

Inclusive Leadership:

Preparing Principals for the Role that Awaits Them

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Abstract: Preparing administrators with the capacity to improve instruction for all learners is critical for recruiting and retaining special education teachers. However, recent research points out the need to improve skills of current and future administrators for this role. To address these concerns the special education and administrator preparation programs at a western university designed and conducted research to determine how well preservice principals were being prepared to improve instruction for all learners. To determine program improvement and training needs, researchers collected focus group and survey data from current and alumni students from both programs. Findings of this research are organized into recommendations for program improvement.

Introduction

One of the most important challenges in education is to create and nurture inclusive environments that support learning for all students. The degree to which students can be well educated is directly correlated to a system of personnel preparation that results in a qualified work

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force so that every student has highly skilled and competent teachers and administrators. In an effort to increase student achievement in classrooms, the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2002* (NCLB) requires that all students be taught by highly qualified teachers. Every administrator appreciates how teacher quality and quantity directly link to student learning results. However, many students receiving special education services do not have access to highly skilled or competent special education teachers due to the critical shortage of fully licensed special educators (Boe & Cook, 2006).

Findings, in a report conducted by the Presidential Commission on the Conditions of Special Education and authorized by the Council for Exceptional Children (2001), indicated that the most pressing issues facing educators and special education systems include ambiguous and competing responsibilities; overwhelming paperwork; inadequate district and administrative support; significant teacher isolation; insufficient focus on improved student outcomes; increased demand for well-qualified special educators; poorly prepared general and special educators; and fragmented licensing systems. York-Barr, Sommerness, Duke, and Ghere (2005) accurately describe the problem and predict “that an emerging crisis in special education, if unresolved, will result in diminished quality of services and education outcomes for children” (p. 194).

Further compounding this problem, the lack of special preparation for school principals challenges their ability to meaningfully serve all students (Garrison-Wade, 2005; Goor, Schwenn, & Boyer, 1997). Administrators report being ill-prepared for the job and cite difficulties with role clarification and job specialization (Ashby & Maki, 1996; Garrison-Wade, 2005). In the role of instructional leaders, principals need requisite knowledge in assessing the impact of disabilities on student performance, monitoring referral-to-placement procedures, providing various service delivery models, and facilitating student support teams (Garrison-Wade, 2005). Aims to create inclusive environments for all learners more easily can be realized through strong, inclusive leadership practices from school administrators.

While every teacher must be prepared for the vast diversity of today’s student population, principals face additional challenges leading special education initiatives. Sindelar, Shearer, Yendol-Hoppey, and Liebert (2006) maintained that the inclusion of students with disabilities in general education is a complex and demanding reform. Given that complexity, inclusion is often misunderstood and sometimes resisted by teachers and not fully understood or supported by school administrators. Since 1990, considerable attention has been paid to the identification of the skills, knowledge, and dispositions that enable all teachers to embrace

and successfully implement inclusive educational practices (Ryndak, Jackson, & Billingsley, 1999- 2000). As schools move away from maintaining separate systems, others, including Fisher, Frey, and Thousand (2003) cautioned that schools are going to need special educators who can interrelate curriculum and communicate with others. All educators need skills and dispositions to provide instruction and assessment to students with and without disabilities and the ability to facilitate collaborative problem solving when difficulties arise in these areas. Facilitating such collaborative problem solving situations must be modeled, nurtured, and fostered by principals.

Collaborative problem solving is essential as schools strive to meet the statutory demands for improved educational outcomes. Improving those outcomes must be accomplished by increasing the delivery of academic and behavior interventions in the general education settings (IDEA, 2004). The emergence of *response to intervention* (RTI) initiatives requires that administrators be knowledgeable about, and value multiple processes including philosophical and policies related to RTI, research-based instruction/interventions, tiered intervention approaches, curriculum-based measurement/evaluation, data-driven decision making, progress monitoring, and the role of RTI in eligibility decisions (Hardcastle & Justice, 2006).

Beliefs and attitudes that principals hold towards special education are key factors in implementing inclusive school programs. Guzman (1997) identified common factors among successful inclusive school leaders. Those principals had the ability to (a) establish a communication system that allows for rich dialog; (b) be actively involvement in the IEP process; (c) be personally involved with parents of students with disabilities; (d) collaboratively develop philosophies regarding inclusion; (e) articulate clear policies for addressing discipline issues; (f) implement professional development around inclusive practices; and (g) demonstrate skill in data gathering and problem-solving.

Praisner (2003) found that administrator preparation programs provided principals with a minimum amount of knowledge deemed by special education experts to be relevant in the implementation of inclusion. She also discovered that characteristics of disabilities, special education law, and behavior management may be adequately covered in preparation programs, but specific topics that present authentic strategies and processes to support inclusion appear to be lacking. Additionally, many principals lack knowledge of special education legal issues, specifically in compliance and procedural requirements as legally mandated by Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (Rhys, 1996; Nardone, 1999). Despite the implication for school administrators to be trained

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in special education laws and policies, many school administrators have received little, if any training related to special education in their leadership preparation training (Anderson, 1999; Garrison-Wade, 2005). Instead many principals find that they must rely on central office staff (i.e., directors of special education and consultants) and special education teachers as primary sources of information and guidance in providing leadership to students, staff, and programs within their schools. Similarly, Patterson, Bowling, and Marshall (2000) concluded that principals are not adequately trained for leadership in special education. Therefore, not only is the issue the quality and quantity of teachers, but also of adequately skilled administrators.

To address these alarming shortcomings, the special education and administrator preparation faculty at one urban university began to look seriously at what these programs were doing or could be doing to equip future administrators to lead inclusive schools. The School of Education and Human Development (SEHD) at the University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center's (UCDHSC) mission is to improve simultaneously the quality of education for citizens of our democracy and the quality of preparation of educators for our schools. Were we doing a good job of meeting these needs for professionals striving to become the next generation of inclusive school leaders? To answer that question, faculty from the Special Education (SPED) and Administrative Leadership and Policy Studies (ALPS) programs collaborated in a study that looked critically at the ALPS program to see if key content, knowledge, and skills related to disability issues were infused across all core courses in the administrative preparation program.

Methodology

This study included both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The qualitative portion of the study focused on data collected from two focus groups. The quantitative portion used data collected through a survey instrument. Two major research questions guided this study.

1. How well do graduates of the ALPS program feel they are prepared to lead inclusive school practices?
2. What are the most crucial skills that administrators need to have for inclusive leadership?

Participants

A total of 124 participants took part in this study. For the quantitative portion of the study participants were identified through the ALPS

principal licensure, Masters, and Specialist in Education programs database of alumni graduates between the years 2000 and 2005 and students completing their final semester in the ALPS program. From this database 240 email invitations were sent out. Of these alumni and students, 99 participants responded (41% response rate). The participants represent alumni/students from twelve administrative preparation cohorts and seven school districts throughout Colorado. The qualitative portion of the study consisted of a convenient sample of students from a group of SPED students completing their final course in their MA program. Twenty-five students (n=25) were invited to participate in focus group discussions; 100% of the students agreed to participate. Participation in the study was completely voluntary. No remuneration was provided.

Validity

Kidder and Fine (1987) supported the use of quantitative and qualitative methods in research because it is a form of triangulation which enhances the validity and reliability of the study. The multi-methods process of data collection is based on the “triangulation” concept that bias in one data source or investigation is neutralized or at least lessened when other data sources, methods, and investigations are used and/or identified (Jick, 1979). The use of multiple methods helps to “facilitate the validation of data through triangulation” (Denscombe, 1998, p. 40). The triangulation of data in this study was accomplished by looking at similar data sources through different methods; qualitative (focus groups) and quantitative (survey instrument).

We also conducted a face validity of the instrument prior to administering it. Three researchers not involved with this study were asked several questions to determine its validity: (a) What are your perceptions of what the instrument measures?; (b) Is the instrument a reasonable tool to gain information?; (c) Is the instrument well designed? The feedback received from the researchers aligns with the desired outcome of the instrument.

Data Collection

Data were collected through two activities. The first was a survey instrument given to students to determine their perceptions of the effectiveness of the program to prepare administrators to lead inclusive schools. The second activity involved focus group methods.

Survey Instrument

The survey instrument was designed and administered in the first

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phase of the study. It was distributed through Zoomerang, an online survey tool. The instrument consists of four background information questions, four open ended questions, and eleven questions using a Likert scale (see Appendix). The items align with the study's objectives and goals which sought to gather information from participants to assess ALPS' effectiveness in designing courses to support inclusive leadership in the principal licensure program.

Focus Group Discussion

Two focus groups (n=25) were conducted to (a) gather data on the benefits and disadvantages of working within schools that serve students with diverse needs and backgrounds, (b) to offer specific strategies that they perceived were effective in working with students that struggle, and (c) provide recommendations for principals and prospective principals to improve supportive inclusive practices. The participants were divided into two groups. The length of the two focus groups ranged from one to one and one-half hours. Data were collected by using a tape recorder to record program participants' responses. The data were transcribed by using a professional transcriber.

Data Analyses

Survey data were analyzed by using a statistical software program, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), to present descriptive statistical data. Descriptive analysis is the process of transforming raw data into tables and charts to make better sense of the data and provide summaries (Denscombe, 1998). Data were coded and tallied as frequencies and percentages and displayed in frequency distribution tables to give a clear picture of distributions for relevance and comparison.

Qualitative data were coded line-by-line using the constant-comparative analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The process involved the researchers thoroughly reading data to get a sense of the information. Next we identified segments of information that were alike across interviews or focus groups. The open-ended questions and focus group questions provided the initial coding organization. Various Microsoft Word tools (highlighting, comment bar, theme format) were used to manage and analyze the data. Open coding of participants' responses were grouped into themes. Further, an inductive approach was used to identify additional codes for remarks made that did not fit into initial categories. Axial coding involves linking various codes by placing them into conceptual categories. In the final step, selective coding, we explicated themes and compared them between groups (SPED and ALPS).

Quantitative Findings

The background questions from the survey instrument revealed that 37% of the study participants were currently serving as school administrators. Their roles consist of 16 assistant principals, 5 principals, 6 district level positions, and 10 other administrative positions. The remaining 62 participants serve in a variety of teaching roles, including regular education teacher, special education teacher, instructional coach, and department chair. Forty three participants (45%) have 11-15 years of teaching experience, thirty-five (33%) have 6-10 years of experience, and twenty-two (21%) have 1-5 years. The majority of the participants, 54% (n=52) work in elementary schools. Further, the remaining 6% work in pre-school, 38% work in middle school, 24% work in Jr.-Sr. High schools, and 28% work in secondary schools.

Question 14 of the survey instrument asked participants to identify ALPS projects that most helped them learn how to support inclusive practices. The top five projects identified by participants supporting inclusive practices include: School Culture (n=38), Legal Audit (n=35), Family/Community Engagement (n=31), School Improvement Data Analysis (n=31), and No Child Left Behind (n=31). Question 15 asked participants to rank their level of competence in eleven different areas. The top areas of competencies self-reported by the participants at a level of proficient to exemplary in inclusive practices include: 90% have the ability to make and implement differentiated learning recommendations for learners with diverse needs; 87% have the ability to facilitate effective collaborative relationships between special and general education personnel; 86% have the ability to create a diverse learning environment, offer and implement recommendations for differentiated instruction, and foster collegial relationships between special and general educators.

Three red flags were raised in the competence levels participants ranked below a level of proficiency toward inclusive practices: 40% identified a lack of understanding regarding legal issues related to special education; 28% self-reported a lack of skills in their ability to provide constructive feedback and mentoring of special educators and support staff; and 28% reported a lack in their ability to generate options and solutions in resource management (i.e. planning time, paperwork demands, and alternative scheduling). These areas of skill deficiency mirror those articulated in prior studies presented in the literature review. Table 1 illustrates respondent ratios and total number of respondents by the level of perceived competencies.

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Table 1. Total Respondent Ratio and Total Number of Respondents by Level of Perceived Competence.

| Research Questions | 1 Emergent | 2 | 3 Proficient | 4 | 5 Exemplary |
|--|---------------|-----|-----------------|-----|----------------|
| 1. I have the ability to develop school-wide positive behavior support programs. | 6% | 3% | 38% | 37% | 15% |
| 2. I have the ability to facilitate effective collaboration between general and special education teachers. | 6 | 3 | 38 | 37 | 15 |
| 3. I have the ability to make and implement differentiated learning recommendations for learners with diverse needs. | 3% | 9% | 34% | 38% | 15% |
| 4. I have the ability to lead an initiative that creates a learning environment that allows for alternative styles of learning. | 3 | 9 | 34 | 38 | 15 |
| 5. I have the ability to develop activities and make recommendations for professional development training regarding inclusive practices. | 2% | 11% | 32% | 32% | 22% |
| 6. I have the ability to generate options and possible solutions in resource management (i.e. planning time, paperwork demands, and alternative scheduling). | 2 | 11 | 32 | 32 | 22 |
| 7. I have the ability to coach and provide constructive feedback and mentoring to special education and support service personnel. | 1% | 12% | 28% | 47% | 11% |
| 8. I have the ability to foster collegial relationships between special and general education personnel. | 1 | 12 | 28 | 47 | 11 |
| 9. I have the ability to understand and make recommendations regarding the challenges parents and children with disabilities frequently encounter. | 4% | 11% | 29% | 41% | 14% |
| 10. I have the ability to understand and make recommendations regarding legal issues related to special education. | 4 | 11 | 29 | 41 | 14 |
| 11. I have the ability to develop and implement inclusionary practices in schools. | 4% | 14% | 35% | 23% | 13% |
| | 4 | 14 | 34 | 23 | 13 |
| | 10% | 18% | 35% | 23% | 13% |
| | 10 | 18 | 34 | 23 | 13 |
| | 4% | 8% | 32% | 39% | 17% |
| | 4 | 8 | 31 | 38 | 9% |
| | 10% | 15% | 31% | 34% | 9% |
| | 10 | 15 | 31 | 33 | 9 |
| | 12% | 27% | 29% | 26% | 7% |
| | 12 | 26 | 28 | 25 | 7 |
| | 6% | 12% | 40% | 33% | 9% |
| | 6 | 12 | 39 | 32 | 9 |

Qualitative Findings

The findings of the focus groups and open-ended survey questions are organized below into three broad categories: (a) benefits of working with diverse populations, (b) challenges facing teachers and administrators, and (c) suggestions from participants. Comments are actual responses from the focus group questions (see Table 2).

Benefits of Working with Diverse Populations

Participants from both programs saw many benefits to working in a school with learners having diverse backgrounds and needs. A number of students spoke to the richness of difference and the values of acceptance for all students.

- One teacher noted, *“Having diverse backgrounds and needs allows students to gain an appreciation of the uniqueness of all individuals.”*
- An ALPS student maintained, *“The biggest benefit is that schools with diverse populations mirror the ‘real’ world. It represents society - there are all types of individuals with different abilities that we learn to work with.”*
- Currently practicing principals saw personal benefits to

working in such schools noting, “*It broadens my perspective, and increased my empathy*”; “*It’s stimulating, rewarding*”; “*The instructors learn as much as the students. Everyone has something different to offer*”; “*Takes you out of your comfort zone and makes you learn.*”

Challenges Facing Teachers and Administrators

While the benefits of working with learners displaying diverse needs and backgrounds are vast and varied, so too are the concerns. We received feedback from ALPS students and alumni as well as SPED students and teachers.

ALPS students. Current students of the ALPS program voiced a genuine sense of apprehension about being able to meet the needs of all learners as reported in comments including:

- “*The main concern I have is being able to meet the diverse needs of all students and having the knowledge and resources to do so.*”
- “*If too many diversities are present, the staff can be spread too thinly to effectively meet the needs of anyone let alone everyone.*”
- “*It is a challenge to have all staff members ‘be on board’ with encouraging rather than denying diversity.*”

Table 2. Focus Group Research Questions.

1. What benefits do you perceive for yourself and your students when working in a school with learners having diverse backgrounds and needs?
2. What concerns do you have for yourself and your students when working in a school with learners having diverse backgrounds and needs?
3. Describe the working relationship with your administrator(s).
4. Describe a specific initiative/action/project that your administrator has undertaken to support inclusive services in your school building.
5. Have you experienced any challenges in working with an administrator on issues related to inclusive practices? If so, please identify.
6. What questions do you have regarding addressing the needs of learners with diverse needs and backgrounds that you feel should be addressed in an administrator preparation program?
7. Please identify specific strategies and/or processes that you believe future administrators need to learn to support inclusive practices.
8. Please identify any projects that you believe could help future administrators become skilled supporting inclusive practices.

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- *“I’m concerned about spending too much time on students who have more needs and forgetting about the ‘normal/typically developing’ students.”*

SPED students / teachers. Since the 25 SPED students were concurrently completing their Master’s degree while teaching in the field, they drew upon their daily experiences that were often quite challenging. Many of those challenges focused on their administrator’s ability to support inclusive practices. Legal and training issues were evident in a number of teacher comments:

- *“I’m concerned about my administrators’ knowledge of the legal components of special education because I don’t see it. I’ve come to resent that I always have to train the staff.”*
- *“We have students that are never going to be at grade level and meet NCLB. The principal needs to advocate for us.”*
- *“I hear..... I want you guys to work together ...but my administrator is really not creating an environment where it can happen, or setting the leadership tone for how to do it.”*

Other teachers voiced feelings of frustration and isolation in their efforts to meet their student’s needs.

- *“A majority of my teachers don’t know how to differentiate in order to understand how they can have an inclusive classroom.”*
- *“The administrator has no idea what is going on in the special ed room.”*
- *“My principal says...we’re inclusionary, we’re inclusionary, but there’s no co-teaching, kids are pulled and gone from the general ed classroom.”*

ALPS alumni. Alumni of the ALPS program currently serving in leadership roles see first-hand the realities of meeting students’ diverse needs. They articulated an array of specific challenges below.

- *“We don’t have enough accommodations to meet everyone’s needs.”*
- *“I am concerned about knowing everything in their IEP’s.”*
- *“Politics. I do not like the way that children are labeled. I do not like that students are given a ‘life sentence’ in special education.”*

Other principals spoke to the inter-related dynamics of implementing best practices.

- *“Differentiating is always a challenge. It requires time, resources and expertise that are often hard to come by.”*
- *“I have concerns about effectively meeting both the requirements of the law and the needs of the students and their parents.”*
- *“Am I able to meet the needs of my special students while challenging my gifted ones and providing for the needs of those in the middle?”*

Another principal left us with a series of important questions.

- *“How do we respond and support all of our students from a place of cultural competency as a school and individual? Are we willing to first examine how our cultural assumptions impact the learning experience of our students?”*

Suggestions from Participants

While all participants clearly face challenges in working with students from diverse backgrounds and needs, they were quick to identify strategies and or processes that could foster the environment of inclusive schools. A common theme heard among the focus group participants focused on communication and collaboration.

When asked what things administrators need to know to meet diverse needs and backgrounds, SPED students spoke passionately about an array of issues that clustered around the following themes: (a) knowledge of special education law and disabilities; (b) skills to create inclusive environments including the ability to lead teachers in best practices such as differentiation, collaboration, and positive behavior supports; and (c) display a genuine appreciation and support of what SPED teachers do.

Practicing and future administrators clearly elaborated their needs for effectively leading efforts to improve instruction for all learners. They called for more training in a variety of special topics including: (a) special education law; (b) strategies for organizing a school to best utilize the special and general education teachers; (c) concrete strategies and resources about the variety of diverse needs; and (d) managing discipline issues with students displaying special education needs.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The suggestions given by students, teachers and administrators mirror those offered to educators by Friend and Pope (2005) to create inclusive schools where everyone can succeed. To be supportive, principals should: (a) be knowledgeable about differentiation of instruction; (b) help teachers attend professional development opportunities; (c) provide coaching; (d) arrange for teachers to visit each other; and (e) field questions that parents and family have about special education teaching practices. To meet that charge of creating schools where every student can succeed, higher education preparation programs must look critically at their basic values as well as their existing organizational structures, be responsive to their students, and hold the highest expectations to ensure they are doing all they can to prepare administrators and teachers for the challenges present in today's inclusive schools.

We know we have our curricular work cut out for us, but the direction is clear and actions are underway to ensure that our preparation programs strategically plan for ways that administrators and special educators are working together to improve instruction for all students. For instance, faculty have begun to review all assignments in program courses to see where leadership skills for inclusive practices can be added. We also developed and implemented a seminar for future principals in special education. Strategic focus has already been given to enhance readings, discussions, and assignments that will better prepared ALPS students to (a) understand legal issues related to special education; (b) provide constructive feedback and mentoring of special educators and support staff; and (c) generate options and solutions in resource management (i.e., planning time, paperwork demands, and alternative scheduling).

Principals report their greatest barrier to finding qualified special education personnel is the limited applicant pool (Carlson et. al, 2002). Given the daunting profile of the current applicant pool combined with the demands of the job, it goes without saying that once they are hired, principals must embrace an active role in retaining special educators. While there isn't a *script* for what inclusive programming should look like in every school, supporting and nurturing special educators is critical in realizing the goal of providing a quality education for every student (Sobel, Fulmer, & Garrison-Wade, 2006). The key is to identify and provide supports that are uniquely geared to the realities of the special education teacher.

As students with challenging academic and behavioral needs participate in a wider array of settings, programs, and opportunities, the need for school leaders who understand the complexities of varied sys-

tems and alternative teaching strategies becomes essential to ensure student success. As inclusive education becomes increasing the norm in every school and as special and general educators assume shared responsibility for all students, many questions about shifts in roles, rules and responsibilities of everyone who works with and for students with disabilities are guaranteed to spring forth, many of which have not even been considered to date (Fisher, et al, 2003).

We fully support the call for vision and action that Skrla, Scheurich, Garcia, and Nolly (2004) passionately advocate, “Achievement gaps by race, ethnicity, home language or culture, SES, or other variables are not just an educational problem; they are a problem for our entire society” (p. 156). We hope that our response—auditing our program’s effectiveness in preparing principals to lead inclusive school practices—will be helpful to other educational leadership programs that also choose to respond with action to the call.

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Appendix: Inclusive Practices Survey

We realize that some of these questions deal with sensitive issues. Please note that all of your responses are CONFIDENTIAL.

Dorothy Garrison-Wade, Donna Sobel, & Connie L. Fulmer

1. Last four digits of your home telephone number: ____ _ _ _ _

2. Choose your cohort descriptor:

| | | | |
|---------|---------|--------|--------|
| APSLA-1 | ACLA-1 | JCLA-1 | JCLA-2 |
| DPSLA-1 | DPSLA-2 | DCLA-2 | DCLA-3 |
| BVSLA-2 | BVSLA-3 | DL#3 | DL#4 |
| DL#5 | | | |

3. K-12 Teaching/Administration experience (check all that apply).

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Type of School | Teacher Role | Administrator Role |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public school | <input type="checkbox"/> teacher – reg. ed. | <input type="checkbox"/> assistant principal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> private school | <input type="checkbox"/> teacher – sp. ed. | <input type="checkbox"/> principal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> alternative school | <input type="checkbox"/> instructional coach | <input type="checkbox"/> central office position |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> dean or dept. char | <input type="checkbox"/> asst. superintendent |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> superintendent |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| Years Teaching | School Level | Curricular Focus |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1-5 yr teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-School | <input type="checkbox"/> (eg., Art/Music/Science) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 yr teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> Elementary | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11-15 yr teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> Middle | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Jr-Sr. High | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary | |

Type of Endorsement/Licensure

General Education (Elementary); Content Area: _____

General Education (Secondary); Content Area: _____

Special Education (Elementary); Content Area: _____

Special Education (Secondary); Content Area: _____

Other _____; Content Area: _____

Open Ended Questions

4. What benefits do you perceive for yourself and your students when working in a school with learners having diverse backgrounds and needs?

5. What concerns do you have for yourself and your students when working in a school with learners having diverse backgrounds and needs?

6. What questions do you have regarding addressing the needs of learners with diverse needs and backgrounds that feel should have been addressed in this preparation program?

7. Please identify specific strategies and/or processes that you have learned to support inclusive practices.

8. Please check any project in your ALPS program that helped you learn how to support inclusive practices.

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Core Values | <input type="checkbox"/> NCLB | <input type="checkbox"/> SI: Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vision-Mission | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Audit | <input type="checkbox"/> SI: Data Analysis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Culture Study | | <input type="checkbox"/> SI: Curriculum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family/Community Engagement | | <input type="checkbox"/> SI: Writing the Plan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation Cycles | <input type="checkbox"/> Instructional Leadership Work Samples | |

Please check one number to indicate your current level of competence:

Inclusive Leadership

0 indicates no competence and 5 indicates exemplary competence.

9. I have the ability to develop school-wide positive behavior support programs.

| Emergent | | Proficient | | Exemplary | |
|----------|---|------------|---|-----------|---|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

10. I have the ability to facilitate effective collaboration between general and special education teachers.

| Emergent | | Proficient | | Exemplary | |
|----------|---|------------|---|-----------|---|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

11. I have the ability make and implement differentiated learning recommendations for learners with diverse needs.

| Emergent | | Proficient | | Exemplary | |
|----------|---|------------|---|-----------|---|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

12. I have the ability to lead an initiative that creates a learning environment that allows for alternative styles of learning.

| Emergent | | Proficient | | Exemplary | |
|----------|---|------------|---|-----------|---|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

13. I have the ability to develop activities and make recommendations for professional development training regarding inclusive practices.

| Emergent | | Proficient | | Exemplary | |
|----------|---|------------|---|-----------|---|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

14. I have the ability to generate options and possible solutions in resource management (i.e., planning time, paperwork demands, and alternative scheduling).

| Emergent | | Proficient | | Exemplary | |
|----------|---|------------|---|-----------|---|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

15. I have the ability to coach and provide constructive feedback and mentoring to special education and support service personnel.

| Emergent | | Proficient | | Exemplary | |
|----------|---|------------|---|-----------|---|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

16. I have the ability to foster collegial relationships between special and general education personnel.

| Emergent | | Proficient | | Exemplary | |
|----------|---|------------|---|-----------|---|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

17. I have the ability to understand and make recommendations regarding the challenges parents of children with disabilities frequently encounter.

| Emergent | | Proficient | | Exemplary | |
|----------|---|------------|---|-----------|---|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

18. I have the ability to understand and make recommendations regarding legal issues related to special education.

| Emergent | | Proficient | | Exemplary | |
|----------|---|------------|---|-----------|---|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

19. I have the ability to develop and implement inclusionary practices in schools.

| Emergent | | Proficient | | Exemplary | |
|----------|---|------------|---|-----------|---|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |