the small size would seem more unobtrusive. What I failed to consider were the many connections that had to be attached in order to record successfully. These attachments consisted of the adapter for power, the microphone and the earphones. The earphones were added later in the research process, following an unsuccessful attempt at recording an interview. They allowed me to check that I was actually recording. With all of these things in place, my unobtrusiveness was gone. The recording machine now resembled some sort of alien being covered in tentacles. I became adept at setting up ahead of time leaving only the small microphone on the table and placing the ‘alien’ on a chair next to me. On those few occasions when I was unable to attend the actual meetings that were to be recorded, the teachers agreed to record them for me using the schools’ machines.

**Role of the researcher.** "One may have access to the people and a wide range of information but the level of information is controlled by the group members being investigated." (Merriam, 1988, p. 93). The collection of data for this study was characterised by a series of interviews and team meetings which were recorded as well as personal discussions with participants which were not recorded. These discussions, while not recorded, helped to build rapport with participants as well as flesh out my knowledge about these women.
My success as a collector of information was shaped by the development of field relationships during my time at the schools. From my perspective, the fact that I was not part of their school's system, especially in an administrative capacity, added to the comfort level of the participants and staff. Being unassociated with the hierarchy of the school board took away some suspicion of formal evaluation of teachers. Also, the fact that I did not live in the area and had no children in the school system was beneficial. I was asked the question regarding children by almost every school. Though I cannot be sure, the fact that I was pregnant certainly seemed to break a lot of ice. Finally, my own teaching background and willingness to talk about my experiences facilitated mutual understanding and conversation. Knowing that I knew their language, at least in part, created a more open environment for sharing.

The language used to interpret the data was a combination of my experiences past and present, both with the participants of this research and in my own professional and personal life. It was important that this language was compatible with that of the participants.

**Steps in the collection of information.** Involvement with participants in the schools lasted from January to May. During this time, interviews were conducted with each teacher individually in order to examine her perceptions of her role as a consultant in the school as well as her beliefs regarding the success or failure of children. Interviews featured a variation on the Kolb cycle (Hunt 1987), which suggested that teachers be encouraged to explore concrete events involving students and peers and to reflect upon them. While the interviews consisted of a four part protocol (see appendix III) this protocol served only as a
general guideline with a focus on openendedness to allow for the emergence of ideas and additional information. These series of interviews were conducted over the four-month period at times convenient for the participants. Coinciding with the interviews were the tape recordings of team meetings.

DPT (Diagnostic Prescriptive Team) meetings were conducted every one or two weeks depending on the number of requests by teachers. Present at these meetings were the resource teacher (the research participant), other teachers from the staff, generally one from each division (primary, junior and intermediate), the principal and often a school board representative. Prior to each meeting, permission forms for taping were signed by all members of the group (see appendix IV) and, with the exception of one case, the taping proceeded.

Following these interviews and DPT meetings, I dated and stored each tape. I then transcribed them and placed them in binders with the interviews at the beginning followed by the DPT meetings in chronological order.

The transcripts were read and analysed (see data analysis next section). Based on this analysis, a post interview was conducted with each participant.

The resulting information consisted of a series of four to five tape recordings for each of these three teachers consisting of one to one conversations with myself regarding their beliefs. A second set of information consisted of the tape-recorded team meetings, 5 for two of the schools and 6 for the other, each about 40 minutes to an hour in length. All tape recordings were later transcribed. A third set of information were field notes taken throughout the process.
Organising the information. The model represented in Figure 1 represents the comparative analysis of the data collected in this inquiry. Data from two sources, the teacher interviews and DPT meetings, were analysed and combined to form two images, one of teachers' beliefs about their consultative role and a second image reflecting their beliefs about students. This information was then analysed and combined again to form an image of the relationship between these teachers' beliefs about students with respect to their beliefs about their consultative role. The data that resulted from this analysis was used to examine the relationships between teachers' beliefs and their consultative practice in an in-school team setting. The same procedures were used for all three cases.

Following the collection of data, the transcripts were read and reread. The information collected in the interviews was summarised into what I considered direct and implied information regarding the teachers' beliefs regarding students' success and failure as well as information regarding their consultative role.

Team meetings (DPT's) were coded according to the date of the meeting and statements made by participants were numbered in the order in which they occurred. I proceeded to look at the information presented in those meetings in two ways. Initially, each line of transcript was summarised and a note made on what I interpreted that line to mean. I also made notes on statements that were unclear to me. During this line by line analysis, I attempted to focus on what I considered to be the consultative aspect of each
The relationship between teacher beliefs and consultative practice in in-school team meetings.

Figure 1: Analysis of Data
sentence. Following this, I reread the same statements, this time changing my focus to participants' beliefs regarding students. Statements were noted that, in my mind, reflected particular beliefs regarding students.

With this completed, I invited participants to read and examine the notes made by me and participate in discussions on the accuracy of my interpretations. I sat with participants as they reviewed their interpretations and we discussed any sections that were of concern. The transcripts and notes were mailed to all three participants for their perusal prior to the review with myself. All three agreed to post interviews during which their thoughts and impressions were collected. My aim was to clarify, verify and expand on my interpretation of the participants' ideas.

The procedure described above aimed to develop and facilitate the emergence of the "picture" presented by each individual teacher. In order to present this "picture" accurately, it was important to focus on the actual conversations as they occurred. My role as the portrayer of this picture was to present the information in a clear and concise manner that illustrated to the reader my interpretation of what is going on. The post interviews helped to clarify my perceptions by revisiting the events with the participants.

After completion of the post interviews, information was re-examined in light of the participants' responses and discussions. Changes to my initial interpretation of transcripts were made where necessary and notes were made to clarify areas that were unclear to me. At this point, I set out to do a more detailed organisation of the information. The goal of this organisation was the categorisation, by participant, of all the information gathered through interviews and DPT meetings.
The procedure for categorising information at this point was similar to that of the initial organisation, with one important difference. This time, the statements from team meetings were sorted along thematic groups. This was very helpful for the formation of a picture of the participants' actions and then later for connecting these actions to beliefs stated in the interviews. A more detailed explanation of this organisation follows.

I first examined each participant's consultative role as she described it through the interviews. Initially, information was collected, guided by the initial protocol, about how each participant saw her consultative role. This information was expanded through conversation over time to include narratives relating to concrete experiences with students and colleagues. This additional information helped add dimension to the ideas that arose as representative of each participant's perception of her consultative role. Information collected was analysed statement by statement. My interpretations of participants' beliefs regarding their role were taken from their direct statements and filtered through my experiences with those teachers.

The consultative practice in a team meeting was looked at in the following way. As already noted, statements made at DPT meetings were coded, interpreted by me and then reviewed by the participants. These individual statements, separated from the text, were re-examined again from a consultative perspective. Categories emerged reflecting how participants carried out their consultative role. Statements that did not either fit into or create a category were examined in context of the full transcript and, if appropriate, categorised. Brief statements such as "Uhhm" were included in a category only if, in context of the transcribed conversation, the statement reflected a consultative component of the participant's role.
When all the statements were categorised, each category was re-examined for the fit between the category and the statements placed there. I then looked at the categories that had emerged and, in some cases, merged similar categories into a new category name. Interpretations of statements were checked periodically for compatibility with original interpretations which had been noted by the researcher prior to the post interviews. This categorisation of statements allowed for a framework through which a profile of the participant's consultative style emerged.

Interview discussions regarding students' success or failure were generally facilitated by all the participants' keen interest and obvious concern for students. Participants tended to personalise their discussions of students with stories about specific children. For me, information presented in this manner brought alive the characteristics which were being explored and enhanced my understanding of the context in which their beliefs about students were couched. Initially, discussions centred around the definition of success or failure. It was important to establish a mutual understanding of what those terms meant to individual participants. These definitions are described as they pertain to each participant in the context of the individual case studies.

In examining the participants' beliefs regarding students' success and failure, procedures similar to those of examining their perceptions of their consultative role were used. I read their statements and, having checked my initial impressions of their beliefs with participants in the post interviews, proceeded to organise, using their words, the information they had given me in a way that could be presented to the reader.
Interactions at DPT meetings that reflected the participants' beliefs about students were often more subtle than the interactions concerning their consultative practice. Having their input at the post interviews allowed the formation of a clearer picture of their beliefs.

As with the analysis of the consultative role during DPT meetings, categories that reflected common types of beliefs were developed. All statements within the developed categories were reread to double-check their suitability. Statements were also checked against my initial interpretations of the meanings of those statements. Again, where I thought appropriate, categories were combined or eliminated.

Planning for Trustworthiness

There's another side of this. The feeling that I've made it all up and Help! How can I justify all this? It's this thing about knowing, sometimes I look at words on a page and think, do I really remember, do I know? This is a difficulty with this approach; it is something you learn to live with.

Reason and Rowan, 1981 (Eds.) (p.399)

In their discussion of generalisability, Bogdan and Bilken (1982) stressed the importance of the researcher stating the affect that generalisability will have in the dissemination of research results. They state that generalisability need not be a priority in qualitative research. Results of this research are generalisable only in that they may result in the opening of new avenues of exploration for researchers.

The verification of this study was dependent on my ability to gather information that truly reflects the perceptions of the participants involved. One question that became crucial was how would my relationships with these people affect the data to which I would pay attention? The use of the tape recorded and verbatim transcripts and a flexible interview protocol were beneficial in dealing with this concern. Nevertheless, while my getting to
know the participants enriched my analysis of the transcripts, the nagging question of how it inhibited or limited the original intent of the participant remained. The words of Donmoyer, (1985) seemed applicable "... meaning is not drawn from the data but rather imposed upon it. Data cannot speak for themselves. For data to speak they must be translated into a language and languages are inventions not discoveries" (pg. 17).

The verification of information was addressed in two ways. The first was an effort on the part of the researcher to remain objective and open to the information that emerged. Secondly, built in throughout the study were continuous checks with the subjects regarding the correctness of information and the validity of analysis conducted by the researcher. Given that the focus of this study was an examination of teachers' personal beliefs, it is essential that the information collected retain sensitivity to their perspectives.

An additional two avenues of validity were examined in relation to this investigation. Both reflect a form of triangulation which was defined by Hammersley and Atkinson (1990) as," checking inferences drawn from one set of data sources by collecting data from others" (pg. 198) The first of these was respondent validity. The aim of respondent validity, as cited by Hammersley and Atkinson (1990), is to establish a correspondence between the sociologists' and the members' view of the members' social world by exploring the extent to which the members recognise, give assent to, the judgements by the sociologists. (Bloom, 1978, as cited by Hammersley and Atkinson, pg. 548-549).

The use of open ended interviewing, access to transcript analysis by participants and the development of the post interview to assess the correctness of the researcher's perceptions were attempts to enhance the trustworthiness of my interpretations and analysis of the respondents' data. As discussed by Hammersley and Atkinson (1990), we can never
be sure that a person's perceptions of action can be interpreted by them in a non-biased manner. Indeed Blumer (1969), in his discussion of Symbolic Interactionism, noted that each individual social interaction is influenced by the current interaction as it is occurring. Therefore it may not be far fetched to assume that an interaction regarding the participants' previous experiences was in itself a construct of the current interaction. Thus, the current interaction, in this case the post interviews, may not necessarily be able to provide a valid perception of the former interactions. To allow for this possible limitation, the researcher encouraged participants to explore their hands-on experiences with students and peers using a variation of the Kolb cycle, (Hunt, 1987), to attempt to form another framework from which to view their beliefs. Also, the post interviews, approximately 12 months after the data collection, allowed for discussions of current situations in which the teachers were involved. This provided a comparison base for the previous experiences to assess the stability of the themes and interpretations over time. This, accompanied by the teachers' examination of the verbatim transcripts and analysis, helped the participants to interpret the interactions as they had occurred. With this in mind, what I was attempting to do was come as close to the events as possible and, while respondent validity may have limitations, it is another tool in the quest for historical accuracy.

A second method of triangulation was attempted through the combination of the following data sources: transcripts, observations, field notes and verification by participants. Verification, as described earlier in this chapter, was a co-operative effort where I sat with participants as they reviewed my notes on the interpretation of transcripts. The discussions formed the basis for the post interview discussed earlier. The transcript comparisons, the post interviews and the field notes combined to form a picture, a type of background or a
double check. That is not to say that compatibility between all three constituted the validity of this study but, rather, that the use of this variety of information provided a more complete picture with which to substantiate events and the interpretation of these events.
CHAPTER FOUR: CASE STUDIES

Introduction to the Case Studies

Each of the three women in this study presents a portrait of their teaching life. The courage necessary for them to allow such an intimate portrayal did not go unnoticed. In an attempt to present their portrait as honestly and completely as possible, their own words were used to convey what took place. My categorisation and presentation of information was an attempt to present, in an organised manner, the events and discussions that took place over the five month period in which we worked together.

The goal of this study was the examination of the relationship between belief’s and practices of teachers in a consultative role. My goal in the presentation of this relationship was to present the participants stated beliefs and experiences as accurately as possible. Their discussions and experiences were the focus. To keep separate my thoughts and interpretations (at least visually) from the text of their words, a different font was used for my reflections within the presented material. These reflections are reserved for the end of sections, which present the organisation of statements made by participants. The use of different fonts was to help clarify, within this work, the parallel processes of presentation and analysis.

The portraits collected formed three different collages with the central character being each of the consulting teachers (Regina, Diane and Roseanne). It was during the process of analysing the collected information that a ‘role’ emerged for each teacher. From the point of view of Goffman (1959) this role was similar to an acting role (Goffman, 1959), a performance, complete with audience. The presentation of each
teacher's role was a framework from within which their stated belief systems, in conjunction with their interactions with peers, were presented.
Regina

Inviting Participation

My very first impression upon entering this school was one of friendliness. The secretary in the office smiled and welcomed me with a gesture to sit, as she was momentarily busy. The principal emerged and, as I introduced myself, I had an overwhelming feeling that I had known her before. She expressed to me that she felt the same but after some discussion, we decided that it was just an odd sense of deja vu since it was obvious that we had not had a chance to meet on any previous occasion. This common feeling of deja vu immediately created a comfort level that I had not felt in other schools and it was as a pair of temporarily created "old friends" that we went in search of Regina. Regina expressed an enthusiastic interest in the study as it was explained, asking questions to clarify points and nodding in agreement with ideas presented. Concerns were raised by both Regina and the principal regarding confidentiality and the dissemination of information, both of which were addressed. It was at this point that Regina expressed her greatest concern, that she didn’t generally say much during DPT (Diagnostic Prescriptive Team) meetings. I assured her that I understood ahead of time the board’s philosophy of the team approach to problem solving and that that would be fine.

Upon leaving the school I was delighted that they had agreed to participate. Regina had scheduled to have her mornings free of students while I was there in order to talk with me and complete her work (preparation, consultation etc.). This was rather a two edged sword as, although I certainly appreciated her commitment of time, I did not have enough questions or discussion topics for four months of free mornings and I felt
that my presence would be a disruption to her regular work. However, the problem was
soon remedied by my insistence that she use her time as she saw fit and that I would
volunteer in the classrooms. Unfortunately, because of the set up, I did not get to observe
her with her students, which I would have enjoyed, but we did have a lot of opportunity
to get to know one another and discuss ideas. Her insistence that I should be included in
the staff picture, though I declined, as well as invitations to staff pot luck dinners and
being included in staff meetings made me feel as though I had attained a deep level of
acceptance into the school, which pleased me greatly. Conversations during lunch and
recess were with staff members as well as her and I felt no discomfort with the other staff
members if she was not there to share in them. On a more personal level with her, we
shared many discussions regarding my pregnancy, (a topic that was difficult to avoid),
her students and how she perceived her role. Following team meetings, she would often
ask me for ideas and comments. I tried to respond to these by talking about my own
experiences as a teacher and avoiding specific recommendations as I did not feel that this
was my role. The relationship developed into a very open and warm friendship.

Following the birth of my son, James, I resumed my contact with Regina to
conduct the post interview. In the meantime, I had been in contact with her occasionally
over the phone to maintain communication on a somewhat personal level and also to
arrange for access to the initial analysis of the transcripts of the tape recorded team
meetings taken from our time together. Regina suggested that she would come to my
home given the fact that I had a small child, we could conduct the interview there. Upon
her arrival, she settled in to read the analysis that I had done on the remaining transcripts.
Once this was completed we proceeded to conduct the final interview. After sharing
lunch and conversation we parted with a warm embrace. I marvelled at how much our relationship had developed even with the lapses in contact after the birth of my son. With every meeting I had a deeper respect for her as an educator as well as a growing regard for her as a personal friend.

**Teaching History**

Regina was an experienced, well-trained teacher who continued, after 20 years teaching experience, to expand her knowledge base by attending training sessions, meetings, and information exchanges with peers. Initially, Regina taught regular classrooms grade 6, 7 and 8 and was then a reading improvement teacher. This position allowed her to work with specific students in the area of reading on a withdrawal basis. She had completed her B.A. and Ontario Ministry of education Additional Qualifications Special Education parts 1, 2 and 3 and was currently a resource teacher in a school of approximately 600 children. Regina's foray into the area of teaching special education was at the request of a principal.

R It wasn't a conscious choice I made to get into the field. There was something that ... I'd seen the special education teacher, I'd seen the reading improvement teacher work in our school and I thought they were doing such a good job. I didn't even know if I could come up to their standards but I gave it a try.

In terms of special education services, the exceptional population of the school varied from children with severe developmental delays to minor learning problems. As with all the teachers involved in this investigation, Regina was responsible for the setting up, chairing and maintaining of information for the team meetings.
Diagnostic Prescriptive Team (DPT) meetings occurred at this school every Tuesday with the exception of the last Tuesday of the month. Referrals came from teachers and were filled out by them.

R When they write out the referral, they have to write out the presenting problem, what is the problem that they are experiencing, and why do they want to refer the child. Then they write down the ways they have tried to solve the problem and then they write down the student's weaknesses but also the student's strengths. So we know where the student's weaknesses are but if they write down the student's strengths we have something to build on.

When possible, the principal attends the meeting but Regina is the chairperson and record keeper. While information from these meetings is kept, it is not included in the student's permanent record. Informing parents, while often done out of courtesy, is not considered mandatory.

The Facilitator

The following portrait was broken into four distinct parts; each viewed through a different filter. The first filter presented a view of Regina's perceptions of her consultative role. These perceptions were gleaned from interviews and discussions that took place over the months we were together. Actual transcript selections presented were from tape-recorded interviews conducted using a semiformal protocol. Transcript selections were presented here with organising statements from myself. The second filter produced a picture of Regina's consultative role as she interacted in team meetings. These meetings were tape-recorded and I examined the statements made by Regina in the context of the interactions that took place. The third filter re-examined the interview data. This view centred on Regina's beliefs regarding why children succeed and fail.
Finally, the **fourth filter** re-examines the team meeting data this time Regina's beliefs about students as they are manifested in in-school team interactions are explored. At the end of each **filter** my observations and thoughts on what had been presented were noted.

**Filter 1: Regina's Consultative Role (interview)**
Examining Regina's role under a consultative filter resulted in a complex picture of activities, many of which, by Regina's own admission, were self-imposed. The mandate of an LRT role is to provide services to students through a variety of methods. It is the mechanics of this provision of services that vary.

Regina saw her role as multifaceted. Administrative jobs, such as "handing out referral sheets", keeping records, co-ordinating personnel and setting up DPT meetings, fell under her professional mandate. A part of this administrative aspect of her role was the recruitment and scheduling of additional personnel to deliver services. These people included parent volunteers and coop students. Pursuing the discussion of these aspects of her role, Regina related the following example of her day.

S.B. We mentioned earlier about all of the hats that you were wearing, can we talk about all the different things that you do?

R OK, this morning I was talking with a teacher from (high school). She is a high school teacher and she places Co-op students and one of the hats that I wear is to talk to our teachers at the school here and ask them if they would like to have Co-op students working in their class. Once I get the clearance from them I talk to (secretary) and she will send over so many students and hopefully they will get placed in our school.

I work with the parent volunteers. I do the same thing. I find out what the need is in our school. Some teachers would like a parent volunteer to help them out in the morning, to read to the kids, to supervise them on trips. So
I find out what their needs are at the beginning of the year and I send out a little blurb in the newsletter and the parent volunteers sign a little piece of paper and send it back with their children. I have a little pool that I draw from.

Administrative type responsibilities aside, Regina saw working with students as a major component of her job. She saw herself as providing "program modifications for students" and as a "provider of remedial help".

OK, last year we had a student who wasn't able to write very quickly. In fact he was very verbal, but when it came time to print things on paper he was lost. He knew the material. So I would ask him the exam questions verbally and he would tell me and I would just scribe down his work.

and later,

There are some students in grade 7 who are having trouble working from their grade 7 math book. So I am able to give them remedial books that they can still work on the text everyone else is using but when they hit a chapter like ratio or percentage, and I find that that is always hard for them, at that time they don't have to work in that chapter they can work from the other remedial book.

When discussing her consultative role Regina stated that part of her consultative role was to be a "consultant to parents".

I consult with parents if they are having problems with any of the forms that have gone home. Say their child was being assessed and they were not quite sure of a particular form. They will usually phone me and I will clarify for them.

She also saw herself as an advocate for students and stated that she perceived herself as a facilitator for students, "smoothing the way for students in special situations".
In order to work successfully with students Regina noted the importance of constant communication with other teachers. This communication was facilitated by the DPT process which was headed by Regina. Regina saw the DPT as a vehicle for the "giving and receiving of feedback" as well as providing the opportunity for the following up of recommendations that had been made.

R I usually write down any recommendations that come out of the meeting for the student. And what I do with these recommendations I follow up on them. I give a copy to the teacher so she will know what has been discussed and what is going to happen and what is going to be done. Because there are some of the things that she has to do like phoning the parents or sending home communication books, whatever recommendations were made. She has a copy of that. I have a copy of the recommendations in the student's file.

In terms of consultation with teachers, Regina saw herself as a facilitator;

R It is not so much that I shell out advice, because if that were the case, we would not have to have a DPT meeting..... The whole reason for and philosophy for DPT is that teachers bring their expertise to the meetings and I facilitate that. I more or less facilitate the discussion, try to encourage suggestions from other members of the team, bounce ideas off them. They bounce ideas off each other so in a way I am a facilitator"

She also saw herself as a reassuring presence to teachers.

R I also provide not only advice for teachers to use in their class but also sometimes support for themselves, a pat on the back just to let them know that they are doing the right job. Sometimes a teacher will refer a student and everything that she has done is in place. There is nothing more we could suggest and she just kind of wants an affirmation or reassurance, " Am I doing the right thing?" and kind of bring out in the open as a safeguard to let everyone know, this is what is being tried. In case two or
three years down the road someone will say "Oh I don't know where they have gone with this child." We know, and it is on record that this is what has been tried and we have sanctioned it and blessed it.

She characterised the success of her consultative role as being aided by her direct involvement in the classroom and maintaining informal contact with teachers on a continual basis.

R Someone could just meet me in the hall and say I am having a problem with so and so, what should I do.

Even in the forum of DPT meetings, Regina saw herself as very much a part of a team. In response to a question on whether she ever met with resistance regarding specific recommendations she might make during DPT meetings, Regina said:

R I don't think that I have ever had that happen because I very rarely make a recommendation point blank like that. Usually it is a suggestion that is made and everyone bounces it off each other and then we have an agreement and sometimes, most of the time, when we are not all present I recap all the things that we have decided and if there is anyone that is violently opposed then we put it on hold and come back to it and discuss it again but very rarely would there be a time that someone is so violently opposed to a recommendation that the recommendation will go through when there is all this discord.

When asked to characterise her most important function as a consultant Regina stated "I help teachers help themselves".

**Reflections - Filter 1: Regina's Consultative Role (interview) interpretation**

Consultation, as discussed earlier, is generally defined as a problem solving type of activity with a specific purpose and set agenda (Friend and Cook, 1992). What we see when we look at Regina is a much more complex picture. My own experiences over the years of being in a consultative type of role have tempered my view of what consulting is.
Certainly if consultation took place only in a particular room at a particular time, with the same people, defining the intricacies and procedures associated with the process would be simplified. Unfortunately, this type of simplification is not possible.

I chose to define Regina's consultative practice as being characterised by two separate dimensions. The first of these was her ability to deal with a wide range of activities and responsibilities. The consultative role is not a simple one and often requires the learning resource teachers to participate in a variety of tasks. If we look at Regina's catalogue of the types of things she did, we saw interaction with parents, students, administrators, volunteers and peers. These interactions constituted consulting when we take the broad view that consultation is communication taking place for the purposes of serving a client (Dettmer, Dyck and Thurston 1996). Certainly in the case of Regina, the client was at times the student. At other times the client is a fellow teacher for whom Regina was assessing his or her classroom needs and providing support or, it may be a parent who had difficulty understanding paperwork.

The second dimension I identified as rapport building. The expertise, experience and ability to develop and maintain personal, trusting relationships with those people with whom you need to communicate is essential. When discussing characteristics of a successful consultant, Jordan (1994) noted that the establishment of trust was a process aided by the exchange of expertise and knowledge in a complementary way. Operationally, we saw Regina do this through informal contact with teachers as well as through her descriptions of the types of interactions that took place during team meetings.

Filter 2: Regina's Consultative Role (team meeting)
Regina’s consultative role during team meetings was gleaned from statements tape recorded during those meetings. From the sorting of statements, five aspects of her consultative role emerged; **organising, providing information, questioning, suggesting** and **supporting**. This section presents these categories, the statement that represents them and my reflections.

In our very first meeting, Regina reiterated the importance of the team approach.

*R* I usually don’t say much because this is a team and the team is the one that brings all the expertise to the team so that we can brainstorm and problem solve.

The interactions of team members in the meetings that unfolded in the following months was very much reflective of a team approach. Thus, while I sorted the information that emerged into those categories stated above, the reporting of statements that reflect those categories is often couched in the interactional process of the DPT with Regina as the facilitator.

**Organising.** The first category, organising, contained various facets. Regina’s first organisational task was to introduce, review and set up follow-up procedures for the student(s) that would be discussed at that meeting. In order to do this, Regina read to the team from a referral form completed by teachers at that school when they brought students to the attention of the in-school team.

Regina’s introduction of students set the topic for the meeting, provided the necessary information from which to start the discussion and reviewed information that might have an impact on the decisions made. Typically, at these introductions, Regina would read from a form filled out by the classroom teacher.
OK then should we go with that then. OK, I am going to go on to (student). She is also in grade 2, the same class. She is having a lot of difficulty reading and following simple directions. She needs a lot of individual attention in all language areas to avoid falling even further behind grade level. How have you tried to solve the problem? She sits at the front. I give her extra direction and individual attention whenever I can. Mom is aware of her problems and is very helpful and supportive but is worried that she can't keep up. Her strengths? While her attention span is very short she tries very hard and completes tasks as well as she is able. An eager but sensitive child. Her weaknesses? Spelling, reading and writing. Her work is seldom completed. She needs improvement in formation of numbers, basic addition and subtraction. This was written in December and at that time I was asked to hold off on this because she started to improve. I think after the November reports that she really started to improve.

The review and follow-up for students were represented through the following types of statements:

I am not going to set up a review for her because when (assessment person) does the testing she will bring back the results and then at that time we will talk about her then.

While organising the beginnings and endings of meetings, organisational statements also served a variety of other functions. They were used to direct action in the form of summarising plans and planning the next step as well as deliver up service to students.

We will give you the green light and then we will get together and plan something. You are going to interview the students first after we get the OK from the parents. You are going to speak to the parents. Then we will interview the children and work the sessions in.

I can try a couple of days in the week in the afternoon. Would that help? On Thursday you are having someone so
if I could find some time, twenty minutes in the afternoon for math. Because in the morning she is receiving another person.

Regina used organisational statements to communicate with parents and outside agencies.

R So we will get the hearing test and if you could emphasise to mom that it is really important that he be here in time and that since we have discussed it at DPT we really feel that he would benefit a lot. Because if he is not here to get the instruction there is no way we can remediate anything.

She also used these types of statements to confirm and clarify directions

R Well we have two recommendations so far. That is that (teacher) is going to do the Rosner on him. Based on that, we are going to find out whether his hearing is OK.

These individual statements occurred within the context of a team problem solving approach that took place during the DPT meetings, as exemplified by this series of statements dealing with the establishing of interventions in the classroom.

*(PT refers to presenting teacher, other teachers are referred to by using SP)*

R Well (helper), she was in there trying to do (student 1)'s keyboarding skills. She didn't have to do that any more so during her timetable whole, what she could be doing is working with (student 2).

PT Yes, but I have (Student 1). I've got (student 2) and (student 3).

R You have a whole group.

PT If it is OK with (helper).

SP1. But would it do her any good? If so many people are working with (student 4). And some of the names you mentioned I would think that (Helper) would have her hands full.

R Oh no, no she wouldn't be working with all them at once. She would be one to one with one person and then another
time when she comes in she is with another but I have scheduled a couple of 15 min. blocks throughout the week where she is to do keyboarding skills with (student 4) but (student 1) doesn't need to be dragged back to the computer because he willingly goes. It was just to ensure that he got a consecutive, consistent keyboarding once in a while.

PT So does she have time for this girl on her own?

SP1. Yeah, two 15-minute blocks, that is what they just said isn't it?

R Yeah, throughout the week. 15 minutes one day 15 minutes another but what I could do is look at the schedule and then eliminate (student 1) It's nothing, just half an hour.

**Providing information.** The statements that Regina made that provided information tended to fall into two categories, which I have described as inside information and outside information. Inside information took the form of the many introductory statements that she read. These statements, listed under the first category of organisation, were comprised of information provided by fellow teachers that was restated by Regina. A second form of inside information related to implementation of interventions for students. These interventions necessitated the sharing of the following types of information: information on testing and resources,

R Oh this thing. If we get the referral sent in this week there is about an eight-week waiting period, two months, two and a half months. It really depends on who is first on the list.

... 

R On the ICON computer there is that program where you can add, subtract, multiply and divide and the facts just flash up on the screen. That's something that you could suggest that he do just for pure drill. A daily drill.
as well as information on program

R Well knowing the fact that they just don’t have the skills whether they don’t remember it or whether they need the phonics skills again but in a contextual form. But it needs to be.

and information regarding students.

R He is obviously working to the best of his ability. If he is making progress then he is, well even though he is not at his level. Wherever he was he has come up and he is working towards that.

The outside information Regina provided often related to information regarding the family of a student,

R Father and mother were not living together at the time, they were separated long ago and mother was only an occasional visitor in his life and she would pop in maybe once a month or so and the fact that she died so closely on the heels of the father dying. I guess maybe after the father died he was going to try and become closer to mom or at least he knew he had one other parent that...

or the involvement of outside agencies with a student.

R The speech teacher was asking me about that from Chedoke and she want to find out what is happening with the psychologist first to find out if he is at a stage where if she were to intervene, would it have any effect on his stuttering or not. So that is probably why that person wanted me to phone. OK, is there any more information. This is just kind of a review to just kind of update the team on what has been happening with this little guy.

Questioning. During DPT meetings after a student had been introduced, the process of problem solving began. In terms of Regina’s consultative role, her actions at
this point could best be described as gathering and expanding information. This was
done mainly through the third category, questioning. These questions, which as a
subcategory make up the majority of the types of statements made by Regina, represented
various types of information gathering. Some were direct questions to the teacher, which
usually dealt with the comfort level of an idea or strategy suggested or tried with a
student, inviting feedback from participants.

R "OK is there anything else that you would like to see done.
Are you feeling comfortable with this right now?"

R "In the meantime are you happy with the way things are
going in the class with (helper) helping him and the
modifications you have made to the program?"

A majority of the questions asked centred around clarification of academic questions.

R And you have seen the different reversals?

R Does she reverses now that she is doing cursive writing as
opposed to printing? Because in grade 3 they print but in
grade 4 they are writing.

R Does he do his homework and is he consistent, gets it done,
hands in the work?

Other questions were open ended in an attempt to clarify social or emotional issues.

R He doesn't initiate going to the group and saying...?

R And when they go skating and that, how does he...?

R He doesn't have a best friend or anyone that he chums
around with at recess time?
It was common to see Regina use questioning as a way of suggesting strategies that might be used. These suggestions put in a question form were less threatening and allowed the teacher and other members of the team to disagree and suggest other alternatives.

PT I think there has probably been a change but I don't know for sure. Looking at his report card I would think that there has been a change because I think he has had the same personality since last year but it didn't show up on his work. Now it is showing up on his work. Mind you I have brought him back a long way from wherever he was. From a very poor, poor, poor understanding to an adequate, average understanding. So he does have the ability.

R What are his best marks like? What subjects does he really shine in? Computers? Math?

PT No, well his math is better than his reading but he is average.

R Has he ever been picked for student of the month or anything like that?

PT No

R Has he ever done anything that you could kind of praise him?

SP1 Could you give him the responsibility of taking care of somebody else?

PT Oh yeah I could do that but I don't know that that is a help.

As this conversation continued, Regina continued to use questioning as a technique to suggest ideas finally hitting on an idea with which the teacher was comfortable.
SP1 Maybe you could give him a part in the play?

PT Yes, maybe

SP2 Some responsibility

PT Yeah, maybe he will get to know some people in the play. That is a good idea.

A majority of the remaining questions asked centred on organisational issues directly.

R Uhhm, So how often would you do this, twice a week?

SP1 I would think. I wouldn't mind, how's quarter to 10 till quarter after. Not that, let's say 10 to 10 after, a 20-minute period.

PT That's fine

SP1 How about Monday, Wednesday and maybe Thursday. You don't mind him out at that time. I don't mind because that is my religion, one music and one guidance.

PT If it is helping him, I am not too worried about it.

R OK. You are not having math at that time are you?

PT Yes we are.

R Oh well, he can't be missing what is happening in the classroom.

PT Well we will have like 20 minutes in and we can send him out for that. I mean as long as he is doing math somewhere, great.

SP1 What is the point of doing math if he can't. Do you have math games that drill on the Icon? I could maybe switch that time to a third time. There would be two during math and one in the afternoon.

R OK, yeah.
SP1  So maybe they can miss a language arts 20 minutes.

R  So when is this going to start?

It is interesting to note, in this selection, the team approach to problem solving that took place. Regina's well paced questions were more of a facilitating nature than one of direction. When faced with an alternative suggestion, Regina often deferred to a team member. The team seemed to be taking the lead in coming up with a solution.

**Suggesting.** Thus far, in my description, I have proposed that Regina used organising statements, providing information and questioning as techniques to expand existing knowledge and to guide practice. The next section in the exploration of Regina's consultative role consisted of making suggestions. As discussed earlier in this section, Regina periodically used questions to guide decision-making. Direct suggestions to teachers were linked closely with the organisational type of statements that aided in the establishment of interventions for students. Suggestions such as setting up two reading groups or the use of a computer in a particular classroom were part of a larger organisational thrust to ‘get things moving' in terms of intervention. Regina's suggestions followed the flow of the conversation and were never isolated. They generally were designed to assist by working out the logistics of a suggestion that had been made.

R  Do you have just one group in math or two?

PT  One for now.

R  Does it look like there might be a discrepancy in your class that you might want to split up the class into two groups?
The ones that can go on and the ones that need extra drill in the operations sort of...

PT    Might have to.
R     Yeah that might be a good idea.
PT    Yeah get (helper) to come up.
SP    Is (helper 1) available
R     I don't know. I would have to ask. It was just for early childhood.

As stated earlier, the type of suggestions made were often part of a group problem solving approach. In keeping with the team approach which is so prevalent in this setting, suggestions for students often came from various members of the team, and as Regina stated early on, she 'facilitated' this process.

SP1.    I think it's time we let mom and dad know how concerned you are and the things that you are seeing and since(student) is being assessed and somebody is going to be in the home doing a family background. Is (assessment person) doing that?
R      Yes.
SP1.    and all of that gathering of information maybe she should just start to tune into the other kids because you mentioned that the other two are the same. I wouldn't suggest a formal assessment at this stage but rather the special education or reading improvement teacher start to become involved and then if after three or four months you notice that with extra help... First of all Regina are you available to give extra help? I know we were counting on (another teacher) to be an extra body in there right now.
R      I think in the math in the afternoons.
**Supporting.** The final category of statements that reflected Regina's consultative role were described as support type statements. There were very few direct statements that might be considered supportive. The examples found took the form of,

R "That would be great."

and in another example

SP1. What about school support Regina? I thought there were people in our board that dealt with....

R (Counsellor) would but since he is already being looked at they don't like to overlap and overstep. He is already going to the counselling.

PT What I thought was that I had to pass this information on to them.

R Yes that is what they wanted, that questionnaire filled out to find out whether to continue or not.

PT Right now I am better off to leave him out on his own.

R And you have got to cope with all that...

SP1. Yeah he is telling you (referring to the idea that the child by his behaviour is passing the message that he is unable to cope)

PT Right now he just can't do it.

Agreeing with a suggestion made or an opinion stated was common. The text is peppered with "uhhm's" and "yeah." These little verbal nudges seemed to have a number of purposes; to keep the meeting going, to support the speaker and to confirm information. It is important once more to note that the general atmosphere of the meetings, as observed by myself and reflected in the recordings, was characterised by the team approach. The necessity of overt statements of support, in my observation, was overshadowed by the general atmosphere of comfort and willingness of participants to
share information and suggestions in a non-threatening atmosphere. To review, the major categories that emerged in the analysis of Regina's consultative role were organising, informing, questioning, and supporting.

Reflections - Filter 2: Regina's Consultative Role (team meetings): An Interpretation

Reading the transcripts of the interaction Regina had during her team meetings allowed a tapestry to emerge of the type of role she played consultatively during these sessions. However, getting a sharp, true definition of that role was difficult. The interactions, by their very nature, were intricate weavings of meaning. Understanding the consultative role, was much more dependent on the interplay between participants in the meeting and, most importantly, on the common philosophy of a team problem solving approach.

Very seldom, as practitioners, do we get the opportunity to listen to what we say when we interact and examine it closely. Dettmer (1996) suggested the use of tapes to assess the effectiveness of the interaction would be a worthwhile pursuit. Given the broad nature of consultation, this may seem impractical but, within a team meeting setting, it may be an idea worth considering. For me, the experience of being able to look at the words of teachers as they interact and then to review those interactions over a period of time was reassuring. Many of the aspects of the role that emerged were those, which one would expect, sharing information, scheduling, asking questions etc.
For Regina, as for all three participants, it was not so much the aspects of the consulting process that inform us about their particular practice as it was the closer look at what each of these types of activities entailed.

Regina was an organiser, a facilitator. Finding and isolating specific suggestions made by her within the transcripts was a difficult task. Fellow teachers far outnumbered her in suggesting techniques and interventions. By reading the information provided by the regular classroom teachers, then by gathering of information (some of which was provided by her) and the expanding this knowledge through questioning and the use of ‘verbal nudges’ efficient problem solving was accomplished. Regina moved the meetings along at a quick and efficient pace. From my point of view, at times, the pace set may have seemed intimidating to presenting teachers who did not come regularly. To those members of the committee who were regulars, the quick exchange of ideas was the norm. Because the focus was on Regina’s words we did not get the full flavour of the exchanges at the team meetings. An examination of the full transcript showed a team interaction where ideas flowed quickly, disagreements happened, but were not perceived as personal. Regina used her consultative role to provide a forum for the sharing of expertise while taking a back seat as the provider of solutions and expert knowledge.

Filters 1 & 2: Regina’s Consultative Role (interview) and her Consultative Role (team meetings): A Reflection on Some Parallels.

Regina’s beliefs about her consultative role related to her participation in team meetings. Examination of the relationship between Regina’s role as she described it and as it manifested itself in consultative events was explored by highlighting the parallels between her stated ideas and the verbal exchanges during DPT meetings.
Regina stated that part of her consultative role was administrative in nature. Indeed, a vast majority of the types of statements made by Regina were of an organisational nature. Included in this administrative category were the introductory statements and information statements regarding the involvement of outside agencies, scheduling and co-ordinating of staff, volunteers and resources. In our discussions, Regina stated that the co-ordination of personnel and programs is one of her specific duties. Here we saw Regina’s facilitative role.

The second category that emerged in talking with Regina was that of communication and the facilitation of program modifications. Analysis of the DPT transcripts showed clarification and feedback on program modifications, questioning aimed to bring out strategies and modifications, direct suggestions for modification and, of course, the organisational type of statements that enabled the team to plan for the implementation of modifications. Also to be noted were the statements made by Regina during DPT to ensure follow up on the success of a strategy or suggestion. This was Regina the facilitator.

Regina stated that advocacy for students and consultation with parents was a part of her role. These characteristics of her consultative role were not often reflected during the interactions.

Direct consultation with parents did not take place in those meetings in which I was involved. Since parents were not invited to these meetings, the advocacy for parents, which Regina noted in her discussion of her consultative role, would be difficult to view. This aspect of Regina’s role was evident only in those statements that made arrangements for parental contact to share or gather information.
The final parallel to be discussed is that of support to teachers. As mentioned earlier, direct support statements in the form of a sentence were rare but verbal nudges of "uhhm" and "yeah" were present throughout. A more general support for teachers through the co-ordinating and providing of support and resources in the class was reflected throughout the transcripts. This co-ordination and provision was not enforced on teachers but, rather, was accomplished through the collaborative nature of the meeting.

The categories that emerged in the exploration of Regina's consultative role reflected only one view of her interactions. With this view, we saw a consultative role characterised through interaction and facilitation in a team problem solving approach. Not the purveyor of opinion or intervention, Regina's consultative role was characterised by inclusiveness (Little 1985). It would be impossible to ignore the fact that the style of interaction was well established before my observations and it would be impossible to ascertain whether Regina alone, through her approach, was totally responsible for creating her role as it manifested itself. What can be determined is that the role itself was a reflection of her personal perceptions. This type of information sharing and joint problem solving was an environment in which Regina showed a great deal of comfort, ease and finesse.

Filter 3: Regina's Beliefs about Students' Success and Failure (interview)

It is in this section we see Regina's statements about her beliefs about students' success and failure. These conversations were based on a semiformal interview protocol
and ran concurrently with her discussions of her consultative role as well as the tape recordings of team meetings.

Initially, our discussion centred on the definition of success. Through consensus, it was decided that success would be seen as a judgement based on the student's current level of functioning. Many of the students that Regina worked with on a daily basis, when compared with age appropriate peers, would probably be considered as failing, where an examination of their learning would show that they were actually progressing.

It is important to note at this point that, as described in the methodology section, an inverse relationship was assumed in the categories stated. For example, failure, as related to a non-supportive home life, was also interpreted as a supportive home life having an impact on success. Statements that related to only one factor, success or failure, were noted.

Regina, in her discussions of success and failure, focused on child's failure being closely related to home life, while success was generally attributed to self-esteem. Looking at Regina's statements using this particular filter we saw the following categories regarding success and failure: self esteem motivation, home life, program, and ability,

Regina's statements reflected strongly that self-esteem of the student was a key component necessary to attain success in school.

R They have fine motor problems. They had that; they were living with those problems every day. We showed them that it is OK. You can pick up a pencil and you can write. We know you can do it. So now they have overcome the negative self-image that they came with and now they are flying. This one little boy is in grade 6 now, he came to us in grade 4. If at the end of the day he was able to write two words that was pushing it. Now he is able to write reams
and reams and filling up his page and overcoming a lot of fear of putting a mark on the paper. So a lot of that has to do with self-esteem. I can do it. I am worthwhile and let me try. Once you give a child a chance, allow them opportunities to fail too because that is how we learn from our mistakes. Where some of these students are very afraid to put things on paper because if it is not going to be right they are not going to attempt it. And somehow, somewhere along the line they got the impression that they are no good, that it is not right. So if you can overcome that in them. That takes a while. Of course there is a lot of peer help too. A lot of acceptance by the group. A lot of love goes into bringing them, unravelling all the negative feelings that they have built up. Accepting them as they are and then they will flourish, no matter what.

Along with the importance of feeling good about themselves, the motivation of the students was also important.

R The child's willingness to do it, that it is a worthwhile activity. That there is value and I want to do it. If he doesn't have that then he is not committed to it and he is just, he is not going to do it.

R He has to be able to commit himself and take ownership for his problem as well.

Another trend that was evident in Regina's discussions of student's success and failure was the importance of consistency.

R You teach the lesson over and over and over and eventually they do know it.

R Actually, as the consistency starts, the child realised it starts to become easier.

When I asked Regina to list the factors that were most necessary in order for a student to succeed, she stated:

R The nature of the task at hand has to be something that can be accomplished. You can't give a child a task he can't do
and expect him to do it. So it has to be at his ability level so that he can meet with success.

And then, when asked what contributed to a child experiencing failure, Regina stated the same factor in her list of causes.

R  A task that is beyond the child's ability.

Regina proposed the idea that, while students have varying abilities, this is not the most important factor in successful learning.

SB.  I would think that the response of most regular classroom teachers would be, in my experience, a child is successful because he is smart.

R  Oh no, I have seen lots of smart children who don't and are very, and their self-esteem is so low. They have got the ability, they have got the brains, they have got everything and they cannot use it in any way, shape or form to reach a goal because they don't know how. They don't have that motivation. They haven't been pointed in the direction of organising themselves.

Regina's thinking was characterised by the underlying idea that we foster success through building self-esteem. This could be accomplished through setting appropriate tasks, consistency, and peer support and mainly through a positive attitude towards and interaction with the student.

When discussing why children fail, Regina focused mainly on the home situation of the student. What was evident in talking with Regina was the idea that success could be 'done' in the school environment. With enough positive attitude, program modification and accommodation in every possible way, children could progress. Regina
thought the somewhat less controllable environment of home was, at times the ‘undoing of a child's success’.

R There has to be, what ever the school has done should not be undone at home. I am not saying that the school has to be perfect but, if we are striving in a direction, there has to be a consistency. You cannot say to the child, I would like you to practice these words at home and then you get home and the parent or whoever says that it is not important for you to learn those words and then he is getting mixed messages. And that in itself won't fail the child but eventually it will do some damage.

In an example of the importance of home life on failure Regina related the story of one child.

R I think that if I were to pick a student I would have been disappointed in the progress that the student was making and yes she was failing and I think the reason she was failing was that her home-life was horrible. She came to us from a mother who had four or five children and they were each given away to different foster homes and the mother just kept the last little boy. They were away for a period of about four or five years and a couple of years ago she was to get them back again and the Children's Aid gave them back to her. So then you have a little boy who was with her from the day he was born. He only had to compete for the mother's attention between him and her. And then you had all the brothers and sisters coming back ranging from high school. So they are all coming back and they are all coming from different homes? So they have all received different an upbringing over the years. So this girl came to us and she was in grade 6. She was, we were trying to put her on a different program but somehow it just wasn't working. Any program we tried it just wasn't working out. She was not putting in any effort at all. We would try a lot of different things here, modifications of the spelling, math going into the classroom to help her, having her come out for withdrawal. Giving her lots of positive strokes, warm fuzzies and all that. It would last for short periods of time. The effects would just last they were very minimal but they would just last for short periods of time. The kid would go
home and it would all be undone. The mother would go off, and she would favour the little boy and this girl wasn't getting the attention so there wasn't much in the work, in the academic work for her. She wasn't providing anything. It wasn't of any value to her and so no matter what we did it wasn't working. She did not internalise the value of learning, the value of any work as a personal thing that she wanted to accomplish because she was too distraught over what was going on at home. She was kind of wild. It didn't matter, writing was atrocious, she would never remember books, her homework would never be done, so of course we modified expectations. You don't have to do homework, you could just do it in school. No matter how minimum we would make the requirement she still would not rise to those expectations because there was an awful lot going on at home. She would be away a lot so I consider that one a failure.

Analysis of Regina's beliefs about students was facilitated by her natural inclination to characterise beliefs through the narration of a specific incidents with individual students. When asked,

SB. What about a child that you would consider successful who is having a learning problem, LD or a slow learner?

R You mean a developmentally delayed child?

SB. No I mean LD. Say somebody in the regular stream comes out for resource help but you think is really coming along nicely, making good progress. To what would you attribute that success?

R There is this other child who is having this learning problem. He is not visually impaired of handicapped or anything like that and he has got all his mentality about him. He is sharp as a nickel. At home the parents are very lackadaisical. They can come and go as they please. They can watch movies till one in the morning. There is not a kind of discipline, well, it is school night and you have to do this and this. If the child sneezes, the child goes to the doctor. I think that most of the time it is because he would rather not come to school. He will just use an excuse and mom will leave him at home. So we had a talk with mom and work together and let him and her know that it is very
important for him to come to school and what sort of message we are giving this child. He was often leaving his books at home....

Regina goes on to describe in detail the setting up of a communication booklet, academic interventions, and the importance of a changed attitude on the part of a student.

Information presented in this manner brought alive the characteristics which were being explored and enhanced my understanding of the context in which beliefs were couched.

Reflections - Filter 3: Regina's Beliefs about Students' Success and Failure (interview): An Interpretation

As Regina and I talked about students it became evident that the self-esteem of the student was of great importance to her. Regina saw self-esteem as being enhanced by ensuring that the student was presented with academic tasks that were at an appropriate level or presented in an appropriate way. Along with this presentation of an appropriate type of work, Regina also felt that the student bore some responsibility for ensuring the work was done correctly and to the best of the student's ability. She saw this assignment of responsibility to the student as a device to build self-esteem and confidence.

Regina focused on the building of peer relationships as an important for a student's success. The provision of opportunity for students to be picked for a team, get a call at home from a classmate, and receive praise from teachers were seen, by Regina, as ways to improve a student's self concept.

Regina expressed a belief that as teachers we had a responsibility to adapt the curriculum that we were presenting in a way that suited the learning needs of students. She saw failure as being a failure on the part of the teacher to present a suitable task.
This adaptation of teacher behaviour as opposed to remediation of student performance is reflective of Jordan's (1994) interventionist framework in which student needs are addressed through collaborative planning and program modification.

When talking about why children fail, the conversation turned to the home life of students. Inconsistent rules, lack of follow through by parents, and emotional upheaval at home was seen as having a negative impact on learning. Interestingly, this emphasis on failure being external to the school is not unusual. Studies in attribution of students' success or failure have shown, generally, that teachers tend to attribute failure of students externally to themselves, the teachers (Christenson et al., 1983; Superaxo, Perrez and Kramis, 1987). This same research notes that teachers also tended to attribute this same failure internally to the child. This line of thinking was not evident in Regina's description of her beliefs.

**Filter 4: Regina's Beliefs about Students (team meetings)**

The DPT meetings that Regina was involved in were characterised by equal communication among members. A warning that Regina had given me early on in the process, "I don't say much", rang true. She reiterated this statement in her initial taped DPT by stating:

R. I usually don't say much because this is a team and the team is the one that brings all the expertise to the team so that we can brainstorm and problem solve.

Regina's comments were re-examined many times in terms of context. As they were often short, it was very important to note the conversation surrounding them.
Although dominating the conversation with outright statements regarding her beliefs would have made my analysis easier, it would have diminished the process of team problem solving that I hold in high regard and denied me the opportunity to see Regina co-ordinate it with such professionalism and finesse.

Despite the brevity of her statements, many trends were evident in Regina’s conversations. Self-esteem of children was by far at the forefront of the conversations during the DPTs. The categories that emerged when looking at Regina’s interactions through this filter were, self-esteem, programming, monitoring, testing and home life.

**Self-esteem.** Initially, these statements were categorised under two headings, self-esteem and peers. On closer examination, the two were amalgamated as the comments made about peers were mainly associated with the students feeling good about themselves.

Some of the students discussed were brought to team specifically because of self esteem or peer difficulties.

R  " Mostly a review. (student) is going to be reviewed today. He is in grade 3. He is (teacher)’s student and she wrote up a referral on him. Change in behaviour, (student) is having great difficulty co-operating with his peers when seated in a small group. He is constantly bickering and arguing. He makes rude comments and then denies what he has done. When group tasks are assigned (student) refuses to take on his task. Won't share material, laughs and acts giddy, wastes time. Many tasks are left incomplete even when assigned on an individual basis. His peers are frustrated with him. He often bursts into tears or becomes giddy and silly. Ways that (teacher) has tried to solve the problem. His group tried various solutions. Time out, head down but (student) refused to admit that he had done anything and would not adhere to the time limits. They let him choose tasks that he would then not fulfil his role or demand a
change after all the tasks had been chosen. The group was completely disrupted. She changed the group, the same problem. Had him complete tasks away from the group but he made constant demands for attention. Finally had to remove him from all the groups. So he worked alone?"

Others were discussed in terms of academic difficulties. Comments regarding self-esteem, while more numerous in those situations where that specific difficulty was being discussed, did occur in other discussions as well.

Relationships with peers became evident as one factor that affected the success of a student. The team itself shared this sentiment, making comments that reflected the importance of friendship sometimes even above academic concerns.

R "Sounds like he needs a few friends"

Later, in a discussion of a child who had no friends, a teacher suggested:

R You know I don't want to give up any more of my intermediate students for peer tutoring but it sounds like he is the perfect candidate. He sounds like he needs someone.

Regina's agreement with these sentiments was reflected through probing of the student's difficulties.

R He doesn't initiate going into the group and saying...

PT He just sits in his chair and when I say all right work in a group until I put him into a group. Or I say go ask him to work in the group.

SP1. But he is fine once he is in the group?

R And when he goes skating and that how does he...?

PT He goes. He doesn't want any attention brought to, but he, I don't see him skating with any group or anyone ever.

R He doesn't have a best friend or anyone that he chums around with at recess time?
PT Not a friend. He doesn't go out at night. His parents say he is just stuck in front of the computer.

SP1. Are his parents worried about him?

PT Yes they are very worried about that too. Science, you saw his board and there were three papers stuck on it because he just lost track of what he was doing.

SP1. Is he in grade 7?

PT Uhhm

R OK, he doesn't have a boy friend, how about girls. Do any of them ...

PT No

R No one?

This probing was followed by constructive suggestions concerning how to help the students feel better about themselves through developing relationships with peers.

R Is there any way that you can plant a couple of ideas in the class to say that next time you are on a team pick (student)

R Can you start a telephone buddy system where they might phone him up and ask him what is for homework and that way, I don't know if anybody would call him at home and of course he would be happy not to be calling anyone either but you know like what we do for circle of friends?

A second factor that emerged in the area of self-esteem was that of the impact of academic success. While discussing another student, Regina asked:

R One more question, during the year while you were teaching her was she making gains, was she improving?

R What are his best marks like, what subjects does he really shine in, computers yeah, math....

R Does he get high on marks, like wow I got that?
Do you have someone going out to Mr (teacher) room to do math because, if not, I was going to suggest...

The suggestion was that the boy helps another student with his academics in order to build self-esteem.

Along with academic success the value of taking responsibility for one's own learning was noted. Regina saw this factor as very important to being a successful student. Through questioning, information regarding the student's work habits was ascertained.

Does he do his homework and is he consistent, gets it done, hands in the work?

The history test that you give out did he finish it?

Would he sabotage the session?

Suggestions for raising the esteem of the student in the eyes of the others and taking on responsibility were made.

Has he ever been picked for student of the month or anything like that?

So in the meantime can you think of anything else that (teacher) can do in terms of getting (student)? Does he like to run errands, but you said he likes to, anything you ask him he will do so it's not that, ah.

The importance of the student taking responsibility for his success was characterised by the following statement.

He is obviously working to the best of his ability. If he is making progress then he is, well even though he is not at
his level, wherever he was he has come up and he is working towards that.

At times, taking on additional responsibility or receiving additional responsibility for tasks was not the solution for a particular student.

R He resents and bristles at getting any help. If you were to invite him to redo his work or even try and point him in the direction of how it should be he won't say anything but you can see that the pencil starts getting tighter and the lines heavier and he is looking above his glasses and he is wondering why. And he is getting very rigid.....

In summary, Regina's suggestions and statements focused on making students feel better about themselves. Attempts to accomplish this goal were made through building peer relationships, encouragement to take responsibility, and providing situations for academic success.

**Programming.** Regina's suggestions regarding the academic needs of students were important in the analysis of her beliefs about children. A number of statements suggested the student receive brief periods of individual attention in a specific area on a regular basis for a period of time.

R Well, (helper), she was in there trying to do (another student) keyboarding skills she didn't have to do that any more so during her time table while she is doing that she could be working with (student).

R I can try to come in a couple of days a week in the afternoon. Would that help? On Thursday you are having someone in so if I could find some time, 20 minutes in the afternoon for math. Because in the morning she is receiving another person.
Other suggestions reflected attempts to change the nature of the service delivery in a class to better suit their needs.

R Does it look like there might be a discrepancy in your class that you might want to split up the class into two groups. The ones that can go on and then the ones that really need the extra drill in the operations sort of....

**Monitoring.** Monitoring students' success and difficulties provided valuable information on which to base the implementation and or continuation of interventions. This monitoring was most evident in the introduction of student cases during DPT. As part of the process, the teacher is expected to fill out information on what the difficulties are what has been tried and finally whether this has been successful.

R OK we will start. In grade two from (teacher) class. (student) is very attentive in class, is having difficulty with reading. He has been absent a lot this year and late. He could profit from individual help with word attack skills. How have you tried to solve the problem? Well I have sent home two notes and attendance has improved and I have given him as much individual attention as I can. His strength? He listens well and is very obedient and hard working. Oral language is good. His weakness? Perhaps hearing, perhaps being the oldest of four very young children. He has not had much exposure to print. OK, discussion.

PT Well I am still worried about him. Even though his attendance has improved I just had him up to the board right now and he really....

SP Has he been tested before?

PT I don’t think so.

R Has his hearing been tested? Perhaps that is something we can recommend to the parents.

Later in the same meeting the introduction of another student.
OK then should we go with that then? OK I am going to go on to (student). She is also in grade 2, the same class. (student) is having a lot of difficulty reading and following simple directions. She needs a lot of individual attention in all language areas to avoid falling even further behind grade level. How have you tried to solve the problem?

She sits at the front, I give her extra direction and individual attention whenever I can. Mom is aware of her problem and is very helpful and supportive but is worried that she can't keep up.

(Reading from form completed by teacher) Her strengths? While her attention span is very short, she tries very hard and completes tasks as well as she is able. An eager but sensitive child. Her weaknesses? Spelling, reading and writing. Her work is seldom completed. She needs improvement in the formation of numbers, basic addition and subtraction. This was written in December and at that time I was asked to hold off on this because she had started to improve. I think that after November reports that she really started to improve.

And she has but she is still not really grade three material.

And she has but now (teacher) thought that we better bring her up to DPT because for a while there, she was improving and she didn't think it was necessary to bring her up but she would like us to talk about her. Maybe you could give us a little bit more on (student)

Statements that reflected the importance of monitoring to Regina were evident throughout.

One more question, during the year while you were teaching, did she make gains, was she improving?

Would you have caught it do you suppose?

OK, basically what you are saying is that this child is having, is not progressing as rapidly as the other ones in your class in terms of grade two. He is not working at the grade 2 level so be aware next year. You are going to
continue what you are doing and first thing in Sept. that is a child we are going to inform the teacher of. Look at him, monitor him if he falls anywhere along the way...

In another case, questions were used to clarify the difficulty with a focus on monitoring by the teacher over time with regard to the developmental nature of the difficulty.

R   OK so she is reversing numbers and letters.

PT Yes I think that it bothers her so much that she is very shy and she doesn't want to give answers. I know she likes to give answers but she doesn't want to because you know...

SP1. I helped her out a little last year when she was in Sue's class and I don't recall the reversals last year. Have they just started now?

PT We had a thing from the doctor and I think that he was stepping beyond his bounds there but since we I've seen that note. I've been looking for it.

R   And you have seen the different reversals?

PT Yes

R   Does she reverses now that she is doing cursive writing as opposed to printing? Because in grade 3 they print but in grade 4 they are writing.

PT I give them the option right now.

R   OK so she is still reversing though she is printing.

Testing. During the meetings, the issue of testing arose several times. The emphasis on the testing of students reflected a desire to investigate the nature of their difficulties. At times, the request for testing came from a source other than Regina, a teacher or parent. In each case Regina was supportive.

PT Anyway I thought that if we tested him first and if there is a problem, if there isn't a problem with attention ...
R   Yes it will also come out in the testing when they...

PT  Who his friends are?

R   The personality sure.

SP1. What does he do at night, what are his other interests?

SP2. I think it is a good idea to test him.

PT  Well his parents want him tested anyway and I do too. I don't know. He is just an average person with, I would say above average abilities, to tell you the truth, and such a pleasant person that you could almost say well, lets, you could almost not see a problem there.

R   Uhhm

In another situation, the suggestion for testing came from Regina.

SP1. Do you think that she would cope better in another program? Like is she frustrated?

PT  No I don't think that she is frustrated, it is just oh well yeah. I don't think it bothers her.

SP2. Nothing seems to bother her.

PT  It doesn't bother her. I think just a little bit of extra help.

R   OK. Why don't we, before we change all the programs around, why don't we just have her tested by student services? They will make recommendations and we can implement those recommendations. And number two, what I think would be a good idea is to ah switch (helper) over to give her some help. So the recommendation was that an assessment be sent into student services and that (helper) work with her in the times she used to work with John. Any questions about that. No?

PT  OK

R   I am not going to set up a review for her because when special services does the testing she will bring back her results and then at that time we will talk about her then.
PT  Great.

R  Would you please let the parents know that we are going to be having her tested? Call them first and then I will send home the papers that need to be signed, OK, but let them know ahead of time that these papers are coming so that it doesn't catch them by surprise.

**Home life.** Statements concerning the home generally centred on keeping the parents informed of the school's plans,

R  Would you please let the parents know that we are going to be having her tested. Call them first and then I will send home the papers that need to be signed, OK, but let them know ahead of time that these papers are coming so that it doesn't catch them by surprise.

R  He has missed so much, now have you mentioned this to mom and that and....

R  Inform mom and dad. There is going to be a move towards a peer who is more organised and structured in a couple of weeks. Ah, give her specific instructions and I'll go in there in the afternoons a couple of times a week for math...

R  OK next Monday. Could you explain to mom what we have decided?

...gathering information regarding the parents' wishes that had been communicated to teachers,

R  This is (student)'s mom. She came and she was talking to you because she felt concerned about him and the family situation. Is that it?

R  Her marks went down and mom said no she would rather she stayed in so (student) could do that. What do you think?
and general information about the family that may have had an impact on the student's education.

R  He is with his mom now?

R  Father and mother were not living together at the time, they were separated long ago and mother was only an occasional visitor in his life and she would pop in maybe once a month or so and the fact that she died so closely on the heels of the father dying. I guess maybe after the father died he was going to try and become closer to mom or at least he knew he had one other parent that...

R  The only girl in the family, about two and a half or three

R  OK when did this nanny come on board? Is this just recently or, the reason I am asking is that are we sort of hoping that now that she is on board that they will be there on time.

To review, the majority of statements during DPTs in this section reflected statements that were associated with self-esteem. A minority of statements concerned the impact of teacher intervention in terms of programming. The importance of monitoring student performance and program was seen as important to the success of a student. Also discussed was the role of testing students' abilities and the finally category of home life.

Reflections - Filter 4: Regina's Beliefs about Students as seen during Team Meetings: An Interpretation

Discerning Regina's beliefs about students within the setting of a team meeting was difficult. Much of the interaction, especially in the area of making suggestions, sharing ideas and information, came from the team as a whole. While Regina was an important participant, the statements that she made tended to focus on co-ordinating type activities. What did come across was Regina's concern over the self-esteem of students.
These comments were present when the problem was social in nature but also when the difficulties were academic. I was aware of a real concern for the happiness of the students. The second issue was the power of programming. To Regina, success was the best motivator. None of us would flourish under impossible demands. She believed that the student's inspiration to strive and progress came from realistic goals that built confidence and challenged them. My reading of the team meeting notes and my presence at those meetings left me with a very strong sense of a group that focused on changes to the school environment rather than trying to 'fix' the student. This is not to say that the suggestions for direct intervention to improve a student's academic performance or social skills were not discussed. Certainly programming suggestions and individual help with skill building were discussed and plans were made for their implementation. There was impetus for the students to show some commitment to the learning process as well as to improve their skills.

The issue of testing of students became an interesting one. If the focus was on change of the learning environment then why a reliance on measures of ability? In most cases the request for testing did not come from Regina. The request sometimes came from parents or other teachers. There was no observable resistance to the suggestion of testing. In my experience testing becomes a necessary hoop in many situations. The demand for testing from the medical community, counselling services, parents and fellow teachers can be very strong. We also work in a system that requires formal assessment for identification and thus special education teachers are all to familiar with the realities of 'let's get them assessed'. 
The final area dealt with the home life of the student. This category seldom related directly to the student’s success or failure. There were discussions about the lack of parental commitment to support the school but most statements focused on informing parents of school decisions. What did this tell us about Regina’s view of the impact of home on students? Not a lot! It was apparent that it was a priority for Regina to keep the lines of communication open. If we go by what we see in the transcripts, there was a very one-sided communication; a communication based on informing rather than interacting. Sticking with the analysis of the interactions themselves, to me what was more interesting was what was not said. Having been present at hundreds of team meetings, I understand that there can be a tendency to assign blame. The assigning of responsibility for a student’s failure resting mainly on the shoulders of the home environment is often a topic of discussion. This assignment of blame can lead to a feeling of helplessness on the part of the team. By contrast, in Regina’s meetings the discussions were dynamic and action oriented. The focus was positive and one came away with the sense that the team could make a difference.

Filters 3 & 4: Regina’s Beliefs about Students (interview) and Regina’s Beliefs about Students (team meetings): A Reflection on some Parallels

Regina often stressed the importance of a student feeling good about him or herself. This concern certainly manifested itself during the interactions that took place in the DPT meetings. In personal discussions regarding self-esteem, Regina linked self-esteem to peer support, programming consistency and support, and a positive attitude on the part of the teachers toward the student. As a parallel, the discussions that related to
self esteem during the DPT meetings also centred on factors that could contribute to self esteem: the importance of peers, academic success, the role of praise and verbal support.

Another parallel that emerged was the focus on motivation and commitment on the part of the student. In both situations, the importance of this factor to the success of the student was evident. Regina, in her discussion of beliefs, noted that the program the child was assigned had a lot of power to help self esteem and, more importantly, create an environment characterised by success. The appropriateness of assigned tasks to suit the learning needs of the student was seen as very important. In the DPT meetings, suggestions, direct statements and support of ideas presented by the group reflected an adherence to this belief. The necessity of intervention, monitoring and using a variety of methods was reinforced and accommodated.

In Regina's discussion about the learning success of a child, Regina played down the importance of ability, stating that motivation was more important. With this in mind, it is important to note that during the DPT discussions, the possibility and or necessity of testing to establish ability was raised. Given the stated beliefs this may have been viewed as a contradiction. It was possible that the establishment of a baseline measure on learning was seen as a necessary tool for the implementation of appropriate programming, though this could not be stated definitively.

A final aspect of Regina's belief system that arose was the involvement of home life in the success or failure of a student. Certainly in our discussions, the idea that home life was a factor in a student's failure was stated. Interestingly enough, in the DPT meetings, this type of attribution to the home life of the student was not present. The focus on home life only manifested itself in terms of providing information that may have
been pertinent to the situation being discussed, for example, the number of siblings in the family. The focus of the meetings was centred on what could be accomplished within the walls of the building itself, with home support where possible.

**Regina: The Facilitator: an overview**

We now come to the question of "Who is Regina"? Taking Goffman's view of our roles as actors I characterised Regina as the FACILITATOR. Regina co-ordinates personnel, time and program. She disseminated information and provided resources. She kept people informed and updated. She stayed within the regular curriculum, withdrew students infrequently. She often couched her suggestions in questions or additions to existing discussions.

Regina's facilitative nature carried over to students by her propensity to provide opportunity for self-esteem building rather than direct social skill instruction. Academically she saws the success of the student as dependent on the provision of opportunity for success. There was a strong sense that the student should be motivated and show some commitment to the learning.

Regina presented as efficient, dependable and consistent. She saw her job as "helping teachers help themselves". In doing this, Regina purposely took a back seat. Jordan (1994) portrayed the essence of consultation as being the giving away of expertise to allow colleagues to learn and thus utilise new techniques. By assuming this background role, Regina relied on the members present to share expertise. The one
difficulty with being facilitative is the necessity of a pool of expertise and resources to facilitate. Given a talented group of performers, one could facilitate a concert but only if the performers can sing. Fortunately for Regina, in this setting all the performers could sing.

Diane

Inviting Participation

This school, at the time of entry, was being housed in another school within the school board. This led to two separate staffs and areas within the same building; a temporary measure while waiting for a new school to be built. My initial visit began in the principal’s office, which from my observation also served as a supply closet, a definite indication of the temporary nature of the arrangement. Following a description of the proposed study, during which he took detailed notes, he assured me that there would be no difficulty proceeding but, of course, that the final decision remained with the teacher. At this point, the principal proceeded to give me a brief tour of the school, which consisted of three floors. Contained on the top floor was a large room that had been partitioned off and which now housed a majority of St. B.s students. The younger students were located on the lower floor and the special education room was on the main floor.

Entering Diane's room, I noticed that, while being small, it was well organised and contained a variety of resource materials. In his introduction, the principal informed me that Diane had just become a grandmother and I congratulated her. I told her that I
was expecting and our relationship immediately began to develop around the common theme of children. She began to discuss the impact that having children had had on her development as a teacher and that the experience had taught her the importance of children feeling good about themselves in order to learn. This was a theme that would arise many times throughout our relationship. She expressed genuine interest in the study and I assured her that I would contact her shortly.

Diane, from the start of our relationship, made every effort to include me in the school culture. It was in this school that I became a part of a social skills group set up by Diane. The students in this group would discuss reactions to different types of situations and the difficulties of successes they were experiencing. At times, when the teacher was busy, I would get the group going while waiting for her arrival. The students came to expect my presence and no question was asked of them that were not also asked of me. In this school I also did some volunteering in classrooms which was beneficial in breaking down barriers that exist in this social setting. Interestingly, while these experiences gave me more information and insights into the workings of the school culture, it also allowed Diane to see me through different eyes. Her perception of me as researcher and soon to be mom was expanded to include teacher, another common ground on which to establish open dialogue.

As for my personal relationship with Diane, from my perspective we became quite close for a brief period. Her open and honest analysis of her teaching and her willingness to share vignettes of both her personal and professional experiences were a reflection of her kind nature and her self-deprecating style. During the term, she experienced the loss of a loved one and, in the midst of dealing with this, called me to see
if I wanted to come to her home to continue the interviewing. I declined but was grateful and somewhat surprised at the level of consideration she had shown for my interests. The overall impression that seemed to emanate from Diane was friendliness. I observed this in her interactions with students and teachers.

**Teaching History**

Diane began teaching in 1962 and continued until 1968 when she choose to leave work to raise a family. She re-entered teaching in 1979 and, at the time of this investigation, was employed as a special education teacher. The beginning years of her career were spent as a regular classroom teacher with grades ranging from 2 to 6. For Diane, entering the field of special education was a conscious choice.

D "I thought I could do a job that was needed, could offer children a sense of self worth. I could also help in their academics."

Beginning her training in a two-year teacher training course following the completion of grade 12, she continued her education through university and Ministry of Education courses as well as through professional development including workshops, conferences and professional literature.

**The Protector**

This portrait of Diane was also broken into four filters. The first filter examined Diane's beliefs about her consultative role. Secondly, the tape-recorded team meetings were explored in relation to Diane's consultative role within the context of in-school team meetings. The third filter re-examined the interview data, focusing on Diane's beliefs about
children. Finally, through filter four, interactions in the in-school team meetings were re-examined focusing on Diane's beliefs about students.

**Filter 1: Diane's Consultative Role (interview)**

Diane perceived her role as encompassing various parts. She stated that she was a 'sounding board' for teachers and principals; that she provided support and encouragement. She also saw herself, at times, as a mediator between teachers and parents. For example, Diane describes her role in a parent interview.

\[ \text{D I also sit in with teachers on interviews when they just need, not so much an extra body, but just somebody to support them in their beliefs and to back them up or to give them the word that they maybe have in their mind or have forgotten to say.} \]

She saw herself as a facilitator for students to discuss and develop behavioural strategies,

\[ \text{D I hold a social group for different grade levels so I am a facilitator for the kids to discuss and develop different acceptable theories of behaviour. I'm there when kids run into problems either of a physical nature or through a sensitive emotional nature. I'm there to be a support to them and help them deal with the problem as it arises, to help them to deal with other kids.} \]

and as an assessor of learning needs.

\[ \text{D I basically have to assess every child, where they are at, whose name comes to me and then determine from that, with the help of the team, determine what I have, what facilities I have, or materials I have or whether I am just going to use the classroom materials and work backwards a bit. Go back to the kind of start where we can pick up these kids.} \]

Finally, she saw staff development and provision of information and materials as part of her role.
Right now I've got a call in to our gifted consultant and what we are looking for in that program, for two children in grade four, who could easily finish that program in a very brief time. We need something to go beyond that.

Later, in a discussion of staff development:

I was just setting up about the Crisis Intervention Team and I would like to see us get together and get the ideas down for this as to how we are going to deal with certain situations, so, that sort of thing and then we will present it to the teachers.

Diane characterised her consultative role through the following statement.

I am a facilitator. My role is to listen to the needs of people, listen to suggestions that other people have, compile them, put them together, make some of my own but basically scrounge out information and materials to implement the suggestions that have been made.

Diane saw part of her consultative role as finding a middle ground between what may to her be a desirable strategy and what in reality could be implemented. She stated that when talking to a teacher you should not be the only provider of suggestions and ideas.

You can't say "this is how it is going to be" and that is the end of it.

And later:

And some of the ideas that are suggested in DPT won't work with a particular teacher but they will work with the person that suggested them so, therefore, without saying "Oh that one won't do" that's what I have to do is say, "oh yeah that is an excellent idea" and then put it to the one that's going to have to do it. "Do you feel you could or would you be willing to try this?" and they are usually very honest and say, "No, I probably won't". So that everybody has to look at a different idea or a different suggestion to go with.
Diane saw part of her consultative role as being persistent, especially when dealing with what she considered resistance on the part of teachers.

D  OK, I would encourage and persist for a period of time. If I am still not getting anywhere then I will implement it myself in the time I have and they are usually quite willing to let me do that in the classroom. I have one teacher in particular who is very, was inconsistent. I would get promises but I wouldn't get results so therefore I have taken over. That, which is not what I should be doing but under the circumstances and knowing the teacher whom I have dealt with in other places, this is the best method at this particular time. Now that doesn't mean that I don't go back and try it again with a new idea that I picked up at a conference or something in discussions with another group of special education teachers. I'll go in and try new ideas and I figure that one of these days something is going to stick. I always make it a point to be pleasant and I always make it a point to not express my displeasure because ultimately the child is theirs and what they do is their responsibility.

Breaking into a consultative role presented a challenge for Diane.

D  It was awkward at first.... I had a lot of peddling to do and what I did was, I didn't consult with people in the beginning. I got the kids that were on the list that I was supposed to work with and what I did simply was to build confidence. If a teacher asked me for something specific I would make a point to be available or to provide it, or to find out where to get it.... My job was there to help them in their role and after it became more easy...."

Diane saw the key components to access in this type of role were, at first, the dispelling of the 'expert myth' and, secondly, persistent informal contact. With regard to being viewed as an 'expert', Diane stated,

D  In reality, it is just that my particular area has to do with it (special education).
D I try not to let it be like that. In some schools where I have been present, the special education teacher is looked at for the answers. I try to make it more like this is our school and we are a team.

Part of dispelling the expert myth seemed to be accessibility to teachers on a daily, basis. Diane's informal type of consultation often occurred before school, at recesses, lunch, "a few minutes here and there". Using teacher planning time or quiet times in the classroom to approach teachers regarding the needs of their students and giving updates on information also served as a method of keeping communication open.

D I'll just slip in their room when they have got a few minutes free or after recess, just before anything gets going, and check out the situation.

To sum up, Diane described herself as a support to students and parents. She saw her role as facilitative in terms of providing materials and helping to implement suggestions. She also saw part of her responsibility as assessing students, listening to students and teachers and acting on their needs.

Persistence and cheerfulness were noted as strategies for breaking down resistance. Finally, Diane did not believe that she should be perceived as an expert, rather as a team member who possessed some particular knowledge in an area that others may not.

**Reflections - Filter 1: Diane's Consultative Role (interview): An Interpretation**

*Meeting Diane gave you a warm feeling. She was direct and open and possessed an honest concern about others that is not usually seen. I immediately felt comfortable in her presence and was glad to watch her interact with students. The students, who might be*
considered social misfits in the school, were 'safe' in her room. It is these aspects of her personality that was reflected in her consultative style.

Diane's role as a team player is a precarious one. When we saw her discuss being present at teacher interviews she described herself as there to "support them (the teachers) in their beliefs. When she went on to talk about working with students, she saw herself as being "a support to them". The term advocacy would be an appropriate description of these types of actions. Advocacy, while noted as a form of consultation, is controversial as it implies supporting one side over another. This view was countered (Conoley and Conoley, 1982) by the argument that all consultation is in one form or another advocacy for a client to reach a desired goal.

Diane's concern to safeguard those around her was seen as an important function of her role. When I look at her interaction with peers, it was interesting to note her reference to "we have to look at students as a team" followed by statements that reflected what "I can do for them". When Diane discussed the assessment of student needs, she states that this is done with the help of the team but then went on to describe the use of her materials and her individual work with those students.

Diane described her consultative role as a facilitator. Her definition of the term can only be ascertained from her description of her actions. Diane noted that important cornerstones to being facilitative were to listen to others and respect their beliefs and ideas. She stated that she listened to suggestions, added her own but then seemed to take all the responsibility for carrying out those suggestions. Her tendency to take responsibility on herself was highlighted in her discussions of dealing with resistance. Here we saw persistence and encouragement followed by disagreements by a team member and
implementation of her ideas anyway. She noted that a teacher who was resistant to the idea would often be quite willing to let her work with the student on the strategies outside the regular classroom. All the while Diane was striving to maintain a pleasant supportive relationship with the staff members. Goffman (1959) in describing his perceptions of team interactions noted that "A performer often engenders in his audience the belief that he is related to them in a more ideal way than is always the case" (pg. 48). The surface performance of agreement and teamwork is what seemed to exist in Diane’s description of her consultative role.

Diane showed an awareness that teamwork needed improvement in her setting. She described trying to break out of the mode of service provider, "trying to make us more like a team". She saw informal contact, being personally supportive and cheerfulness as the tools she needed to accomplish her goal. She noted the value of being persistent, dropping in on people, presenting variations on ideas that may be useful and being resourceful in the gathering of materials and resources. Worthy of note was her ability to be patient and to compromise, stemming from her respect for fellow teachers.

I characterised Diane as a protector. Her desire to take care of people and situations seemed, at times, to override what would considered the actions necessary to build a team. Bauwens et al. (1989) described the following goals for successful consultation: multidisciplinary planning support for the regular classroom teacher, improved quality of education for all children, process oriented emphasis on team work, and regular teachers taking part of the responsibility for program implementation.
Filter 2: Diane's Consultative Role (team meeting)

The examination of statements presented at DPT meetings, in relation to Diane's consultative role, resulted in the following categories: **informing**, **organising**, **suggesting**, questioning and a combined category of agreement and support.

**Informing.** A majority of the statements that Diane made were to provide information. These statements centred on the following types of subjects: student **performance** and program, ability information, and family and medical concerns.

Student performance and program made up a majority of the type of information statements that were put forth by Diane. These focused on program delivery; what kind of program she would be working on with the student.

M. What about the oral reading or her silent reading.

PT Her word attack is really really weak. She really isn't as of yet getting the words from context. You know. She is not filling a word because it makes sense. So she is not really using a lot of strategies. And she is gleaning some information out of it but she is missing out on things. Say even with the very low things that are in the things that she is reading she is missing about 50 percent of the comprehension. But 50 percent is better than....

D See, she is another one that, even last year, she was a non-reader. And she is just begun basically to read so there is a lot of the skills that other children were taught and they absorbed that she just wasn't ready for and therefore she is not getting them in a regular class like if she were in an early primary grade, she would be getting them there. You know I really think both she and (student) would benefit strongly from that focus reading program. I know you would much rather see them do the individual reading but these particular kids, since they are just at the beginning of their reading. Because focus is so, ah, structured. Number one, they never fail. It is a no fail type of program. Secondly, there is all the basic things that they need and
they are built right into the program. Our problem of course is that we don't have a program and ...

D. When he is down here, I take all the poems that you have done and we do it on the board or on chart paper. We do it on the paper that we had there. We do it as a group, we do it two boys together, individually, then we do picking up the words from it and I always ask him last and he has heard it about 5 times when it is his turn so, when he starts to do it he is guaranteed practical success. He does remember it then but he doesn't have it the next day and he doesn't recognise certain words. Like the other boys if I have a word on the board and I always have to poem up there too and I will say the part that comes before and then they know what the word is if they had trouble recognising it. He can't do that. This morning yesterday's words were reviewed, said and children, and he told me that said began with s today which threw me right off. But he hadn't been able to do it. It takes him a long time to build confidence to even to speak to another adult.

Others looked at what had previously been tried with a student.

D. And last year what I worked with him on was just that. We took all the areas and wrote down what needed to be done in all the areas and then that was what we were going to direct ourselves towards to see the improvement. And he gradually, seeing him about three or four times a week I was seeing him, we had narrowed it down to pretty well once a week. And we covered a lot of those areas. And that is what I am doing this year with him. Just continuing on that list. In math, I haven't done as much math with him this year because, since we went through the skills, he didn't seem to be doing too too badly. It was multiplication facts again. And that is something that will benefit (student) also so we can work on that.

The statements dealing with program were almost exclusively related to a withdrawal setting.
Information on students' ability made up a large part of the category information.

Ability statements focused on the child's academic ability as observed through Diane's work with that student or through information provided by team members.

D When I was working with him in comprehension things, if we did a story, as far as comprehension goes, was with another new Canadian student and he was by far ahead of the other one as far as comprehension. He had a better vocabulary comprehension than the other student and his main thing seemed to be that he was missing certain words and phrases when he was putting it together in written form.

D The other problems I found with (student) was that she was really ploughing along with her listening skills and when I saw her on March 20, last Wednesday she had reverted back almost to I felt the beginning. I did five words with her and I stopped. I saw her yesterday on Monday the 25 and we did the same words again and we did another dozen and a half and she just flies through them. It was as if there was a short circuit in the brain last Wednesday and yesterday the connection was there. I know that you are seeing that too in different things in the classroom. So I went ahead with the Rosner listening skills with her and I am doing every single one with her. Because she was so, like I never know from one time to the next.

Diane spent a lot of time reporting on the results of testing that she had administered.

D In sentence memory, he was at grade 1 level, listening to a sentence and repeating it back. And when he had to listen to the vocabulary and listen to the word, he was at a grade 3 level.

PT1 Something is wrong

D In sentence memory he is at ...

PT1 There is no way he is at upper grade 3 level.

D In sentence memory he was at grade 1 level, listening to a sentence and repeating it back. And when he had to listen
to the vocabulary and listen to the word he was at a grade 3 level.

PT1  Now this reading comp. Was this a passage in front of him and he was to write the answer?

D    No, he had to choose the answer. The answer was already written.

PT1  Oh, he is good at that but that’s....

SP   That is reading comp.

PT1  Well....

SP   Written comp. is

D    Another thing...

SP   Another dimension..

PT1  What I am trying to get at is that kids, they can really bluff it when it is choosing an abc, they look for a key word and as far as the reading comprehension that I test them on, and I can tell what they are understanding by simply asking the questions

SP   Writing...

PT1  No, not ever writing. Just asking them to tell me about it because they do they can. Who was it that can do, there was one of them that was, had scored a very high grade level and when I focused in on him and really started asking, he didn’t have a clue. But the multiple choice was easy.

D    I am wondering sometimes too, though coming down here where there is no distractions allows them to focus a little bit better on it. I mean that is utopia, you can’t have that, but as far as listening vocabulary he was at the grade 3 level. Where he had to listen to a story and answer the questions he was at the upper grade 2 level, and what happened with his answers, I think he was the one, when he would give me an answer it was never wrong but it wasn’t quite accurate either, but he was in the right neighbourhood. He wasn’t out to lunch or anything. With (student 1) she would put names to people, she would create new names, new situations whereas he didn’t. For
his listening, the Rosner auditory skills he was at an upper grade 2 level. Which is where I thought (student), he is lower, but not that much. In spelling he was at a grade 2 level, between grade 2 and grade 3 but definitely grade 2 level. So he is not that far off, but I think that... You had him last year (teacher).

She provided information on the mechanics of organising and administrating testing.

D Well there is no help given at all, like I give him absolutely no help. In that sense it was accurate. As accurate as they can be with an informal thing. The passages could say they are at grade appropriate level. He had lower third grade in three out of five. At the upper third grade he had 4 out of 5, so he's right within the realm of where he should be but I think he is going, we mentioned this, we talked a bit about this yesterday, that he is going to be slower at thinking his facts through and putting them down. He is having difficulty organising his thoughts to get them down.

Finally, Diane related ability to the student’s behaviour in the learning environment.

D I'd be right across from (student 1) but the thing is like, even yesterday, when he was in here with (student 2), I was working with (student 2) and I was having him do the Brigance on the reading comprehension. He tuned into everything I was doing with (student 2). He could not separate it.

Family information and medical concerns are the final types of information provided by Diane. Family information is made up primarily of straight information regarding the family make up, e.g. number of siblings or sharing information that had been shared by a parent.

D And this is another pattern that stems from when she was little because mom has often said that they learned long ago to leave (student) alone.
Also included in information on the interaction between parents and children with regard to the child's learning needs.

D It is just a case of, I know this kid has those problems, I know what she is like and she has stated it to them and she has also stated it to me. I know what she is like, she says she is the way she is. It is often a case that we hear from other families as well.

Much of the family information centred around the family's co-ordination for medical intervention.

D Referring to (student), his Mom stopped by the other day about his sister and she's going to a paediatrician and for testing, they're doing all kinds of neurological testing, and the doctor said that (student) probably should be tested also because of the behaviours and because of just the actions that he goes through that the doctor's observed, and that she commented. This is (Doctor) commented on (sibling) being similar to (student) in flightiness and disorganisation, and the other areas.

Statements regarding information about issues like medication and medical assessments were also provided.

D It's a yellow duotang with all the stuff in it. She's been on Ritalin for the last year and a half, and they tried to decrease it at the end of last term. They were decreasing it and she was doing pretty well, staying on task, but the move to the new school plus the open area, plus new everything, Mom decided that she should probably go back to a full dose. She said this in November when we saw her, at the interview time, that she should go back to a full dosage of it and work from there. Her Mom is a nurse over at Mac, so... OK? So we continue?

Organising. The second category under Diane's consultative role is organisation. As with Regina, part of this organisational category is the introduction of students.
D We will switch to (student). I tested (student) in December and in spelling she was at a grade 2 level in her listening vocabulary. Where she had to listen she was at a grade 3 level. I went up to grade 4, grade 5 actually. In her listening comprehension, lower grade 3 level, she was still getting perfect. I didn't do an upper third. Her word recognition she was a grade two level, where she recognises the word. Her reading comprehension upper third grade, her sentence memory, ...

This part of the organisational nature of the role is also characterised by setting up follow up meetings

D Yes and (student) is in the other class for social behaviour. OK, is there any suggestions, any other ideas of things that we can do with (student). OK, so I will see him for a few weeks and see what happens. I will do the 6 weeks and I think at that time we said that we would talk to the parents again and see what is going on so...

and providing closure on a discussion of a student to allow for another student to be introduced.

D OK, we will continue and we will look at (student 1) again after I have spoken with (teacher) after she has seen him. I wanted to bring (student 2) name up because (student 2) is up for her IPRC review and I just wanted to fill everybody in on what (student 2) is doing. I am going to read what (teacher 2) wrote here and then (teacher 1) can add to it. In lang. arts, (student 2) is improving. Her word attack is also improving due to content and willingness to sound first few letters of word. Comprehension is better than word attack. She is taking pride in her reading now. This is a child who was a non reader last year and she is now reading, what level would you say (teacher 3)?

A second type of organisational statement made by Diane focused on the scheduling of the student's time. Co-ordinating Diane's time to meet and help remediate a difficulty was a common focus.

PT1 He is doing a lot more than he did when he first came and he wants to try and he wants to read and I say it is your turn
to go and read to the mom that is here he will pick up a
book and he will go down there. When he came, it was like
"No way, I am not going to", you know, so he wants to, he
wants to write sentences.

D I would like to keep him in the group. I see them 5 days a
week for a half-hour at a time and I would like to see him
continue in that group just so he hears and experiences
more things. Then we will talk to (teacher) and get her
input. Do you have any other suggestions?

PT1 No, he is probably not ready to read. You know if he
doesn't know the alphabet and he is having problems with
the chiming and all that other stuff that you are doing he is
probably just not ready and I don't think that any amount of
reinforcing those breakthrough words is going to do any
good. Especially if he hasn't learned them consistently, you
know which shows they are not learned. I would suspect
that it is a language problem and (teacher) should be able to
give you some ....

D OK, one of the main things we do is we always have a
sharing where they have to give sentences and it is very
very different although he is getting better. I will give
specific words that I want them to use in the sentences so
he is using it and trying, so, it is coming, very slowly.

Another aspect of the organisational category was the co-ordinating of materials.

D OK. Well, what I will do then is that I will borrow the
books, if you would like, and I can take the kids and I will
try to get them, it won't be in your language arts time but I
will fit them in every day and I will do that reading with
them both....

A small part of the discussions in the DPT meetings centred on co-ordinating with outside
agencies. Certainly, as noted earlier, some co-ordination did exist between the medical
needs of children and the school, though these were generally co-ordinated through a parent.

In direct communication with outside organisations, the provision of information regarding
a student was the focus.
D  Maybe we could find out if there is counselling still going on. We could phone the counsellor if it wasn't, get a form 14 so that mom could get a release of information. At least we would get some idea and explain to them what is happening. We will have a better handle on this.

**Suggesting.** The third category to be discussed is suggestions. Compared with the number of statements in the preceding two categories, this category represented a small percentage of statements made by Diane. Those suggestions that were made focused mainly on programming. Interestingly, suggestions for programming are in a withdrawal setting.

D  That we order our text books from. But this was the main problem but it may be on now because there was talk of them including it because so many people were finding it for kids like this who can't go in an individual... Who need that basic structure but who also need grade appropriate, age appropriate materials. The stories are very short. They are to the point but they are also current. Stuff like I have, this stuff, the Merril reading program. Well, it was good for a while but they lost interest in it because it was so boring.....

PT  Yeah it is boring

D  Where this other stuff, while it is not exactly pattern, the words are repeated through the grades and the whole patterning process is the exactly the same all the way through. So if they are experiencing it, they are also experiencing success. I did it with a group of 5,6,7,and 8's and in the testing, you do the monthly test, the end of the unit test and because it is built in, it is fail proof. They just don't fail. So the kids start to feel good, the kids, hey, they can read and it builds the other part of their need, their confidence. So what do you think. Do you want me to try that?

PT  Oh sure.

D  Right now I don't feel that they are getting the structure that they need. For those particular kids.

...
D I am working with the other grade six boys and we are doing some writing skills, writing and how... What we could do maybe is, he could join that group and we could continue to use that because it is a lot of handwriting, the formation, a lot of ideas, discussion oral then the written areas. So it would help. Any other ideas?

... 

D I would like to keep him in the group. I see them five days a week for a half an hour at a time and I would like to see him continue in that group just so he hears and experiences more things.

A minority of the suggestions made referred to the child being maintained in the regular classroom with modifications.

D It would be good for (student). He is in grade 5 but if you had a group of kids that were working at it then he wouldn't feel as though he were standing out.

Another area in the category of suggestions dealt with involving the parent in terms of offering suggestions,

D You know, what we could recommend to the parents is maybe to get tapes with the books from the library and that way she is seeing it and hearing it. Do you want to call? Have you spoken with the parents? or suggesting that information be shared.

D Maybe it would be an idea to have both parents come in and sit down with them. This is a serious matter. I have got a little girl, she is barely surviving grade 4. She is not surviving in grade 3. You had her for just that little bit.

These types of suggestion statements represent a small portion of statements made during the DPT meetings and are not a continuous theme throughout the transcript.
D What does this do to him when he is in high school though?

SP He just doesn't take French.

D Does he not need a language to get his, whatever the grade 12 is called?

Secondly, questioning was used to establish the teacher's comfort level with a particular intervention or situation.

D Would it distract you or disturb you if he stayed in the area in the back?

SP Well, as long as he's working independently and I know I'm free to come and go and I very often do.

D It would have to be work that he would be able to do independently without direction and that I would check it the next time I met with him.

D Do you want to introduce him to it or do you want me to?

Diane also used questioning to obtain information

D In math, she is weak in all areas. Is she one of those kids that forgets the basics when you go on to the next thing? She forgets what has gone before? (pause) Would you say that she is lower than (student) or at the same level?

and to ask for suggestions.

D Any suggestions for social or things like that? Do we know if they are coming back or are we waiting to hear if they are coming back next September?

Very seldom were questions used as requests, as in this example.

D Would you call and find out?
**Agreement and Support.** The final category was that of support and agreement statements. In this category we saw very direct statements of support for teachers.

D  Great, OK, that would be terrific.

SP1  I will put that in an envelope for you today, that address.

D  OK, that would be great.

...

D  That has helped him a lot ...

Agreement statements, tended to occur in the form of uhhm, "OK" and "yeah". These are common throughout the DPT meetings and serve to provide support while moving the meeting along.

**Reflections - Filter 2: Diane's Consultative Role during Team Meetings: An Interpretation**

In looking at Diane's consultative role, I had to remind myself continually that the consultative aspects of the role were under examination. How does this role manifest itself? What sorts of things is she doing that would be considered reflective of this type of role? The overwhelming amount of specific information about students made this task difficult. The interactions in the DPT meetings were not characterised by a lot of give and take of ideas and group problem solving but were comprised of direct statements that provided information rather than contributing to discussion. Statements often related what Diane was doing with the students, her evaluation of their progress and her plans for future work with them. The collaborative process aimed at intervention in the regular class, as described by Idol (1986), was not apparent in the in-school team interactions at Diane's schools.
The issue of testing was of special note. On Diane's part testing reflected a very
traditional approach. Assessment tools were separate from the curriculum, as were some of
the programs she utilised. It could be theorised that Diane used testing not just as a
measure of students' success but also as a means for Diane to chart her progress. Bringing
a student up a grade level is the standard by which she measures her effectiveness. Used
this way, testing can separate the regular classroom from special education. Diane's
interactions regarding the validity of test scores, as referred to earlier, highlighted this
separation.

Having been present at the meetings, I did note a resistance on the part of team
members. Indeed, this was a topic that Diane discussed with me. This resistance was
illustrated in the transcription of the disagreement over testing scores previously presented.
However, a more telling example of this resistance was the lack of contribution by team
members. Jordan (1994), in her discussion of dealing with resistant teachers, presented the
dilemma of choosing a student's needs at the risk of alienating peers or compromising your
opinions to maintain harmony. Indeed, Goffman (1959) described this dilemma as striving
for a "working consensus". In his view, it is necessary at times to suppress our heartfelt
feelings in order to find an acceptable view of the situation. Diane chose to shelter students,
to take on the responsibility for their instruction and try to 'fix' them before sending them
back. Whether this was a response to the amount of resistance present, a personal
preference or a combination of both was impossible to say.
Filter 1 & 2: Diane's Consultative Role (interview) and Diane's Consultative Role (team meetings): A Reflection on some Parallels

Examining the relationship between Diane's stated beliefs and the consultative role that emerged in the team meetings resulted in some interesting parallels and contrasts. A large part of Diane's discussion of her consultative role centred on not only how she saw her job, but how she went about implementing 'her vision' of that job into the school environment. She stated that she saw herself as a support to teachers. In team meetings she provided this support by obtaining materials for teachers, providing information to teachers on a student's ability and progress, and programming for students on an individual basis. The support given was paralleled by Diane's self-description of being an assessor of students, a scrounger and an implementer of strategies. (In light of the team meetings, the reference to strategies related to the provision of programs).

In Diane's interview, we saw a quiet determination to intervene in students' learning in what she considered a positive way. To implement her vision of the job, Diane used persistence and patience. She made herself available for casual discussions regarding students, volunteered extra time to work with students and supplied materials to teachers when needed. Diane's tactics were reminiscent of Aesop’s Tortoise and the Hare, slow and steady wins the race.

Examination of Diane's role in team meetings, resulted in the observation that a majority of her time was used to provide information to teachers. Ideas for programming, test results, students progress and outside information were often presented. Services provided for students often meant withdrawal from the regular class. For the teachers in
this school, this seemed to be a positive option. On Diane's part, there was a willingness to provide this type of service delivery to students.

Diane's natural inclination to maintain a positive and supportive atmosphere may have influenced the service delivery of her consultative role. While she expressed the desire to have the teachers act more like a team, the types of actions that took place in the school showed that in this current environment that "team" approach was still only a goal not a reality.

Filter 3: Diane's Beliefs about Students' Success and Failure (interview)

Conversations with Diane invariably turned to the subject of students. Her answers on a variety of topics were filled with references to her work with students. In discussions regarding her consultative role, Diane described herself as a facilitator for students.

D I am a facilitator for kids to discuss and develop different theories of behaviour and I am also there if a kid runs into problems of a physical nature or a sensitive, emotional nature. I am there as a support for them to help them deal with the problem.

Later, in a discussion of how she perceived her role, her thoughts turned to programming for students. She described her actions as follows:

D I basically have to assess every child, where they are at, whose name comes to me and then determine from that, with the help of the team, determine what I have, what facilities I have, or materials I have or whether I am just going to use the classroom materials and work backwards bit. Go back to the kind of start where we can pick up these kids. Some of them just need the extra support and bolstering, like the grade ones that I work with. We have this early intervention program and what I have to do is go back and encourage them to believe that they can do it.
lot of what I do is, basically with the kids in academics, is to make them believe that they can do it and that we just haven't found, it's not their fault but it's our fault that we haven't found a way to make them, to connect with them.

This idea of finding a way to help a child learn and the responsibility of this search being hers was a common theme throughout discussions with Diane.

D Yeah, in his case, it's like a mesh screen wall is being put up. Not a solid wall but a mesh wall where I am bouncing off it all the time. I am not getting through. Periodically I make breakthroughs. They are short and few and far between and they don't last very long but it is enough to give you hope to keep on working, with this kid to keep on trying and you don't give up.

The discussions regarding her beliefs about children's success and failure did not begin with a discussion of the meaning of success and failure. Instead, our conversations led us to a discussion of how she perceived children's learning problems.

D ....we all come from different ways of learning. We just haven't picked the right way that a lot of those kids learn. And we have a number, I would say that the largest part of the kids that we have labelled as learning disabled are coming from that area. That they actually learn in a different manner that we just haven't, that just doesn't fall into our regular programming. Then there are the other kids who are learning disabled who actually do have some kind of barrier, whether it be neurological or whatever, that prevents them from learning and it will always stop them from learning as a regular person learns. It isn't that they don't learn, they can't learn things. It is just that it would be in smaller doses than what one child might learn in one year, this child might take ten years to learn.

When asked about her beliefs as to why children fail and succeed, the following categories emerged: self esteem, the learning environment, motivation, home and maturity.
Elaborating on a student's self esteem, Diane related the following:

DOK, let me give you my grade 8 girl. She was failing because her self-esteem was so rock bottom that she was suicidal. She is succeeding now because she feels so good about herself. In fact, she was a real dip today, running around "I'm happy, I'm happy". I said "You are off your rocker" but you could say that to her without her taking offence or reading something into it that wasn't there. She knows that people are backing her, she has friends. That all makes a difference. She is still failing a lot of classroom tests. Being successful here, what has happened here, though, is that doing the work here, it is in a much, once again the environment, we are closed, we are quiet, she can concentrate on the small bits. Up there she gets the bigger portion and she hasn't learned yet to break it down for herself. Also, she came to us with almost as a non-reader in grade 7. She is now reading at a grade 8 level. In a modified program but she is doing it and that in itself, that she is in the regular program, is another criterion for success for that particular girl.

Tied in with these causes of failure was the following example of the impact of the student's emotional state on learning.

DHe is not buying into what I am saying. He is coming in full of anger so that is clouding over what he is learning. He is coming in with an attitude of, "You can't tell me anything, I know my rights". He is also coming in with an attitude, "I don't need that". So yes, he is failing and when it is pointed out to him, remember when we learned how to spell that word, remember the rhyme, the rap sound we made to sound that word, when we did that in the test he was successful and it was," Well I knew that, I knew that". "Yes, you knew that but you are not putting it down". He is the only one that is consistently failing.

For Diane, the success of a student often appeared to rest not with the child but with the environment surrounding the student and our power as educators to manipulate that environment.
D. You build on what you did the day before. Every day it is build, build, build. With the learning disabled kids, the ones that I have, everybody is different. I find an area where I think we can start and be successful and with learning disabilities I am talking about the kids that we just haven't tapped into the way of how they do it. With those kids I take an idea, it might be the same idea as the other kid but I would approach it in a way, a new method of doing it, or a new way of looking at the same topic and taking it from that point and if that works fine and if it doesn't work I don't mind cutting my losses and trying something else...

Diane also noted the importance of the motivation of the student. In a discussion of the impact of inherent ability on a student's success, Diane stated the following.

D .... I am a firm believer that IQ is a crock. I mean you could have a kid with an incredibly high IQ but who loses in the social skills and who doesn't have a bit of practical sense. Therefore what the hell does IQ do? It doesn't do a damn thing. Whereas a person with a much lower IQ and who is a real worker and is self-motivated, who is striving and survived.

...Right, I have seen enough kids in the system over the years to believe it and to know for a fact that kids that I have helped, who have been special education kids, and have been special education kids when they got high school, who because they have had that extra help and knew how to work have gone on to be grade 13 OAC graduates and possibly university. I have also seen kids that you know were the bright lights in elementary school bomb totally in high school because they couldn't be bothered and they had nothing in them in their background to help them learn how to survive. These are your school dropouts. Unnecessarily.

In some cases, the impact of the home life on learning was seen as being detrimental to the learning of the student.

D Yes, I had the behaviour consultant come in and observe 4 of my kids. Two of them, one the parents give no school support whatsoever. Their idea of a good game is to see
how many days the kid can skip taking Ritilan and have us guess what days he didn't take it.

Finally, the issue of maturity was also seen as influential on the student's ability to be successful.

D Well, that is what has happened with the kids I had last year but this year... One, I guess because I am not seeing their program. Last year's group of grade one kids are demitted since September because they had matured, gained confidence. They had come along. I don't see sparks this year in the kids I am dealing with. In one out of four I see it. The other three, probably, while they are very young. Two out of three, I just checked the birthday's today. Two are December birthdays and one is September birthday. Those three are quite young and it might be just a maturity thing but I suspect that what we will have to do once we finish this early intervention program, they will be DPTd in their own classroom and they are not... and it really won't have anything to do with maturity.

D There is a total difference and I wouldn't have believed it. I would have said, "Oh, they are all immature" but I can see the patterns forming where one group went, where we started with early intervention in January, it just went up and up and up. With this group it is just going on a very low level except for one boy and he is going up and up and up.

D Definitely, but she also has to reach a stage of maturity within herself to do this and I think that the foster mom has done so much in that regard too, helping her see herself as she is. She has laughed with her and she has cried with her, you know.

Diane summed up her statements regarding the success and failure of students by describing part of her teaching style that I characterised as persistence. Evaluating the students' needs, making a plan and trying it out were necessary steps. As always, the onus of responsibility
seemed to be on the teacher's ability to program effectively and to monitor and modify that program where necessary.

**Reflections - Filter 3: Diane's Beliefs about Students' Success and Failure (interview): An Interpretation**

For Diane, the issue of self-esteem was very important. She presented herself as a facilitator to allow children to grow behaviourally and academically and to be an emotional support to them. In almost every statement she referred to the students' need to feel good about themselves. She had stated initially that her experiences of being a mother had had a great impact on her teaching. Her discussions of her beliefs about students reflected a mothering perspective. I chose to view Diane as the 'protector', an identity that will be discussed in detail at the end of this case study. Using this view specifically to examine her stated beliefs about children, we saw a teacher who placed the onus of responsibility for ensuring the emotional and academic well being of her students firmly on her own shoulders. She was the students' assessor, their programmer, and their counsellor. If a child was experiencing academic difficulties, she saw herself as persistent, never giving up till she found a way that that child could learn. Generally, Diane characterised learning difficulties as being a different way to learn and believed that persistence and building on small successes were effective strategies.

Diane saw the provision of a safe environment as enhancing self-esteem. She noted the value of positive reinforcement and encouragement. She also believed that motivation of a student was more important than ability and that practical sense and work ethic were the key to survival.
When asked about the reasons for student failure, Diane noted three factors: firstly, the anger a child may possess as being a barrier to learning, secondly, the home life of the student being unsupportive thus having a detrimental effect, and thirdly, the idea that the student is just not ready yet.

**Filter 4: Diane’s Beliefs about Students’ Success and Failure (team meetings)**

Diane’s desire to provide personally for students was very apparent in the analysis of DPT meetings. While the categories that emerged were nominally the same as those in Regina’s transcripts, the specifics of the categories were quite different. The categories that emerged were *programming, ability, self-esteem and family*.

**Programming.** The most frequently occurring theme in Diane’s statements about children was a focus on programming. This focus was characterised by intervention through the use of withdrawal. What became apparent was the belief that taking the student out for a period of time and working on particular skills was beneficial to students.

D (teacher) had talked with these two boys and, even if they came once a week and worked on some specific writing skills, it might help them to kind of concentrate a little bit more and do a little bit more.

...  

D I am wondering, too, if being down here where there is no distractions allows them to focus a little bit better on it.

...  

D I am working with two other grade 6 boys and we are doing some of the writing skills, writing and how. What we could maybe do is, he could maybe join the group and we could continue to use that because it is a lot of handwriting. The formation, a lot of ideas, discussion, oral and then the written areas, so it would help.
This practice seemed to be in place for a number of reasons. First of all, the comfort level of the student was better served in the more private setting of her resource room.

D When he is down here, if I take all the poems that you have done and we do it on the board or on chart paper, we do it on the paper that (student) had there. We do it as a group. We do it two boys together, individually, then we do picking up the words from it and I always ask him last and he has heard it about 5 times when it is his turn. So when he starts to do it he is guaranteed practical success. He does remember it then but he doesn't have it the next day and he doesn't recognise certain words. Like the other boys, if I have a word on the board and I always have two poems up there too and I will say the part that comes before and then they know what the word is if they had trouble recognising it. He can't do that. This morning yesterday's words were reviewed, 'said' and 'children', and he told me that 'said' began with 's' today which threw me right off. But he hadn't been able to do it. It takes him a long time to build confidence to even to speak to another adult.

Another reason was the difficulty level of the work and the flexibility of a resource room setting to provide the individual instruction in a certain weak area.

D OK. Well, what I will do then is that I will borrow the books if you would like and I can take the kids and I will try to get them. It won't be in your language arts time but I will fit them in every day and I will do that reading with them both...

A final reason was the usefulness of this type of withdrawal for the monitoring of students' progress.

D That would be excellent because then he could work on that perfect copy and go right back to basic stuff and go from there. That would be good.

Despite the emphasis on withdrawal, three considerations were noted. Firstly, the withdrawal was, at times, temporary in nature.

D And last year what I worked with him on was just that. We took all the areas and wrote down what needed to be done
in all the areas and then that was what we were going to
direct ourselves towards to see the improvement. And he
gradually, seeing him about three or four times a week I
was seeing him, we had narrowed it down to pretty well
once a week and we covered a lot of those areas. And that
is what I am doing this year with him. Just continuing on
that list. In math, I haven't done as much math with him
this year because once we went through the skills he didn't
seem to be doing too too badly. It was multiplication facts
again. And that is something that will benefit (student)
also, so we can work on that.

Secondly, the work done during withdrawal time was generally focused on developing one
skill that would carry over to alleviate curriculum concerns.

D Yeah but the thing is he has been working up to it. We
have been working on it and he has been listening. See the
other thing is, kids with ADD have a heck of a time with
this because they can't concentrate long enough to hear
through. This is one of the reasons (student) is having
difficulty with his spelling. We worked on that today,
listen to sounds and he is not getting angry either. He said,
"Show me" so when I was able to show it to him and then
he would listen to it again and replay it through his head.
You could see the process going on. This appears to be a,
you asked me to have (student 2) write a story and she did.
I also did the visual test with (student 3). There was some
reading why but anyway (student 2) did just fine. She was
up to the larger maps and she had gotten up to the eighth
map which was the eighth design and she was having no
difficulty whatever. There are a lot of difficult to
understand and spelling errors in her story. So once again
she is a student that needs to develop those listening skills
by concentration. That explains the spelling errors and the
problems in her writing. How is she?

Finally, some withdrawal of students resulted in interventions in the regular classroom.

D I talked to (teacher), before he was sick, about (student) and
because (student) needs organisation help too, and I
decided that since the two of them were in Grade Five, I'd
put the two of them together on Monday and Friday just
before lunch and we worked out a system where we were
going through a whole series of organisational skills and yesterday, we put a folder together, all the things they're to keep in the classroom to help them get organised, before class, during class and after class, things that they have at home. They have a checklist at home on their fridge and that they check off each morning just briefly before they head out the door, to make sure they've got all the items on it including lunches, shoes, equipment, like pencils and stuff. So been through this whole list and now I'm hearing from (teacher) that (student) is just being a royal pain and I haven't talked to you about (student) 'cause I've only seen him twice now for this idea. How that works. Is (student) seeming to be...

PT Seems to be.

D They seem so confident when they're in here and they're discussing things and they're coming up. They know the words to say, they know that even the order in which things have to be done. They even, you know, "Did we do this? Yes, we did this this morning, No, we didn't do that". They ticked it off but they're not carrying it back upstairs.

PT Like I said she has improved, immensely, she is proud of things that she has done, that she has done well.

SP Sounds like she must be a very impulsive kid.

D She's on Ritalin.

SP Oh, OK.

D Yes, she's on Ritalin.

PT So, no matter how much you teach organisational skills, she will always give you the right answer but she is too impulsive to follow through. She would almost have to have a sentence, like one thing to do and then she has to physically tick it off and look at the next one before she moves on.

D Yeah, that was the idea of this checklist because it is.. you just check off which thing you should do and .. but by the sounds of it you know it's.. get her to show you the folder and see if she's doing anything right 'cause we double-check on Fridays how they've done through the week.
Thus, while Diane's statements reflected actions that involved the withdrawal of students as being beneficial, there was some movement towards addressing the needs of students in the regular class.

**Ability.** Tied in with the theme of programming was an overlapping theme that dealt with students' ability as it was affected by intervention. The sorting of this category begins with the topic of early intervention.

D  If this had been done back in grade 1 when it should have been, then it certainly would have made a difference to this little girl. She would have recognised by now behaviours that work or not. OK, I will put a referral in. Get that started today about three or four weeks and we will come back to (student)...

Ability, while seen as something which may benefit from early nurturing, was also seen as a quality dependent on the readiness of the student

D  (student) was never ready before now. She has reached the point of being ready. Whatever has been suggested by the school, mom has gone overboard to do.

and which needed to be developed at its own pace.

D  OK, one of the main things we do is, we always have a sharing where they have to give sentences and it is very, very difficult although he is getting better. I will give specific words that I want them to use in the sentences so he is using it and trying. So it is coming, very slowly.

... 

D  It is like he is still playing catch up with the vocabulary, with the proper manner of speaking. Age appropriate, he is not speaking at an age appropriate way, he is speaking in a much younger manner. And that came through at the interview where he is still far happier playing with children in grades two and grade three.
Ability is also addressed in the category of assessment. Measurement of ability was accomplished through academic and medical assessments. The ability of a student was discussed as benchmarks for performance.

D In sentence memory he was at grade 1 level, listening to a sentence and repeating it back. And when he had to listen to the vocabulary and listen to the word, he was at a grade 3 level.

At times, these discussions regarding results obtained from assessment as a reflection of ability were disputed. In these situations, the belief in the validity of the assessment held true, as seen in the next excerpt that includes the statement presented above.

D In the word recognition, where it is simple words, he is at grade two level in reading vocabulary. Placement, where once again it was just vocabulary, he was at grade three level. In reading comprehension he is at upper grade three level.

PT Something is wrong.

D In sentence memory he is at ....

PT There is no way he is at upper grade three level.

D In sentence memory he was at grade 1 level, listening to a sentence and repeating it back. And when he had to listen to the vocabulary and listen to the word, he was at a grade 3 level.

PT Now this reading comprehension. Was this passage in front of him and he had to write the answer?

D No, he had to choose the answer. The answer was already written.

PT Oh, he is good at that. But that's ...

SP That is reading comprehension.

PT Well....

SP Written comprehension is...
D Another thing.

SP Another dimension.

PT What I am trying to get at is that kids, they can really bluff when it is choosing an ABC. They look for the key word and as far as reading comprehension that I test them on and I can tell what they are understanding by simply asking the questions.

SP Writing?

PT No, not ever writing. Just asking them to tell me about it because they do, they can. Who was it that can do? There was one of them that was, had scored very high on grade level and when I focused in on him and really started asking, he didn't have a clue. But the multiple choice was easy.

D I am wondering sometimes too though, coming down here where there is no distractions allows them to focus a little bit better on it. I mean that is utopia, you can't have that, but as far as listening vocabulary, he was at the grade 3 level. Where he had to listen to a story and answer the questions he was at the upper grade 2 level, and what happened with his answers, I think he was the one, when he would give me an answer it was never wrong but it wasn't quite accurate either but he was in the right neighbourhood. He wasn't out to lunch or anything. With (student), she would put names to people, she would create new names, new situations whereas he didn't. For his listening, the Rosner auditory skills he was at an upper grade 2 level. Which is where I thought (student), he is lower, but not that much. In spelling, he was at a grade 2 level, between grade 2 and grade 3 but definitely grade 2 level. So he is not that far off, but I think that... You had him last year (teacher).

Linked with academic testing was the involvement of the medical profession to aid in the diagnosis of difficulties, which may affect student performance.

D Referring to (student), his Mom stopped by the other day about his sister and she's going to a paediatrician for (sibling) and for testing, they're doing all kinds of
neurological testing, and the doctor said that (student) probably should be tested also because of the behaviours and because of just the actions that he goes through that the doctor's observed, and that she commented, this is Doctor, commented on (student) being similar to (sibling) in flightiness and disorganisation and the other areas.

Ability was also linked to the emotional state of the student.

D Language too. Here I was watching her mouth the words when she is reading and I said "(student), you are reading it!" and she said "I am." I said "yeah". And I said "say what you just said" and I said "That is it." But she didn't believe that she was capable of doing it so a lot has to do with confidence there so...

**self esteem.** The caring Diane felt for her students was reflected through the statements she made concerning the self-esteem of the students in her school. The most common reference under the category of self-esteem was the necessity of confidence.

D The concept isn't there.... But he also has no confidence in himself. It comes through in every aspect of his academic work.

It would seem, in Diane's view, that the provision of a comfortable place in which a child can be nurtured was important in the development of confidence.

D And he literally making himself ill, things like that.

PT The parents said that they changed schools because they didn't like the philosophy of the other school.

SP We had a few times where he didn't want to come to school but it was at the beginning. The first, it hasn't happened since Christmas, where the sister was home ill and he was afraid to come by himself. The first time she let him stay at home and the second she made him come by himself. He was crying and poor (teacher) ended up with a kid that was crying.....

D Well, we sat upstairs and we talked about was he afraid of this school or was he happy. He was very happy to be at
this school. He felt really good about the kids. The teachers made him feel comfortable. He just wanted his sister. He was alone, and he has no confidence in himself, very little. Now academically, ...

Success was seen as a possible way to enhance a child's confidence. At times, Diane would encourage the creation of a situation that guaranteed success in order to build confidence in learning.

D Where this other stuff, while it is not exactly pattern, the words are repeated through the grades and the whole patterning process is exactly the same all the way through. So, if they are experiencing it, they are also experiencing success. I did it with a group of 5, 6, 7, and 8's and in the testing, you do the monthly test, the end of the unit test and, because it is built in, it is fail proof. They just don't fail. So the kids start to feel good. The kids, hey, they can read and it builds the other part of their need, their confidence. So what do you think. Do you want me to try that?

Diane saw the nurturing of confidence as a stepping stone toward a successful and productive learning experience. Positive self-esteem was seen as a factor that contributed to the success of a student.

D And she did some of the stories in the mysteries and that is a 3.5 level and she had difficulty but she understood the comprehension of them and was doing quite well. She does not retain. She can maintain with one particular lesson only with additional help from home. This is in math. In math she is really struggling. She is not retaining a lot of things still. Her basic concept in math, I know (student) struggled in the beginning and used a lot of concrete examples with her but her attitude has improved and she is more willing to do things now than she was earlier and she is willing to do it independently. She is feeling better about herself because she is reading. Now she doesn't feel quite so down on herself. Her negative put downs of herself seem to be decreasing and her success are contributing, she has a more positive attitude. Anything else you wanted to add?
These successful experiences were seen to lead to a "willingness" on the part of a student to try. This willingness was also seen as a positive factor that, in itself, affects the student's learning.

Diane stated that self-esteem was enhanced through the cultivation of peer relations.

D Mom works in Dundas. Plus, it was hard enough for (student) to make friends all these years. This year she has made friends. She feels really good about herself...

Diane's concern about the development of peer relationships was paired with the idea that part of being accepted by peers was accepting yourself.

D It is of his own making. And he feels himself. He is not a stupid kid. He sees where (student) is popular and the kids, in some of the social skills things, some of the kids have chosen (student) as someone that they would really like to play with, as being a really acceptable, cool kind of guy. And (student 2) sees this and I think that the pressure is more of his making and he knows...

PT Sure, he has told his mom that he is not happy.

D He is accepting himself as he is. I think that that is one of the things that I see. He is in the social group...

PT Even that he would volunteer to be an altar server. Mom or dad didn't initiate that. He wanted to do that. He was the only one from our school. I mean that took a lot of courage.

D He also has joined little league for the first time in his life at his own initiation. The parents have always encouraged it and he has never wanted any part of it and this year he joined and I said because it can be really deadly with some of the parents, so I just suggested that they didn't go near the other parents. They are aware of (student)'s capabilities or lack of them. So I just suggested that during games that they may be sit apart from other people so that they don't feel hurt and offended by the comments that are going to be made. I mean they are going to be made. And the other thing was...
PT Why?
D He is not athletic at all and the other parents are cruel.
PT Not all of them.
D A good portion of them.
PT He bats well but his catching, fine motor I guess... But even when he played hockey the kids said "Boy, you are really good at that..."
D A few comments like that would be really good.
PT A few things. So, I think baseball, he probably thinks that he could probably do well as long as he doesn't get too many negative comments. Because he is very sensitive and when someone makes a comment he says, "Well, I guess I am not very good at this because these people say that I am not." Maybe he needs some kind of counselling. Everyone has got strengths and weaknesses and...
D In the social skills group, when we have discussions and things, it is now just starting to come out that he is acknowledging that maybe he doesn't march to the same drummer as the other kids but it is OK to do what he is doing as long as he feels good about himself and that is coming through bit by bit each week in the different discussions that we are having. But counselling, ha...
PT Well it is just that I have spoken to him lots of times and...
D That has helped a lot.

**Family.** Family was seen as playing an important role in the success of a student. Information was shared regarding parental expectations.

D Yeah, and yet ironically they're so laid back, not too much, if they want to do it, they do it, if they don't want to do it, they don't do it at home, but Dad expects them to tow the mark and to exhibit acceptable behaviours out in public and things like that. Mom just says, "They're just kids" and lets them go to it, to the point where people hesitate to have
them come into their home now, and I've had that, that was told to me by ... a family that's related to them that chose not to have them come into the house if they could help it. They would prefer to go to their home as opposed to these kids, because of (student) and because of (student).

Another factor was the responsibility of family to co-operate with the school in terms of reinforcing the concepts taught at school.

D What about, would it be possible to send books home that he is reading since Mrs. (mom) is willing to help.

PT Is she home now with the baby or is she working?

D She had a baby! What did she have?

PT A little girl.

D Oh, that's right. Well, if it would be possible to send things home, like somebody could read to him.

PT Maybe he should read to brother. He is in Kindergarten. That would be good for (student). Get home some easy books and get him to ....

D That would encourage it and maybe mom could ask two or three questions.

The final aspect of the role of family was the importance of communication between home and school.

D Maybe it would be an idea to have both parents come in and sit down with them. This is a serious matter. I have got a little girl, she is barely surviving grade 4. She is not surviving in grade 3. You had her for just that little bit.

To review, Diane, through her interactions in DPT meetings, focused on many areas. Those areas, in order of presentation, were program, ability, self-esteem and family.
Reflections

Filter 4: Diane's Beliefs about Students' Success and Failure (team meetings): An Interpretation

Diane's service delivery to students consisted mainly of withdrawal of students. Through her actions Diane portrayed the belief that the regular classroom environment could not provide for the needs of all students. The actions taken reflected a belief that children could benefit from direct instruction in weak areas and from compensatory strategies put in place that carry over to other aspects of the student's day. For Diane, it would seem many of these things are better done in an isolated setting. A second reason for the removal of students from the regular class was to provide a safe place for them. This security for students was important to Diane the 'protector'.

While Diane's programming was often characterised by some amount of withdrawal, there seemed to be intent to reintegrate into the regular class. Withdrawal was usually remedial in nature and focused on specific areas of deficit.

The student's ability was a second category that emerged. Diane noted the importance of early intervention. She communicated a message that allowing time for students to be ready was necessary for skill development. She also explained a lag in ability as the student not being ready yet. Ability was also linked to self-esteem. Feeling good and having confidence were seen as improving a students' ability to perform.

Diane reported a lot of informal testing scores at team meetings. Diane saw these scores as being important measures of academic ability. The measuring of a child's performance was used to program and to check on academic growth.
Self-esteem of students was linked to almost every area that Diane discussed. The importance Diane attached to self esteem for academic success was noted earlier. Diane stressed the importance of developing confidence in students and saw factors such as peer interaction and the provision of a nurturing environment as being instrumental in the development of positive self-esteem. The sheltering of students, either though the provision of physical space or the allowance for growth at their own pace (a pace defined by Diane), was a priority for Diane.

Filter 3 & 4: Diane's Beliefs about Students' Success and Failure (interview) and Diane's Beliefs about Success and Failure (team meetings): A Reflection on some Parallels

Diane's expressed beliefs about students and her role in the DPTs reflected many parallels. Diane stated that an important factor in the success of a student was self-esteem. In the DPT meetings, Diane expressed the importance of building confidence and developing good peer relations. Part of building confidence was providing a learning environment that was comfortable for the student. Diane's suggestions often included some element of the student being in a more isolated setting with her, where he or she may feel more comfortable and thus make more academic progress. Diane noted that the home can play an important part in self-esteem but, interestingly, in the DPT meetings, discussions about home involved more of an exchange of information either with the home or about the home situation.

In the area of program, Diane placed a great emphasis on the necessity of the teacher, namely herself, finding a way to reach the student. She used the image of a mesh wall, which allowed only some things to get though. Finding what got through and
expanding on it was a goal. To accomplish this goal, in the DPT meetings, Diane's suggestions and recommendations often reflected a personal monitoring, programming and handling of students. Diane provided service for individual students by establishing a comfort level and using the flexibility and close monitoring that could be attained in a resource room setting.

The emphasis of programming in the special education setting, the use of assessment data separate from in-class data to establish benchmarks for performance and the strategy of working at their own pace to get caught up reflect a belief system that sees the problem as inherent in the child. Certainly when discussing her beliefs Diane notes both developmental and neurological factors as inhibiting learning.

Finally, in her interviews, Diane stressed the importance of building on what the child had and continuing the programming based on what skills the student already possessed. Diane noted the importance of early intervention and expressed concerns about a student not being ready. With this in mind, in her discussion of her beliefs about students, Diane did not stress the ability level of the student as being an inhibiting factor to success. In fact, ability level and the ascertaining thereof, was seen in both her description of her beliefs and her role in DTPs as a way of determining a starting point and monitoring progress.

Diane: The Protector: An Overview

Diane’s role as protector permeated her work. I even felt safe in her presence. You could not help but like her and be bolstered by her nurturing style. Diane’s behaviours with teachers as well as students showed protective tendencies. While verbalising a desire for a
more team-like approach, many of her actions resulted in the maintaining of the status quo of withdrawal and parallel programming. With students she provided for many of their needs. She tested them, talked to them, charted their progress and changed their learning environment within her room. Often, when they failed, it was because she didn’t find the key or developmentally the student wasn’t ready.

Diane's desire for a 'team' approach to dealing with students seemed a long way off. Given the service delivery expected and supplied within this school the goal of shared and equal responsibility for exceptional students seemed an uphill battle. Do teachers who don’t have to take responsibility for the learning of exceptional pupils in their class ever learn the skills necessary to deal with those types of student? Do students who are protected from the regular curriculum or difficult social situations collect the experiences necessary to cope? In the end is the lack of opportunity an inhibitor to growth and development?

Finding a middle ground between protecting and challenging a student as well as a teacher may have been the direction in which to move. My own consultative experiences, which I have discussed earlier, have led me to two observations. Firstly, teachers can be very comfortable with a withdrawal model of service delivery. Secondly, a necessary evil of change can be a certain amount of discomfort. Like the grain of sand in the pearl, some forms of discomfort can produce positive growth.
Roseanne

**Roseanne: Inviting Participation**

One of my first notations on entry to this setting stated that Roseanne was receptive to the study and would meet with me in the New Year. This written statement was followed by "Yahoo!" My obvious delight in being invited to this setting was in a large part due to my initial impressions in talking with Roseanne. Her direct approach, openness and cooperative manner had made me hopeful that she would participate in this research. The characteristics that I had observed on that initial meeting held true. Roseanne never hesitated to share with me her ideas and thoughts whether they agreed with mine or not. She extended a feeling of welcome to me that extended to the staff and greatly increased my comfort level.

During my time in this school, I spent a majority of time in the special education teacher's classroom while she worked with students. I also volunteered. Despite the busy schedule, there was plenty of time for us to talk and for interviews to proceed. Roseanne talked with me regarding her personal life as a way of explaining those days when she seemed less responsive to my presence. This divulgence of information created a relationship that was indeed more personal than that of researcher and participant. We had many long discussions, not only about both her life and mine, but also regarding teaching and what she saw as her role in the school. Having the opportunity to observe her with students made those discussions on teaching and her role more alive and meaningful.
Roseanne: Teaching History

Roseanne had begun teaching 21 years earlier. She began her career as a junior teacher, teaching juniors in an open concept school. She then moved to intermediate 7's and 8's. She continued to switch junior and intermediate following maternity leaves. She stated a preference for working with older students. When asked about her 'roots' in special education she stated

Ro I got into special education. I don't know, I just decided to take some courses and then I liked it and so I thought I'd go into it.

These few courses turned into a Specialist in Special Education. It was with the encouragement of her principal that Roseanne entered the field and, at the time of this study, had been teaching in special education for five years.

Ro Yes, I taught here as a classroom teacher. I've been here the longest actually of all the teachers so far. I've been here at least nine years. I started as a classroom teacher here at grade 5 and then I went into reading improvement for a year. That's when the principal said, you know, try special education and we'll start with reading improvement and I took the courses and then right after that I applied for special education position and it just happened that the special education teacher here was leaving and I wanted to stay. So I got the position and I stayed here in special education.

Roseanne stated that she kept herself current through access to board personnel, journals, workshops and more or less "keeping your eyes and ears open".

DPT's at Roseanne's school took place every Thursday and were set up by her in conjunction with the principal. At the beginning of the school year special needs children were looked at and, from there, children were referred as needed by teachers. DPT team members were chosen by the principal with a representative from each division, including
the librarian, to try and ensure representation from the whole school. Roseanne had the responsibility for chairing the meetings as well as keeping records. Information from DPT meetings was kept in a binder in the classroom with access by teachers and parents. The information was not including the OSR. Forms for providing information to the team prior to the meeting were handed out to teachers when a referral was made.

The Pragmatist

In this final case study presentation of statements followed the same procedure as in the previous two. Filter 1 showed Roseanne as she describes her consultative role. Filter 2 examined the team meetings interactions where we see Roseanne's consultative practice as she interacted with her colleagues. Filter 3 focused back on Roseanne and her stated perceptions of why students fail and succeed. Finally, with filter 4 we are returned to the team meeting in an attempt to examine Roseanne's beliefs about students' success and failure as manifested in her interactions with team meetings.

Filter 1: Roseanne's Consultative Role (interview)

Roseanne, in describing her consultative role, referred to what she perceived as the philosophy of the board.

SB. Is part of your role considered to be educating them? (regular classroom teachers)

Ro That's what they are trying to get to. The focus is on doing that. Before it was the special education teacher going into the classroom. No, actually the other way around. The child coming out of the classroom and the special education teacher just working with these children that have difficulties. Then we went from there to the special education teacher going in to the classroom and working in
conjunction with the teacher and now, the focus in the last two years I would imagine, has been in trying to make it so that you are providing programs and any types of assistance to the teacher to help them deal with the problems in the classroom, so we are trying to get more into the resource situation rather than teaching.

Much of Roseanne's description of her role reflected a move towards compliance with this philosophy. She, as with the other two teachers in this research, described her role as multifaceted.

Ro: I have to be responsible. OK, let's start again. Special Education teachers should be aware of the programs and the curriculum of the primary, junior and intermediate divisions so that the children are... the children's needs are being met. That's curriculum. When ordering, that's one of the other things we do with the help of our primary reading improvement teachers, when ordering materials, we keep that in mind, what does the primary division have? What do they need, and so on with the junior and intermediates also. I teach, so I work with the kids. Sometimes I modify programs for some teachers if it would help them, again keeping in mind that you're not trying to take over the responsibility. That's something that's always at the forefront. I work with the kids, curriculum, and working with the teachers. On a few occasions I would go in the classroom and actually teach the kids. Not so much to show the teachers how it's done, but just an idea that I would like to try out myself to see if it does work in practice or maybe the teacher has asked me to come in and show her or him how this would work in the classroom. That doesn't happen that often but there have been times when I would go into the classroom and do that. I see myself as a guidance counsellor also for the kids. I am a liaison person for the other agencies, because we do have cases of either physical abuse, we've had cases of physical abuse, neglect. There's a lot of paper work involved, keeping track of, and I find this to be, not time consuming because it's important but, um, it does take a lot of time. You have to record these visits and what has been said, what we have tried, so that we can keep track of where we've been which helps us to know where to go from here. So if we do contact agencies, all of that has to be recorded, and it's not just being in the phone. So you have paper
work as well. Parents, liaison with the parents, that's a constant thing. Back to paperwork, the administrative part is the DPT itself. Getting the children on paper as to when they're going to be presented. Having them tested, that's another part, the testing of these children before they are brought up to DPT so we can have a start...

To these aspects of her role, curriculum knowledge, program modification team teaching, liaison, guidance, record keeping, parent contact and administrative work, Roseanne added informal assessment of students and the provision of professional literature.

When discussing the consultative role specifically, Roseanne initially recapped many aspects of her role that would be considered consultative, such as liaison with parents. In terms of Roseanne talking with fellow teachers she described how she set the consulting process in motion by opening the lines of communication.

Ro At the beginning of the year when we have our first staff meeting, one of the items on the agenda is for me to present to the teachers the format of special education. What we do and how we do it et cetera and one of the things that I do say to the teachers is that, number 1, I welcome them to come to the special education room at any time, to search and look through anything that we may have in the room that they may use or they may need and if they are still having problems or if they need extra help to let me know or one of their reading improvement teachers know and we will more than, be more than happy to sit down with them during one of their planning times and we made it very clear that that is how they can use one of their planning times, is to sit with a special education teacher and discuss...

These lines of communication were maintained through the remainder of the school year with meetings between Roseanne and staff members.

Ro Most of the teachers would come to me if it's a serious problem or even not so serious problem and would make an appointment to see me during one of their planning times.
and then we will sit down and go over the program or whatever it is that the teacher needs.

She stated that part of her role was keeping things on track.

Ro Like I'm thinking of myself and the last special education teacher that was here. I like to get down to business and if, say, at a meeting, people will go off track, I'm very aware of that and always pull them back in. Now how I do it. I feel sometimes I'm, I may be very abrupt and just say, well now I can understand that but we're really discussing.... I haven't heard any complaints and sometimes I think I'm harder on myself but that's the consulting. You're evaluating yourself as a consultant or as a communicator, too, to approach that, to bring that person back on track.

Roseanne saw her consultative role as being part of a team.

Ro It's important that it is just not me making recommendations. At DPT, it's everybody and that is why we have such a diversity of people so that they will come from different background in their teaching. Even being in primary for a long time they might have a different point of view than say a teacher from intermediate and they all do contribute to recommendations so it's not just the special education teacher sitting there saying this is what you should do and this is how you should do it because I don't feel that. I know I don't know everything and I don't think there is any one person that knows everything but if we have a group together we can pool all our knowledge and come up with the best...

With this team philosophy, Roseanne felt that a very important part of her role was that of support giver.

Ro Yes, I do that a lot, just to tell them you are doing good.

She stated that little of her time was used as a mediator.

Ro I could see myself as a support, a mediator very infrequently because our team is a problem solving team so that everybody will contribute something and I think that has eliminated...
In those situations where colleagues disagreed Roseanne described her actions as follows.

        Ro Yes, the majority of them are open to ideas. The ones I do find difficulty with I would just, I would go about it another way, so that there is no, there are no ill feelings but yet the child's needs are still being met. My primary focus is on the child and, if I am having difficulty with the teacher, I still take that child into consideration and if it doesn't work out, then I go into the classroom, then I will remove the child from the classroom, but the child will get that ...

In summing up, Regina characterised her consultative role thusly,

        Ro Definitely, especially in this school. I find that that is what I do most of the time in a consultative way is teach them how to be a special education teacher in the classroom.

**Reflections - Filter 1: Roseanne's Consultative Role (interview): An Interpretation**

\[\text{In her consultative role, Roseanne described her interpretation of the board's philosophy regarding the role of the LRT. She described an LRT as being a resource person to teachers. In simpler terms an LRT teaches them (regular classroom teachers) how to fish as opposed to fishing for them.}\]

\[\text{Roseanne's role was described by her as being comprised of various aspects. To her, a good working knowledge of the regular curriculum was important and where possible she, used the regular curriculum to work with students. She described part of her role as providing program modification but drew on her experience of being a regular classroom teacher to weigh the pros and cons of the implementation of modifications and strategies.}\]

\[\text{She used informal assessment of student needs as a basis for planning modification.}\]

\[\text{Roseanne used the techniques of team teaching and modelling to help teachers address the needs of their students. She saw her role as providing liaisons with outside agencies and parents; providing of professional literature; as well as the onerous task of record keeping.}\]
When asked about her initiation of her consultative role with the teachers she noted that she introduced herself and her role early in the year, invited teachers to come and see what resources she has available and explained to them how and when to access her for help.

Roseanne saw the team as being important. She described the team at her school as being very involved in the giving of suggestions and was comfortable with this type of involvement. She was very wary of overstepping and taking over both at team meetings and in the teachers' programs. Despite this, when asked about resistance she noted that the student was her first priority and that if necessary she would remove a student from a class for help though she saw see this as a last resort.

Filter 2: Roseanne's Consultative Role (team meetings)

Roseanne's consultative style was reflected through the following categories: informing, organising, questioning, supporting and agreeing, and finally suggesting.

Informating. Roseanne, in her role as consultant, spent a majority of her time relaying information to team members.

Ro So you mentioned mostly his behaviour in the form that you gave me. You have also a concern about his reading. I circled here falling asleep. I want to make sure that was brought up at the meeting. Very messy printing, so his fine motor skills are not ...

Ro I think we have to start right at the beginning here. I have a concern about (student) that you haven't mentioned, that's his reading. Now, it could be the eyes, it could be the actual vision part but if you look at the ... either he has no idea of the initial consonants sound, but I have a feeling he does, or there's something he's seeing wrong and it's not a case of reversals, like ... A word that begins with 'b' he'll start with the sound 'ch', or 'p', he'll start with 'h'.
The results of testing were shared along with academic levels of students in comparison with other students or in comparison to where the average students should be.

Ro Oh, I tested her. She scored at a 2.9 she across the board mid grade 2 level actually. Word comprehension was 2.2, passage comprehension 3.5, word attack 2.6, word identification 2.6.

Ro Because they're doing. She's doing much better than your lower group, your middle group. Academically, she's achieving at a higher level, she's behind grade level. When she came in..

Students were also discussed in terms of what they could actually do academically.

Ro Although he scored lower he has more skills than (student 1) believe it or not. (student 1) probably has a very good memory and he remembered some of the words. (student 2) didn't know the words but at least he would look at them and say well, it's something or other but he knew that he was supposed to start at a certain point. He has the beginning skills, he has the beginning consonant sounds. I recorded everything he said. He has no reversals, which is good. He just can't put the rest of them together. So again with the extra help... Fine motor it seems that both these boys are having problems with fine motor. There's a lot of things in this room that you're welcome to take and all kinds of fine motor skills... you can do. You can put it as a Centre so that everyone is welcome to it but make sure that (student 1) and (student 2) go to that quite often. We can get around the fine motor that way. So, that would be my suggestion and the team's that (student 1) and (student 2) be withdrawn and do it for about eight weeks? Look at them in another eight weeks and see..

A second aspect of the provision of information was that of program information. This information dealt mainly with the mechanics of service delivery to students.

Ro He is one of the children that was withdrawn for that specific period of time and you are saying that he is still quite behind ...

and the practices that Roseanne used in working with students.
Ro: Reading comprehension, decoding. I wouldn't give her anything, well, I am giving her actually upper grade 2 level but what I have done with her and (student), because they are both at the same stage, is that I take the phrases. Like they have to do a lot of drills before they even go into the story so I have taken phrases there. That is what I do, they are basically memorising those phrases and they can remember it when they are in the chapter and then they are able to read that a little more easily but there is a lot of work to be done.

A third type of information provided by Roseanne was that of background information. A student's previous school history was provided.

Ro: It was in the States that she failed. I kept thinking Toronto because most of our kids come from Toronto, and they fail them but they did fail her somewhere along the line so I would imagine when she went to (other school), or whatever, they just kept her at the same grade level that she was in then, and then we decided to put her at age appropriate.

Information regarding previous discussions about the student helped to fill in gaps in the discussion and make for more productive use of time.

Ro: No it was never done. I don't think, number one it is difficult for (student) to translate. That is probably one of their reasons, that's a lot of work. That is not going to give me any more information. He can handle the English and he has been here long enough. He has been in the States or Toronto wherever to pick up things and he is not picking it up.

Along with background information other general information was provided which answered questions or provided necessary detail to enhance the problem solving process.

This general information included such thing as scheduling information

Ro: I can't. I am booked up I have 4 each DPT team. Now wait, (student) is gone. I can put her after the March break. I was able to read all her work. I could read all that.

system information
Ro We won't be getting OSRs from another ...

and answers to direct inquiries.

Ro That was Nov. 30, a long time.

A final type of information that was provided was family information. This information generally dealt with the co-ordination of meetings to exchange information with parents.

Ro She's not working. We might try to get her in during the school hours so we don't have to come back in the evening. Is that OK with everybody else? Great, thanks (teacher).

and the co-ordination, with parents for intervention, usually of a medical nature, with students.

Ro To put you up to date. The last time we talked about him, about (student) that is, we discussed the necessity of getting a complete paediatric evaluation to check out his hearing and his heart. No, through (parent), we talked to the family doctor a month ago and he said his vision and hearing are OK. He has no heart problem in the sense that there is nothing to worry about. He can cope with all kinds of gym activities. He did not attend the paediatric assessment that was scheduled for January 4 91. So there was an appointment made but it was not kept. That is about it.

Organising. As with the other two participants in this study, Roseanne's consultative role during DPT meetings had a component of organisational duties. The one similarity, no doubt out of necessity, was the introduction and setting up of review for students. At the beginning of each meeting, Roseanne introduced a student and then asked the presenting teacher to describe the difficulty.

Ro Our concern was reading comprehension. She has some oral skills. Recommendations were to conference with (teacher) and set up a program, which we did, and contact the former school, which I did not, and we have her at a mid grade 4 program and she feels comfortable with that. Do you have anything you would like to add?
This same procedure applied for all students introduced during the meeting. Along with the 
introductions were the organisation for review of students.

Ro So in eight weeks from now, which will bring us to April 11, we'll look at them again to see if what sister is doing is 
helping them and by that time we'll get more information, 
especially on (student), from. I'll set up a meeting. Would 
any time be OK with you, (teacher)?

Most of the students discussed were scheduled for review with only a few exceptions.

Ro Well, I won't put him down for a review again but if you 
find that he's going back down for whatever reason, be it 
attendance or academics just let us know and we will put 
him back on our agenda. Thanks.

Those statements that served to keep the group on track and monitored the time limitations 
were made in this type of mode of co-ordination of chairing the meeting.

Ro Getting back to (student 1) we are running out of time and 
we have (student 2) to talk about. Just do the different 
testing with her and see where she is at and then should we 
look at her again...

In addition to the co-ordination aspect of her role, Roseanne had organisational 
duties that extended beyond the mechanics of the meeting, as in organising intervention for 
students for academic needs. This was accomplished directly by co-ordinating with the 
teacher to discuss service delivery,

Ro Maybe there is something that you haven't tried yet. Try 
that too. All right, you will basically try these methods in 
the classroom and we can look at him again. How long 
should we wait, a month?

by co-ordination of intervention in the classroom,

Ro OK, just to speed things on here. So we will try that with 
(student) OK. Going to the (teacher) room. Manipulative 
things and you will talk to (teacher) about it. Activities 
that would suit her and we will look at her again before the
end of the year to see if that is working and then maybe add on maybe something else because you were mentioning. I know she is getting a lot of stars, she goes to (teacher 2) takes (teacher 3)'s class for chime in and they do that and I know that (teacher 2) reads a lot in the classroom. So if we find that she still needs more of that then we will add that on next time. When shall we look at her again?

and by arranging for programming outside the classroom setting.

Ro We can't do anything more then till we find out from the medical profession. So (teacher), you will get back to mom?

Within this aspect of her role, Roseanne assigned duties to herself as well as others.

Ro I will, tell the teachers from now on to make sure to bring the work that will be my job.

The final aspect of Roseanne's organisational role was that of co-ordinating outside services. Included in this category were contact with parents, often about obtaining information from the medical community

Ro I would check his vision then, that's what I was concerned about that I... Maybe that's one thing that we can mention to Mom when she comes in is to have him go for .... Any problems with the hearing, vision more than.. What about the hearing? Does he have any...

as well other schools.

Ro OK, so Monday I will meet with (student) and we will go over the contract and see what changes there will be and go on from there. And if he is still with us then we will look at him again March 21.

**Questioning.** The category of questions was permeated by general questions to the group which encouraged the sharing of ideas and opinions.
Ro OK lets get back to (student). What do we do with her now? Should we just leave her at the program that she is at and look at her again at the beginning of the year?

...  

Ro I want to know if she should be IPRC’d. There has been a suggestion, well this is what I want to ask because she is two years behind than she should be, have an IP then she has to be IPRC’d. Does everyone agree? OK, thank you. You are doing a terrific job there (teacher).

Roseanne also used questions to confirm plans

Ro So would you feel that she would benefit more from staying in your classroom till the end of the year or should we do something...

and provide support for individual teachers.

Ro Is there anything special or anything specific I should say that you would like?

The use of questions to clarify and confirm programming suggestions and decisions was also evident.

Ro Does he respond to, like would you be able to talk to him and say, now (student), I want to try something with you like realise or do you realise that you make a lot of noise when you play or whatever it is? Just pick one thing and say what do you think? Do you think you are very noisy? Do you think he would be able to answer you honestly to carry on a conversation so he could see what the problem is or would he deny the fact, the fact that I do make noise or I am a problem or do distract?

...  

Ro The contract, this is what the contract looks like and the rules are: when (student) breaks a rule the teacher will put a check mark in the first empty box and will indicate to the student in a quiet way that he is breaking a rule. The rules are at the top of the agreement. I will speak and make other sounds only when the teacher asks me. So when the rule is broken a check mark is put beside these times. For the next empty box, no for each empty box he will receive 5
minutes of reward time and the total is not to exceed 30 minutes. So basically he works that he gets 30 minutes free time a day. At the beginning of each time block he goes to the special education room and discusses the rules and expectations for the next class with either Mr. (teacher) or myself. He has been doing that and the arrangement was to be reviewed after a week. It was reviewed after the first week and we got rid of extra boxes because he had too many and he was successful with just half that amount which is what we have now. What we have to do again, I asked (student) if we could meet again tomorrow but he won't be here tomorrow he told me. So we can't meet with him tomorrow regarding the agreement and how we are going to change this contract. So we are going to have to sit together with the home room teacher and discuss how the agreement is going to change and put on the agreement in writing that free time will not be taken during language arts or math, is that correct?

General clarification around issues of family information and background of students was also present.

Ro If we meet with the mum would we just put forth our concerns about his behaviour and do we stop there?

Ro How would she respond to being invited here?

Ro Maybe they did come from the states, OK, I could be wrong.

Questions were used to clear up detail or to provide further information about students' abilities in order to aid the problem solving process.

Ro Could be that she is writing fast and just forgot the word.

Finally, questions were used to ensure understanding of responsibilities of the members of the group.

Ro No, when I say teaching, I don't mean as a separate skill, "today we are going to do phonics", but they need that as part of their curriculum. I guess what I am getting to is, is
it going to be done in the classroom or is it going to be
done in the class?

**Agreeing and Supporting.** A fourth category that emerged in the analysis of
Roseanne's consultative role was that of agreement and support. DPT meeting chaired by
Roseanne contain numerous instances of "Yeah" and "OK". Often, these were verbal
nudges to affirm parts of discussion. Contained within this category were those statements
that more directly represented support for teachers.

Ro  Well you are very good with her. Actually you are perfect
with her.

...  

Ro  With the fingers, yeah that will help, Actually there is only
five she doesn't know. I still I have got a hang up on that. I
don't know how important it is for these kids to learn their
multiplication tables. There are pros and cons to it but I
feel that they really don't need to because anybody can
walk around with a calculator in their pocket. It is not
going to be the difference between success and failure.

**Suggesting.** The final category to be discussed is that of program suggestions. A
majority of these statements dealt with academic intervention in the classroom.

Ro  So then is he the child that should be taught phonics, should
be made aware of by actual teaching starting with the initial
consonants this is something they do in Grade one right?
And he doesn't have that yet, so he's still guessing the
visual, this is what it looks like.

Many of these suggestions were in the area of reading and defined the parameters of the
type of intervention that would take place.

Ro  What we're going to get to at the end of (student 1) and
(student 2) is that like I spoke to (student 3) and (student 4)
before about this, and we've agreed that they should get this
extra help in the reading and we did find a time in the
schedule that we can get (student 1) and (student 2) in because they do need. maybe (student 2) is having these frustration problems at school, because he can't . . . he really, he's not reading at grade level so naturally he's going to have a harder time in writing because reading comes before writing and what's going on at a home, I'll tell you right now, if Mom's going through that, and she's probably after every guy that leaves, she's having a hard problem getting herself put together. She's ignoring those kids so (student 2) trying to figure out where he fits in in the society business and family, and that's why I would suggest we start with the Mom and have her become aware that this child's going through a lot of difficulty. Go through the family doctor, as you mentioned (teacher) make sure that it isn't a physical thing and in the meantime, having them withdrawn for this natural language approach, when I say phonics, I mean to throw it in there, because he needs to be made aware of these sounds and he needs to feel better that he can do something, and then we can look at him in another few weeks and see where we should go from there. OK, with that we'll go to (student 1) who was also referred to me by (teacher). Academically actually, he scores lower than (student 2). (teacher), how do you find (student 1)?

Beyond academic suggestions, there were suggestions in the area of behaviour

Ro I thing we should start right away on a behaviour contract something like (student) has. And if you find for example that getting out of his seat is the first behaviour, that you want to get rid of we will put that into his contract and then work on other things.

as well as suggestions for the monitoring of students both academically and behaviourally.

Ro I thought that was where we were going form here. To take (student 1) and (student 2) and the other kids that you were talking about that are having those difficulties that need to be taught. Do your novel; throw in the formal teaching of the decoding skills

Ro In the meantime, (teacher) you can continue to monitor his behaviour in writing and very observable statements, just like what you are doing. To present specific examples to the mum also.
Finally, suggestions that the family be contacted and informed of program were present.

Ro If you just tell the parents this is what we are going to do rather than saying these are the problems that we have. So I am going to get the contract set up and then present it to the parents. That is what I would like to do with (student). Hopefully he will get his work done etc. etc. and then we will see what happens.

**Reflections - Filter 2: Roseanne's Consultative Role (team meetings): an interpretation**

Roseanne, in her statements during DPT, reflected the direct style that I had come to respect in my dealings with her. An overall impression of a businesslike approach to problem solving with an emphasis on making decisions and moving forward seemed to characterise the meetings. If this approach rankled with the team, it was not apparent. The opposite actually appeared to be the case. The efficiency and speedy handling of cases with an emphasis on follow up where necessary allowed for dealing with a large number of students. To review, Roseanne's consultative role in DPT was divided into five categories. The first of these was providing information. As with all participants, the role of the LRT seemed to be a purveyor of information. In Roseanne's case, that information centred on information about the abilities of the student, any testing done and the academic performance. Information about programming and service delivery to the student was also provided by Roseanne. General information regarding family, outside organisations made up the last part of this category.

The second major emphasis was on organisational statements. This type of statement included introducing and setting up reviews for students, keeping track of scheduling considerations, assigning duties and co-ordinating outside agencies.
The category of questioning centred around confirmation of plans, asking if support was needed and obtaining details on specific students or situations. Questions were also used to assign responsibility for tasks.

The final two categories were agreement and support and suggestions. Suggestions centred on academic and behavioural concerns as well as the involvement of the family in interventions.

**Filter 1 & 2: Roseanne's Consultative Role (interview) and her Consultative Role (team meetings): a reflection on some parallels.**

Roseanne, in the beginning of our discussions, stated clearly that the philosophy of the school board reflected a move towards a more consultative type of role. She saw part of this role as being a co-ordinator of personnel and materials. Many aspects of her role in DPT meetings, such as contacting outside agencies, scheduling intervention in terms of programming for students, and record keeping on students reflected the physical realities of her perception of that aspect of her role. Roseanne expressed the need to be a team player and to be a mediator and a supporter of teachers. Looking at her interactions, we saw a use of questioning rather than direct statements to clarify and guide plans for intervention. We saw many brief verbal reminders in the form of "uhhm's" to reassure teachers. Along with this we saw direct support statements to teachers. Suggestions were made with an emphasis on group consensus and with a respect for the teacher's classroom realities as they expressed them. Finally, with reference to the DPT meetings themselves, Roseanne saw herself as the record keeper and the chair of these meetings. She, in her conversations during meetings kept a business like pace. Allowing for the free expression of concerns and
ideas but quickly moving on when conversation strayed if the problem solving process stalled.

**Filter 3: Roseanne's Beliefs about Students' Success and Failure (interview)**

Roseanne talked in detail about individual cases to highlight her beliefs concerning success and failure. Her definition of failure was based on individual success from whatever the students starting point was rather than success in age appropriate curriculum. With this established, she did note that curriculum concerns are a very real factor for the regular classroom teacher.

**Ro** I always felt that. You try to make it as academic as possible, because you're always accountable as to, especially as a classroom teacher. This is the other thing that I found myself doing a lot, in being out of the classroom, but I was part of the same thing in the classroom, but you get hung, not hung up, but you are liable, you have to cover a certain curriculum, so much of a curriculum and when you see these children lagging behind, you start to worry, Oh my goodness. They're at point A and they have to go to point M by June and they are nowhere near that. I'm doing something wrong. And because of that hang up they tend to go too quickly with some of these children and as a result they're creating more frustration and more situations where the child doesn't learn. I see myself doing a lot of that with teachers now. It's like, well that's OK if he didn't learn that now. He needs to see it again, he needs to say it again, he needs to do it again and again and again. I believe in repetitions. Different L.D. children need different amount of repetition. So you might get a child who needs 100 or 1000 repetitions before he learns the word "and". I'm thinking of (student), right now who still can't remember the word "and". So we'll go on to something else but I'll keep throwing the word "and" in there because he needs to see it more often than other words that he can't remember.
Roseanne's statements regarding why children succeed and fail suggested a strong belief that motivation was an extremely important factor in enabling a child to succeed.

Ro Yes, as a teacher you have to start first. You have to try to motivate the child.

This theme occurred often in Roseanne's discussions of children; the importance of the child being personally motivated.

Ro There is no motivation on his part. I think motivation here is the key too. When you try to motivate this child and nothing seems to work. He is motivated only when you are working with him side by side and even then you need all your energy to keep him on task. Because he is so far behind he needs to practice and he is not going to practice on his own because he doesn't have the motivation and because for the (not clear) it is like a link. It is not just one thing he is not learning because he is not practising. He is not practising because he is not motivated. He is not motivated because he doesn't see the need. He doesn't see the need because...

Roseanne noted the responsibility of the teacher to help develop this motivation.

Ro He is motivated. We can find things to get him excited. He loves games so we use that to get him to learn and because of his memory he is learning vocabulary words. It is taking him a long time but once he has got it in his mind, once it is there, he doesn't lose it.

Ro He is motivated to beat me to learn these words. he does have that drive. That is the word, drive and you have got to just pick up on that drive and make him go even farther. He is truly LD he also has a speech difficulty, he has a language barrier and he has the same environment as the other child but the difference is that his memory is a bit better and he has got the motivation it is there.

The responsibility of the teacher to help provide motivation was expanded by her to include the responsibility of school and teacher to provide a caring class where the child could learn comfortably.
Ro Good teacher in the sense that you want them to accept the child, acceptance of the child. I think caring. I think that teachers have to be more caring. You could be a good teacher in the sense of knowing all the latest curriculum but if you don't like kids and you haven't got the patience for them then you better not be here cause they are not going to learn because they can pick it up. They are going to hate you and they are not going to learn. So I think that that is very important.

Self-esteem was seen as an important factor in a child's learning. Certainly references to a caring classroom suggested that the comfort level and confidence of a student were important. In more specific comments regarding self-esteem, Roseanne noted:

Ro What I'm thinking about right now is self-concept and self-image. I know that has a lot to do with teaching children. If they don't have a good self-concept, you can be the best teacher and teach academics and it may not get through to the child. I believe that it won't. You have to look at the child first. The first two things I rule out is a medical problem and emotional. If a child is very very unhappy with himself or his family situation or even with the school situation, that child is not going to learn. So you have to make sure all those aspects are taken care of.

Home environment was seen as important in terms of the motivation and achievement of the student. Roseanne spoke of two children in similar home situations where one was failing and the other was doing well.

Ro Now that, the home environment there is about the same, even though there are both parents they really, they work in the evenings. There is not that what is the word, emphasis, and also there is not the supervising of the children that there should be. They are allowed to go to bed at any time. Sometimes he will stay up and wait for his mom to come home if it is 11 or whenever the afternoon shift is finished. They are cleaning the offices stuff like that. So he is almost left on his own and he is only in grade 4.
In this case the student was successful. To Roseanne, while home life was important, it was not the most crucial factor.

What was important to Roseanne was the impact of ability on success. Roseanne communicated that a student's ability would certainly have an impact on the teaching techniques to be used with that child.

Ro I demand more work of an LD child than I do of a slow learner. We do have slow learners in this school. The globally delayed we call them. They are usually hard workers you know. Their motivation, even their characteristics are different. I find that their motivation is quite good. They want to learn. They do work. I am thinking of three of them right now that you could just give them their whole program and they will just sit there and do it. They may wander off at times but it doesn't take much to get them back on task. They are very eager to please. They are receptive to what you have to say, whereas the LD children because of they have more knowledge, more understanding, know that they are slow on something. They put themselves down first and their minds are just taken over by the wrong things at the wrong time and it is your job as a teacher to get them to think the right things at the right time. Like right now, you are doing reading well great that means you turn off the radio kind of thing. They have to be told these things and that means that you always have to look at the word in order to read it. Sometimes something as simple as that needs to be told to a child. Well I would like you to look at the word first and then let's see if we can read it and now let's look at it from left to right and does it look like anything to you, is it a long word or a short word. All these things have to be taught to the LD children and once they have that then they can be on their way.

When asked what that crucial factor was, Roseanne stated "the learning disability". She saw this disability as being unchangeable and therefore the onus of responsibility was on finding ways around this obstacle.
Ro Yes, the LD will always be there but you can still be very successful. Yes, they can use techniques to help them. This is basically what we are trying to teach these people is, of course, to get as much as they can automatically information but the rest of it to use tricks and little things too, for example get organised and be on task and teach them these techniques.

A final category that emerged was that of physical ability. This was noted only in a situation where a physical illness or injury might have had an impact on learning. The investigation of a physical cause for failure would only proceed so as to eliminate a physical factor that may inhibit the child for example poor fine motor control.

In her characterisation of why children succeed and fail, Roseanne put a lot of responsibility on herself to influence learning. When asked, "To what would you attribute the sudden failure of a student," Roseanne stated,

Ro If that, first of all, I would look at myself first. If I had just worked with words and games and then all of a sudden I gave him a test and he fails it. I wouldn't say that he doesn't know homonyms. I would say "whoa wait a minute". Was the test too long? Was he not feeling well? Maybe he couldn't read the sentence. I would find out first from the other, I would look at what I had given him and if it wasn't the task then I would go back much further then.

She saw the commitment of teachers as being vital to creating successful learning environments. While being very supportive of the efforts of the teacher in the regular classroom, having been one herself for many years, she ended our discussion on this note.

Ro See, I don't see those teachers as bad teachers. I see them more as lacking information. When I talk about bad teachers, I am simply thinking about, "Well I am just in it for the summer months" and it just irks me when I hear a teacher say, "Well, I don't have to be here". Well, get out, do us a favour and do those children a favour, leave. No matter how bright you are if you don't feel you should be here, that is a bad teacher.
Reflections - Filter 3: Roseanne's Beliefs about Success and Failure (interview): An Interpretation

Roseanne's beliefs about students were viewed from two perspectives, those factors that are changeable and those that are not. The LD, as Roseanne states was a given. What were not givens were motivation, the impact of home life and most importantly the power of the teacher to manipulate the learning environment.

Tough beliefs about student were the focus of our conversations it was very clear that Roseanne had one overriding belief about teachers. You either were a teacher or you were pretending to be. To Roseanne a teacher was someone who liked students and shows it. A pretender is someone who liked the holidays that went along with teaching. In Roseanne's mind, the students knew the difference and that influences learning.

With the notion that LD is immutable we saw Roseanne's efficient manner take over. Taking LD as a given what did the school have the power to control. In Roseanne's view curriculum, emotional environment and at times physical characteristics could be manipulated to improve learning. The responsibility for these changes was a shared one between school, student and home.

Filter 4: Roseanne's Beliefs about Students (team meetings)

Roseanne's beliefs about students as manifested in the DPT meetings were sorted into the following categories; introduction/review, testing, ability, physical, behaviour, program intervention, parental involvement, and a very small section titled cultural concerns.
**Introduction/Review.** The first of these categories, introduction and review was presented in some detail in the consultative role Roseanne played in DPT meetings.

Certainly, by their very nature, these statements served an organisational function in the context of the meeting. It was felt that they were worth noting with regard to Roseanne's beliefs about children in terms of the information they provided about students. Those areas that Roseanne chose to highlight in the introductions were of interest. Roseanne used the introductions to highlight and review concerns and program suggestions.

Ro So you mentioned mostly his behaviour in the form that you gave me. You have also a concern about his reading. I circled here falling asleep, I want to make sure that was brought up at the meeting, very messy printing, so his fine motor skills are not ..

Roseanne's showed unfailing consistency in setting up review for students.

Ro Maybe there is something that you haven't tried yet. Try that too. All right you will basically try these methods in the classroom and we can look at him again. How long should we wait, a month,

**Testing.** In the category of testing, keeping 'on top of kids' seemed a priority. This monitoring consisted of ascertaining skill levels for students

Ro Oh I tested her she scored at 2.9. Across the board she is mid grade two level actually. Word comprehension was 2.2 passage comprehension 3.5, word attack 2.6, and word identification 2.6.

as well as tracking and reporting their behaviour.

Ro I did write down that any movements in my room she did pay attention to. Which is another way of saying that she is very distracted. Anything, anything at all.

Ro In the meantime (teacher), you can continue to monitor his behaviour in writing and very observable statements, just
like what you are doing. To present specific examples to the mum also.

Apart from the monitoring aspect of assessing students, the importance of obtaining academic levels on students was noted in many cases as a means of programming for students.

Ro Although he scored lower, he has more skills than (student 1), believe it or not. (student 2) probably has a very good memory and he remembered some of the words. (student 1) didn't know the words but at least he would look at them and say, well it's something or other but he knew that he was supposed to start at a certain point. He has the beginning skills, he has the beginning consonant sounds. I recorded everything he said. He has no reversals, which is good, he just can't put the rest of them together so again with the extra help. Fine motor it seems that both these boys are having problems with fine motor. There's a lot of things in this room that you're welcome to take and all kinds of fine motor skills. You can do, you can put it as a Centre so that everyone is welcome to it but make sure that (student 1) and (student 2) go to that quite often. We can get around the fine motor that way. So, that would be my suggestion and the team's that (student 1) and (student 2) be withdrawn and do it for about eight weeks? Look at them in another eight weeks and see ..

Ability. Roseanne based many of her statements regarding a student's ability on a description of what a student could or could not do.

Ro Even his printing everything his reading, has gone up. His printing is much better. He couldn't separate words. He used to print words one over the other. Now he knows that and he is really coming along. So there aren't any more problems. Then that is it.

Ro Yeah, like she sees 'little' and says 'light', so she has an idea of the configuration of the word and the beginning of the sound and then yes, that is the whole word and the rest is guessing but she will look at the word 'then' and say 'that', 'say' and say 'sue' 'she' is guessing. She has no English. We have to keep in mind, both parents speak
Portuguese she is the oldest. Any English is done at school.

Often the statements were related to the area of reading. Testing results, as mentioned earlier were also used as an indicator of ability.

Ro Much weaker, she only scored at a high grade 2 level.

Ability was also measured though comparisons with other students.

Ro Most kids at that age.. well, you have (student 1) also, (student 2) rather, who also cannot read, but yet he'll look at the word. I'll show his paper next, and he'll know that he doesn't know but he'll start with, he's focusing at the beginning of the word and he'll go 't'. I don't know the rest of it, but he knows that's where he starts and that's the beginning sound, whereas (student 1) looks at it, tries to figure it out and then he comes up with something completely different.

Roseanne discussed the possibility of an inherent factor that inhibits learning by suggesting the possible existence of a learning disability.

Ro He is one of the children that was withdrawn for that specific period of time. And you are saying that he is still quite behind so there is a definite learning disability.

This decision as to whether or not a child is actually learning disabled is one that arises throughout DPT discussions.

Ro But I am saying that he could have missed the actual teaching although his work shows some characteristics of LD children and he did score very low.

... 

Ro We can't really say whether she's LD or ...

**Cultural concerns.** One of the smaller categories, cultural factors, merited discussion under this heading. In comparing students to peers, Roseanne used the example
of students who are all in ESL together and point out that, accounting for language
difficulties one student is not doing as well as her peers.

Ro But her progress, I would dare to say, is not as fast or at the
same rate as the slower kids. So even though the ESL is
there, you can see she, the whole family, is not learning as,
in comparison to the other ESL children so we have to keep
an eye on them because of that. All of them, the three of
them, are very slow.

In this school, many of the students came from culturally different backgrounds than
that of the general population of the community. This fact was discussed only in terms of
how it may have had an impact on the learning of the student.

Ro Do you find that these lack of verb tenses could that be
more of a, say, a learning disability or because she just
doesn't have a grasp of the total English language.

Physical. Students' ability, while separated into a single category, was closely
related to other factors in the analysis of Roseanne's statements. The physical development
and maturity of a student was a consideration in programming for students.

Ro That explains a lot of the readiness skills that she doesn't
have yet. OK

The physical condition of a student was a common topic in the DPT meetings.

Ro OK, last time we discussed him then, the recommendation
was to refer him to the family doctor.

... 

Ro The 9th then. All that I can do at this point if I see him on a
regular basis, do the natural language approach with him.
He is learning some vocabulary but very slowly. So,
basically we are concerned about him getting a paediatric
assessment so I will continue to call home.

... 

Ro To put you up to date. The last time we talked about him,
about (student) that is, we discussed the necessity of getting
a complete paediatric evaluation to check out his hearing and his heart. We talked to the family doctor a month ago and he said his vision and hearing are OK. He has no heart problem in the sense that there is nothing to worry about he can cope with all kinds of gym activities. He did not attend the paediatrician that was scheduled for January 4, '91. So there was an appointment made but it was not kept. That is about it.

The elimination of a contributing physical factor that may have inhibited learning was an important focus.

Ro OK, so we could look at him again in the near future to see first of all if he has had a paediatric assessment because that is the most important one. We are now in April. Shall we look at him towards the end of the year or leave it till September?

**Behaviour.** Another factor that was explored during DTP's was the impact of a student's behaviour on learning. Roseanne saw the attention of students during class as having an impact on learning.

Ro He also, I have observed him in music class and even during testing, I thought it was just the atmosphere of testing, kids are nervous, but during testing he is going like this, pulling his sleeves. I wrote down everything he did, his pants he was pulling them up. My God, I get tired just looking at him. And, in music it was the same thing. He was interested in the song. (Music teacher) was very good. He keeps them going and moving so you don't have time to daydream in his class and yet he is there with a hood and he takes it off and he puts it on and then he slides down his chair. You name it he does it.

The importance of a co-operative attitude was noted also.

Ro To put it a little more strongly, that (student). He is defiant. All those behaviours. I have seen him in the classroom, "You can't make me" or "Make me". And that worries me in a child that young, that is actually challenging you to make him do something. If it isn't looked at now he can be
a real behaviour problem when he gets older. How is he academically?

PT I don't know how he is doing in Environmental Studies because he didn't hand in an assignment. I should have brought his report card. In reading, he is doing very well on the program we have him on. He is a more organised child, although you know today, I don't know why he did this. In his good workbook he draws this and then waited for my reaction. So yeah...

Ro Yeah, he wants to see "What are you going to do now".

PT His work is neat. It is complete. He can read it all. He is doing well on that program. It is not his work that troubles me, it is his behaviour.

Ro Yeah, yeah.

PT His art work is excellent. That is another one that is talented with creative art. He uses his hand and he does things that none of the other children are doing. He is very original. He is not afraid to mess up the page as long as it's his idea.

SP (Not clear, asked a question)

PT Yes, I think part of the thing with homework, there was a problem. She had been apparently going to take him to Florida with the other brothers but she didn't. She took the older brother and he stayed home and he was very upset. That week was just terribly rotten. And he told me about this trip to Florida and I think that is ... But it seems to me like there has been a lot of promising and it is not followed through and I think he has been let down.

Ro Uhhm, could be.

SP (Asking about brother) (The teachers discuss that the brother is different)

Ro But he is very very mild compared to (student 1). (student 1) will look at you straight in the eyes and challenge you. (student 2) will do it more you know....
The little guy in kindergarten seems to be following in the footsteps of (student 2). I can see it. They have the same kinds of behaviour patterns. He will just walk into the classroom and just disrupt everything. He is not a shy child.

So what can be done with a child this young that is showing such....

Services for him because I think he is a child that would benefit from ... not very many are recommended that early but I do think that he is troubled.

It sounds like he needs to be liked.

Uhhm, and they have been taking things from him and promising things that he is not getting. Of course she has all these feelings. Maybe he just needs to learn how to deal with them.

With him to it depends on the day I think. Some days he is more co-operative than others.

If the family is amenable to it.

Yeah, if the family doesn't co-operate ....

So where do we go from here?

Working at it from a school angle, we can only do so much but maybe we should get to the root of it.

There is another little one at home.

I thought when I bumped into her at a basket ball once she had another little kid with her.

Could she have been baby-sitting him?

Could be.

I don't think that there is one younger than (student 2).

No.
Ro If we meet with the mum, would we just put forth our concerns about his behaviour and do we stop there?

Behaviour was dealt with in the DPT meetings by monitoring, the use of parental contact and contracts. Part of this development of a co-operative attitude may have been attained by involving the student in the problem solving process, as suggested by Roseanne.

Ro If he does, perhaps that would be another way of going about it. They feel to be part of the problem solver, so he has part of it and say "You have your rights you know, I do make a lot of noise, but (student), what do you think you can do to help out?" or Why shouldn't you make the noise. Let him tell you. Maybe, because of his defiance of you, it seems that things have to come from him. So if everything comes from him perhaps he'll be more receptive to doing it. I don't know.

**Program intervention.** The next category, program intervention was interrelated to the previous category. A number of the interventions suggested dealt with specific suggestions in the area of reading.

Ro Well, that is what we have done with that novel study...

PT1 Ravenswood. He was in Ravenswood II and he did not answer one comprehension question correctly.

Ro I am not talking about comprehension, but we stressed the word analysis skills in that novel. How did he do in that?

PT1 In what part?

Ro The word analysis the ones I made up.

PT1 He had a hard time...

Ro Then that is what he needs a lot of... and maybe you can use the novel to keep concentrating on that aspect there. Instead of having 10 comprehension questions, have one, or make it a lot fewer but concentrate more on the word analysis.
PT1  Well we will be doing another novel study. He won't be able to be in a grade 5 level. He can't I know that right now.

Ro  Well put him in a novel at his grade level, but add those decoding skills, make it part of the program so what you need to do is stress more the word structural skills rather than the comprehension for now.

Many of these interventions were to take place in the classroom setting.

Ro  And I am sure that you will have one group because these two that sit in with (helper) 's group and they can sit in the classroom and do an activity.

Other suggestions highlighted the importance, to Roseanne, of temporarily withdrawing the student for assistance.

Ro  ...So that would be my suggestions and the team's, that he be withdrawn and do it for about eight weeks.

Suggestions focused on specific skills that should be developed,

Ro  Uhhm, I find too that (teacher) and I talked about it that she needs a lot of concrete experiences with math. She doesn't have the concept of addition at all. She doesn't realise what 2+1 is. She still needs to play with objects. Now you were mentioning about spending some time in kindergarten. I could see (student) really benefiting from it. How does that work?

on the importance of breaking down work into manageable pieces,

Ro  Let's take that first and then see if they can comprehend it, stuff like that.

on follow up and practice,

Ro  What do you think of this, doing what you suggested, and I am doing this with (student), a grade 7 child who was practically a non-reader. Actually taking the work that you are doing and making the word families but having them in his own little book and I find that when he forgets and you go back to it and he sees that, maybe the configuration, he
will remember "oh!" This is what he can take home to practice and that will help him further.

and a structured approach to instruction.

Ro  Well, knowing the fact that they just don't have the skills whether they don't remember it or whether they need the phonics skills again but in a contextual form. But it needs to be formal.

**Parental involvement**. The final category to be discussed was that of the involvement of the home on a child’s learning. Statements that involved the home were generally comments that suggested that a parent be contacted for the exchange of information, at times as mentioned earlier, to work towards a particular goal such as improving behaviour.

Ro  If you just tell the parents this is what we are going to do rather than saying these are the problems that we have. So I am going to get the contract set up and then present it to the parents. That is what I would like to do with (student). Hopefully he will get his work done etc. etc. and then we will see what happens.

or to request the involvement of an outside intervention, namely the medical community.

Ro  So what do we do keep after her? Shall we, for example, request a paediatric assessment now knowing, ah, it is not severe, why wait.

Information regarding the home life of the student was also shared if it was thought to be pertinent to learning,

Ro  (student 1) doesn't have anyone at home to talk to in English. Her brother doesn't pay much attention to her at all. She is alone most of the time. Whereas (student 2) she has a lot of older sisters and her parents speak English so
she has the advantage right there. OK, so we will leave it at that.

or the emotional state of the student.

Ro  What we're going to get to at the end of (student 1) and (student 2) is that like I spoke to (student 3) and (student 4) before about this, and we've agreed that they should get this extra help in the reading and we did find a time in the schedule that we can get (student 1) and (student 2) in because they do need. maybe (student 2) is having these frustration problems at school, because he can't . . . he really, he's not reading at grade level so naturally he's going to have a harder time in writing because reading comes before writing and what's going on at home, I'll tell you right now, if Mom's going through that, and she's probably after every guy that leaves, she's having a hard problem getting herself put together. She's ignoring those kids so (student 2) trying to figure out where he fits in in the society business and family, and that's why I would suggest we start with the Mom and have her become aware that this child's going through a lot of difficulty. Go through the family doctor, as you mentioned (teacher) make sure that it isn't a physical thing and in the meantime, having them withdrawn for this natural language approach, when I say phonics, I mean to throw it in there, because he needs to be made aware of these sounds and he needs to feel better that he can do something, and then we can look at him in another few weeks and see where we should go from there.

OK, with that we'll go to (student 1) who was also referred to me by (teacher). Academically actually, he scores lower than (student 2). (teacher), how do you find (student 1)?

Reflections - Filter 4: Roseanne's Beliefs about Students (team meetings): An Interpretation

To review, the categories that emerged in the analysis of Roseanne's beliefs about students role were introduction/review, testing, ability, cultural factors, physical and maturational, behaviour, program interventions, and the involvement of the home. Of note in the introduction and review was Roseanne's consistency in setting up review for students.

Ongoing monitoring of students was important. Even plans for intervention were generally
given a time limit in which to measure progress. Roseanne's efficiency came through here. Discuss, plan, assess, and replan was the pattern, discontinue something that was not working.

Testing information was used in providing information for programming and to monitor students. This testing was at times formal but often involved direct observation in the classroom either by Roseanne and/or the classroom teacher. Much of the assessment information was subtle and couched in the intervention strategies. A suggestion to chunk work was based on the teacher's observational assessment that the student was falling behind. Communications about student's ability often involved description of action noted in the regular classroom. Roseanne even suggests anecdotal records of in-class behaviour compiled by the teacher be used as a vehicle for communication to parents. Student's ability was considered along with the factors of culture, physical and maturational issues. Information in these areas was used to identify, used for programming and, where possible, and to eliminate any inhibiting factor.

The distinction between whether or not a child was LD was important in conversations. Suggestions were often aimed at eliminating the potential contributions of cultural, physical, motivational and environmental factors before making the decision that a child was or was not LD.

Students' behaviour was seen as important, with an emphasis on the necessity of being attentive. Assessment of behavioural difficulties was generally obtained through observation in the regular class. A suggestion to involve a student directly in the planning of intervention was noted. Including students in this process is seen as positive in the process of changing behaviour. In terms of program intervention, strategies like chunking
work follow up and practice and brief withdrawal for specific skills were used. Most of these suggestions were aimed at allowing the student to remain in the regular class.

Finally, the family was implicated in terms of sharing information either with or about them.

Filter 3 & 4: Roseanne's Beliefs about Students (interview) and Roseanne's Beliefs about Students (team meetings): A Reflection on some Parallels

Roseanne, in discussing her beliefs about students, stressed the importance of the teacher's ability to change the learning environment to meet the students needs. She saw the demands of curriculum as important but expressed the realisation that, for the classroom teacher working with an exceptional student, these demands could be onerous. Roseanne saw the use of chunking and repetition as effective techniques and recommended these types of strategies in DPT meetings. Programming for students at times involved a brief withdrawal for remediation in a specific area. Also a great emphasis was placed on the necessity of follow up and practice for students. Roseanne felt that a good match between teaching and learner were essential for success.

The motivation of the student was an element that Roseanne felt was essential to ensure success. In the DPT meetings this motivation was linked to home life, behaviour in class and academic success. It was stressed that a co-operative attitude on the part of the student was important. This motivation was encouraged in efforts to allow the child to be part of the problem solving process.

Roseanne saw the student's environment, both home and school, as important for success. Involvement of the home was characterised by information sharing regarding the situation at home and the student's emotional state. Certainly, information was shared with the home with regard to programming and other interventions but the inability of the school
to have a direct impact on the home was evident. With this in mind, the ability of the
teachers to affect the school environment was strong. The use of different teaching
techniques, as mentioned earlier, arranging for additional help, planning for a structured
approach to instruction and ensuring follow up, all contributed to manipulating the school
environment to ensure success.

Another category discussed was that of ability. Roseanne saw ability as well as
physical considerations and maturational issues as having an impact on success. Testing
was part of the focus of the DPT meetings. Setting a baseline of students' capabilities
through testing and observation and using that information to program was useful. Contact
with outside agencies, such as medical facilities, was used to check out and hopefully
eliminate any factors that would inhibit learning. Finally, a combination of testing and
monitoring was used to check a student's readiness to cope with regular class demands.

The establishment of true LD was a factor in both Roseanne's discussion of her
beliefs and the DPT transcripts. In both, it seemed to be important to clarify whether or not
the students truly had a learning disability. Elimination of any inhibiting factors was a
focus in team meetings. Paediatric assessment, slowing down the pace and building self-
esteeem were techniques used to enhance learning. If when done, the teacher is still faced
with the existence of continued difficulty on the part of the student, then LD must be
considered. Whether this had a direct impact on programming ideas or just frame of
reference is impossible to ascertain given the information collected. Certainly, in
Roseanne's discussions about belief's, one would say that at the very least her frame of
reference regarding a particular student would be affected.
Finally, the area of self-esteem was noted as important for success. In the DPT meetings, few direct statements were made regarding the self-esteem of the student. We could assume that the changes in program to meet the students' needs, the provision of additional resources and personnel to help students and other interventions would have a positive effect on self-esteem but this is not directly referred to as such.

**Roseanne: the pragmatist: an overview**

Roseanne was warm and personable. She allowed you in and welcomes your input. She allowed a scrutiny of her work by me that would have been difficult for many. Her own reference to self-reflection was expanded to the welcoming of examination by others.

While warmth and openness were evident when you were with her, it was her practical nature that shone through in her consultative role. Being practical in her beliefs about students she communicated a need to keep moving. Look at the difficulties, eliminate those factors that are inhibiting learning (where you can), try something, assess, move on. Practically speaking, she felt home life was important but a bad home life is not necessarily debilitating to the student. School environment was malleable. Ability did seem to be an inherent factor to Roseanne, though, being of a practical bent, control and change those things you can. Motivate, initiate and regulate but get something accomplished.

Consultatively, the warmth and personableness came through in the respect she showed for her colleagues. The practicality came through in the efficient handling of people and resources.
Roseanne's practical nature prohibited her from having all the answers. She had too much common sense to be under the illusion that she had the key (whatever that should be). Her common sense allowed her to let team members stand on equal ground. Her practical nature didn't allow them to stand around.
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The case studies presented in this study were three individual stories. Because of this, part of the interpretation and discussion of these stories was presented within the individual case studies. This interpretation, included with each case study, was an attempt to view the words of participants within the context of their particular setting. Having said this, these three women did portray three versions of the same story. The plot for this story was their experiences and beliefs in relation to their changed role.

This chapter consists of four distinct yet interrelated sections. The first of these is a revisitation of the literature presented in chapter 2 of this inquiry. This literature encompassed areas related to the consultative process such as; training, personality, experience, teacher resistance and administrative support. These areas are reviewed in relation to the three participants' stories. Also included is a brief discussion of the definition of a consultant and the modes of consultation used. The second section of this chapter is an overview of the three participants in relation to the questions posed at the beginning of this inquiry. To review, these questions were:

1. What are these teachers' stated beliefs about students?
2. What are these teachers' stated beliefs about their consultative role?
3. What is the relationship between these teachers' stated beliefs and their consultative practice during in-school team meetings?
The third section examines three areas of interest that arose as a result of this study that require further development and exploration. These areas are as follows: these teachers' consultative role in the school, the impact of school environment on the creation and maintenance of that role, and finally the relationship between beliefs and these teachers' consultative practice. In the fourth section, I reflect on my own process of completing this inquiry.

Revisiting the literature

At this point it becomes interesting to revisit some of the questions and points raised in the review of literature. The issues of training, personality traits, experience, teacher resistance and administrative support were discussed in relation to the literature. All three participants stated that they had not received any formal training in consultation, though each had a specialist certificate in special education. For all three women, their school board had communicated a clear message that their role would become more consultative. They did receive informal training in the form of workshops but each felt that more training directly in the area of consultation would have been helpful. This lack of specific training in the area of consultation is not unusual and the training that is available varies considerably (Hudson & Glomb, 1997; Strawderman & Lindsey, 1995). Workshops themselves have been shown to be ineffective vehicles for the communication of knowledge (Fullan, 1991), though of more concern than the vehicle by which information is transmitted are the source and the shape of that information. Difficulties such as top down delivery of information, lack of follow-up support, poorly defined role relationships, and the group approach that often sacrifices individual needs
have continued to plague professional development (Fullan, 1991). Training in
consultation as a type of professional development should consider the relevance of the
individual, school and system needs. Whether improved professional development would
lead to better consulting is still an area that needs additional investigation.

With respect to personality, in my experience, having worked closely with many
learning resource teachers, I would have difficulty finding three more accommodating
and pleasant people. Certainly their recommendation by a superior that they be included
in the study, along with their agreement to do so, suggested that these women were co-
operative and open by nature. This certainly was my experience with them. Whether
these qualities make them better consultants is an unanswered question. Fairness, self-
presentation, self-assuredness, flexibility, good interactional skills and co-operation are
seen as important qualities to possess as a consultant (Friend & Cook, 1992, Friend,
Bursuck & Hutchinson, 1998, Wilson, 1989). While these participants demonstrated
these and other qualities, the effect of those parts of their personality on the consultation
process is one that is open to differing interpretations.

All three participants were experienced, senior teachers. Diane had been teaching
for 16 years, Regina for 20 and Roseanne for 21. Not all their experience was in a special
education role. All three were regular classroom teachers before taking on the challenge
of special education. Roseanne had been a regular classroom teacher in her current
school for many years and felt that that added much to her credibility. While the value of
experience has received little direct empirical examination, the consensus in the field
seems to be that more experienced teachers are better equipped to deal with the
complexities of consultation (Dickens and Jones 1990). Certainly breadth of experience
among team members is considered an important factor that can contribute varying levels of expertise and information to a meeting. (Friend et al., 1998)

Because of the limitations of this study, I was not able to observe the execution of plans made during DPT meetings. It is impossible for me to say whether what I saw was co-operation on the part of team members or resistance, which can be in the form of verbal compliance without further action. Because attendance at team meetings was mandated for members of the team, their attendance at these DPT meetings would not be sufficient to judge whether or not they were there out of a sincere desire to be part of this process. However, the number of cases brought forward during the meetings and the waiting lists of students to be discussed could indicate that teachers in the schools saw the process as useful. Barriers to consultation such as lack of support and time constraints (Jordan, 1994) were addressed to some degree by the fact that the meetings were mandatory and also by the regular presence of school board resource personnel at the meetings. While the settings and the client base for the three schools were similar, some differences were noticeable. The interactions at Roseanne's and Regina's meetings did not seem to reflect any resistance on the part of the teachers. The routine for communication at in-school team meetings was well established and the open exchange of ideas was evident. In Diane's meetings, however, the conversations were more stilted. They focused on what Diane could and would be doing for exceptional students outside the regular class. Diane worked well within this framework but expressed her desire to break out of this type of service delivery.

Administrative support, according to Fullan (1991), is a key factor in the process of change. Certainly the School Board level of administration in this situation showed a
clear support for the consultative process in their provision of a clear direction, support personnel and requirements for in-school teams to be a part of the special education process. (Of course, whether these are effective ways to promote change is another discussion). Principal involvement, as noted by Stanovich (1996), can be a key factor in supporting, encouraging and providing concrete support for the collaborative effort within a school. Friend et al., (1998) described the principal’s role as being influential in establishing a collaborative environment within the school. Both Regina and Roseanne were encouraged by their principals to enter the field of special education. For Diane, it was a personal choice stemming from a desire to help exceptional students. While my analysis did not include the principals’ role, their presence showed a commitment to the process. In both Roseanne’s and Regina’s schools, the principal was in regular attendance. Interestingly, at Diane’s meetings, the principal was often absent. In Diane’s school, the principal’s role appeared managerial. Diane noted during my discussions with her that the principal made sure that the team was set up and that the meetings were scheduled but had little involvement otherwise. This managerial style differs from action oriented participation (Dugoff, Ives & Shortel, 1990) in which the administrator takes an active role in meetings.

The two larger issues discussed in the literature were, who is the consultant and what models of consultation are in use? In this inquiry, the consultant is someone who does a variety of jobs. These women co-ordinated people and resources, provided support and information, performed direct intervention and assessment with students, communicated formally and informally with peers and the public and co-ordinated and chaired in-school team meetings. The 'hats' that these participants wore were many and
varied. These 'hats' were similar in all three cases. The differences in part, lay in their personal interpretation of the role. Whether a protector, a pragmatist or a facilitator, these women were all participating in consultative practices in their schools. How each balanced the demands and requirements of the job with her underlying belief systems was what defined consulting for them. Diane's consultative role was characterised more along the lines of service provider. Her role reflected much of what Jordan (1994) describes as a pathognomonic teacher; assessing children to find the difficulty, programming to 'cure' that difficulty and re-testing. The other two consultants reflected more of an interventionist approach (Jordan, 1994). Teachers discussed the concerns, modifications were attempted and then the cases were re-examined at a later date to assess whether the intervention had been successful. This review of the cases served as a vehicle for further intervention. This problem solving approach based on the collection of information, formulation of a plan, intervention with the student and then review is common (Friend et al., 1998; Mills, 1995; Smith, Luckasson & Crealock, 1995.

The next question to be re-examined is "What model of consulting was used"? For the purposes of this study, a very structured format was used. This was the in-school team, defined by this board as, various personnel found within the school who act as a program and resource team to assist classroom teachers and special education teachers to adapt and modify programs within the classroom. This definition is similar to Weber's (1993) definition of a support or assistance team the purpose of which is to consult with individual teachers who require assistance regarding students perceived as having special needs (Weber, 1993). In these schools, the learning resource teacher (Regina, Diane and Roseanne) chaired each team meeting. This role is a typical one for an LRT (Wiener &
Davidson, 1990). They took all notes and they arranged follow up. The teams each had a regular classroom representative from each division, a school board resource person and a principal when possible. The meetings were held during lunch hours with usually 2 to 3 students discussed. While the workings of the model were similar, the underlying philosophies were different. In Diane’s model, advocacy for the child was central. This advocacy, as defined by Conoley & Conoley (1982), involves the advocate siding with one person to the possible detriment of another. Diane’s concerns over the wellbeing of each child in some ways overrode the in-school team approach that is characterised by collaboration among peers. Roseanne’s and Regina’s models reflected many more of the characteristics that are defined in the literature on successful consulting. There was more evidence of parity among the participants, goal sharing, resource sharing and accountability (Friend & Cook, 1992). This type of in-school team meeting is closer to this school board’s description of in-school team which focuses on shared responsibility and problem solving for exceptional students.

Three portraits

Regina: The Facilitator

Regina’s name for her role, as with all three women in this inquiry, was assigned at the end of the analysis of data. The word facilitator was chosen to represent how she perceived herself as well as to characterise her role, in action, during DPT meetings. An
overview of Regina's stated beliefs about students showed self esteem as being important for a student's success.

R "We show them that it is OK, You can pick up a pencil and you can write. You know you can do it. So now they have overcome the negative self image they came up with and they are flying."

This belief that self-esteem was important was reinforced later when discussing why some children with good ability still do not succeed. In this case Regina noted

R "I've seen lots of smart children who don't (succeed) and are very, and their self esteem is so low.

Belief in the importance of self-esteem went hand in hand with student success. Regina felt that, given opportunities to succeed, self-esteem would be enhanced. Regina saw herself, as well as other teachers, as being responsible for providing opportunities for success.

R "The nature of the task and has to be something that can be accomplished. You can't give a child a task he can't do and expect him to do it. So it has to be at his ability level so that he can meet with success"

While responsibility for success was set squarely on the shoulders of the teacher, Regina felt that what could be done at school could be undone at home. She expressed the concern that many children did not receive the type of support from their home that enabled them to be successful at school. That is not to say that all responsibility for failure was placed on the home but rather, that those conditions at school that could contribute to failure could also be overcome by effort on the part of the school. The influence of home was not as malleable.
In terms of her consultative role, Regina saw herself as wearing many hats. She interacted with parents, students and peers. She often consulted outside of the forum of the DPT meeting and co-ordinated resources such as volunteers and materials. A brief list of her duties as she describes them include; working with parent volunteers, placing co-op students, consulting with parents, direct intervention with students, notetaker and chair of DPT meetings, facilitator of discussions among teachers and a source of personal support to teachers.

Regina felt that being available to teachers and being supportive of them was a very important aspect of her role.

R "I also provide not only advice for teachers to use in their class but also sometimes support for themselves, a pat on the back just to let them know they are doing the right job.

Important to her perception of her role was that she did not inflict her ideas on others.

R "It's not so much that I shell out advice because if that were the case we would not have the DPT meeting .... The whole reason for and philosophy for DPT is that teachers bring their expertise to the meetings and I facilitate that. I more or less facilitate the discussion, try to encourage suggestions from other members of the team, bounce ideas off them. They bounce ideas off each other so in a way I am a facilitator."

The relationship between Regina's stated beliefs and her consultative practice during team meetings was consonant. Regina stressed in her discussions that self-esteem was important. During team meetings, she often encouraged suggestions and discussions that allowed for the enhancement of self esteem though methods such as verbal praise and a positive attitude on the part of the teacher.
R. "Has he ever done anything that you could kind of praise him for?"

Regina played down the notion of ability during team meetings, choosing instead to focus on issues of motivation and suitability of assigned tasks. Home life, while discussed in-depth during the interview in terms of student failure; was not directly referred to in that context during team meetings.

Consultatively, Regina did wear many hats just as she described during her interviews. She took care of administrative tasks, organised personnel and resources, communicated information, and provided encouragement to teachers. Regina stated very early on that she was concerned about having me come in to the team meeting because "she didn't say much". This was also true. Regina's role was facilitative in nature. She fielded the information and organised the information and tried to co-ordinate the wishes and decisions of the team. While there were specific instances where Regina, in her role as a special education teacher, did nudge the team in a particular direction, this "nudging" did not occur any more often than that done by her peers on the team.

The name facilitator is an accurate descriptor for Regina. When discussing her consultative role with me she stated that she saw herself as a facilitator. She manifested this type of facilitative role in practice in her interactions with the team. Even in her work with students, she saw herself as providing opportunity for success, not enforcing it. Consultatively, she allowed for an open exchange of ideas and opinions while providing a supportive and organised procedure for the commission of those plans arrived upon through group consensus.
Diane talked with me about how the experience of becoming a mother had influenced her teaching. She felt that each child needed some form of nurturing, both academically and emotionally. This nurturing aspect of her personality was prevalent during the time I spent with her. At the end of the data analysis, Diane was named the protector.

In terms of her beliefs about children, Diane often reflected that the cause for failure might be within the child (developmental, physical or self-esteem).

D. OK, let me give you a grade 8 girl. She was failing because her self-esteem was so rock bottom that she was suicidal.

Despite this, she saw that the responsibility for their learning rested almost solely on the shoulders of the teacher.

D. You build on what you did the day before. Every day is build, build, and build. With the learning disabled kids, the ones that I have, everybody is different. I find an area where I think we can start and be successful with the learning disabilities.

Diane felt that if a child failed, it was in part because she herself was not finding the answer.

D Yeah, in his case it is like a mesh screen wall is being put up and I am bouncing off it all the time. I am not getting through. Periodically I make breakthroughs. They are short and few and far between and they don't last long but it is enough to give you hope, to keep on working with this kid to keep trying and don't give up.

She felt it was important for students to work hard and that they needed motivation and encouragement in order to do so. Her first response to the question, why
do children fail, was to say that it was because the child may be angry. The feelings of the child were uppermost in her mind.

In terms of her consultative role, Diane saw herself as a facilitator.

D I am a facilitator. My role is to listen to the needs of people, listen to suggestions that other people have, compile them, put them together, make some of my own but basically scrounge out information and materials to implement the suggestions that have been made.

Diane perceived herself as being a support to peers, students and parents.

D I also sit in with teacher in interviews when they just need not so much an extra body, but just somebody to support them in their beliefs and to back them up or to give them the word that they maybe have in their mind or have forgotten to say.

She felt it was important not to cause bad feelings among teachers. When talking about dealing with teacher resistance, she noted:

D. I always make it a point to be pleasant and I always make it a point to express my displeasure because ultimately the child is theirs and what they do is their responsibility.

Diane felt uncomfortable with the perceived role of "expert". She worked hard at being accessible to teachers and saw the importance of casual contact in terms of consultation.

D. I'll just slip into their room when they have got a few minutes free or after recess, just before anything gets going and check out the situation.

She saw herself as a team player and wanted to encourage that feeling in her school. She was aware of the lack of team focus in her school and expressed frustration at trying to break out of the role of service provider.
The relationship between Diane's beliefs about children and her interactions in in-school team meetings was relatively consistent. The importance of self-esteem was a recurring theme. She made suggestions to enhance students' positive feelings about themselves. She dealt with the developmental, physical, and self esteem issues within the students by engaging in behaviours such as withdrawal to provide a nurturing environment. She personally took on the responsibility for the student's improvement, often running a parallel program where she set the benchmarks for the students. She seemed to perceive a safe environment as being one in which the students were taken outside the demands of the regular class.

In Diane's consultative practice we saw similar types of behaviour. Diane saw herself as supportive to teachers and this did indeed seem to be the case. She shouldered a lot of the responsibility for the students' learning by allowing for the removal of that responsibility from the regular class. This seemed to be an approach with which the staff was comfortable. The emphasis was on remediation more so than accommodation. While Diane stated that she wanted to move toward a more team-oriented model, the interactions at team meetings did not reflect shared responsibility for students' learning.

The name protector works well for Diane. I felt safe in her presence. She liked to please people and was always willing and co-operative. While Diane expressed a desire to have the team-work in a more consultative way, in my perception, the lines of responsibility were clearly drawn and maintained. This delineation of responsibility, with exceptional students being maintained by Diane, was not questioned or challenged by the group in their interactions. What seemed to be missing was that necessary
dissonance needed to grow as a team in a consultative way. Diane, in her role as protector, seemed to be acting in the only way she could, given her beliefs.

**Roseanne: The Pragmatist**

Roseanne believed that success is measured by a student's progress. The starting point is not a comparison with peers but rather, wherever the child happens to be, with success being measured from that point. With that in mind, she saw many causes for failure, factors such as motivation, self-esteem, ability and homelife. She felt it was the teacher's responsibility to motivate students.

Ro As a teacher you have to start first. You have to try to motivate the child.

She also felt that it was the teacher's responsibility to provide a caring classroom for students. She defined a caring class as one where the child feels accepted and liked. Roseanne clearly differentiated between what she considered a slow learner/globally delayed child and the student with a specific learning disability (LD). She noted that the student with LD had more knowledge and understanding and needed to be challenged in a different way. Roseanne saw the teaching of strategies and specific techniques to help students with LD become efficient learners as important. Roseanne kept the focus on teachers in terms of the responsibility for students' learning. She saw it as her job to provide teachers with the tools they needed to be successful in their work.

Ro See, I don't see teachers as bad teachers. I see them more as lacking information.

Being an experienced teacher, Roseanne had seen the passage of many trends. In special education, she had seen the passing of the withdrawal service delivery model to make way for the more consultative model, which she described thus:
Ro Now the focus in the last two years, I would imagine, has been trying to make it so that you are providing programs that any type of assistance to the teacher to help them deal with the problems in the classroom. So we are trying to get into more of a resource situation rather than teaching.

She saw her job as multifaceted, involving such duties as being informed about curriculum, modifying program, record keeping, parental contact etc. Roseanne saw herself not as a team leader but as a participant.

Ro It is important that it is not just I making the recommendations. At DPT it's everybody and that's why we have such diversity of people so that they will come from different backgrounds in their teaching. Even being in primary for a long time they might have a different point of view than say a teacher from intermediate and all do contribute to recommendations. So it's not just the special education teacher sitting there saying this is what you should do and this is how you should do it because I don't feel that. I know I don't know everything and I don't think there is any one person that knows everything but if we had a group together we can pool all our knowledge and come up with the best....

She had an organised approach to the special education service delivery model, starting off with a staff meeting at the beginning of the year to explain her role and the role of the in-school team. Roseanne felt it was important to be supportive to her fellow teachers and also to be open to their ideas. Roseanne summarised her role as "teaching them (peers) how to be special education teachers".

During team meetings, Roseanne suggested many techniques that would be useful in the regular class. Her team meetings showed a great respect for the demands placed upon a regular teacher but the suggestions made to lighten their load did not take the
responsibility of the student out of their hands. Her discussions showed that she saw self-esteem of the student as being affected by the teacher and that the teacher could make changes to improve this. Finally, she felt it necessary, through the use of discussion, observation and assessment, to differentiate between LD and other types of learning problems. Given the diagnosis of LD, suggestions and discussions would vary.

Roseanne was efficient and methodical. The meetings moved along quickly with an open exchange of ideas. Group consensus was stressed and participants' input was encouraged.

I have called Roseanne a pragmatist because her consultative style was marked by efficiency. She sought to identify the problem, generate suggestions and ideas with the team, apply these ideas and set a date for recheck. The suggestions and ideas often focused on regular curriculum and maintaining the students in the regular class. Along with this efficiency came a warm personality that created a comfort level with her peers.

**Areas for future investigation**

**Participants' Consultative Role outside of Team Meetings**

The goal of this inquiry was to examine the relationship between these teachers' beliefs and their consultative practice in in-school team meetings. While this consultative practice, in terms of the collection of data, was confined to those meetings, it is possible to extrapolate from what was said at the meetings to these teachers' consultative practice within the schools themselves.

Initially, for all of the students brought to the in-school team, we saw an information (data) collection on the part of the teacher in the referral form they filled out.
Wiener et al. (1990) noted that data collection is one of the functions of the in-school team. These data took the form of the introductions read by each LRT when a new case is discussed. These introductions were forms filled out by the regular classroom teacher. While I was not with the regular classroom teachers when they completed these forms, the information read out suggests that regular classroom teachers, with the assistance of other teachers and the LRT, had tried strategies with students prior to referring. This informal problem-solving approach in dealing with exceptional students is noted as an important component of teacher consultation practice within a school (Friend et al. 1998; Mills, 1994). When describing their consultative practice, all three participants in this study noted the importance of being available to staff in an informal way. They also noted that discussions often began in an informal area such as the lunchroom or outside a teacher's door. This type of accessibility and informal contact is consistent with descriptions of consultative practice (Mills, 1994; Reinhiller, 1995).

All three participants in this inquiry saw an important part of their role as consultation with outside agencies and parents. Based on the information presented at team meetings, it would seem to be the case that these teachers did indeed have a role that involved communication with individuals and agencies outside the setting of the meeting. Medical, family, and board level communications were part of the information shared at team meetings. These LRT's often took on the responsibility for contacting these persons and communicated to the teams any information that had been the result of previous involvement with them. This type of communication is an important part of the consultative role in the school (Friend. et al. 1998).
By far the largest part of these participants' role was that of programming and assessment. Whether or not this constitutes consultative practice is an interesting discussion. The degree to which these teachers incorporated instruction and assessment into the regular classroom setting with the co-operation and participation of the regular classroom teacher would seem to be the degree to which collaboration was taking place. If we view collaboration as encompassing the characteristics of voluntary participation, parity among members, shared goals, accountability, outcomes and resources (Friend et al., 1998), the interactions that took place in the team meetings at Regina's and Roseanne's schools generally reflect these characteristics. If we move beyond the meeting interactions and theorise about what types of actions were taking place in the school, we can capture an image of the service being provided to exceptional students. In Roseanne's school, we see in class observation to collect data on students, modification of the regular class curriculum, behaviour contracts between teachers and students and the use of various personnel and volunteers to assist teachers. In Regina's school we see similar types of activities with many of the suggestions coming from team members. While both of these teachers do at times withdraw students, it is by far less common than intervention in the regular classroom by the regular classroom teacher. While some of the interventions discussed at the team-meetings in Diane's school did involve participation by the regular classroom teacher, a majority of the interventions were based on the withdrawal of students for remediation.

The consultative role of the resource teacher is described by these three participants as complex. Certainly both regular and special educators recognise that dealing with exceptional students required extra effort (Wood, 1998). The interactions
that took place during these in-school team meetings in many ways reflected that complexity. If we accept that shared responsibility among colleagues is one of the goals of collaboration (Friend et. al, 1998) then the examination of the allocation responsibility among team members in in-school team interactions may provide us with a basis for examining the division of those responsibilities among team members.

**The Impact of Environment on Collaboration**

In many ways, Diane's setting is the most interesting in terms of her consultative role within that school. In Diane's school, the impact of that particular school setting is worthy of note. Unlike Roseanne and Regina, Diane, while being an experienced teacher, was new to that particular school. Wood (1998) suggested that "collaboration requires an evolution of educators thinking and behaving" (p.182). Diane entered a school that seemed to be at a particular stage of evolution in terms of the staff's view of ownership of exceptional students, a stage that was different from Diane's. Diane often expressed her desire to work with staff in a more collaborative way. This lack of harmony between Diane's desire to work as a team and the existing culture in the school resulted in a very traditional approach to special education where students were generally withdrawn and taught. Diane's 'power' to change this service delivery was limited to her own ability to build rapport and trust with the staff and to make herself available. Within that school setting, as mentioned earlier in this inquiry, the role of the principal was managerial in focus. The importance of the participation of the principal as an agent to promote change is well established (Fullan, 1991). When we compare the participation of Diane's principal to that of the other two schools, the difference lies in the fact that in
the other two settings the principals were active participants in the meeting when possible. This participation may be an indication to the staff of the value of this process.

The question of whether Diane's consultative practice would be the same in a different type of setting is one that bears examination. The impact of the school environment on change is one that cannot be ignored. Certainly for Diane it would seem that she had real obstacles to overcome if her goal of working as a team was to be achieved. The inclusion of information regarding these types of school factors provides a more complete picture of the factors that may effect the implementation of a consultative model in a school and suggests the need for further investigation.

**The Role of Beliefs in the Process of Change**

Educational change depends on what teacher does and thinks. It would all be so easy if we could legislate changes in thinking.

(Fullan, 1991, p.117)

In examining the relationship between beliefs and practice in these three stories, a balancing act emerges. Each of these individuals strove to balance the educational beliefs they hold with the demands of this particular type of service delivery. Pajares (1992) suggested that beliefs define relevance and provide a filter through which our experiences are viewed and placed in their appropriate context, shaping not just what we recall but how we recall it. Mahlios & Maxon (1995) showed how preservice teachers' beliefs about children can permeate their training and the impact those beliefs have on the learning of those future teachers. A person's beliefs serve to reduce dissonance (Pajares, 1992) and provide a framework through which that person accommodates new information. For these reasons and others, beliefs have been found to be resistant to
change. When a person is taught a new concept or procedure, that teaching is transmitted through an already existing belief structure and adapted to complement the framework in place. Pajares (1992), in discussing the relationship between beliefs and knowledge, described the relationship as being intimate, with beliefs having the upper hand. "Beliefs are a key component and more influential than knowledge in deciding how individuals organise and define tasks and problems and are a stronger predictor of behaviour" (Pajares, 1992, p.311).

In examining the belief systems of these three women, there are certain assumptions that we can make. In a very general sense, we can assume that the physical environments in which they worked were similar (student populations, client base, resources). The second assumption is that, given that they were practising the same board mandated model at the same time, they would have received similar types of information and training in consultation. Thirdly, the format and make up of the meetings which they co-ordinated can be assumed to be similar. Not surprisingly, when we look at the breakdown of their roles, they are participating in similar types of activities (organising, informing, and supporting in terms of their consultative role and home life, ability, etc.). It was in the closer analysis of these categories that their differences became apparent. Each of these case studies depicted a different portrayal of the same process. For these women, the ‘role’ they portrayed permeated the entire consultative process. In essence, they assimilated their consultative role into their existing beliefs. Diane was a protector; her tendency was to maintain students within her program. Discussions did not generally involve intervention in the regular class or changes in the regular classroom teacher's behaviour. Her role with students consisted
mainly of withdrawing students, testing them, programming for them. This role, within the discussions at the team meetings, was quite evident. Diane, in her discussions with me, expressed a desire to move away from this ownership of students. Regina was a facilitator. The team hummed along. There was lots of open dialogue and idea sharing. Her role matched the give and take of the meetings. She was the procurer, scheduler, and bookkeeper. Roseanne's consultative practices were similar to Regina's in many ways. The difference was that Roseanne took less of a back seat. There was no doubt that she was in charge. Her mission was to get things done and that was what she did. Within the time frame of this inquiry, Regina, Diane and Roseanne did not alter their roles if the issues changed whether the difficulty was academic, social, parental, staff related or otherwise. Regina did not suddenly become protective. Diane, given a particular set of circumstances, did not change her style of interacting.

What does this say to us about the process of change? Fullan (1991) stated that if we ignore the 'subjective realities' of people involved in change then we undermine the meaningfulness of that change. McGrevin and Rusher (1992) proposed that the success of policy implementation rests on the verbalisation, acknowledgement and discussion of belief systems. Criticism abounds of a "top down" implementation of change that does not take into account personal beliefs and realities (Fullan, 1991). The stories of these three women tell us that beliefs have an effect on the type of consultation that happens in a school. Perhaps what we see when we look on the surface is an element of what Fullan (1991) described as 'false clarity' (the belief that change has taken place when they have only assimilated the superficial trappings of change). Upon closer examination, we see Diane, for perhaps a variety of reasons, delivering the same type of service that existed
before the consultative model, only now she is doing it within the in-school team collaborative process. Roseanne and Regina seem to have assimilated more readily their beliefs to the consultative model. Perhaps their underlying beliefs were closer to those of consultation. Pajares (1992) noted that beliefs can only be inferred not observed. Had I relied solely on their telling me about their beliefs, I would have had half the picture only. Fullan (1991) pointed out that it is possible to articulate about the goals of change and even utilise the techniques without actually understanding the implications for practice. These three participants spoke knowledgeably of the consultation model and their role within it. The presentation of those words in relation to their practice provides the depth needed for a complete picture.

While it is understood that this study dealt with three participants only, the experiences of these participants may have implications for other professionals in similar situations. If we accept that these three teachers' beliefs had an impact on their consultative practice then we may be able to assume that other teachers in similar settings are experiencing the same type of assimilation of beliefs and practice. The examination of this relationship between beliefs and practice can lead us to a better understanding of the consultative/collaborative relationships within the school setting.

**Limitations of this study**

Consultative/collaborative practice in a school setting is a complex picture to try and construct. The use of these in-school team interactions to construct a view of that practice provides us with only a small view of the overall practice. That having been said, the in-school team can be seen as "a collaborative vehicle for dealing expediently
and professionally with problems" (Mills, 1994, p. 187). It provides for us a concrete manifestation of collaboration from which we can extrapolate information and generate areas that require further investigation.

A second limitation of this inquiry is the lack of information regarding the implementation of the suggestions/interventions that were a result of the team meetings. This view would have provided information on the feasibility of the interventions suggested and the role that resistance may have played in the implementation of these suggestions. This information would have provided more depth to the fleshing out of these teachers' consultative practice.

A final limitation of this study is the lack of information on the perspectives and beliefs of other participants on the team. Their beliefs, if made explicit, would have provided for a much more detailed picture of the interactions that take place at in-school team meetings.

**Future Research**

The results of this research has suggested that the process of change can be enhanced if those involved hold beliefs that are similar to those proposed by the change (Mahlios & Maxson, 1995; Fullan, 1991). Recognising those beliefs and finding a vehicle for them to be explored might prove beneficial to the implementation of a successful consultation delivery service. A means of identifying those belief systems may be found in the definitions presented by Jordan (1994) as pathognomonic and interventionist. What would be the impact of using definitions such as these to assess belief systems before assigning teachers to a consultative special education role?
It has been suggested that the building of new knowledge becomes meaningful only in terms of its compatibility with a person's existing beliefs. We take in only that knowledge that confirms what we already think (Tilema, 1994). Specifically, in terms of a person adopting and then implementing a consultative approach in his or her role as a special educator, it becomes apparent that beliefs play a major role in the success of implementation. Another area of exploration would be to take a closer look at the belief systems of the other team members. Are their beliefs in synchrony with the direction and ontological basis of what is perceived as effective consulting and, if so, does this then allow for more meaningful interaction? On the other hand, what of those individuals whose strongly held beliefs conflict with the goal of consultation. Can their beliefs be prohibitive and ultimately lead to a dismissal of the process as not being a worthwhile use of time?

On a more general level, this type of inquiry can assist us in examining consultative practice from a different perspective and using that information to enhance the effectiveness of this process. When consultation is being ineffective, rather than changing the mechanics, e.g. rescheduling to a better time of day or changing the team members, perhaps we could stop and examine the impact of our beliefs on that process. I feel that the opportunity to look at the words of these meetings is invaluable. When we consult, we take away shaped memories, filtered though our own perspectives regarding what was said. Taking the opportunity to look at our interactions verbatim and to reflect on them may provide a key to making consultation more effective and thus help attain our ultimate goal, the improvement of services to our clients, our students.
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To Whom It May Concern:

Ms. Sheila Bennett, Doctoral Candidate in Special Education, The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, has been granted approval by The Hamilton-Wentworth Roman Catholic Separate School Board to conduct a research project designed to explore the relationship between teacher attribution of students' success and failure and the manifestation of these attributions in the consultation event.

This approval is subject to the agreement of the Principals in the schools in which the study is conducted.
Summary of Pertinent Information

Objective of the Study

To explore the relationship between teacher attribution of student's success and failure and the manifestation of these attributions in the consultation event.

Subjects

Number - Five (5) resource consulting teachers. (Special education teachers who consult with regular classroom teachers regarding students)

Description - It would be preferable that these teachers share common grade level and student populations. For example: teachers who work with teachers and students at the elementary grade level in settings focusing on the integration of slow learner and/or learning disabled students. Resource consulting teachers participating in this study must be actively involved in consulting with regular classroom teachers regarding students.

Other participants - During phase two of this study, it will be necessary to tape record consultation events involving regular classroom teachers (see description of phase two in next section). These regular classroom teachers will not be the subject of investigation by the researcher, though examination of the interactions of resource consulting teachers and regular classroom teachers will be an essential part of the research study.

Description of phases

Phase 1 Individual interviews with resource consulting teachers regarding their attributions. The area of attribution will be explored with regard to student success and failure. An informal questionnaire protocol will be administered orally with emphasis on free response and discussion generated during interview sessions. Interviews will be taped with the permission of the teacher.

Phase 2 Recording of interactional consultation events. This phase will consist of tape recording and sitting in on consultation events regarding students in the regular classroom setting.

Phase 3 Individual interviews with resource consulting teachers to discuss the relationship between their stated attributions in phase one of the study and the analysis of interactional events. Interviews will be taped with the permission of the teachers.
Interview Protocol

Part 1
How many years have you been teaching?
Has that always been in the area of special education?
How/why did you become a special education teacher?
Could you describe your training?
How do you keep up with current information?

Part 2
How often do you have dpt?
Who sets them up?
Who attends?
Who chairs?
How are the records kept?
What information, if any do the teachers bring?
How do you get feedback from the decisions made at the dpt?
What is your role at the dpt?
(How do you see yourself...mediator, instructor, consultant)
Part 3
What aspects make up your role as a special education teacher in this school?
How would you describe the consultative aspect of your work with teachers?
How often and in what forms do you consult?
How do you build rapport?
How do you see your consultative role with regard to dpt meetings?
  - making recommendations
  - support to staff
  - intervention/crises
  - dealing with conflict
  - staff education
  - etc.

How did this consultative role emerge?
  - board directed
  - principal support
  - training/background, a personal quest

Part 4
Describe the type of students that you work with. (referred and not)
Elaborate on each
Generally how do you work with these students?
It is important to establish definitions of success and failure when speaking about academics only. A child being successful does not mean grade level but rather progressing at a reasonable rate in tests, assigned tasks set by the special education teacher or with the cooperation of the classroom teachers.
Think of a student with whom you have worked who has failed? (Why)
How do you work with this student?
Think of a student with whom you have worked who has succeeded? (Why)
  do you work with this student?
If a child who was failing began to succeed? (Why)
If a child you were working with began to fail? (Why)
What components do you feel are necessary for success?
What components do you feel contribute to failure?
What can you do to help a child succeed?

Written component

3 students who fail, list three reasons why.
3 students who succeed, list three reasons why?

A student with whom you have been working has been assessed as having normal intelligence with delays in the academic areas of math and reading. The student's school records show that he/she has missed a considerable amount of time in the past year due to illness.

When working with the student you find that the student makes consistent progress as time passes. To what do you attribute this progress?

The same type of child receiving the same instruction fails to make progress over time, to what do you attribute this failure?
I hereby give my permission for the tape-recording and transcription of the following meeting upon the following understanding.

- That in the transcription of the recordings, the names of all persons involved, including students, will be changed in order to maintain confidentiality.

- That I retain the privilege of refusing further taping of sessions if unforeseen circumstances make it unreasonable to continue.

- That tapes and transcriptions will be used, stored and maintained by the researcher for the purposes of research only.

Signature:______________________________

Researcher:_____________________________