INDIANA ADMINISTRATORS’ PERCEPTIONS OF THE EVALUATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS OF STUDENTS WITH MILD DISABILITIES
A DISSERTATION
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BY
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This study is dedicated to my father Fred Cordes who always encouraged and supported my educational goals and to my godfather, Erich Helge for being an inspiration to me.

To my sons Michael, Daniel and David: you are my heart. I love you more than I can say. Always remember that with God all things are possible.

To my husband John, words cannot fully express the extent of my gratitude and love.
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Abstract

**DISSERTATION PROJECT:** INDIANA ADMINISTRATORS’ PERCEPTIONS OF THE EVALUATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS OF STUDENTS WITH MILD DISABILITIES

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A recent focus of educational reform has been the evaluation of teacher performance. In response, individual states created comprehensive teacher evaluation (TE) instruments. Indiana passed Public Law 90 (formerly SEA 001) in 2011 that addressed teacher effectiveness. While it outlined the required components of the new TE instruments, there was no mention of special education in the legislation. To date there has been no TE instrument that addresses the unique responsibilities of special education teachers (SETs).

This study was completed in response to the current need for additional research to inform the field of efforts focused on the evaluation of SETs and the need for TE instruments that are sensitive to SETs unique responsibilities in increasing student outcomes. This exploratory study examined the perceptions of elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors in Indiana public schools concerning the evaluation of SETs who teach students with mild disabilities in general education classrooms. The study investigated the differences between the respondent groups in their knowledge of PL 90 (SEA 001), their corporation/cooperatives teacher evaluation instrument and professional teaching standards including both the Rules for Educator Preparation and Accountability (REPA) and the Council for Exceptional Children’s (CEC) Knowledge and Skill Professional Standards. Training
requirements in teacher evaluation, the identification and inclusion of the unique skills and responsibilities of SETs and the differentiation of general and special educators in their TE instrument were also addressed in this study. Findings from this study indicated that not all respondents have received training in their TE instrument as mandated in PL 90 (SEA 001). A majority of the respondents believed that (a) SETs should be evaluated using a differentiated/modified TE instrument from that used for GETs and (b) expressed a desire for additional training in the unique responsibilities of SETs. Recommendations for practice and implications for future research are provided.
# Table of Contents

ABSTRACT ......................................................................................................................... 6  
LIST OF TABLES .................................................................................................................. 12  
CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION .......................................................................................... 15  
Teacher Quality and Effectiveness ................................................................................. 17  
    Performance Evaluation Models for Special Education Teachers ......................... 19  
Statement of the Problem ................................................................................................. 20  
Purpose of the Study .......................................................................................................... 23  
Research Questions ........................................................................................................... 24  
Significance of the Study ................................................................................................... 25  
Basic Assumptions ............................................................................................................ 27  
Definition of Terms ........................................................................................................... 28  
Summary ............................................................................................................................. 31  
CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW .............................................................................. 33  
    Foundation ...................................................................................................................... 33  
Search Methods .................................................................................................................. 33  
Evolution of Special Education Law ............................................................................ 35  
Court Cases and Ruling ...................................................................................................... 37  
Policy Influences on Teacher Quality and Effectiveness ........................................... 39  
Indiana’s Response to Federal Legislation of Teacher Quality and Effectiveness .......... 40  
Federal Funding for the Principles of IDEA ................................................................. 42  
Teacher Quality and Improved Student Outcomes ...................................................... 46  
Special Education Teacher Effectiveness ....................................................................... 48
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Teacher Evaluation Reform ............................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana’s Teacher Evaluation Reform .............................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of Evaluation Reform on Special Educators ...........................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Accreditation .......................................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education Professional Contexts ..........................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary .............................................................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGY ............................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose ..............................................................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample ...............................................................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sampling Method ...............................................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Design ...............................................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentation ...............................................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Structure ...............................................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section I .........................................................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section II ........................................................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section III ......................................................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section IV .......................................................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section V ........................................................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section VI ......................................................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section VII .....................................................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Development and Review .....................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jury Panel .......................................................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot Testing .................................................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Consistency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Variables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent Variables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistics and Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4 – RESULTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent Demographics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Qualitative Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 5 – DISCUSSION</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Tables

Table 1. Return Rates for Elementary School Principals, Secondary School Principals, and Special Education Directors .........................................................................................................................84

Table 2. Demographics Reported by Position .........................................................................................................................86

Table 3. How Would You Describe Your Administrative Role in the Evaluation of Special Education Teachers? .........................................................................................................................88

Table 4. "Do Not Know" Responses Concerning Perceptions of Knowledge of PL 90 (SEA 001) and Their Corporation/Cooperative's Teacher Evaluation Instrument .................................................................................................................................90

Table 5. Perceptions of Knowledge of Indiana PL 90 (SEA 001) and Their Corporation/Cooperative's Teacher Evaluation Instrument by Position .........................................................................................................................92

Table 6. Identify the Teacher Evaluation Instrument that Most Closely Represents Your Corporation/Cooperative's Teacher Evaluation Instrument .........................................................................................................................93

Table 7. "Yes," "No," and "Do Not Know" Responses Concerning Training Requirements in the use of Their Teacher Evaluation Instrument for the Assessment of General and Special Education Teachers .........................................................................................................................95

Table 8. What Type of Training have you had in the Implementation of Your Corporation/Cooperative’s Teacher Evaluation Instrument? .........................................................................................................................96

Table 9. “Yes,” “No,” and "Do Not Know" Responses Concerning the Inclusion of the Unique Responsibilities of Special Education Teachers in Their Teacher Evaluation Training .........................................................................................................................98

Table 10. Where Did You Receive Training in the Unique Responsibilities of Special Education Teachers? .........................................................................................................................99

Table 11. “Yes” and “No” Responses Concerning Additional Training in the Use of Their Teacher Evaluation Instrument .........................................................................................................................101

Table 12. "Do Not Know" Responses Concerning Perceptions of Knowledge Related to IDEA 2004 .........................................................................................................................................................103

Table 13. Perceptions of Knowledge of IDEA 2004 as it Relates to the Responsibilities of Special Education Teachers of Students with Mild Disabilities in General Education Settings ..............................................................................................................106

Table 14. “Yes,” "No," and "Do Not Know" Responses Concerning the Evaluation of General and Special Education Teachers Using the Four Domains of (1) Instructional Planning (2) Effective Instruction (3) Leadership and (4) Core Professionalism .........................................................................................................................109
Table 15. "Yes" Responses Concerning the Evaluation of General and Special Education Teachers Using the Four Domains of (1) Instructional Planning (2) Effective Instruction (3) Leadership and (4) Core Professionalism ..........................................................112

Table 16. "No" Responses Concerning the Evaluation of General and Special Education Teachers Using the Four Domains of (1) Instructional Planning (2) Effective Instruction (3) Leadership and (4) Core Professionalism ..........................................................116

Table 17. Responses Concerning Beliefs of Knowledge Related to the Ability to Determine the Effectiveness of Special Education Teachers of Students with Mild Disabilities .................118

Table 18. "Do Not Know" Responses Concerning Perceptions of Beliefs Related to the Differentiation in the Evaluation of General and Special Education Teachers ................121

Table 19. Perceptions of Beliefs Related to the Differentiation in the Evaluation of General and Special Education Teachers .................................................................123

Table 20. “Yes,” "No,” and "Do Not Know” Responses Concerning the Similarities and Differences of the Teacher Evaluation Instrument Used for the Assessment of General Education Teachers and Special Education Teachers of Students with Mild Disabilities .................127

Table 21. "Do Not Know" Responses Concerning Perceptions of Knowledge of the REPA (2010) Indiana Standards for Educators as Related to Teacher Evaluation .........................129

Table 22. Perceptions of Knowledge of the REPA (2010) Indiana Standards for Educators as Related to Teacher Evaluation .................................................................131

Table 23. "Do Not Know" Responses Concerning Perceptions of Knowledge of the Council for Exceptions Children's (CEC) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards (2012) as Related to Teacher Evaluation .................................................................134


Table 25. Identify the Professional Standards Your Teacher Evaluation Instrument Included in Your Corporation/Cooperative’s TE Instrument for General Education Teachers .................140


Table 27. "Do Not Know” Responses Concerning Perceptions of Beliefs Related to the Impact of PL 90 (SEA 001) on the Evaluation of Special Education Teachers .................................144

Table 28. Perceptions of Beliefs Concerning the Impact of PL 90 (SEA 001) on the Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Special Education Teachers .................................................................146
Table 29. “Yes” and “No” Responses Concerning Perceptions of Beliefs Related to the Effectiveness of Their Teacher Evaluation Instrument in Assessing Special Education Teachers of Students with Mild Disabilities ................................................................. 148

Table 30. Themes to Respondents’ Responses Concerning the Belief the Teacher Evaluation Instrument Used in the Assessment of Special Education Teachers of Students with Mild Disabilities is Effective as Reported by Position .......................................................... 150

Table 31. Themes to Respondents’ Responses Concerning the Belief the Teacher Evaluation Instrument Used in the Assessment of Special Education Teachers of Students with Mild Disabilities is Not Effective as Reported by Position .......................................................... 152

Table 32. Themes to Respondents’ Additional Comments of Importance as Reported by Position ................................................................. 154
CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

The American public education system has been in existence for well over a century and has historical roots dating back to this country’s founding fathers. The "public education system" has become an American institution and a given right to all citizens. All students deserve a teacher who is highly qualified (US DOE, 2002).

"We know what works. It starts with teacher quality. Teacher quality has been found to be 20 times more important than any other factor, including poverty, in determining which kids succeed" (Daniels, 2011). Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels made this statement in his State of the State address in January 2011. Evaluation of teachers in the State of Indiana has been a strong focus of legislators seeking to improve teacher quality and improve student outcomes for all learners, including students with disabilities (SWD).

Every student with a disability between the ages of three and twenty-one residing in the United States is entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Following decades of precedent-setting case law, in 1975 President Gerald Ford signed into law The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA), known as PL 94-142. While the field of special education remains in its infancy, the evolution of federal laws with their subsequent reauthorizations and revisions has connected both the quality and effectiveness of teachers to student achievement, progress, and outcomes. More than 20 years after Congress first passed the EAHCA, teacher accountability was added, and its focus was expanded to include the provision that students with disabilities had the same rights to quality education (Almazan, 2009; IDEA 2004; US DOE, 2002). All students, including those with disabilities, had similar goals of performance (Benedict, 2013; IDEA, 2004). Documented annual compliance of federal and state laws was no longer the sole marker of accountability in education as stated by President Bush in the No Child Left
Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001. Subsequent laws authorized by President Obama in the Race to The Top (RTT) Initiative in 2009, the US DOE Blueprint for Reform in 2010, and the Every Student Succeeds Act in 2015 reiterated the importance of accountability measures.

Given the changes in federal laws and increased regulatory oversight, in 2010 the United States Department of Education (US DOE) recognized that the educational outcomes of SWD had not improved as expected. The goal of closing achievement gaps as identified in both NCLB and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004 did not occur. As a result, in 2012 the Federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) announced a movement toward prioritizing the improvement of outcomes for SWD entitled Results Driven Accountability (RDA). The two primary initiatives of RDA included a review of all indicator data for both compliance and student performance results (US DOE, 2012b). Every year states are required to report data to the US DOE regarding the performance of SWD in the classroom. Before OSEP's RDA initiative, states' accountability was for reporting data identified on compliance indicators as it related to SWD. For the first time in the nearly forty-year history of IDEA, states' requirements included ratings on educational outcomes in addition to compliance with federal and state laws for SWD. The new evaluation required the reporting of data on how SWD scored on state assessments, and the National Assessments for Educational Progress assisted in the determination of whether states were meeting the goals and implementation of IDEA (US DOE, 2012b).

The adoption of federal policy and subsequent implementation of state laws precede practice, however; it is through reported data and findings resulting from empirical research that future policy and practice are decided. Policy makers and educational scholars have agreed that teachers play an important role in the goal of improving student outcomes for all learners.
Additionally, empirical studies have identified that the single largest contributor to achieving this goal is teachers (CEC, 2012b; Darling-Hammond, 2002, 2012; Darling-Hammond & Ducommun, 2010; Jones & Brownell, 2014; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005; Sanders & Rivers, 1996). However, little information is available to inform the performance evaluation of special education teachers (SETs) (Brownell, Hirsch, & Seo, 2010; CEC, 2012b; Holdheide, Browder, Warren, Buzick, & Jones, 2012). In addition, limited research is available to guide the use of achievement and increased growth data for SWD (Holdheide et al., 2012; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014). The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), an internationally recognized education organization and a trusted voice in shaping education practice and policy for SWD, confirmed that SETs are at the center of learning for SWD. The 2012 CEC position paper on SET evaluation reiterated the fact that research supports teachers being the most important school-based factor in determining student achievement. Additionally, the CEC stated that “the current state of policy and practice across the nation has resulted in a patchwork of approaches, and all states and local districts are grappling with how to measure student growth especially for students with disabilities” (CEC, 2012b, p.2).

**Teacher Quality and Effectiveness**

Recent changes in federal and state laws have resulted in policymakers shifting their focus to teacher quality with the goal of increasing student outcomes for all learners across the nation. Stakeholders agree that teacher quality is paramount to teachers' success and improved student outcomes. Yet disagreement remains as it pertains to its operational definition and the measurement tools we use to determine teacher quality and effectiveness (Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002; Wayne & Youngs, 2003). For definitions of teacher quality and teacher effectiveness to inform practice, these must reflect the multifaceted responsibilities that teachers
are challenged to meet (CEC, 2012b; Goe, 2007; Goe, Bell, & Little 2008; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014; Jones & Brownell, 2014). In recent literature, the terms teacher quality and teacher effectiveness have frequently been used interchangeably (Goe, 2007; Little, Goe, & Bell, 2009); however, educational researcher Linda Darling-Hammond (2010, 2012) and others, including Campbell, Kyriakides, Muijs, and Robinson (2003), collectively identified the importance of differentiating teacher quality and teacher effectiveness.

Teacher quality has historically represented a myriad of skills, dispositions, and characteristics often obtained through educational pursuits and teacher accreditation programs. The existence of variables across educational contexts, including grade levels, student ability levels, class sizes, and the availability of curricular materials, has an impact on the quality of instruction of the highly qualified teacher (HQT) (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Conversely, teacher effectiveness refers to the purpose of instruction and is focused on student outcomes, including students' gains on tests, indicators of knowledge and skills, and other measures of student learning (Darling-Hammond, 2010, 2012; Goe et al., 2008). In response to and alignment with the mandates related to teacher effectiveness as articulated in NCLB in 2001 and IDEA in 2004, the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) issued a Highly Qualified Teacher/Educator Effectiveness State Plan in July 2012 that focused its Title II, Part A funding for activities related to teacher effectiveness rather than teacher quality. In the 2011 State Teacher Policy Yearbook: National Summary, The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) identified only five states that directly tied teacher compensation to teacher evaluation (TE) results, with Indiana being included in the small group (NCTQ, 2011). In addition, Indiana received the rank of number one in the nation with the most progress on teacher policy since 2009 by demonstrating progress in both teacher preparation and teacher evaluation policy (NCTQ, 2011).
Performance Evaluation Models for Special Education Teachers

The current emphasis on teacher effectiveness in recent educational policy presents an array of specific challenges for the determination of effectiveness and evaluation of SETs (Benedict, 2013; CEC, 2009, 2012b; Holdheide, Goe, Croft, & Reschly, 2010). SETs provide instruction and support students who frequently demonstrate a wide range of learning challenges and are additionally influenced by their learning environments, curriculum and changing social expectations (Benedict, 2013; Billingsley, Carlson, & Klein, 2004; Brownell, 2002; CEC, 2013; McLeskey & Billingsley, 2008). SETs meet various performance demands as they strive to promote academic achievement and increase educational outcomes for their SWD (Billingsley, 2004; Gelman, Pullen, & Kauffman, 2004; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014; Jones & Brownell, 2014; McLeskey, Tyler, & Flippin, 2003). In addition, SETs work collaboratively with other professionals, including general education teachers (GETs), therapists, counselors, paraprofessionals, community agency personnel, and families, to ensure their SWD receive the services, supports, and specialized instruction identified in their individualized education program (IEP) (CEC, 2012b; US DOE 2004).

In response to federal mandates, individual states created comprehensive teacher evaluation models based upon teacher performance (Baker et al. 2010; Braun, 2005; CEC, 2012b; Darling-Hammond 2010, 2012; Holdheide et al., 2010). The IDOE, in conjunction with The New Teacher Project (TNTP), developed and trialed the RISE evaluation system in 2010. Following the RISE pilot program, local education agencies (LEA) across the state made the choice to adopt the RISE model or to develop and submit for approval their own TE instruments. In support of the mandated changes in TE systems, the IDOE created the Office of Educator Effectiveness and Leadership to assist LEAs in ensuring the fidelity of implementation of the
new requirements related to teacher effectiveness and evaluation for all general and special education teachers (IDOE, 2012a).

**Statement of the Problem**

Historically, teacher evaluation has been a local education agency (LEA) responsibility. The recent changes in federal policy articulated in the accountability mandates for student performance and teacher quality have shifted the responsibility from LEAs to that of the state (Cole, Robinson, Ansaldo, Whiteman, & Spradlin, 2012; Holdheide et al., 2010). The revised accountability measures are included in NCLB's requirement of highly qualified teachers (HQTs), the US DOE's Blueprint for Reform, and in the RTT's definition and characteristics of highly effective teachers (HETs) (US DOE, 2009; US DOE, 2010). In addition, the 2004 revision to IDEA recognized the higher standards for SWD and included them in state and district assessments and in the LEA's annual yearly progress (AYP) reports. These increasingly linked future educational funding to results driven accountability systems and teacher effectiveness to student outcomes for 21st-century college and career readiness. States, in turn, held the responsibility of designing and implementing evaluation models for all teachers including SETs who teach SWD. In response, LEAs across the state of Indiana complied with the directive of developing a new teacher evaluation model based on teacher performance and effectiveness for both GETs and SETs (Cole et al., 2012; IDOE, 2012a; Murphy, Cole, Pike, Ansaldo, & Robinson, 2014). Empirical findings from research support that there currently exists no uniform national consensus or measure of SET effectiveness available to inform LEAs as they move forward to revise their teacher performance evaluation practices and instruments (Baker et al., 2010; Blanton, Sindelar, & Correa, 2006; CEC, 2012b; Holdheide et al., 2010, 2012; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014).
The evaluation of SETs poses a number of unique differences compared to GETs. Special educators are responsible for the education of students with a wide variety of challenges and needs, including behavioral, social, academic, cognitive, physical, sensory, and developmental. They require specialized training and instruction to provide their SWD with FAPE (EAHCA, 1975; IDEA, 2004). In addition, SETs serve in various educational settings and capacities including elementary, middle, high school, and co-teaching models of instruction. There currently exist no national measures for SET effectiveness (Blanton et al., 2006; Holdheide et al., 2010; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014). SETs continue to be evaluated inconsistently and by measures that do not take into account the unique demands of their roles and other variables that influence their abilities to demonstrate growth and increase positive outcomes for their SWD (CEC, 2009, 2012a, Holdheide et al., 2010; Jones & Brownell, 2014).

In the 2012 position paper on SET evaluation, the CEC promoted the ideal that all teachers should be included in one evaluation system differentiated based on their professional role (CEC, 2012b). Educational researchers have maintained that using the same evaluation tool for all teachers may be problematic. Teaching SWD is complex and frequently requires specialized knowledge of both content and teaching strategies (Holdheide et al., 2010; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014; Jones & Brownell, 2014). As states and LEAs move forward in the determination of SET effectiveness, research should continue to inform the practice of SET performance evaluation. Current empirical findings advise that teacher performance evaluation needs to reflect the specialized expertise and training of SETs (Amrein-Beardsley, 2009; Baker et al., 2010; CEC, 2009; 2012b; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014; Jones & Brownell, 2014). Current evaluation models do not recognize this specialized expertise (Holdheide et al., 2010; Jones & Brownell, 2014; Sledge & Pazey, 2013). A survey conducted by the National
Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality in the fall and winter of 2009-2010 gathered data regarding state and LEA evaluation practices for SETs. Over 3,000 surveys sent to special education directors yielded 1,143 total respondents. Data reported 26% of respondents used a modified evaluation process and 72% used the same tool for both GETs and SETs for performance evaluation purposes (Holdheide et al., 2010).

Indiana was part of a larger national trend to make improvements in their teacher evaluation instruments. In 2011, Indiana Public Law 90 (PL 90), formerly known as SEA 001, was passed into law by Indiana legislators and signed by Governor Mitch Daniels. The IDOE allowed for flexibility for each LEA across the state to select or design a new TE instrument compliant with the new state law. This made Indiana’s law unique in that it did not specify a state-mandated evaluation system. Rather, the IDOE provided several options to LEAs including the state-created TE rubric known as RISE, which had been developed with assistance from The New Teacher Project to comply with IC 20-28-11.5. In addition, LEAs could adopt the nationally known system called Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) or develop their own instrument aligning with the PL 90 (SEA 001) requirements. The idea was to allow different ways to approach reform in TE while providing LEAs with the option of selecting the percentage of teachers’ rating correlated to student’s scores on standardized assessments. The LEAs across the state were required to adopt RISE or develop their own TE instrument subject to approval by the IDOE beginning in the 2012-2013 school year (Metz & Wright, 2011; TNTP, 2012), with implementation to begin at the onset of the new teacher contracts. PL 90 (SEA 001) outlined the required components of the new TE system, including plans for annual performance evaluations for all certified employees, methods for assessing student growth, measures of effectiveness including observations, and other performance indicators. It did not include directives or
adjustments related to the unique needs of SETs who teach SWD (Indiana Code, IC 20-28-11.5-4; Jones & Brownell, 2014).

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine Indiana elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors' perceptions of the evaluation of SETs who teach students with mild disabilities in general education classes. An electronic survey was distributed to administrators responsible for TE in school corporations and special education cooperatives in Indiana. The survey asked questions concerning (a) their current knowledge of PL 90 (SEA 001), principles of IDEA 2004, and their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument, (b) the level of training required to be an evaluator of SETs, (c) their knowledge of professional standards for both GETs and SETs, including REPA and the CEC professional standards for SETs including their unique responsibilities, (d) their beliefs concerning the use of a differentiated TE instrument for GETs and SETs, and (e) their beliefs concerning the effectiveness of their TE instrument in the evaluation of SETs.

Respondents included three groups identified as elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors in Indiana's public schools. The study examined perceptions and the differences between the three groups in their views of their corporation/cooperative's TE instrument as used to determine the effectiveness of their SETs who teach students with mild disabilities. A further purpose of the study was to examine differences that may exist between respondent groups in their knowledge of REPA and CEC professional standards included in their corporation/cooperative's TE instrument. The intent of this research was to inform the field of education concerning the current TE instruments used to
evaluate the effectiveness of SETs in Indiana's public schools including all elementary, middle, and high schools.

**Research Questions**

This was an exploratory study investigating the knowledge, perceptions, and beliefs of Indiana elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors who evaluate SETs of students with mild disabilities in grades K–12. The following research questions guided the study.

1) Are there differences in the level of knowledge between elementary school principals, secondary principals, and special education directors regarding Indiana PL 90 (SEA 001) and their corporation/cooperative’s teacher evaluation instrument used for special education teachers?

2) What are the differences in the training requirements of elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors who evaluate special education teachers of students with mild disabilities?

3) Are there differences between elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors in their level of knowledge concerning their ability to identify the differences in the responsibilities of general education teachers and special education teachers who teach students with mild disabilities?

4) Do elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors believe it is important to differentiate between general education teachers and special education teachers on their teacher evaluation instrument?

5) What is the level of knowledge of elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors of professional standards for general education
teachers and special education teachers and their inclusion in their corporation/cooperative’s teacher evaluation instrument?

6) Do elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors believe their teacher evaluation instrument provides valid criteria for the determination of the effectiveness of a special education teacher of students with mild disabilities?

**Significance of the Study**

Research has demonstrated that student outcomes strongly correlate with the effectiveness of their teachers (Baker et al., 2010; Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Goe, 2007; Goe et al., 2008). While these studies provided the information that supported federal initiatives and state reforms, they have neglected to provide the specific skills sets that are necessary to advance student learning and contribute to positive student outcomes (Goe, 2007). This has left states and LEAs with a variety of evaluation models to provide information resulting in teacher compensation and dismissal (Darling-Hammond, 2010, 2012; NEA, 2011). In their 2012 position paper on special education teacher evaluation, the CEC stated, "Indeed, very few states and districts are addressing the unique challenges associated with evaluating special education teachers and this is an area where much work remains" (CEC, 2012b, p.2).

Recent findings have confirmed that a gap remains in current special education teacher evaluation research (Benedict et al., 2013; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014; Sledge & Pazey, 2011).

Given that policy precedes practice and implementation often takes time, many states and LEAs are still in the early stages of using their teacher performance evaluation systems. For example, Indiana is currently in its fifth year using the evaluation model passed into law in 2011.
In some cases, states have identified and defined teacher performance evaluation requirements, yet have provided little guidance on how to communicate or implement policies at the local education level (Holdheide et al., 2012). Recent research concluded that while the majority of states have identified their commitment to developing evaluation systems informed by multiple measures for which there is adequate empirical support, such empirical evidence is not available to inform the evaluation of SETs (Baker et al., 2010; Goe & Holdheide, 2011; Holdheide et al., 2012; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014). Although professional training, certification, and standards inform the preparation of SETs, there continues to be a lack of research that systematically identifies performance skills critical for the identification of the effectiveness of SETs. In addition, there currently exists no specifically identified model of evaluation for SETs' performance to assist LEA administrators with their evaluations (Baker et al., 2010; Holdheide et al., 2010; Holdheide et al., 2012).

Many states have established specific standards and a state certification process for teacher evaluators (Cole, Murphy, Rogan, & Eckes, 2013). In Indiana, both teachers and administrators have responded to legislative mandates that require adherence to a uniform, rigorous evaluative model. The IDOE staff and the Indiana Teacher Evaluation Cabinet stated, "Without effective evaluation systems, we can't identify and retain excellent teachers, provide useful feedback and support, or intervene when teachers consistently perform poorly" (IDOE, 2011a, p.5).

In addition to being given the option to use the RISE, Teacher Advancement Program (TAP), Peer Assistance and Review Program (PAR), or their own state-approved evaluation model, LEA's were also given latitude in who would provide training to the evaluators, how often the training would occur, and the subject of the trainings (Cole et al., 2013). This is
potentially problematic in that there is no unified state approved evaluator training nor is there a certification process to ensure that evaluators are highly trained and skilled. Training is available and a certificate awarded for the successful completion of the RISE evaluation system. In addition, the Indiana Association of School Principals and the Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents collaborated with Standards for Success, an online teacher evaluation model that offers training and certification for evaluators in Indiana. The results of the first Indiana statewide staff performance for the 2012-2013 school year indicated that 83.27% of the first year general and special education teachers combined received a ranking of effective or highly effective, with 88.25% for second and 87.86% for third year teachers respectively (IDOE, 2013). The reported data does not delineate GETs from SETs in their evaluation results. This study provides the needed clarity of the knowledge, beliefs, and perceptions of elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors of their corporation/cooperative's TE tool as it pertains to the evaluation of SETs of students with mild disabilities. It provides support for the further development of special education evaluation instruments that maximize improved teaching and increased outcomes for students with disabilities receiving instruction in general education classes.

**Basic Assumptions**

Basic assumptions of this study were that Indiana elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors had knowledge of the evaluation process of SETs. They had knowledge of their corporation/cooperative’s adopted state approved evaluation tool and its application for the evaluation of SETs. The assumption was the electronic survey information material would be deliverable. Based upon these assumptions, the researcher designed survey instrument questions to measure the perceptions of the participants' knowledge
and beliefs regarding the application of their district approved TE tool used in the evaluation of SETs. In addition, the participants involved with the survey were assumed to have knowledge in special education terminology, have an understanding of the intent of the questions, and have answered the questions to the best of their knowledge and ability.

**Definition of Terms**

_Council for Exceptional Children (CEC):_ The CEC is the largest professional organization of special educators and advocates for the rights of individuals with exceptionalities. The CEC develops updates and maintains professional standards for entry-level special education teachers and advanced roles in special education. The CEC is committed to an effective and comprehensive educational service delivery system based on best practice and research (www.cec.org).

_Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE):_ The IDEA regulations define "free appropriate public education" as special education and related services that (a) are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge; (b) meet the standards of the SEA; (c) include an appropriate preschool, elementary school, or secondary school education in the State involved; and (d) are provided in conformity with an individualized education program (IEP) that meets the IDEA's requirements (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 34 C.F.R. § 300.17).

_Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT):_ In 2001, NCLB identified and defined the term highly qualified teacher. To be deemed highly qualified, teachers must (a) have a bachelor's degree, (b) have full state certification or licensure, and (c) prove that they know each subject they teach (US DOE, 2001). All Indiana teachers who seek to teach Core Academic Subjects must meet the standards set by the HQT guidelines established by the NCLB mandate. In addition, they must
hold a valid Indiana elementary school education teacher’s license or a special education license that includes elementary school grades and have passed the required PRAXIS II elementary education licensing exams. Special education elementary school teachers must pass Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment #10011 PRAXIS II exam to be highly qualified. (http://www.doe.in.gov/effectiveness/educator-effectiveness-highly-qualified-teacher-provisions).

**Highly Effective Teacher (HET):** The national education landscape is moving away from an emphasis on HQT to highly effective teachers. Indiana is leading this charge as evidenced by the passage of our education reform package in 2011. The IDOE created the Office of Educator Effectiveness and Leadership (IDOE, 2012b).

**Individuals with Disabilities Act of 2004 (IDEA):** IDEA, originally passed in 1975 and reauthorized most recently in 2004, is a law that ensures education services to students with disabilities across the nation. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education, and related services to eligible children and youth with disabilities (IDEA, 2004).

**Individual Education Program (IEP):** As defined in IDEA, an IEP provided to students meets the child's unique needs and must result in educational benefit. It includes the student's present levels, goals, related services, and accommodations to ensure the student is receiving a free and appropriate public education (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 34 C.F.R. § 300.340).

**Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):** One of the six principles of the IDEA. Educational placements of students with IEPs are to be in the least restrictive environment (LRE). The LRE is the setting in which students, to the maximum extent appropriate; receive instruction and the
services outlined in their IEP in classes with student who do not have disabilities. In addition, LRE is a compliance indicator monitored by individual states and reported annually to the US DOE (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 34 C.F.R. § 300.550).

**Mild Disabilities:** A student with a mild disability refers to a child evaluated as having a cognitive impairment, a hearing impairment (including deafness), a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment (including blindness), a serious emotional disturbance, an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairment, a specific learning disability, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities. The student needs special education and related services. The LRE category for a student with a mild disability is 50 and the student receives 80% or more of their instruction in the general education setting (IDEA, 2004).

**Primary Evaluator:** Primary evaluators are responsible for collecting evidence themselves and reviewing evidence collected by any secondary evaluator in the evaluation of teachers (IDOE, 2011a; STAND, 2014).

**The Rules for Educator Preparation and Accountability (REPA):** In Spring 2010, the IDOE sought a contractor to develop high-quality educator standards to support REPA and to provide guidance to educator preparation programs as they revise their programs to meet the state's new licensing requirements. The IDOE also stipulated that scientifically based standards are aligned with Indiana Academic Standards and the Common Core State Standards developed jointly by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) (IDOE, 2010).

**Results Driven Accountability (RDA):** Adopted by the Office of Special Education Programs, RDA issued determinations that reflect state performance on results as well as compliance indicators for increased achievement for students with disabilities (US DOE, 2014).
RISE: The Indiana Teacher Evaluation Cabinet in response to PL 90 (SEA 001) developed the RISE model evaluation system in 2011. RISE provides information on the most important aspects of teaching including planning, instruction, leadership, and student learning (www.riseindiana.org).

Secondary Evaluator: A secondary evaluator may supplement the work of the primary evaluator by conducting observations, providing feedback, or gathering evidence of student learning (IDOE, 2011a; STAND, 2014).

Special Education (SE): The term "special education" is defined in relevant part, as "specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability..." (Individuals with Disabilities Act, 34 C.F.R. § 300.39).

Teacher Evaluation (TE): The process by which teachers are determined effective and subsequent future decisions regarding continued employment and compensation packages are based (Whiteman, Shi, & Plucker, 2011).

Summary

The past two decades have witnessed a significant increase in federal policy and subsequent state legislation on the subject of education reform. The recent focus of this reform has been the evaluation of teacher performance as it directly connects to student outcomes. Federal mandates including NCLB (2001) and IDEA (2004) have conceptualized the definitions of HQTs, HETs, and projected student outcomes for all students including those with disabilities. The federal initiative RTT (2009) further expanded upon NCLB with its unprecedented funding incentives to increase teacher and leader effectiveness in improving student outcomes. Federal initiatives tasked individual states with the development, implementation, and progress monitoring of teacher evaluation. At the federal, state, district, and building levels, stakeholders
are depending on these newly constructed TE instruments to improve teacher quality and effectiveness while simultaneously increasing student achievement for all students including those with disabilities (Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014).

In December 2015, President Obama signed Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) into law. As the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA) of 1965, ESSA replaced NCLB, 2001. Through this law, legislatures sought to shift federal involvement to individual states regarding accountability and school improvement requirements (ESSA, 2015). The ESSA amended IDEA 2004 by removing the definition of "highly qualified" and the requirement that teachers be "highly effective." In addition, states were not required to ensure that SETs are "highly qualified" beginning with the 2016-2017 school year (US DOE, 2015). Instead, they must have full certification as a SET or have passed the state SET licensing exam and hold a license to teach in the state as a SET. They must also hold at least a bachelor's degree (ESSA, 2015). Teacher evaluation has remained a critical focus of school corporations and special education cooperatives across Indiana during the enactment of this new legislation. While research in TE continues, there remains a gap in the systematic evaluation of SETs. There is no validation of current models of TE for use with SETs and these models provide little differentiation between GETs and SETs (Benedict et al., 2013; Holdheide et al., 2012; Jones et al., 2013, Woolf, 2014). While corporations in Indiana received latitude in the creation of their TE instruments, no mandate for specialized training in the unique responsibilities for SETs was included. Given the limited research, this study provides information regarding the current knowledge and application of professional teaching standards to the evaluation of SETs in Indiana public schools.
CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW

Foundation

The past 40 years have yielded numerous federal mandates establishing, defining, and articulating the education of SWD in public schools across the United States. The year 2015 marked the 40th anniversary of the EAHCA of 1975, also known as Public Law 94-142 that gave SWD the right to FAPE. The most recent reauthorization, known as IDEA (2004), along with NCLB (2001), were the first legal mandates in both general and special education that tied teacher quality, effectiveness, future employment, and compensation to student achievement and outcomes. Indiana responded in 2011 with its educational reform law known as PL 90 (SEA 001). The focus of this study was to investigate the knowledge, beliefs, and perceptions of Indiana administrators including elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors concerning the evaluation of SETs who teach students with mild disabilities. The federal government has defined students with mild disabilities as receiving their education under the LRE placement category code based on federal program types 50 (80% or more of their educational day is spent receiving instruction in the general education classroom).

Search Methods

The identification of research and literature for this review was obtained from various sources. The researcher conducted a thorough search at Ball State University's Bracken Library with the assistance of the librarian of reference services encompassing the reference, thesis, and dissertations sections. Computer-aided educational databases including Academic Search Premier, EBSCO Host, ERIC database, Ball State Cardinal Scholar, and Ball State One Search provided relevant information. Additional searches included the use of the Google, Yahoo, and Bing computer search engines. The following terms and combinations of key words including
special education, special education teachers, teacher effectiveness, teacher quality, teacher evaluation, special education law, Indiana teacher quality, Indiana teacher effectiveness and teacher evaluation reform, students with disabilities, student achievement and results-driven accountability were included in the search.

A variety of websites were accessed in the literature review including but not limited to the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. Federal and state laws including documents from the United States Department of Education (US DOE) and Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) provided access to legal mandates. These documents included links to the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (EAHCA), the Individual with Disabilities Act of 1990, and subsequent reauthorizations in 1997, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) Amendments of 2004, The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, The Blueprint for Reform, The Race to The Top (RTT) Initiative in 2009, and the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015. Legal court cases were located with the Lexus Nexus search engine and from public school law books.

The review of the literature yielded the following categories including national legislative mandates, Indiana educational reform laws and their influence on teacher evaluation, court cases and their impact on the delivery of special education services to SWD, teacher quality and effectiveness, and teacher performance evaluation tools being used across the nation, and more specifically in Indiana. In addition, the issue of inclusion of SWD in general education classes was highlighted across the categories of legal mandates, teacher quality, teacher effectiveness,
and the challenges faced by administrators who evaluate SETs across multiple educational settings for SWD.

**Evolution of Special Education Law**

The movement towards education for all children in the United States initially had its roots in 1954 with our country's national Civil Rights movement. Comparable to racial segregation, SWD repeatedly were denied the right to public education and were often kept on the perimeter of society. Chief Justice Earl Warren delivered a unanimous ruling in the landmark court decision of Brown v. Board of Education, 347 U.S. 483 (1954), that separate was not equal and that no child should be denied an education (Brown, 1954). Subsequently, the Brown decision led the way to promote the belief that all people, regardless of race, gender, or disability, have the right to a public education. In Brown, the Court addressed segregation and ruled that even if factors like facilities, teachers, and supplies were equal, separation itself was unequal and a violation of the equal protection clause of the 14th amendment. Precedent-setting court decisions such as the Brown case served as a catalyst for the modern civil rights movement inspiring education reform and challenging segregation for all students including those with disabilities.

In 1975, over two decades following the Brown decision, up to half of the estimated eight million children with disabilities in the U.S. were being inappropriately educated or excluded from public schools entirely leading to the next major phase in the advancement of special education (Pulliam & Patten, 2006). The additional historic legislation included both PARC v Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Mills v. Board of Education, DC. In 1971, the Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children (PARC) sued the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for a state law that allowed public schools to deny education to children who had not obtained a mental age
of five years. PARC was the first significant challenge to existing laws around the country excluding students with mental disabilities from attending school with their non-disabled peers. Resultant of the ruling, the State was compelled to provide a free public education to all children between the ages of six and twenty-one years. The Commonwealth could no longer deny any child with disabilities access to any free public program of education. A few months later in Washington, DC, the Supreme Court heard a new case: the exclusion of Peter Mills, a 12-year-old student with behavioral issues, from attending school with his peers due to the costs of his education being an undue burden. The court ordered the district to provide accessible, free, and suitable education for all children of school age regardless of disability or impairment. Both PARC and Mills held that children with handicaps receive access to adequate, publicly supported education.

Following the decisions in these two cases, additional lawsuits challenged the unfair practices that prevented students with disabilities from receiving a public education, eventually leading to the signing of the Education for all Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA), also known as Public Law 94-142 (Kauffman, 2005). The EAHCA combined an educational bill of rights with the promise of federal financial incentives (Yell, Katsiyannis, & Haselkorn, 2007). The name of the law changed in subsequent reauthorizations in 1990 and again in 1997 to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (PL 101-476; PL 105-17). The most recent reauthorization of IDEA in 2004 (U.S.C. §1400 et seq.) became known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA). The EAHCA originally intended to support states and LEAs in protecting individual rights while simultaneously meeting the individual educational needs of SWD. It became the cornerstone of special education, requiring public
schools to provide FAPE to students with a wide range of disabilities (EACHA, 1974; Yell, Katsiyannis, & Haselkorn 2007).

Six core principles identified and defined in IDEA include (a) zero reject, (b) nondiscriminatory identification and evaluation, (c) an IEP, (d) the LRE, (e) procedural safeguards, and (f) parent participation. Zero reject states FAPE is a guarantee to all children regardless of ability. Nondiscriminatory identification and evaluation establish safeguards in the assessment and placement of students into special education. An IEP meets the individual needs of the student. The LRE mandates that to the maximum extent possible children with disabilities are to be educated with children who are not disabled. Procedural safeguards provide a system of checks and balances to ensure accountability and fairness for SWD and their families. Parent participation gives parent(s) the right to be included in their child's placement decisions, IEP development, evaluation, and access to their child's education records. The language in these principles has been subject to interpretation by states, LEAs, and families alike. For example, Congress has never set a fixed standard for FAPE. Rather the definition of FAPE is in accordance with the procedures necessary to ensure that parents and school staff would collaborate to develop a student's program of special education, thereby resulting in variations of FAPE from state to state. Subsequent court rulings continue to render decisions regarding the legal responsibilities of the definition of FAPE and the ramifications for SWD and their families (Gallagher, 2006; Yell et al., 2007).

Court Cases and Rulings

Resultant landmark court decisions have included Hendrick Hudson School District v. Rowley (1982), Roncker v. Walter (1983), and Honig v. Doe (1988), among others (Gallagher, 2006). Hendrick Hudson School District v. Rowley was the first major court case that interpreted...
provisions in the EACHA. Amy Rowley, a student who was deaf, was denied a sign language interpreter in a general education class. Following due process, the Supreme Court ruled that FAPE did not mean it had to maximize each student's potential but rather intended to provide the student access to and benefit from public education (Hendrick Hudson School District v. Rowley, 1982). This case, known as the Rowley standard, was undoubtedly the most important and influential case in special education law as it continues to be the standard against which services for students with disabilities is measured (Yell et al., 2007).

In Roncker v. Walter (1983), parents challenged the IDEA provision of the LRE. Daniel Roncker was a nine-year-old boy with mild mental retardation. The school determined his placement in a segregated school and his parents sought contact with his peers in general education. The ruling favored inclusive, not segregated placement for students with disabilities and encouraged that those placement decisions be made on an individual basis as opposed to predetermining a student's placement based upon perceived level of functioning or disability (Roncker v. Walter, 1983). This ruling became known as the Roncker Portability Test, which stated that in cases where the segregated facility is considered superior, the court should determine whether the services which make that placement superior could feasibly be provided in a non-segregated setting (Yell, 2006). In 1989, Daniel R.R. v. State Board of Education again contested the IDEA provision of LRE. Daniel was a six-year-old boy with Down syndrome whose LRE included separate education classes for academic instruction and general education for non-academic classes. The ruling resulted in the Daniel Two-Part Test. It asked if the education in the regular classroom with supplementary aids and services could be satisfactorily achieved, and if it could not and the student is removed, is he/she mainstreamed to the maximum extent appropriate (Yell, 2006).
In Honig v. Doe (1988), the court considered the placement needs of children with emotional disabilities (ED) who met educational eligibility criteria under ED. The court ruled that their physical or verbal outbursts did not constitute sufficient reason to prohibit them from attending school prior to having a hearing. This was the first and the only case to address the topic of acceptable limits of disciplining students with disabilities under EAHCA (Honig v. Doe, 1988). The Supreme Court ruled that behavior was causally connected to or a manifestation of the disability. As a result, it enforced the stay-put provisions and established that schools may suspend a SWD for up to 10 days before triggering IDEA's procedural safeguards (Yell, 2006). Collectively, these renderings continued to refine and expand upon the rights of SWD. Consequently, in addition to FAPE, services support SWD that enable them to obtain meaningful, educational benefit from instruction (IDEA, 2004; Yell et al., 2007).

**Policy Influences on Teacher Quality and Effectiveness**

Twenty years following the passage of EAHCA, the law added accountability. This expanded focus included the rights of SWD to quality education (Almazan, 2009). Mandates of NCLB (2001) and IDEA (2004) supported students in special education settings. They also required states increase the quality and effectiveness of all schools, thereby increasing student outcomes for all learners including SWD. In 2007, the Commission of NCLB reiterated the IDEA principle that SWD can learn and should have access to the general education curriculum. In addition, NCLB introduced the first nationally criterion referenced definition of teacher quality (US DOE, 2003). It required that all new teachers, including both GETs and SETs, be HQTs. NCLB Section 9101 in part states the following:

The term highly qualified—when used with respect to any public elementary school or secondary school teacher teaching in a state means that the teacher has obtained
full state certification obtained through alternative routes to certification or passed the state teacher's licensing examination, and holds a license to teach in such state, except that when used with respect to any teacher teaching in a public charter school, the term means that the teacher meets the requirement set forth in the state's public charter school law; and the teacher has not had certification or licensure requirements waived on an emergency, temporary or provisional basis and holds at least a bachelor's degree. (p.535)

Intended to support efforts to nationalize teacher quality minimum standards, elements of NCLB's HQT criteria were included in the 2004 reauthorization of IDEA. The definition of highly qualified SETs in IDEA [20 U.S.C. 1401 (10)] was aligned with NCLB's HQT requirements under that statute in section 9101 of the ESEA [20 U.S.C. 7801(23)]. Taking it a step further, IDEA required SETs be highly qualified in the core academic subject(s) they taught (Sec. 662(a) (5), US DOE, 2004). The requirements for ensuring that SETs are highly qualified are found in the regulation at 34 CFR § 300.156 of IDEA. Additionally, in the revisions was the requirement that GETs needed to be minimally knowledgeable to teach SWD students with disabilities in their general education classrooms (Sec. 662(a) (4), US DOE, 2004).

**Indiana's Response to Federal Legislation of Teacher Quality and Effectiveness**

Federal legislation charged each state with the responsibility to develop and implement plans in accordance with the mandates identified and defined in both NCLB and IDEA, while simultaneously taking the needs of their LEAs and their individual students into consideration. The State Board of Education approved Indiana’s response to the reauthorization of IDEA in 2004, adopted as the State Board of Education Special Education Rules, Title 511, Article 7, Rules 32-47 June 1, 2010. The IDOE and Office of Special Education continue to provide
leadership and state-level support for public school programs for SWD from ages 3-21. The division ensures that Indiana is compliant with the federal IDEA mandates through monitoring of special education programs, oversight of community and residential programs, provision of mediation and due process rights, and sound fiscal management (IDOE, 2010).

Compliance with the specific mandates of HQTs in NCLB and initiatives outlined in RTT was articulated in the IDOE 2009-2010 Equitable Distribution of Qualified, Experienced Teachers State Plan, subsequently published in January 2012. Dr. Tony Bennett, Indiana's then superintendent of public instruction, took a visionary approach to educational transformation as articulated in its aggressive 90-25-90 goal. This meant that 90% of students pass both Math and English/Language Arts sections of ISTEP and End-of-Course Assessments (ECA); 25% of all graduates receive a score of 3, 4, or 5 on at least one Advanced Placement exam; and 90% of students graduate from high school.

Indiana was among the first states in shifting the focus on HQTs to highly effective teachers (HET) as evidenced by the passage of the aggressive education reform package in 2011. In response to and in alignment with the mandates related to teacher effectiveness as articulated in NCLB in 2001, IDEA in 2004, and RTT in 2011, the IDOE issued a Highly Qualified Teacher/Educator Effectiveness State Plan in July 2012, which focused its Title II, Part A funding for activities related to teacher effectiveness rather than teacher quality. In their State of the State 2013 Connect the Dots: Using Evaluation of Teacher Effectiveness to Inform Policy and Practice report, The National Council on Teacher Quality identified only five states that directly tied teacher compensation to teacher evaluation results, with Indiana being included in the small group.
Governor Mitch Daniels' 2011 legislative agenda contained changes to education policy including tying the evaluation and pay of teachers to student achievement. In April 2011, Indiana passed the Senate Enrolled Act (SEA 001), a comprehensive legislative education reform package. The Indiana SEA No. 409 is an act to amend the Indiana Code concerning education. SEA No. 409 contained the Commission on Education Study Committees' recommendations for teacher preparation programs to ensure individuals who graduate from them are able to meet the highest professional standards (SEA 409, 2013). The Commission was charged with the study and evaluation of (a) methods for accurately evaluating teacher preparation programs, (b) the use of teacher evaluations for measuring teacher preparation programs, and (c) the financial costs for students pursuing postsecondary education (SEA 409, 2013).

A major component of the SEA 409 legislative package has become known as PL 90 (SEA 001) (Indiana Code, IC 20-28-11.5). This groundbreaking legislation addressed the effectiveness of educators in classrooms across the state and provided guidelines for LEAs to create staff performance evaluations and revisions to the teacher compensation rule (Whiteman, 2011). The law also included annual performance evaluations, the use of objective data, multiple measures to evaluate teachers and school leaders, four performance categories, and opportunities for professional growth.

**Federal Funding for the Principals of IDEA**

All states receive IDEA federal funds and its requirements apply to states receiving financial assistance. IDEA continues to provide billions of dollars in federal funding annually to assist states and local communities in providing educational opportunities with the goal of increasing outcomes for approximately six million students with varying degrees of disabilities who participate in special education across the United States. The greatest share of annual IDEA
funding comes from Part B Section 611 grants to states. In the fiscal year 2013, total IDEA funding was $11.98 billion (US DOE, 2013; NCES, 2013).

In exchange for federal dollars, IDEA requires states to adhere to the six basic principles that have remained fundamentally unchanged since the signing of the EAHCA in 1975. They include zero reject, protection in an evaluation, FAPE, LRE, procedural safeguards, and parental participation (IDEA, 2004). Zero reject means schools must educate all children with disabilities regardless of the nature or severity of the disability and it prohibits the exclusion of any child from a public education. In addition, each state is required to develop a system to determine which children are or are not receiving the needed special education services. Child Find tasked LEAs with the responsibility for locating, identifying, and evaluating all children with disabilities from birth through age 21 residing in the state and provided this service at no cost to parents. This applies to all children, including those who attend private school and public schools, highly mobile children, homeless children, and children who are wards of the state (IDEA, 2004).

Protection in evaluation refers to the fact that schools must use nonbiased, multi-factored methods of evaluation to determine whether a child has a disability and if there is a recommendation of special education services. All assessments administered to the child are in their native language as to be racially and culturally nondiscriminatory and validated for their specific purpose. They must be administered by trained personnel and include those designed to provide information about specific educational needs, not just a general intelligence quotient. In addition, decisions about students must be based on more than their performance on a single test, and evaluations are to be made by a multidisciplinary team that includes at least one teacher or another specialist with knowledge in the area of suspected disability (IDEA, 2004).
Part B of IDEA requires that FAPE is available to eligible children with disabilities residing in the state. To be eligible, an evaluation determines if a child has one or more disabilities identified in IDEA including cognitive impairment, hearing impairment, visual impairment, emotional disability, orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments, specific learning disabilities, deaf-blindness, and multiple disabilities. In addition, states may adopt the term developmental delay for children ages three through nine who are experiencing a developmental delay as defined by the state. IDEA defines FAPE as special education and related services provided at public expense and at no cost to parents. It defines special education as specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability. This specially designed instruction means adapting for an individual student including the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction in order to address the unique needs of the student that result from their disability (Almazan, 2009; IDEA 2004).

Each child who receives special education and related services must have an IEP. The IEP must be an individualized document designed for only one student. Following the evaluation and determination of a disability, an IEP must be developed and implemented to meet the unique learning needs of the SWD. The IEP is developed by the child's teacher(s), parent(s), school administrators, related services personnel, and the student, who work together to improve the educational outcomes. The IEP includes the student's present levels of performance, identifies measurable annual goals and short-term objectives, and describes specific special education and related services provided for the student to benefit from special education services (IDEA, 2004; Heward, 2006). The IEP is frequently referred to as the road map of the student's education, guiding its direction, the route they will take, and the expected destination. It also serves as the
monitoring tool to determine whether the student is receiving the services contained in the IEP to ensure FAPE and whether the LEA is complying the IDEA (Almazan, 2009; IDEA, 2004).

IDEA mandates that students with disabilities are educated with their general education peers to the maximum extent appropriate in the LRE. Under the IDEA, schools are required to ensure that students with disabilities are

educated with children who are not disabled, and special classes, separate schooling

or another removal of children with disabilities from the regular education environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.


The LRE creates a presumption in favor of inclusion in the regular classroom although the word inclusion does not appear in IDEA or NCLB. To ensure that each student with a disability is educated in the LRE appropriate to meet their needs, LEAs must provide a continuum including both placement and educational services (IDEA, 2004). Four major themes have resulted from the law and subsequent court cases as it applies to LRE for students with disabilities. They include individualization, the right to an integrated education, appropriateness, and options. Integrated settings are the preferred placements for students with disabilities. Individual placement decisions meet the unique educational needs while providing meaningful educational benefit for all students (IDEA, 2004; Yell, 1998).

LEAs must provide due process safeguards to protect the rights of children with disabilities and their parents. Parental consent is a requirement for initial and any subsequent evaluations and placement decisions regarding special education. Confidentiality is also a requirement regarding the student's records. Parents may withhold their consent for evaluation,
request an independent educational evaluation (IEE) at public expense, or request a due process hearing if they disagree with the identification, evaluation, placement, or provision of FAPE for their child. Due process hearings are a last resort to resolve conflicts between school districts and parents (IDEA, 2004; Heward, 2006).

The final principle mandated in IDEA includes parent participation and states that schools must collaborate with parents and students with disabilities in the development and implementation of special education services. Parents are required to receive notification of IEP meetings, and their input and wishes are to be considered in the development of the IEP goals and objectives, services, and placement decisions. IDEA gives parents the right to equal participation in the process, access to the educational materials, and the right to reject or revoke special education services for their child (Hulett, 2009; IDEA, 2004).

**Teacher Quality and Improved Student Outcomes**

In conjunction with increased attention to the public education of students with disabilities, additional focus on both improved student outcomes and teacher quality was evidenced in federal policy initiatives originating with ESEA in 1965 (US DOE, 1965). Its most recent reauthorization in 2015 was entitled ESSA and was signed by President Obama. Consistent with previous federal legislation, ESSA included federal funding and initiatives to encourage states to adopt standardized curricula, design teacher preparation and professional development with the intentioned goal of improving student achievement for all students and closing the achievement gap for SWD (Berry & Eckert, 2012; ESSA, 2015; Guthrie & Springer, 2004; Jorgenson & Hoffman, 2003; Wayne & Youngs, 2003).

While ESEA and reauthorization of IDEA both promoted far-reaching mandates to raise student academic achievement to proficiency levels, the strongest evidence of pressure for
increased LEA accountability came from the President Obama Administration's RTT funding competition. This initiative was unprecedented in that it linked federal funding involvement to states' adoption of comprehensive accountability systems (Guthrie & Springer, 2004; US DOE, 2009). The 2010 Blueprint for Reform, President Obama's precursor to Race to the Top (RTT), included revisions to increase both state and LEA accountability for increased student achievement. As a component of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (PL 111-5), the US DOE established the RTT program to incentivize states to implement a "comprehensive approach to education reform" (US DOE, 2009, p. 4). The Obama Administration's framework of reform included the priorities of ensuring that all students be college and career ready upon graduation, teachers be highly qualified and effective, the diverse learning needs of all students be met, the support of public school choice, and the promotion of innovation (US DOE, 2010). In the executive summary, he included the following statement on teacher evaluation:

[States shall] design and implement rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that (a) differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth...as a significant factor, and (b) are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement. (p. 9)

Race to the Top was a historic $4.35 billion US DOE contest to promote innovation and was funded by the ED Recovery Act as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. In the evaluation of applications, states earned points for meeting specific criteria including: (a) adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy; (b) building data systems that measure student growth and success; (c) informing teachers and principals about how they can improve
instruction; (d) recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, and (e) turning around our lowest-achieving schools. The section including effective teachers was the most heavily weighted, representing 138 out of 500 possible points (RTT Executive Summary, 2009; US DOE, 2009).

Under the subsection, Great Teachers, and Great Leaders, RTT identified a new approach in response to NCLB, thereby elevating the profession by focusing on recruiting, preparing, developing, and rewarding effective teachers and leaders. RTT also focused on teacher and leader effectiveness in improving student outcomes, supporting states and districts that were willing to take bold action to increase the number of effective teachers and leaders where they are needed most, and strengthening pathways into teaching and school leadership positions in high-need schools (RTT Executive Summary, 2009; US DOE, 2010). The proposal would provide funds to SEAs and LEAs to develop and support effective teachers with an emphasis placed upon high-need, high-poverty, and high-minority schools (RTT Executive Summary, 2009; US DOE, 2010).

**Special Education Teacher Effectiveness**

All teachers are at the center of policy reforms and accountability mandates for increasing student outcomes. Historically, research in the field of special education focused on what competent teachers did (Brophy, 1979; Stallings, 1980). Effective teaching required the implementation of generic instruction and classroom management skills and provided multiple opportunities for students to respond (Brownell et al., 2010). As the field evolved from residential settings to general education classrooms, current research has shifted its focus to reexamine the definition of an effective SET (Brownell et al., 2010).
Policy makers and stakeholders agree that teacher quality is an integral component to student achievement and success; however, there continues to remain a divide between the appropriateness of the definition and measurement of teacher quality and effectiveness (Darling-Hammond, 2010; US DOE, 2004). Meanwhile, student performance data continues to inform local, state, and federal K-12 accountability compliance reports (Darling-Hammond, 2010). In response to recent changes in federal policy and state laws, teacher evaluation supports both the improvement of teaching and learning as well as for the purpose of accountability (Baratz-Snowden, 2009). Researchers in education continue their struggle with policy mandates that pass without the support of empirical evidence or an agreement of what constitutes teacher quality (Amrein-Beardsley, 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Hanushek, 2012; NEA, 2011).

**National Teacher Evaluation Reform**

Traditionally, teacher evaluation served a variety of purposes connected to teacher quality and professional growth. The field is currently engaged in dialogue on the values and challenges of traditional methods of teacher evaluation, emerging approaches directly tied to student achievement, and strategies that focus on multiple measures of teacher and student performance (Hightower et al., 2011). Recent changes to teacher evaluation reflect the increased accountability measures outlined in NCLB. The 2004 revisions of IDEA were responsible for creating goals for the performance of SWD that aligned with their general education peers (Benedict et al., 2013; IDEA, 2004). In addition to the higher standards set for SWD, they were now included in the state and district assessments and counted in the annual yearly progress (AYP) (IDEA, 2004). Added to the reporting of the number of SWD who participated in the general education assessments and the alternative assessments, states were also required to report
on the accommodations the students received during the assessments (IDEA, 2004). These initiatives collectively set the tone for assessment-based accountability (Benedict et al., 2013).

Due in part to the NCLB Commission, which called for moving beyond the designation of teachers as highly qualified to an assessment of where teachers are highly effective, there has been increased interest in moving beyond the traditional measures of teacher qualification to evaluate teacher's performance and effectiveness (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Teacher effectiveness was reiterated in RTT in 2010 as President Obama placed a renewed emphasis on teacher evaluation with the intended outcome of increased student achievement. It defined a highly effective teacher as one whose students achieve high rates (e.g., one and one-half-grade levels in an academic year) of student growth. States subsequently had the responsibility of designing and implementing evaluation models for all teachers (US DOE, 2012a).

**Indiana's Teacher Evaluation Reform**

The last forty years have included the study of sound teaching practices (Ebmeier, Beutel & Dugan, 2010). The supervision and evaluation of teachers in Indiana have been a recent focus of legislators as they seek to improve teacher effectiveness. As a result, TE has been a focus of policymakers in Indiana seeking to reform education in response to federal mandates. Representing sweeping changes in the evaluation of teachers, in 2011, PL 90 (SEA 001) became law and was effective in the fall of 2012. It provided guidelines for LEAs to develop their own evaluation systems. The required components of the evaluation systems included an annual evaluation, the use of objective data, multiple measures, evaluation results divided by four categories including ineffective, improvement necessary, effective and highly effective, and the use of professional development to increase teacher effectiveness (IDOE, 2012b). The IDOE outlined the requirements of the evaluation plan, which must contain an observation rubric that
includes detailed descriptions at each level of performance for each indicator, thus ensuring teachers receive detailed feedback from their observers. In addition, school districts must have a plan to offer additional support to new and struggling teachers, which could result in coaching, mentoring, or additional professional development (IDOE, 2012). In the 2011 National Council on Teacher Quality Policy Yearbook, Indiana ranked number one in progress as compared to other states; this was thought to be in direct correlation to the 2011 legislative package on educational reform (IDOE, 2012; NCTQ, 2011).

The new evaluation process began on April 30, 2011, when then Governor Mitch Daniels signed the SEA 001 into law. It required all public school districts to put in place annual teacher evaluations tied to merit pay and was to be ready for implementation by the start of the 2012-2013 school year. As a result, numerous decisions made in this process included accepting or rejecting the state proposed RISE evaluation model, or modifying it to meet the needs of LEAs. Teacher approval of the proposed evaluation system was also required before submitting it for state approval (SEA 409, 2013).

In the 2011–2012 school year, three LEAs in Indiana piloted the RISE model that rated teachers on 19 different criteria meant to evaluate how well they plan lessons, teach classes, and lead their peers. Assistant State Superintendent Dale Chu stated that nearly 80% of school corporations planned to use the RISE rubric (Whitman et al., 2011). The RISE model identified two types of evaluators, including primary and secondary evaluators. The primary evaluator is responsible for the summative evaluation of a teacher and collecting and reviewing the evidence collected by any secondary evaluators (IDOE, 2011). The secondary evaluator may provide feedback to the primary evaluator from observations and artifacts of student learning. Each teacher may have only one primary and one secondary evaluator per year. In interviews with
State Impact Indiana, administrators from the three pilot districts acknowledged that the new system was a big change and required a lot of preparation and training. However, they all shared that better feedback will help teachers improve their practice (Moxley, 2012; IDOE 2011a; STAND, 2014).

In July 2012, the IDOE issued a *Highly Qualified Teacher/Educator Effectiveness State Plan* that focused its Title II, Part A funding for activities related to teacher effectiveness rather than simply on teacher quality. Title II Part A funding is provided through the ESEA to ensure both SEA and LEA activities were focused on teacher and principal effectiveness to increase student achievement. In 2011, the IDOE encouraged all LEAs across the state to focus their Title II Part A funds towards effective professional development that increased teacher effectiveness (IDOE, 2012b). These recommended activities included providing financial incentives to retain teachers and principals with effective ratings, instituting merit pay programs for HETs, developing and implementing strategies to recruit, hire, and retain HETs and principals, training both principals and teachers in the new evaluation process, and supporting principals in the work of teacher evaluations (IDOE, 2012b).

The IDOE, in conjunction with The New Teacher Project (TNTP), developed and piloted the RISE evaluation system in 2010 in three school districts across the state. Following the pilot, other LEAs across the state developed their own evaluation systems to ensure teacher effectiveness. Aligning Title II Part A funding further allowed LEAs to develop and implement quality evaluation systems focused on teacher effectiveness. In support of the numerous changes, the IDOE created the Office of Educator Effectiveness and Leadership to assist LEAs in ensuring the fidelity of implementation of the new requirements related to teacher evaluation and teacher effectiveness (IDOE, 2012a).
Impact of Evaluation Reform on Special Educators

Questions continue to emerge in the current research to identify best practices in the evaluation of teachers (Murphy et al., 2014). The recent *Education Policy Brief Indiana Teacher Evaluation: At the Crossroads of Implementation* (2014) articulated the following questions:

Do teacher observation and evaluation rubrics represent valid indicators of effective teaching? Can these rubrics be used effectively with high degrees of validity and reliability? Can student growth and achievement be measured with high degrees of validity and reliability? Is student growth an appropriate indicator of instructional effectiveness? Should the evaluation of teachers be tied to compensation?” (Murphy et al., 2014, p.1)

Answering these questions will be critical in ensuring that teacher evaluation promotes teacher improvement and increases student learning and outcomes (Murphy et al., 2014).

Some believe the evaluation of teachers should use the same model for both GETs and SETS, while others hold that this may be problematic for special education teachers (Holdheide et al., 2010). As individual states seek to implement strategies to improve teacher effectiveness, it is crucial that evaluation tools include multiple performance indicators, measures, and data that are adequate for their purposes (Holdheide et al., 2010). This is especially important for SETs as student-learning challenges are by nature tied to teaching and learning outcomes (CEC, 2009, 2012b; Holdheide et al., 2010).

Teaching SWD is complex and frequently requires specialized knowledge of both content and teaching strategies. For example, SETs may implement systematic, highly repetitive individualized instruction that may look very different from GETs. In addition, SETs have responsibilities that include developing student IEPs, coordinating case conferences, and completing necessary legal paperwork compliant with state mandates. They are also responsible
for collaborating with the student's families, coordinating instruction with GETs, completing
transition assessments and plans, developing and implementing functional behavior assessments,
implementing behavior intervention plans, developing progress monitoring goals, and using
evidenced-based practices with their students (Holdheide et al., 2010; Johnson & Semmelroth,

Traditionally, the most common form of teacher evaluation has centered on classroom
observations that measure processes, teacher practices, interactions between teachers and
students, and other general aspects of instruction (Hightower et al., 2011; Jones & Brownell,
2014). Common problems frequently associated with these traditional evaluations include poor
evaluation instruments, little school district guidance on the substance of teacher evaluations, the
lack of time for evaluators to conduct evaluations, the absence of high-quality feedback to
teachers, and few consequences attached to the evaluations (Hightower et al., 2011). As a result,
researchers have concluded that teacher evaluations often resulted in little instructional
improvement and the continued employment of ineffective teachers (Hightower et. al, 2011).

There are typically two types of assessment models: summative (which measure
accountability) and formative (which measure teacher improvement). Summative teacher
evaluations have historically been oriented towards personnel decision making and may include
portfolios and value-added models (VAM). VAM approaches seek to tie individual teachers to
the performance of their students. A summative evaluation is a method of judging the work of a
person or program at the end of the program with the focus placed upon the outcome. It is often
associated with more objective, quantitative methods of data collection and accountability. It is
outcome focused more than process focused. Summative evaluations are frequently used for
accountability purposes, primarily to ensure teacher effectiveness. Traditionally, summative
evaluations select, promote, or dismiss educators (Benedict et al., 2013; Darling-Hammond, 2006). In spring 2010, the IDOE sought a contractor to develop high-quality educator standards to support The Rules for Educator Preparation and Accountability (REPA) and to provide guidance to educator preparation programs as they revise their programs to meet the state's new licensing requirements. The IDOE also stipulated that the standards be scientifically based and aligned with Indiana Academic Standards and the Common Core State Standards developed jointly by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), (IDOE, 2010) to assess whether the results of the person evaluated met the stated goals.

The second type of teacher evaluation, formative evaluations, typically focus on teacher learning and improvement. They provide ongoing feedback to teachers based on their instructional performance. Additionally, their intended purpose is to assist teachers with the identification of professional development opportunities designed to meet their unique instructional needs. With regard to teacher evaluation models, the objectives of evaluative feedback are to guide teachers in data use, assess individual and classroom needs, and use their prior knowledge and experience to establish goals (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). While research supports feedback as one of the most important elements of an evaluation system, it has also found that evaluation systems are failing to provide teachers with the information and feedback required to promote professional growth (Danielson & McGreal, 2000).

There are six commonly used teacher evaluation methods of which SETs should be informed. They include observation checklists, peer review, portfolios/ePortfolios, teaching standards including INTASC/CEC standards, the Charlotte Danielson framework (1996), and VAM (Benedict et al., 2010). The research on teacher evaluation, along with consideration of
state policy accountability mandates for SETs, support these evaluation methods (Blanton et al., 2006; Holdheide et al., 2010).

Observation checklists typically include a list of competencies that principals or evaluators check off to rate a teacher's performance; however, the small amount of literature on them has yielded checklists to be inadequate (Danielson, 2010). In addition, individuals may vary in the way they rate teachers, which may yield inconsistent and unreliable results. Teachers measure the accountability of each other in peer review (Goldstein, 2007). The most common form of peer review is the Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) that began in Toledo, Ohio in 1981. Twenty years later, the Toledo Plan of peer review was considered by some to be the blueprint of PAR, although disagreement between teacher unions, teachers, and administrators continue to persist in their support of PAR (Goldstein, 2007). Authentic measures used in the evaluation of teacher performance include portfolios and e-portfolios (Attinello, Lare, & Waters, 2006). Teachers have the opportunity to select their own artifacts best believed to represent their accomplishments across instructional contexts. They may include a resume, lesson plans, documentation of student work, and their personal teaching philosophy (Gelfer, Xu, & Perkins, 2004). In lieu of collecting and storing physical portfolios, many school districts are opting for e-portfolios. It is important for teachers to be mindful in their personal portfolios to select artifacts that demonstrate evidence of increased student achievement and outcomes (Benedict et al., 2013).

The CCSSO developed the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards. Informed by input from teachers, teacher educators, researchers, and state policy leaders, the InTASC standards were originally created in 1987 by California and Connecticut as guidelines to support and assess new teachers (Benedict et al., 2013). Their intent
was to be general in order to be applicable to a variety of instruction settings. Policy makers and educators have frequently cited these standards to help attain educational reform goals (CCSSO, 2011). Divided into four categories similar to those of the CEC standards, the ten standards include (a) The Learner and Learning, (b) Content Knowledge, (c) Instructional Practice, and (d) Professional Responsibility (CCSSO, 2011). Each standard is comprised of three categories including (a) Performances, (b) Essential Knowledge, and (c) Critical Dispositions. The quantity embedded within each standard due to their comprehensiveness may overwhelm educators. A major distractor in using standards as an evaluation tool lies within their lack of assessment process that in turn makes it difficult to link teacher performance and student outcomes (Blanton, 2006).

The Charlotte Danielson's framework for teaching assesses a teacher on four domains including (a) planning and preparation, (b) classroom environment, (c) instruction, and (d) professional responsibilities. Its intent is to provide a roadmap for teachers to improve their pedagogy. As opposed to a checklist, it identifies good teaching behaviors but allows for individualism via scoring rubrics. The downfall of this model is in that the principal or evaluator must possess sufficient pedagogical content knowledge in the subject area he/she is assessing. In addition, the sheer amount of domains covered in the framework (Benedict et al., 2013) can easily overwhelm new teachers. VAM assesses a teacher's performance in relation to their students' learning and achievement as measured on standardized tests. VAM is an attempt to isolate a teacher's effect on student growth while controlling for outside influences. VAM played a significant role in RTT, which defined HETs as those whose students demonstrated a high rate of growth in test scores (Benedict et al. 2013).
Teacher Accreditation

Founded in 1954, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) accredits teacher certification programs at U.S. colleges and universities. The Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) was founded in 1997 as a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving academic degree programs for professional educators who will teach and lead in schools for students in pre-K through grade 12. July 1, 2013 marked the de facto consolidation of NCATE and TEAC, thus making the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) the new single accreditor for educator preparation. The intended goal was to unify the accreditation system in order to raise the performance of teacher candidates as education practitioners in the nation's schools. They sought to raise the standards for the evidence the field relies on to support its claims of teacher quality while advancing research and innovation (CAEP, 2015).

On June 5, 2014, the CAEP Board of Directors adopted the CAEP Standards for Advanced Programs and amended in February 2015. The CAEP commission found existing research that provides some guidance regarding factors "likely to have the strongest effects on outcomes for student content knowledge; field experience; and the quality of teacher candidates" (CAEP, 2015, p.2). The adopted five CAEP standards include (a) content and pedagogical knowledge; (b) clinical partnerships and practice; (c) candidate quality, recruitment, and selectivity; (d) program impact; and (e) provider quality assurance and continuous improvement (CAEP, 2015, p. 2). Under standard 1: content and pedagogical knowledge, the commission emphasized the importance for candidates to demonstrate a strong content background in tandem with pedagogical. Previously in 2011, the InTASC principles provided a framework of content knowledge and professional experiences related to teaching practice that pre-service education
brings to the profession. They include learner development, learning differences, learning environments, content knowledge, application of content, assessment, planning instruction, instructional strategies, professional learning and ethical practice, and leadership and collaboration (CCSSO, 2012). The core teaching standards driven by the federal initiatives that all students can and must achieve to high standards underwent revision. These standards define what effective teaching should look like with the goal of improved student outcomes for all learners including SWD. In 1992, the InTASC’s standards targeted beginning teachers. These standards are now professional practice standards for all teachers (CCSSO, 2012). According to CAEP, content knowledge describes the depth of understanding of concepts, skills, processes, theories, principles, and structures that connect and organize ideas. Pedagogical content knowledge in teaching includes the primary actions of teaching. It has been identified as crucial to good teaching and student understanding. It involves a shift in teacher's understanding from comprehension of the subject matter to an understanding of the diversity of students' learning profiles, and subsequently, how to differentiate instruction that can promote the learning of all students regardless of their capacities, experiences, strengths, and learning styles (CAEP, 2015).

Research in the field indicates that students learn more when their teachers have a strong foundation of content knowledge (Schacter & Thum, 2004). Teachers need to understand subject matter deeply and flexibly so they can help a student create useful cognitive maps, relate one idea to another, and address misconceptions. Teachers need to see how ideas connect across fields and to everyday life. This kind of understanding provides a foundation for pedagogical content knowledge that enables a teacher to make ideas accessible to others (CCSSO, 2012, p.13).
Researcher Darling-Hammond (2013) defined deeper learning as an understanding of the meaning and relevance of ideas to concrete problems. She included an ability to apply core concepts and modes of inquiry to complex real world tasks, a capacity to transfer knowledge and skills to new situations, abilities to communicate ideas and to collaborate in problem-solving (CCSSO, 2012). Under the second CAEP standard of clinical partnership and practice, the commission stated that candidates must have opportunities to develop, practice, and demonstrate the content and pedagogical knowledge and skills that promote learning for all students (CAEP, 2015). In addition to school-based experiences, they recommend community-based and virtual teaching situations to integrate applications of theory from courses and demonstrate evidence-based, pedagogical practices that improve student learning and outcomes (NCATE, 2008).

CAEP identifies the importance of candidate quality, recruitment, and selectivity under standard three. Education preparation providers (EPP) have the responsibility to ensure the quality of their teacher candidates. This includes the initial recruitment, monitoring of candidates' progress, providing support, and finally to demonstrating that upon graduation the candidates are proficient. The quality of new teachers entering the field depends not only upon the quality of the preparation they receive but also upon the EPP's ability to attract and select candidates who have the potential to be effective teachers (CAEP, 2015). Rockoff, Jacob, Kan, and Staiger (2011) found there was a statistically significant relationship between teachers’ cognitive and non-cognitive skills and student and teacher outcomes, specifically when compared to student test scores.

While the CAEP recognizes that there are many professional efforts to define standards for teaching, they need to ask EPP to ensure that the data used in decision-making are both valid and reliable while also ensuring a sense of fairness towards potential candidates (CAEP, 2015).
Standard 4 addresses the results of preparation in classrooms and schools. The commission highlighted that multiple measures provide accreditation evidence for program evaluation. The CAEP commission suggests that multiple types of surveys can serve as an indicator of teaching effectiveness, satisfaction of employers, and satisfaction of completers. In addition, the commission recommends that CAEP considers the development of common survey items and instruments for employers and completers and participate in the validation of a student survey instrument for use in teacher pre-service programs (CAEP, 2015).

Under CAEP standard 5: provider quality assurance and continuous improvement, the commission promotes the use of data-based decision making for EPP, whether it is via the Inquiry Brief Continuous Impartment or Transformation Initiative Pathway (CAEP, 2015). The quality of an EPP measures the abilities of its completers to have a positive impact on student learning and achievement. The commission recommends that continued research in the area of accreditation can further deepen the knowledge of current best practices and provide models of emerging structures to continue to improve upon educator preparation (CAEP, 2015). Inspired by the RTT competition, states and LEAs across the country have revamped their evaluation systems. The critical question is how they can create evaluations that are useful instruments for teachers and administrations to promote student progress and improve student outcomes.

**Special Education Professional Contexts**

Over time, the field of special education has evolved because of shifting economic and political priorities, social values, and advances in educational research (Brownell et al., 2010; Spooner, Algozzine, Wood, & Hicks, 2010). One of the most noteworthy shifts has been the inclusion of educating students with disabilities alongside their non-disabled peers in their neighborhood schools (Yell et al., 2004). From the initial passage of PL 94-142 in 1975 to ESSA
in 2015, Congress has supported inclusive practices in the requirements for schools to provide an education in the LRE and to ensure that all students have access to the general education curriculum (Almazan, 2009). The over-arching goal of including SWD in general education classrooms is for SWD to make progress in the general education curriculum and not merely for them to sit in classrooms doing unrelated work. This includes the opportunity to learn the core concepts of the general curriculum to the greatest extent possible through instruction at their individual level with the accommodations and/or modifications necessary to meet with success (Almazan, 2009). Part B of IDEA and its implementing regulations require that children with disabilities should be educated with nondisabled peers. Recent national statistics show that students with disabilities spend over 80% of their instructional day in general education classrooms. According to the 2009 TASH Congressional Briefing on Inclusive Education, Inclusive Education and Implications for Policy: The State of the Art and The Promise What the State Statistics Say About Inclusive Education, the percent of students age 6-21 with disabilities placed in general education settings at least 80% of the time in the 2007-2008 school year ranged from 18% -92%. Indiana was ranked 18th in the nation with 62% of its students with disabilities receiving instruction in general education settings at least 80% of the time (Almazan, 2009). In addition, a 2001 study funded by the IDOE Division of Special Education revealed that inclusive settings have benefit for the achievement of students without disabilities and emphasize those unique needs of children with disabilities (Yell, Drasgow, Bradley, & Justesen, 2004).

The CEC is the largest professional organization of special educators in the United States and collaborates with other professional organizations in the preparation of special education teachers to help ensure they are well prepared to teach and support the learning of students with disabilities. Historically, pedagogy or teaching skill has been at the heart of special education and
SETs have altered instructional variables to promote learning and achievement for SWD. SETs must learn and have an understanding of both the general and specialized instruction. The CEC has advocated for well-prepared and high-quality special education professionals for over 75 years. In 1989, the CEC published the original special educator's professional standards based on materials from the literature, state and local governments, and institutions of higher education. The original list of thousands of competencies decreased to 107 in 1996. The original revisions have subsequently undergone numerous changes in 2003, 2009, and most recently in 2012. The current 2010-2012 revisions have added new standards for professional preparation in initial and advanced specialty strands with knowledge and skill areas that influence licensure. The preparation standards fell under seven standards with twenty-eight identified elements. In December 2012, The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) approved both the Initial Preparation Standards with Elaborations and Advanced Preparation Standards with Elaborations for SETs. The seven major preparation standards included learner development and individual learning differences, learning environments, curricular content knowledge, assessment, instructional planning and strategies, professional learning and practice, and collaboration. These standards organized under four areas of concentration including learner and learning, content knowledge and professional foundations, instructional pedagogy, and professionalism and collaboration. In addition, twenty-eight key elements fall within the seven preparation standards (CEC, 2013).

Under standard one, beginning special educators need to understand the characteristics of individuals with and without exceptionalities and need to know how exceptionalities can affect an individual's learning across environments. In addition, beginning SETs need to understand how language, culture, and family all influence the SWD's learning, including their values,
interests, and post-secondary options. The key elements of standard two include the beginning SET’s need to be able to modify learning environments for SWD to promote independence, self-motivation, and self-advocacy skills. Standard three emphasizes the need for beginning SETs to use the general and specialized curricula to individualize learning, while standard five is focused on the SET’s use of evidenced based practices for their SWD. The use of ethical principles and practice for SETs is outlined in standard six; and collaboration with colleagues, community agencies and families is emphasized in standard seven (CEC, 2012a).

The Advanced CEC Preparation Standards include specialty sets of standards for the safe and effective practice of their professional disciplines. These specialty sets capture the professional knowledge base, including empirical research, disciplined inquiry, informed theory, and the wisdom of practice, for their area of expertise for each proposed knowledge and skill. These specialty sets contain the knowledge and skills that are shared across all special education disciplines in combinations with those that are unique to their respective disciplines. The initial level specialty sets include Initial Specialty Common Items, Blind & Visual Impairments, Deaf & Hard of Hearing, Deaf-Blindness, Developmental Disabilities & Autism, Early Childhood Intervention, Emotional & Behavior Disorders, Gifts & Talents, Individualized General Curriculum, Individualized Independence Curriculum, Learning Disabilities, and Physical Health and Multiple Disabilities. The advanced level of specialty sets includes Administrator Specialist, Academic Intervention Specialist, Behavior Intervention Specialist, Deaf/Hard of Hearing Specialist, Diagnostic Specialist, Developmental Disabilities & Autism Specialist, Early Childhood Specialist, Gifted & Talented Specialist, Inclusion Specialist, Learning Disabilities Specialist, Technology Specialist, Transition Specialist, and Advanced Specialty Common Items (CEC, 2012a).
Summary

Recent federal policy and state legislation redefined teacher effectiveness by linking it to increased student outcomes, and research has demonstrated that student outcomes are strongly correlated to the effectiveness of their teachers (Baker et al., 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2009; Goe, 2007; Goe et al., 2008). Subsequently, LEAs have been under pressure to adopt evaluation instruments to align student achievement to teacher performance evaluations. Currently, there exists an ongoing debate over the evaluation of SETs. In compliance with federal guidelines, states have adopted new teacher evaluation models; however, there continues to be disagreement regarding which type of evaluation model best contributes to increased outcomes for SWD (Holdehide et al., 2012; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014).

"To date, no teacher performance evaluation measures have been explicitly developed for use with special education teachers" (Woolf, 2014, p.1). Rather, the performance of SETs is frequently based upon measures normed for use with GETs and are not sensitive to the unique contexts of SETs and to the specialized skills and expertise expected of them (CEC, 2009; Holdehide et al., 2012; Jones & Brownell, 2014; Semmelroth & Johnson, 2014; Woolf, 2014). While CEC has established the most prominent standards pertaining to both knowledge and skills for SETs they are often an underutilized resource in the evaluation of SETs (CEC 2012b; Holdheide et al., 2012; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014; Woolf, 2014). Despite the availability of the accepted standards for SETs, there exists a lack of empirical research aimed to inform the evaluation of SETs. How to best measure their effectiveness to inform school districts as they move forward to revise their teacher performance evaluation practices and models remains undetermined (Baker et al., 2010; Blanton et al., 2006; CEC, 2012; Holdheide et al., 2010; Holdheide et al., 2012; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014; Sindelair, Brownell, & Billingsley, 2010).
Danielson's framework for effective teaching is currently the most widely used model for the evaluation of teachers. Although states and corporations are currently using it across the country, it does not contain specific criteria for the evaluation of SETs (Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014). Indiana's Public Law 90 (SEA 001) allowed school corporations to adopt the State's model plan known as RISE, the System for Teacher and Student Advancement (TAP), or the Peer Assistance and Review Teacher Evaluation (PAR). According to the report Teacher Evaluation in Indiana, A Review of Public Law 90 and Its Implementation, May 2014 by STAND for Children and the Bellwether Education Partners, data evaluated from the IDOE website resulted in several findings. They include student growth is not a consistent factor in educator evaluations, there is no consistent plan to ensure students have effective instruction, and that some corporation's evaluation plans do not meet the statutory requirement of PL 90 (SEA 001). Indiana teacher effectiveness data from the 2012–2013 teacher performance evaluation results did not differentiate between general and special education teachers.

The review of the literature in the field indicates the need for further research to examine the knowledge and perceptions of those who are responsible for the evaluation of SETs in the state of Indiana. Emphasis needs to focus on how to better identify the unique needs of SETs while simultaneously meeting the mandates of Indiana law regarding teacher evaluation reforms.
CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGY

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine Indiana elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors’ perceptions of the evaluation of SETs who teach students with mild disabilities in general education classes. It examined (a) their current knowledge of PL 90, IDEA 2004, and their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument, (b) the level of training required to be an evaluator of SETs, (c) their knowledge of professional standards for both GETs and SETs, including REPA and the CEC professional standards for SETs, encompassing their unique responsibilities, (d) their beliefs concerning the use of a differentiated TE instrument for GETs and SETs, and (e) their beliefs concerning the effectiveness of their TE instrument in the evaluation of SETs.

Indiana public school administrators in corporations/cooperatives received an electronic survey to determine the level of training required to evaluate SETs in Indiana. It examined their knowledge of the REPA professional standards for all teachers and the CEC professional standards for SETs. The study intended to inform the field of education concerning the TE instruments used to evaluate the effectiveness of SETs in Indiana’s public elementary, middle, and high schools.

Sample

The population for this study includes all 92 counties in the state of Indiana. A total of 290 school corporations and 44 special education cooperatives servicing students with IEPs in Indiana public schools were included in the study. Participants for this study included elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors (including
cooperative and district level) who are responsible for the evaluation of SETs of students with mild disabilities.

The researcher used the directory for Indiana Council of Administrators of Special Education (ICASE) published and revised in October 2015 by the Indiana IEP Resource Center (IEPRC) to identify the 157 administrators of special education in the state of Indiana as potential participants. It is located at https://www.indianaieprc.org/index.php/services#special-education-resources. The researcher contacted Dr. Todd Bess, Executive Director for the Indiana Association of School Principals (IASP), to obtain a list of elementary and secondary school principals. Dr. Bess directed the researcher to the second tab on the 2015-2016 Indiana School Directory revised in October 2015. The 2015-2016 Indiana School Directory contained all public elementary, middle, and high schools in Indiana. All elementary and secondary school principals were included in the sample and asked to complete the survey. There were 1,158 elementary school principals and 684 secondary school principals identified as serving in administrative roles in public school settings in Indiana. All were invited to participate in this research study.

**Sampling Method**

“In education, surveys are most commonly used for the collection of data by schools or about schools” (p.161), and the descriptive method is particularly useful for investigating a variety of educational issues (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2006). The researcher’s intent was to conduct an exploratory study utilizing a self-selected sample of the population with a cross-sectional survey research instrument. Its focus was to obtain information regarding the perceptions of Indiana elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors concerning their current knowledge of and beliefs regarding their
corporation/cooperative’s TE tool used for determining the effectiveness of SETs of students with mild disabilities.

“The procedures used to conduct a survey have a major effect on the likelihood that the resulting data will describe accurately what is intended to be described” (Fowler, 1993, p.4). The researcher selected a survey aligned with descriptive research and followed the research process including the identification of a problem, review of the literature, selection of an appropriate sample of participants, collection of valid and reliable data, analysis of the data, and the reporting of conclusions (Gay et al., 2006, p. 160). In addition, the cross-sectional study collected data from selected individuals in a specific time and was a single, stand-alone study (Gay et al., 2006). The method of census sampling where all participants are included and a self-selected sampling of all respondents from the population best represented the perceptions of the population groups identified in this study. The exploration of Indiana’s administrators (elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors) provided data for this exploratory study.

**Research Design**

This study used research methods including forced choice, also known as closed question, and Likert-type scale survey questions with data interpreted through descriptive and inferential statistical data analysis (parametric and non-parametric). Forced choice refers to a specific format for response options in survey questionnaires. Forced choice questions required the respondent to select a response option that indicated a definitive opinion and allowed for greater specificity.

The survey also included three focused questions with open-ended responses that provided the researcher with qualitative data. The inclusion of open-ended questions allowed
respondents to answer in their own words and provided information for further quantitative research (Marsden & Wright, 2010). The focused questions with open-ended responses were included in the research design for participants to provide insight into future practices and to provide a level of knowledge related to the perceptions of the determination of the effectiveness of special education teachers using Indiana approved TE instruments. The first focused question with an open-ended response was concerning the perceptions of elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors related to their belief in the effectiveness of their TE instrument in the assessment of the GETs. The second focused question was concerning the perceptions of elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors related to their belief in the effectiveness of their TE instrument in the assessment of the SETs. The third and final opened ended question provided the respondents an opportunity to provide any important as related to the study.

**Instrumentation**

A survey research design was determined to be the most appropriate model for the implementation of this study. The survey, designed in Ball State University Qualtrics, provided a quantitative description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population (Creswell, 2013). Survey development informed by the literature on teacher evaluation included federal policy, state law, and its application to SETs. Indiana’s response to federally mandated changes in TE outlined in PL 90 (SEA 001), passed in 2011, and included the development, adoption, and implementation of new TE instruments for all teachers across the state. It did not include directives or adjustments related to the unique needs of SETs who teach SWD (Indiana Code IC 20-28-11.5-4; Jones & Brownell, 2014).
While PL 90 (SEA 001) requires evaluators to receive training, it does not specify the contents or location of the training. Nationally, no TE measure explicitly developed for use with SETs exists (Woolf, 2014). The performance of SETs is often based upon measures normed for use with GETs and is not sensitive to the unique contexts of SETs (CEC, 2009; Holdheide et al., 2012; Jones & Semmelroth, 2014; Woolf, 2014). Therefore, the evaluation of SETs continues to reply upon inconsistent measures that do not take into account the unique demands of their roles and other variables that affect their abilities to demonstrate growth and increase positive outcomes for their students with disabilities (Holdheide et al., 2010; Jones & Brownell, 2014; Sledge & Pazey, 2013).

The initial set of questions was structured to obtain general information pertaining to the participants’ demographics, professional training, roles, credentials, and experience at the time they completed the study instrument. The second set of questions contained skip logic questions structured to obtain information regarding the type of TE instrument used, training requirements for use of their TE instrument, and the inclusion of professional standards for both GETs and SETs. The third set of questions were Likert-style questions intended to gain respondents’ knowledge concerning PL 90 (SEA 001), IDEA 2004, and their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument. Respondent’s knowledge of REPA and CEC professional teaching standards and their ability to apply them to domain one (instructional planning) and domain two (effective instruction) of their TE instrument was included in section three of the survey. The fourth set of questions were Likert-style questions and were designed to obtain the respondent's beliefs regarding the differentiation between GETs and SETs identified in their TE instrument. In addition, the survey included three focused questions with open-ended responses that provided the respondents the opportunity to provide a deeper understanding of the issues surrounding the
determination of the effectiveness of special educators who teach students with mild disabilities (CEC, 2013; Holdheide, 2012; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014; Sledge & Pazey, 2013; Woolf 2014). Focused questions with open-ended responses were included in the final section to provide additional contextual data. Two focus questions allowed the respondents to provide additional information following a “yes” or “no” response. The third focus question provided the respondents an opportunity to provide any additional information they deemed important to the research study concerning their adopted TE instrument as related to the determination of the effectiveness of their SETs who teacher students with mild disabilities.

The researcher designed the survey instrument using Qualtrics, a survey software and data management tool offered to the researcher at Ball State University. The survey included elements of PL 90 (SEA 001), the Indiana RISE Rubric, the 2010 REPA Standards, and the 2012 CEC Initial and Advanced Preparation Standards. The electronic survey selected participants via an email letter which provided study participants with a website link embedded in the email. The URL allowed access to the survey in BSU.Qualtrics.com once the respondent had read and agreed to the survey informed consent. The survey opened on April 15, 2016, and closed on June 10, 2016, for an eight-week period. The survey allowed for obtaining demographic information and incorporated questions including Likert-type scale design, yes/no/do not know questions, and focused questions with open-ended responses. Each survey was coded to ensure confidentiality. An expert panel review and pilot testing prior to implementation of the research study assisted the researcher in the development of the study. The researcher and faculty advisor alone had access to the participants’ responses to the study.
Survey Structure

The organization of the survey prompted the respondents to reply to the forced choice, Likert-type scale survey questions, and limited open-ended questions. Likert scaling most often uses 5 points (Marsden & Wright, 2010). The Likert-type scale questions provided a continuum of options from extremely negative to extremely positive. Open-ended questions can add richness to survey results that is difficult to achieve with closed questions. (Marsden & Wright, 2010). The electronic survey method has an increased rate of return over the mail survey method (Dillman, Smyth & Christian, 2014). Additional advantages of online surveys include the low cost of data collection, the potential for high speed of return, advantages of a computer-assisted instrument, and the time provided for thoughtful responses (Fowler, 2014). These considerations supported the use of an electronic survey in Qualtrics for this research study.

Section I. The first section included general information regarding the intended purpose of the survey. The intent was to gain the perceptions of elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors in the knowledge and beliefs of the use of their TE instrument as related to the determination of the effectiveness of SETs of students with mild disabilities. It also provided the participants with informed consent, prompted participation, and identified a completion date of the survey.

Section II. The second section obtained demographic information from respondents regarding gender, age, and current positions. Educational attainment, years in current position, years with current employer, years in the field of education, description and size of the school corporation or special education cooperative, and their administrative role as an evaluator of SETs was also included in this section.
Section III. The third section of the survey provided definitions of key terminology in the literature and relevant to the purpose of the study as related to special education, teacher effectiveness, professional standards for teachers, teacher evaluation, and pertinent legislation.

Section IV. The fourth section of the survey provided questions intended to obtain information about the administrators’ knowledge related to the evaluation and unique responsibilities of SETs of SWD. It included questions pertaining to PL 90 (SEA 001), the principles of IDEA 2004, and the professional standards including REPA and CEC for both GETs and SETs. Respondents were directed to rate their knowledge of the predictors by indicating 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree, and 5 = no knowledge/do not know.

Section V. The fifth section of the survey provided questions intended to obtain information of Indiana administrators’ beliefs concerning the use of their corporation/cooperatives’ TE instrument in the assessment of SETs of SWD. It included questions regarding PL 90 (SEA 001), the unique responsibilities of SETs, the differentiation between GETs and SETs in their TE instrument, and the need for specialized training in the evaluation of SETs. Respondents were directed to rate their knowledge of the predictors by indicating 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree, and 5 = no knowledge/do not know.

Section VI. The sixth section of the survey provided questions intended to obtain the administrators’ knowledge related responses concerning the contents of their TE instrument, an inclusion of professional standards, training requirements, and the differentiation between GETs and SETs in the application of the individual domains.

Section VII. The seventh section of the survey contained three focused questions including open-ended responses with the intent of providing supplemental data and allowing the
respondents the opportunity to reply to the challenges of the completion of the TE instrument as related to the evaluation of the effectiveness of SETs of students with mild disabilities. Two focus questions allowed the respondents to provide follow up information to a “yes” or “no” response. The third focus question provided the respondents an opportunity to provide any additional information they deemed important to the research study concerning their adopted TE instrument as related to the determination of the effectiveness of their SETs who teach students with mild disabilities.

Survey Development and Review

**Jury Panel.** This survey instrument was disseminated to a jury panel \( N = 13 \) of state and national subject matter experts in the field of the evaluation of special education teachers. The email asked each jury panel member to review and provide feedback on the formatting, question design, and overall usefulness regarding the consistency, readability, and face and content validity of the survey. The collective responses and feedback provided information to guide the researcher in any redesign and/or revision(s) of the survey instrument in relation to the content of the questions. Feedback from the jury panel resulted in the addition of survey questions, which examined the belief that special educators should be evaluated over the same teaching domains and skills as general education teachers.

**Pilot Testing.** Completion of the pilot testing of the survey instrument provided additional information regarding the consistency, readability, face and content validity, and to obtain an average time for completion. The pilot study provided the researcher with a small-scale trial run. A pilot study provides the researcher with potential problems or issues (Gay et al., 2006). It can also increase the likelihood of success in the research study (Simon, 2011). The researcher approached two separate school corporations in Indiana to participate in the pilot
study. The pilot study group included 37 elementary school principals, secondary school principals, assistant principals, and special education directors currently employed in two Indiana public school corporations. One school corporation responded to the pilot study. Invited participants from the second corporation did not participate in the pilot study, as permission to participate was not granted by administration at the time of the pilot testing of the survey instrument. None of the responses from the pilot study were included in the study analysis. No pilot study data were part of or reported in the research study results. The pilot group had two weeks to complete the survey. This gave participants the opportunity to provide comments related to the ease of use of the survey and to add any suggestions for improvement. Data from the pilot testing provided information regarding the use of the electronic system, any technology barriers, the time commitment required to complete the survey, and tested the analytic plan, survey distribution, and data management issues. There were no reported issues or problems with the delivery, data collection, or statistical analysis process in the pilot study. Data received from pilot study respondents was not included in this research study.

**Survey Procedures**

An electronic survey format, Qualtrics, provided by Ball State University, was used for the purposes of this survey. The Qualtrics software program provided the design, distribution, and collection of the survey data. The Qualtrics program created a link that electronically sent the survey to potential participants. It used a panel of study participants to email a letter of invitation and informed consent per IRB and electronic agreement for participation before opening the survey. If the participant selected “I agree,” he/she was directed to the survey. If the participant responded, “I decline,” he/she was thanked for his/her time and then exited Qualtrics without having access to the survey.
An electronic survey provided the researcher the opportunity to survey a specified group of administrators from the state of Indiana in an effort to have a larger number of survey respondents. A high response rate for surveys is approximately 22% (Fowler, 2014). The evaluation and subsequent determination of the effectiveness of SETs of students with mild disabilities in general education settings is a timely and critical issue that has multiple impacts on teacher retention and compensation and ultimately affects student outcomes in the state of Indiana.

The researcher contacted elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors in the state of Indiana by electronic email. The researcher sent an electronic invitation that described the identity of the researcher, provided an explanation of the study, and requested their willingness to participate. The email also provided a link for the respondent to make an informed decision regarding their decision to participate in the survey. Qualtrics sent a letter to non-respondents every ten days requesting completion of the survey. The survey opened on April 15, 2016 and closed automatically at the end of eight weeks on June 10, 2016.

Analysis

Data Analysis

The IBM Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS 24.0, 2015) analyzed responses to open-ended questions concerning the evaluation of SETs and their effectiveness and the perceptions of the level of knowledge and beliefs.

Internal Consistency. To determine internal consistency as a measure of reliability for the survey instrument items, Cronbach’s alpha was used. Levels at or above > 0.70 are considered appropriate for research purposes (Gay et al., 2006). The independent and dependent
variables used in the survey were identified and defined to provide further insight into the analysis process.

**Independent Variables.** Independent variables are behaviors or characteristics believed to influence some other behavior or characteristic and are presumed to cause, influence, or affect outcomes (Gay et al., 2006). The independent variables in this study were the teacher evaluation instruments, the REPA Indiana Standards for Educators, the CEC standards, and the position of employment in administration held by the participants. The positions were (a) elementary school principals, (b) secondary school principals, and (c) special education directors.

**Dependent Variables.** The dependent variable is the change or difference in a behavior or characteristic that occurs because of the independent variable (Gay et al., 2006). Criterion variable, effect, outcome, or posttest are additional references to the dependent variable (Creswell, 2013; Gay et al., 2006). The dependent variables in this study were the differences in the perceptions of elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors in relationship to their knowledge/understanding of PL 90 (SEA 001), the principles of IDEA 2004, their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument, the inclusion of REPA and CEC standards, and the differentiation between GETs and SETs as identified in their TE instrument.

**Statistics and Analysis**

Descriptive statistics are data analysis techniques that enable a researcher to describe numerous pieces of data with a small number of indices (Gay et al., 2006). They measure and describe demographic variables (e.g., gender, age, years of experience, employment role, employment setting, and the role of the evaluator). Interval responses included information related to age, years in their current position, and years of experience in education. The responses
all had a single choice and a coded value. Descriptive statistics include the frequency of responses, the measures of central tendency (mean, median and mode), and the standard deviation of responses, which is the most stable measure of variability (Gay et al., 2006).

The inferential statistics determined how likely samples give the same results that would have been obtained for the entire population and were analyzed using parametric or nonparametric tests (Gay et al., 2006). Parametric tests included a one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) with a posthoc Bonferroni test, given equal variance was found using Levene’s test. The ANOVA test must meet four basic assumptions (1) normally distributed data, (2) homogeneity of variance, (3) interval data, and (4) independence (Field, 2009). If equal variance was found, the researcher reported an ANOVA with an F-statistic. This compared the amount of systematic variance in the data to the unsystematic variance (Field, 2009). If equal variance of the data was not found, it was analyzed using the ANOVA Welch test, with the Tamhane 2 used as the posthoc test. In addition, if the four basic assumptions were not met in the data, the researcher used non-parametric analysis and the Kruskal-Wallis test, which reports the H statistic based upon mean ranks but was converted to a Chi-square for reporting purposes. The posthoc analysis for Kruskal-Wallis determined the differences between groups, used variable testing of each specific group (2 groups), and employed the Mann-Whitney U test as the post hoc test for this study.

Summary

Chapter three included information regarding the methods to be used in this research study. The purpose of the study, the research questions, the survey design, and the plan for analysis of the data were presented. The study used a state-based population and sample design focused on Indiana elementary school principals, secondary school public principals, and special
education directors. Information gathered from this research study is important as PL 90 (SEA 001) went into effect in 2011 and the new TE instruments were developed and approved for use by administrators in Indiana public schools in the 2012-2013 school year. This study provided needed information regarding the implementation of the new TE instruments used for the evaluation of SETs who teach students with mild disabilities in Indiana public schools.
Chapter 4 – RESULTS

Research has demonstrated that student outcomes strongly correlate with the effectiveness of their teachers (Baker et al., 2010; Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Goe, 2007; Goe et al., 2008). Empirical findings resulting from research however continue to support that there is currently no uniform national consensus or measure of SET effectiveness available to inform school districts as they move forward to revise their teacher performance evaluation practices and models (Baker et al., 2010, Blanton et al., 2006, CEC, 2012b; Holdheide et al., 2010; 2012; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014). This study investigated the perceptions of Indiana administrators’ concerning the evaluation of SETs of students with mild disabilities. The findings presented in this chapter are from the data collected through BSU Qualtrics survey software. The research is likely one of the initial studies completed in Indiana that investigated the knowledge and perceptions of elementary school principals, secondary school principals and special education directors regarding the implementation of their teacher evaluation instrument as related to SETs of students with mild disabilities following the passage of Indiana PL 90 (SEA 001) in 2011. These professionals were selected as their administrative responsibilities often include serving as the primary or secondary evaluator(s) of both general and special education teachers in their corporation or cooperative (IDOE, 2011a). The Statistical Program for the Social Sciences 24.0 (SPSS, 2015), an IBM statistical software program was used in the analysis of the study.

Data Analysis

Data from the survey were aligned to answer the six research questions used to guide the study. Analysis was completed and reported based on the respondent’s position: (a) elementary school principals, (b) secondary school principals, and (c) special education directors. The
responses should be considered exploratory. Exploratory research is often used when the topic or issue is new and the research can address questions of all types (what, why, how) (Fowler, 2009). Study results are reported by frequencies ($n$), means ($M$), and standard deviation ($SD$). Inferential statistics conducted on the Likert-type scale questions included the parametric one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Four basic assumptions must be met in reporting parametric statistics: (1) normal distribution of the independent variable data, (2) independence of subjects, (3) equal variances of groups (Levene’s Test of Homogeneity of Variances), and (4) independence (Field, 2009). The assumption of normal distribution was met using the Q-Q Plot. Results indicated populations contained normal distributions across all variables. Equal variance was checked using Levene’s tests and as a result, findings were reported with the Welch F-statistic. The posthoc Tamhane T2 test was conducted to report significant differences among the group comparisons set at the .05 significance level. The study included the use of Likert scale in questions 12–16 of the survey. The five identified points on the Likert scale were defined as: (1) strongly disagree (0-25%), (2) disagree (26-50%), (3) agree (51–75%), (4) strongly agree (76-100%), and (5) do not know (DNK). The fifth category of “DNK” responses were accounted for as descriptive data and were recoded as system missing by SPSS for the purposes of statistical analysis. Therefore, the number five (5) rating of “DNK” was not included in the statistical reporting of the Likert scale survey responses. In addition, the “DNK” responses from this study were analyzed separately to explore the lack of knowledge regarding survey items associated with this study. For reporting purposes in this dissertation, a 20.0% cut score of “DNK” responses was used to further identify any significant need(s) for additional training in identified knowledge or skill areas. Therefore, the recommendations for additional training or the
identification on no training needs associated with the “DNK” responses are limited to the study’s findings and are not generalizable to the broader population of Indiana administrators.

**Respondent Demographics**

The sampling procedure yielded 1,685 potential study participants. Invitations were sent to participants via e-mail that included a survey link in Qualtrics with 1,594 emails actually delivered. Bounced or undeliverable e-mails included those that may have been sent to a non-existent email address, an undeliverable email, a full mailbox, a blocked e-mail, an auto reply, an outlook clutter mailbox or sent to personnel who may no longer be in the position. Undeliverable emails totaled 91. Table 1 reports 837 email letters were delivered to elementary school principals with 91 completed responses received (10.8%). Six hundred and nine email letters were delivered to secondary principals with 88 completed responses received (14.4%). One hundred, forty-eight email letters were delivered to special education directors with 54 completed responses received (36.4%). Two hundred, ninety-two surveys were started (18%) however, not all included complete responses. Therefore, incomplete returned surveys (N = 33) were removed from the data set (11%). The highest single group response rate was among special education directors (36.4%) accounting for 23.1% of the total group responses. The second highest single group response rate was among secondary school principals (14.4%) accounting for 37.8% of the total group responses. The response rate among elementary school principals (10.8%) accounted for 39.0% of the 233 responses used in the data analysis. Given the exploratory research design and a total 14.6% return rate, the results of this research may not be generalized to a larger population.
Table 1

*Return Rates for Elementary School Principals, Secondary School Principals and Special Education Directors*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation Classification</th>
<th>Number Delivered</th>
<th>Number Returned</th>
<th>Return Rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School Principals</td>
<td>837</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary School Principals</td>
<td>609</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education Directors</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1594</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Percentages represent data reported by category.

**Demographics**

Section II of the survey contained 10 questions designed to collect demographic data from each respondent. Table 2 reports the demographic data identifying specific characteristics. Females accounted for 51.5% of all survey participants and included 120 respondents in the following categories: elementary school principals (n = 53), secondary school principals (n = 23) and special education directors (n = 44). Males accounted for 48.5% of all survey participants and included 113 respondents in the following categories: elementary school principals (n = 38), secondary school principals (n = 65), and special education directors (n = 10). The largest age range of respondents was 41-50 (39.9%) Secondary school principals represented 48.9% and elementary school principals represented 37.4% of the population in this age group. The second largest range of respondents was 51-60 (29.2%) and 31-40 represented the third largest age range of respondents totaling 47 (20.2%). Only three total respondents were under the age of 31 years (1.3%) and included one elementary school principal and two special education directors. One hundred thirty seven of the total respondents (58.8%) including 55 elementary school principals (60.4%), 50 secondary school principals (56.8%), and 32 special education directors (59.3%) held master’s degrees. Fifty–two respondents (22.3%) held an Ed.S degree including 15
elementary school principals (16.5%), 25 secondary school principals (28.4%), and 12 special education directors (22.2%). Thirty-eight total respondents (16.3%) held a Ph.D. / Ed.D including 19 elementary school principals (20.9%), ten secondary school principals (11.4%), and 9 special education directors (16.7%). Seventy-two of the respondents across all categories (35.8%) had been in their current position between three and five years. Forty-nine total respondents (25.9%) were in their position between 6-10 years and represented equally across all three categories. One hundred thirty-eight total respondents (59.5%) including 57 elementary school principals, 49 secondary school principals, and 32 special education directors had all been in the field of education for 20+ years. Only seven respondents including one elementary school principal, two secondary school principals, and three special education directors (3.0%) had ten or less total years in education. The majority of respondents \( N = 119 \) reported working in rural educational settings (51%). The second largest category of total respondents \( N = 58 \) reported working in suburban educational settings (24.9%). One hundred and seventeen respondents \( (50.4\%) \) identified the size of their cooperation/cooperative as medium \((1,000 – 4,999)\) students, and 50 total respondents identified their cooperation/cooperative as large \((10,000+)\) students \( (21.5\%) \) and were equally represented across all three categories.
Table 2

Demographics Reported by Position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>73.9</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>44</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>54</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 - 30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61+</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA/BS</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA/MS</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ed.S.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph.D./Ed.D.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
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<td>88</td>
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<td>54</td>
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<tr>
<td>Years in Current Position</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1 year</td>
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<td>1-2 years</td>
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<td>11.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>16-20 years</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Years in Current Corporation/Cooperative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Years in Education</td>
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<td>11-15 years</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>13.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>3-5 years</td>
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<td>13.3</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-15 years</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>16-20 years</td>
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<td>20+ years</td>
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<td>99.9</td>
<td>88</td>
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<td>12.5</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>53.4</td>
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<td>88</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>54</td>
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</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Size of Cooperation/Cooperative</th>
<th>Large: 10,000+</th>
<th>Medium-Large: 5,000-9,999</th>
<th>Medium: 1,000-4,999</th>
<th>Small: &lt;1,000</th>
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<td>42</td>
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<td></td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>46.2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>47</td>
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<td>88</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>52.8</td>
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<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Percentages represent data reported by category.

The respondents were asked to identify their role in the evaluation of SETs. The options of (a) primary evaluator, (b) secondary evaluator, or (c) do not evaluate teachers were provided. Primary evaluators are responsible for collecting evidence themselves and reviewing evidence collected by any secondary evaluator. A secondary evaluator may supplement the work of the
primary evaluator by conducting observations, providing feedback or gathering evidence of student learning (IDOE, 2014). Table 3 reports a total of 178 respondents (76.4%) including 82 elementary school principals (90.1%), 68 secondary school principals, (77.3%), and 28 special education directors (51.9%) served in the role of primary evaluator of SETs in their corporation/coordinate. A total of 39 respondents (16.7%) including five elementary school principals (5.5%), 17 secondary school principals, (19.3%) and 17 special education directors (31.5%) served in the role of secondary evaluator of SETs in their corporation/cooperative. Sixteen total respondents (6.9%) including four elementary school principals (4.4%), three secondary school principals (3.4%), and nine special education directors (16.7%) indicated that they were not responsible for the evaluation of SETs in their corporation/cooperative.

Table 3

How would you describe your administrative role in the evaluation of special education teachers?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n (%)</td>
<td>n (%)</td>
<td>n (%)</td>
<td>n (%)</td>
<td>N (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary evaluator</td>
<td>82 (90.1)</td>
<td>68 (77.3)</td>
<td>28 (51.9)</td>
<td>178 (76.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary evaluator</td>
<td>5 (5.5)</td>
<td>17 (19.3)</td>
<td>17 (31.5)</td>
<td>39 (16.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not responsible for</td>
<td>4 (4.4)</td>
<td>3 (3.4)</td>
<td>9 (16.7)</td>
<td>16 (6.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teacher evaluation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>91 (100)</td>
<td>88 (100)</td>
<td>54 (100)</td>
<td>233 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Percentages represent data reported by category.
Research Questions

Chapter 1 outlined the six research questions for this study. The findings are presented below. The quantitative portion of the survey answered the six research questions. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze the differences among the three identified group means concerning: (a) their corporation/cooperative’s teacher evaluation (TE) instrument, (b) professional standards for both general education teachers (GETs) and special education teachers (SETs), (c) differences in training, (d) differences in responsibilities of GETs and SETs, and (e) their beliefs regarding the effectiveness of their TE instrument as related to the determination of the effectiveness of SETs. Qualitative analysis was conducted on three open-ended questions regarding beliefs pertaining to the effectiveness of their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument used to assess GETs and SETs, and any additional comments deemed important by the respondent regarding the evaluation of SETs in their corporation/cooperative. Central themes were identified and data reported for open-ended responses among elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors.

Research Question 1

Are there differences in the level of knowledge between elementary school principals, secondary principals and special education directors regarding Indiana PL 90 (SEA 001) and their corporation/cooperative’s teacher evaluation instrument used for special education teachers?

Survey section IV, questions 12a-b addressed the respondent’s knowledge of PL 90 (SEA 001) regarding teacher evaluation requirements. This survey question required respondents to answer one of the following: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree, or do not know (DKN). The “DNK” responses were collected to provide the researcher with an overall
perspective of a lack of knowledge concerning the mandates in PL 90 (SEA 001) which identifies the guidelines and required components of the teacher evaluation system (IDOE, 2012). Table 4 reports the percentage of respondents who answered “DNK”. Two elementary school principals (2.2%), four secondary school principals (4.5%) and one special education director (1.9%) responded “DNK”. Based on the “DNK” ratings for the respondents on this survey item ($N = 7; 3.0\%$), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.

Table 4

"Do Not Know” responses concerning perceptions of knowledge of PL 90 (SEA 001) and their corporation/cooperative’s teacher evaluation instrument

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL 90 (SEA 001) regarding teacher evaluation (TE) requirements</td>
<td>2 2.2</td>
<td>4 4.5</td>
<td>1 1.9</td>
<td>7 3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>our corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument</td>
<td>1 1.1</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>1 1.9</td>
<td>2 0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Percentages represent data reported by category and "Do Not Know” responses.

Table 4 also indicates one elementary school principal (1.1%) and one special education director (1.9%) indicated they do not have comprehensive knowledge of their corporation/cooperative’s teacher evaluation instrument. Based on the “DNK” ratings for the respondents on this survey item ($N = 2; 0.9\%$), most
respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.

Table 5 represents the perceptions of knowledge of PL 90 (SEA 001) which identifies the guidelines and required components of Indiana’s TE system and knowledge of their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument. Respondents agreed ($M = 3.19 – 3.44$) that they had comprehensive knowledge of PL 90 (SEA 001) regarding TE requirements. There was no significant difference reported ($F = 2.52, df = 2, p > .05$) among the respondents. Respondents agreed or strongly agreed ($M = 3.55 – 3.78$) that they had comprehensive knowledge of their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument. A significant difference was reported ($F = 4.09, df = 2, p < .05$). The effect size (.20) was small. The Tamhane 2 posthoc test (.232) found that elementary school principals had higher ratings, indicating more agreement that they had comprehensive knowledge of their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument compared to secondary school principals ($p < .05$). There were no other significant differences reported among groups.
Table 5

*Perceptions of knowledge of Indiana PL 90 (SEA 001) and their corporation/cooperative’s teacher evaluation instrument by position*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Welch</th>
<th>Cohen's D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>132.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
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<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>0.15</td>
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<tr>
<td>SD</td>
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<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have comprehensive knowledge of...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL 90 (SEA 001) regarding teacher evaluation requirements</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>4.09*</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>our corporation/cooperative's TE instrument</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>3.68</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001*
Respondents were asked to identify the TE instrument that most closely represents their corporation/cooperative by category. The following options included: (a) Indiana’s RISE Model, (b) Modified RISE, (c) Teacher Advancement Program (TAP), (d) Peer Assistance and Review (PAR), (e) a locally created TE instrument, and (f) Other. Table 6 reports that the Modified RISE evaluation instrument ($N = 128$) was the most common response (54.9%). A locally created TE instrument ($n = 48$) received the second highest response (20.6%). Indiana’s RISE Model ($n = 31$) received the third highest response (13.3%). The total responses of other ($N = 15$) received the fourth highest response (6.4%). The responses of other included Marzano ($n = 7$), Danielson ($n = 4$), and McRel ($n = 4$).

Table 6

Identify the teacher evaluation instrument that most closely represents your corporation/ cooperate’s teacher evaluation instrument

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana’s RISE Model</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>14.8</td>
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<td>Modified RISE</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>56.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAP: Teacher Advancement Program</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAR: Peer Assistance and Review</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locally created TE Instrument</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>4.4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Percentages represent data reported by category.*
Research Question 2

What are the differences in the training requirements of elementary school principals, secondary principals, and special education administrators who evaluate special education teachers of students with mild disabilities?

Respondents were asked about the training requirements as related to the use of their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument. Survey section VI, question 31 asked if training in the use of its TE instrument for both GETs and SETs is a requirement in their corporation/cooperative. Question 31 was a skip logic question. Skip logic allowed the respondents to move forward based upon their response of “Yes,” “No,” or “DNK.” Table 7 reports 68 elementary school principals (74.7%), 56 secondary school principals (63.6%), and 40 special education directors (74.1%) answered “Yes” that their corporation/cooperative requires training in the use of the TE instrument for both GETs and SETs. If the respondents answered “Yes” (N = 164; 70.4%) to question 31 they were directed to answer questions 32 - 35 which further inquired about the training they received. Twenty-two elementary school principals (24.2%), 29 secondary school principals (33%), and ten special education directors (18.5%) answered “No” that their corporation/cooperative does not require training in the use of its TE instrument for both GETs and SETs. If the respondents answered “No” (N = 61; 26.2%) to question 31 they skipped to survey section VII, question 36 which inquired about the effectiveness of their TE instrument in teacher evaluation. Eight total respondents (3.4%) including one elementary principal (1.1%), three secondary school principals (3.4%), and four special education directors (7.4%) answered “DNK” that their corporation/cooperative does not require training in the use of its teacher evaluation instrument for both GETs and SETs. Respondents who answered “DNK” to question 3, also skipped to survey section VII question 36.
Table 7

"Yes," "No," and "Do Not Know" responses concerning training requirements in the use of their teacher evaluation instrument for the assessment of general and special teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does your corporation/cooperative require training in the use of its teacher evaluation instrument for both general and special education teachers?</th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>63.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
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<td>1.1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Percentages represent data reported by category and "Yes," "No," and "Do Not Know" responses.
Respondents who answered “Yes” to question 31 were directed to question 32 and asked to further identify the type of training required by their corporation/cooperative in the implementation of their TE instrument. The respondents were directed to select from the following: (a) State-Initiated Standard for Success Training (SFS), (b) Indiana Teacher Appraisal and Support System Training (INTASS), (c) corporation training, (d) cooperative training or (e) other. Table 8 reports corporation training \((n = 72)\) was the most common response. SFS Training \((n = 46)\) received the second highest response \((28.2\%)\) and the response of other \((n = 19)\) received the third highest response rate \((11.7\%)\). The responses of other included RISE training \((n = 5)\), multiple source training \((n = 5)\), TAP training \((n = 3)\) and NEIT certification \((n = 3)\).

Table 8

What type of training have you had in the implementation of your corporation/cooperative’s teacher evaluation instrument?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Initiated Standards for Success Training (SFS)</td>
<td>22 32.4</td>
<td>12 21</td>
<td>12 30.8</td>
<td>46 28.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana Teacher Appraisal and Support System Training (INTASS)</td>
<td>2 2.9</td>
<td>6 11</td>
<td>2 5.1</td>
<td>10 6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporation Training</td>
<td>34 50</td>
<td>26 46</td>
<td>12 30.8</td>
<td>72 44.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative Training</td>
<td>4 5.9</td>
<td>7 13</td>
<td>5 12.8</td>
<td>16 9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6 8.8</td>
<td>5 8.9</td>
<td>8 20.5</td>
<td>19 11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>68 100</td>
<td>56 100</td>
<td>39 100</td>
<td>163 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Percentages represent data reported by category.
Survey section VI, question 33 asked if the training they received included the unique responsibilities of SETs. Table 9 reports 14 elementary school principals (20.6%), 17 secondary school principals (30.4%), and 12 special education directors (30.8%) answered “Yes” the training included the unique responsibilities of SETs. Forty-nine elementary principals (72.1%), 32 secondary school principals (57.1%), and 27 special education directors (69.2%) answered “No” their corporation/cooperative did not include the unique responsibilities of SETs. Five elementary school principals (7.4%), seven secondary school principals (12.5%) and zero special education directors answered “DNK” that their corporation/cooperative included the unique responsibilities of SETs. Survey section VI, question 34 asked if their training included elements of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), (2012) Knowledge and Skill Professional Standards for SETs. Five elementary school principals (7.4%), 11 secondary school principals (19.6%), and four special education directors (10.3%) answered “Yes” training included elements of the CEC, (2012) Knowledge and Skill Professional Standards for SETs. Fifty elementary school principals (73.5%), 30 secondary school principals (53.6%), and 28 special education directors (71.8%) answered “No” their corporation/cooperative did not include elements of the CEC, (2012) Knowledge and Skill Professional Standards for SETs. Thirteen elementary school principals (19.1%), 15 secondary school principals (26.8%), and seven special education directors (17.9%) answered “DNK” their corporation/cooperative included elements of the CEC, (2012) Knowledge and Skill Professional Standards for SETs (see Table 9).
Table 9

"Yes," "No," and "Do Not Know" responses concerning the inclusion of the unique responsibilities of special education teachers in their teacher evaluation training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did this training include the unique responsibilities of SETs?</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>72.1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Did this training include elements of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), (2012) Knowledge and Skill Professional Standards for SETs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>71.8</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>66.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Percentages represent data reported by category and "Yes," "No," and "Do Not Know" responses.
Survey Section VI, question 35 asked respondents to identify the location of the training required by the corporation/cooperative in the implementation of their TE instrument.

Respondents selected from the following options: (a) corporation, (b) cooperative, (c) state onsite training, (d) state web based training, and (e) other. Table 10 reports corporation training \((n = 81)\) was the most common response \((49.7\%)\). Cooperative training \((n = 36)\) received the second highest response \((22.1\%)\), and the response of other \((n = 24)\) received the third highest response rate \((14.7\%)\). Other responses included on the job training/experience \((n = 7)\) and higher education \((n = 3)\) as training. Ten respondents reported they did not receive special education training and three reported there is no difference between GETs and SETs regarding evaluation. Web-based training received the lowest number of total responses \((n = 8; 4.9\%)\) indicating this may be an underutilized training resource in Indiana.

Table 10

*Where did you receive training in the unique responsibilities of special education teachers?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporation</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State On-Site Training</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Web Based Training</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Responses</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Percentages represent data reported by category.
Survey section VII, question 43 asked all respondents about their beliefs regarding benefits from additional training in the unique responsibilities of SETs as identified in CEC, (2012) Knowledge and Skill Professional Standards pertaining to the evaluation of SETs of students with mild disabilities. Table 11 reports 73 elementary school principals (81.1%), 76 secondary school principals (86.4%), and 41 special education directors (78.8%) answered “Yes” they would benefit from additional training in the unique responsibilities of SETs as identified in CEC, (2012) Knowledge and Skill Professional Standards pertaining to the evaluation of SETs of students with mild disabilities. Seventeen elementary school principals (18.9%), 12 secondary school principals (13.6%), and 11 special education directors (21.2%) answered “No” they would not benefit from additional training in the unique responsibilities of SETs as identified in CEC, (2012) professional standards pertaining to the evaluation of SETs who teach students with mild disabilities. Results indicate the majority of respondents across all three categories (N = 190), approximately 83% expressed the desire for additional training in the unique responsibilities of SETs as identified in CEC, (2012) Knowledge and Skill Professional Standards pertaining to the evaluation of SETs of students with mild disabilities.
Table 11

"Yes" and "No" responses concerning additional training in the use of their teacher evaluation instrument

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you believe you would benefit from additional training in the unique responsibilities of SETs as identified in the CEC (2012) professional standards as it pertains to the evaluation of SETs who teach students with mild disabilities?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>86.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Percentages represent data reported by category and "Yes" and "No" responses.*
Research Question 3

Are there differences between elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors in their level of knowledge concerning their ability to identify the differences in the responsibilities of general education teachers and special education teachers who teach students with mild disabilities?

Survey section IV, question 13a-c addressed the respondent’s knowledge of the following: (a) IDEA 2004, the federal law that ensures education services to students with disabilities across the nation; (b) IDEA’s principle of LRE regarding the right for a student with mild disabilities as appropriate to receive instruction in the general education setting; and (c) the components of an IEP and the SET’s responsibilities in its implementation for students with mild disabilities. Questions concerning IDEA’s principle of the LRE were included as evaluators should be knowledgeable of the responsibilities of both GETs and SETs to ensure FAPE for SWD in general education settings. This survey question required respondents to answer one of the following: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree, or not know. The “DNK” responses were collected to provide the researcher with an overall perspective of a lack of knowledge concerning IDEA 2004 and its principles for students with disabilities. Table 12 reports the percentage of respondents who answered DNK. Two elementary school principals (2.2%), four secondary school principals (4.5%) and one special education director (1.9%) responded “DNK” to their knowledge of IDEA regarding the responsibilities of SETs of students with mild disabilities. Given the total respondents who answered “DNK” (N = 7; 3.0%) additional training is not indicated in this area. Table 12 also indicates one elementary school principal (1.1%) and one special education director (1.9%) who do not have comprehensive knowledge of IDEA’s principle of LRE for students with disabilities. Given the total respondents
who answered “DNK” ($N = 2; 0.9\%$) additional training is not indicated in this area. Only one elementary teacher (1.1\%) responded “DNK” to having comprehensive knowledge of IDEA’s principle of an IEP for students with disabilities. Given the total respondents who answered “DNK” on this survey item ($N = 1; 0.4\%$), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.

Table 12

"Do Not Know" responses concerning perceptions of knowledge related to IDEA 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents’ "Do Not Know” responses to comprehensive knowledge of...

IDEA 2004 regarding the responsibilities of special education teachers (SETs) of students with mild disabilities.

|                           | 2 | 2.2 | 4 | 4.5 | 1 | 1.9 | 7 | 3.0 |

IDEA’s principle of the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and the right for a student with mild disabilities as appropriate to receive instruction in the general education setting.

|                           | 1 | 1.1 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 1.9 | 2 | 0.9 |

the components of an IEP and the SET’s responsibilities in its implementation for students with mild disabilities.

|                           | 1 | 1.1 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 0.4 |

Note. Percentages represent data reported by category and "Do Not Know" responses.

Table 13 represents the perceptions of knowledge of the following: (a) IDEA 2004 regarding the responsibilities of SETs of students with mild disabilities, (b) IDEA’s principle of
the LRE and the right for a student with mild disabilities as appropriate to receive instruction in the general education setting, and (c) the components of an IEP and the SET’s responsibilities in its implementation for students with mild disabilities in general education settings. Respondents agreed ($M = 3.14 – 3.87$) that they had comprehensive knowledge of IDEA regarding the responsibilities of SETs of students with mild disabilities. There was a significant difference reported between groups of respondents ($F= 44.59, df = 2, p < .001$). The effect size (.54) was large. The Tamhane 2 posthoc test (.341) identified that elementary school principals had a higher rating thus indicating more agreement in their comprehensive knowledge of IDEA 2004 regarding the responsibilities of SETs of students with mild disabilities compared to secondary principals ($p < .05$). The Tamhane 2 posthoc test (.393) identified special education directors had a higher rating, indicating more agreement in their comprehensive knowledge of IDEA 2004 regarding the responsibilities of SETs of students with mild disabilities compared to elementary school principals ($p < .05$). The Tamhane 2 posthoc test (.734) identified that special education directors had a higher rating, indicating more agreement in their comprehensive knowledge of IDEA 2004 regarding the responsibilities of SETs of students with mild disabilities compared to secondary school principals ($p < .05$). Respondents agreed ($M = 3.44 – 3.68$) that they have comprehensive knowledge of IDEA’s principle of the LRE and the right for a student with mild disabilities as appropriate to receive instruction in the general education setting. There was a significant difference reported between groups of respondents ($F= 28.36, df = 2, p < .001$). The effect size (.39) was medium. The Tamhane 2 posthoc test (.238) identified elementary school principals had a higher rating, indicating more agreement in their comprehensive knowledge of IDEA’s principle of the LRE and the right for a student with mild disabilities as appropriate to receive instruction in the general education setting compared to secondary school principals.
(\(p < .05\)). The Tamhane 2 posthoc test (.263) identified special education directors had a higher rating, indicating more agreement in their comprehensive knowledge of IDEA’s principle of the LRE and the right for a student with mild disabilities as appropriate to receive instruction in the general education setting compared to elementary school principals (\(p < .05\)). The Tamhane 2 posthoc test (.501) identified special education directors had a higher rating, indicating more agreement in their comprehensive knowledge of IDEA’s principle of the LRE and the right for a student with mild disabilities as appropriate to receive instruction in the general education setting compared to secondary school principals (\(p < .05\)). Respondents agreed (\(M = 3.43 – 3.98\)) that they have comprehensive knowledge of the components of an IEP and the SET’s responsibilities in its implementation for students with mild disabilities in general education settings. There was a significant difference reported between groups of respondents (\(F = 50.56, df = 2, p < .001\)). The effect size (.46) was large. The Tamhane 2 posthoc test (.239) identified elementary school principals had a higher rating, indicating more agreement in their comprehensive knowledge of the components of an IEP and the SET’s responsibilities in its implementation for students with mild disabilities in general education settings compared to secondary school principals (\(p < .05\)). The Tamhane 2 posthoc test (.311) identified special education directors had a higher rating, indicating more agreement in their comprehensive knowledge of the components of an IEP and the SET’s responsibilities in its implementation for students with mild disabilities in general education settings compared to elementary school principals (\(p < .05\)). The Tamhane 2 posthoc test (.550) identified special education directors had a higher rating, indicating more agreement in their comprehensive knowledge of the components of an IEP and the SET’s responsibilities in its implementation for students with mild disabilities in general education settings compared to secondary school principals (\(p < .05\)).
Table 13

Perceptions of knowledge of IDEA 2004 as it relates to the responsibilities of special education teachers of students with mild disabilities in general education settings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Welch F</th>
<th>Cohen's f</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have comprehensive knowledge of...</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEA 2004 regarding the responsibilities of special education teachers (SETs) of students with mild disabilities.</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEA's principle of the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and the right for a student with mild disabilities as appropriate to receive instruction in the general education setting.</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the components of an IEP and the SET's responsibilities in its implementation for students with mild disabilities in general education settings.

| Value | 91 | 3.67 | 0.47 | 88 | 3.43 | 0.65 | 54 | 3.98 | 0.14 | 233 | 3.65 | 0.50 | 2 | 138.79 | 50.56*** | 0.46 |

*Note. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.*
Survey section VI, question 20 addressed the respondent’s knowledge of the assessment of both GETs and SETs using the four domains including the following: (1) instructional planning, (2) effective instruction, (3) leadership, and (4) core professionalism. The Indiana RISE Model for teacher evaluation outlined these four domains and identified related competencies in domains 1-3. Domain 4 reflects the non-negotiable aspects of a teacher’s job (IDOE, 2012). Question 20 is a skip logic question. Skip logic allowed the respondent to move forward based upon the response of “Yes,” “No,” or “DNK.” Table 14 reports 77 elementary school principals (84.6%), 80 secondary school principals (90.9%), and 45 special education directors (83.3%) answered “Yes” they assess both GETs and SETs using the four domains identified above. If the respondents answered “Yes” ($N = 202; \ 86.7\%$) to question 20, they were directed to answer questions 21-24 which further inquired about each of the individual four domains in their TE instrument. Thirteen elementary school principals (14.3%), eight secondary school principals (9.1%), and eight special education directors (14.8%) answered “No” they do not assess both GETs and SETs using the same four domains identified above. If the respondents answered “No” ($N = 29; \ 12.4\%$) to question 20, they skipped to questions 25-28 which further inquired about each of the individual four domains in their TE instrument. One elementary principal, (1.1%), zero secondary school principals (0.0%), and one special education director (.04%) answered “DNK”. If the respondents answered “DNK” ($N = 2; \ 0.9\%$) to question 20, they skipped to survey question 29 which inquired about the professional standards included in their TE instrument.
Table 14

"Yes," “No,” and "Do Not Know" responses concerning the evaluation of general and special education teachers using the four domains of (1) instructional planning (2) effective instruction (3) leadership and (4) core professionalism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you assess for general and special education teachers using the 4 domains of (1) instructional planning (2) effective instruction (3) leadership (4) core professionalism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>84.6</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>90.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Percentages represent data reported by category and "Yes," "No," and "Do Not Know" responses.
Table 15 represents the “Yes” responses to question 20, which inquired if they assessed for GETs and SETs using the four (4) domains of (1) instructional planning, (2) effective instruction, (3) leadership, and (4) core professionalism. Sixty-five elementary school principals (84.4%), 68 secondary school principals (85.0%), and 32 special education directors (71.1%) answered “Yes” they assess both GETs and SETs using the same domain 1 (instructional planning). Ten elementary school principals (13.0%), ten secondary school principals (12.5%), and 11 special education directors (24.4%) answered “No” they do not assess both GETs and SETs using the same domain 1 (instructional planning). Two elementary school principals (1.0%), two secondary school principals (1.0%), and two special education directors (1.0%) answered “DNK” to this inquiry. Given the total respondents who answered “DNK” (N = 6; 3.0%), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.

Sixty elementary school principals (77.9%), 66 secondary school principals (82.5%), and 34 special education directors (75.6%) answered “Yes” they assess both GETs and SETs using the same domain 2 (effective instruction). Fifteen elementary school principals (19.5%), 13 secondary school principals (16.3%), and nine special education directors (20.0%) answered “No” they do not assess both GETs and SETs using the same domain 2 (effective instruction). Two elementary school principals (2.6%), one secondary school principal (1.3%), and two special education directors (1.0%) answered “DNK” to this inquiry. Given the total respondents who answered “DNK” (N = 5; 2.5%), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.

Seventy elementary school principals (90.9%), 73 secondary school principals (91.3%), and 35 special education directors (77.8%) answered “Yes” they assess both GETs and SETs
using the same domain 3 (leadership). Five elementary school principals (6.5%), six secondary school principals (7.5%), and eight special education directors (17.8%) answered “No” they do not assess both GETs and SETs using the same domain 3 (leadership). Two elementary school principals (2.6%), one secondary school principal (1.3%), and 2 special education directors (4.4%) answered “DNK” to this inquiry. Given the total respondents who answered “DNK” (N = 5; 2.5%), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.

Seventy-two elementary school principals (93.5%), 75 secondary school principals (93.8%), and 41 special education directors (91.1%) answered “Yes” they assess both GETs and SETs using the same domain 4 (core professionalism). Two elementary school principals (2.6%), one secondary school principals (1.3%), and two special education directors (4.4%) answered “No” they do not assess both GETs and SETs using the same domain 4 (core professionalism). Two elementary school principals (2.6%), one secondary school principal (1.3%), and two special education directors (4.4%) answered “DNK” to this inquiry. Given the total respondents who answered “DNK” (N = 5; 2.5%), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.
Table 15

"Yes" responses concerning the evaluation of general and special education teachers using the four domains of (1) instructional planning (2) effective instruction (3) leadership and (4) core professionalism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you assess special education teachers (SETs) using the same domain 1 (instructional planning) as general education teachers (GETs)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>84.4</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>85.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you assess SETs using the same domain 2 (effective instruction) as GETs?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>77.9</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>82.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you assess SETs using the same domain 3 (leadership) as GETs?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>91.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you assess SETs using the same domain 4 (core professionalism) as GETs?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>93.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Percentages represent data reported by category and "Yes," "No," and "Do Not Know" responses.
The “No” responses to question 20 which inquired if they assessed for GETs and SETs using the four (4) domains of (1) instructional planning, (2) effective instruction, (3) leadership, and (4) core professionalism are reported in Table 16. Of the total 29 “No” responses to question 20, when further asked if they assess both GETs and SETs using the same domain 1 (instructional planning) ten elementary school principals (76.9%), eight secondary school principals (100%), and six special education directors (75%) answered “Yes.” Three elementary school principals (23.1%), zero secondary school principals (0.0%), and zero special education directors (0.0%) answered “No” they do not assess both GETs and SETs using the same domain 1 (instructional planning). Zero elementary school principals (0.0%), zero secondary school principals (0.0%), and two special education directors (25.0%) answered “DNK” they assess both GETs and SETs using the same domain 1 (instructional planning). Given the total respondents who answered “DNK” (N = 2; 6.9%), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.

Twelve elementary school principals (92.3%), eight secondary school principals (100%), and six special education directors (75.0%) answered “Yes” they assess both GETs and SETs using the same domain 2 (effective instruction). One elementary school principal (7.7%), zero secondary school principals (0.0%), and zero special education directors (1.0%) answered “No” they do not assess both GETs and SETs using the same domain 2 (effective instruction). Zero elementary school principals (0.0%), zero secondary school principals (0.0%), and two special education directors (1.0%) answered “DNK” they assess both GETs and SETs using the same domain 2 (effective instruction). Given the total respondents who answered “DNK” (N = 2;
3.4%), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.

Nine elementary school principals (69.2%), five secondary school principals (62.5%), and five special education directors (62.5%) answered “Yes” they assess both GETs and SETs using the same domain 3 (leadership). Four elementary school principals (30.8%), two secondary school principals (25.0%), and one special education director (12.5%) answered “No” they do not assess both GETs and SETs using the same domain 3 (leadership). Zero elementary school principals (0.0%), one secondary school principal (12.5%), and two special education directors (25.0%) answered “DNK” they assess both GETs and SETs using the same domain 3 (leadership). Given the total respondents who answered “DNK” ($N = 3; 10.3$%), additional training is not indicated in this area.

Seven elementary school principals (53.8%), five secondary school principals (62.5%), and five special education directors (62.5%) answered “Yes” they assess both GETs and SETs using the same domain 4 (core professionalism). Three elementary school principals (23.1%), two secondary school principals (25.0%), and one special education directors (25.0%) answered “No” they do not assess both GETs and SETs using the same domain 4 (core professionalism). Three elementary school principals (23.1%), one secondary school principal (12.5%), and 2 special education directors (25.0%) answered “DNK” they assess both GETs and SETs using the same domain 4 (core professionalism). Given the total respondents who answered “DNK” ($N = 6; 20.7$%), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.
Table 16

"No" responses concerning the evaluation of general and special education teachers using the four domains of (1) instructional planning (2) effective instruction (3) leadership and (4) core professionalism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you assess special education teachers (SETs) using the same domain 1 (instructional planning) as general education teachers (GETs)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td>82.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you assess SETs using the same domain 2 (effective instruction) as GETs?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td>89.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you assess SETs using the same domain 3 (leadership) as GETs?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>65.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Percentages represent data reported by category and "Yes," "No," and "Do Not Know" responses.
Survey Section VII Question 42 asked all participants if they are confident in their knowledge and ability to determine the effectiveness of SETs of students with mild disabilities. Table 17 reports a total of 206 respondents (89.6%), including 81 elementary school principals (90.0%), 79 secondary school principals (89.8%), and 46 special education directors (88.5%), answered “Yes” they are confident in their knowledge and ability to determine the effectiveness of SETs of students with mild disabilities. Twenty-four total respondents (10.4%), including nine elementary school principals (10.0%), nine secondary school principals (10.2%), and six special education directors (11.5%), answered “No” they are not confident in their knowledge and ability to determine the effectiveness of SETs of students with mild disabilities.

Table 17

Responses concerning beliefs of knowledge related to ability to determine the effectiveness of special education teachers of students with mild disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you confident in your knowledge and ability to determine the effectiveness of special education teachers of students with mild disabilities?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Percentages represent data reported by category and “Yes” and "No" responses.
Research Question 4

Do elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors believe it is important to differentiate between general education teachers and special education teachers on their teacher evaluation instrument?

Survey section V, question 16b-d addressed the respondent’s beliefs of the following: (b) SETs require specialized/unique knowledge and skills to provide instruction for students with mild disabilities, (c) SETs should be evaluated using a differentiated/modified evaluation instrument from the TE instrument used with GETs, and (d) specialized training in the unique responsibilities of SETs of students with mild disabilities should be a requirement in our corporation/cooperative. Results of survey questions 16a and 16e are reported under research question 6 located in Tables 27-30 (p.144, 146, 148, and 150) as they addressed the respondent’s beliefs of the validity of the criteria included in their TE instrument in determining the effectiveness of a SETs and did not concern the differentiation between GETs and SETs. Survey questions 16b-d required respondents to answer one of the following: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree, or do not know (DNK). Table 18 reports the percentage of respondents who answered “DNK” to questions concerning perceptions of beliefs related to the differentiation in the evaluation of general and special education teachers. Four elementary school principals (4.4%), nine secondary school principals (10.2%), and three special education directors (5.6%) responded “DNK” that SETs require specialized/unique knowledge and skills to provide instruction for students with mild disabilities. Given the total respondents who answered “DNK” (N =16; 6.9%), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.
Six elementary school principals (6.6%), ten secondary school principals (11.4%), and three special education directors (5.6%) responded “DNK” that SETs should be evaluated using a differentiated/modified evaluation instrument from the TE instrument used with GETs. Given the total respondents who answered “DNK” ($N = 19; 8.2\%$), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.

Six elementary school principals (6.6%), seven secondary school principals (8.0%), and three special education directors (5.6%) responded “DNK” to specialized training in the unique responsibilities of SETs of students with mild disabilities should be a requirement in our corporation/cooperative. Given the total respondents who answered “DNK” ($N = 16; 6.9\%$), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.
Table 18

"Do Not Know" responses concerning perceptions of beliefs related to the differentiation in the evaluation of general and special education teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special education teachers (SETs) require specialized/unique knowledge and skills to provide instruction for students with mild disabilities.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SETs should be evaluated using a differentiated/modified evaluation instrument from the TE instrument used with general education teachers (GETs).</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized training in the unique responsibilities of SETs who teach students with mild disabilities should be a requirement in our corporation / cooperative.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Percentages represent data reported by category and "Do Not Know" responses.

Table 19 reports responses from survey question 16b-d concerning perceptions of beliefs regarding differentiation of GETs and SETs including the following: (b) SETs require specialized / unique knowledge and skills to provide instruction for students with mild disabilities, (c) SETs should be evaluated using a differentiate/modified evaluation instrument from the TE instrument used with GETs, and (d) specialized training in the unique responsibilities of SETs who teach students with mild disabilities should be a requirement in our corporation/cooperative. Results of survey questions 16a and 16e are reported under research.
question six located in tables 27-30 (p.144, 146, 148 and 150). Respondents agreed ($M = 3.30–3.40$) in the belief that SETs require specialized/unique knowledge and skills to provide instruction for students with mild disabilities. No significant difference was reported between groups of respondents ($F = 1.99, df = 2, p > .05$). Respondents agreed ($M = 3.10 – 3.30$) in the belief that SETs should be evaluated using a differentiated/modified evaluation instrument from the TE instrument used with GETs. No significant difference was reported between groups of respondents ($F = 0.58, df = 2, p > .05$). Respondents agreed ($M = 3.16 – 3.30$) in the belief that specialized training in the unique responsibilities of SETs who teach students with mild disabilities should be a requirement in our corporation/cooperative. No significant difference was reported among respondents ($F = 1.51, df = 2, p > .05$).
Table 19

_Perceptions of beliefs concerning differentiation in the evaluation of general and special education teachers_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Welch</th>
<th>Cohen's</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>special education teachers (SETs) require specialized/unique knowledge and skills to provide instruction for students with mild disabilities.</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SETs should be evaluated using a differentiated/modified evaluation instrument from the TE instrument used with general education teachers (GETs).</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
specialized training in
the unique
responsibilities of
SETs who teach
students with mild
disabilities should be
a requirement in our
corporation/cooperative.

|       | 85 | 3.3 | 0.62 | 81 | 3.16 | 0.6 | 51 | 3.3 | 0.67 | 217 | 3.3 | 1 | 2 | 124 | 1.51 | 0.12 |

*Note.* *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.*
Survey Section VI, questions 18 and 19 concerned the similarities and differences of the TE instrument used for the assessment of GETs and SETs. Required response options included “Yes”, “No”, and “DNK”. Table 20 reports 68 elementary school principals (74.7%), 64 secondary school principals (72.7%), and 35 special education directors (64.8%) answered “Yes” their corporation/cooperative uses the same TE instrument for all teachers including GETs and SETs. Twenty-three elementary school principals (25.3%), 24 secondary school principals (27.3%), and 18 special education directors (33.3%) answered “No” their corporation/cooperative does not use the same TE instrument for all teachers including GETs and SETs. Zero school principals (0.0%), zero secondary school principals (0.0%), and one special education director (1.9%) answered “DNK” their corporation/cooperative uses the same TE instrument for all teachers including GETs and SETs. Given the total respondents who answered “DNK” (N = 1; 0.4%), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.

Results indicate the majority of respondents across categories (N = 167; 71.7%) reported they use the same TE instrument for all teachers including GETs and SETs in their corporation/cooperatives. Thirty-five elementary school principals (38.5%), 42 secondary school principals (47.7%), and 28 special education directors (51.9%) answered “Yes” their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument allows for differentiated/modified criteria for the assessment of GETs and SETs. Fifty-one elementary school principals (56.0%), 43 secondary school principals (48.9%), and 24 special education directors (44.4%) answered “No” their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument does not allow for differentiated/modified criteria for the assessment of GETs and SETs. Five elementary school principals (5.5%), three secondary school principals (3.4%), and two special education directors (3.7%) answered “DNK” their
corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument allows for differentiated/modified criteria for the assessment of GETs and SETs. Given the total respondents who answered “DNK” (N = 10; 4.3%), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.

Results indicate slightly over half of respondents across categories (N = 118; 50.6%) reported their TE instrument allows for differentiated/modified criteria for the assessment of GETs and SETs.
Table 20

"Yes," "No," and "Do Not Know" responses concerning the similarities and differences of the teacher evaluation instrument used for the assessment of general education teachers and special education teachers of students with mild disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your corporation/cooperative use the same teacher evaluation instrument for all teachers including special and general education teachers?</td>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
<td>68</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>No</strong></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Do Not Know</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td><strong>91</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
<td><strong>88</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Does your corporation/cooperative's teacher evaluation instrument allow for differentiated/modified criteria for the assessment of special and general education teachers? | **Yes** | 35   | 38.5 | 42   | 47.7 | 28   | 51.9 | 105   | 45.1 |
|                               | **No** | 51   | 56   | 43   | 48.9 | 24   | 44.4 | 118   | 50.6 |
|                               | **Do Not Know** | 5    | 5.5  | 3    | 3.4  | 2    | 3.7  | 10    | 4.3  |
| Total                         | **91** | 100  | **88** | 100  | **54** | 100  | **233** | 100   |

*Note.* Percentages represent data reported by category and "Yes," "No," and "Do Not Know" responses.
Research Question 5

What is the level of knowledge of elementary school principals, secondary school principals, principals, and special education directors of professional standards for general education teachers and special education teachers and their inclusion in their corporation/cooperatives teacher evaluation instrument?

Section IV, questions 14a-c asked respondents about their level of knowledge concerning the REPA (2010) Indiana Standards for Educators as applied to domain 1 (instructional planning) and domain 2 (effective instruction) in their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument. This survey question required respondents to answer one of the following: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree, or not know. The “DNK” responses were collected to provide the researcher with an overall perspective of a lack of knowledge concerning REPA (2010) Indiana Standards for Educators as applied to domain 1 (instructional planning) and domain 2 (effective instruction) in their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument in teacher evaluation. Table 21 reports one elementary school principal (1.1%), one secondary school principal (1.1%), and two special education directors (3.7%) responded DNK to their knowledge of REPA (2010) Indiana Standards for Educators. Given the total respondents who answered “DNK” (N = 4; 1.7%), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.

One elementary school principal (1.1%), one secondary school principal (1.1%), and seven special education directors (13.0%) responded “DNK” to their knowledge of REPA (2010) Indiana Standards for Educators and ability to apply them when evaluating GETs in domain 1 (instructional planning). Given the total respondents who answered “DNK” (N = 9; 3.9%), most
respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.

One elementary school principal (1.1%), one secondary school principal (1.1%), and eight special education directors (14.8%) responded “DNK” to their knowledge of REPA (2010) Indiana Standards for Educators and ability to apply them when evaluating GETs in domain 2 (effective instruction). Given the total respondents who answered “DNK” ($N = 10; 4.3$), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.

Table 21

*Do Not Know* responses concerning perceptions of knowledge of the REPA (2010) Indiana Standards for Educators as related to teacher evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents’ “Do Not Know” responses to comprehensive knowledge of...</td>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>$%$</td>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>$%$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the REPA (2010) Indiana Standards for Educators.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REPA (2010) and am able to apply them when evaluating GETs in domain 1 (instructional planning).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REPA (2010) and am able to apply them when evaluating GETs in domain 2 (effective instruction).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Percentages represent data reported by category and "Do Not Know" responses.
Table 22 represents the perceptions of knowledge of the REPA (2010) Indiana Standards for Educators and their application to domain 1 (instructional planning) and domain 2 (effective instruction) in their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument. Respondents agreed ($M = 3.31$-3.33) that they had comprehensive knowledge of the REPA (2010) Indiana Standards for Educators. No significant differences were reported ($F = 0.42, df = 2, p > .05$) between groups of respondents. Respondents agreed ($M = 3.25$-3.28) that they had comprehensive knowledge of the REPA (2010) Indiana Standards for Educators and were able to apply them when evaluating GETs in domain 1 (instructional planning). No significant differences were reported ($F = 0.43, df = 2, p > .05$) between groups of respondents. Respondents agreed ($M = 3.24$-3.33) that they had comprehensive knowledge of the REPA (2010) Indiana Standards for Educators and were able to apply them when evaluating GETs in domain 2 (effective instruction). No significant differences were reported ($F = 0.43, df = 2, p > .05$) between groups of respondents.
Table 22

**Perceptions of knowledge of the REPA (2010) Indiana Standards for Educators as related to teacher evaluation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Welch F</th>
<th>Cohen's f</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I have comprehensive knowledge of...</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the REPA (2010) Indiana Standards for Educators</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REPA (2010) and am able to apply them when evaluating GETs to domain 1 (instructional planning)</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REPA (2010) and am able to apply them when evaluating GETs to domain 2 (effective instruction)</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.*
Section IV, questions 15a-c asked respondents about their level of knowledge concerning the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards (2012) for SETs and their application to domain 1 (instructional planning), and domain 2 (effective instruction) in their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument. This survey question required respondents to answer one of the following: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree, or do not know. The “DNK” responses were collected to provide the researcher with an overall perspective of a lack of knowledge concerning CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards for SETs as applied to domain 1 (instructional planning) and domain 2 (effective instruction) in their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument in teacher evaluation.

Table 23 reports five elementary school principals (5.5%), two secondary school principals (2.3%), and two special education directors (3.7%) responded “DNK” to their knowledge of CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards for SETs. Given the total respondents who answered “DNK” (N = 9; 3.9%), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.

Six elementary school principals (6.6%), two secondary school principals (2.3%), and two special education directors (3.7%) responded “DNK” to their knowledge of CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards for SETs and ability to apply them when evaluating SETs in domain 1 (instructional planning). Given the total respondents who answered “DNK” (N = 10; 4.3%), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.

Six elementary school principals (6.6%), two secondary school principals (2.3%), and two special education directors (3.7%) responded “DNK” to their knowledge of CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards for SETs and ability to apply them when
evaluating GETs in domain 2 (effective instruction). Given the total respondents who “DNK” ($N = 10; 4.3\%$), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.
Table 23

"Do Not Know" Responses concerning perceptions of knowledge of the Council for Exceptional Children's (CEC) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards (2012) as related to teacher evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents’ “Do Not Know” responses to comprehensive knowledge of...</th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the elements identified in the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards (2012) that apply to special education teachers (SETs) of students with mild disabilities</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the elements identified in the CEC Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards (2012) identifying the unique responsibilities of SETs and am able to apply them to domain 1 (instructional planning).</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the elements identified in the CEC Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards (2012) identifying the unique responsibilities of SETs and am able to apply them to domain 2 (effective instruction).</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Percentages represent data reported by category and "Do Not Know" responses.
Table 24 represents the perceptions of knowledge of the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards for SETs and their application to domain 1 (instructional planning) and domain 2 (effective instruction) in their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument. Respondents tended to have neutral ratings or agreed ($M = 2.56 - 3.21$) that they had comprehensive knowledge of the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards for SETs. A significant difference was reported ($F = 16.53, df = 2, p < .001$) between groups of respondents. The effect size (.39) was medium. The Tamhane 2 posthoc test (.619) identified that special education directors had a higher rating thus indicating more agreement that they had comprehensive knowledge of the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards for SETs compared to elementary school principals ($p < .05$). There were no other significant differences reported among groups. Respondents tended to have neutral ratings or agreed ($M = 2.58 – 3.19$) that they had comprehensive knowledge of the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards for SETs and were able to apply them to domain 1 (instructional planning). A significant difference was reported ($F = 12.99, df = 2, p < .001$) between groups of respondents. The effect size (.36) was medium. The Tamhane 2 posthoc test (.557) identified a higher rating thus indicating that there was more agreement between special education directors in their comprehensive knowledge of the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards for SETs and were able to apply them to domain 1 (instructional planning) compared to elementary school principals ($p < .05$). The Tamhane 2 posthoc test (.611) identified a higher rating thus indicating that there was more agreement between special education directors in their comprehensive knowledge of the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards for SETs and were able to apply them to domain 1 (instructional planning) compared to secondary school principals ($p < .05$). There were no other significant differences reported among groups.
Respondents tended to have neutral ratings or agreed \(M = 2.57 - 3.19\) that they had comprehensive knowledge of the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards for SETs and were able to apply them when evaluating SETs in domain 2 (effective instruction). A significant difference was reported \((F = 12.57, df = 2, p < .001)\) between groups of respondents. The effect size (.34) was medium. The Tamhane 2 posthoc test (.557) identified a higher rating thus indicating that there was more agreement between special education directors in their comprehensive knowledge of the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards for SETs and were able to apply them when evaluating SETs in domain 2 (effective instruction) compared to elementary school principals \((p < .05)\). The Tamhane 2 posthoc test (.623) identified that special education directors had a higher rating thus indicating that more agreement they had comprehensive knowledge of the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards for SETs and were able to apply them to domain 2 (effective instruction) compared to secondary school principals \((p < .05)\). There were no other significant differences reported among groups.
Table 24

*Perceptions of knowledge of the Council for Exceptional Children's (CEC) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards (2012) as related to teacher evaluation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Welch df1</th>
<th>Welch df2</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>f</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*I have comprehensive knowledge of...*

the elements identified in the CEC knowledge and skills professional standards (2012) that apply to SETs of students with mild disabilities.
<p>| | | | | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>2.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>2.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.
Survey Section VI, question 29 asked respondents to identify the professional standards included in their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument for GETs and were able to select from the following options: (a) REPA: Indiana Standards for Educators, (b) InTASC Standards: Interstate teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, (c) no specific professional teaching standards, and (d) do not know. Table 25 reports that the REPA Indiana Standards for Educators ($N = 134$) was the most common response (57.5%). “Do Not Know” ($N = 45$) received the second highest response (19.3%). No specific professional teaching standards ($N = 38$) received the third highest response (16.3%) and the InTASC Standards received 16 total responses (6.9%).
Table 25

Identify the professional standards your teacher evaluation instrument includes in your corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument for general education teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REPA: Indiana Standards for Educators</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>55.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InTASC Standards: Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No specific professional teaching standards</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Percentages represent data reported by category and totals.
Survey Section VI, question 30 asked respondents if their TE instrument included the elements from the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards for the evaluation of SETs. Required response options included “Yes,” “No,” and “DNK”. Table 26 reports seven elementary school principals (7.7%), twelve secondary school principals (13.6%), and 14 special education directors (25.9%) answered “Yes” their corporation/cooperative included the elements for the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards for the evaluation of SETs. Fifty-three elementary school principals (58.2%), 39 secondary school principals (44.3%), and 23 special education directors (42.6%) answered “No” their corporation/cooperative did not include the elements for the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards for the evaluation of SETs. Thirty-one elementary school principals (34.1%), 37 secondary school principals (42.0%), and 17 special education directors (31.5%) answered “DNK” their corporation/cooperative included the elements for the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards for the evaluation of SETs. Results indicate that nearly half of the respondents across categories (N = 115; 49.4%) reported their corporation/cooperative did not include the elements for the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards for the evaluation of SETs. Given the total respondents who “DNK” (N = 85; 36.5%), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.
Table 26

"Yes,” "No,” and Do Not Know” responses concerning knowledge of the Council for Exceptional Children's (CEC) Knowledge and Skill Professional Standards (2012) in their teacher evaluation instrument

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>49.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Not Know</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>36.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Percentages represent data reported by category and "Yes," "No," and "Do Not Know” responses.
Research Question 6

Do elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors believe their teacher evaluation instrument provides valid criteria for the determination of the effectiveness of a special education teacher of students with mild disabilities?

Survey section V, question 16a addressed the respondent’s belief of PL 90 (SEA 001) regarding its positive impact on the evaluation of the effectiveness of SETs of students with mild disabilities in their corporation/cooperative. This survey question required respondents to answer one of the following: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree, or do not know (DKN). Table 27 reports the percentage of respondents who answered “DNK”. Thirty-two total respondents (13.7%), including twelve elementary school principals (13.2%), 15 secondary school principals (17.0%), and five special education directors (9.3%), responded “DNK”. Given the total (N = 32; 13.7%), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.

Table 27 also includes question 16e which addressed the respondent’s belief their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument provides valid information for the determination of a SET of students with mild disabilities as ineffective, effective or highly effective. Sixteen total respondents (6.9%), including four elementary school principals (4.4%), nine secondary school principals (10.2%), and three special education directors (5.6%), responded “DNK”. Given the total (N = 16; 6.9%), most respondents indicated they knew this information and addressed the question accordingly, therefore additional training is not indicated in this area.
Table 27

"Do Not Know" responses concerning perceptions of beliefs related to the impact of PL 90 (SEA 001) on the evaluation of special education teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents' “Do Not Know” responses to I believe that...</th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PL 90 (SEA 001) has had a positive impact on the evaluation of the effectiveness of SETs in our corporation/cooperative</td>
<td>12 13.2</td>
<td>15 17.0</td>
<td>5 9.3</td>
<td>32 13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>our corporation/cooperative's TE instrument provides valid information for the determination of a SET of students with mild disabilities as ineffective, effective or highly effective.</td>
<td>4 4.4</td>
<td>9 10.2</td>
<td>3 5.6</td>
<td>16 6.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Percentages represent data reported by category and "Do Not Know" responses.

Table 28 represents the perceptions of beliefs of Indiana administrators regarding Indiana PL 90 (SEA 001) which identifies the guidelines and required components of Indiana’s teacher evaluation system and their beliefs that it has had a positive impact on the evaluation SETs in their corporation/cooperative. Respondents agreed (M = 2.73 – 2.85) that they believed that Indiana PL 90 (SEA 001) has had a positive impact on the evaluation of the effectiveness of SETs in their corporation/cooperative. There was no significant difference reported (F = 0.46, df = 2, p > .05) among the respondents. In addition, respondents agreed (M = 2.70– 3.10) in the belief their corporation/cooperative's TE instrument provides valid information for the
determination of a SET of students with mild disabilities as ineffective, effective or highly effective. A significant difference was reported between groups of respondents \((F = 4.28, df = 2, p < .05)\). The effect size (.20) was small. The Tamhane 2 posthoc test (.354) found that special education directors had a higher rating, indicating a stronger belief their corporation/cooperative's TE instrument provides valid information for the determination of a SET of students with mild disabilities as ineffective, effective or highly effective compared to elementary principals \((p < .05)\). There were no other significant differences reported among groups.
Table 28

Perceptions of beliefs concerning the impact of PL 90 (SEA 001) on the evaluation of the effectiveness of special education teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Welch</th>
<th>Cohen's f</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL 90 (SEA 001) has had a</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>positive impact on the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evaluation of the effectiveness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of SETs in our corporation/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cooperative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>our corporation/cooperative's</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TE instrument provides valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>information for the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>determination of a SET of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students with mild disabilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as ineffective, effective or</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>highly effective.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.
Section VII, question 39 asked respondents if they believed their TE instruments is effective in the assessment of SETs of students with mild disabilities. Table 29 reports 231 total responses received including “Yes” ($N = 128; 55.4\%$) and “No” ($N = 103; 44.6\%$) responses. Forty-Nine elementary school principals (53.8\%), 49 secondary school principals (55.7\%), and 30 special education directors (57.7\%) responded “Yes,” indicating their beliefs that their TE instrument is effective in the assessment of SETs of students with mild disabilities. Forty-two elementary school principals (46.2\%), 39 secondary school principals (44.3\%), and 22 special education directors (42.3\%) responded “No,” indicating their beliefs that their TE instrument is not effective in the assessment of SETs of students with mild disabilities.

In addition to SETs, respondents were asked to answer similar questions located in survey section VII, questions 36–38 regarding the effectiveness of their TE instrument in the assessment of GETs. While the results are not reported in tables in this chapter, given 232 total responses, 181 administrators responded “Yes” (78.0\%) and 51 responded “No” (22.0\%) that their TE instrument is effective in the assessment of GETs. More administrators agreed that their TE instrument was effective in the evaluation of GETs (78.0\%) than SETs (55.4\%), (see Table 29). Fewer administrators responded that their TE instrument was not effective in the evaluation of GETs (22\%) than SETs (44.6\%), (see Table 29).
Survey question 40 asked respondents to provide additional information to why they believed their TE evaluation instrument is effective in the assessment of SETs of students with mild disabilities. Question 40 gave the respondent an opportunity to provide an open-ended response. The open ended responses provided by SPSS 24.0, (2015) were reviewed, coded and arranged according to central themes and/or concepts by the examiner and reported in Table 30 (Saldana, 2009). Fifty-eight respondents including 25 elementary school principals (42.4%), 19 secondary school principals (32.2%), and 14 special education directors (23.7%) provided additional information. The central themes among the responses included the following: (a) the four domains on their TE instrument include competencies for all teachers, \((N = 23)\), (b) their TE instrument allows for differentiation of GETs and SETs, \((N = 23)\), and (c) their TE instrument is researched based and aligned with best practices, \((N = 7)\). In addition, five administrators provided additional comments, which are reported in Table 30.
provided responses under (d) other. Responses included the following: “allows for both evaluator and teacher input,” “allows for flexibility in scoring,” “student work demonstrates evidence of mastery of the objectives,” “teachers are held accountable for student growth,” and “there is no perfect system and as an evaluator I must be competent in my assessments and not rely completely on the tool.”
Table 30

*Themes to respondents' responses concerning the belief the teacher evaluation instrument used in the assessment of special education teachers of students with mild disabilities is effective as reported by position*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central themes to responses concerning a belief that their TE instrument is effective in the assessment of special education teacher of students with mild disabilities.</th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The 4 domains include competencies for all teachers.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>57.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allows for differentiation of special and general education teachers.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researched-based and aligned with best practices.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Responses</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Percentages represent data reported by category and totals.
Survey question 41 asked respondents to provide additional information to why they believed their TE evaluation instrument is not effective in the assessment of SETs of students with mild disabilities. Table 34 reports a total of 73 respondents including 30 elementary school principals (41.0%), 26 secondary school principals (35.6%), and 17 special education directors (23.3%) provided additional information. The central themes among the responses included the following: (a) their TE instrument does not include specific skills and responsibilities of SETs \((N = 44)\), (b) there is no differentiation between GETs and SETs \((N = 12)\), and (c) students with disabilities cannot meet the indicators in the domains \((N = 6)\). In addition, 11 total respondents provided responses under (d) other. Responses included the following: “standardized testing data is unreliable,” “we have had four different district directors in five years which does not allow for consistency or rigorous SLOs that contribute to the overall school growth,” “co-teaching and behaviors are not scored,” “not realistic and too narrow in scope,” “there needs to be some type of growth attached to the TE instrument,” and “same as previous response.”
Table 31

*Themes to respondents' responses concerning the belief the teacher evaluation instrument used in the assessment of special education teachers of students with mild disabilities is not effective as reported by position*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>n</em></td>
<td>%</td>
<td><em>n</em></td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central themes to responses concerning a belief that their TE instrument is not effective in the assessment of special education teachers (SETs) of students with mild disabilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not include specific skills and responsibilities of SETs.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>57.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No differentiation between GETs and SETs</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students with disabilities cannot meet the indicators in the domains.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Responses</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Percentages represent data reported by category and totals.
Section VII, question 44 allowed the respondents to provide any additional information regarding their thoughts and opinions deemed important with respect to their TE instrument and the evaluation of GETs and SETs in their corporation/cooperatives. Table 32 reports 29 total responses from 12 elementary school principals (41.4%), 12 secondary principals (41.4%), and five special education directors (12.8%). The central themes among their responses included the following: (a) desire for additional training in the area of evaluation for SETs ($N = 14$), (b) they do not have or need a different TE instrument for GETs and SETs ($N = 6$), and (c) they had previous special education training which assisted them in the evaluation of SETs ($N = 4$). In addition, administrators ($N = 5$) provided responses under other and included, “challenge is having the teachers meet all the needs of the individual student by providing the best learning environment,” “young teachers will not pursue special education because of the fear of the accountability model,” “special education is an arena all to itself,” “good luck,” and “thank you.”
Table 32

Themes to respondents' additional comments of importance as reported by position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central themes to responses concerning respondents' additional information of importance</th>
<th>Elementary School Principals</th>
<th>Secondary School Principals</th>
<th>Special Education Directors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire additional training.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not need a different TE instrument for general and special education teachers.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous special education training.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Responses</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>41.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Percentages represent data reported by category and totals.*
Summary of Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative analysis of this survey included identified central themes coded and organized among groups of respondents (Saldana, 2009). Elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors ($N = 128; 55.4\%$) perceived their TE instrument is effective in assessing SETs of students with mild disabilities (Table 29, p. 148). Of the total 128 “Yes” responses, 58 respondents including 25 elementary school principals, 19 secondary school principals, and 14 special education directors provided additional information as to why they perceived their TE instrument is effective in assessing SETs of students with mild disabilities. Central themes in their responses included the four domains in their teacher evaluation instrument include competencies for all teachers including both GETs and SETs, their TE instrument allows for differentiation of GETs and SETS, and their TE instrument is research based and aligned with best practices (Table 30, p.150). Specific responses within the identified themes included their TE instrument “was based upon the research of Marzano and addressed the needs of unique learners,” “was designed to evaluate staff who work directly with special education students,” “is thorough in assessing different areas that are important for special education teachers,” “provides a clear set of expectations for special education teachers,” and “is more specific to the roles and responsibilities of the special education teachers.”

Elementary school principals, secondary school principals and special education directors ($N = 103; 44.6\%$) perceive their TE instrument is not effective in assessing SETs of students with mild disabilities (Table 29, p. 148). Of the total 103 “No” responses, 73 respondents including 30 elementary school principals, 26 secondary school principals, and 17 special education directors provided additional information as to why they perceived their TE instrument is not effective in assessing SETs of students with mild disabilities. Central themes in their responses included,
their TE instrument does not include specific skills and responsibilities of SETs, no
differentiation between GETs and SETs, and student with disabilities cannot meet the indicators
in the domains. (Table 31, p.152). Specific responses within the identified themes included their
TE instrument “does not allow for special populations,” “does not address practices critical to the
success of a special education teacher,” “does not take into account the additional responsibilities
and knowledge needed to work with students with disabilities,” “indicators do not match
excellence in instruction for special education teachers,” “does not properly assess unique
instructional practices needed with mild identified students,” “is not realistic and too narrow in
scope,” “is not specific enough to the unique job of a special education teacher,” “is not
differentiated enough to support special education instruction and leadership,” and “key pieces to
what special education teachers do are left out.”

Twenty-nine total respondents, including 12 elementary school principals, 12 secondary
school principals, and five special education directors provided additional information deemed
important with respect to their TE instrument. A central theme was found among groups
concerning their desire for additional training in the evaluation of SETs (Table 32, p.154).
Specific responses within the identified theme included “additional training in any job related to
function is always beneficial,” “I recently survey our special education teachers to see if they
were happy with our TE tool and more than 50% did not like it,” “the more training we get the
better we are at accurately assessing teachers,” “professional development would need to be
diverse enough where schools who are collaborative are addressed as well as those school that
are not inclusive,” “training would need to be different,” “annual updates or training to be able to
talk with other administrators with special education in their building would be helpful.”
Summary

Chapter 4 presented findings that included an analysis of descriptive and inferential statistical data and an analysis of qualitative data to answer the six research questions. Demographics of Indiana administrators were presented. In response to the research questions, data was analyzed to determine the differences in perceptions and beliefs of Indiana administrators of the evaluation of special education teachers of students with mild disabilities. Differences were examined in the level of knowledge between the three groups of respondents regarding PL 90 (SEA 001) related to teacher evaluation requirements, their TE instrument, knowledge of components of IDEA for students with identified disabilities, REPA (2010) Indiana Standards for Educators, and the CEC Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards (2012). Differences in their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument, and training requirements were analyzed. Additionally, beliefs of respondents related to PL 90 (SEA 001), the unique skills required by SETs, the differentiation of their TE instruments for special and general educators, and the effectiveness of their TE instrument in the assessment of SETs of students with mild disabilities were analyzed. The data was presented in both table and narrative formats.

Key findings indicated that 97% of the total respondents were in agreement that they had knowledge of Indiana PL 90 (SEA 001) regarding teacher evaluation requirements. While PL 90 (SEA 001) mandated training in their teacher evaluation instrument, only 70% of the combined respondents indicated their corporation/cooperative required such training. Approximately 74% of the total respondents indicated their training did not include or they did not know if their training included the unique responsibilities of SETs. Given the CEC Knowledge and Skill Professional Standards are the widely accepted professional standards used in the preparation of special education teachers, approximately 88% of the total respondents indicated their training
did not include or they did not know if they were included in their local training requirements. In addition, 93% of respondents agreed that the unique responsibilities of SETs should be a requirement in their corporation/cooperative training and 83% of respondents responded “yes” they would benefit from additional training in the unique responsibilities of SETs as identified in the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skill Professional Standards.

Concerning the differentiation between the evaluation of general and special educators, 72% of the total respondents indicated they used the same TE instrument for both GETs and SETs while 45% allowed for differentiated/modified criteria for SETs. Approximately 56% of the total respondents believed their TE instrument is effective while approximately 46% indicated it is not effective in the assessment of special education teachers of students with mild disabilities. Lastly, 90% of all respondents indicated “yes” they are confident in their knowledge and ability to determine the effectiveness of SETs of students with mild disabilities in general education classrooms.
CHAPTER 5 - DISCUSSION

This study explored the perceptions of Indiana public school administrators regarding the evaluation of special education teachers of students with mild disabilities in general education settings. The study also examined the perceptions of administrators’ knowledge and beliefs concerning the evaluation of general education teachers as related to their TE instrument. The study used a census approach to identify Indiana public school administrators including: (a) elementary school principals, (b) secondary school principals, and (c) special education directors as their administrative responsibilities include staff performance evaluations to increase student achievement (IDOE, 2012a).

The study was guided by six research questions designed to investigate the perceptions of respondents’ knowledge and beliefs regarding PL 90 (SEA 001) and the effectiveness of their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument in the evaluation of SETs of students with mild disabilities in general education settings. The survey instrument was developed by the researcher and distributed electronically to participants using Qualtrics software. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

The importance of teacher evaluation has been identified in educational reform and documented in several empirical studies (Baker et al. 2010; Braun, 2005; CEC, 2012; Darling-Hammond 2009, 2010, 2012; ESSA, 2015; Goe et al., 2008; Holdheide et al., 2010; IDOE, 2012). An extensive review of the literature and legislative reform was completed to examine teacher evaluation including Indiana’s response to federal mandates including (a) NCLB (2001), (b) RTT (2009), and (c) the recently passed ESSA in December 2015. This study was completed in response to the current need for additional research to inform the field of efforts focused on the evaluation of SETs and the need for TE instruments that are sensitive to special educators’
unique responsibilities in increasing student outcomes (Baker et al., 2010; CEC, 2010; Holdheide et al., 2012). Effective teaching at all levels and for all students, including SWD, is imperative in meeting the reform agenda of school improvement.

Samples and Returns

Study participants that inform this investigation were educators employed in public school administrative positions in Indiana. Elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors were selected as they are most directly responsible for the evaluation of teachers’ performance in general education settings. Each set of administrators represented perspectives potentially unique to their respective LEA administrative roles. An electronic survey was developed, disseminated, and stored using Qualtrics, a survey and statistical management software program. The Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS 24.0, 2015), an IBM statistical software program, was used in the analysis of the study.

A total of 1,594 participants received electronic letters of invitation to participate in the study, including 837 elementary school principals, 609 secondary school principals, and 148 special education directors. A total of 233 surveys were completed for a return rate of approximately 15% (Table 1). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), Welch-F tests, and Tamhane (T2) post-hoc tests were used to analyze differences in perceptions among the respondent groups. Qualitative analysis was also conducted and reported using central themes (frequencies and percentages) to three open-ended questions related to the administrators’ perceptions of the evaluation of SETs in the state of Indiana.
Findings from the Literature

Previous studies conducted by The Center for Evaluation and Education Policy (CEEP) at Indiana University had been completed in 2012 and repeated in 2014 regarding the implementation of PL 90 (SEA 001) as it pertained to teacher evaluation. Participants in these studies included superintendents, principals, and teachers across the state of Indiana; however, the studies did not delineate between general and special educators nor did the questions in the survey identify the unique responsibilities of special educators (Murphy et al., 2014; Murphy, Cole, Ansaldo, & Brown, 2015). In addition, the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (NCQT) collaborated with the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) to conduct an in-depth inquiry to include state and district special education administrators across the country regarding evaluation practices for special education teachers; however, the inquiry’s participants did not include principals (Holdheide et al., 2010). Review of the literature indicated a lack of clarity concerning the comprehensive analysis on the topic of the evaluation of special education teachers by Indiana public school administrators. Clearly, there is limited research and evidence related to teacher evaluation concerning SETs.

Indiana’s PL 90 (2011), formerly known as SEA 001, was implemented in the fall 2012-2013 school year in alignment with school corporation master teacher contracts. Leadership was identified as a key component of this educational reform (New Leaders for New Schools, 2009; US DOE, 2010). The discussion of this study centers on the main findings as identified by the research questions. Perceptions of knowledge and beliefs of educational leaders are important, as they are responsible for the implementation of their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument in the performance evaluation and subsequent determination of teachers’ effectiveness. Educational leaders need to possess knowledge of Indiana’s educational reforms and their responsibilities.
pertaining to teacher evaluation. This should include knowledge of their TE instrument’s domain indicators and professional standards including the Rules for Educator Preparation and Accountability (REPA) Indiana Standards for Educators (2010), intended to shift the focus from highly qualified teachers to highly effective teachers. In addition, CEC and the NCTQ have proposed that the preparation and professional standards for special educators are a valuable resource and that evaluations should support instructional practices consistent with the CEC’s research-based standards for SETs (CEC, 2012b; Holdheide et al., 2010). Possessing this knowledge is key for evaluators to have as they are expected to provide specific and meaningful feedback to teachers regarding their performance in the classroom to increase student achievement (IDOE, 2011b, 2012a). In addition, this is significant for teachers as evaluation scores are tied to their compensation and future contract renewal (IDOE, 2012b; PL 90, 2011; Whiteman, 2011).

Respondents in this study provided information concerning the determination of the effectiveness of SETs of students with mild disabilities in general education settings in Indiana public schools using their TE instrument. Training requirements in teacher evaluation, knowledge of the unique skills and responsibilities of SETs and the differentiation of GETs and SETs in their TE instrument were also addressed. Training for principals and school leaders in the effective evaluation practices of SETs was a recommendation highlighted in the CEC Position on Special Education Teacher Evaluation (CEC, 2012b). The 2010 NCTQ study also recommended the integration of special education content into evaluator training (Holdheide et al., 2010). Concerning the use of a differentiated/modified teacher evaluation instrument for SETs, the 2010 NCTQ study indicated that the majority of respondents (71.9%) did not allow for the use of a differentiated/modified TE instrument for SETs, although nearly half (49.9%)
responded they believed that general and special educators should not be evaluated using the same instrument (Holdheide et al., 2010). The CEC, however, has recommended that evaluations should be differentiated and based on the unique roles and responsibilities of SETs (Benedict et al., 2013; CEC, 2012b). Findings of this study concerning respondents’ perceptions of knowledge and beliefs regarding training and the differentiation in their TE instrument are supported by the literature and the limited research studies to date (Baker et al., 2010; Benedict et al., 2013; CEC, 2012; Holdheide et al., 2012; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014; Jones & Brownell, 2014; Sledge & Pazey, 2013; Woolf, 2014). These findings are reported in greater depth in the sections below.

**Discussion of Study Findings**

**Perceptions of Knowledge**

Findings from the study indicated no statistical differences among the three groups of respondents (elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors) pertaining to the perception of knowledge of PL 90 (SEA 001) regarding teacher evaluation requirements and their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument (Table 5). Respondents across all three groups indicated they agreed or strongly agreed that they had comprehensive knowledge of (a) PL 90’s (SEA 001) teacher evaluation requirements, and (b) their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument. Findings from the literature indicated the supervision and evaluation of teachers in Indiana has been a recent focus in response to federal mandates of teacher effectiveness (Cole et al., 2012; Cole et al., 2013; Hardy et al., 2014; Whiteman et al., 2011). This study found that administrators were knowledgeable concerning PL 90 (SEA 001) and their corporation/cooperative’s teacher evaluation instrument.
Indiana’s response to TE mandates (noted by Cole et al., 2012, 2013 and 2016) outlined in PL 90 (SEA 001) provided guidelines for LEAs to develop their own evaluation systems while adhering to the tenants of the law. The required components of the TE process included an annual evaluation, the use of objective data, and multiple measures including rubrics, observation, and other performance indicators (Indiana Code, IC 20-28-11.5; IDOE, 2011). The reported comprehensive knowledge of PL 90 (SEA 001) and their corporation/cooperative’s adopted TE instrument indicated respondents in all groups accept and support their integral role in Indiana’s reformed teacher evaluation process. Armed with this knowledge, TE evaluators are in a position to best assist in reform efforts and school improvement through effective TE measures and practices.

In 1975, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142) provided all children with disabilities the right to a free and appropriate public education. The most recent revision of PL 94-142 is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA, 2004). IDEA maintained the six principles governing the education of students with disabilities as initially identified and defined in PL 94-142. The principle of least restrictive environment (LRE) and the components of an individual education program (IEP) comprise two of the six core principles of IDEA. Data from this study indicated respondents across all three groups had comprehensive knowledge of IDEA 2004. Results also indicated that special education directors showed a higher level of agreement than that of the elementary and secondary school principals (Table 13). This may be attributed to the requirements and ongoing professional development regarding the implementation of policies, procedures, and best practices in the area of special education that special education directors receive as part of their administrative training. In addition, the role of Director of Exceptional Needs is the administrative function for special
education programs and services in an Indiana special education cooperative or school corporation. Special education directors are tasked with the responsibility of providing professional development to principals and teachers concerning compliance of procedures identified in the State Board of Education Special Education Rules, Title 511, Article 7, rules 32-47. Information pertaining to the requirements of an Indiana Director of Exceptional Needs administrator’s license are located on the IDOE website at http://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/licensing/director-exceptional-needs.pdf.

Findings from the literature reported that in addition to student instruction, a majority of a special educator’s school day (up to 94%) is spread across a variety of responsibilities required by IDEA, 2004 (Jones & Brownell, 2014). These additional responsibilities as outlined in IDEA include IEP development and implementation, individual lesson planning, classroom management, the development and implementation of behavior intervention plans, collaboration with general education teachers and families, progress monitoring, assessment, and participating in ongoing professional development (CEC, 2012b; IDEA, 2004).

When asked specifically about the least restrictive environment (LRE) core principle of IDEA and the right for a student, to the maximum extent appropriate, to receive instruction in the general education setting, respondents in this study indicated they had comprehensive knowledge. Results also indicated that special education directors’ responses had higher levels of agreement compared to the elementary and secondary school principals (Table 13). Findings from the literature indicated LEAs must provide a continuum including both placement and educational services and each student with a disability must be educated with their non-disabled peers in the LRE appropriate to meet their needs. The general education classroom is considered the LRE (Almazon, 2009; Bartlett et al., 2007; Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2009; Hulett, 2009;
Skrtic, Horn, & Clark, G. 2009; Yell, 1998). Special education directors receive reports from the IDOE informing them of their LRE indicator five compliance status. They are typically responsible for providing professional development and technical assistance in the area of LRE for principals and teachers. In addition, they serve as a reference in decision making regarding placement in the student’s LRE. This may account for their strong agreement in their comprehensive knowledge of IDEA’s principle of the LRE. Findings from the literature indicated that changes in the IDEA, 1997 included an emphasis in providing SWD access to the curriculum in the general education classroom (Skrtic et al., 2009). Students have a presumptive right to be educated in the general education setting with their general education peers, and general education classes are the placement of first choice for all learners (Skrtic et al., 2009; Yell, 1998). School leaders must advocate for the rights of all children to promote inclusive school practice; they have the responsibility of improving outcomes for all students (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2009). The LRE is determined on an individual basis by the student’s IEP team. IDEA requires not less than one regular education teacher participate in the IEP team meeting (IDEA, 2004). The IEP team is also referred to as the case conference committee in Indiana Special Education Rules Title 511 Article 7 rules 32-37 (IDOE, 2010). The general education teacher provides knowledge related to how the child performs in the general education setting, how peers perform in the general education setting, how the student interacts with peers, information regarding the expectations of the general education classroom, and classroom dynamics (Hulett, 2009). This study reported that Indiana administrators have knowledge of LRE; however, it did not elicit specific data concerning the general education teacher’s required participation in IEP meetings. This is recommended for future research.
When asked specifically about the core principle of the IEP and the SET’s responsibilities in its implementation for students with mild disabilities in general education settings, respondents across the three groups again indicated they had comprehensive knowledge. Results also indicated that special education directors’ responses had a higher level of agreement than that of the elementary and secondary school principals (Table 13). Findings from the literature indicated any child who receives special education and related services must have an IEP developed and implemented to meet the unique learning needs of the student (Almazon, 2009; Bartlett et al., 2007; Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2009; Hulett, 2009; Skrtic et al., 2009). In addition, the IEP is developed by the student’s educational team to include administrators, GETs, and SETs with the intent of working together to improve the education outcomes for the student. The IEP serves as a monitoring tool to ensure the student has received FAPE. It also determines whether the LEA is in compliance with the principles identified in IDEA (Almazon, 2009; Bartlett et al., 2007; Heward, 2006; Hulett, 2009). Given their position and responsibilities, information is made available to special education directors on the IDOE Learning Connection website located at www.learningconnection.doe.in.gov. Corporation/cooperatives receive reports from the IDOE informing special education directors of their compliance with issues related to the development of an IEP. They include information related to both compliance indicator 11, addressing initial evaluations, and compliance indicator 13, addressing secondary transition and IEP goals. Information regarding compliance indicator monitoring is updated regularly on the IDOE website located at http://www.doe.in.gov/specialed/monitoring-guidance. This may account for special educator directors’ strong agreement in their comprehensive knowledge of IDEA’s principle of the IEP. IDEA stipulates the required members of a student’s IEP team (IDEA, 2004). This includes a representative of the public agency (PAR). The district special
education director, building principal, assistant principal, or special education coordinator often fulfills the role of PAR. Training in special education mandates, procedures, and timelines is essential in preparing the PAR for his/her role in the case conference process and supervision of special education programs. The PAR is responsible to ensure the parent(s) understand their legal rights and responsibilities outlined in Article 7 (Indiana Special Education Rules Title 511, 2010). In addition, findings from the literature indicated the PAR must be able to supervise the provision of services to the student with an IEP. Ultimately, the IEP document is an agreement between PAR of the school district and the parent (Bartlett et al., 2007; Hulett, 2009). This study found that Indiana school administrators including elementary and secondary principals and special education directors were knowledgeable of the IDEA core principle of the IEP, but did not elicit data concerning their specific responsibilities as the PAR at IEP meetings for SWD. This is recommended for future research.

The state of Indiana, under the leadership of the IDOE, included reforms to educator preparation and licensing. The Rules for Educator Preparation and Accountability (REPA), enacted in 2010, revised Indiana’s educator licensing structure. The IDOE mandated the standards be aligned with research, the Indiana Academic Standards, and the Common Core State Standards. The REPA standards were developed together by the National Governors Association and the CCSSO (IDOE, 2010). Data from this study indicated respondents across all three groups agreed that they had comprehensive knowledge of the REPA (2010) Indiana Standards for Educators (Table 22, p. 131). No significant differences were reported among groups of respondents by position. They were also in agreement that they were able to apply these standards in their assessment of the effectiveness of GETs teachers in assigning a ranking of ineffective, needs improvement, effective, or highly effective to indicators in both domain 1
(instructional planning) and domain 2 (effective instruction) (Table 22) on their evaluation instrument. No significant differences were reported among groups of respondents by position. This may be attributed to the licensing requirements for all administrators in their prescribed course work, internships, and final exams in pursuit of their Indiana administrator’s license. Information regarding administrative license requirements in Indiana is found and updated regularly on the IDOE website located at http://www.doe.in.gov/licensing/administrative-licenses. Findings from the literature indicated teachers who demonstrate the use of professional standards of practice are more effective in supporting student learning (Hammond & Ducommun, 2010). Research has indicated that evaluation systems should align with teaching standards (Blanton et al., 2006; Holdheide et al., 2010; Little, 2009) and that professional standards should be a focus in the evaluation of teachers (Hammond & Ducommun, 2010).

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) is an internationally recognized education organization and a trusted voice in shaping education practice policy for SWD. The CEC developed, updates, and maintains professional standards for entry-level SETs and advanced roles in special education. The CEC is committed to an effective and comprehensive educational service delivery system based on best practice and research. Additional information regarding the CEC is located at http://www.cec.org. Findings from the literature indicated that while the CEC has established the most prominent standards pertaining to both knowledge and skills for SETs, they are often an underutilized resource in the evaluation of SETs (CEC 2012; Holdheide et al., 2012; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014; Woolf, 2014). Data from this study indicated respondents across all three groups had neutral ratings or agreed that they had comprehensive knowledge of the elements identified in the CEC Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards (2012) that apply to SETs of student with mild disabilities (Table 24, p.137). Significant
differences were found between special education directors, and elementary school principals and secondary school principals. Once again, results indicated that special education directors had a higher level of agreement than those of elementary or secondary school principals in their knowledge of the elements identified in the CEC Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards (2012) that apply to SETs of student with mild disabilities. In addition, results indicated that special education directors had a higher level of agreement than those of elementary or secondary school principals in their knowledge of the elements identified in the CEC Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards (2012) identifying the unique responsibilities of SETs and were able to apply them to domain 1 (instruction planning) (Table 24, p. 137).

Data from this study indicated respondents across all three groups had either neutral ratings or agreed that they had comprehensive knowledge of the elements identified in the CEC Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards (2012) identifying the unique responsibilities of SETs and were able to apply them to domain 2 (effective instruction) (Table 24, p. 137). Results again indicated that special education directors had a higher level of agreement than the elementary and secondary school principals in their knowledge of the elements identified in the CEC Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards (2012) identifying the unique responsibilities of SETs and were able to apply them to domain 2 (effective instruction) (Table 24, p. 137). Findings may be attributed to the training special education directors are more likely to have received in the CEC Professional Knowledge and Skill Standards as early special education teachers as they are specific to the field of special education. It may also be attributed to the requirements for the Indiana Director of Exceptional Needs administrative license. Information regarding administrative licenses in Indiana is found and updated regularly on the IDOE website located at http://www.doe.in.gov/licensing/administrative-licenses. In addition, special
education directors may be more likely to hold a professional membership and review literature regularly written and disseminated by the CEC. As previously referenced, research has indicated that evaluation systems should align with teaching standards (Blanton et al., 2006; Holdheide et al., 2010; Little, 2009). Blanton et al. (2006) and Hammond and Ducommun (2010) recommended that such professional standards should be a focus in the evaluation of teachers.

The CEC has stated it is through the evaluation process that a special education teacher’s knowledge and skills are assessed and that evaluations must respect the professional practice of SETs (CEC, 2012b). In addition to the CEC, it has been identified that professional standards of practice for SETS can be valuable resources in the evaluation process. These professional standards reflect the importance of the preparation of an SET in acquiring the unique skill set to serve the varying needs of students with disabilities (Blanton et al., 2006, Holdheide et al., 2010; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014). In the 2012 Position on Special Education Teacher Evaluation, the CEC recommended that professional practice and standards for SETs must be recognized and respected in the TE evaluation process. It is important for evaluators including principals and school administrators to have knowledge of these standards of practice, as PL 90 (SEA 001) and the IDOE have tasked them as evaluators to provide fair, credible, and accurate annual evaluations to differentiate teacher performance and to support professional growth (IDOE, 2011a). Responsibilities of the evaluator include the provision of ongoing feedback, resources and professional development opportunities, setting professional goals, and creating an individualized development plan to meet those goals for all teachers including SETs. Findings from this study indicate that elementary and secondary school principals may require additional training in the CEC Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards to assist them in the
performance evaluation of SETs for SWD, especially concerning domain 1 (instructional planning) and domain 2 (effective instruction) as indicated above.

**Evaluator Training**

According to PL 90 (SEA 001), an individual may evaluate a certificated employee only if the individual has received training and support in evaluation skills, although it did not specify requirements of training (PL 90, Indiana Code, IC 20-28 -11.5 - 5). The data from this study found 164 respondents in the combined three groups (70.4%) indicated their corporation/cooperative required training in the use of its TE instrument (Table 7, p. 95). A total of 61 respondents (26.2%) indicated their corporation/cooperative did not require such training (Table 7, p. 95). Highlighted in the *Highly Qualified Teacher/Educator Effectiveness State Plan*, updated in July 2012, the IDOE included the recommendation to support principals in the evaluation process by providing them with the knowledge and skills to evaluate teachers’ effectiveness (IDOE, 2012b). This included both content knowledge and instructional practices. However, PL 90 (SEA 001) has maintained its position in providing guidelines for local education agencies (LEA) and has not specified the inclusion of knowledge and skill professional standards for teachers (including general and special educators) in their evaluation instrument (IDOE, 2012b). Reported recommendations in the CEC’s *Position on Special Education Teacher Evaluation* indicated that special educator evaluation should include practices that align with the CEC’s professional standards. Additional recommendations included that school leaders, including principals, be trained in the effective evaluation of SETs and this training should include multiple reliable measures and address each educator’s professional standards (CEC, 2012b).
Data from the study reported that from the respondents who received training in their corporation/cooperative, a total of 43 respondents (26.4%) among the combined three groups indicated their training included the unique responsibilities of SETs (Table 9, p. 123). A total of 108 respondents (66.3%) indicated the training they received did not include the unique responsibilities of SETs (Table 9, p. 98). Findings from the literature concerning the evaluation of special education teachers have concluded that training should include the unique responsibilities of SETs (CEC 2012b; Holdheide et al., 2010). In addition, findings from this study found that only 12.3% of combined respondents indicated their training included elements of the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skill Professional Standards for SETs (Table 9, p. 98). The IDOE ensures that Indiana is compliant with federal IDEA mandates (IDOE, 2010). While PL 90 (SEA 001) outlined the required components of the new TE system including the requirement for training, it did not include directives or adjustments related to the unique needs of SETs who teach SWD (Indiana Code, IC 20-28-11.5-4). In addition, LEAs were given latitude in who would provide training to the evaluators, how often the training would occur, and the subject matter of the trainings (Cole et al., 2013). There were inconsistencies reported across corporations/ cooperatives regarding training requirements in their TE instrument as related to the evaluation of SETs who teach SWD. The majority of respondents reported they have not had training in the unique responsibilities of SETs or in their professional standards as promulgated by the CEC to assist them in the evaluation of SETs. Data from the present study indicated the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skill Professional Standards for SETs are not currently being utilized or referenced in teacher evaluation instruments to assist with the assessment of SET teacher effectiveness in Indiana.
Findings from the study indicated respondents across all three groups agreed that they believed specialized training in the unique responsibilities of SETs who teach students with disabilities should be a requirement of their respective corporation/cooperative (Table 19, p. 123). The data from this study’s findings also indicated nearly 83% of respondents believed they would benefit from additional training in the unique responsibilities of SETs as identified in the CEC (2012) professional standards as they pertain to the evaluation of SETS of students with mild disabilities (Table 11, p. 101). This finding emphasizes the importance of training in the unique responsibilities of SETs and its value as reported by the respondents of this study.

Researchers have advised that teacher performance evaluation needs to reflect the specialized expertise for which special education teachers have been trained (Amrein-Beardsley, 2009; Baker et al., 2010; CEC, 2009; 2012; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014; Jones & Brownell, 2014). In the Council for Exceptional Children’s Position on Special Education Teacher Evaluation (2009), the CEC addressed the belief that special education teacher evaluations should be based upon their diverse roles if they are to be effective. Findings from the literature discussed teaching students with disabilities is complex and frequently requires specialized knowledge of both content and teaching strategies (Benedict et al., 2013; CEC, 2013; Holdheide et al., 2010; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014; Jones & Brownell, 2014). Special educators typically have responsibilities that general educators do not, which include managing a student caseload, modifying curricula to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities, and the addition of paperwork including IEPs, functional behavior assessments, behavior intervention plans, and initial and re-evaluations (Benedict et al., 2013; CEC, 2013; Jones & Brownell, 2014). Instructional practices frequently require a highly repetitive, systematic delivery to students, which may differ from the instruction provided by general educators (Benedict et al., 2013).
Special education teachers are also expected to actively collaborate with their students’ general education teachers, family members, therapists, school psychologists, and administrators in the development of the student’s IEP, transition plans, behavior plans and assessments (Benedict et al., 2013; Blanton et al, 2006; CEC, 2013; Holdheide et al., 2010). The CEC has recommended that all evaluators, including principals, must be trained in effective evaluation practices for SETs. This training should include the unique roles and responsibilities of SETs and the students they serve (CEC, 2009; CEC 2012). In addition, recommendations from the 2010 NCTQ study reiterated the importance of evaluator training to include information related to SETs and their specific roles and responsibilities (Holdheide et al., 2010).

**Differentiation between General and Special Educators**

The data from this study found that 167 total respondents (71.7%) indicated they use the same TE instrument for all teachers including GETs and SETs (Table 20, p. 127). A total of 65 respondents (27.9%) indicated they do not use the same TE instrument for all teachers including GETs and SETs (Table 20). In response to the differentiation of their TE instrument between GETs and SETs, data from this study’s findings indicated 105 total respondents (45.1%) reported their corporation/cooperative allowed for differentiation/modified criteria on their TE instrument. Data from the findings indicated 118 total respondents (50.6%) did not allow for differentiation/modified criteria between GETs and SETs on their TE instrument (Table 20). The findings indicate inconsistencies across corporations/cooperatives in Indiana concerning the similarities and differences and the inclusion of differentiation in their TE instrument used to evaluate GETs and SETs.

The literature suggested that in addition to student instruction, a majority of a special educator’s school day (up to 94%) is spread across a variety of responsibilities required by
IDEA, 2004 (Jones & Brownell, 2014). Using the same evaluation instrument may fail to account for the unique roles and responsibilities of special educators (Benedict et al., 2013), and an effective TE instrument should include these unique responsibilities (CEC, 2012b). Educational researchers have maintained that using the same evaluation tool for all teachers may be problematic. Some believe the evaluation of teachers should use the same instrument for both GETs and SETs while others hold that this may be problematic for SETs (Holdheide et al., 2010). The CEC has supported a different ideal in that all teachers should be included in one evaluation system differentiated based on their professional role (CEC, 2012). In addition, findings from the literature have held the performance of SETs is frequently based upon the measures and normed for use with GETs and are not sensitive to the unique context of SETs. In addition, they do not include the specialized skills and expertise expected of them (CEC, 2009; Holdheide et al., 2012; Jones & Brownell, 2014; Semmelroth & Johnson 2014; Sledge & Pazey, 2013; Woolf, 2014). In the Council for Exceptional Children’s Position on Special Education Teacher Evaluation (2009), the CEC recommended evaluations for SETs must take into consideration the unique needs of students with disabilities, their continuum of services, and the individualized teaching practices used with their students. The implementation of an evaluation instrument that takes into account the increasing responsibilities and the unique roles of SETs is challenging (Blanton et al., 2006; Sledge & Pazey, 2013). Recent recommendations have been identified to improve the credibility and provide the needed differentiation between GETs and SETs in TE instruments (Jones et al., 2013; Holdheide, 2013; Jones and Brownell, 2014). Findings from the current study support these aims.
Respondents’ Beliefs

Findings from this study indicated no statistical difference among the three respondent groups regarding the belief that PL 90 (SEA 001) has had a positive impact on the evaluation of the effectiveness of SETs in their corporation/cooperative. Respondents among all three groups believed that PL 90 (SEA 001) has had a positive impact on the evaluation of the effectiveness of SETs in their corporation/cooperative (Table 28, p. 146). A review of legislation outlined how teacher effectiveness is defined and is included in federal mandates (NCLB, 2001; IDEA, 2004; ESSA, 2015) and state legislation (PL 90, 2011). Indiana PL 90 included the rating categories of (a) ineffective, (b) improvement necessary, (c) effective, and (d) highly effective (Indiana Code, IC 20 - 28-11.5 - 4). Respondents collectively agreed that PL 90 (SEA 001) has had a positive impact on the evaluation of the effectiveness of SETs in their corporation/cooperative.

Findings from this study indicated respondents agreed in the belief their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument provides valid information for the determination of a SET of students with mild disabilities as ineffective, improvement necessary, effective, or highly effective (Table 28, p. 146). There was a significant difference found between special education directors and elementary school principals and secondary school principals. Elementary school principals and secondary school principals tended to agree while special education directors had a higher rating indicating a stronger belief that their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument provides valid information for the determination of a SET of students with mild disabilities as ineffective, improvement necessary, effective, or highly effective.

Findings from the literature indicated that teaching students with disabilities is complex and frequently requires specialized knowledge of both content and teaching strategies (Holdheide et al., 2010; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014; Jones & Brownell, 2014; Sledge &
Responsibilities of SETs include the implementation of systematic, individualized instruction, the development of IEPs, coordinating case conferences, and the completion of necessary legal paperwork to be in compliance with state mandates. They are also responsible for collaborating with students’ families, coordinating instruction with GETs, completing transition assessments and plans, developing and implementing functional behavior assessments, implementing behavior intervention plans, progress monitoring goals and using evidenced based practices with their students (Holdheide et al., 2010; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014; Jones & Brownell, 2014). Findings from this study indicated no statistical difference among the three respondent groups regarding the belief that SETs require specialized/unique knowledge and skills to provide instruction for students with mild disabilities. Respondents among all three categories believed that SETs require specialized/unique knowledge and skills to provide instruction for students with mild disabilities (Table 19, p. 123). Data from this study indicated no statistical difference among the three respondent groups regarding the belief that SETs should be evaluated using a differentiated/modified evaluation instrument from the TE instrument used with GETs. Respondents among all three categories believed that SETs should be evaluated using a differentiated/modified evaluation instrument from the TE instrument used with GETs (Table 19, p. 123). In addition, data from this study indicated no statistical difference among the three respondent groups regarding the belief that specialized training in the unique responsibilities of SETs who teach students with mild disabilities should be a requirement in their corporation/cooperative.

Researchers have advised that special educators require specialized/unique knowledge and skills to provide instruction for SWD and should be evaluated using a differentiated/modified evaluation instrument to include these skills. In addition, researchers have advised that
evaluators of SETs be required to receive training in their roles and responsibilities. Findings from the current study support these aims.

**Limitations of the Findings**

Electronic email was used to invite Indiana administrators including (a) elementary school principals, (b) secondary school principals, and (c) special education directors to participate in this research study.

One limitation of the study was the return rate of approximately 15%. Reports indicate the number of survey studies using e-mail to collect data has increased over the past 15 years and the average response rate to the surveys appears to be decreasing (Sheehan, 2001). The increase in surveying in the United States may be part of the explanation of lower response rates, along with the increase in unsolicited e-mail to Internet users (Baruch & Holtom, 2008). In his book, Survey Research Methods (5th ed), Fowler’s data showed a trend toward lower response rates since 2000. The current response rates reported by Fowler are reported between 15-20% (Fowler, 2014). Additional security measures that schools implement to filter e-mails may have contributed to this study’s limited response rate. E-mails may have been blocked by spam filters, sent to Microsoft Office Clutter boxes, or sent to personnel who may no longer be in the position. In addition, returns indicated an over representation of special education directors (36%) and an under representation of elementary principals (11%), thus the data may be biased toward the views of special education directors and not representative of elementary principals. The findings of this research are considered exploratory due to the low response rate as well as the sample being confined to the state of Indiana, meaning the data are not more broadly generalizable.
A second limitation of the survey may have been the time of year the electronic survey was distributed. The survey ran eight weeks at the end of the 2015-2016 school year. School administrators are frequently occupied with end of the year staff evaluations, interviews for future job openings, and school related activities including assemblies and commencements. Such obligations may have added additional constraints to their schedules and may have prevented them from taking the survey. Due to the time of year, many administrators may not have seen these emails, ignored or deleted them from their in-box, or just decided that the study was not important to them. Thus, this may have been a potential factor in the low response rate.

A third limitation may have been the survey questions, specifically regarding the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skill Professional Standards for SETs, where a higher number of respondents answered “No” or “Do Not Know.” A total of 115 respondents (49.4%) responded “No” and 85 responded “DNK” (36.5%) that their TE instrument included the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skill Professional Standards for SETs. In addition, 108 total respondents responded “No” (66.3%) and 35 responded “DNK” (21.5%) that their TE training included elements of the CEC (2012) professional standards for SETs. The results posed a potential limitation of the statistical findings in that respondents were unfamiliar or did not include the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skill Professional Standards for SETs in their teacher evaluation training or in their TE instrument. As indicated previously, PL 90 (SEA 001) did not include requirements in the evaluation process as related to professional standards including the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skill Professional Standards for SETs (IDOE, 2012).

Implications for Practice

Findings from the literature indicated there remains a significant gap of empirical evidence of TE instruments recently developed and currently being used for the evaluation of
special educators (Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014; Woolf, 2014). Some of the larger studies examining teacher evaluation systems, including the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) Project conducted by the Melinda and Bill Gates Foundation (2010) and The Widget Effect (Weisberg et al., 2009), excluded the term special education and made no mention of special education teachers (Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014). This study took a first step in exploring the knowledge and beliefs of Indiana administrators not previously investigated. It is critical that administrators responsible for the evaluation of certified teachers receive training regarding the mandates included in PL 90 (SEA 001) and in the implementation of their corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument given its significance in improving student outcomes. It has also been linked to teacher contract renewal and compensation based on evaluation results. The State Initiated Standards for Success (SFS) and Indiana Teacher Appraisal and Support INTASS provide training and ongoing support in teacher evaluation in Indiana. Fidelity of implementation of their TE instrument in determining the effectiveness of their teachers is of critical importance as teacher effectiveness has been strongly correlated with improved student outcomes (Baker et al., 2010; Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Goe, 2007; Goe et al., 2008).

Administrators should possess working knowledge of the REPA Indiana Standards for Educators (2010) and the CEC Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards (2012) for SETs. Administrators who serve as evaluators of SETs need to have an understanding of the unique responsibilities of SETs as they pertain to the teaching of students with mild disabilities in general education settings. This study found that administrators had knowledge of PL 90 (SEA 001) as it pertained to their responsibilities as an evaluator and had knowledge of the REPA Indiana Standards for Educators (2010). However, the study also found that both elementary and secondary principals had less knowledge of the CEC Knowledge and Skills Professional
Standards (2012) for SETs and indicated they desired more training in this area. The CEC has stated the evaluation of special education teachers is an area where much work remains (CEC, 2012b). While special education directors may have received training in the CEC Knowledge and Skills Professional Standards (2012), this study found that elementary and secondary principals may not have received such training and report this as an area of need for further training.

This study contributes to a small but growing research base that addresses the unique challenges and inconsistencies associated with the evaluation of special educators. Findings from the literature indicated that the CEC has provided recommendations regarding the evaluation of SETs; however, no model currently exists for special educators (CEC, 2012; Holdheide et al., 2010, 2012; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014; Woolf, 2014). The CEC has also recommended that evaluations must identify and be based on the SET’s unique roles and responsibilities. They should be conducted by evaluators who possess expertise in evidence based practices and interventions in the field of special education and should be implemented in a systematic manner (CEC, 2009; CEC, 2012b). The NCTQ Research & Policy Brief findings indicated that experts in the field believed that TE should be differentiated to include the unique roles and responsibilities of SETs and that current TE instruments many not include this differentiation (Holdheide et al., 2010). The state of Indiana is not unique in its lack of a consistent TE model to address the unique responsibilities and skills of SETs of students with disabilities. Research and findings from the CEC and the NCTQ have and continue to provide evidence from empirical research, inquiries via surveys, resources, and opportunities for professional development/training via on-site conferences or online webinars to support administrators in their evaluation of the effectiveness of special education teachers of students with mild disabilities. Corporations
and cooperatives would benefit from promoting ongoing collaboration among their evaluators including special education directors and building principals to keep all stakeholders informed of the unique responsibilities of special educators and the learning needs of students they teach.

**Recommendations**

Given this study was exploratory, generalizations could not be made regarding the perceptions of elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors in the state of Indiana or beyond. However, findings from the study demonstrated inconsistencies regarding the required training, the inclusion of professional standards for both GETs and SETs, and the differentiation of the responsibilities of general and special educators in corporation/cooperatives’ TE instruments being used across the state of Indiana. This level of inconsistency indicates a need for ongoing professional development/training in the area of the unique responsibilities of SETs who teach students with mild disabilities in general education settings. The following recommendations are made for state and local level consideration.

**State Level**

1. The IDOE should continue to provide training and professional development to ensure administrators are in compliance with the mandates of PL 90 (SEA 001) regarding the evaluation of all teachers.

2. The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) in collaboration with the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (NCTQ) should look more thoroughly into the professional standards for teachers of students with disabilities and incorporate these into performance indicators in their state approved TE instruments used in Indiana to evaluate special educators. Differentiating teacher performance cannot be assumed. It needs to be investigated and developed based upon research with the purpose of helping teachers improve their instructional practices for students with disabilities.
3. The IDOE should consider re-examination of the required coursework for the completion towards obtaining an Indiana Administrator’s License for Principals to include the core principles identified in IDEA (2004) and elements in the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skill Professional Standards for special education teachers.

4. The National Council on Teacher Quality’s State of the States (2013) *Connect the Dots: Using evaluation of teacher effectiveness to inform policy and practice* report indicated that Indiana was one of only three states, along with the District of Columbia public schools, to require a certification process for their evaluators. As it goes into its sixth year of implementation of PL 90 (SEA 001), IDOE should consider adding more specific training requirements for evaluators of teachers in Indiana to include the unique roles and responsibilities of special educators. The IDOE needs to ensure that Indiana administrators are evaluating all teachers, including SETs, equitably and with knowledge of their respective professional standards.

5. Future research should involve the collaborative efforts of the IDOE, the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (NCCTQ), the Indiana chapter of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), and/or the Center for Evaluation and Educational Policy (CEEP) at Indiana University. They should review findings from studies focused on the perceptions and views of primary evaluators including elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors to provide needed clarity as to whether they are similar to the findings in this study.

6. Future research should incorporate (a) more comprehensive analysis of “Do Not Know” and (b) “No” responses in this study. Given this study was limited to perceptions of elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors, it may be
replicated to survey special education teachers and related service staff who provide instruction for students with mild disabilities in general education settings.

7. Future research should continue to explore how the primary evaluators of special educators receive their initial training in the unique roles and responsibilities of SETs. Findings could subsequently influence future training requirements in Indiana for evaluators of SETs.

**Corporation/Cooperative Level**

1. In compliance with PL 90 (SEA 001), all Indiana administrators responsible for the evaluation of both general and special education teachers should receive training in their TE instrument. This training should include the unique responsibilities of a special educator as identified in IDEA (2004) and in the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skill Standards for SETs. Studies on standards-based teacher evaluation indicated teachers who focused on professional standards were more effective in supporting student learning (Darling-Hammond & Ducommun, 2010).

2. Corporations/cooperatives should consider the use of multiple evaluators, including both primary and secondary evaluators, as this could be a valuable tool in improving the quality of evaluations. In addition, attention should be provided to ensure special education administrators are evaluating collaboratively with principals for SETs. Principals and special education administrators should observe the teacher separately; both analyzing teaching practices in their area of expertise, and then should collaborate to develop summative evaluation reports.

3. Corporations/cooperatives should re-examine their TE instrument and consider the inclusion of indicators in their TE rubric to reflect the unique responsibilities of special educators.

4. Professional development is critical. All administrators responsible for the evaluation of SETs should participate in ongoing professional development to include the core principles of IDEA (2004) and the application of the CEC (2012) Knowledge and Skill Standards for SETs to
provide formative feedback to SETs. This will further assist evaluators in providing professional
development for both GETs and SETs.

**Conclusion**

The past two decades have witnessed an increase in federal policy and subsequent state legislation on education reform. The evaluation of teacher performance has been at the forefront of this reform in an effort to ensure all Indiana’s students are receiving effective instruction (IDOE, 2012a). Evaluations of teacher performance are necessary as they continue to inform policy. Indiana is in its fifth year using the evaluation model passed into law in PL 90 (SEA 001) in 2011, with implementation begun in the 2012–2013 school year. Individual states identified and defined teacher evaluation requirements, however little guidance on how to communicate or implement policies was provided at the local education level (Holdheide et al., 2013). Indiana was one of only three states, along with the District of Columbia public schools, to require a certification process for their evaluators (NCTQ, 2013). Indiana requirements state the evaluator must receive training yet did not specify certification requirements including the differentiation of responsibilities of GET and SET teachers. Indiana developed and piloted the RISE TE model; however, LEAs were given latitude in who would provide the required training and its content (PL 90, 2011; IDOE, 2012a). In addition, allowable modifications to RISE were provided to LEAs regarding professional practice components, measures of student learning, and summative scoring; however, these did not include reference to special education teachers or students with exceptional learning needs (IDOE, 2011a).

This study investigated the perceptions of elementary school principals, secondary school principals, and special education directors concerning their current knowledge and beliefs of the evaluation of special education teachers of students with mild disabilities in general education
classrooms. It is important to identify the perceptions of knowledge and beliefs concerning PL 90 (SEA 001) and the use of the TE instruments as evaluation results are used to inform and shape professional growth for all teachers (IDOE, 2012b, 2014). In addition, teacher compensation is currently tied to evaluation results. Previous studies have indicated an effective teacher influences the quality of the learning environment and student outcomes (Holdheide et al., 2012; Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014; Sledge & Pazey, 2013). The majority of respondents in this study indicated that their corporation/cooperative required training in the use of its TE instrument for both general and special education teachers and that their corporations/cooperatives primarily provided the training. Indiana state onsite training and state web-based training comprised less than 14% of the training reported by the respondents. Respondents agreed in the belief that specialized training in the unique responsibilities of SETs who teach students with mild disabilities should be a requirement in their corporation/cooperative, yet two-thirds of the respondents indicated they did not receive this training. Eighty-three percent of respondents indicated they would benefit from additional training in the unique responsibilities of SETs, yet 90% of respondents indicated they were confident in their knowledge and ability to determine the effectiveness of SETs who teach students with mild disabilities. The need for both initial and ongoing training aligns with findings that evaluators, including principals, should be trained in effective evaluation practices that reflect the unique roles and responsibilities of educators (CEC, 2012b; Holdheide et al., 2010).

Seventy two percent of respondents in this survey indicated they used the same TE instrument for all teachers including general and special educators. Nearly 90% of respondents indicated they assess both GETs and SETs using the same four domains including (a) instructional planning, (b) effective instruction, (c) leadership, and (d) core professionalism.
Over 50% of respondents indicated their TE instrument did not allow for differentiated/modified criteria for the assessment of SETs, yet respondents across all groups were in agreement in the belief that SETs should be evaluated using a differentiated/modified evaluation instrument from the instrument used for the evaluation of GETs. In addition, over 50% of respondents agreed that their TE instrument is effective in the evaluation of special educators of students with mild disabilities. Recommendations from previous studies conducted by CEC and the NCTQ combined with recent recommendations from research have promoted the need for differentiation between GETs and SETs in TE instruments (CEC, 2012b; Holdheide et al., 2010; Holdheide, 2013; Jones et al., 2013; Jones & Brownell, 2014; Woolf, 2014).

The qualitative findings in the present study indicated slightly over one-half of the respondents perceived their TE instrument as effective in assessing SETs of student with mild disabilities and added that their TE instrument was researched-based and included the unique roles and responsibilities of SETs. Respondents who did not perceive their TE instrument as effective in assessing SETs of student with mild disabilities added that it did not include specific skills and responsibilities of SETs and provided no differentiation between GETs and SETs.

Given the results of this study, additional research is recommended to assist in the standardization of the TE instruments used for the assessment of the effectiveness of special education teachers in Indiana. The TE instrument should account for the unique skills and knowledge of SETs and instructional strategies that are research-based and are known to increase positive outcomes for students with disabilities. This study serves as a starting point for further discussion and research to assist Indiana administrators in their evaluation practices of special education teachers of students with mild disabilities in general education settings.
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doi:10.3102/00346543073001089


Appendix A

CITI Training

COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)
COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS REPORT *

* NOTE: Scores on this Requirements Report reflect quiz completions at the time all requirements for the course were met. See list below for details. See separate Transcript Report for more recent quiz scores, including those on optional (supplemental) course elements.

- Name: Patricia Hartman (ID: 5302745)
- Email: phartman@boc.edu
- Institution Affiliation: Ball State University (ID: 1568)
- Institution Unit: Special Education
- Phone: 360.652.7479

- Curriculum Group: RCR FOR SOCIAL, BEHAVIORAL & EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHERS
- Course Learner Group: Same as Curriculum Group
- Stage: Stage 1 - RCR
- Description: This course is for investigators, staff and students with an interest or focus in Social and Behavioral research. This course contains text, embedded case studies, AND quizzes.

- Report ID: 16552351
- Completion Date: 01/30/2010
- Expiration Date: N/A
- Minimum Passing: 80
- Reported Score*: 87

### REQUIRED AND ELECTIVE MODULES ONLY

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For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or have been a paid independent learner.

CITI Program
Email: citi@support@miami.edu
Phone: 360-243-7970
Web: https://www.citiprogram.org
COURSEWORK TRANSCRIPT REPORT**

** NOTE: Scores on this Transcript Report reflect the most current quiz completions, including quizzes on optional (supplemental) elements of the course. See list below for details. See separate Requirements Report for the reported scores at the time all requirements for the course were met.

• Name: Patricia Hartman (ID: 5350748)
• Email: phartman@bsu.edu
• Institution Affiliation: Ball State University (ID: 1568)
• Institution Unit: Special Education
• Phone: 260 409-7479

• Curriculum Group: RCR FOR SOCIAL, BEHAVIORAL & EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHERS
• Course Learner Group: Same as Curriculum Group
• Stage: Stage 1 - RCR
• Description: This course is for investigators, staff and students with an interest or focus in Social and Behavioral research. This course contains text, embedded case studies AND quizzes.

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For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or have been a paid Independent Learner.
COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)
COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS REPORT*

* NOTE: Scores on this Requirements Report reflect quiz completions at the time all requirements for the course were met. See list below for details. See separate Transcript Report for more recent quiz scores, including those on optional (supplemental) course elements.

- Name: Patricia Hartman (ID: 5350748)
- Email: phartman@bsu.edu
- Institution Affiliation: Ball State University (ID: 1066)
- Institution Unit: Special Education
- Phone: 260 409-7479

- Curriculum Group: Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher
- Course Learner Group: Same as Curriculum Group
- Stage: Stage 1 - Basic Course
- Description: Choose this group to satisfy CITI training requirements for investigators and staff involved primarily in Social/Behavioral Research with human subjects.

- Report ID: 10532000
- Completion Date: 01/02/2016
- Expiration Date: 01/02/2019
- Minimum Passing: 80
- Reported Score: 94

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<td>Ball State University (ID: 13475)</td>
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For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or have been a paid Independent Learner.

CITI Program
Email: citisupport@miami.edu
Phone: 305-243-7910
Web: https://www.citiprogram.org
## COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)

### COURSEWORK TRANSCRIPT REPORT

**NOTE:** See Course Transcript Report if you are required to complete, including quizzes or optional demonstrations, elements of the course. See it for this transcript. See separate requirements for the reported course at the time all requirements for the course were met.

- **Name:** Patricia Harman (ID: 123456)
- **Email:** pharman@email.com
- **Institution Affiliation:** Ball State University (ID: 15678)
- **Institution Unit:** Special Education
- **Phone:** 203-456-7890

- **Curriculum Group:** Social & Behavioral Research - Bar Reviewer
- **Course Learner Group:** Same as Curriculum Group
- **Stage:** Stage 1 - Bar Reviewer
- **Description:** Choose the group to satisfy CITI training requirements for investigators and staff involved primarily in Social and Behavioral Research with Human Subjects.

- **Report ID:** 123456789
- **Report Date:** 01/02/2016
- **Current Score:** 94

### REQUIRED ELECTIVE, AND SUPPLEMENTAL MODULES

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For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing Institution identified above, or have been a paid independent learner.

CITI Program
Email: citisupport@citiprogram.org
Phone: 305-243-5901
Website: http://www.citiprogram.org
APPENDIX B

Office of Research Integrity
Institutional Review Board (IRB)
2000 University Avenue
Muncie, IN 47306-0155
Phone: 765-285-5070

DATE: March 4, 2016
TO: Patricia Hartman, MA
FROM: Ball State University IRB
RE: IRB protocol # 866308-1
TITLE: INDIANA ADMINISTRATORS’ PERCEPTIONS OF THE EVALUATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS WHO TEACH STUDENTS WITH MILD DISABILITIES
SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project
ACTION: APPROVED
DECISION DATE: March 4, 2016
REVIEW TYPE: EXEMPT

The Institutional Review Board reviewed your protocol on March 4, 2016 and has determined the procedures you have proposed are appropriate for exemption under the federal regulations. As such, there will be no further review of your protocol, and you are cleared to proceed with the procedures outlined in your protocol. As an exempt study, there is no requirement for continuing review. Your protocol will remain on file with the IRB as a matter of record.

Exempt Categories:

| Category 1: Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal education practices, such as (i) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or (ii) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods. |
| X Category 2: Research involving the use of educational test (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior |
| Category 3: Research involving the use of educational test (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under category 2, if: (i) the human subjects are elected or appointed officials or candidates for public office; or (ii) Federal statute(s) require(s) without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter. |
| Category 4: Research involving the collection of study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or |

- 1 -
IRB Approval

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<th>if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Category 5:</strong> Research and demonstration projects which are conducted by or subject to the approval of Department or agency heads, and which are designed to study, evaluate or otherwise examine: (i) public benefit or service programs; (ii) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs; (iii) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under these programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category 6:</strong> Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies, (i) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed or (ii) if a food is consumed which contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.</td>
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**Editorial Notes:**

1. N/A

While your project does not require continuing review, it is the responsibility of the P.I. (and, if applicable, faculty supervisor) to inform the IRB if the procedures presented in this protocol are to be modified or if problems related to human research participants arise in connection with this project. **Any procedural modifications must be evaluated by the IRB before being implemented, as some modifications may change the review status of this project.** Please contact (ORI Staff) if you are unsure whether your proposed modification requires review or have any questions. Proposed modifications should be addressed in writing and submitted electronically to the IRB (http://www.bsu.edu/irb) for review. Please reference the above IRB protocol number in any communication to the IRB regarding this project.

**Reminder:** Even though your study is exempt from the relevant federal regulations of the Common Rule (45 CFR 46, subpart A), you and your research team are not exempt from ethical research practices and should therefore employ all protections for your participants and their data which are appropriate to your project.

Bryan Byers, PhD/Chair  
Institutional Review Board  
Christopher Mangelli, JD, MS, MEd, CIP/Director  
Office of Research Integrity
Dear “Participant Name”,

My name is Patricia Hartman and I am writing to ask for your assistance. I am conducting a research study as part of my doctoral work at Ball State University. The study is titled: “Indiana Administrators’ Perceptions of the Evaluation of Special Education Teachers Who Teach Students with Mild Disabilities.” This study is designed to investigate administrators’ perceptions concerning their current knowledge and beliefs of their teacher evaluation instrument and its effectiveness in assessing special education teachers.

Participation in this study is voluntary and the survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Please take time to read the informed consent statement that will appear after you click on the survey link below. I encourage your participation and thank you in advance for taking the time to assist me in this research project.

Sincerely,

Patricia Hartman

Primary Investigator
Patricia Hartman
Doctoral Candidate
Department of Special Education
Ball State University
pahartman@bsu.edu

Faculty Advisor
Dr. Michael Harvey Ph.D
Associate Professor
Ball State University
Department of Special Education (TC 719)
mwharvey@bsu.edu
765 285-5715

Survey Link
Appendix D

Participant Reminder Letter

Dear “Participant Name”,

Recently, you were invited to participate in a pilot research study: “Indiana Administrators’ Perceptions of the Evaluation of Special Education Teachers Who Teach Students with Mild Disabilities.” This is a follow up reminder. This study is designed to investigate administrators’ views of their teacher evaluation instrument and it effectiveness in assessing special education teachers who teach students with mild disabilities. We are using the pilot study to test the Qualtrics delivery tool to ensure our analytic plan is valid. Your responses will not be used in any analysis.

Participation in this study is voluntary and the survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. I encourage your participation and thank you in advance for taking the time to assist me in this research project.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,

Patricia Hartman
Primary Investigator
Patricia Hartman
Doctoral Candidate
Department of Special Education
Ball State University
pahartman@bsu.edu

Faculty Advisor
Dr. Michael Harvey Ph.D
Associate Professor
Ball State University
Department of Special Education (TC 719)
mwharvey@bsu.edu
765 285-5715

Survey Link
Appendix E

Survey

Study Title:
Indiana Administrators’ Perceptions of the Evaluation of Special Education Teachers Who Teach Students with Mild Disabilities

Study Purpose:
The questionnaire is designed to obtain information from Elementary and Secondary Principals and Special Education Administrators in Indiana public schools. The purpose of the study is to explore the differences among administrators in their knowledge and perceptions of their teacher evaluation instrument used for determining the effectiveness of special education teachers who teach students with mild disabilities. The study will also investigate their understanding and beliefs of the differences in responsibilities between general and special education teachers.

Inclusion Criteria:
To participate in this survey you must be a Public School Administrator and have an IDEO administrator’s license, be 18 years or older, be the primary evaluator of special education teacher(s) who work in public school corporations or in a special education cooperative in the state of Indiana.

Participation Procedures and Duration:
You are being asked to complete an on-line survey concerning your current knowledge and perceptions of your teacher evaluation instrument used for determining the effectiveness of special education teachers who teach students with mild disabilities. The survey is conducted through Ball State University’s Qualtrics software. Participation in this survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Data Anonymity
All data will be maintained as anonymous and no individual identifying information will be presented in any publication or presentation related to the survey.

Storage of Data:
All data from the survey will be password protected and saved electronically in Ball State University Qualtrics survey software under the researcher’s account and files. The researcher and faculty advisor are the only individuals who have access to the data. All data will be kept for the duration of the study and will be deleted within two years of the end of the study period.

Risks
There are no predictable risks involved in this study. You may choose to not answer any question that makes you uncomfortable and you may stop the survey at any time.

Voluntary Participation
Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you are free to withdraw your permission at anytime for any reason without penalty or prejudice from the investigator. Please feel free to ask questions of the investigator before signing this form and at any time during the study.

IRB Contact Information
For one’s rights as a research subject, you may contact the following: Director, Office of Research Integrity, Ball State University, Muncie, IN. 47306 (765) 285-5070 or irb@bsu.edu.
INFORMED CONSENT

- ☐ I agree (1)
- ☐ I decline (2)

Section I: About this Study

Research has maintained the most significant factor in increasing student achievement is teacher effectiveness (Holdheide et al., 2010). In addition, research continues to support evaluation of the effectiveness of teachers who teach students with disabilities needs attention (CEC, 2012; CEEP, 2013). Indiana’s PL 90 (SEA 001) has resulted in policymakers shifting their focus to the area of teacher effectiveness with the goal of increasing student outcomes for all learners. In addition, the 2004 revisions to IDEA recognized the higher standards for students with disabilities and included them in state and corporation / cooperative assessments and in their annual yearly progress (AYP) reports. These shifts in policy have led to the creation of new instruments in the evaluation of all teachers. This study will examine the perceptions of elementary and secondary principals and special education administrators in Indiana public schools concerning their current knowledge and beliefs regarding their corporation/cooperative’s teacher evaluation instrument used for determining the effectiveness of special education teachers of students with mild disabilities. Thank you in advance for your participation in this important study.

Section II: Demographics Please provide the following background information about yourself and your current position by selecting the item in each question that best describes you/your position.

Q1 What is your gender?
☐ Male (1)
☐ Female (2)

Q2 What is your current age?
☐ 20-25 (1)
☐ 26-30 (2)
☐ 31-40 (3)
☐ 41-50 (4)
☐ 51-60 (5)
☐ 61+ (6)
Q3 What is your current position?
- Elementary School Principal (1)
- Secondary School Principal (2)
- Special Education Administrator (Director) (3)

Q4 What is the status of your current position setting? (Select the most appropriate descriptor based on your position setting).
- LEA / School Corporation (1)
- Special Education Cooperative (2)

Q5 What best describes your level of educational attainment?
- BA/BS degree (1)
- MA/MS degree (2)
- Educational Specialist degree (3)
- Doctoral Ed.D / Ph.D (4)
- Other (please list below) (5) ____________________

Q6 How long have you been in your current position?
- A. less than 1 year (1)
- 1-2 years (2)
- 3-5 years (3)
- 6-10 years (4)
- 11-15 years (5)
- 16-20 years (6)
- more than 20 years (7)

Q7 How long have you been employed at your current corporation/cooperative?
- less than 1 year (1)
- 1-2 years (2)
- 3-5 years (3)
- 6-10 years (4)
- 11-15 years (5)
- 16-20 years (6)
- more than 20 years (7)

Q8 How long have you been in the field of education?
- less than 1 year (1)
- 1-2 years (2)
- 3-5 years (3)
- 6-10 years (4)
- 11-15 years (5)
- 16-20 years (6)
- more than 20 years (7)
Q9 How would you describe your corporation / cooperative?
- Urban (1)
- Suburban (2)
- Metropolitan (3)
- Rural (4)

Q10 How would you best describe the size of your corporation / cooperative?
- Large (10,000+ students) (1)
- Medium-Large (5,000-9,999 students) (2)
- Medium (1,000-4,999 students) (3)
- Small (less than 1,000 student) (4)

Q11 How would you describe your administrative role in the evaluation special education teachers?
- I am a primary evaluator of a special education teacher(s). (1)
- I am a secondary evaluator of a special education teacher(s). (2)
- I am not responsible for the evaluation or supervision of a special education teacher(s). (3)

Section III: Key Terms

The key terms section in this survey will provide participants a common language when answering survey questions. Specific definitions concerning teacher evaluation and special education teacher effectiveness are important in this study to estimate the knowledge and perceptions of building principals, assistant principals, dean of students and special education administrators in the state of Indiana.

**Council for Exceptional Children (CEC):** The CEC the largest professional organization of special educators and advocates for the rights of individuals with exceptionalities. The CEC has developed and continues to update and maintain professional standards for entry-level special education teachers and advanced roles in special education. ([www.cec.org](http://www.cec.org)).

**Highly Effective Teacher (HET):** The national education landscape is moving away from an emphasis on highly qualified teachers to highly effective teachers. Indiana is leading this charge as evidenced by the passage of our education reform package in 2011. The IDOE created the Office of Educator Effectiveness and Leadership (IDOE, 2012b).

**Individual Education Plan (IEP):** An IEP which is provided to students and covered by IDEA, must be tailored to the child's unique needs and must result in educational benefit. It includes the student's present levels, goals, related services and accommodations to ensure the student is receiving a free and appropriate public education (IDEA, 2004).

**Individuals with Disabilities Act of 2004 (IDEA):** IDEA, originally passed in 1975 and reauthorized most recently in 2004 is a law that ensures education services to students with disabilities across the nation. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to eligible children and youth with disabilities (IDEA, 2004).

**Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):** One of the six principles of the IDEA. Educational placements of students with IEPs must be made in the least restrictive environment (LRE). The LRE is the setting in which students, to the
maximum extent appropriate; receive instruction and the services outlined in their IEP in classes with students who do not have disabilities (IDEA, 2004, TASH, 2009).

**Mild Disabilities:** A student with a mild disability means a child evaluated as having a cognitive impairment, a hearing impairment (including deafness), a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment (including blindness), a serious emotional disturbance, an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, an other health impairment, a specific learning disability, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities, and who needs special education and related services. The LRE category for a student with a mild disability is 50 and the student receives 80% or more of their instruction in the general education setting (IDEA 2004).

**Public Law 90-2011 (PL 90):** (Senate Enrolled Act 001) Enacted by the 2011 Indiana General Assembly and signed into law by Governor Mitch Daniels, PL 90 requires annual teacher evaluations that are significantly informed by student achievement and growth data; conditions teacher tenure on effectiveness; and allows districts to dismiss ineffective teachers. PL 90’s provisions require transparent reporting of teacher effectiveness data to parents and the public (IC 20-28-11.5).

**The Rules for Educator Preparation and Accountability (REPA):** In 2010, the IDOE sought to develop high quality educator standards to support REPA as they revise their programs to meet the state’s new licensing requirements. The IDOE also stipulated that the standards would be aligned with Indiana Academic Standards and the Common Core State Standards developed jointly by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), (IDOE, 2010).

**RISE:** The RISE instrument evaluation system was developed by the Indiana Teacher Evaluation Cabinet in response to Indiana Public Law 90 in 2011. The RISE instrument provides information on the most important aspects of teaching: planning, instruction, leadership, and student learning (www.riseindiana.org). Special Education (SE): The term “special education” is defined, in relevant part, as “specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability...” (34 C.F.R. § 300.39).

**Teacher Evaluation (TE):** Refers to the process by which teachers are determined effective and subsequent future decisions regarding continued employment and compensation packages are based (P.L. 90, 2011; Whiteman et al., 2011).

**Section IV: Knowledge of Unique Responsibilities of Special Education Teachers**

This section is designed to explore your knowledge related to the evaluation and unique responsibilities of special education teachers of students with mild disabilities. Please indicate the degree of agreement you would place on the following study item by selecting the corresponding survey item rating.

Please use this rating scale for all survey questions.

**Rating Scale: Degree of Agreement with Study Item Statement**

1=Strongly Disagree with Statement = 0-25% agreement
2= Disagree with Statement = 26-50% agreement
3=Agree with Statement-51-75% agreement
4=Strongly Agree with Statement=76-100% agreement
5= Do Not Know = No Knowledge
Q12 I have comprehensive knowledge of:

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<th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th>
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<th>Agree (3)</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (4)</th>
<th>Do not Know (5)</th>
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Q13 I have comprehensive knowledge of:

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<td>teachers of students with mild disabilities. (1)</td>
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<td>IDEA’s principle of the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and the</td>
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<td>right for a student with mild disabilities as appropriate to</td>
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<td>receive instruction in the general education setting. (2)</td>
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<td>the components of an IEP and the special education teacher's</td>
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<td>responsibilities in its implementation for students with mild</td>
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<td>disabilities in general education settings. (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDEA 2004 regarding the responsibilities of special education teachers of students with mild disabilities. (1)</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree (1)</td>
<td>Disagree (2)</td>
<td>Agree (3)</td>
<td>Strongly Agree (4)</td>
<td>Do not Know (5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDEA’s principle of the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and the right for a student with mild disabilities as appropriate to receive instruction in the general education setting. (2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>the components of an IEP and the special education teacher's responsibilities in its implementation for students with mild disabilities in general education settings. (3)</td>
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Q14 I have comprehensive knowledge of:

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<th>Strongly Agree (4)</th>
<th>Do not Know (5)</th>
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<tr>
<td>the REPA (2010) Indiana Standards for Educators. (1) REPA (2010) and am able to apply them when evaluating general education teachers in the area of instructional planning (domain 1). (2) REPA (2010) and am able to apply them when evaluating general education teachers in the area of effective instruction (domain 2). (3)</td>
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Q15 I have comprehensive knowledge of:

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<th>Agree (3)</th>
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Section V: Beliefs of Indiana Administrators

The section is designed to obtain the beliefs of Indiana administrators concerning the use of their corporation/cooperative’s teacher evaluation instrument in the assessment of special education teachers who teach students with mild disabilities.

Please use this rating scale for all survey questions.

Rating Scale: Degree of Agreement with Study Item Statement

1 = Strongly Disagree with Statement = 0-25% agreement

2 = Disagree with Statement = 26-50% agreement

3 = Agree with Statement = 51-75% agreement

4 = Strongly Agree with Statement = 76-100% agreement

5 = Do Not Know = No Knowledge

Q16 I believe that:
PL 90 (SEA 001) has had a positive impact on the evaluation of the effectiveness of special education teachers (SETs) of students with mild disabilities in our corporation / cooperative. (1) SETs require specialized / unique knowledge and skills to provide instruction for students with mild disabilities. (2) SETs should be evaluated using a differentiated / modified evaluation instrument from the TE instrument used with general education teachers (GETs) (3) specialized
training in the unique responsibilities of SETs who teach students with mild disabilities should be a requirement in our corporation /cooperative. (4)

our corporations / cooperative’s TE instrument provides valid information for the determination of a SET of students with mild disabilities as ineffective, effective or highly effective. (5)
Section VI: Knowledge of Professional Standards and Training Requirements

This section is designed to obtain the knowledge of Indiana administrators concerning the inclusion of professional standards and their corporation/cooperative’s training requirements regarding their teacher evaluation instrument.

Q17 Identify the teacher evaluation (TE) instrument that most closely represents your corporation / cooperative’s TE instrument?

- Indiana’s RISE Model (1)
- Modified RISE (2)
- TAP: Teacher Advancement Program (3)
- PAR: Peer Assistance and Review (4)
- Locally Created Teacher Evaluation Model (5)
- Other: please list below (6) ____________________

Q18 Does your corporation/cooperative use the same teacher evaluation instrument for all teachers including general and special education teachers?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Do Not Know (3)

Q19 Does your corporation/cooperative’s teacher evaluation instrument allow for differentiated/modified criteria for the assessment of special and general education teachers?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Do Not Know (3)

Q20 Do you assess for general and special education teachers using the 4 domains of (1) instructional planning (2) effective instruction (3) leadership and (4) core professionalism?

- yes (2)
- No (3)
- Do Not Know (1)

Q21 Do you assess special education teachers using the same Domain 1 (Instructional Planning) indicators as general education teachers?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Do Not Know (3)

Q22 Do you assess special education teachers using the same Domain 2 (Effective Instruction) indicators as general education teachers?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Do Not Know (3)
Q23 Do you assess special education teachers using the same Domain 3 (Leadership) indicators as general education teachers?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Do Not Know (3)

Q24 Do you assess special education teachers using the same Domain 4 (Core Professionalism) indicators as general education teachers?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Do Not Know (3)

Q25 Do you assess special education teachers using the same Domain 1 (Instructional Planning) indicators as general education teachers?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Do Not Know (3)

Q26 Do you assess special education teachers using the same Domain 2 (Effective Instruction) indicators as general education teachers?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Do Not Know (3)

Q27 Do you assess special education teachers using the same Domain 3 (Leadership) indicators as general education teachers?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Do Not Know (3)

Q28 Do you assess special education teachers using the same Domain 4 (Core Professionalism) indicators as general education teachers?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Do Not Know (3)

Q29 Identify the professional standards your teacher evaluation instrument includes in your corporation / cooperative’s instrument for general education teachers.
Q30 Does your teacher evaluation instrument include elements from the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC, 2012) professional knowledge and skill standards for the evaluation of special education teachers?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Do Not Know (3)

Q31 Does your corporation/cooperative require training in the use of its teacher evaluation instrument for the assessment of both general and special education teachers?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Do Not Know (3)

Q32 What type of training have you had in the implementation of your corporation/cooperative’s teacher evaluation instrument?

- State initiated Standards for Success Training (SFS) (1)
- Indiana Teacher Appraisal and Support System Training (INTASS) (2)
- Corporation training (3)
- Cooperative training (4)
- Other training: please list below (5) ____________________

Q33 Did this training include the unique responsibilities of special education teachers?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Do Not Know (3)

Q34 Did this training include elements of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC, 2012) knowledge and skill professional standards for special education teachers?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Do Not Know (3)
Q35 Where did you receive training in the unique responsibilities of special education teachers?

- Corporation (1)
- Cooperative (2)
- State On Site Training (3)
- State Web Based Training (4)
- Other (please list below) (5) ____________________

PreQ36 Section VII: Focused Questions and Open-ended Response

This section is designed to explore your perceptions of the impact of your corporation/cooperative’s TE instrument in the evaluation of special education teachers who teach students with mild disabilities

Q36 Do you believe your current teacher evaluation instrument is effective in the assessment of general education teachers?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q37 Please provide additional information below as to why you believe your current teacher evaluation instrument is effective in the assessment of general education teachers?

Q38 Please provide additional information below as to why you believe your current teacher evaluation instrument is not effective in the assessment of general education teachers?

Q39 Do you believe that your current teacher evaluation instrument is effective in the assessment of special education teachers of students with mild disabilities?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q40 Please provide additional information as to why you believe your teacher evaluation instrument is effective in the assessment of special education teachers of students with mild disabilities?

Q41 Please provide additional information as to why you believe your teacher evaluation instrument is not effective in the assessment of special education teachers of students with mild disabilities?

Q42 Are you confident in your knowledge and ability to determine the effectiveness of special education teachers of students with mild disabilities?

- Yes (4)
- No (5)
Q43 Do you believe you would benefit from additional training in the unique responsibilities special education teachers as identified in the CEC (2012) professional standards as it pertains to the evaluation of SETs who teach students with mild disabilities?

☐ Yes (1)
☐ No (2)

☐ Q44 Please provide any additional comments of importance.