

Inclusion Or Pull Out? What Is The Answer

Kelly Kowal

University of Alaska Southeast

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Education in
Special Education degree at the University of Alaska Southeast

RECOMMENDED: _____
Jill Burkert, Ph.D., Academic Advisor

APPROVED: _____
Deborah Lo, Ph.D., Dean, School of Education

Date

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Abstract

This meta-synthesis of the literature on inclusion and pull-out settings for students with disabilities helps find what might be the least restrictive environment for their education. The past laws and the current mandates of IDEA (2004) help guide us to what should be inclusion settings for all students with disabilities and what the access to general education curriculum should look like. However, the lack of training, knowledge and support often restrict and limit the success of students in the inclusion movement present in some special education programs and schools of today. When these students are not given an opportunity, with a team decision, and are placed in their least restrictive environment (LRE), we as an education system cannot claim there is a clear answer if inclusion works. Nor, can we find the best answer for educating all students.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Inclusion - the action or state of including or of being included within a group or structure (dictionary.com). Getting to inclusion is an interesting story and one that comes from parent advocacy. As we look at the history of inclusion in the realm of Special Education, most students with disabilities, no educational opportunities and for some students with disabilities, education opportunities were limited. In many instances these students did not receive any education at all. When students with disabilities were allowed to be educated, they went to separate schools or were only allowed to learn in separate classes. Today we have come so far and it is commonplace to see many students with disabilities learn in the same classes as other students thus being the inclusive classrooms of today. The big shift is in the fact that education is considered a right and not an option. Kids with disabilities have a right to a free and appropriate education. In many places throughout the world this is not the case. The history of inclusion goes much deeper and is a topic continuing to be debated. It is the determination of the best way to educate students with disabilities. When we look at the history we can see just how much progress there has been in the education of students with disabilities in the United States, but in the same note how much further we need to go for the best environment for each student. (Torreno, 2012) There were laws passed but still many children with disabilities received limited or no educational services in the

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public schools. PL 94-142, which was the first special education law, where kids with disabilities were now able to attend publicly funded schools. With the passing of PL 94-142 it was the hope to fix the situation by requiring all students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate education. This bill also helped in establishing a process for funding to help defer the cost of these special education programs. As time passed the idea of educating students with disabilities led to what we know as "mainstreaming". This is where kids were sometimes "allowed" to attend general education classes. This was to "see", as sort of as an experiment, if the student could function in the classroom with "regular" kids. After time this idea of having students with disabilities come into the regular education classroom has taken us to what we know of today as inclusion.

In the beginning, as our nation was creating a nationwide educational system, children with disabilities were not receiving formal education and were segregated and put into special schools. Many of these schools claimed to educate but really they were serving as residential facilities. As time went on teachers began to take notice of children's learning differences and this led to classes and schools being built by groups of parents to make sure they were educated. All of this went on between 1850 and 1950 as trained people who worked with individuals with disabilities continued to try and move forward. Even though these programs were not found consistently throughout the nation, this started a positive change in ideas about how we teach children with disabilities. "Succinctly put, the late 1800s and early 1900s were disheartening for individuals with disabilities. Classes and programs during this period relegated students with disabilities to an education through both warehousing and segregating them." (Bicehouse,

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Vaughn; Faieta, Jean, 2017) As we move forward through history and into the middle of the 1920s, educators started to see the importance of the education and involvement of individuals with disabilities in the community. Children were still being put into facilities because the parents believed that they did not have any other choice. Any form of special education during this time was only offered in the big cities. (Torreno, 2012)

Believe it or not even though the Supreme Court ruled in 1954 (Brown vs. Board of Education) that students of race could not be separated in public schools, nothing was done for the million plus special education students being excluded and the other 3.5 million not receiving appropriate services. Parent groups worked to change the beliefs that individuals could be taught despite their disabilities. These movements improved the conditions in many of the institutions and helped create many new opportunities and propose legislation. Many of the laws in place excluded certain disabilities making it that only one in five had a right to an education. (Torreno, 2012) The Regular Education initiative, of the 1980's, started by Margaret Will, a parent who also was the head of OSEP for the Department of Education (Office of Special Education Programs). She had a son with Down syndrome and asked why he had to learn in a segregated setting.

PL 94-142 Education for All students act was passed after beginning with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 with amendments taking place in 1986 and 1992 granting rights of employment and schooling to people with disabilities in any institution receiving federal funding. Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) then made it so all school districts were required to provide free and

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appropriate education for all children. Being the first major legislation of its kind, IDEA requires the education be in the least restrictive environment (LRE) for every child. The law mandates every child with a disability should be taught at a neighborhood school in general education classes. In 1990 the Americans with Disabilities Act further protected school-aged children with disabilities outside of the classroom in employment and access to public and private services. (Torreno, 2012)

Educating using inclusion increased with the reauthorization of IDEA in 1997. This gave more access to education and made sure the rights to a quality education were upheld. In 2004 another reauthorization of IDEA took place to align it with No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 allowing the understanding of the important elements of the 1997 law. (Torreno, 2012)

“The onset of inclusion has resulted in over 90% of students with disabilities receiving education in typical schools and almost half were included in the general classroom 80% of the day during the 1999-2000 school year. An increasing number of students with disabilities are graduating from high school, with over half earning a diploma. Full inclusion is still years away, though, as millions with disabilities learn in special education classrooms.” (Torreno, 2012) As of today Special Education is once more in the midst of debate. “The changes to IDEA, combined with the current Race to the Top movement, leaves many unanswered questions about the future of special education services and its providers in the United States. Without question, the push for high academic achievement and the requirement that all students meet a level of proficiency that comply with the new standards leave many questioning the impact of the

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changes in the field of special education.” (Bicehouse, Vaughn; Faieta, Jean, 2017) IDEA now has hit 40 years old and we have seen much change in the area of how America educates people with disabilities. “If special education is going to continue to move forward in the 21st century, the successful implementation must continue to rest upon the belief that inclusive schooling for all is a noble and moral obligation. Students must continue to receive the supports they need so that American education remains strong, democratic, and truly inclusive for all.” (Bicehouse, Vaughn; Faieta, Jean, 2017)

1.2. Author's beliefs and experience

My experience and interest in the idea of full inclusion and best practices in the least restrictive environments (LRE) for any and all children stems from the fact that I have worked in schools where different models have been used to support children with Individual Educational Plans (IEPs). I have worked with both pull-out (where the student leaves their regular classroom and go to another room for support and services towards their goals on their IEP) and full inclusion or push-in (where the child is supported towards their goals in the general education classroom) is used year after year. In the middle school setting, where I taught for twelve years, we used replacement curriculums in a resource classroom with a Special Education teacher as well as a Teacher Assistant (TA) to support the needs of the students. Some of the students were in a resource room for up to three periods a day depending on the level of support needed. These students spent most of their day in a resource room and then were placed in the general education classroom for science and their electives. Within the middle school setting the idea of clumping

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students with needs and falling into Tier II and III of Response to Intervention and Multi-Tier System of Supports (RTI / MTSS) took place. They would then be placed into a particular period with a co-teaching situation so they can receive the accommodations needed to be successful. I was able to be a part of this co-teaching strategy, multiple periods a day for two years. There were many positives that transpired do to this set-up. Students had multiple adults to present lessons, adults were able to help them as needed, they were able to build relationships with multiple adults as well as their peers, and less wait time happened to receive attention. This co-teaching model supported the inclusion version of many students that had an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Within these classrooms there were students that fell in the areas of Learning Disabled (LD), English Language Learners (ELL) and students that were either Tier II and III of Response to Intervention and Multi-Tier System of Supports (RTI / MTSS). In being able to teach in this situation I felt we were able to meet the needs of many more students by giving them access to the curriculum in the general education setting.

Having transferred to a school just last year, calling itself a “full inclusion school”, it has made me look at what might truly be a LRE. The school has kids with IEPs in what is called “inclusion classrooms” where there are kids needing support not only with IEPs but may be struggling in many different ways, needing Response to Intervention and Multi-Tier System of Supports (RTI / MTSS) Tier II and III level interventions. These students are placed in these classrooms by test scores as well as teacher input. This practice has made me question where the best placement might be for students with IEPs. Should it be the general education classroom or a resource room or a combination of both? What do good inclusion models look like? Is there the

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room for growth, do parents support this setting, and are teachers ready to teach in this inclusion setting? The rest of the classes within the school are students placed with scores of average or above average on AmisWeb for K-2. Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) scores for grades 3-6 are used for these placements. These students are then divided into classes called “regular” or “general education” classes.

The inclusion classes have some students with IEPs and others that are struggling and need supports based on RTI / MTSS interventions. Within the inclusion classes there are multiple adults at any given time to run small groups, support students with whole group activities and pull students out of the room for additional support. These classes have smaller overall numbers so the ratio of adults to students is lower than the other classes in the building. In the past the growth and state testing scores have been at the top of the district as well as becoming a Blue Ribbon School in 2016. These are all the areas continuing to make me curious about the placement of children with IEP’s.

With this meta-synthesis, I hope to investigate the following research areas and questions:

1. The history and practices of inclusion of students with IEPs into the general education classroom. Also, should the least restrictive environment (LRE) be the general education classroom or a resource room or a combination of both?
2. What do good inclusion models look like and are there times when full inclusion is not a good option for the student?

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3. Views of parents, students, teachers, and administrators of inclusion practices and do all of the stakeholders support this setting?

4. Are teachers ready to teach in inclusion settings?

1.3. Purpose of this meta-synthesis

This meta-synthesis, which focused on the inclusion of students with Individual Learning Plans (IEPs) into general education classes, had multiple purposes. One purpose was to review journal articles related to the inclusion of students in the general education setting, specifically the practices of teachers, student growth and views of parents, students, and teachers and administrators of inclusion. A second purpose was to review journal articles related to the history of the practice of inclusion. A third purpose was to classify each article by publication type, to identify the research design, participants, and data sources of each study, and to summarize the findings of each study. My final purpose in conducting this meta-synthesis was to identify significant themes in these articles, and to connect those themes to my own teaching practice in an inclusion school working with students in Anchorage, Alaska.

2. Methods

2.1. Selection criteria

The 53 journal articles included in this meta-synthesis met the following selection criteria. The articles explored history related to inclusion of students in the general education setting. The articles also explored issues related to the views of parents, students, teachers, and administrators

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as well as if teachers were ready to teach in inclusion settings. These articles were published in peer-reviewed journals, Google Scholar, online articles and related to the field of inclusion in education. The articles were published between 1992 and 2018.

2.2. Search procedures

Database searches, Google Scholar searches, Google searches and ancestral searches were conducted to locate articles for this meta-synthesis.

2.2.1 Database searches

I conducted University of Alaska Southeast Library (UAS LIBRARY) searches within the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC, Ebscohost) using these specific search terms:

1. (“inclusion”).
2. (“push-in”) AND (“pull-out”).
3. (“pull-in”) AND (“pull-out”).
4. (“general education”) AND (“special education”).
5. (“special education students in the regular classroom”).
6. (“classroom settings for special education students”).

These database searches yielded a total of 53 articles (Andrias & Burr, 2012; Barton, 2016; Bentum & Aaron, 2003; Bevan-Brown, 2012; Bicehouse & Faieta, 2017; Bouck, 2006; Brock & Schaefer, 2015; Connor, & Ferri, 2007; Cromwell, 1997, Dalkilic & Vadeboncoeur, 2016;

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Demirdag, 2017; Dupuis, Barclay, Holmes, Platt, Shaha & Lewis, 2006; Eredics, 2014; Graham, Lawson, Rasheed & Voltz, 2007; Gehrke, Cocchiarella, Harris & Puckett, 2014; Gelzheiser, Meyers & Pruzek, 1992; Hughes, Guth & Hall, 1999; Hyatt, Iddings & Ober, 2005; Idol, 2006; Inclusive Schools Network, 2015; Isherwood & Barger-Anderson, 2008; Jones & Hensley, 2012; Kleinert, Towles-Reeves, Quenemoen, Thurlow, Fluegge, Weseman & Kerbel, 2015; Klingner, Vaughn, Schumm, Cohen & Forgan, 1998; Koh & Shin, 2017; Lang, Davis, O'Reilly, Machalicek, Rispoli, Sigafos, Lancioni & Regester, 2010; LeDoux, Graves & Burt, 2012; Manset, & Semmel, 1997; Marston, 1996; Moody, Vaughn, Hughes & Fischer, 2000; Obiakor, Harris, Mutua, Rotatori & Algozzine, 2012 ; Prom, 1999; Rea, McLaughlin & Walther-Thomas, 2002; Reindal, 2010; Rodriguez & Garro-Gil, 2015; Rose, Barahona & Muro, 2017; Rozalski, Stewart & Miller, 2010; Samuels, 2017; Sanagi, 2016; Schoger, 2012; Schultz, 2001; Shanker, 1994; Sharman, 2018; Smelter, Rasch & Yudewitz, 1994; Torreno, 2012; Theoharis & Causton, 2014; Vaughn & Schumm, 1995; Webb, Webb & Fults-McMurtery, 2011; Weber, 2015; Wexler, 2016; Whinnery, 1996; Wiener & Tardif, 2004; Winton, 2013)

2.2.2 Ancestral searches

An ancestral search involves reviewing the reference lists of previously published works to locate literature relevant to one's topic of interest (Welch, Brownell, & Sheridan, 1999). I choose not to conduct ancestral searches using the reference lists of the previously retrieved articles.

2.3. Coding procedures

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I used a coding form to categorize the information presented in each of the 53 articles. This coding form was based on: (a) publication type; (b) research design; (c) participants; (d) data sources; (e) and findings of the studies.

2.3.1. *Publication types*

Each journal article was evaluated and classified according to publication type (e.g., research study, theoretical work, descriptive work, opinion piece/position paper, guide, evaluative work, and a periodical). *Research studies* use a formal research design to gather and/or analyze quantitative and/or qualitative data. *Theoretical works* use existing literature to analyze, expand, or further define a specific philosophical and/or theoretical assumption. *Descriptive works* describe phenomena and experiences, but do not disclose particular methods for attaining data. *Opinion pieces/position* papers explain, justify, or recommend a particular course of action based on the author's opinions and/or beliefs. *Guides* give instructions or advice explaining how practitioners might implement a particular agenda. *Evaluative* works are based on or related to an assessment to form an idea of the value of something. A *Periodical* is a piece that is published at regular intervals.

2.3.2. *Research design*

Each study on the topic of inclusion of special education students was further classified by research design (i.e., quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods research). *Quantitative* research utilizes numbers to present information. Instead of numbers, *qualitative* research uses language, such as interviews and surveys, to present issues and outcomes of the study. *Mixed methods*

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research involves the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods to present information within a single study.

2.3.3. Participants, data sources, and findings

I identified the participants in each study (e.g., general education teachers, students with and without disabilities, parents, administrators, teacher assistants (TAs), student teachers (pre-service teachers), and special education teachers). I also identified the data sources used in each study (e.g., observations, surveys, interviews, visits, and test scores). Lastly, I summarized the findings of each study (Table 2).

2.4. Data analysis

I used a modified version of the Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method previously employed by Duke (2011) and Duke and Ward (2009) to analyze the 53 articles included in this meta-synthesis. Significant statements were first identified within each article. For the purpose of this meta-synthesis, significant statements were identified as statements that addressed issues related to: (a) history and practices of inclusion; (b) inclusion models; (c) views of parents, students, teachers, and administrators of inclusion practices; (d) teachers ready to teach in inclusion. I then generated a list of non-repetitive, verbatim significant statements with paraphrased formulated meanings. These paraphrased formulated meanings represented my interpretation of each significant statement. Lastly, the formulated meanings from all 53 articles were grouped into theme clusters, represented as emergent themes. These emergent themes represented the fundamental elements of the entire body of literature. (Table 3)

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3. Results

3.1. Publication type

I located 20 articles that met my selection criteria. The publication type of each article is located in Table 1. Twenty-two of the 53 articles (41.5%) included in this meta synthesis were research studies (Barton, 2016; Bentum & Aaron, 2003; Brock & Schaefer, 2015; Demirdag, 2017; Dupuis, Barclay, Holmes, Platt, Shaha & Lewis, 2006; Graham, Lawson, Rasheed & Voltz, 2007; Gehrke, Cocchiarella, Harris & Puckett, 2014; Gelzheiser, Meyers & Pruzek, 1992; Isherwood & Barger-Anderson, 2008; Jones & Hensley, 2012; Kleinert, Towles-Reeves, Quenemoen, Thurlow, Fluegge, Weseman & Kerbel, 2015; Klingner, Vaughn, Schumm, Cohen & Forgan, 1998; Lang, Davis, O'Reilly, Machalicek, Rispoli, Sigafood, Lancioni & Regester, 2010; LeDoux, Graves & Burt, 2012; Marston, 1996; Moody, Vaughn, Hughes & Fischer, 2000; Prom, 1999; Rea, McLaughlin & Walther-Thomas, 2002; Rose, Barahona & Muro, 2017; Sanagi, 2016; Whinnery, 1996). Nineteen of the 53 articles (35.8%) were descriptive works (Andrias & Burr, 2012; Bicehouse & Faieta, 2017; Bouck, 2006; Connor, & Ferri, 2007; Cromwell, 1997; Dalkilic & Vadeboncoeur, 2016; Hughes, Guth & Hall, 1999; Hyatt, Iddings & Ober, 2005; Koh & Shin, 2017; Obiakor, Harris, Mutua, Rotatori & Algozzine, 2012; Rozalski, Stewart & Miller, 2010; Samuels, 2017; Schoger, 2012; Stout, 2001; Torreno, 2012; Vaughn & Schumm, 1995; Webb, Webb & Fults-McMurtery, 2011; Weber, 2015; Wexler, 2016). Two of the articles (3.7%) were evaluative works (Manset, & Semmel, 1997; Reindal, 2010). One of the articles (1.8%) was theoretical work (Rodriguez & Garro-Gil, 2015). Four of the articles (7.5%) were opinion works

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(Bevan-Brown, 2012; Eredics, 2014; Sharman, 2018; Smelter, Rasch & Yudewitz, 1994). Three of the articles (5.6%) were Guides (Inclusive Schools Network, 2015; Theoharis & Causton, 2014; Winton, 2013). Lastly, one of the articles (1.8%) was a periodical (Shanker, 1994).

Table 1

Author(s) & Year of Publication	Publication Type
Andrias & Burr, 2012	Descriptive
Barton, 2016	Research Study
Bentum & Aaron, 2003	Research Study
Bevan-Brown, 2012	Opinion
Bicehouse & Faieta, 2017	Descriptive
Bouck, 2006	Descriptive
Brock & Schaefer, 2015	Research Study
Connor, & Ferri, 2007	Descriptive
Cromwell, 1997	Descriptive
Dalkilic & Vadeboncoeur, 2016	Descriptive
Demirdag, 2017	Research Study
Dupuis, Barclay, Holmes, Platt, Shaha & Lewis, 2006	Research Study
Eredics, 2014	Opinion
Gehrke, Cocchiarella, Harris & Puckett, 2014	Research Study
Gelzheiser, Meyers & Pruzek, 1992	Research Study
Graham, Lawson, Rasheed & Voltz, 2007	Research Study
Hughes, Guth & Hall, 1999	Descriptive
Hyatt, Iddings & Ober, 2005	Descriptive
Idol, 2006	Evaluative
Inclusive Schools Network, 2015	Guide

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Isherwood & Barger-Anderson, 2008	Research Study
Jones & Hensley, 2012	Research Study
Kleinert, Towles-Reeves, Quenemoen, Thurlow, Fluegge, Weseman & Kerbel, 2015	Research Study
Klingner, Vaughn, Schumm, Cohen & Forgan, 1998	Research Study
Koh & Shin, 2017	Descriptive
Lang, Davis, O'Reilly, Machalicek, Rispoli, Sigafod, Lancioni & Regester, 2010	Research Study
LeDoux, Graves & Burt, 2012	Research Study
Manset, & Semmel, 1997	Evaluative
Marston, 1996	Research Study
Moody, Vaughn, Hughes & Fischer, 2000	Research Study
Obiakor, Harris, Mutua, Rotatori & Algozzine, 2012	Descriptive
Prom, 1999	Research Study
Rea, McLaughlin & Walther-Thomas, 2002	Research Study
Reindal, 2010	Evaluative
Rodriguez & Garro-Gil, 2015	Theoretical
Rose, Barahona & Muro, 2017	Research Study
Rozalski, Stewart & Miller, 2010	Descriptive
Samuels, 2017	Descriptive
Sanagi, 2016	Research Study
Schoger, 2012	Descriptive
Shanker, 1994	Periodical
Sharman, 2018	Opinion
Smelter, Rasch & Yudewitz, 1994	Opinion
Stout, 2001	Descriptive
Theoharis & Causton, 2014	Guide

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Torreno, 2012	Descriptive
Vaughn & Schumm, 1995	Descriptive
Webb, Webb & Fults-McMurtery, 2011	Descriptive
Weber, 2015	Descriptive
Wexler, 2016	Descriptive
Whinnery, 1996	Research Study
Wiener & Tardif, 2004	Research Study
Winton, 2013	Guide

3.2. Research design, participants, data sources, and findings of the studies

As stated previously, I located 20 research studies that met my selection criteria (Barton, 2016; Bentum & Aaron, 2003; Brock & Schaefer, 2015; Demirdag 2017; Dupuis, Barclay, Holmes, Platt, Shaha & Lewis, 2006; Graham, Lawson, Rasheed & Voltz, 2007; Gehrke, Cocchiarella, Harris & Puckett, 2014; Gelzheiser, Meyers & Pruzek, 1992; Isherwood & Barger-Anderson, 2008; Jones & Hensley, 2012; Kleinert, Towles-Reeves, Quenemoen, Thurlow, Fluegge, Weseman & Kerbel, 2015; Klingner, Vaughn, Schumm, Cohen & Forgan, 1998; LeDoux, Graves & Burt, 2012; Marston, 1996; Moody, Vaughn, Hughes & Fischer, 2000; Prom, 1999; Rea, McLaughlin & Walther-Thomas, 2002; Rose, Barahona & Muro, 2017; Whinnery, 1996; Wiener & Tardif, 2004). The research design, participants, data sources, and findings of each of these studies are identified in Table 2.

Table 2

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Authors	Research Design	Participants	Data Sources	Findings
Barton, 2016	Qualitative	5 general education teachers, 2 special education teachers, 4 parents, 6 students	Teachers and parents – private interview Students – online questionnaire	This study was done to find out the effects on students' social success in the classroom. It was determined that students should be looked at individually and realize that some are more successful in the classroom and others are more successful in a resource room. The best scenario would be for there to be smaller class sizes with a mix of students and both a general education teacher and special education teacher.
Bentum & Aaron, 2003	Mixed Methods	Two groups of children – 230 children with a reading disability re-elevated after 3 years and 164 children with a reading disability re-elevated after a total of 6 years (3 years then 3 years)	Pre- and Post tests scores in reading and intelligence.	This study looked at the long-term effects of reading achievement having been taught in the resource room. Multiple results were found in this study. A resource room did not improve word recognition or reading comprehension skills, all students had a significant decline in spelling errors, with the group of 6 years they showed a decline in verbal IQ scores. In conclusion placement in a resource room does not seem to have significant

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				effects on reading skills. Finally, this placement has disastrous effects on spelling and verbal intelligence, a manifestation of the so-called Matthew effect.
Brock & Schaefer, 2015	Quantitative	Groups of students throughout Ohio and their placements in rural and urban districts.	State level data in Ohio, mapping and multivariate analysis of variance	This study looked at the area of geographic location in regards to placement of students with development disabilities. The findings showed that students in urban districts spent less time in general education classes and that students in rural districts spent more time in general education classrooms.
Demirdag 2017	Quantitative	20 students without disabilities totaling 120 students from 6 different middle school classrooms. 2 classrooms (1 inclusive and 1 non-inclusive) for each of the following grades – 6,7,8	Density Assessment (20 multiple choice questions), SPSS program for data analyses, paired samples t-test, multivariate group analysis test	Looking at the effects of inclusion and then reporting to instructional leaders. This study was to analyze the effects of inclusive science education on the general education population of middle school students' scientific conceptual understandings. The findings showed that the inclusive practice was both significant and positive on the conceptual understandings of science topics for students without disabilities in these inclusive science classrooms.

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Dupuis, Barclay, Holmes, Platt, Shaha & Lewis, 2006	Mixed Methods	364 high school students grades 9-12 from inclusive classrooms (98 students with disabilities and 266 regular education students	Student Survey – 2 versions (17 identical questions – 15 were Likert-scaled and 2 open-ended and one with 2 additional questions for reg. ed. students)	Data supported that students with disabilities included in regular education classrooms were reported that they felt successful and socially fit in, as well as motivated to do their best. Overall they felt that they did well and worked harder in inclusive classrooms. The general education students had mixed results. The overall results showed that inclusion classrooms are positive for both students with disabilities and their general education peers.
Gehrke, Cocchiarella, Harris & Puckett, 2014	Mixed Methods	87 pre-service teachers in a dual certification (special education and elementary education) 5 Special Education Directors	Researched based 22-item Perceptions of Inclusion Survey, interviews, Likert scale, written responses	This study looked at people in their student teaching and being able to address inclusion and have had training on the subject. The findings showed that inclusion is an elusive concept and is very inconsistent. It also continued to note that teacher preparation and training must prepare them for a wide range of contexts.
Gelzheiser, Meyers & Pruzek, 1992	Qualitative	6 elementary schools – 2 urban, 2 suburban, 2 rural out of the greater Capital	A revision of the Student-Level Observation of Beginning Reading	In this study students did not make significantly greater gains in reading when the instruction was provided both by push-in (inclusion) or by pull-out.

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		District of NY, grades 2-5, 1-2 pull-in classes per school, 2-3 pull-out classes per school	(SOBR-R) and reading comprehension assesses using the Stanford Achievement Test	Also, there was not a difference in time devoted to reading instruction and direct reading. In this study teachers had the ability to choose how they taught. There is no clear indication that either is most effective.
Graham, Lawson, Rasheed & Voltz, 2007	Qualitative	64 Black high school students with mild disabilities receiving special education services	Grade Level Short Form Reading Sub-test of the Multilevel Academic Survey Test (MAST)	This study suggested that included Black students with mild disabilities as a group performed better academically than non-included Black students with mild disabilities. These groups should not receive their education in separate settings but should have equal access to inclusive settings.
Isherwood & Barger-Anderson, 2008	Qualitative	15 regular education teachers and 5 special education teachers	Interviewed and observed for 1 year – case study design	The major factors of the adoption of co-teaching were; that co-teaching was arranged by the principal, frustration with content and curriculum, was done by schedule, and having limited resources. Steps to help in the process: help in redefining roles, school administrators must validate and visit as well as give praise to those classrooms. School personnel must establish goals, beliefs, and define roles within the classroom.

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Jones & Hensley, 2012	Qualitative	51 middle and high school (grades 7-12 from 1 middle school and 3 high schools) students with services under ID (intellectual disabilities) and 12 special education teachers	Individually interviewed	This study found that students with intellectual disabilities in self-contained classrooms had lower self-determination than others with the same disabilities in a resource room. Students did not have enough access to regular type school activities (i.e. passing periods, lunchroom, etc.) for change to happen they must be given choices regarding their school days.
Kleinert, Towles-Reeves, Quenemoen, Thurlow, Fluegge, Weseman & Kerbel, 2015	Qualitative	15 States and 39,837 students	Learner Characteristics Inventory	This study showed that the number of students with cognitive disabilities over the multistate sample, even though we know that they can effectively learn academic content, they were placed in other settings other than general education.
Klingner, Vaughn, Schumm, Cohen & Forgan, 1998	Qualitative	32 students with and without learning disabilities (16 with LD and 16 without) in an urban school	Individually interviewed	Overall in this study the students found the pull-out model to be preferable to inclusion. Students with LD were split on this same issue. Results varied for other questions. The study results support the need for a variety of delivery options making sure to look at each child individually.

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LeDoux, Graves & Burt, 2012	Mixed Methods	56 teachers of which 7 were chosen for the focus group, grades 1-5, 1 PE teacher and 1 resource teacher	Surveyed, questionnaires, Likert scale, multi-grade level focus group given questions to discuss in an open forum	<p>Qualitative Results – need for communication, lack of collaboration including planning, grading, and instruction, the need for in depth training and PD.</p> <p>Quantitative Results – most challenging was students being able to keep up with the pace of curriculum, time to meet IEP needs, lastly was modifying the curriculum.</p>
Marston, 1996	Mixed Methods	<p>Study 1 - 61 elementary special education resource teachers (SERTs) and 19 secondary SERTs</p> <p>Study 2 – 240 students with reading goals</p>	<p>Study 1-Questionnaire</p> <p>Study 2 – Curriculum based measures of reading</p>	The data shows that using a combined service model is more effective than the pull-out or inclusive models only. This was based on the average gain from the 15 th to the 20 th percentile whereas the pull-out only and inclusion only had no change in percentiles. It shows that serious attention to the LRE to make sure that a variety of learning opportunities exist.
Moody, Vaughn, Hughes & Fischer, 2000	Mixed Methods	6 teachers, 59 students (39 males and 20 females) 55 were identified having LD and the other 4 other disabilities	Teacher interviews, observations, teacher self-reports, Test of Reading Fluency (TORF), Woodcock-Johnson: Tests of	This study was a follow-up of an observational study done 2 years ago. The findings show that we can no longer blame the teachers of special education for the lack of gains in reading when the resource rooms are set up and structured as they are today. This study shows

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			Achievement-Revised (WJ-R)	that the opportunity to receive specialized intensive instruction is not available to students that need it in the large resource room classes.
Prom, 1999	Qualitative	8 students (4 girls and 4 boys) with disabilities in 7 th grade, 2 teachers	Feedback form, videotaping	The findings from this pilot study show a basis for future research. In the study itself, though the samplings are small, show that there is an inconstancy and did not always match what was occurring and that the teachers perceptions can influence the students. This study would be beneficial to groups trying to implement inclusive practices.
Rea, McLaughlin & Walther-Thomas, 2002	Mixed Methods	All 8 th grade students with LD in 2 middle schools – 32 students in inclusion and 22 students in resource or “pullout” model	<i>T</i> tests or chi-square analyses, investigation	This study provides a model for any school system wanting to evaluate their service delivery models. The findings state that school effectiveness depends on its ability to respond to individual student needs. This study supports the findings that students with LD should be included in the general education classroom.

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Rose, Barahona & Muro, 2017	Mixed Methods	213/823 total children - 90 Kindergarten, 58 3 rd graders, and 65 5 th graders in 3 elementary schools participated Total 823 children enrolled in the schools (242 received pull-out and 405 did not)	Priori power analysis, questionnaire, nomination of peers, services received	Perceptions of students that are in a pullout system and their status. The results of this study show that a relationship existed between the status of the student and the fact that they may be viewed less favorably. And those students that were not pulled-out were viewed more favorably. These perceived images change as they get older and into higher grades.
Whinnery,1996	Qualitative	48 elementary students in grades 2-5 enrolled in 2 public schools, 32 students with LD, all groups contained more males than females	Surveys with standardized instructions with the questions read to all students	This study results were organized in to four categories. This study looked at the attitudes and feelings of students in resource rooms and CC/CT students did not differ significantly. The majority of students in both groups including regular education students all felt good about themselves and accepted by their peers and classroom teachers. This study supports that program decisions need to use mixed methods to determine the LRE for each student.
Wiener & Tardif, 2004	Mixed Methods	117 children with LD (67 boys and 50	Stoichiometric Rating Scale, Friendship	This study was done with children with LD in four types of special education

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		girls), grades 4-8 in 9 schools	Interview and Questionnaire, Friendship Quality Questionnaire-Revised, Loneliness and Social Dissatisfaction Scale, Children's Depression Inventory, Self-Perception Profile for LD, Social Skills Rating Scale	settings. Looking at the following: social acceptance, number of friends, quality of relationship with best friends, self-concept, loneliness, depression, social skills, and problem behavior. The results show that many children with LD scored lower in all of the above areas. The difference being the placement for their services. Overall it was the children in the inclusive setting that fared better. Students in other settings had more behavior problems and seem to be unhappy overall. Placement of a student with LD impacts both positively and negatively depending on the placement itself and the teachers involved.
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3.2.1. Research design

Two of the 20 studies (10%) used a quantitative research design (Brock & Schaefer, 2015; Demirdag 2017). Nine of the studies (45%) utilized a mixed methods research design (Bentum & Aaron, 2003; Dupuis, Barclay, Holmes, Platt, Shaha & Lewis, 2006; Gehrke, Cocchiarella, Harris & Puckett, 2014; LeDoux, Graves & Burt, 2012; Marston, 1996; Moody, Vaughn, Hughes

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& Fischer, 2000; Rea, McLaughlin & Walther-Thomas, 2002; Rose, Barahona & Muro, 2017; Wiener & Tardif, 2004). Nine of the studies (45%) used a qualitative research design (Barton, 2016; Graham, Lawson, Rasheed & Voltz, 2007; Gelzheiser, Meyers & Pruzek, 1992; Isherwood & Barger-Anderson, 2008, Jones & Hensley, 2012; Kleinert, Towles-Reeves, Quenemoen, Thurlow, Fluegge, Weseman & Kerbel, 2015; Klingner, Vaughn, Schumm, Cohen & Forgan, 1998; Prom, 1999; Whinnery, 1996; Whinnery, 1996;).

3.2.2. Participants and data sources

The majority of the 20 research studies included in this meta-synthesis analyzed data from students both with and without disabilities. Thirteen of the 20 studies (65%) analyzed data collected from students with disabilities (Barton, 2016; Bentum & Aaron, 2003; Brock & Schaefer, 2015; Dupuis, Barclay, Holmes, Platt, Shaha & Lewis, 2006; Gelzheiser, Meyers & Pruzek, 1992; Graham, Lawson, Rasheed & Voltz, 2007; Jones & Hensley, 2012; Marston, 1996; Moody, Vaughn, Hughes & Fischer, 2000; Prom, 1999; Rea, McLaughlin & Walther-Thomas, 2002; Rose, Barahona & Muro, 2017; Wiener & Tardif, 2004). Eight of the 20 studies (40%) analyzed data collected from students without disabilities (Brock & Schaefer, 2015; Demirdag 2017; Dupuis, Barclay, Holmes, Platt, Shaha & Lewis, 2006; Gelzheiser, Meyers & Pruzek, 1992; Kleinert, Towles-Reeves, Quenemoen, Thurlow, Fluegge, Weseman & Kerbel, 2015; Klingner, Vaughn, Schumm, Cohen & Forgan, 1998; Rose, Barahona & Muro, 2017; Whinnery, 1996). Five of the studies (25%) analyzed data collected from General Education Teachers (Barton, 2016; Isherwood & Barger-Anderson, 2008; LeDoux, Graves & Burt, 2012; Moody,

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Vaughn, Hughes & Fischer, 2000; Rea, McLaughlin & Walther-Thomas, 2002). Seven of the studies (35%) analyzed data from Special Education Teachers (Barton, 2016; Gehrke, Cocchiarella, Harris & Puckett, 2014; Isherwood & Barger-Anderson, 2008; Jones & Hensley, 2012; LeDoux, Graves & Burt, 2012; Marston, 1996; Prom, 1999). In addition to four Parents (Barton, 2016) and eighty-seven Student Teachers (Gehrke, Cocchiarella, Harris & Puckett, 2014), data was also analyzed from other participants. These additional participants included groups of students throughout Ohio and their placements in rural and urban districts, 5 States and 39,837 students, and 6 elementary schools (Brock & Schaefer, 2015; Gelzheiser, Meyers & Pruzek, 1992; Kleinert, Towles-Reeves, Quenemoen, Thurlow, Fluegge, Weseman & Kerbel, 2015).

Interviews, questionnaires, and surveys provided the main data sources used in the research studies. Seven of the studies (35%) used interviews to collect data (Barton, 2016; Gehrke, Cocchiarella, Harris & Puckett, 2014; Isherwood & Barger-Anderson, 2008; Jones & Hensley, 2012; Klingner, Vaughn, Schumm, Cohen & Forgan, 1998; Moody, Vaughn, Hughes & Fischer, 2000; Wiener & Tardif, 2004). Six of the studies (30%) used questionnaires to collect data from participants (Barton, 2016; Demirdag 2017; LeDoux, Graves & Burt, 2012; Marston, 1996; Rose, Barahona & Muro, 2017; Wiener & Tardif, 2004). Three of the studies (15%) used surveys to collect data (Dupuis, Barclay, Holmes, Platt, Shaha & Lewis, 2006; LeDoux, Graves & Burt, 2012; Whinnery, 1996). Other data sources were also used in the research studies, including

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standardized tests, grade level assessments, feedback form, videotaping, learner characteristics inventory, self-reports, observations, and mapping and multivariate analysis of variance.

3.2.3. Findings of the studies

The findings of the 20 research studies included in this meta-synthesis can be summarized as follows:

1. Settings - In the above studies data showing growth or non-growth in the areas of academic and standardized testing was addressed in all settings. When viewing students having IEPs we see when studies have been completed, in regards with growth in many areas of academics, there is no clear outcome on where is the best setting for learning outcomes. We find there are increases in reading both in the general education setting as well as in the resource room regardless to the methods used. Also, there was not a difference in time devoted to reading instruction and direct reading in either setting, showing there is no clear answer. When looking at settings there are many types of inclusion classrooms. There is co-teaching (were the general education teacher and the special education teacher work together), small groups within the general education setting taught by both teachers, one is a lead teacher and the other is support, and partial inclusion (where the student is in the general education classroom for part of the lesson then pulled-out to finish the lesson in a resource room). When looking at the research, all of the above were used to collect data and again seeing no clear answer.
2. Views - The views and feelings of teachers and students in inclusive and non-inclusive rooms were addressed through many of the studies. Most teachers felt they were not ready or trained

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well enough for work in an inclusion classroom. Teachers also felt there was not a clear expectation and division of work between the classroom teacher and special education teacher. Many general education teachers felt there was a lack of understanding of curriculum by the special education teacher. One study showed the inclusive practice was both significant and positive on the conceptual understandings of science topics for students without disabilities in these inclusive science classrooms thus showing us there is not an impact on students without disabilities. General education teachers also felt the included students had trouble keeping up with the lessons.

Students had mixed feelings when it came to being a part of an inclusive classroom. The students in an inclusive classroom felt for the most part they were receiving the support they needed to succeed. Students without disabilities were split on whether the students receiving support should be in the general education classroom or leave to a resource room. Not enough parents were interviewed but the ones that were had mixed views. There was no clear outcome on best placement but most likely a form of mixed methods should be used to best reach each child.

3. Community - All social aspects for inclusive and non-inclusive students play a key part in the development of each child. Most showed students with disabilities felt better about themselves in an inclusive classroom. They felt they had more friends and received help in areas they had trouble in with two teachers in the classroom. They liked staying in the general education classroom and felt their peers accepted them better than when they were pulled-out. Students

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without disabilities had mixed views on having peers in the same class. Some felt the class had to slow down or it was louder when students with disabilities were in the room. Some liked the idea and felt that it was good for all students because everyone got the same lesson. Parents had limited input in the studies looked at and I would have liked to see more parents used in the process. They should have as much input as the other team members. Overall, it was the children in the inclusive setting that fared better in their social and emotional areas.

3.3. Emergent themes

Four themes emerged from my analysis of the 53 articles included in this meta-synthesis. These emergent themes, or theme clusters, include: (a) history and laws of inclusion; (b) inclusion models, strategies and practices; (c) views and perceptions of teachers, students, parents, and administrators of inclusion practices; (d) Ideas and recommendations for improvements in inclusive settings. These four theme clusters and their formulated meanings are represented in Table 3.

Table 3

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
History and laws of inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Having an understanding of the history of inclusion so as to be able to work with children with disabilities. ● In the 1900-1950 there was an increasing number of documented students with special needs in the public school settings.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Council for Exceptional Children was established in 1922. ● In 1954 was the Brown vs. Board of Education outcome, requiring that schools become racially integrated. ● The Division of Handicapped Children and Youth was established in the year 1963. ● PL 94-142 Education for All students act was passed after beginning with the Rehabilitation Act in 1973. ● The Regular Education initiative, of the 1980's, started by Margaret Will, a parent who also was the head of OSEP for the Department of Education (Office of Special Education Programs). ● In 1986 children from their birth until the ages of two are now covered under the law PL99-457. ● 1990 the Americans with Disabilities Act further protected school-aged children with disabilities outside of the classroom in employment and access to public and private services. ● From the years 1990-2004 the Individuals with Disabilities education Act (IDEA) was passed and in place until the reauthorization in 2004. ● No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was put into place in 2001. ● RTI/MTSS - Response to Intervention (RTI) and Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) are frameworks for integrating instruction, evidence-based interventions, and assessments to meet the academic and behavior needs of all students. ● Most recently Every Student Succeeds Act, was passed in December of 2015.
Inclusion models, strategies and practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Co-teaching models that are often used in the inclusion classroom are as follows: one teach and one observe, one teach and one assists, parallel teaching, station teaching and team teaching. ● Using flexible learning environments that can accommodate for individual learning differences uses Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to reach all students in a classroom. ● Full inclusion is the idea of all students being taught in the same classroom using strategies that reach every child. ● The idea of mainstreaming came before inclusion and

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	<p>was ways to have students with disabilities sit in a general education classroom in the hopes they would learn.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A push-in model is where another teacher services students with disabilities in the general education classroom. ● Using direct instruction is a strategy to instruct curriculum. ● Cooperative grouping is often used as a practice to help teach curriculum to all students. ● The use of peer tutoring is an option to address students of different levels academics. ● Reverse inclusion is when general education students come into the resource room or self-contained to learn or to support students with disabilities. ● When working with students that are of different ages or abilities levels often times peer buddies are used. ● Teachers need to keep learning more about the students' abilities and the many ways to reach, teach, and of course include them in the classroom. ● The effects of inclusion programs are mixed and there is no clear answer to the best learning environment.
Views and perceptions of teachers, students, parents, and administrators of inclusion practices	<p>Teachers –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Frustration with not understanding how to work in an inclusion classroom. ● Lack of training in the areas of dealing with students with disabilities. ● Time for teamwork in order to plan for the inclusive classroom. ● Some teachers did not feel they had a clear approach in teaching reading to students with learning disabilities (LD). ● Some teachers used the “eclectic approach” in their classroom. ● Inadequate training of teachers in teaching reading and giving support as needed to new teachers on inclusion practices. ● Differences in how an inclusion classroom functions with support between large and small districts. ● Communication between all staff members in regards to students. ● There is a need for administrative support when working

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	<p>in an inclusion classroom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Division of responsibilities is a problem in the fact that students do not get the same attention. <p>Students –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students on both sides have mixed feelings on being in an inclusion classroom. ● Results vary with student data in and out of inclusive settings. ● Some students like to be pulled out to receive their support on curriculum. ● Some students like to stay in the general education classroom and receive their support there. ● Some peers, without disabilities, feel that students with disabilities should leave and others feel it is best for them to all be in the same classroom. ● Some behavior may have an effect on students without disabilities within the classroom. ● When working with students some feel there is a lack of content matter from the resource teacher. ● Students in the inclusion class viewed the Sped teacher as a helper teacher. ● Many students thought the Sped teacher was there to help both the teacher and the students. ● Students were often mixed on who they preferred to teach them in the classroom. ● Many LD kids preferred the pull-out model due to easier work and less noise. <p>Parents –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents feel that they must be able to have a say in their child's placement. ● Parents know their child best and should be listened to. ● The understanding of their rights is a problem in the fact that many do not know what they are entitled to. ● When a placement is made there must be support from the school. ● Making sure that parents are being able to attend meetings. <p>Administrators –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Many administrators were forced to make teacher partners due to the schedule or the finances. ● Administrators need to understand how to observe
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	<p>teachers in an inclusive classroom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Administrators must understanding of the laws of inclusion in order to have these classes in the school. ● Time to work with the teachers in the inclusive setting. ● Administrators must also have support from higher up for implementing inclusion. ● When the administrator arranges teaching assignments, teachers teaching styles and personalities are often not taken into account.
<p>Ideas and recommendations for improvements in inclusive settings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Training for general education teachers in the area of inclusion and working with students with disabilities. ● Doing an evaluation of the program that is already in place at the school. ● Allocating time for teachers to plan and do trainings. ● Resources being available for all staff to support students. ● Latest strategies and best practices presented to all staff for use. ● Appropriate student supports available, financed and used for inclusive settings. ● Time to build relationships and learn about students' abilities. ● Knowing and understanding the laws of IDEA (2004). ● Meetings with parents about where they would like to see their child placed. ● Partner with researchers when possible to continue to evaluate inclusive education. ● Make collaboration a priority with time to implement. ● Share the workload between both the general education teacher and the special education teacher. ● Increase inclusion in elective classes for secondary education. ● Use faculty meetings and professional learning communities for meetings to increase knowledge regarding disabilities, improved teaching techniques, and better classroom management. ● Make sure all teachers understand the curriculum being taught in the classrooms that they are working. ● Lunch is another area to consider for social interaction with help and guidance from the staff. ● Clubs and activities for all students with help and guidance for social interaction from the staff.

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4. Discussion

In this section I have summarized the emergent themes from my analysis of the 53 articles included in this meta-synthesis. These emergent themes were then connected to my own practices as a special education teacher.

4.1. History and laws of inclusion

When you know and understand the history and laws of inclusion it lends itself to an understanding of the system you are working under, whether it is the classroom or a school. When you know the history of inclusion, we as educators are then able to work with children with disabilities. Starting back in the 1900's there was an increasing number of documented students with special needs in the public schools. Many times these students were moved or housed in other settings away from the school. As time continued, laws and advocate groups were put into place, such as The Council for Exceptional Children established in 1922. One of the biggest outcomes for education and the move towards equal education for all, was the Brown vs. Board of Education result in 1954 requiring that schools become racially integrated. This led the way for students with disabilities to receive a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment with laws such as PL 94-142 Education for All students passed after beginning with the Rehabilitation Act in 1973. The Regular Education initiative, of the 1980's, started by Margaret Will a parent who also was the head of OSEP for the Department of Education (Office of Special Education Programs). She started this for her own son with Downs Syndrome. She wanted a better education for him and pushed for the laws to change where

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children are educated and to give him the right to be included. Things continued to move forward during the years of 1990-2004 as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was passed and in place until the reauthorization of this law in 2004. Moving on in history the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was put into place in 2001. RTI/MTSS - Response to Intervention (RTI) and Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) are frameworks for integrating instruction, evidence-based interventions, and assessments to meet the academic and behavior needs of all students was next and is still used today. Most recently Every Student Succeeds Act, was passed in December of 2015. With the laws forever changing and moving us forward in the area of inclusion, it is important to always remember where we started.

When I started teaching twenty-five years ago I never thought about the laws. I knew some of them and learned about others in college but I did not feel they impacted my teaching within the school. As I have continued to teach I have come to realize the importance in knowing what a child is entitled to within the school systems of today. I am also now aware of the position I play. Being a special education teacher and knowing the laws in order to help the families of the students I work with to receive the best education in the least restrictive environment. When I started teaching, students with special needs were nowhere to be seen within the school. They were in different settings or different buildings. As I taught during the first part of my career, in the general education classrooms for twenty-two years, I had to learn to work and present material to all students including ones with disabilities. To a greater extent students needing progressively more support were placed in my classroom. Having now spent the past three years as a special education teacher knowing the history as well as the current laws have helped me to

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not only work with my students but their families as well. Being able to articulate what is needed for the success of a child is why we should all be familiar with the laws of today.

4.2. Inclusion models

There are many types of inclusion used throughout our educational system. Full inclusion is the idea of all students being taught in the same classroom using strategies that reach every child. The idea of mainstreaming came before inclusion and was a process having students with disabilities sit in a general education classroom in the hopes they would learn. One of the models used today is co-teaching. Types of co-teaching models often used in the inclusion classroom are as follows: one teach and one observe, one teach and one assists, parallel teaching, station teaching and team teaching. By using these flexible learning environments it can accommodate for individual learning differences. Another method supporting the idea of inclusion would be to use reverse inclusion, when general education students come into the resource room or self-contained to learn or to support students with disabilities. Many schools still use a push-in model, where another teacher services students with disabilities in the general education classroom. This is the most common model and part of the discussion when looking at the LRE. Another way to reach all children is using the teaching method of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in a classroom. This is an educational framework based on research that guides the development of flexible learning environments accommodating individual learning differences. This should be a part of all inclusion classrooms, as it not only supports a child with a disability but all children. Using direct instruction is another strategy to instruct curriculum as well as the strategy of corporative grouping to help teach curriculum to all students. The use of peer tutoring

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is an option to address students of different levels academics in an inclusion classroom. When working with students of different ages or abilities levels, peer buddies can help so that students can access the curriculum. The main point is for teachers to keep learning more about the students' abilities and the many ways to reach, teach, and of course include them in the classroom, understanding the effects of inclusion programs are mixed and there is no clear answer to the best learning environment.

Teaching itself is a very difficult and complex career. Many teachers are trying to teach in an inclusion classroom without the training needed to understand the different models and strategies used in an inclusion classroom. In my own teaching I have used many of the above models throughout the past years. As the years have progressed I have found what works best out of the co-teaching models. They are parallel teaching, station teaching and team teaching. Having been able to implement these in two different school settings with different age groups I have been able to see the positive results of the child's social emotional learning and academic growth. In the best of all worlds, I as a teacher would love to have the option to do what is truly needed and best for my students with disabilities. This would mean I could work with inclusion, co-teaching, reverse inclusion, resource rooms and peer groups to give these students the access to the curriculum they so deserve. After forty years of IDEA we are nowhere near having all our students in their least restrictive environments but must continue to move towards the ideals of full inclusion.

4.3. Views of parents, students, teachers, and administrators of inclusion practices

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Inclusion is a practice involving many people in order to be successful. Everyone from teachers, administrators, parents, support staff and the students themselves must take part in the inclusion process. All have views of what inclusion is and what it should look like. Teachers' views are all over the place but the one topic that was clear is most do not feel they are trained well enough to teach in an inclusion classroom. They also are afraid the special education teacher will lack in curriculum knowledge as well as not fulfilling their weight of shared duties. Another area of concern is having enough time to plan together as well as having the support of the administration.

When a school decides to implement inclusion the administrator may be forced to make teacher partners due to the schedule or the finances instead of true partnerships. This is where the teachers have a say on who they will co-teach with in the classroom. When the administrator arranges teaching assignments, teachers teaching styles and personalities are often not taken into account. Administrators need to understand how to observe these teachers in an inclusive classroom once they have been trained and been working presenting lessons. It is imperative that administrators give the time needed to work with the teachers in the inclusive setting. Administrators must understand the laws of inclusion in order to have inclusive classes in the school and must have support from higher up for implementing the inclusion process.

The group having the most to say is the parents because they only want what is best for their child. The parents feel they must be able to have a say in their child's placement. Parents know their child best and should be listened to but it seems in some cases the school makes the final

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decision. Many parents need to know and have an understanding of their rights. It seems they do not know them and this is a problem in the fact that they do not comprehend what educational supports their child is entitled. Making sure the parents are being able to attend meetings is only the first step in getting them involved. When a child's placement is made there must be support from the school as well as the parents in order for it to truly be the LRE.

The most interesting information came from the ideas and thoughts on inclusive classrooms from the students. They had many mixed results when it came to their own least restrictive environments. Some students like to be pulled out to receive their support on curriculum while others like to stay in the general education classroom and receive their support. Some peers, without disabilities, feel that students with disabilities should leave and others feel it is best for them to all be in the same classroom for their education. When working with students some feel there is a lack of content matter from the resource teacher. Other students in the inclusion class viewed the Sped teacher as a helper teacher only there to help both the teacher and the students. Students often had mixed thoughts about which educator they preferred to teach them in the classroom. When asked, many kids with disabilities preferred the pull-out model due to easier work and less noise. There is no clear answer to where the student themselves want to learn or feel they have the best chance to be exposed to the curriculum.

The fact that more parents are not represented in the 53 articles studied for my paper is disheartening. Parents should be the key component in any IEP process. When I am working on an initial, annual or reevaluation, I make it a point to talk to the parents or guardians at great

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length. These conversations are during the scheduled meetings but also at other times as well. I make sure to acknowledge the parent as the child's best teacher and ask the child where they feel they can learn best. These would be ideas I would have liked to do when teaching middle school. I believe if we were truly able to place children where they felt they could learn we might just see better outcomes in their learning. With the elementary children I believe they too would have some idea of where they believed they learned best. I am not sure that administrators are ready to go the direction of letting a child decide where to learn. Overall, there needs to be communication and time given to all that are working in the inclusion setting. Teachers, administrators, students and parents must always do what is best for the child even if it means using a resource room along with the concept of inclusion.

4.4. Ideas for improvements

In order for the successful practice of inclusion to take place, all staff working with the inclusion setting must be sure they are trained and open to working with other staff, parents, students, TAs, administrators and the students with disabilities themselves. The training needs to go beyond just the special education teachers but must include the general education teachers as well. There needs to be a shared work load between the general education teacher and the special education teacher working in the inclusive classroom. Making collaboration a priority with time to implement. The use of faculty meetings and professional learning communities for meetings to increase knowledge regarding disabilities, improved teaching techniques, and better classroom management must now be a priority. Inclusion teachers need support from their administrators as well as having the time to plan together for lessons. They also need to make sure that the

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curriculum is understood for all subjects being taught. As time continues all parties involved need the time to build relationships and learn about students' abilities. In doing the above, educational settings will be well on their way to a successful and positive inclusion classroom.

In my career of teaching I would like to be given more time to create the relationships needed to be successful with my co-workers. On a daily basis I am working in three inclusion classrooms in grades kindergarten, first and second. When I started working in this elementary school, I was not given any time to know the teachers, curriculum or to plan for the upcoming year. I was expected to jump in and hit the road running. After this meta-synthesis it is clear this was not the best practice in order to have the best inclusive practices possible. I needed time to learn the curriculum and it was not provided. This was on top of trying to get to know my students on my caseload. Whether the fault of the district or the school, it truly impacted my abilities to be the best special education inclusion teacher by not allowing me the time to get to know my teachers or the curriculum.

5. Conclusion

When starting this meta-synthesis I was looking for answers on where would be the least restrictive environment (LRE), inclusion in the general education classroom or the resource room, for students with an individual education plan (IEP). I asked the question, "Inclusion Or Pull Out? What Is The Answer For All Students". The findings of this meta-synthesis highlight that, after reading and researching, I fell short on finding the answer because there was no clear answer. I was hoping to be able to take the clear answer and bring it back to the school I am working in and use it to improve the "inclusion" practices that we have in place. However,

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having found that there is little to no research that supports one setting or another as best for students with disabilities to support their learning needs, but finding that in fact having a combined method of service delivery available to all, would be the best outcome based on the research. The research used revealed teachers must be trained and use a variety of methods to reach all children within inclusion classrooms. It also showed academic gains could be made in either setting with the right approaches and techniques. One of the not so surprising results was social gains for all children were most likely to happen in the inclusive setting. It also stated that parents and teachers must be involved together to find the LRE for every child and looking at co-teaching, as a model for inclusion might be best to reach every student.

In the studies I looked at for this meta-synthesis I was disappointed that very few parents were interviewed, talked to or questioned for their input or their feelings about their child's placement. When working with a child that has an IEP it is imperative that the parent or guardian is involved in this process. That being said, parents and/or guardians should also have a say in the environment or setting that the children are being educated in. To leave such a huge piece of the puzzle out is disheartening.

Other additional findings of this study show there are no clear answers to what the LRE should be for students with disabilities. One of the only certainties is that we must continue to study the different service models and be open to finding what works for each child individually. If school systems are open to finding and completing the training needed for the staff that interacts with children, using the best service models, success rates of children with disabilities

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will increase. Despite the fact that we as a nation, even after forty years, do not have full inclusion in all educational settings and complete access to curriculum for all children as stated by IDEA (2004), we do the best we can to show growth with each child. We, as educators, are continuing to move forward and find ways to work towards what is truly the best educational setting for students' with disabilities.

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