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Understanding the Barriers, Bridges and Bases to Inclusion Instruction for Secondary Students with Mild to Moderate Disabilities

Angela Renee Lyte Crowther
San Jose State University

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UNDERSTANDING THE BARRIERS, BRIDGES, AND BASES TO INCLUSION
INSTRUCTION FOR SECONDARY STUDENTS WITH MILD TO MODERATE
DISABILITIES

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the Educational Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership

San José State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

by

Angela R. Lyte-Crowther

May 2020

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The Designated Dissertation Committee Approves the Dissertation Titled

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by

Angela R. Lyte Crowther

APPROVED FOR THE EDUCATIONAL DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN
EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY

May 2020

Senorina M. Reis, Ed.D.	Department of Education and Educational Leadership
Roxana Marachi, Ph.D.	Department of Education and Educational Leadership
Demerris Brooks, Ed.D.	Santa Clara County Office of Education
Matthew Love, Ph.D.	Special Education Department of Teacher Education

ABSTRACT

UNDERSTANDING THE BARRIERS, BRIDGES, AND BASES TO INCLUSION INSTRUCTION FOR SECONDARY STUDENTS WITH MILD TO MODERATE DISABILITIES

by Angela R. Lyte Crowther

Inclusion is the practice of educating students with disabilities and students without disabilities in the same learning environment. For secondary students with mild/moderate disabilities, inclusion is rooted in the philosophical mindset of social justice, equity, and legislation. Inclusion is a complex and sometimes controversial topic few educational systems want to tackle. The purpose of this multi-method research was to gather and analyze secondary site administrators' and teachers' opinions on the barriers, bridges, and bases needed for the furtherance of inclusion practices and the elimination of the segregated classrooms for students with mild-moderate disabilities. A plethora of research on this topic exists, yet there remains a gap in the literature of understanding what secondary staff needs for inclusion to move from theory to practice. One hundred and seven teachers and administrators participated in this research with mixed results. This study found that positive beliefs about inclusion are necessary but not sufficient to override the need for collaboration time, preservice training, qualified personnel, and district level administrative support.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Problem of Practice

In the 1960s, parents of students with disabilities called for more equitable treatment and integration with their non-disabled peers (Osgood, 2008).

However, the idea of inclusion in public education is rooted in the 1868 14th Amendment of the United States Constitution and its equal protection under the law clause (U. S. Const. Amend. XIV). It was reaffirmed eighty-six years later with the 1954 Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* that dismantled educational segregation for African American students. With the Civil Rights movement in the 1960s, education scholars began facing challenges when they took an intense look at the social and economic inequalities for specific student populations in public schools. Scholars and special interest groups advocated for public education reform by revisiting the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision and applying it to all students in segregated public education (Turnbull, 2003). Through a social justice lens Turnbull (2004) stated that if one were to substitute "students with disabilities" for "Negro" and "non-disabled" for the word "white" in the *Brown* decision, it becomes apparent how the 14th Amendment became the constitutional basis for the right of students with disabilities. There are concurrent equity issues between students with disabilities and African American and Latino counterparts in *Brown*, including the unequal educational opportunities, resources, quality of instruction, and the underlying philosophy that relied on stigmatization and negative consequences (Diangelo,

2012). The Civil Rights Act of 1964 added further similarities. It recognized the social injustice suffered by African Americans paved the way for other groups to demand the same social justice and protection under the law (Kober, 2007). In 1973, Americans with disabilities were protected with the passage of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the provisions under section 504. Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) of 1975, and its evolution to Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1997 and subsequent re-authorizations in 2000 and 2004, wherein inclusion is a core element of a free appropriate public education (F.A.P.E) with the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) requirement for all children with disabilities in the United States (IDEA 20 U.S.C. sec. 1412).

Educational terminology related to a discussion of inclusion can be confounding since different scholars, practitioners, and school districts differently define the term. The word inclusion will not be introduced as a term by the U.S. Department of Education or the California Department of Education until 2015. The word “inclusion” is used and defined in the policy statement entitled Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs (U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services, 2015). The purpose of that policy statement was to provide recommendations to States, local educational agencies (LEAs), schools, and public and private early childhood programs, for developing programs to increase the inclusion of infants, toddlers, and preschool children with disabilities in high-quality early childhood programs. These Federal Departments’ statements of intent were that all young children with disabilities

should have access to inclusive high-quality early childhood programs. Nevertheless, Federal, California legislation, or IDEA mention or require inclusion per se. Instead, the law requires that children with disabilities be educated in the “least restrictive environment appropriate” (Osborne, 1994). Inclusion and the term mainstreaming are often mistakenly interchanged since both involve placement into a general education classroom among students without disabilities. However, the contrast is that inclusion emphasizes 100% general education classroom placement, while mainstreaming is less than 80% placement (McGovern, 2015). The two approaches to inclusion are similar. In the attempts to embed special education strategies and accommodations during classroom instruction but mainstreaming includes pull-out services and or resource room models whereby students with disabilities are taken away from students without disabilities for some portion of their instructional activities. In marked contrast are self-contained classroom models in which students with disabilities have 100% of instructional activities separate from children without disabilities. In segregated classrooms, students do not have nondisabled peer interactions and are not able to observe typical behavior role models among age-matched peers. In such classrooms, subject matter discussions are limited or virtually nonexistent because of their severe academic and language deficit (Affleck, 1988; U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Thus, this research regards inclusion as a social justice issue aimed at educational equity, including, for

example, fair outcomes, treatment, access, and opportunities for all students (Theoharis, 2007; Equity and Excellence Commission, 2013).

Definition and Models of Inclusion

The term inclusion in education refers to a model of instruction wherein special needs students spend most or all their time with non-special (general education) needs students. Inclusion rejects the use of special schools or classrooms to separate students with disabilities from students without disabilities (Catapano, 2019). There are several models of inclusion. First, the Blended Model or Blended Learning Environment is a traditional learning setting merged with technology. Here, various technology tools are utilized to supplement instruction, engage learners, and monitor data, in addition to the non-tech lessons and activities common in classrooms. This model is especially useful for inclusive environments as students with a variety of learning needs can have better individualized and supported learning experiences with the aid of technology (Catapano, 2019).

Second, the Itinerant Model features a traveling specialist, usually a certified teacher who is trained to supplement student learning in specialized areas. The itinerant teacher is not the regular classroom teacher, but rather a supportive professional who often visits or assists in multiple classrooms. Instead of teaching students' specific content, she/he focuses on metacognitive skills that help students, especially special education students who benefit from inclusive support, "Learn how to learn." Itinerant teachers often serve as consultants for

teachers who want to learn more about supporting children with learning disabilities (Catapano, 2019). The itinerant model is currently being used in the XYZ School District in East Palo Alto, after a court order that was viewed as one of the most substantial of school reform (Emma C.v. Eastin, 985 FSupp.940 Cal. 1997).

Third, the Team Teaching/Co-Teaching model pairs two (or more, but usually two) credentialed teachers working together to cooperatively teach a class. The typical pairing includes one teacher who specializes in content (such as an English or Math teacher) and a special education teacher. Together, the teachers utilize their skills and focus on ensuring that all students receive a quality education and special education students have appropriate accommodations in place to support their learning (Kurth & Gross, 2015).

Definition of Students with Mild to Moderate Disabilities

In general, students with disabilities have single or concurrent professionally diagnosed mental, physical, or emotional characteristics that impact the person's ability to receive an educational benefit without special IDEA services and programs (Fletcher, 2001). Specific for this research are those students with mild to moderate disabilities and specific learning disabilities. Students with mild/moderate disabilities are students with disabilities ranging from specific learning disabilities, like struggling in reading or math, to speech-language impairment where the student needs speech therapy for receptive and expressive language disabilities. Some students with sensory (i.e., vision,

hearing) or physical disabilities (i.e., motor impairments), and or health impairments also are diagnosed with mild/moderate disabilities (California Department of Education, 2018).

The Individual Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA, defines what constitutes the criteria to be identified as a child with a disability under the law. In California, Mild to Moderate Disabilities is a designated credentialing term for an Educational Specialist teacher. In some states, such as Arkansas and California, the term mild to moderate disabilities is also used to characterize students with specific learning disabilities (SLD), mild/moderate intellectual disability (i.e., mental retardation), other health impairments, emotional disturbance, and autism spectrum disorders (California Teaching Commission, 2018).

Students with specific learning disabilities (SLD) in grades 6 to 12 make up a large portion of students with mild to moderate disabilities (California Department of Education Special Education Division, 2017). SLD is a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using spoken or written language. SLD may impact a student's ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or do mathematical calculations, and is associated with several conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia (California State Dept. of Education, Division of Special Education, 2019). The term does not include learning problems primarily resulting from visual impairment, hearing impairment, motor

disabilities, intellectual disability, emotional disturbance, or environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

Why Inclusion and Secondary Students

Inclusion is essential and especially relevant for secondary students with mild/moderate disabilities because it stresses equal and equitable educational delivery, resources, and hiring highly qualified competent subject matter teachers (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural, 2009). With solid bases and infrastructures, inclusive classrooms are designed to provide socialization opportunities among students without disabilities, critical in secondary situations, and less often available in segregated learning environments (Villa, 2016). For all the reasons inclusion is relevant, it remains elusive and encumbered by its barriers in most of California's 211,035 secondary public schools (California Department of Education, 2018). As valued members of the school culture, students with disabilities have the right to participate in the academic, social, and extracurricular activities of a local school community via evidence-based instructional and behavioral supports that foster student success alongside their non-disabled peers (McLeskey, Rosenberg, & Westling, 2009).

Research Questions

With a social justice emphasis aimed to understand better and address inclusive practices for older students with mild to moderate disabilities, including SLD, this research project addresses three salient questions.

1. What are the barriers faced by secondary California public schools that prevent inclusionary practices for older students with mild to moderate disabilities?
2. What are the potential bridges (solutions) that can nurture school personnel collaboration and provide high quality and more frequent inclusionary practices for students with mild to moderate disabilities?
3. Which bases (i.e., infrastructure elements) are necessary to create inclusionary instructional practices for students with mild to moderate disabilities?

Method of Research

This research is a quantitative and qualitative analysis using descriptive and inferential statistics measuring participant's opinions on the three research questions gathered from a Qualtrics survey.

Scope and Limitations

This research gathered data about inclusion for secondary students with mild to moderate disabilities from general and special education teachers and school site administrators, from four San Francisco Bay Area Counties in Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPA), who may or may not have experience with students with special needs in or out of an inclusive setting. One exclusion criterion applied to this research, and employees of the Santa Clara County Office of Education, the researcher's employer, will not participate in this study.

Specifically, this research will explore the barriers, bridges, and foundational bases (i.e., infrastructure) that contextualize inclusion instruction implementation. Teachers and school site administrators' opinions will enable the development of a generalized blueprint for inclusion instruction to be conceptualized and practiced, with fidelity, throughout California secondary schools.

Researcher Positionality

This researcher is a nearly 20-year veteran educator in the special education field. Having risen from the ranks of a substitute teacher in a resource classroom to a single subject high school teacher in an excluded special day class, to current position as a manager for special education programs in a county office of education. She has witnessed and been a part of the ever-changing legislative guidelines and policies that have shaped California's special education programs for students with mild-moderate disabilities in our secondary public schools. As an African American woman, the disproportionately of students of color and the social injustice of segregated learning environments in special education has not eluded her observations. She entered this research looking for understanding between the policy of inclusion and its actual practice.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

To understand California's current educational system, it is helpful to highlight, albeit briefly, several of the major historical laws and Supreme Court cases that influenced the development of specialized and separate educational systems in public schools in the 20th and 21st centuries.

The Emergence of Special Education in the United States

Compulsory school attendance laws began with Massachusetts in 1852. Other states in New England and the North followed more quickly than the South, but by 1918 all states had compulsory school attendance statutes. However, in the 1920s, students with disabilities were often denied the opportunity to public education, despite the passage of Smith-Towner Bill, which mandated free public compulsory education (Slawson, 2005). At the time, universal attendance laws did not apply to students with disabilities (Rauscher, 2015), despite the 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution and its equal protection clause (Johnson, 2019). This meant that students with disabilities were subjectively judged as non-school eligible. It would not have been unusual for students with even the mildest of disabilities to be denied access to education (Brown, 1980).

The 1960s Civil Rights movement intended to address discrimination due to race, color, religion, sex, or national origin; had education scholars and the families of people with disabilities began facing challenges when they took an intense look at the social and economic inequalities for specific student populations in public schools. Students with disabilities became one of those

student populations targeted by special interest groups and grass-roots family efforts looking to reform public education (Dunn, 1968).

When Congress established Title VI to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, it created a Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, also known today as The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) (Osgood, 2005). It was during this period that many states codified the practice of exclusion for students when they passed laws which prohibited students with disabilities from attending public schools if the disability was considered extraordinary (Yell, Rogers, & Rogers, 1998). Access to a U.S. public school education could be and often was, denied to a student with a disability if the school district claimed it was unable to accommodate the student's special needs. This exclusionary practice was usually upheld in the courts (McLeskey & Pacchiano, 1994).

During the 1970s, federal legislation paved the way for students with disabilities to receive an adequate education at the state's expense. One significant Supreme Court decision, *Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children (PARC) v. Pennsylvania* (1972), applied the equal protection argument of the 14th amendment to students with disabilities. (PARC) brought a case on behalf of a child with an intellectual disability who had been denied attendance at his local public school. At the time, Pennsylvania had a law that allowed public schools to deny education to children who had not reached a mental age of five years of age by the start of first grade. *PARC v. Pennsylvania* (1972) set

precedence by striking down this exclusionary practice. During the same year, *Mills v. Board of Education of District of Columbia* was filed in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. In that case, children with severe behavioral issues were denied a free education in a special private school that serviced their behavior disability. The court ruled that students with disabilities must be given a free public education (F.A.P.E.) even if the students are unable to pay for the cost of education (Beyer, 1983). Like the PARC case, these cases, and several more throughout the country, established that all children (K-12) were entitled to free public education (F.A.P.E.) and training appropriate to their learning capacities (Roos, 1974; Beyer).

Evolution of Special Education and the Concept of the Least Restrictive Environment

From 1973 to 1977, three additional vital pieces of federal legislation formed the foundation of mainstreaming students into neighborhood public-school settings. First, Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* was enacted into national law and protected students with special needs from discrimination based on their disability. Second, the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA) allowed parents to have access to all personally identifiable information collected, maintained, or used by a school district regarding their child. The third legislative act was the *Education for All Handicapped Children Act* (Public Law 94-142). Today we know this law as the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA). P.L. 94-142, guaranteed specific rights to students with disabilities including (1) the right to a free and appropriate public education; (2) the right to

remain in present placement until a pending special education complaint is resolved (stay-put); (3) the right to an education in the least restrictive environment (LRE); and (4) the right to have all changes in placement carried out according to the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) process.

Since its inception, IDEA has been reauthorized and its provisions litigated and further defined in the Courts. For example, the notion of LRE is not defined by only one setting (Yell, 2006). LRE is a legal principle ensuring the rights of students with disabilities to be educated in the regular classroom (20 United States Constitution §1412(a)(5)(A), 2012). Mainstreaming and inclusion are two methods frequently used to meet the LRE requirement. Mainstreaming refers to the physical placement of students with disabilities in the regular classroom alongside their non-disabled peers. Mainstreaming requires school districts to educate students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment (LRE) (IDEA, §1412(5) (B)).

The *Education for All Handicapped Children Act* also required educational institutions to establish specific assessments and processes to prove a student's need for special education services beyond his/her medical and/or physical disabilities (U. S. P.L. 94-142, 1975). This new act protected students who were being over-identified and placed in special education with the label of mental retardation because they were not achieving at the same rate as other students. School officials had to accurately assess students and give a specific diagnosis as to the nature of the disability and develop an Individualized Education Plan

(IEP) with goals and objectives that would allow qualified students with disabilities an educational benefit. Under these laws, parents were given the authority to be a part of the evaluation process as well as have access to their student's educational records (U. S. P.L. 94-142, 1975).

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, education researchers again began taking a contrastive inventory of instructional practices and resources comparing special education and general classrooms and programs. Many educational scholars started calling for sweeping proposals for school reform, as they identified educational barriers, such as inadequately prepared teachers, the lack of curriculum, and poor accountability in the current segregated and inequitable educational systems (Stainback & Stainback, 1984). In 1984, Susan and William Stainback published an article, "A Rationale for the Merger of Special Education," where they presented a case using practical, experimental, and ethical grounds for abandoning separate special education instruction. They also cited educational scholars Maynard Reynolds and Jack Birch (Birch, Reynolds, 1982), who wrote, 'At this point in the progressive inclusion trend, it is time to stop developing criteria for who does or does not belong in the and instead turn the spotlight to increase the capacities of the regular school environment' (Stainback & Stainback, 1989). The point here was that the emphasis needed to be placed on inclusion instead of exclusion when providing education to all students (Osgood, 2005).

In the 1990s, many students with disabilities remained educated in segregated settings of special day classes for most or all the school day (McLeskey & Pacchiano, 1994). Progress was slow for students with disabilities to be integrated into the classrooms with non-disabled peers. In schools that promote mainstreaming, students with disabilities were assigned to special education classes with special education professionals and mainstreamed into general education classrooms and activities (i.e., art, physical education, music, lunch, recess) for social integration with their peers without disabilities. In short, mainstreaming was still part of a two-system educational environment where special education and general education were separate (Hossain & Shahidullah, 2010). Because of these practices, only about 20% of children with disabilities received free public education alongside their peers without disabilities (McLeskey et.al., 2009).

In 1992, one of several district court cases, Board of Education Sacramento City School District. v. Holland (1992), clarified the concept of “least restrictive environment” of IDEA to mean a student with a disability is to be educated, to the maximum extent appropriate, in the regular classroom (Board of Education, Sacramento City School District v. Holland, 1992). In this case, Rachel Holland was an 11-year old child with moderate intellectual disability and what would later be characterized as a secondary mild to moderate education-related disability. The school district wanted to place Rachel in an exclusionary special day classroom. However, Rachel’s parents wanted Rachel educated in the general

education classroom because they believed that interaction with peers without disabilities provided Rachel with social and greater educational benefits.

The U. S. District Court in California identified four factors to consider termed “barriers” that would later set the criteria in determining if an inclusive education in the regular classroom was appropriate for a student with disabilities. First, the court looked at the educational benefits of the regular classroom, supplemented with appropriate aids and services, compared to the self-contained special education classroom. Second, the court considered the social benefits of interacting with non-disabled children. Third, the court weighed the possible harmful effects of the student’s presence on the teacher and other children in the regular classroom. Fourth, the court factored the costs of mainstreaming the student.

The court ruled in favor of the parents, finding the general education placement was appropriate. The court determined Rachel benefited academically and socially in the inclusive environment, and there was no negative impact on the regular teacher or students. The court set precedence with the statement "Where the segregated facility is considered superior, the court should determine whether the services which make that placement superior could be feasibly provided in a non-segregated setting. If so, the placement in the segregated school would be inappropriate under the Act" (Board of Education, Sacramento City School District v. Holland, 1992). Despite this case, as with many others, there was still little movement throughout California toward inclusion.

Federal Legislation 2004 to Present: IDEA, No Child Left Behind, and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was revised and re-authorized in 1997 and 2004. The 1997 amendment called for students with disabilities to participate in state and district-wide assessments. Regular education teachers were also required to be a member of the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) team (IDEA, 1997). The 2004 reauthorization added components from the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The most notable change from the 1997 IDEA amendment was to require more accountability at the state and local levels. It also required school districts to 1) provide adequate instruction and intervention programs for struggling students to help keep them out of special education and 2) enable all students to be taught by “highly qualified” teachers. Under NCLB “highly qualified” teachers 1) held a bachelor’s or higher degree from a regionally accredited college, and 2) held the appropriate state license or teaching certificate for their assignment, or had subject matter competence in all core academic subjects (United States Department of Education, 2004).

The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) required districts to certify their secondary teachers or remove them from classrooms if they were teaching out of their credential or subject matter area (IDEA, 2004; CCTC, 2005). Many teachers had to return to school and pass a core competency exam to be NCLB compliant as “highly-qualified” (National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD), 2017). This historical focus on subject matter

knowledge rather than differentiated instruction in teaching education programs may become a barrier to inclusion instruction, when NCLB is ended (Anderson, 2005).

The adoption of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in 2015, the newest version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), made several changes to IDEA, most significantly for students with mild-moderate disabilities. For example, ESSA eliminated the “highly-qualified” requirement for all teachers, including those with disabilities (Federal Register, 2017).

Legislation has been supportive but inconsistent on inclusion. As these laws have been enacted, few in education could have predicted the conflict, politics, and barriers that would arise from providing an equitable education in the public-school classroom to students with disabilities. In March 2017, the U.S. Supreme Court decided the most significant special-education case in 35 years in *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District*. The justices unanimously ruled that, under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), public school students with disabilities are entitled to greater benefits than some lower courts had determined. The Endrew F. case was a direct departure from Rachel Holland’s case in 1992; because it said it was appropriate for a student to be placed in a more exclusive, segregated and restrictive environment no matter the cost to the district (Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District, 2017; Yell & Bateman, 2017). Although the Endrew F. case and its decision were centered on the

district's fiduciary responsibility, the underlying result is that the court's decision made it permissible to deviate from the least restrictive environment of IDEA.

Students with Mild to Moderate Disabilities

Specific Learning disability is the most prevalent category of mild-to-moderate disabilities in California. Over 305,000 secondary students have mild to moderate disabilities. Secondary students with SLD make up 70% of all secondary students with mild to moderate disabilities in California (California Department of Education, Special Education Division, 2018). Nationally, students with mild to moderate disabilities make up 15% of the total school-aged population in the United States (U.S. Department of Education, 2013).

Learning disabilities are identified with academic tests with 80% of students demonstrating unexpectedly low reading academic achievement, with the remainder in mathematics and written expression (McLeskey et al., 2009). Intervention strategies are designed according to grade level. At the elementary level, students are given high-quality core instruction in the general education classroom, additional time to help them learn key academic content, and differentiated instruction (Hossain & Shahidullah, 2010).

With the classification of dyslexia as a mild to moderate disability, the California Dyslexia Guidelines of 2017 estimate a prevalence of one in every 10 California students qualifies to receive specialized academic instruction and special education services under an IEP because of dyslexia. In previous years, most students with dyslexia received accommodations in general education

classrooms under a 504 plans, however, studies have reported that students with dyslexia need differential and holistic pedagogy modes of service not a change in their academic program to a more restrictive environment under the guise of an IEP (Long, MacBlain, & MacBlain, 2007). The increase of students being placed in special education could have a catastrophic impact on special and general education departments as they try to provide services to all eligible students from the dwindling pool of certificated mild/moderate educational specialists who currently deliver specialized academic instruction to students with disabilities (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2017).

Why Inclusion and Teacher Shortages.

Prior to 2002, researchers have recognized, special education teacher attrition has been a major contributor to the shortage of well-prepared special educators, with many abandoning the education profession (McLeskey & Billingsley, 2008). California schools have difficulty filling special education teacher vacancies. Since 2016, shortages have skyrocketed, as evidenced by the growth of substandard special education certifications issued (Carver-Thomas & Hammond, 2017). With the new ESSA requirements came the elimination of all references to the term "highly qualified" first introduced in the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which subsequently led to increases in interns, permits, and waivers for teachers with substandard credentials in the field of special education. Between 2011–12 and 2015–16, the issuance of these substandard credentials has nearly doubled. During this same period, preliminary

special education credentials issued to fully prepared teachers decreased by 29% (Carver-Thomas & Hammond, 2017). The unintended consequences of ESSA's elimination of the "highly qualified teacher" requirement, coupled with the special education teacher shortage, is that students with mild/moderate disabilities remain in segregated special education classes where an equitable education is less likely, therefore denying their equal protection under the Constitution.

California has made several attempts to combat the special education teacher shortages by offering incentive programs to districts close to \$200 million over the last four years. These programs were specifically designed to address the state's persistent teacher shortage; however, these incentives have resulted in minimal increases in special education teacher enrollment in preparation programs and licensure and not enough to meet the increase in need (Lambert, 2019).

Why Inclusion and Students of Color

In the later part of the Obama administration, the U. S. Education Department changed Individuals With Disabilities Education Act regulations to try to address disciplinary disparities between white students and students of color with disabilities. These new, regulations required states and local education agencies (LEAs) to take steps to address disproportionate representation in the four areas; Special Education in general; Special Education within a specific disability category; Disciplinary action; and more restriction environment This legislative

reform was to address the historical inequity in educational opportunity for students with disabilities. Yet, issues of race, class, and privilege have rarely been part of the national dialogue on educational equity despite ongoing historical reports about the over-representation of students of color in special education programs and its lifelong implications (State Performance Plan Technical Assistance Project, 2020).

A 2011 study found disproportionality of specific learning disabilities across race socioeconomic status and language using data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study of 2002 (Callahan, Muller & Shifrer, 2011). These results coincide with recent report from the California Department of Education (2018) which found a current increase in services for Hispanic students in all but two of the thirteen significant educational qualifiers. Similarly, California data found a disproportionate increase in the number of Hispanic students diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder, compared to White and African American students. Taken together, these results suggest that students of color are more likely to be diagnosed with disabilities, and vulnerable to fewer opportunities to be educated among their age-matched peers. The issue of disproportionality of specifically amongst African Americans has been revisited in recent years to deflate the notion that special education is discriminatory (Morgan, Farkas, Hillemeier & Maczuga, 2012). A 2012 report that synthesized existing Minority Disproportionate Representation (MDR) for Black students only in conjunction with searching electronic databases concluded there was a lack of

overrepresentation. The report surmised that Black parents may reject reports stating their students qualify for services in special education because of past perceptions (Morgan, et. al., 2012; De Matthews, 2014). Data pulled from the California department of Education Dataquest for the 2018/19 school year for the six SELPAs that make up Santa Clara County, has data indicating that students of color (Hispanic, African- American and Mixed-Race) make up or 66.8% , 60%, 63.8% of students in the categories of Speech and Language, Emotional Disturbance and Other Health Impaired, respectfully. In the category of Specific Learning Disabilities, Hispanic, African- American and Mixed-Race students represent 94.8% of students in Santa Clara County Special Education (DataQuest, 2020).

Disproportionality is a concern for California Department of Education which has established Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervention Service which monitors districts throughout the state. Figure 1 represents 2020 California data that reported 182 districts throughout the state have been designated to have significantly disproportionality indicators places these districts in the State Performance Plan Technical Assistance Project (SPP-TAP) (Napa County Office of Education, & State Performance Plan Technical Assistance Project, 2020).

Figure 1. Significant Disproportionality Element and Indicator in California

These results raise the issue as to whether inclusionary education practices could not only address educational inequity for students with disabilities but also, in a distinctive manner, students of color with disabilities (Klingner, Artiles, Kozleski, Harry, Zion & Tate, 2005; Ford, Whiting, Goings & Alexander, 2017). Similarly, reforms intended to improve the over-identification of students of color for special education classification have not worked; as evident by current over-enrollment data of students of Hispanic and African American students in segregated special education programs (Zion & Blanchett, 2011). This situation exacerbates the school to prison pipeline, as recent studies have shown that students in segregated special education programs are suspended, retained and placed into academically inferior institutions and alternative education programs

with less skilled teachers and limited resources, at a higher rate than general education students (Ford, Whiting, Goings, & Alexander, 2017).

In the literature, it has been argued that inclusive education through a social justice issue of equity does not have the realization in today's urban low-income school's potential to be truly inclusive because it is built on the premises of an inferiority paradigm (Fasching-Varner, 2014).

Empirical Studies and the Impact of Inclusion on Site Administrators

Schools have difficulty accommodating students with disabilities without fundamental changes to their infrastructures. For example, the inclusion of students into general education classes sometimes requires additional staffing, facility improvements, specialized equipment, and classroom relocations (Dudley-Marley, 2010). At the secondary level school officials have become increasingly concerned over the number of special education students assigned to their sites because of the added financial burden for providing additional services, staffing, accommodations, and facility upgrades (Ball & Green, 2014).

The adoption of inclusion also affects how schools allocate their staffing resources. Some teacher contracts limit the number of students on IEPs or 504 Plans assigned to a teacher in one period, thus requiring school administrators to balance class enrollment (School District, 2018). Such adjustments could lead to additional staffing and/or force schools to make the difficult decision of limiting class offerings and lessening the number of sections of favorite elective classes. The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills Report, on

the impact of inclusion on general education, concluded that few schools believed full inclusion was possible without fundamental changes to school structures and increased funding (MacBeath & Galton, 2006).

Site administrators' attitudes and opinions on inclusion may be a barrier to inclusive education for students with mild to moderate disabilities. In 2014, Ball and Green conducted a descriptive study to examine the perceptions of school leaders toward the inclusion of students with disabilities. The *Principals and Inclusion Survey*, administered to 138 Tennessee principals, indicated that the principals had slightly negative attitudes toward the inclusion of students in the general education setting. There was a negative correlation between the training and experience, and the attitudes of the principals. Ball and Green indicated that the results warranted the need for more pre-service special education training and experience to increase the quality and practice of inclusion (Ball & Green, 2014).

A 1999 Cook, Semmel, and Gerber study looked specifically at the attitudes of principals and special education teachers toward the inclusion of students with disabilities and found they disagreed most strongly on survey items stating that the achievement of students with mild disabilities increases when they are included in general education classes (Cook et al., 1999). The authors concluded that principals' initial optimistic attitudes were inconsistent with teachers' attitudes. It was suggested, through this study, that administrators who anticipated and prepared for the appropriate outcomes improved the attitudes of

special education teachers toward inclusion, which may, in turn, improve the efficacy of inclusion reforms (Cook et al., 1999). The Cook et al. study is useful for the current study since it addressed the need to clarify infrastructure elements in special education inclusion programs.

Empirical Studies and the Impact of Inclusion on General and Special Education Teachers

As with school site administrators, a key element needed for an inclusive education lies in the general educator's attitude and willingness to accommodate students who have disabilities. It is also, arguably, the biggest barrier to inclusion. Inclusion requires the complete integration and acceptance of students with learning disabilities in classrooms, and the research confirms negative attitudes toward inclusion will need to change with longevity and training (Beattie, 1997). When LRE became firmly stamped in federal law through IDEA, researchers began in earnest to look for ways to prepare for inclusion for students with disabilities (Osborne, 1994).

As early as the 1990s, scholars have studied the relationship between teachers' attitudes and the acceptance of inclusion instruction. A study of 125 teachers in the San Antonio area reported teachers with higher levels of special-education experience were found to hold more positive attitudes towards working in inclusion classrooms (Van Reusen, 2001). Schumm and Vaughn (1995) reviewed 18 studies conducted over five years to determine the success of students with learning disabilities served in inclusive settings. Their analysis revealed that general educators felt a lack of preparation in planning and

implementing instructional adaptations for students with disabilities. In addition, general educators noted a lack of opportunities for collaborative planning with special educators.

Scruggs and Mastropieri (1997) synthesized 28 studies investigating the perceptions of over 10,000 general educators regarding issues of inclusion spanning from 1958 to 1995. This analysis shows that the majority (65%) of general educators supported the idea of inclusive services. The research concluded that only 29.2% of general educators indicated that they had adequate training and expertise to implement inclusive services. The study also identified the foundational bases that needed to be in place before the successful implementation of inclusion instruction.

It has been widely suggested that teachers of inclusion classrooms adjust their instruction based on the students' performance. Particularly at the secondary level, students with learning disabilities require diversified instruction (McLeskey et.al., 2009). However, this presents a barrier for many general education teachers who are not trained to teach students with varying learning disabilities they may face in a single class period.

Studies have shown that attitudes may be positively influenced by inclusion and that the longer the inclusion is in place, the greater its positive influence (Krajewski & Hyde 2000). Teachers that have positive attitudes, perceptions, and collaboration skills were more successful in inclusion environments (Schmidt & Venet, 2012). Educators without the ability to collaborate or who felt they did not

have enough resources (i.e., material to differentiate instruction, paid collaboration time, and professional development time) or administrative support reported feelings of helplessness and an inability to meet the needs of all their students (Schmidt & Venet, 2012).

Teacher Preparation

The post NCLB pivot to teacher standards and away from teacher credentialing and preparation has inadvertently caused a decline in teacher preparation for inclusion (National Council on Disability, 2018). Because ESSA currently requires teachers to be assigned solely on their state's licensure and certification criteria, districts find themselves encumbered with teachers who know their subject matter but do not necessarily possess the skills to teach all students (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2017). A study conducted in 2010 to explore the relationships between teachers' feelings of efficacy concerning educating students with disabilities found that general education teachers expressed their need for specialized training at a higher rate than special education teachers who had specific credentialing and preservice opportunities. The majority of the general education teachers reported not having the necessary supports and resources needed to successfully integrate special needs students in the classroom (Buell, Hallam, Gamel-McCormick, & Scheer, 2009)

Few secondary teacher preparation programs in California prepare candidates for teaching in an inclusion classroom (Cooper et al. 2008) the needs

of students are ever-changing, and many non-special education teachers are ill-prepared or not given adequate consultation, preparation and planning time (McLeskey & Waldron, 2002). Teachers new to teaching this population of students lack the expertise in dealing with the various and sometimes complicated behavioral and learning needs of individual students within the classroom community. Another impact on secondary teachers is their need to address and balance standards, curriculum, and testing in a class with students with a wide range of abilities, learning styles, limitations and prior skills and knowledge (Monahan, Marino & Miller 1996; MacBeath & Galton, 2006).

In 2013, Feng and Sass analyzed the impact of both pre-service and in-service training on the ability of general education teachers to promote academic achievement among students with disabilities. Their study found that students with disabilities whose teacher was certified in a single subject area and special education had greater achievement in both math and reading than similar students whose teacher was not special education certified. The data suggested that students without disabilities experience slightly lower achievement when taught by only a special-education certified teacher and in-service professional development did not affect students with disabilities in special education courses however, non-disabled students whose regular education teachers received special education training exhibited modestly higher achievement.

The study concluded that an increase in effectiveness with teacher experience is greater for teachers in regular education courses than for teachers

of special education courses. General education teachers with advanced degrees and considered "highly qualified" were more effective in boosting the achievement of students with disabilities than those with only a baccalaureate degree (Feng & Sass, 2013).

The ability to successfully instruct students in any setting requires more than training, and it requires that teachers feel empowered to apply new skills and competencies (Florian, 2012). The concept of self-efficacy has been used to describe both a belief that action will lead to an outcome and that one can perform the action that will lead to an outcome (Bandura, 1977). Teachers conflicting attitudes have been documented to create barriers to inclusive education as demonstrated by the CLASS (Creating Laboratory Access for Science Students) Project which examined teacher attitudes and inclusive education practice (Bargerhuff et al. 2004). The project was an initiative that offered training and resources to help overcome the barriers teachers experience when first trying to provide equal access in the science laboratory field to students with a variety of disabilities, including physical, sensory, and learning disabilities. The study concluded that foundational pre-training created higher levels of positive attitudes on inclusion with participating teachers (Bargerhuff, 2004; Ajuwon, Laman, & Earle, 2014).

Best Practice Research

To answer inquiries around the bridges needed for inclusion, we look to the literature and its best practices. A 2007 meta-synthesis (of 32 original reports of qualitative research on co-teaching inclusion models involving 454 co-teachers, 42 administrators, and five support personnel) concluded that co-teaching was the best practice of inclusion for students with disabilities. However, for that collaboration to be effective, the individuals in each pair should be on an equal footing (Scruggs et al., 2007). The ideal inclusion classroom has a collaborating pair consisting of a general education teacher who has subject matter competency, and an educational specialist teacher, who knows the pedagogy to deliver specialized academic instruction to students with a variety of disabilities and behavioral needs (Dudley-Marley, 2010; MacBeath & Galton, 2006).

Best practices in the literature suggest the pedagogy in these classrooms should focus on critical content, ensuring that all students learn the content in-depth. It also suggests the use of curriculum maps and unit plans to determine the content and to frame and guide instruction and teachers using big ideas that help students learn and remember the main concepts and facts related to the topic. Teachers are also advised to explicitly present important content to students and use intervention strategies such as graphic organizers and content-enhancement routines (Jitendra, 2002). Other best practices of inclusion have suggested that, when learning new information, students need to be provided additional support through instructional scaffolding methods such as outlines,

recommended documents, storyboards, or key questions (Villa, 2016). These instructional strategies promote cognitive, affective, and psychomotor learning skills and knowledge. Additionally, students with learning disabilities at the secondary level need to be provided explicit strategies to increase their study skills, test-taking skills, assignment completion skills, self-advocacy and follow-up on instructions (McLeskey et. al., 2009). All these strategies require teacher training, preparation time, resources, and administrative support.

McLeskey and Waldron (2002) published a qualitative study that examined pedagogical issues that arose from the implementation of inclusive programs in six primary school settings. Interview responses from teachers and administrators indicated that implementing inclusion instruction practices for students with disabilities resulted in fundamental changes to curriculum requirements, instruction, grading methods, and related expectations of student performance, but found the rejection of the use of specialized instructional approaches due to teacher ill-preparedness.

Gap In the Research

Inclusive education has been developing for over 65 years and continues to be an important concept as many school districts look to a more efficient way to support the ever-growing population of students with special needs (Bruce, 2010). Many proponents advocating for inclusion understand the need for students with disabilities to have equal and equitable educational delivery, giving this population equal access to resources and highly qualified teachers. Looking

through the history and development of inclusion as a practice, we know that inclusion is supported by federal legislation and court rulings, but there are still myriad challenges associated with inclusionary school practice.

Understanding the barriers, bridges, and bases to inclusion instruction for secondary students with mild to moderate disabilities is significant research because it ensures critical analyses of California's current practices through an examination of its goal of ensuring that all students can receive a quality education despite the presence of an educationally related disability (Taylor & Ringlaben, 2012). By conducting this research, we may discover school site administrators and teacher opinions on how to build strong base infrastructures to support inclusive instruction at secondary sites and create bridges of collaboration, so inclusion instruction becomes the norm for equitable instructional practices for all students (Landsman & Lewis, 2006).

Chapter Three: Methods

Introduction/Purpose of Study

The purpose of this research is to gather opinions about inclusion for secondary students with mild to moderate disabilities from school site teachers and administrators. Specifically, this research will identify the barriers, bridges, and foundational bases (i.e., infrastructure) associated with inclusion teachers and school site administrators believe are needed to develop a blueprint for inclusion instruction to be practiced with fidelity throughout California secondary schools.

Research Questions

The instrument's questions were designed to elicit opinions on three research questions. Research question 1 asked participants their opinion on how they feel about students with mild/moderate disabilities. These questions were designed to determine the participants' attitude, mindset and comfort level that may create barriers to inclusion. Research question 2 asked opinions on what participants think are the potential solutions, planning time training/to create a bridge of collaboration between administration, special and general education teacher relationships and can nurture school personnel collaboration during inclusion. The third research question asks opinions on what base levels of administrative support, infrastructures, resources and pre-service training teachers and administration think is needed prior to starting an inclusion classroom.

Research Design

This research is a quantitative analysis using descriptive and inferential statistics measuring participant's opinions on the three domains of this project. The first domain addresses the barriers (i.e., attitudes, opinions) California public school administrators and teachers face that prevent inclusionary practices for secondary students with mild to moderate disabilities. The second domain identifies the potential bridges (i.e., solutions, level of support and collaboration needed) that can foster and sustain school personnel to provide high quality and more frequent inclusionary practices for students with mild to moderate disabilities. And the third domain, bases (i.e., infrastructure elements, pre-service training, professional development, staffing, facility upgrades, and resources) will measure the necessary steps to create an inclusionary instructional environment for students with mild to moderate disabilities.

Independent and Dependent Variables and Covariates

The independent variable in this study is group membership, either as a school site administrator or a secondary teacher. The dependent variables in this study are the opinions about inclusion barriers, bases, and bridges as reported by school site administrators and secondary teachers. Opinions will be collected via a 39-item Likert survey scale, which includes two sections. Section 1 has a 39-item Likert scale intended to measure teacher and administrator opinions toward the three research domains resulting in a composite score and 3 distinct

domain scores. Items will be measured via a 5-point scale of agreement (strongly disagree, agree, no opinion, disagree, strongly disagree).

In section 2, collected demographic data about the participants. For example, the participants will be asked their age, race, gender, and years of teaching and administrative experience. The demographic trends will be used as potential covariates in this study. For example, years of experience (high versus low) could be a factor in school site administrators' opinions about inclusion barriers.

Population and Sample - Participant Demographics and Recruitment

Figure 2 represents research recruitment area from five San Francisco Bay Area Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) counties. Participant recruitment occurred by initially contacting school districts' superintendents from Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara counties to be determined which districts would be interested in participating in this project.

Figure 2. Map of the Five San Francisco Bay Area SELPA Counties (California Department of Education, 2019).

A copy of the invitation letter is attached as Appendix A. With superintendent permission, site administrators and teacher participants contacted via email invitation letter and survey link through his/her work email. A copy of the invitation letters is attached as Appendix B.

Selection Criteria for the Sample

This research relied on obtaining an available and voluntary sample of participants whose districts had given prior approval to contact their employees. For this research, a secondary teacher is defined as an individual holding a California single subject and or mild/moderate specialist credential(s), teaching students in grades 6th through 12th (California Teaching Commission, 2019). A school site administrator is defined as a principal or an assistant principal holding an administrative services credential and or any personnel on the site whose responsibilities include scheduling, professional development, and management of teachers who serve students with mild/moderate disabilities. Participants will include general and special education teachers and school site administrators who may or may not have experience with students with special needs in or out of an inclusive setting. One exclusion criterion will be applied to this research, and employees of this researcher's home district (Santa Clara County Office of Education) will not participate in this study. There are no additional participant exclusion criteria (i.e., years in service, age, race, gender, subject matter credentials, nor educational level).

Instrumentation and Development

Use of a survey instrument was chosen for this study because inclusion is a highly controversial topic as evident by some district superintendents' reluctance and many refusals to allow their staff to participate, citing the "undue stress" it may cause. For that reason, the researcher felt a more honest and forthright opinion would be received from an anonymous survey.

Data was collected and analyzed using two versions of a single survey whose only difference will be language specific to school site administrators and teachers. The content of each survey is intentionally adapted from two prior studies to help ensure validity. The first, the *Principal's Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education* (PATIE) created by Bailey (2004) and the second, the *2006 Teacher Questionnaire* from the University of Cambridge commissioned by the National Union of Teachers (MacBeath, Galton, Steward, MacBeath, & Page, 2006). In addition, the survey includes questions prepared by the researcher and academic advisor based on the extant inclusion literature to further ensure validity.

In his study, Bailey described the validation of a 32-item instrument he initially designed to measure the attitudes of school principals in government schools in Queensland, Australia toward the inclusion of students with disabilities in regular education classrooms. The original survey netted 644 returns, and the data validation demonstrated that this was a reliable and valid scale. The scale-covered administrator attitudes on inclusion instruction in the areas pertaining to

1) academics, social benefits, and disruption; 2) workload and management; 3) social justice, policies, and alternative placement; 4) professional training; 5) funding and resources, and 6) levels of challenging behaviors and access to professionals specifically trained for addressing the challenging behaviors. Per that study's conclusions, the instrument proved to have acceptable construct validity and psychometric properties, and it was found to be valuable in identifying administrators' attitudes toward inclusive education. Bailey's instrument directly relates to this study since there are comparable constructs centered on attitudes, self-efficacy, professional training, funding and resources, collaboration, and access to social justice and equitable policies needed to sustain an inclusion model of instruction. Bailey's survey has been cited in at least 29 publications (Sanks, Boggs & O'Phelan 2009; Sharma, Loreman & Forlin, 2012). Appendix D provides a side-by-side crosswalk of Bailey's original items and this study's adapted survey items. This table also includes the extant literature references for the adapted survey items.

The University of Cambridge questionnaire directly asked teachers about their experience in teaching students with special educational needs and additional support. That study's intent was to ascertain how inclusion affected teachers' working lives (MacBeath, Galton, Steward, MacBeath, & Page, 2006). Like this research, MacBeath solicited teacher's opinions and perspectives on collaboration, preparation, support, and the stresses associated with providing inclusion instruction for students with disabilities in general education classrooms

(MacBeath et al., 2006). Appendix D also provides a side-by-side crosswalk of the original items from MacBeath et al. and this study's adapted survey items and extant literature references. In addition, the survey includes new questions borne from the extant literature (see Appendix D). These new items were initially conceptualized by this researcher and field-tested via two pilot studies to help with the survey's reliability.

Field-Test Procedures - Pilot Studies

As part of the course work for this doctoral program, several opportunities were presented to test this methodology and further develop the survey instrument. As part of the coursework in EDD 502 (Qualitative Research Methods in Education Research), the researcher sought to enhance the survey's validity. This researcher took Bailey's PATIE (2004) Likert survey and modified it into an open-ended questionnaire and interview script. In adapting the interview questions, the researcher tailored the terminology of the questions to comport to this project (i.e., students with special needs were replaced by students with mild/moderate disabilities). This researcher interviewed one respondent who was a middle school assistant administrator who managed the school's special education programs. His full inclusion school used the itinerant model of inclusion. This individual was representative of this study's future research participants.

The participant was interviewed across three days (6/22/18 to 6/24/18) for sixty-three minutes of recorded dialog. The interviewee was this researcher's

professional colleague, and thus, he was comfortable engaging in a candid conversation about inclusion and how best to survey school administrators. This administrator respondent conveyed his support that this project's three research questions were consistent with inclusion themes in the middle school context. He reported that the questions directly elicited his opinions on the barriers of inclusion instruction, the bridges of collaboration and support, and the base infrastructure elements necessary for inclusion implementation. He also made word and phrase suggestions, so those survey items used jargon familiar to potential survey respondents. His suggestions were incorporated to help the survey's reliability.

A second pilot study occurred in the coursework for EDD 511 (Leader Learner), and the researcher had another opportunity to test the survey instrument with teachers and administrators using Google forms. In this pilot study, the barrier questions were administered in survey form to 4 secondary school teachers and two school site administrators. They were asked to answer the Likert items and, after they answered, offer suggestions about the survey items. For example, they commented on how to make the items clearer for future use.

After reviewing the results from the two administrators and four teacher respondents, the researcher redesigned the instrument to assess participants' prior knowledge and asked participants to share their definition of inclusion to add clarity and readability to the items (i.e., the survey's reliability). This step was

consistent incorporating elements of student-centered learning to the instrument, a suggestion from Wolfe et al. (2013).

Data Collection Procedures

Final survey instrument and participant access and completion.

Participants were able to choose when and where to take the survey. Data was collected via the Qualtrics online survey platform. The Qualtrics website states their software provides the highest levels of security and frequently surpasses data security expectations (Qualtrics, 2018). Qualtrics has a non-public cloud-based system, with a secure data storage center system designed to prevent data hacking. Qualtrics will not sell participant data or give access to any third party or Qualtrics employees (Qualtrics). Qualtrics will also provide a turn off location tracking feature, to prevent ballot-box stuffing (i.e., taking the survey more than once from a specific IP address).

Items from the three domains were distributed across the instrument and at Likert scale was used for responses. For example, the items measuring teacher and school administrators' opinions on inclusion barriers are items 4, 8, 13, 17, 19, 25, 29, 31, 32, 36, and 39. Items 5, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 21, 22, 23, 24, 30, 33, and 35 collect data related to opinions on the bridges regarding inclusion, while items 5, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 21, 22, 23, 30, 33, 35, and 40 addressed bases infrastructure. The survey also provided an opportunity for the participants to give further input through three open-ended questions in which they can write about

their general views and opinions about inclusion. The open-ended questions are items 41, 42, 43, and 44.

Survey data collection. Surveys were distributed by Qualtrics and from the researcher's San Jose State email. Between December 1st through to December 10th, seventy-two superintendents were contacted via emails requesting participation. Sixteen districts gave immediate consent, and an additional four districted requested researchers apply through the District's research application process. Two of the applications were accepted. While the other two acceptance was received after the surveys had closed.

After a second request was sent on January 6, 2020, five additional school districts acquiesced giving the researcher a total of twenty-three districts to contact their middle/intermediate and high schools. Surveys were sent to 1738 teachers and 141 administrators via Qualtrics distribution email system between December 6, 2019 through to December 20, 2019. Qualtrics resumed sending surveys per program schedule after the district's holiday break January 6th through to the survey's close date of January 24, 2020. After receiving a slow response after January 6, 2020, researchers sent out reminders and anonymous survey links directly to principals of 26 schools via Excel mail merge.

Quantitative Analysis.

Before any analyses were conducted, data were coded and imputed in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24 software. Inclusion scores were calculated as the average response to each item on the survey.

However, several items were reverse coded due to negative wording in the item (Questions: 4, 8, 10, 13, 17, 25, 29, 31, 32, 39, and 40). Scores on each of the subscale were calculated in a similar manner, but using only items pertaining to each subscale. As such, scores on the overall inclusion opinion, and each subscale, could range from zero to five.

First, participants' demographic characteristics are summarized (collectively and by groups: teachers and administrators) using frequencies and percentages. Then, descriptive statistics, including measures of central tendency (e.g. mean) and variability (e.g. standard deviation), for the survey and sub-scale responses are summarized (collectively and by groups). Internal reliability was also assessed for the overall inclusion opinion scores and each subscale. Internal reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. A value of .70 or greater is considered acceptable for internal reliability (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Subsequently, the statistical assumptions associated with the parametric independent samples t-test and one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were assessed. Finally, results pertaining to each research question were reported using inferential statistics.

Quantitative Analysis

In addition to the Likert-type items on the survey, there were four open-ended questions. For each of these questions, a thematic analysis was conducted to systematically identify, organize and offer insight into themes in participant responses. This type of analysis identifies commonalities across participant

responses, and groups responses together based on themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

First, responses were read with the intent to identify relevant information that could impact one (or more) of the three major research questions. Then, initial codes were created for responses identifying shared features across responses. Following the initial coding, responses were grouped into themes, representing patterns across participant responses. Then, those themes were defined and interpreted.

Limitations and Benefits

The timing of when participants were sent, the survey may have limited the number of participants. Participants may have had concerns that their identity with responses may be revealed. These same feelings might have led to school district reservations and rejections to participate in this research. As indicated in the letters to Superintendents and invitation letters to participants, responses are presented in an aggregated way to protect confidentiality. This research is only a sample of five percent of teachers and administrators were sent invitations and survey links. This study does not represent the opinions of all those who declined to participate, and their views may differ.

The use of the word “aggressive” in questions # 8 and # 31 used to describe the behavior of a students with a mild/moderate disability because of his/her education-based label of “emotional disturbance” can and does have damaging effects (Weist, Mellin, Garbacz, & Anderson-Butcher, 2019). Leaders of school

mental health (SMH) have had longstanding concerns, reinforced through the research, about the use of negative descriptors and its impacts of stigmatizing language in the education arena. The use of specific stigmatizing labels such as “aggressive”, by educational professionals, should be avoided as the use of such a broad descriptive word may reinforce negative predictions (Weist, et. al., 2019).

Another limitation of this study is the sample size of the 1879 surveys sent to potential participants with only 107 (5.7%) were completed thus not compromising the reliability of findings. Although validated by previous research (Bailey, 2004), there were no additional instruments in this study that would strengthen the findings from the small sample size. Therefore, use of the word, “aggressive” as it relates to the findings are not generalizable beyond the scope of this study.

Data Analysis & Statistical Methodology

This study investigated the opinions of teachers and administrators on barriers, bridges, and bases for inclusivity practices for secondary students with mild or moderate disabilities. Participants completed an overall inclusion opinion survey with 39 Likert items (coded as 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = no opinion, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree). Within this scale, three sub-scales were measured: 1) barriers, 2) bridges, and 3) bases for inclusivity practices.

Participants also provided demographic information. First, participants' demographic characteristics are reported, followed by descriptive and reliability statistics related to responses to the survey. Then, the statistical assumptions

associated with the analyses were assessed to determine whether the parametric or non-parametric analysis is more appropriate. Finally, each research question was assessed systematically.

Chapter Four: Data Analysis And Findings Of The Study

Introduction

The purpose of this research is to examine opinions from school site teachers and administrators about inclusion practices in general educational environments for their secondary students with mild to moderate disabilities. The questions asked were to elicit opinions on three research questions. Research question one, asked participants their opinion on how they feel about students with mild/moderate disabilities. These questions were designed to determine the participants' attitude, mindset and comfort level that may create barriers to inclusion. Research questions two, asked opinions on what participants think are the potential solutions, planning time training/to create a bridge of collaboration between administration, special sped/gen teacher relationships and can nurture school personnel collaboration during inclusion. The third research question asks opinions on what base levels of administrative support, infrastructures, resources, and pre-service training teachers and administration think is needed before starting an inclusion classroom.

Demographic Information Summarized

Surveys were administered to 110 participants. However, three participants did not complete any of the survey items, and therefore removed from the analyses. As such, responses from 107 participants (37 administrators and 70 teachers) were included in the present study. First, participants' demographic information is summarized, collectively and by group membership. Then,

descriptive data about the cumulative opinions on inclusion, and domain-specific opinions on inclusion (i.e. barriers, bridges, and bases) is summarized for all participants collectively and by group membership. Finally, the statistical assumptions associated with the inferential analysis are assessed, followed by the results of the statistical analysis comparing opinions on inclusion by group membership. The null and alternative hypotheses regarding each research question were reviewed.

Tables 1 - 5 are participants' demographic information summarized, collectively and by group membership. Table 1 shows demographic data of groups by gender, age range, and Race/Ethnicity.

Table 1

Demographic Data by Group Membership

	Teachers		Administrators		Total	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
<i>Gender</i>						
Male	17	24.3	14	37.8	31	69.2
Female	52	74.3	22	59.5	74	29.0
<i>Age Range</i>						
30 years or younger	8	11.4	1	2.7	9	8.4
31 to 50 years old	42	60.0	18	48.6	60	56.1
51 or more years old	20	28.6	17	45.9	37	34.6
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>						
African American	2	2.9	4	10.8	6	5.6
Asian	7	10.0	5	13.5	12	11.2
Caucasian	40	57.1	16	43.2	56	52.3
Hispanic	9	12.9	7	18.9	16	15.0
Other/Mixed	8	11.4	3	8.1	11	10.3
Pacific Islander	1	1.4	1	2.7	2	1.9

*Note, percentages do not equal 100% due to missing data

As displayed in Table 1, demographic data grouped by participants' membership, the present study consisted of responses from 107 participants. Most participants were female ($n = 74$, 69%). Participants' age ranges were classified as 1) 30 years old or younger, 2) between 31 and 50 years old, and 3) 51 years or older. More than half of participants were between the ages of 31 and 50 years old ($n = 60$, 56.1%), followed by those who were 51 years or older ($n = 37$, 34.6%), and those who were 30 years old or less ($n = 9$, 8.4%). Approximately half of participants were Caucasian ($n = 56$, 52.3%), followed by

Hispanic ($n = 16$, 15.0%), Asian ($n = 12$, 11.2%), Other/Mixed ($n = 11$, 10.3%), African American ($n = 6$, 5.6%), and Pacific Islander ($n = 2$, 1.9%).

Table 2 represents participants' responses to items pertaining to their years of experience in different areas of education by their group membership.

Table 2

Administration and Teaching Experience by Group Membership

	Teachers		Administrators		Total	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
<i>Administration Experience</i>						
None	70	100.0	0	0.0	70	65.4
0 – 5 years	--	--	18	48.6	18	16.8
6 – 10 years	--	--	9	24.3	9	8.4
11 – 20 years	--	--	3	8.1	3	2.8
21 or more years	--	--	5	13.5	5	4.7
<i>General Education Teaching Experience</i>						
None	3	4.3	1	2.7	4	3.7
0 – 5 years	16	22.9	6	16.2	22	20.6
6 – 10 years	12	17.1	8	21.6	20	18.7
11 – 20 years	18	25.7	11	29.7	29	27.1
21 or more years	19	27.1	9	24.3	28	26.2
<i>Special Education Teaching Experience</i>						
None	37	52.9	17	45.9	54	50.5
0 – 5 years	10	14.3	4	10.8	14	13.1
6 – 10 years	4	5.7	5	13.5	9	8.4
11 – 20 years	4	5.7	8	21.6	12	11.2
21 or more years	4	5.7	1	2.7	5	4.7

*Note, total percentages do not always equal 100% due to missing data

There were 35 participants with administration experience, of whom approximately half had between zero and five years of experience ($n = 18$, 51.4%). Fewer participants had between six and 10 years of experience ($n = 9$,

25.7%), 11 and 20 years of experience ($n = 3$, 8.6%), and 21 or more years of administration experience ($n = 5$, 14.3%). Furthermore, most participants (including administrators) had at least some general education teaching experience ($n = 99$). Approximately 28.3% had 21 or more years of experience teaching general education ($n = 28$), 29.3% had between 11 and 20 years of teaching experience ($n = 29$), 20.2% had between six and 10 years of general education teaching experience ($n = 20$), and 22.2% had between zero and five years of general education teaching experience ($n = 22$).

Table 3 displays demographic information regarding the school environment. Participants were asked about their current school employment (middle or high school), the number of students who attend their school, and whether their school has a special day class.

Table 3

School Level Information

	Teachers		Administrators		Total	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
<i>School Type</i>						
Middle School (6 – 8)	7	10.0	5	14.7	12	11.2
High School (9 – 12)	63	90.0	30	81.1	93	86.9
<i>Student Enrollment</i>						
Less than 200 students	3	4.3	1	2.7	4	3.7
201 to 500 students	5	7.1	4	10.8	9	8.4
501 to 1000 students	5	7.1	2	5.4	7	56.4
More than 1000 students	57	81.4	27	73.0	84	78.5
<i>Special Day Classes</i>						
Yes	52	74.3	30	81.1	82	76.6
No	10	14.3	2	5.4	12	11.2
Unknown	8	11.4	5	13.5	13	12.1

Note, total percentages do not always equal 100% due to missing data

As noted in Table 3, most participants currently worked at high schools ($n = 93$, 86.9%), while fewer worked at middle schools ($n = 12$, 11.2%). Most participants worked at schools with student enrollments of more than 1000 ($n = 84$, 78.5%). Fewer participants worked at schools with enrollment between 501 and 1000 students ($n = 7$, 6.5%), between 201 and 500 students ($n = 9$, 8.4%), and less than 200 students ($n = 4$, 3.7%). Most participants worked at schools with special day classes ($n = 82$, 76.6%), while fewer worked at schools with no special day classes ($n = 12$, 11.2%).

Table 4 displays participant responses when asked about their experience with I.E.P and/or 504 plans, as well as their knowledge and practice of inclusion pedagogy.

Table 4

Participants' Experience with I.E.P/504 Plans and Inclusion Practice and Pedagogy

	Teachers		Administrators		Total	
	n	%	N	%	n	%
Close Relatives with I.E.P or 504 plans						
Yes	44	62.9	17	45.9	61	57.0
No	22	31.4	17	45.9	39	36.4
Close Professional Colleague with I.E.P or 504 plans						
Yes	29	41.4	14	37.8	43	40.2
No	17	24.3	12	32.4	29	27.1
Does your current school practice inclusion for students with mild/moderate disabilities?						
Yes	63	90.0	30	81.1	93	86.9
No	3	4.3	4	10.8	7	6.5
Knowledge rating of inclusion pedagogy						
None	2	2.9	2	5.4	4	3.7
Some Knowledge	27	38.6	6	16.2	33	30.8
Competent	27	38.6	20	54.1	47	43.9
Expert	14	20.0	7	18.9	21	19.6

*Note, total percentages do not equal 100% due to missing or unknown data

As we see in Table 4, more than half of participants have a close relative with an I.E.P or 504 plans ($n = 61$, 57.0). Additionally, 40.2% of participants have worked with a close professional colleague with an I.E.P or 504 plans ($n = 43$).

Most participants' current school does practice inclusion for students with mild/moderate disabilities ($n = 93$, 86.9%). Participants' knowledge of inclusion pedagogy varied: Almost half rated their knowledge of inclusion pedagogy as competent ($n = 47$, 43.9), followed by 30.8% who rated their knowledge as "some knowledge" ($n = 33$). Fewer participants had "expert" knowledge ($n = 21$, 19.6%), and even less had no knowledge of inclusion pedagogy ($n = 4$, 3.7%).

Table 5 represents descriptive statistics in which participants' opinions towards inclusion were measured via a 39-question 5-point Likert-type scale (strongly disagree, disagree, no opinion, agree, and strongly agree).

Table 5
Descriptive and Reliability Statistics

Scale	Mean (SD)	Median	Range	Cronbach's Alpha
<i>Inclusion (Overall)</i>				
Teachers	2.82 (0.45)	2.89	1.34 – 3.63	.885
Administrators	3.05 (0.36)	3.02	2.37 – 4.08	.744
Overall	2.90 (0.43)	2.95	1.34 – 4.08	.865
<i>Barriers sub-scale</i>				
Teachers	3.20 (0.66)	3.32	1.45 – 4.45	.666
Administrators	3.38 (0.59)	3.36	2.00 – 4.82	.517
Overall	3.26 (0.64)	3.36	1.45 – 4.82	.635
<i>Bridges sub-scale</i>				
Teachers	2.95 (0.57)	3.00	1.33 – 4.25	.761
Administrators	3.25 (0.44)	3.25	2.50 – 4.82	.503
Overall	3.05 (0.54)	3.00	1.33 – 4.92	.728
<i>Bases sub-scale</i>				
Teacher	2.48 (0.48)	2.50	1.00 – 3.50	.718
Administrator	2.68 (0.56)	2.62	1.93 – 4.43	.766
Overall	2.55 (0.52)	2.57	1.00 – 4.38	.734

Table 5 shows us descriptive statistics. Participants' opinions towards inclusion were measured via a 39-question 5-point Likert-type scale (strongly disagree, disagree, no opinion, agree, and strongly agree). Overall inclusion opinion scores were calculated as the participants' average across all 39 items. In addition to an overall inclusion opinion score, three sub-scales were calculated to assess the following domains: 1) *Barriers* that prevent inclusion, 2) *Bridges* that can nurture collaborations/provide more frequent inclusionary practices, and 3) *Bases* necessary to create inclusionary practices. The *Barriers* sub-scale

consisted of 11 items, the *Bridges* subscale score consisted of 12 items, and the *Bases* sub-scale consisted of 14 items. Sub-scale scores were calculated as the average rating for items referring to each subscale/sub-domain. Additionally, internal reliability for each measure was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. A value of .70 or greater is considered acceptable for internal reliability (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Scores on the overall inclusion opinion scale ranged from 1.45 to 3.97, with an average score of 2.93 ($sd = 0.42$). There was also high internal reliability on the overall inclusion opinion scale. Scores on the *Barriers* sub-scale ranged from 1.45 to 4.82, with an average score of 3.36 ($sd = 0.64$). Internal reliability on the *Barriers* sub-scale was slightly lower than satisfactory (e.g. Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Scores on the *Bridges* sub-scale ranged from 1.33 to 4.92, with an average score of 3.05 ($sd = 0.54$). Internal reliability on the *Bridges* sub-scale was also satisfactory. Scores on the *Bases* sub-scale ranged from 1.00 to 4.38, with an average score of 2.55 ($sd = 0.52$). Internal reliability on the *Bases* sub-scale was also satisfactory.

Overall Inclusion Opinions.

Responses from the 39 items Likert-type scale were aggregated and an average overall composite score was calculated for each participant. Scores ranged from 1.34 to 4.08 on the overall inclusion opinion scale, with an average score of 2.90 ($sd = 0.43$).

First, an independent sample t-test was conducted to determine whether participants' overall inclusion opinions differed depending on whether they were an administrator or a teacher. There was a significant difference on overall inclusion opinion scores, $t(105) = 2.780, p = .006$. On average, administrators had higher scores ($m = 3.05, sd = 0.36$) than teachers ($m = 2.82, sd = 0.45$).

Furthermore, a series of one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA's) were calculated to determine whether participants' demographic information contributed to any differences in overall inclusion opinion scores. There was no significant difference in inclusion opinion scores based on age, $F(2,103) = 1.665, p = .194$. There was no significant difference in inclusion opinion scores based on ethnicity, $F(5, 97) = 0.437, p = .822$. There was no significant difference based on gender, $F(1,103) = 1.583, p = .211$. There was no significant difference between participants at middle and high schools, $F(1,103) = 1.281, p = .260$. Finally, there were no differences in inclusion opinion scores based on Special Education teaching experience, $F(4,89) = 1.450, p = .224$, nor did they differ by General Education teaching experience, $F(4,98) = 1.045, p = .388$.

Table 6 shows the statistical assumptions of the independent samples t-test were assessed by conducting the primary analysis for each research question.

Table 6

Shapiro-Wilk Test of Normality for Inclusion Opinion Scale and Subscale Scores

Shapiro-Wilk Test of Normality			
	Statistic	Df	<i>P</i>
Inclusion Opinion (overall)	.955	107	.001
Barriers	.967	107	.009
Bridges	.965	107	.006
Bases	.977	107	.060

Table 6 highlights the statistical assumption. Before conducting the primary analysis for each research question, the statistical assumptions of the independent samples t-test were assessed. The first assumption, independent observations, is inherent in the study design. The assumption of normally distributed data was then assessed by the Shapiro-Wilk Test of Normality statistical test. A significant *p-value* (i.e., $< .05$) would indicate that the shape of the distribution is significantly different than the normal distribution, and therefore the data are not approximately normally distributed. The distribution of inclusion opinion overall scores was significantly different from the shape of a normal distribution, $p = .001$. Additionally, the *Barriers* and *Bases* sub-scales were significantly different from a normal distribution, p 's $< .05$. The *Bases* sub-scale did not significantly differ from the shape of a normal distribution.

Table 7 represents the assumption of homogeneity of variance that was assessed.

Table 7

Levene's Test of Equality of Variance

Leven's Test of Equality of Variance			
	Statistic	df	<i>P</i>
Inclusion Opinion (overall)	2.23	1,105	.139
Barriers	0.36	1,105	.552
Bridges	1.87	1,105	.174
Bases	0.68	1,105	.139

We see in Table 7 the assumption of homogeneity of variance was assessed. The independent samples t-test assumes that variances across the two groups are equal. Levene's Test of Equality of Variance assessed whether the assumption of homogeneity of variance was violated. An alpha level greater than .05 (i.e. $p > .05$) indicates that the groups' variances are not significantly different from each other. An alpha level less than .05 indicates that the assumption of homogeneity of variance is violated. This assumption is especially important when the group sample sizes are unequal. In the present study, the variances between groups (i.e. administrators and teachers) did not differ significantly for the inclusion opinion scale, nor for any of the sub-scales. While some data for the Inclusion Opinion scale violated the assumption of normality, t-tests are robust to violations of normality, particularly when the group sample sizes are adequate (typically > 30 participants per group) (Bartlett-Paul, 2013). Because the present study had more than 30 participants per group, and none of the other

assumptions were violated, it was determined that an independent sample t-test was an appropriate analysis for the present study.

Research Question 1: What are the barriers (attitudes/mindset/'comfort-level') faced by California secondary public schools T&A that prevent inclusionary practices for secondary students with mild to moderate disabilities?

Overall, participants' scores on the *Barriers* sub-scale were neutral or slightly positive ($m = 3.26$, $SD = 0.64$). This indicates that, on average, participants (administrators and teachers) agree with the barriers mentioned in the survey that prevent inclusionary practices for secondary students with mild to moderate disabilities.

It was of interest to determine whether participants' opinions on the barriers that prevent inclusionary practices differed based on whether the respondent was a teacher or administrator. An independent sample t-test calculated to determine whether a statistical difference in the responses of administrators and teachers occurred. There was no statistical difference between the average response on the *Barriers* sub-scale between administrators and teachers, $t(105) = 1.41$, $p = .161$.

Additionally, it was of interest to determine whether participants' demographic information contributed to any differences in how they responded to items on the *Barriers* sub-scale. A series of One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted, treating demographic information as the independent variable and scores on the *Barriers* sub-scale as the dependent variable. There was no

statistical difference between the different age groups on the *Barriers* sub-scale, $F(2,103) = 1.79, p = .173$. There was no statistical difference across ethnicities on the *Barriers* sub-scale, $F(2,103) = 0.885, p = .494$. There was no statistical difference between genders on the *Barriers* sub-scale, $F(1,103) = 0.019, p = .891$. There was no statistical difference between those working at middle or high schools, $F(1,103) = 0.025, p = .874$. There were no differences in scores on the *Barriers* scale based on Special Education teaching experience, $F(4,89) = 1.864, p = .124$, nor did they differ by General Education teaching experience, $F(4,98) = 1.937, p = .110$.

However, when we examine the questions, we see the most negative responses to inclusion through the positive responses of questions that revolved around student's behavior within inclusion classrooms. Table 8 highlights survey items questions in the *Barriers* subset found to be significant in their negative opinions and mindset.

Table 8

Mean and Standard Deviation Pivotal Responses by Bases and Group Identifiers

Survey Item		Teacher	Administrator	Total
		Mean (Standard Deviation)	Mean (Standard Deviation)	Mean (Standard Deviation)
Q8	Students with mild/moderate disabilities who are continually aggressive toward school staff should not be included in general education classrooms.	3.47 (1.25)	2.84 (1.24)	3.25 (1.28)
Q17	Teaching students with mild/moderate disabilities can sometimes be stressful.	4.27 (0.66)	3.97 (0.95)	4.17 (0.78)
Q25	Including students with mild/moderate disabilities creates few additional problems for some general education teachers' classroom management.	3.37 (1.09)	3.29 (1.13)	3.34 (1.1)
Q31	Students with mild/moderate disabilities who are continually aggressive toward their fellow students should not be included in general education classrooms.	3.81 (1.17)	3.29 (1.25)	3.63 (1.22)

In table 8, we see that all these questions netted negative options center on student behavior that affects mindset and willingness to have students with M/M

in general education classrooms, whereas overall for both groups was slightly positive.

Research Question 2: What are the potential bridges (solutions/planning time/training/collaboration/sped/gen teacher relationships) that can nurture school personnel collaboration and provide high-quality and more frequent inclusionary practices for secondary students with mild to moderate disabilities?

Overall, participants' scores on the *Bridges* subscale were neutral ($m = 3.05$, $SD = 0.54$). This indicates that, on average, participants (administrators and teachers) had *no opinion* on items mentioned in the survey that suggest potential bridges to nurture school personnel collaboration and provide high-quality and more frequent inclusionary practices for secondary students with mild to moderate disabilities.

It was of interest to determine whether participants' opinions on the *bridges* sub-scale differed based on whether the respondent was a teacher or administrator. An independent sample t-test was calculated to determine whether a statistical difference in the responses of administrators and teachers occurred. There was a statistical difference between the average response on the *Bridges* sub-scale between administrators and teachers, $t(105) = 2.82$, $p = .006$. On average, administrators' scores on the *Bridges* sub-scale were higher than teachers' scores.

Figure 3. The average score for Administrators and Teachers on the Bridges sub-scale.

Additionally, it was of interest to determine whether participants' demographic information contributed to any differences in how they responded to items on the *Bridges* sub-scale. A series of One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were conducted treating demographic information as the independent variable and scores on the *Bridges* sub-scale as the dependent variable. There was no statistical difference between the different age groups on the *Bridges* sub-scale, $F(2,103) = 1.128, p = .328$. There was no statistical difference across ethnicities on the *Bridges* sub-scale, $F(5,103) = 0.261, p = .933$. There was a statistical difference between genders on the *Bridges* sub-scale, $F(1,103) = 3.942, p = .05$.

On average, males' scores on the *Bridges* sub-scale ($m = 3.21$, $SD = 0.47$) were higher than females' scores ($m = 2.98$, $SD = 0.57$).

Figure 4. The average score for Males and Females on the Bridges sub-scale.

Additionally, there was a statistical difference between those working at middle or high schools, $F(1,103) = 4.589$, $p = .035$. On average, participants from middle schools ($m = 3.37$, $SD = 0.57$) scored higher on the *Bridges* sub-scale than participants from high schools ($m = 3.01$, $SD = 0.53$).

Figure 5. The average score for participants from middle and high schools on the Bridges sub-scale.

Finally, participants' scores on the *Bridges* sub-scale was impacted by teaching experience. There was a significant difference in scores based on the Special Education teaching experience, $F(4,89) = 2.99$, $p = .023$. Participants with zero to five years of experience and those with 11 to 20 years of experience scored the highest, followed by those with no experience and those with 21 or more years of experience (Figure 6). There was no difference in scores on the *Bridges* sub-scale based on General Teaching experience, $F(4,98) = 1.007$, $p = .408$.

Figure 6. The average score on the Bridges sub-scale based on teaching experience.

The Bridges most negative response were on the collaboration and pre-service preparedness of general education teachers when receiving a student with mild to moderate disabilities into the general education classroom.

Table 9 reviews specific questions in the Bridges domain that were significantly negative in their response compared to other responses in the subset.

Table 9

Mean and Standard Deviation Pivotal Responses by Bridges and Group Identifiers

Survey Item		Teacher	Administrator	Total
		Mean (Standard Deviation)	Mean (Standard Deviation)	Mean (Standard Deviation)
Q16	When preparing to receive a student with mild/moderate disabilities, our general education teachers have had adequate discussions with special education teachers and/or specialists (Speech/OT/Counselor)	1.73 (0.9)	2.08 (1.08)	1.85 (0.97)
Q26	When preparing to receive a student with mild/moderate disabilities, general education teachers have adequate time to develop instructional materials.	1.8 (0.78)	2.29 (1.18)	1.96 (0.96)

In table 9, we see teachers and administrators had negative opinions when asked if there was adequate time and knowledge is provided to teachers to prepare when students with mild/moderate disabilities were introduced into their classrooms.

Research Question 3: Which bases (i.e. infrastructure elements/staffing/preservice training/resources-time/\$\$) are necessary to create inclusionary instructional practices for secondary students with mild to moderate disabilities?

Overall, participants' scores on the *Bases* subscale were slightly negative ($m = 2.55$, $SD = 0.52$). This indicates that, on average, participants (administrators and teachers) disagreed with the bases mentioned in the survey that are necessary to create inclusionary instructional practices. In other words, the bases currently provided by the administration, classroom settings, and teaching practices are not enough bases for creating inclusionary practices for students with mild to moderate disabilities.

It was of interest to determine whether participants' opinions on the *bases* sub-scale differed based on whether the respondent was a teacher or administrator. An independent sample t-test was calculated to determine whether a statistical difference in the responses of administrators and teachers occurred. There was a statistical difference between the average response on the *Bases* sub-scale between administrators and teachers, $t(105) = 1.979$, $p = .05$. On average, administrators' scores on the *Bases* sub-scale ($m = 2.68$, $SD = 0.56$)

were higher than teachers' scores on the *Bases* sub-scale ($m = 2.48$, $SD = 0.48$) (see Figure 7).

Figure 7. The Average Score for Administrators and Teachers on the Bases Sub-scale.

Additionally, it was of interest to determine whether participants' demographic information contributed to any differences in how they responded to items on the *Bases* sub-scale. A series of One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were conducted, treating demographic information as the independent variable and scores on the *Bases* sub-scale as the dependent variable. There was no statistical difference between the different age groups on the *Bases* sub-scale, F

(2,103) = 1.482, $p = .232$. There was no statistical difference across ethnicities on the *Bases* sub-scale, $F(2,103) = 0.700$, $p = .625$. There was no statistical difference between genders on the *Bases* sub-scale, $F(1,103) = 1.378$, $p = .243$. There was no statistical difference between those working at middle or high schools, $F(1,103) = 0.307$, $p = .581$. There were no differences in scores on the *Bases* scale based on Special Education teaching experience, $F(4,89) = 0.366$, $p = .832$, nor did they differ by General Education teaching experience, $F(4,98) = 0.047$, $p = .996$.

Qualitative Analysis

Table 10 represents a qualitative thematic analysis of the optional open-ended question of “Who benefits from inclusion?”

Table 10

Themes for Advantages and Disadvantages for Inclusion

Advantages	Teachers	Administrators	Total
<i>Diversity/Peer-to-Peer interactions</i>	$n = 37$	$n = 14$	$n = 51$
<i>Real-world/inclusion for all</i>	$n = 7$	$n = 14$	$n = 21$
<i>Improve the level of education</i>	$n = 16$	$n = 11$	$n = 37$
Disadvantages			
<i>Workload for teachers</i>	$n = 13$	$n = 5$	$n = 18$
<i>Classroom Problems</i>	$n = 18$	$n = 10$	$n = 28$
<i>Students' feelings</i>	$n = 9$	$n = 3$	$n = 12$

A qualitative thematic analysis was conducted on each of the four open-ended questions on the survey. The first open-ended item asked, “What are the advantages and disadvantages of inclusion for students with mild to moderate

disabilities?” Based on participant responses, there were 24 codes created to group responses across participants. Then, these codes were reduced to three positive and three negative themes. Then, responses were separated into group membership, comparing the number of responses in each theme from teachers and administrators. While the sample sizes per group are not equal, it is still important to consider the theme’s that each group mentioned the most in their responses.

The first theme extracted from the open-ended responses was that the inclusion of students with mild to moderate disabilities promotes the interaction between general education students and special education students. The benefits of each type of student were frequently mentioned. For example, general education students could learn from their interactions by teaching or assisting special education students, as well as general learning how to interact with different types of people. Similarly, special education students may benefit socially from being in general education classrooms. One participant’s response demonstrates the two-way positive advantage by describing how general education students can learn to model behaviors and strategies for learning. In turn, special education students can benefit from observing those model behaviors and strategies.

The second positive theme extracted from responses pertains to how inclusion practices in the classroom would provide students with more of “real-world” experience, in which they must interact with all kinds of different people.

This response was particularly most common among administrators (see Table 10).

The third positive theme extracted from the open-ended responses to emerge involved improving the level of education for special education students. Having “access to curriculum diversity”, to “mainstream curriculum”, and access to “general education curriculum” were all common responses in terms of advantages of inclusionary practices. Both teachers and administrators mentioned that more rigorous, age-appropriate content would improve the learning experience of special education students, with an emphasis on grade-level content instruction.

There were also three negative themes that emerged, as participants were asked to mention the disadvantages of inclusionary practices in the classroom (Although there was a trend such that there were more positive comments than negative). The first theme that emerged was the increased workload for teachers. This theme involved responses referring to increased challenges with lesson planning, classroom management, larger classroom sizes, as well as less time and resources available. The increased workload theme was primarily evident in teacher responses, although some administrators also eluded to increased workload for teachers.

The second negative theme that emerged was that numerous classroom problems could emerge from including special education and general education students in the same classroom. Responses coded into this theme included

scarce in-class support provided to teachers, and possible (behavioral) interruptions and distractions, and students falling behind. This theme was shared across teachers and administrators. However, teachers tended to mention more the behavioral disruptions and distractions, while administrators mentioned more often the inability of special education students to keep up with the pace of instruction.

Finally, the third negative theme that emerged from this question was the inclusionary impact practices might have on the special education students' self-esteem. Many responses mentioned that if special education students fell behind, they may begin to feel isolated, shut down, and feel unaccepted by classmates. They may also feel overwhelmed in a general education classroom. While some administrators mentioned things about the potential for lower self-esteem, this theme was primarily observed in teachers.

The second open-ended item asked, "Who, if anyone, do you think benefits from inclusive policies and why?" Across both administrators and teachers, the most common response, by far, was "everyone" (teachers: $n = 36$), administrators: $n = 17$). The reasons are given as to why tended to mirror the responses from the positive themes of the first open-ended response. Some common responses were that students can learn from each other, teachers can learn from students, and that socialization with diverse populations is a good thing. Additionally, participants included the "real-world" interactions in their

responses. There were also mentions of improved learning for special education students being in general education classrooms.

Another common response was that schools (districts) would benefit from inclusive policies. Some of the reasons given were that they could cut costs, improve scheduling policies, and follow state/federal law requirements. Other responses included specifically parents and teachers as those who may benefit from inclusive policies.

The third open-ended item stated, “Describe the level of support you give your general education teachers for their instruction of students with mild/moderate disabilities” Responses to this question varied between teachers and administrators. For teachers, the most common theme in their responses was that minimal or no support has been given ($n = 11$). The next most common theme was that collaboration opportunities, (co)-teacher training, and weekly meetings were provided ($n = 8$). Fewer teachers mentioned receiving push-in ($n = 2$) or pull-out ($n = 2$) support.

Responses from administrators focused on three themes. First, the most frequent response(s) involved providing advice, mentorship, and/or insight, as well as the ability to facilitate collaborations and continuous communication ($n = 8$). The next most frequent theme involving the level of support was to provide background information and IEPs to the teachers. Finally, fewer responses fit the “minimal or no support” theme ($n = 4$).

The last open-ended item asked, “If there is extra stress associated with teaching students with mild to moderate disabilities, how could it be reduced?” This item provides teacher and administrator suggestions to improve *Bridges* (RQ2) and *Bases* (RQ3). Across both teachers and administrators, four major themes of responses emerged: 1) training, 2) reduce class size, 3) improve time constraints, 4) include another adult in the classroom. Among teachers and administrators, the most common response involved more training (teachers: $n = 17$, administrators: $n = 7$).

The second most common response involved either reducing class-size or the teacher-to-pupil ratio. Ten teachers specifically mentioned reducing the class size, while five administrators made mention of reducing class size. Then, the third theme to emerge was the lack of time that contributes to stress associated with teaching students with disabilities. Teachers and administrators emphasized the lack of time for planning and curriculum design. Finally, both teachers and administrators agreed that placing another adult in the room, whether a co-instructor or a paraeducator, would reduce extra stress.

Summary of Results

A series of independent samples t-tests were conducted to determine whether participants' inclusion opinion scores (and subscale scores) differed for administrators and teachers. Administrators had higher overall inclusion opinion scores than teachers. Administrators also had higher scores on the *Bridges* and *Bases* sub-scales than teachers. Based on the results of the qualitative analysis,

teachers tended to feel that the support they receive for inclusionary practices was minimal, and there were certain time and work-load constraints. Meaning that the bridges necessary for successful inclusion classrooms were not necessarily built yet. There was no difference between administrators and teachers on the *Barriers* sub-scale.

Additionally, a series of one-way ANOVAs were conducted to determine whether participants' scores differed based on demographic characteristics (e.g., age, ethnicity, gender, type of school, and years of experience in special and or general education). The only scale impacted by any demographic characteristics was the *Bridges* sub-scale. On this subscale, males had higher scores than females, participants at middle schools had higher scores than those at high schools, and there was a significant difference based on years of experience teaching special education.

Chapter Five: Discussion

Introduction

In 1968, Lloyd Dunn was one of many scholars coming out during the civil rights movement to criticize public education, particularly special education, for placing students with mild intellectual disabilities in segregated classrooms. He relied on the data available at the time as the foundation to question whether there was an educational benefit in these racially biased environments that were both socially and psychologically damaging. Dunn's arguments against the segregation of students with mild disabilities were consistent with the arguments made in the landmark Supreme Court case, *Brown vs. Board of Education*, as they applied to the segregation of African American students.

The overall purpose of this study was to determine teachers' and administrators' opinions regarding the barriers, bridges, and bases needed to employ inclusive practices for students with mild to moderate disabilities. In general, administrators had higher overall inclusion opinions than teachers. Specifically, on the bridges and bases subscales, administrators scored higher than teachers. Administrators' positive opinions are an important component in the implementation of inclusive environments. Administrators must first buy into the idea of integrated classrooms. One study found that administrators who had a positive mindset on the matter improved the attitudes of their teachers towards inclusion (Cook et al., 1999).

Key Findings for Research Question One

There was no difference between administrators and teachers on the barrier's subscale, and similarly, there was no difference regarding demographic information of the participants. The first research question focused on certain barriers, such as attitude, mindset, and self-efficacy, which can prevent inclusive practices for secondary students with mild to moderate disabilities. One of the key findings of the study was that participants' scores on the barrier's subscale were slightly positive, which indicated that both administrators and teachers generally agreed with the barriers mentioned in the survey. This finding was consistent with previous research conclusions that demonstrated approximately 65% of educators support inclusionary practices and services for students with disabilities (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1997). Additionally, results from the qualitative analysis shed light on the specific barriers for teachers and administrators included in the sample.

There was a common theme regarding barriers, namely that teachers and administrators still had negative mindsets about their ability to utilize inclusive practices in the classroom setting. Teachers complained about increased workload and increased stress due to lack of training, large class sizes, lack of support, and lack of time in their responses to open-ended questions. Administrators also mentioned a lack of support, large class sizes, and increased teacher workload as barriers to inclusive practices for secondary students with mild to moderate disabilities. Generally, teachers and administrators expressed

concerns about being unprepared, unqualified, and/or unable to foster a successful inclusive environment. One previous study found teachers felt efficacious in teaching students with disabilities, though they required more specialized training at a higher rate than special education teachers, and most general education teachers felt that they did not have the necessary support and resources to include special needs students in their classroom (Buell et al., 2009), a sentiment shared in the present study.

Interestingly, teachers reported students' disruptive behavior as a barrier to inclusive practices, whereas administrators did not necessarily consider classroom behavior as a barrier. These responses provided concrete evidence of the types of barriers that prevent inclusive practices. Consistent with previous research, these opinions demonstrated that teachers' attitudes were often a large barrier to inclusion. For example, one study found that teachers with more experience in special education teachers exhibited more positive attitudes toward working in inclusive classrooms (Van Reusen, 2001). Another study found that general education teachers generally felt ill-prepared to plan and implement instructional adaptations for students with disabilities (Schumm & Vaughn, 1995). A lack of training and instructional planning time was a theme in their open-ended responses. Many teachers may feel they lack time to diversify instruction when teaching students with various levels and types of disabilities (McLeskey, 2009; Schmidt, 2002).

However, scores on the barrier's subscale were only slightly positive, and positive findings were found from the qualitative analysis of their open-ended responses. Particularly, both teachers and administrators viewed inclusive practices as beneficial to both general education and special education students. This consensus opinion indicates at least some positive attitudes toward the advancement of closing the barriers to such inclusive teaching practices.

Key Findings for Research Question Two

The second research question addressed the potential bridges (e.g., solutions, collaboration, and administrative support) that can nurture school personnel collaboration and provide high-quality and more frequent inclusive practices for secondary students with mild to moderate disabilities. A key finding regarding this research question was that administrators scored higher than teachers on the *bridge's* subscale. Again, this suggested that an attitude shift in administrators likely precedes a similar attitude shift in teachers.

One consistently mentioned theme in the qualitative analysis is the addition of an extra adult in the classroom, such as a co-teacher or para-educator. Previous research has found that co-teaching was the best inclusive practice for students with disabilities (Scruggs et al., 2007). One effective practice in an ideal classroom pairs a general education teacher with subject matter expertise and an educational specialist with pedagogical expertise to provide students with specialized academic instruction with a variety of disabilities (Dudley-Marley, 2010; MacBeath & Galton, 2006). Many teachers in the present study mentioned

co-teaching, as well as collaborative efforts, as a viable solution to ease the stress of implementing inclusive practices. Several administrators also mentioned the use of collaboration and adding instructional support staff to the classroom as viable solutions.

Other best practices for inclusive teaching include key preparation and training strategies for students as well as teachers. Students may require extra instructional scaffolding methods, such as outlines or storyboards (Villa, 2016), and teachers may require extra time prepping those materials. All the explicit strategies that teachers should employ to successfully create an inclusive environment require training, time, resources, and administrative support (McLeskey, 2009). The results of the present study are consistent with these findings. Another theme in the qualitative analysis was the need for better and/or more preparation time for curriculum development.

Another finding in the present study was that experience is important. Teachers with 0-5 years of special education experience and those with 11-20 years of experience had the highest scores on the bridge's subscale. This is consistent with previous research that found with more experience in special education held more positive attitudes towards working with inclusive classrooms (Van Reusen, 2001). Other research has shown that the longer inclusive practices are in place, the greater its positive influence (Krajewski & Hyde, 2000). Consequently, teachers with more positive attitudes toward inclusion had more successful inclusive environments (Schmidt, 2002). However, other research has

demonstrated that special education teachers did not believe that the academic achievement of students with mild disabilities would improve when they were included in general education classes (Cook et al., 1999).

Key Findings for Research Question Three

Beliefs about inclusion were found to be necessary but were not insufficient. Most participants agreed that inclusive policies benefited all students. However, scores on the base subscale were negative. Negative opinions indicated that participants in the present study believe that the base infrastructures currently provided by the administration, classroom settings, and teaching practices are not enough to promote inclusive environments. There were many suggestions mentioned in the qualitative analysis regarding what is necessary for successful inclusive environments. Common themes included more time for planning, better curriculum design, training, and co-teaching. However, teachers and administrators mentioned a lack of support for general education teachers to properly instruct mild to moderately disabled students at the district level.

Conclusions and Application to Current Policy

The major findings of this research resulted in a reaffirmation of previous studies. Teachers and administrators agree that inclusionary practices may benefit students' achievement, as well as their social and emotional learning, though negative attitudes in terms of pragmatics and the implementation of inclusive environments still exist. As this and other research suggests, participants' attitudes and opinions throughout the educational system, starting

with the superintendent, will continue to be the biggest barriers to change because of the resources and framework of instruction form at the highest levels in district offices. It is important for these leaders to be committed to the philosophy of inclusive education and to the development of attitudes, goals, and values through transformational leadership (Kirtman & Fullan, 2016).

Perceptions of a lack of self-efficacy, training, resources, and support exist, which are needed to successfully create inclusive environments. It is possible to conclude from this data that teachers' barriers towards inclusion are more negative as their perceived inadequacy to maintain classroom management and aggressive behaviors in their classrooms (Monsen, Ewing, & Kwoka, 2013). Participants expressed negative opinions when asked if they received any preparation on best practices for inclusion, concluding that they required preparation and training strategies for both students and teachers. Preparation of teachers for inclusive classrooms is hampered as the California Teaching Commission (CTC) has lessened the licensure requirements for special education teachers due to the teacher shortages, and in doing so, they have devalued special education credentials. Non-credentialed teachers who are granted waivers and emergency credentials by simply passing the California Educator Credentialing Examinations (CBEST) are ill-equipped to provide the necessary support to general education teachers as they prepare to receive students with mild to moderate disabilities in their classrooms. Furthermore, some fully credentialed special education teachers are not allowed to teach

general education students, even if they were once credentialed, have spent an extra year of teacher preparation courses to learn how to teach all types of students (Meadows & Wright, 2008).

The finding in the present study indicated that teachers with 0-5 years of special education experience and those with 11- 20 years of experience had the highest scores on the bridge's subscale is a confirmation that new teachers through their efficacy collaborate with more experienced teachers. These same teachers could benefit from researched-based pedagogy. In a chapter of *Learning Disabilities: Practice Concerns and Students with LD* (2013), studies examined specific pedagogy to be used in inclusive classrooms with students with learning disabilities. The various reports and analysis provided predictions and implications for educators willing to try these strategies (Bakken, Obiakor, & Rotatori, 2013).

Administrators and teachers of this research reported a need for this infrastructure of pre-service training to feel supported in their inclusive classrooms with students of mild to moderate disabilities. One theme that was mentioned consistently in the qualitative analysis was the addition of an extra adult in the classroom, whether it be a co-teacher or para-educator. In this study, extra personnel were a request that can only be realized through staffing allotments that come from district-level leadership. Again, these leaders must be committed to the philosophy of inclusive education to provide the site with needed personnel allowances and resources for professional development to

prepare staff for inclusion instruction (Tune, Lee, Johnson, Roberson & Whitehead, 2013) .

Both teachers and administrators in the present study generally agree with the idea of inclusive practices and what is required to have successful environments with both special education and general education students. Furthermore, many of the suggestions for successful bridges and bases for inclusive environments support the best practices found in the literature, and thus, the results of the present study may be of interest to policymakers and other stakeholders. The participants that chose to participate in this study agreed that inclusive policies benefited all students.

Implications for Educational Policy

Each special education classroom requires a teacher and 1-2 support staff (e.g., para-educators and speech pathologists). However, currently in the state and throughout the country, there is a special education teacher shortage. The Every Student Succeed Act's elimination of the "highly qualified teacher" requirement coupled with the special education teacher shortage resulted in the unintended consequences of students with mild to moderate disabilities remaining in segregated special education classes where an equitable education is less likely, thereby denying their equal protection under the U.S. Constitution.

For inclusive environments to become the norm in California, the Special Education division, as part of the K-12 California Education system for students with mild to moderate disabilities, must be eliminated or "overhauled", which was

determined through a collection reports produced by the Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE), a nonpartisan research and policy organization led by faculty from UC Berkeley, UCLA, University of Southern California and Stanford University (Jones, 2020). My recommendation sees the need for special education to be eliminated or, at minimum, blended into the general public education system, especially for students with mild to moderate disabilities. The two-tiered system that Dunn observed 50 years ago has not yet yielded educational equity. The purpose of special education is to educate students with disabilities, though it has shown over the years to be a self-perpetuating system that continues to grow and further segregate students.

Considering educational policy change in the special education system, it is important to understand the individual agendas that each stakeholder in the system is seeking. As part of the industrialized complex that is the U.S. Department of Education, and subsequently, the California Department of Education system, the California Department of Special Education is a complex system that has several interdependent components that are interdependent of one another. Stakeholders are a set of entities, in this case, departments of interconnected people that produce their pattern of behavior and have their own agendas. Stakeholders can be constricted by-laws, triggered into action by other stakeholders in the system, and easily manipulated by outside forces. (Meadows, 2008).

Some of the stakeholders in the special education system include students with disabilities and their families, governing SELPAs and local education agencies (LEA)s, school site administration and teachers (general and special education), school psychologists and school nurses, and support and direct instructional service personnel (SLP, OT, PT, APE, VI, and OM specialist). Also, each of these stakeholders has a plethora of interconnected entities with intertwining systems of their own. These include but are not limited to the California Teachers Credentialing Commission (CTCC), Accountability and Assessment, and Curriculum and Instruction, private consulting firms, bargaining units, and university and college preparation programs. Another reason to change educational policy and fold special education into general education is to stop perceptualizing the special education systems operating without appropriate resources.

The main stakeholders in the special education system are the students with disabilities, whose numbers fluctuate over time. They are fortuitous for the ever-perceptualizing the system it increases due to over-diagnoses, over-representation, and reexamination and determination of new syndromes and disabilities that require specialized academic instruction. In 2015, Governor Jerry Brown of California signed into law Assembly Bill 1369, which required schools to assess struggling readers specifically for dyslexia, the most prevalent learning disability in the U.S. and a disorder that affects as much as 80% of California students with learning disabilities in special education (Camera, 2017). As of the

2018-19 school year, that would be an estimated 240,336 students, in which 77% are students of color. The number of students impacted does not consider undiagnosed students sitting in general education classes. Assembly Bill 1369 has many years to be realized because mandated assessments have not been developed, validated, or distributed, and personnel has not been trained to administer and interpret the results. California's subsequent governor, Gavin Newsom, recently announced that he is setting aside \$4 million in his 2020-21 budget proposal for screening, professional learning for teachers, research, and a conference on dyslexia.

The change or elimination of special education for students with mild to moderate disabilities is to shift from segregated (special day) classes for those students to have these students educated in inclusive general education classrooms. For this to happen, three major changes are necessary. First, teachers and administrators must have positive attitudes and a willingness to change their behavior. Secondly, there must be a change in how teachers are educated and licensed to eliminate the two-tier system in public education. Special education and general education must merge into a universal credential for all students to have access to highly qualified staff and curriculum, including those students with disabilities (Meadows & Wright, 2008).

The California Teaching Commission (CTC), which licenses all teachers, is the only entity that can accomplish this. The goals of the feedback loops of retaining the much needed highly qualified should sustain the system, though the

CTC is bound to their reality. They see their responsibility of licensing teachers to fill the need. By contrast, the California Department of Education is not just in need of quantity but of high-quality teachers with a positive mindset, self-efficacy, and versatility.

If Governor Newsom's dyslexia plan comes to fruition, it would require rapid expansion in the teacher workforce over the next several years as the number of students with mild to moderate disabilities increases. California schools will continue to have difficulty finding teachers to deliver the specialized academic instruction for students with specific learning disabilities (dyslexia). Hiring teachers has been a major concern as California's supply of qualified teachers remains low, and all signs suggest there are not enough qualified teachers forthcoming (Darling-Hammond, 2019).

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research can build on the results of the present study to empirically test the efficacy of the bridges and bases suggested by teachers and administrators, as well as in previous literature. For example, co-teaching was a common theme as a solution to the stress involved in inclusive classrooms. A future study could observe a classroom of co-teachers, and a traditional classroom, and compare the two across a variety of measures. Another common suggestion was improved teacher planning and training. Training programs for inclusive practices could be evaluated and selected based on the results of the present study. Furthermore, future research may focus on the additional

stakeholders, such as students, parents, and district level administrations to shift attitudes more positively toward inclusive practices and added resources.

Reflections- “Justice too long delayed is justice denied” (King, 1963).

The paradigms of special education are mired in its industrial complex. The system has grown and continues to grow as more and more students are diagnosed with disabilities that impede their education. Over 100 years of constitutional amendments and legislation have asserted that inclusion is in the law, as well as a moral and social justice issue. Inclusion is important because it means that all students, regardless of type or degree of disability, ethnicity, social-economic status, home environment, or parent education indicators, are afforded the right to attend school in their home community with their non-disabled peers, and such students should not be separated or receive unequal educational resources. As Russel Ackoff stated, “To do more of what is not working currently, is to do more of what will not work in the future” (Ackoff, 2011). The present study indicates that many teachers and administrators support the “idea” of inclusive practices, but also agree with the difficulties with the barriers, bridges, and bases of implementation of inclusive classrooms. While perhaps not challenging to espouse, inclusions practical elements are complex, demanding, deliberate, and challenging. Many California, public school districts have struggled to address the full range of inclusion’s political, epistemological, and institutional factors (Hossain & Shahidullah, 2010). Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s statement can be applied to the implementation of inclusion for students with mild

to moderate disabilities. Over the past 55 years, California's secondary public school has not come any closer to having provided the resources, strategies, and highly qualified personnel with positive cultural mindfulness to foster the least restrictive environment that would eliminate the segregation of students with mild to moderate disabilities. Nor has research or data confirmed (substantiated) that the current system of special education is working toward achieving its goals. Inclusion too long (55 years) delayed is inclusion denied.

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Appendix A: Letter to Superintendents

Dear Superintendent _____

My name is Angela Lyte Crowther and I am a doctoral candidate at San Jose State University. I am also the Manager, Special Education Programs for Santa Clara County Office of Education. For my dissertation, I am assessing site administrators' and teachers' (general/special education) opinions about teaching students with mild to moderate disabilities in their regular education classrooms (i.e., inclusion). This research also seeks to identify barriers, bridges and the basic foundational needs associated with inclusionary practices.

I am writing to ask for your permission to anonymously survey your secondary school site administrators and teachers in your district. This research project has been IRB approved through San Jose State University

I believe this research will provide valuable information about administrative and teacher opinions about inclusion. With your permission, I will send an electronic survey to all the secondary administrators and teachers in your district. I will be asking them to complete the anonymous survey within a 3-week period from the time I send the link. My plan is to survey administrators and teachers in 3 to 5 Bay Area SELPAs. The results of the study will be anonymous, and your district will not be identified in any public dissemination of the results.

Participation in this study is voluntary. All demographic data will only be available to the researcher and dissertation advisor and stored on two password-protected devices. This is stressed in the cover letter provided to the potential participants (see attached). All information will be kept secure and confidential. All participants can request to view the results summary; however, no aggregated data will be shared. As well, I am happy to share the results with you after the study is completed.

If you consent to your district's participation in this research, please contact me via email at angela.lytecrowther@sjsu.edu or my cell phone (408) XXX-XXXX. Thank you in advance for your support in this research. It would also help me if you could please let me know who to contact to get the names/emails of your staff.

Respectfully Submitted

Appendix B: Invitation Email to Participants

Dear Survey Participant (Administrator or Teacher)

My name is Angela Lyte Crowther and I am a doctoral candidate at San Jose State University. I am also the Manager, Special Education Programs for Santa Clara County Office of Education. For my dissertation, I am assessing site administrators' and teachers' (general/special education) opinions about teaching (administration) students with mild to moderate disabilities in regular education classrooms (i.e., inclusion) This research also seeks to identify barriers, bridges and the basic foundational needs associated with inclusionary practices.

The research study I am conducting is in partial fulfillment of my degree. The title of my proposed study is:

*“Understanding the
Barriers, Bridges, and Bases to Inclusion Instruction for Secondary Students with
Mild to Moderate Disabilities”*

I am writing to ask you to participate in this research by completing the online Qualtrics survey. I have been given permission to contact you through your superintendent's office.

The survey will ask for your opinions on teaching (or administration) students with mild/moderate disabilities. I am hoping for as many responses as possible to gather a good picture of teachers' and administrative opinions.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. All demographic data will only be available to the researcher and dissertation advisor and stored on two password-protected devices. All survey data will be kept secure and confidential. No school or teacher/administrator details will be disclosed, and your IP addresses will not be collected. All information will be kept secure and confidential and no aggregated data will be shared. As well, I am happy to share the results with you after the study is completed. Your participation is much appreciated. If you would like more information, please contact me via email at angela.lytecrowther@sjsu.edu or my cell phone (408) XXX-XXXX. Thank you in advance for your support in this research.

Survey Link:

Respectfully Submitted

Appendix C. Survey Instrument

Administrator / Teacher Survey: Understanding the Barriers, Bridges, and Bases to Inclusion

Start of Block: Questions

Q1 My name is Angela Lyte Crowther and I am a doctoral candidate at San Jose State University. I am writing to ask you to participate in a research study by completing this online Qualtrics survey. I have been given permission to contact you through your superintendent's office.

This survey asks for your opinions on inclusion for students with mild/moderate disabilities. I am hoping for as many responses as possible to gather a good picture of inclusion practices. I will use the data for my dissertation which focuses on site administrators' and teachers' (general/special education) opinions about teaching students with mild to moderate disabilities in regular education classrooms.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You will not directly benefit from this research nor receive any compensation. There are no more than minimal risks for participating in this research. All information will be kept secure and none of your individual responses will be disclosed. I am not collecting IP addresses and I am happy to share the study's results after it is completed. Your participation is much appreciated.

If you are interested in being a participant and consent to taking this survey, please proceed. You can skip any question and NR -for no reply for open ended questions or leave blank. Thanks a million!

Q2 To start this survey, please provide your written definition of Inclusion

Q3 I believe having a general education teacher and a special education teacher co-teaching in the same room is the best inclusive instruction practice for students with mild/moderate disabilities.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q4 All students who have an IEP for any reason need to receive their education in a special education classroom.

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q5 District administration provides adequate resources for inclusion and differentiated instruction.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q6 My educational background and/or credentialing program prepared me to be an effective instructional leader among my teachers who work with students who are 2 or more years below grade level.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q7 I have provided collaboration time for my general education teachers and special education teachers to meet prior to introducing a student with mild/moderate disabilities into the general education classroom.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q8 Students with mild/moderate disabilities who are continually aggressive toward school staff should not be included in general education classrooms.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q9 General education classrooms have adequate space for the inclusion of students with mild/moderate disabilities.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q10 Special education classrooms and schools are better resourced to educate students with mild/moderate disabilities. These students should stay in special educational settings.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q11 Our general education teachers feel comfortable in approaching their colleagues for help when teaching students with mild/disabilities in their classes.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q12 My District office's Special Education department provides training and PD for teachers to support inclusion instruction for students with mild/moderate disabilities.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q13 Students with mild/moderate disabilities will disrupt other students' learning by requiring additional resources.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q14 Administration provides sufficient in-service training through the school district which allows our general education teachers the ability to teach students with an IEP.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q15 General education teachers are given enough time to plan for the accommodations for students with mild/moderate disabilities in their classrooms.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q16 When preparing to receive a student with mild/moderate disabilities, our general education teachers have had adequate discussions with special education teachers and/or specialists (Speech/OT/Counselor).

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q17 Teaching students with mild/moderate disabilities can sometimes be stressful.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q18 Both general education teachers and special education teachers should collaborate and teach students with an IEP.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q19 All efforts should be made to educate students who have an IEP in the general education classroom.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q20 General education teachers at my school are not trained adequately to educate students with mild/moderate disabilities.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
 - ☐ Moderately inadequate (6)
 - ☐ Extremely inadequate (7)
-

Q21 There are enough available resources including funding to support inclusion instruction for students with mild/moderate disabilities.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q22 Our general education teachers with a significant number of students with mild/moderate disabilities in a single period are given adequate classroom support (para-educators) during their instruction time.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q23 Our district office provides adequate training for teachers to meet the needs of their students with mild/moderate disabilities (IEPs).

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q24 Students with mild/moderate disabilities receive adequate support outside the class during instructional time. (resource room).

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q25 Including students with mild/moderate disabilities creates few additional problems for some general education teachers' classroom management.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q26 When preparing to receive a student with mild/moderate disabilities, general education teachers have adequate time to develop instructional materials.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q27 When assigned a student with mild/moderate disabilities, my general education teachers are told about the student's current performance levels and needs.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q28 General Ed and/or Special Ed teachers are willing to help each other with issues that may arise when they have students with IEPs in the general education classroom.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q29 Students with mild/moderate disabilities who cannot read within 2-grade levels should not be included in general education academic (English/math/science/social studies) core subjects.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q30 General education teachers receive enough funding to support the students with mild/moderate disabilities in their classrooms.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q31 Students with mild/moderate disabilities who are continually aggressive toward their fellow students should not be included in general education classrooms.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q32 Special Day Classes (SDC) is the more appropriate learning environment/classroom for students with mild/moderate disabilities.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q33 General education teachers feel supported by me when faced with challenges presented by having students with mild/moderate disabilities in their classrooms.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q34 General education teachers are provided with release time in order to attend conferences/ workshops in teaching students with an IEP in their classrooms

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q35 Schools in my district receive adequate structural support (desks/classroom space/ramps) to support inclusion instruction.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q36 Non-disabled students benefit socially from inclusion (having students with mild/moderate disabilities in their classrooms).

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q37 Collaborative teaching of students with mild to moderate disabilities can be effective particularly when students with an IEP are placed in general education classrooms.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q38 When preparing to receive a student with mild/moderate disabilities, all members of the IEP team are given access to the student's educational records.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q39 Students with mild/moderate disabilities whose achievement levels in basic skills are significantly lower than their same grade non-disabled classmates should not be included in general education classrooms.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q40 General education teachers have a heavy workload; it is unfair to place students with mild/moderate disabilities in their classrooms.

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Disagree (3)
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree (4)
 - ☐ No Opinion (5)
-

Q41 What are the advantages and disadvantages of inclusion for students with mild/moderate disabilities?

Q42 Who, if anyone, do you think benefits from inclusive policies and why?

Q43 Describe the level of support you give your general education teachers for their instruction of students with mild/moderate disabilities.

Q44 If you have answered that there is an extra stress associated with teaching students with mild/moderate disabilities, how could this be reduced?

End of Block: Questions

Start of Block: Demographic Data – Please check the responses that best describe you

Q45 **Gender**

- ☐ Male (1)
 - ☐ Female (2)
 - ☐ Other (3)
-

Q46 Age

- ☐ 30 years and below (1)
 - ☐ 31 -50 years (2)
 - ☐ 51 years and above (3)
-

Q47 Ethnic Origin

- ☐ African American (1)
 - ☐ Asian (2)
 - ☐ Caucasian (3)
 - ☐ Hispanic (4)
 - ☐ Pacific Islander (5)
 - ☐ Other/Mixed (6)
-

Q48 Current School Employment

- ☐ K - 8 School (1)
 - ☐ Middle School (grades 6 - 8) (2)
 - ☐ High School (grades 9 - 12) (3)
-

Q49 How many students attend your current school?

- ☐ Below 200 (1)
- ☐ 201 - 500 (2)
- ☐ 501 - 1000 (3)
- ☐ Above 1000 (4)

Q50 Does your school have special day classes?

- ☐ No (1)
 - ☐ Yes (2)
 - ☐ Unknown (3)
-

Q51 For the next 4 questions, please answer any questions that apply. Years of Experience as an Administrator, including this current year?

- ☐ None (1)
 - ☐ 0 -5 years (2)
 - ☐ 6 -10 years (3)
 - ☐ 11 - 20 years (4)
 - ☐ 21 years or more (5)
-

Q52 Special Education Teaching Experience, including this current year?

- ☐ None (1)
 - ☐ 0 to 5 years (2)
 - ☐ 6 to 10 years (3)
 - ☐ 11 to 20 years (4)
 - ☐ 21 years or more (6)
-

Q53 General Education teaching Experience, including this current year?

- ☐ None (1)
- ☐ 0 to 5 years (2)
- ☐ 6 to 10 years (3)
- ☐ 11 to 20 years (4)
- ☐ 21 years or more (5)

Q54 Current Job Title

Q54 Administrator Survey <ul style="list-style-type: none">☐ Principal (1)☐ Assistant Principal (2)☐ Dean (3)☐ Other Administrator (4)	Q54 Teacher Survey <ul style="list-style-type: none">☐ General Education Teacher (1)☐ Special Education Teacher (2)☐ Other Teacher (3)
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Q55 Do you have any relatives who have ever had an I.E.P. or 504 Plan?

- ☐ Yes (1)
 - ☐ No (2)
 - ☐ Unknown (3)
-

Q56 Do you have any close personal friends who have ever had an I.E.P. or 504 Plan?

- ☐ Yes (1)
 - ☐ No (2)
 - ☐ Unknown (3)
-

Q57 Do you have any close professional colleagues who have every had an I.E.P. or 504 Plan?

- ☐ Yes (1)
 - ☐ No (2)
 - ☐ Unknown (3)
-

Q58 Does your current school practice inclusion for students with mild/moderate disabilities?

- ☐ Yes (1)
 - ☐ No (2)
 - ☐ Unknown (3)
-

Q59 Rate your knowledge of inclusion pedagogy?

- ☐ None (1)
- ☐ Some knowledge (I have read some literature, heard it talked about) (2)
- ☐ Competent (I have witnessed inclusion practices understand the concept) (3)
- ☐ Expert (I have directly participated in an inclusion program) (4)

End of Block: Demographic Data – Please check the responses that best describe you

Appendix D

Teacher Survey Instrument - Crosswalk of the instrument with questions references

Q#	SURVEY QUESTIONS	QRef.#
2	I believe having a general education teacher and a special education teacher) co-teaching in the same room is the best inclusive instruction practice for students with mild/moderate disabilities	Researcher and Advisor Created
3	All students who have an IEP for any reason need to receive their education in a special education classroom	Researcher and Advisor Created
4	District Administration provides adequate resources for inclusion and differentiated instruction.	Researcher and Advisor Created
5	My educational background and or credentialing program has prepared me to effectively teach students who are 2 or more years below grade level.	Principal's Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education (PATIE) Survey
6	I have been given time for collaboration with Special Ed teacher prior to introducing a student with mild/moderate disabilities into the general education classroom	University of Cambridge 2007
7	Students with mild/moderate disabilities who are continually aggressive toward school staff should not be included in general education classrooms.	Principal's Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education (PATIE) Survey
8	General education classrooms have adequate space for the inclusion of students with mild/moderate disabilities	Researcher and Advisor Created
9	Special education classrooms and schools are better resourced to educate students with mild/moderate disabilities. These students should stay in special educational settings.	Principal's Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education (PATIE) Survey
10	I feel comfortable in approaching my colleagues for help when I teach students with mild/disabilities in my classroom	University of Cambridge 2007
11	My District office's SpEd department provides training and PD for teachers to support inclusion instruction for students with mild/moderate disabilities.	Researcher and Advisor Created
12	Students with mild/moderate disabilities will disrupt other students' learning by requiring additional resources.	Principal's Attitudes Toward Inclusive

		Education (PATIE) Survey
13	I am provided with sufficient in-service training through my school district which allows me the ability to teach students with an IEP.	Principal's Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education (PATIE) Survey
14	I have been given enough time to plan for the accommodations for my students with mild/moderate disabilities in my class.	Researcher and Advisor Created
15	When preparing to receive a student with mild/moderate disabilities, our general education teachers have had adequate discussions with special education teachers and/or specialist (Speech/OT/Councilor)	University of Cambridge 2007
16	Teaching students with mild/moderate disabilities can sometimes be stressful.	University of Cambridge 2007
17	Both general education teachers and special education teachers should collaborate and teach students with an IEP	Researcher and Advisor Created
18	All efforts should be made to educate students who have an IEP in the general education classroom	Researcher and Advisor Created
19	General education teachers at my school, are not trained adequately to educate students with mild/moderate disabilities.	Principal's Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education (PATIE) Survey
20	There are enough available resources including funding to support inclusion instruction for students with mild/moderate disabilities.	Principal's Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education (PATIE) Survey
22	If I have a significant number of students with mild/moderate disabilities in a single class period, I am given an adequate level of classroom support (paraeducators) during my instruction time.	University of Cambridge 2007
23	My district provides adequate training for me to meet the needs of my students with mild/moderate disabilities (IEPs).	Researcher and Advisor Created
24	Students with mild/moderate disabilities receive adequate support outside the class during instructional time. (resource room).	University of Cambridge 2007
25	Including students with mild/moderate disabilities creates few additional problems for some general education teachers' classroom management.	Principal's Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education (PATIE) Survey

26	When preparing to receive a student with mild/moderate disabilities you had time to develop instructional materials.	University of Cambridge 2007
27	When given a student with mild/moderate disabilities, I am told about the student's current performance levels and needs.	University of Cambridge 2007
28	My colleagues are willing to help me with issues which may arise when I have students with an IEP in my classroom.	Researcher and Advisor Created
29	Students with mild/moderate disabilities who cannot read within 2-grade levels should not be included in general education academic (English/math/science/social studies) core subjects.	Principal's Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education (PATIE) Survey
30	I receive enough funding to support the students with mild/moderate disabilities in my classroom.	Principal's Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education (PATIE) Survey
31	Students with mild/moderate disabilities who are continually aggressive toward their fellow students should not be included in general education classrooms.	University of Cambridge 2007
32	Special Day Classes (SDC) is the more appropriate learning environment/classroom for students with mild/moderate disabilities	Researcher and Advisor Created
33	I feel supported by my Administrators when faced with challenges presented by students with mild/moderate difficulties in my classroom.	Researcher and Advisor Created
34	I am provided with release time to attend conferences/ workshops in teaching students with an IEP in my classroom	University of Cambridge 2007
35	Schools in my district receive adequate structural support (desks/classroom space/ramps) to support inclusion instruction.	University of Cambridge 2007
36	Non-disabled students benefit socially, from inclusion (having students with mild/moderate disabilities in their classrooms)	Principal's Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education (PATIE) Survey
37	Collaborative teaching of students with mild to moderate disabilities can be effective particularly when students with an IEP are placed in general education classrooms.	Researcher and Advisor Created
38	When preparing to receive a student with mild/moderate disabilities, as a member of the student's IEP team, I have adequate access to the student's educational records.	University of Cambridge 2007

39	Students with mild/moderate disabilities whose achievement levels in basic skills are significantly lower than their same grade non-disabled classmates should not be included in general education classrooms	Principal's Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education (PATIE) Survey
40	General education teachers have a heavy workload, it is unfair to place students with mild/moderate disabilities in their classrooms.	Principal's Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education (PATIE) Survey
Optional Open-ended Question		
41	What would you consider to be disadvantages of inclusion for students with mild/moderate disabilities?_____	Researcher and Advisor Created
42	Who, if anyone, do you think benefits from inclusive policy and why?_____	University of Cambridge 2007
43	Describe the level of support general education teachers are given for their instruction of students with mild/moderate disabilities. _____	University of Cambridge 2007
44	If you have answered that there is an extra stress associated with teaching students with mild/moderate disabilities, how could this be reduced?	University of Cambridge 2007

Appendix E IRB Approval

Office of Research
Division of
Research and Innovation

San José State University
One Washington Square
San José, CA 95192-0022

TEL: 408-924-2272
officeofresearch@sjsu.edu
sjsu.edu/research

SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY HUMAN SUBJECTS INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

IRB Notice of Approval

Date of Approval: 12/11/2019

Study Title: Understanding the Barriers, Bridges and Bases to Inclusion Instruction for Secondary Students with Mild to Moderate Disabilities

Primary Investigator(s): Dr. Noni Reis

Student(s): Angela Lyte Crowther

Other SJSU Team Members:

Funding Source: None

IRB Protocol Tracking Number: S19146

Type of Review

- ☒ Exempt Registration: Category of approval §46.104(d)(2)(iii)
- ☐ Expedited Review: Category of approval §46.110(a)(i)
- ☐ Full Review
- ☐ Modifications
- ☐ Continuing Review

Special Conditions

- ☒ Waiver of signed consent approved
- ☐ Waiver of some or all elements of informed consent approved
- ☐ Risk determination for device:
- ☐ Other:

Continuing Review

- ☒ Is not required. Principal Investigator must file a status report with the Office of Research one year from the approval date on this notice to communicate whether the research activity is ongoing. Failure to file a status report will result in closure of the protocol and destruction of the protocol file after three years.