

STUDENT SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS

Resource Teacher Perspectives
on
Student Service Delivery Models

by

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Abstract

Manitoba Education and Training has recommended that all schools and/or school divisions adopt a model of service delivery in order to best meet the learning needs of their diverse student populations. Four models of service delivery are highlighted by Manitoba Education and Training. They include, Response to Intervention, Universal Design for Learning, Consultative- Collaborative and Co-teaching (Manitoba Education and Training, 2014). This study uses qualitative research methods to investigate the perspectives of resource teachers in regards to their experiences with various service delivery models. Several factors that enable resource teachers and school teams to effectively support students are discussed. This study also examines the factors that may impede the successful delivery of supports to students with diverse learning needs. Suggestions to improve service delivery also are presented.

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Chapter 1

The challenges of meeting the learning needs of a heterogeneous group of students in both the classroom and whole school setting has been a persistent topic of interest for educators and educational partners for decades. In an effort to address this issue, schools have provided educational service delivery under many frameworks that have involved students receiving instruction in segregated settings, in isolation in schools, in small groups in and out of the classroom setting, and/or in full inclusion in the general classroom setting (Dixon, 2005; Dyson, 2001; Lupart, 2000).

There is great emphasis given to “appropriate educational programming” in Manitoba. Manitoba Education and Training defines appropriate educational programming as a “collaborative school-family-community process where school communities create learning environments and provide resources and services that are responsive to the lifelong learning, social and emotional needs of all students” (Manitoba Education and Training, 2006, p. 1). It has been recommended by Manitoba Education and Training that schools and school divisions formalize their framework for delivering services and supports to all of the students in their care by adopting a service delivery model to guide their practice and instruction. Manitoba Education and Training recognizes that resource teachers are an essential and important component of service delivery and views the resource teacher as a crucial player in the service delivery framework, acknowledging that resource teachers hold many key roles and responsibilities when it comes to supporting students with diverse learning needs. These roles include teacher support, student support, leadership and management (Manitoba Education and Training, 2014).

Manitoba Education and Training places the onus on school divisions to select, adopt, and explicate a specific type of service delivery model. Resource teachers, in addition to other teaching staff and educational professionals, must understand the structure and framework of the model they work within, so that students may receive the support needed for learning.

“Resource teachers should always be knowledgeable about the policies, guidelines, procedures, and practices of the school division in which they are employed” (Manitoba Education and Training, 2014, p. 4).

The goal of this research project is to explore service delivery models in education and examine resource teachers’ perspectives about the experiences they have with various models, frameworks and/or approaches. I have found in my previous work as a Behavior and Learning Support Teacher, and now as a Student Services Consultant, that many resource teachers are unclear about their specific roles and the roles of team members in supporting students with diverse learning needs, even though resource teacher roles and responsibilities have been described and documented by Manitoba Education and Training in *The Handbook for Resource Teachers* (2014).

In this chapter, I will define service delivery as outlined by Manitoba Education and Training, as well as other key terminology used when describing service delivery. In chapter two, I will review the literature that pertains to service delivery and student supports, specifically highlighting the four models of service delivery that have been recommended by Manitoba Education and Training. In chapter 3, I present an overview of my research methodology. The findings of my research study will be presented in chapter four. Finally, in chapter five, I will include conclusion statements along with any limitations and implications associated with the study.

The Amendment to the Public Schools Act: *Appropriate Educational Programming* (Manitoba, 2006) and the supporting document, *Appropriate Educational Programming in Manitoba: Standards for Student Services* (2006) confirms in legislation the rights of all students to receive an appropriate education. The standards are the regulations that outline the responsibilities of schools divisions in meeting the needs of all students, in particular students with special learning needs, and should influence the decisions schools and school divisions make regarding their chosen mode of service delivery. The standards reflect students' rights and responsibilities in relation to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982), as well as the legislation outlined in the Public Schools Act (Manitoba, 2006). In the very broadest and most basic terms, Manitoba Education and Training operates under an inclusive model of education. It defines inclusion as “providing all students with the supports and opportunities they need to become participating members of their school communities” (Manitoba Education and Training, 2006, p.26).

Manitoba Education and Training has recommended the use of four different service delivery models. These models can be used individually or collectively. The models include: Response to Intervention (RTI), Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Consultative-Collaborative and Co-teaching. Manitoba Education and Training does not highlight one model over the other, but emphasizes that all professionals who work within the model or models must understand and be familiar with the chosen framework (Manitoba Education and Training, 2014).

Definition of Terms

In this section I will briefly describe some of the key terms that are prevalent throughout this study.

Resource Teacher/Student Services Teacher. Manitoba Education and Training describes the resource teacher as a teacher whose main role and responsibility is to support teachers and students, and to ensure that appropriate educational programming occurs within the context of an inclusive learning environment. Manitoba Education and Training acknowledges that other responsibilities may include duties that require both management and leadership skills. Manitoba Education and Training also identifies that the title of student services teacher, learning support teacher and special education teacher may be used in lieu of the term resource teacher (Manitoba Education and Training, 2014).

For the purpose of this study, the terms resource teacher and student services teacher will be used interchangeably and are considered to be comparable roles.

Dual Role. The term dual role refers to a student services teacher who is tasked with providing and organizing both resource/academic-based services and/or counselling-based services as part of a student support team.

Low-incidence Categorical Funding. The term low-incidence categorical funding refers to the funding model that existed in the province of Manitoba prior to 2017. In this categorical funding model, school-based teams would complete a funding application that outlined a student's needs and deficits based on specific criteria and categories. Approval of these funding applications by the provincial government resulted in a monetary allocation of resources directed to a school division (Manitoba Education and Training, 2015).

Purpose of Study:

The purpose of this study is to examine resource teacher perspectives regarding service delivery and to develop an understanding of the experiences resource teachers have when working in certain service delivery frameworks. The issue of role clarity cannot be understated. It is the difference between resource teachers effectively managing and understanding their job and resource teachers experiencing job uncertainty and role ambiguity in regards to their role in supporting students. Educators are more likely to leave the teaching role when role clarity and job responsibility are not clearly outlined. Teacher disengagement and productivity are often the precursors to educators leaving the field (Gertsen, Keating, Yovanoff & Harniss, 2001).

McLeskey, Tyler & Saunders-Flippin (2004) reviewed literature and research that focused on the growing exodus of teachers from special education. The results of their review found that there the US has seen a population growth in school age children (ages 5-18 years) over the last several decades. A general population increase of this age demographic has also resulted in an increasing population of children with identified needs who are part of the school system. The growth of this distinct population requires an increase in the number of special education teachers in schools and school districts. It has been increasingly challenging for school districts in the US to attain and retain qualified teachers to work in the field of special education. Adding to the shortage is the fact that the number of special education teachers exiting the profession through attrition is greater than the number of new teachers entering the profession (McLeskey Tyler & Saunders Flippin, 2004). One must wonder if weak implementation of service delivery models and a lack of training regarding evidence-based practices are all contributing factors to continued role ambiguity in the field of appropriate education. Educating diverse learners is a complex, intricate and important job that requires teachers to be trained and

educated in areas of evidence-based practices. If the mandate is for students to receive high quality instruction in an inclusive setting then educators need to be confident in their skills and abilities to successfully undertake the role of supporting students with diverse needs. This research study looks to shine a light on the role of the resource teacher and their experience and perspectives with various service delivery models. The assumption is that a clear understanding of service delivery will support resource teachers in supporting a diverse learning population.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

In this chapter I will review the history of service delivery in education and examine past practices when discussing how to deliver and provide services and supports to students with diverse learning needs. I will review the four identified service delivery models as recommended by Manitoba Education and Training, including consultation and collaboration, co-teaching, response to intervention and universal design for learning (2014).

The Shift in Education Service Delivery

The road to inclusion has been a long one and continues to evolve. In very general terms, there has been a paradigm shift in how education is delivered and taught in Canadian schools over the past several decades

In the early 1800s the education model involved full exclusion, where students who were considered to be different from the norm were not afforded the right to an education in the public school system. Canadian public education was reserved for the elite class (Lupart, 2000).

Following the practice of completely denying public schooling to those viewed as different from the norm was the removal of First Nation, Metis and Inuit (FNMI) children from their families, homes and communities. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada recognizes the existence of 139 residential schools that operated from the early 1800s to as late as 1996. The Commission acknowledges that this is a conservative number and the existence of residential schools across Canada during this time period is likely much higher (<http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution>). The creation of residential schools and the long-term effects on generations of Canadians is a disturbing example and testament to the effects of exclusionary practices in education.

In addition to the creation of residential schools that housed students based on race and cultural groupings, were institutions created to accommodate, not necessarily educate, children based on their disability. The 1900s marked an era where separate spaces were created for children who had identifiable disabilities. “Children with visible handicaps such as visual impairment or hearing impairment were the first to receive care, usually under the supervision of a medical doctor, in residential settings” (Lupart, 2000, p. 3). The main purpose of these separate spaces was not to provide access to overall general education, but rather to provide care. It was actually the privileged that had access to institutions that were thought to cater to the child’s particular disability. Children from less affluent families were usually not considered for attendance at a specialized school. In many cases, these children may have been abandoned by their families and placed in a facility that housed, not schooled, children with various disabilities. Lupart (2000) described these institutions as “human warehouses that were dumping grounds for young children” (Lupart, 2000, p. 4).

Mainstreaming followed close behind and alongside still existing models of segregation. In a mainstreaming model of service delivery, students identified as having special needs spent some of their day in the regular classroom setting and the remainder of their school day in a special education program segregated from most of their same age peers (Dixon, 2005). Mainstreaming also came to be known as integration, meaning that students identified as having special needs, or needs different from the average student in a classroom, were integrated into this same classroom.

Disabled learners were ‘integrated’ to work alongside their non-disabled peers but often without the necessary support that would have enabled their full participation. This

integration took many forms, ranging from partial segregation in special schools and mainstream schools, to full placement in mainstream schools and occasional withdrawal from mainstream classes for placement in ‘special classes’ and segregated group activities (Polat, 2011, p.50).

The movement to providing instruction and instructional supports to all students of varying abilities within a general classroom setting for the majority of the school day came to be known as inclusion. Lupart defines inclusion as “a unified education system that serves the individual learning needs of all students by achieving excellence and equity simultaneously” (Lupart, 2000, p. 252). Katz describes inclusion as “an educational system that creates learning communities inclusive of all students” (Katz, 2013, p. 156).

The practices of exclusion, segregation, mainstreaming and inclusion have not followed a straight trajectory in the path of creating an educational system rooted in the rights of all to learn and have equal access to learning. Currently, there continues to be educational systems and philosophies that still include elements of segregation and separateness within in our own communities. These systems include separate programs that house students deemed not ready or not a good fit for the regular classroom. The Learning Assistance Classroom is an example of a type of setting or program that separates students from the experience of a diverse classroom and inclusion. Winnipeg School Division’s website describes the Learning Assistance classroom as a program for students who have “severe emotional or behavior disorders”. The learning environment is described as self-contained with a low student/teacher ratio. Learning goals are based on both behavior and academic needs with a goal of re-integration back into the regular classroom (Winnipeg school division. Retrieved March 9, 2018, from

<http://www.winnipegssd.ca/schools/WilliamWhyte/AcademicsAndClasses/lac/Pages/default.aspx>).

Dyson (2001) argues that how we interpret the history of education and including students with special needs is strongly influenced by two types of perspectives. The first perspective is the optimistic perspective which suggests that the educational system is better now than it was years ago, and that progress has been made in planning for and educating students with special needs. The second perspective challenges this belief, and suggests that there was a push/pull of power and influence in the educational system and that the educational system did not respond appropriately by serving the students most in need of supports and services.

The American Perspective: Legislation in the United States

Over the years several laws and policies have set the stage for how the education system responds to the diverse needs of learners in a public school setting. In 1975, the United States government passed a law known as Education of All Handicapped Children's Act (EAHCA, Public Law 94-142). In 1997, EAHCA was renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA, as it has commonly become known. The premise of IDEA is that students identified with a disability are entitled to "access, participation and progress" (Hitchcock, Meyer, Rose & Jackson, 2002, p. 8) while receiving instruction within the state mandated curriculum.

This law stated that:

Children and youth with disabilities be afforded the right to a free and appropriate public education, individualized programming, parental participation in the decision making process, nondiscriminatory identification and evaluation, instruction in the least restrictive environment, while ensuring families due process rights and responsibilities (Jimenez, Graf & Rose, 2007, p.41).

If states desired the federal funding for education, then they would have to ensure and prove that they were providing the appropriate programming that made it possible for students with identified disabilities to access the general curriculum.

The Canadian Perspective: Legislation in Canada and Manitoba

In Canada, there is no federal policy regarding education. Each province is responsible for their own legislation and policies. The right to education of a child with a disability is protected by multiple pieces of international legislation on human dignity and the need to respect diverse needs. However, Canada has no federal legislation protecting a child with a disability's right to inclusive education, because education comes under provincial and territorial jurisdiction (Disability and Inclusion in Canadian Education (Towle, 2015, p. 5). Section 15 of the Canadian Constitution address Equal Rights and states that:

1. Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

Subsection (1) does not preclude any law, program or activity that has as its object the amelioration of conditions of disadvantaged individuals or groups including those that are disadvantaged because of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability (Canada. Retrieved March 9, 2018 from

<http://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/how-rights-protected/guide-canadian-charter-rights-freedoms.html#section15>.)

2. Section 15 of the Canadian Constitution proposes and sets in place a standard for each province when they consider developing and passing legislation that addresses the basic human right of education for all.

In Manitoba, *The Amendment to the Public Schools Act: Appropriate Educational Programming* “reflects Manitoba’s commitment to providing all students with appropriate programming that supports student participation in both the academic and social life of schools” (Manitoba, 2006, p. 1).

Manitoba Education and Training defines inclusion as:

A way of thinking and acting that allows every individual to feel accepted, valued and safe. An inclusive community consciously evolves to meet the changing needs of its members. Through recognition and support, an inclusive community provides meaningful involvement and equal access to the benefits of citizenship (Manitoba Education and Training, 2006, p.1).

The *Standards for Student Services* is the recommended source book that schools and school divisions should observe when developing educational programming for all students from Kindergarten to Grade 12 (Manitoba Education and Training, 2006).

All policy and practice must comply with the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and *The Human Rights Code of Manitoba*, which specify that there must be reasonable accommodation of students’ special needs unless they demonstrably give rise to undue hardship due to cost, risk to safety, impact on others, or other factors (Manitoba Education and Training, 2006, p. 3).

Manitoba Education and Training has recommended that schools and school division employ a service delivery model in order to both accommodate students with additional needs and to provide appropriate programming for all students (Manitoba Education and Training, 2014). A service delivery model is the framework or structure that guides schools and school divisions on how to allocate both human and educational resources, organize schools and determine staff roles and responsibilities when providing educational programming for all students. The service delivery model is the decision-making framework that educators follow in regards to appropriate programming for all students.

The four recommended models as proposed by Manitoba Education and Training include: (1) the Consultative-Collaborative, (2) Response to Intervention, (3) Universal Design for Learning, and (4) Co-teaching models (Manitoba Education and Training, 2014).

In the remainder of this chapter, I will provide an overview and analysis of each of these four service delivery models.

The Consultative-collaborative model

Approach: A team of service delivery professionals

The Consultative-Collaborative model involves a multi-dimensional team that is comprised of school personnel, divisional staff and experts outside of the school system. These individuals pool their combined knowledge to make informed decisions regarding educational programming for students with exceptional needs. The key component of this model is problem solving and shared decision making through effective communication. The purpose of the Consultative-Collaborative approach is to support the teachers or educational specialists who are providing direct instruction and supports to the student (Manitoba Education and Training, 2014).

Freeze (2015) argued the role of the teacher in today's educational setting is one that requires connection, collaboration, and interdependence. The diverse needs found within the single classroom setting mandate that teachers work collaboratively and in partnership with a variety of service providers from both within and outside of the school system. Partnerships are not only limited to professional team members, but also include community members and parents. The Consultative-Collaborative model implies that students are best served by a team approach. If that is the case, then it stands to reason that all stakeholders should possess the skills needed to collaborate. "Given the central role of teaching in the promotion of learning, it is not surprising that discussing, working, and sharing in common cause with others have become so important in Canadian education today" (Freeze, 2015, C09-3).

Brownlie & King (2011) also have referenced the role of collaboration in an inclusive service delivery model. They argue that there must be key tenants in place in order for successful collaboration to occur. These tenants include trust, flexibility and good communication skills.

For two people to work closely together, share their needs safely with each other, teach in front of each other, and make plans, they must feel confident that what takes place in the classroom may be celebrated elsewhere but is not critiqued elsewhere (Brownlie and King, 2011, p. 108).

Coben, Thomas, Sattler & Morsink (1997) reviewed educational research literature that focused on the concepts of consultation and collaboration as processes that teachers and professional staff could follow when working together to support students. They reported that this type of service delivery model best served students identified as having disabilities. In their review of the research Coben et al., made a distinction between consultation and collaboration.

Consultation typically involves the sharing of knowledge by one professional with another, or one professional assisting another professional with a problem. This relationship signifies an unequal status between the two professionals. Collaboration, on the other hand, involves mutual efforts by professionals and/or parents to meet the needs of students. This relationship signifies different but equal status between professionals (Coben et al., p. 428).

In 1995, Freeze wrote extensively about the importance of all stakeholders in education dialoging and problem solving together as a unified team for a child. Although Freeze wrote about the need for school-based and interagency collaboration more than twenty years ago, the need for this kind of communication, consultation, collaboration and planning remains valid and even more applicable, given the increasing diversity in today's classrooms.

Collaboration and Inclusion

Collaboration is a necessary process and skill in education. However, the existence of a collaborative team does not necessarily lead to the inclusion of all students in the classroom setting. Sally Spencer (2005) interviewed Drs. Lynne Cook and June Downing, both experienced educators and researchers, regarding the concept of collaboration and inclusion. Dr. Cook had an interesting view about how collaboration may have become misunderstood as a guarantee of inclusion for students with disabilities.

I think things have gotten confused in the last few years because so many people equate collaboration with inclusion, when in fact the foundations in special education were pretty clearly built around developing collaborative decision-making and collaborative working relationships to best serve kids in a continuum of placements. Collaboration describes the relationship between people as they work toward a common goal.

Sometimes that goal is supporting a student with disabilities in a general education classroom. In that instance, collaboration can facilitate inclusion, but the two are not synonymous (Spencer, 2005, p. 297).

This notion that the professional who provides consultation is not at parity with the professional who is involved in direct service, and the assumption that the consultative professional holds a higher or more revered level of knowledge, could potentially interfere with the collaborative process and teaming approach. In order for the Consultative-Collaborative model of service delivery to be truly effective and authentic, there must be mutual respect for all team members and a shared understanding that the contributions of each member together are greater than a few professionals individually dictating how programming and supports should be put into action for the learner (Nochajski, 2002; Kirkpatrick, 2007 & O'Toole).

Educational Stakeholders

A student support team may consist of many members who have varying backgrounds within education and other fields. Student diversity in classrooms means that there are students with varying strengths and needs that may require medical, cognitive, social/emotional, behavioral and/or sensory supports and strategies. Teams that support students with special needs are not limited to the classroom teacher and/or resource teacher. The student services team that supports a particular student may include dozens of individual people and agencies. There is a multi-system approach to supporting children with complex and diverse needs. These systems may include school-based personnel (e.g., classroom teachers, resource teachers, counsellors, school administrators, educational assistants), divisional personnel (e.g., student services consultant, speech/language clinician, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, psychologist, social workers, behavior support teachers, etc.), outside agencies (e.g., social service agencies,

medical professionals, disability services professionals), and of course, home/family units (parents, guardians).

All of these individuals and the systems they represent have a unique skill set and knowledge base. Each system also has access to a network of professionals who possess additional knowledge and skills. Individuals and systems must assemble in a working relationship to share knowledge and skills in an effort to support a student and/or groups of students. The team members must come together to develop a common understanding of student strengths and needs, and to establish goals and create a plan of action to meet these goals (Guttow, Rynkewitz, & Reicher, 2009).

The general public in the new millennium is becoming more and more aware that teaching is not just a responsibility of professional educators within the school's walls.

Community members and resource personnel beyond school walls are needed as collaborators and team members to help in planning and directing rich, authentic learning experiences for students (Dettmer, Thurston & Dyck, 2005, p. 45).

Cook and Friend (1991) describe the need for collaboration to be voluntary and not forced. "Administrators or others with administrative authority may mandate that individuals work in proximity to each other, but selecting collaboration as a style is the choice of participants" (Cook & Friend, 1991, para. 7). In addition, all professionals working together to support a student must have a shared understanding of the student's specific learning needs and goals. The professionals also must have a collective responsibility for both decision-making and student learning outcomes. The professionals need to function as a team and that means not blaming one another if an intervention does not garner anticipated results. Every success in programming should be regarded as the shared responsibility of all team members, just as any

support that does not produce the intended outcome also should be regarded as the responsibility of the collective group (Cook & Friend, 1991).

Professional Development and Collaboration

Researcher Susan Nochajski (2002) felt that there was a lack of research in the field of education concerning the effectiveness of collaboration. As such, she decided to collect data on how and if collaboration amongst school professionals supported and impacted inclusive education. Nochajski asked classroom teachers, student services teachers, occupational therapists, speech therapists and physiotherapists, who work in inclusive settings with students identified as having special or additional needs, to complete questionnaires. The questionnaires required participants to reflect on collaboration and to focus on the effectiveness and challenges associated with collaborative practices. The questionnaires revealed that out of 51 participants, not one could define collaboration and in fact, 21.6% of participants described consultation and collaboration as being synonymous terms. Participants described collaboration as being highly beneficial to both students and professionals, but each participant had a different way of generalizing collaboration. The majority of participants stated that they were confused by the roles of the various professionals that may be part of a student support team. Nochajski argued the lack of role understanding, along with differing views of the collaborative process were actual barriers to professionals working together as a team in a successful manner. In addition, participants reported that collaboration is not always possible when the team supporting a student does not have a shared vision or consensus of the concept of inclusion (Nochajski, 2002).

The research conducted by Nochajski speaks to the need for specific training regarding the collaborative process as a model for service delivery. It would seem that explicit education regarding various service roles and responsibilities are steps that must be taken before a team

commences their collaborative work. Assumptions cannot be made that every member shares the same beliefs and values regarding inclusion or that each team member understands their own role on the team and the role of other team members.

The more people you have, the more professionals you have with different perspectives.

Each may come from a different value system, a different professional culture, and each may have different beliefs about inclusion or about collaboration. As a result, it takes that much more time to work through everything so that all the participants can really collaborate (Spencer, 2005, p. 298).

Role Clarity

Leadership, at the school and divisional levels, needs to set the stage for defining inclusion in their particular setting. It is extremely challenging for professionals, whether they be educators, clinicians or service providers from outside agencies, to provide appropriate services and programming to students when, as a team, they do not have a shared understanding of the model in within which they are working (Walther-Thomas, Bryant & Land, 1996).

The success of any team rests on the ability of its members to work together for a common goal. “Teamwork requires agreement on the importance, relevance, and viability of the shared work to be discussed and undertaken. Each partner to a project must have confidence in his or her personal responsibility and capacity to do the work” (Freeze, 2015, p. C09-48). Role clarity is essential in the Consultative-Collaborative approach. Without it, there is a real risk of students not receiving sufficient supports and alternately the duplication professional supports provided by individual team members, which is not professionally responsible, given the extensive number of students who require comprehensive services in a classroom or school.

Team members need to understand one another's roles to be able to work together effectively. When others' roles are hidden, a team member may project unrealistic expectations onto a colleague, attempt to define the role inappropriately, or fail to see the relevance of that person's contribution to the decision-making process and work of the team (Freeze, 2015, p. 317).

Collaboration: A series of steps

In the article, *Responding to Community Needs Utilizing a Consultative Approach*, Gutow, Rynkewitz and Reicher (2009) identify and elaborate on the sequence of steps that are often used by a collaborative team to support a student with exceptional needs. The first step involves identifying areas of concerns and creating a plan of action to address the concerns. The second step involves the collection and review of data by the collaborative team. The team analyzes the data to determine the degree and extent of the learning gap. The team compares this baseline data and the identified goals in order to develop a specific learning plan. The plan, or learning intervention, is continually assessed by the team to determine if adjustments need to be made based on student progress and performance.

The premise of the Consultative-Collaborative model to supporting students with special needs is that the expertise of the team helps to build capacity at the school level, which hopefully, results in the application of new and enhanced skills across similar student cases. "One of the primary reasons to use a consultative approach is to help the recipient gain skills that can be applied to future situations without the assistance of the consultant" (Guttow, 2009, p. 231). This education-sharing process takes time and requires patience, commitment and understanding of all parties that the journey to supporting students in an inclusive setting is most often one that is travelled over many years.

Challenges within in the Consultative-Collaborative Service Delivery Model

The Consultative-Collaborative model is no doubt a form of service delivery that can support an inclusive model of education. The alignment and gathering of professionals who have specific skillsets and expertise can only act to enhance educational programming. However, the model is not without its limitations or challenges. As the number of professionals involved in a team increases it may become more difficult to reach a consensus about how inclusion will be achieved for a particular student. In addition, the time required to gather as a team for discussion and to review students' needs and potential supports can often be a roadblock to the collaborative process. "For true collaboration to take place you have to give it a lot of time and I don't think school systems are doing enough of that" (Spencer, 2005, p. 298). School divisions and school administrators must be willing to afford school staff the time to work and problem solve together if the Consultative-Collaborative service delivery model is to be effective and true to the collaborative process.

Educational teams need to understand what collaboration looks like, sounds like and feels like in order for team members to actually engage in real collaboration when planning for students of varying strengths and needs. This understanding comes from exposure to existing collaborative teams and the provision of time to meet and discuss learning issues in a problem-solving framework on a regular basis (Fennick & Liddy, 2001). This kind of professional development is the key to successful collaboration and partnership amongst classroom teachers, specialist teachers, administrators, clinicians, educational assistants and any individual who has a role in supporting students.

*Response to intervention*Approach: Three tiers of service delivery

Response to Intervention is a tiered system of service delivery. Student knowledge is assessed and any programming decisions are based upon student performance and assessment. The system typically follows a three-tier framework with universal instruction and supports occurring in the classroom as part of Tier 1 instruction. More intensive, individualized programming and supports occur in Tiers 2 and 3. Programming supports may occur within or outside of the student's classroom during these upper level tiers (Manitoba Education and Training, 2014). Fuchs & Fuchs (2006) describe RTI as a multi-tiered framework of intervention with each tier providing a specific intervention. Interventions become more targeted and specific as students move through the tiers.

Hawkins, Vincent and Schumann (2008) suggest that 80% of students respond well to Tier 1 instructional supports and practices, while 15% of students require Tier 2 interventions and the remaining 5% of students require more specific and intensive Tier 3 interventions. In the RTI model, the first line of intervention rests with school personnel. Classroom teachers work with students to assess knowledge and skill level at primary instruction/tier 1 phase. Assessment results are used to make decisions regarding appropriate supports and programming that will garner student success. Tier 2 supports are implemented if assessments and observations show that the student(s) need additional supports and intervention beyond the universal instruction provided to the class as a whole. The goal for educators at Tier 2 is to provide tailored support and continually reassess to determine if the student has acquired the needed skills and learning to access instruction at the primary instruction phase. If the supports at Tier 2 do not meet the learning needs of a student then further exploration should occur at Tier 3. Tier 3 assessments

usually involve specialized educational personnel, such as psychologists and other clinicians. In this structure, active assessment and the redesign of supports and instruction mean educators should not have to wait for students to fail in order to access appropriate supports.

RTI frameworks: The Standard Protocol Model and The Problem Solving Model

The Standard Protocol Model of RTI refers to the three tiers as they are related to curriculum. Tier 1 instruction involves the planning and instruction of curriculum in the whole class setting or subject specific course setting. The teacher is responsible for assessing students and determining whether the students are meeting specific curriculum outcomes. The students who are identified as not meeting these specific outcomes are recognized as requiring greater supports. The classroom teacher works with the resource teacher and/or student services team to plan Tier 2 supports which should include evidence-based instruction and assessment. The intervention may involve instruction in a small group setting that is led by the resource teacher or another teacher. The teacher planning and delivering the instruction must understand and be able to lead the chosen evidence-based practice. The assessment process is an ongoing component of Tier 2 support, as assessment results provide data not only on student learning, but also on the effectiveness of the evidence-based practice to support the student in meeting the curriculum outcomes. The school team responds with Tier 3 interventions when the student continues to have difficulty learning, despite the targeted intervention. Tier 3 of the RTI model includes the assessment of students for learning disabilities. Arguably, if Tier 3 supports are rooted in evidence-based practices then they must be as intense as Tier 2 supports, if not more. The service providers involved in Tier 3 intervention may include clinical specialists and outside service providers (Shores & Chester, 2009).

A second model of RTI is known as The Problem Solving Model. This model is more fluid in nature than the Standard Protocol Model and the focus is on how a student responds or does not respond to classroom-based instruction and is not just an analysis of test performance scores. “A problem-solving model is a systematic approach that reviews student strengths and weaknesses, identifies evidence-based instructional interventions, frequently collects data to monitor student progress, and evaluates the effectiveness of interventions implemented with the student” (Canter, 2004, p.11).

Academic Support/Behavior Support and Assessment Practices

In an RTI model, interventions that support either academics or behavior intensify with each tier. The type of assessments to determine progress, the need for more intense intervention, or the need for a more diagnostic assessment approach will obviously vary depending on whether the school team is addressing behavior and/or academic learning needs. There is usually a standard, or agreed upon benchmark based on curriculum outcomes when assessing academics. The standard becomes less clear when assessing behavior. The standard of behavior for students is often dependent on the values of the school and the culture of the school, including the level of understanding regarding behavior and its purpose for the student. RTI stresses the importance of using evidence-based practices and assessments during all stages of interventions. This research has been primarily gathered regarding academic interventions. A closer look at the progress monitoring and assessments used for behavior screening and interventions needs to occur (Hawkins et al., 2008).

An RTI service delivery framework involves assessment that serves three distinct purposes. The first purpose of assessment exists to determine if students are responding to universal classroom instruction. The second assessment purpose is to monitor the progress of

more intensive Tier 2 supports and the third purpose of assessment is to determine if there are additional or diagnostic reasons for a student's continued lack of progress and understanding (Hawken, Vincent & Schumann, 2008).

Educators must make decisions regarding the assessment tools and protocols that will be used to universally screen all students. Further decision-making must occur related to instructional techniques, targeted interventions and additional assessment practices, if needed. Evidence-based instructional practices and techniques play a significant role in the implementation of an RTI model (Averill, Baker and Rinaldi, 2014). There is a litany of instructional strategies that educators can access in supporting students with diverse learning needs. There are no shortages of publishers that market their 'program' or 'tools' to be the best fit for addressing student need and closing learning gaps. This degree of choice amongst practices and pedagogy does not make the teacher's job easier, for as professionals they must determine what qualifies as best practice in supporting the learning of a diverse group of students. "The gap between research and practice is particularly problematic in special education, as learners with disabilities require highly effective instruction to reach their potential (Cook, Buysse, Klinger, Landrum, McWilliams, Tankersley & West, 2015).

If the goal of Tier 1 or primary instruction is to meet the needs of 80% of learners than it makes sense to continually review this foundational instruction to see if it actually is appropriate and a good fit/match for all the students in a classroom. Harlacher, Potter & Weber (2015) discussed the need for school teams to regularly meet to review and discuss the effectiveness of primary level instruction. The purpose of the meetings is for the team to determine if they are hitting that 80% mark. Harlacher et al., recommended that the team discussing primary level instruction include the grade level classroom teacher(s), the resource team, specialists such as

reading recovery teachers, school psychologists, and speech/language clinicians and so on. If a professional's specialty can support the acquisition of a specific learning outcome than they should be included in the meeting. The meeting time must be protected from interruption or cancelation. Harlacher et al., discuss how the meeting must be focused on the data and the instructional practices. The conversation cannot foray into conjecturing about realities outside of the school that may impact learning, such as family dynamics. Another general rule is that the team meeting should not focus on individual students but rather the performance of the entire class or grade level. The meeting must focus on a specific learning skill, such as reading comprehension or reading fluency. Student performance data must be collected using the same assessment tool for each student. As an example, if a grade 5 team was meeting to review core instruction in reading fluency and comprehension they will have assessed each student using the same standardized reading assessment tool. The team will review the data to determine if the primary instruction is effective in meeting the 80% target. If not, the team creates a plan to enhance the instructional practices by reviewing options for alternate measures of instruction. The role of the specialists at the meeting are crucial as they will guide the conversation around instructional practices that should enhance student learning. The teachers must commit to adjusting their practice to align with the instructional action plan. The team meets regularly to review data and determine if the revised instructional action plan is having the desired impact on student learning. This type of RTI meeting format is focused on instructional strength and deficit as opposed to student strength and deficit. The meeting process is not about shining a spotlight on what some might label as teacher deficiency, but rather it emphasizes the need for the school team to communicate regularly and work together. In essence it reinforces the concept of collaboration. Team meetings:

Directly engage teachers in conversations around instruction for their students in a collaborative, supportive setting. The teachers choose the common instructional needs of their students and the common instructional strategies they will use; therefore, they do not have instructional decisions imposed upon them without input” (Harlacher et al., 2015).

Intervention versus Identification

During the 1980s and 90s, educators in the United States became increasingly concerned that there was an inflated number of children being diagnosed with learning disabilities. Reasons for over diagnosis included the use of poorly designed psychometric tests, the pressure from parents and other interest groups to publically explain and account for poor student performance, as well as the financial pressure on school boards/divisions to pay for specialized educational programming. Alternately, there was a concern that the students who genuinely struggled with learning due to a learning disability were not being appropriately identified through existing psychometric testing (Fuchs, Mock, Morgan & Young, 2003).

Educators began to question the validity of IQ tests to determine overall intelligence and started to look at the effectiveness of teaching and instruction as a factor in student performance. Poor performance did not have to mean that there was something inherently wrong with the child. Poor or concerning performance could have more to do with the style of teaching and programming, than a child’s ability to learn and succeed (Fuchs et al., 2003).

Response to Intervention evolved, not as a means of replacing psychometric testing to determine student IQ and possible learning disabilities, but as a first attempt at prevention/intervention before moving forward into a formal intelligence testing mode. Proponents of RTI view it as a chance to work with students in a targeted way to see if

improvements in learning can be made before referring to more specialized services (Fletcher et al., 2004).

A theory started to evolve with the idea that the number of students identified as having a learning disability could be reduced if evidence-based instructional practices were employed by teachers and schools. In the United States, there also was a realization that there was a performance gap between students who were advantaged and primarily from nonminority groups and students who were economically disadvantaged and predominantly from minority groups. The former group of students had higher academic achievement as compared to the latter. Regrettably, the system of service delivery in education appeared to favour certain groups, while failing others (Fletcher et al., 2004).

RTI was designed as a system of response that would use evidence-based assessment to determine if a child required additional learning supports that were also grounded in evidence-based practice. In the United States, students who failed to progress under the RTI model were often identified as having potential learning issues or disabilities. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA, 2004) recognized RTI as another avenue for identifying students who may have learning disabilities (Regan, Berkeley, Hughes, & Brady, 2015). The premise of RTI was to create a structure that would allow for identification of students struggling with specific academic and behavior skills and address these learning needs through appropriate supports in the classroom setting, and if needed beyond the classroom setting.

Authentic Assessment in an RTI model

The term authentic assessment means exactly that, assessment that looks to measure how a child is progressing in the real learning environment as opposed to how they are progressing

when measured against a conventional, diagnostic assessment tool. A majority of the research regarding authentic assessment has been routed in the early years with the argument being that formal diagnostic testing is not always a valid measurement of how children with additional needs are learning and developing. “Early childhood intervention requires assessment procedures that capture real-life competencies in everyday settings and document even small improvements in developmental skills. In essence, we need assessment procedures that tell the truth about our most vulnerable children” (Bagnato, 2005, p. 18).

In 2014, Bagnato, Goins, Pretti-Frontczak & Neisworth surveyed over 1400 educational professionals, including teachers, clinicians, daycare providers, administrators, consultants and educational assistants. The purpose of the large scale survey was to compare the effectiveness of commercial-based tests against authentic testing measures. The results of the survey strongly indicated that authentic assessment is better suited to measuring a child’s ability in a real-world context. The results also emphasized that the expert observation and data collection completed by parents, teachers and professionals who work with a child everyday should not be overlooked.

One of the fundamental characteristics of RTI is ongoing assessment and progress monitoring. Research that examines RTI assessment has focused on curriculum-based and norm-based, diagnostic assessments. Authentic assessment should also be considered in the RTI model. Assessment that allows students to access their strengths and choose their mode of expression can also provide information in regards to learning and achievement. Authentic assessment recognizes that all students learn differently and one type of assessment is not a fit for all.

Engaging Professionals

During primary instruction/tier 1 there is universal screening that determines all students' academic abilities and learning needs. Ongoing assessment by classroom teachers and/or resource teachers are provided to establish a baseline of skills and current learning. The results of these assessments determine if a student is within the acceptable range of learning for their grade level. Primary instruction remains as appropriate instructional practice when assessments indicate that student learning is on par with curriculum guidelines and targets. Tier 1 strategies occur in the classroom setting and consists of differentiated instruction focusing on curriculum outcomes (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006). Primary instruction occurs prior to a referral to more specialized assessment services. At this phase/tier the onus is on the teacher to tailor and adapt instruction, materials, assessment and the environment in order to meet the needs of a student(s) who has been identified by the classroom teacher/resource teacher as needing more targeted supports. The foundation of RTI is the understanding that evidence-based practices must be an integral part of everyday classroom instruction (Danielson, Doolittle & Bradley, 2007). The goal is to reduce unnecessary referrals to specialized services and increase teacher capacity in response to students of varying needs (Fuchs et al, 2003).

Students are identified as requiring Tier 2 supports when assessments and observations indicate that they are not progressing or responding to supports and instruction provided through primary instruction. These students are identified as requiring more targeted approaches and interventions. The identification of student needs and appropriate supports still rests with school teaching personnel. It is the classroom teacher and their observations, analysis of assessment and professional judgment that determines appropriate supports and interventions for students.

Professional judgment can be a precarious marker in determining student programming as judgment may vary greatly from educator to educator and will depend upon the training and professional development available to teachers, along with their willingness and understanding of when to use specific, evidence-based strategies and assessment tools. “The obvious challenge with use of professional judgment is that the application is only as good as the training and competence of the team members” (Vaughn, Linan-Thompson & Hickman, 2003, p. 392). When students do not respond to targeted interventions at the school level, then consultation for clinical assessments and services are necessary (Greenfield, Rinaldi, Proctor & Cardarelli, 2010).

A student requires Tier 3 supports when they continue to struggle as a learner and are unable to make progress even with the implementation of targeted approaches and interventions that are part of Tier 2 supports. Tier 3 of the RTI service delivery model involves a more active role from specialized school personnel and in some cases, may include the involvement of qualified professionals from a system outside of the school or school division.

It is important to note that the key to the success of any intervention, including those used in the structure of RTI, is that the intervention should always be grounded in and derived from best practice. The success of the RTI model, like any other service delivery model, rests with the instructional practices and pedagogy of the educators who work within that model (Danielson et al., 2007).

It makes sense that primary instruction and intervention occur in the student’s home classroom if the purpose of RTI is to promote academic progress and avoid unnecessary referrals for clinical services and specialized assessments.

RTI forces schools to adopt universal screening and continuous progress monitoring, while examining and refining their instructional practice and delivery options. This

includes teachers' modes of instruction and addressing the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students, before moving onto the special education referral process (Greenfield et al., 2010, p. 49).

Professional Development: High quality instruction and evidence-based practices

Response to Intervention is presented as a very linear model of service with the fluid movement of supports back and forth amongst the three tiers. In employing the RTI model, there could be a tendency to focus solely on student achievement and not to consider the effectiveness of instructional techniques and programming as a response to learning difficulties. RTI has been described as "a framework for providing high-quality instruction and intervention matched to students' needs" (Reutebuch, 2008, p. 126). Teachers must monitor student progress and evaluate assessment data in order to determine when and how Tier 1, 2 or 3 supports will be implemented. A caution in regards to employing the RTI model is that educators must continually self-monitor the effectiveness of their own instructional practices to determine if pedagogy needs to be tweaked. It could be argued that it is easier and perhaps, far more common to default to the idea that the lack of student progress/performance is a result of a deficit within the child, rather than a deficit in instructional practices and understanding.

The goal of RTI is to improve educational outcomes for all students through the use of evidence-based practice (Reutebach, 2008). High-quality instruction occurs when teachers have access to high-quality and ongoing professional development. Professional development requires a financial commitment from school divisions. The commitment cannot be short-term, but rather part of a long-term vision for supporting students, teachers and schools. Although RTI is described as being rooted in school-based supports as the primary intervention, it requires the investment of many stakeholders beyond the classroom walls. "Professional development, when

embedded within a system-change perspective that is focused on the issues of adoption and implementation, will help to create an environment that can help sustain a given practice” (Danielson et al., 2007, p. 633).

The importance of implementing evidence-based practices cannot be understated. Instruction grounded in research is the most effective way to support all students (Reutebuch, 2008). Instruction needs to fit the learning needs and style of each student. The child should not have to fit the instructional model. Fletcher et al., (2004) and Simenson et al., (2010) maintained that the onus is on educators and schools to look at their own instructional practices and evaluate if the methods employed to educate students are evidence-based and ethical. In doing this critical evaluation, educators may find that the disability is not within the student but rather within the instruction. “We have an obligation to think of students who are struggling to learn as difficult to teach before we label them unable to learn” (Fletcher et al., 2004, p. 328).

The Response to Intervention model forces educators to first look at the instructional programming that occurs in the classroom environment and recognize that this is the primary means of intervention to support students. The evaluation of instructional strategies that are designed to meet the needs of all students at Tier 1, and adjustment of these strategies must not be underestimated or overlooked. It does not mean that there is a deficit within a child when a child experiences difficulty learning the curriculum and/or behavioral expectations. There are fewer possibilities for intervention when educators believe that the student has a deficit that will not change. Following the three tier, Response to Intervention model in its truest form, guides educators in examining and experimenting with educational approaches in an attempt to close learning gaps. The effectiveness of programming is dependent upon the skillset of the educators and team members at each tier. The three-tier model also lends itself to collaboration as students

who are identified as needing supports at Tier 2 and Tier 3 will most likely require the expertise of a multi-disciplinary team. In this regard, the provision of support does not only rely on the classroom teacher and/or resource teacher, but rather, it involves collaboration among many professionals.

Response to Intervention as a decision-making structure

Fuchs et al., (2012) coined the term “Smart RTI”. The term refers to the use of ‘Smart’ regarding Smart phones, Smart cars, and Smart houses. In a Smart RTI system the educators need to become “smarter” in their use of the RTI service delivery model to support all students. The components of Smart RTI include multistage screening, followed by multistage assessment and access to special education systems and services that enhance general classroom supports and instruction (Fuchs, 2012).

In a Response to Intervention framework there are a number of professionals who have the responsibility of making the smart decisions regarding when a student requires more intensive supports. The framework is designed so that evidence-based practices, continual progress monitoring and valid assessments will contribute to a solution-focused system of service. Professional judgment and training are factors that greatly influence how the system of RTI is implemented and followed. The “approach implies a considerable level of expertise in both assessment and intervention and assumes that the professionals involved are able to carry out this problem-solving cycle” (Grigorenko 2009, p. 125).

Greenfield et al., (2010) found that special education teachers felt that their expertise and skills were better used in an RTI model and available to a broader range of students than those of other service delivery models with which they had worked. These educators felt there was more opportunity for them to work across all tiers, not just tier 2 and 3. Special education teachers

reported that they found an RTI model of service delivery to be collaborative in nature. Interestingly in this same study, classroom teachers expressed confusion regarding the differences between Tier 2 and 3 and when to refer students on to extended services. Clarity within one group and confusion within the other speaks to the need for all team members to understand the delivery model being employed. Team members need to have a shared understanding regarding evidence-based practices and interventions associated with each tier in the RTI model. Confusion amongst the professionals will likely result in a delay of appropriate supports and instruction for students.

In the Response to Intervention Model there is a great deal of emphasis given to evidence-based instruction and assessment (Danielson et al., 2007). Educators and schools should be able to articulate why they employ a particular assessment tool. What are the benchmarks used to determine if a child is responding to instruction? Are we measuring students against provincial benchmarks or an arbitrary standard developed in individual classrooms, schools, divisions? Has the tool been selected because it is considered a reliable predictor of student achievement that yields accurate results? Does the tool assess skills and information that is relevant for the required student outcomes and has the tool been field tested for accuracy of results? There should be a variety of assessment tools available to classroom teachers so that students are not deemed as requiring more intensive supports based on the results of one type of assessment (Danielson et al., 2007; Fuchs et al., 2012).

Doctors...do not recommend treatment based on a single, elevated blood pressure measurement, a high PSA reading, or a suspicious mammogram - each of which produces large numbers of false positives. Instead, such screening procedures are followed by

second-stage screens-more accurate and expensive monitoring...or diagnostic assessment (Fuchs et al., 2012, p. 266).

Greenfield et al., (2010) conducted interviews with teachers at an urban elementary school in the Northeast part of the US one year after RTI had been implemented in their school. Teacher observations during the year long process and responses to interview questions helped shed light on some of the positive aspects of RTI, as well as areas of the model that require further research and exploration. This study revealed that the collection of student data during the implementation of a multi-tiered system of student support was crucial to student achievement. Teachers reported that the sharing of data amongst the classroom teachers and special education teachers were the driving forces behind instructional programming decisions. Therefore, the data guided the intervention.

One of the fundamental questions that arises when developing targeted interventions is what to do when students fail to respond to specific programming, whether it be during primary instruction or targeted interventions at Tiers 2 or 3. When is it time to consider shifting the instructional practice and supports and how do you determine which professional is most equipped to provide direct service and programming? Research has indicated that there is confusion regarding instructional practices as well as the roles and responsibilities associated with interventions (Greenfield et al., 2010).

Challenges within the Response to Intervention Model

Critics of RTI have argued that the onus of primary instruction does need to rest solely on the classroom teacher who facilitates and manages the classroom on a daily basis. The primary instruction phase of the Response to Intervention Service Delivery Model requires further examination and discussion. If the practices of primary instruction are really designed to serve

the majority of students, then that must include all diverse learners, including those with exceptional needs. “Perhaps the one agreed-on aspect of Tier 1 is the need for teachers to differentiate instruction to meet the range of learners’ needs” (Fuchs & Vaughn, 2012, p. 198).

Educators know that no two classrooms are the same, just as no two teachers are the same. There are skills, techniques, developmental understandings and pedagogy that are not inherent just because a person holds the title of “teacher” or “principal” or any other educational role. Educational pedagogy and instructional techniques are acquired through training, experience and professional development. It cannot be assumed that all educators are using evidence-based practices within the framework of RTI (Danielson et al., 2007).

Johnson, Pool and Carter (2012) documented their two-year journey regarding the use of the RTI model to improve academic and behavioral outcomes for students in an elementary school in the United States. The authors identified and reported on several issues that arose during the implementation of the RTI model over the two-year period. These issues included a lack of staff understanding regarding the assessment practices and action plans that were part of the RTI interventions. A recommendation from this study was to ensure that professional development occurs so that all staff are confident in the using the data collection tools and that benchmarks for success are clearly articulated. Johnson et al., (2012) strongly recommended that schools start small in order to achieve success, meaning staff should focus on a specific academic or behavior outcome, such as reading comprehension or following adult direction. These areas of focus require baseline data collection. Baseline data collection involves answering the following questions: (a) How are the students performing prior to intervention? (b) What tools will be used to collect and analyze data? (c) Are the same tools and data collection measures being used consistently by all professionals involved? RTI is about a whole team approach and

buy-in. Data should be collected and analyzed by all professionals. Teachers need to be involved in the data collection process. This crucial step should not be offloaded to other team members, including resource teachers, educational assistants, administrators and other staff. With teachers directly involved in data collection, they are able to see the benefits or shortcomings of interventions in a more immediate and meaningful way. The data outlining student responses to intervention drive the instructional decisions made by teachers. Time is the obvious issue with increased teacher involvement regarding data collection and analysis. Teachers need the time to individually assess students, review the data and map out a plan of intervention. Without school administrators supporting this time commitment, it is unlikely that teachers will be able to engage in authentic data collection and analysis.

The second issue was teacher buy-in regarding the interventions. The researchers found that teachers were less committed to the RTI model when they did not have an active role throughout the screening, intervention implementation and ongoing progress monitoring. Continued commitment and engagement in the RTI model waned when any of these duties were offloaded to support teaching staff.

Thirdly, was the recommendation that a consistent system of communication exist in order to share observations, progress and assessment data with all school professionals. In essence, the process and results need to be transparent. Finally, the researchers identified that Tier 2 supports were not clearly stated and that teachers were more committed to the RTI model when they knew how Tier 2 supports would be implemented and which professionals were responsible for those supports. There needs to be a system for when and how Tier 2 and 3 supports are introduced. A student identified as needing intense, targeted interventions on a daily basis would most likely be classified as benefiting from Tier 3 supports. Students receiving Tier

3 supports may include students who have been identified as having special needs, but Tier 3 interventions also may include students who have not been identified as having special needs. Averill et al., (2014) describe the fallacy many educators hold that Tier 3 is synonymous with special education and/or funding. The overriding theme and connection at all tiers of support is that instruction and interventions are rooted in evidence-based practices which include the ongoing assessment of student progress. This ongoing assessment determines the intensity of the intervention and the implementation of various instructional strategies and supports at each tier (Johnson et al., 2012). The ultimate goal is for intervention to be “provided quickly and responsively to all students who need it, regardless of whether they have been identified with special education needs” (Averill, et al, 2014, p. 31).

On the surface RTI appears to be a simple, linear process for providing appropriate programming and supports to all students. A deeper, more thoughtful analysis brings to the surface how important professional development and teacher training are to the success and integrity of this model. The time invested in professional development that focuses on assessment practices and a shared understanding of the specific benchmarks is time well-spent. Professional buy-in occurs when teachers understand the intervention framework and the process for supporting students. The clear articulation of roles and responsibilities must not be overlooked as these steps are critical in the successful implementation of the RTI service delivery model.

Universal Design for Learning

Approach: Access for all

Universal Design originated as a concept in the field of architecture and the need to meet the accessibility requirements of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). Ron Mace coined the term Universal Design as it applies to architecture. In this field, Universal Design refers to the design of buildings, structures, products and environments that can be used by people with a range of physical and cognitive abilities (Courey, Tappe, Siker & LePage, 2012).

In 1984, The Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) was founded by David Rose and Ann Meyer, along with a group of educational researchers. This group began to extend the architectural concepts of universal design to education. CAST highlighted and continues to highlight the role of technology in supporting students with special needs and making curriculum, instruction and classrooms accessible for all (Jimenez, Graf, Rose, 2007).

Hall, Meyer and Rose (2012) define UDL as an instructional framework designed to support recognizable learning, structured learning and affective learning. They define UDL as a guiding framework that allows educators to utilize instructional design that recognizes the diversity of their learners, whether that diversity is based on language, socio-economic status gross motor ability, cultural background, and/or cognitive ability.

Universal Design for Learning is a set of standards and practices that can be part of the instructional make-up of a general classroom. In a UDL classroom, instructional practices include access to a variety of learning materials and opportunities for students to choose how they express and showcase their knowledge and learning. The belief is that ownership and choice will lead to increased levels of student engagement and motivation (Courey, Tappe, Siker & Lepage, 2012).

Universal Design for Learning is a system of service delivery that focuses on instructional design and proactive lesson/unit planning which considers student strength and needs while incorporating curriculum demands. UDL is organized so that instructional supports are one of the first considerations when the initial stages of lesson planning occurs (Spooner, Baker, Harris, Ahlgrim-Dezell & Browder, 2007).

The Universal Design Model entails equal access to materials, resources, instruction, classrooms, and curriculum. Universal Design specifically looks at curriculum and how to ensure that the diversity of learners is understood and recognized when providing curriculum instruction within the classroom (Manitoba Education and Training, 2014). Employing the structural framework of UDL means that teachers must plan for the end in mind and ask themselves if the instructional design and learning opportunities will engage all of their diverse learners (Coyne, Pisha, Dalton, Zeph & Smith, 2012; Jimenez et al., 2007).

A term often mentioned in context with Universal Design for Learning is Universal Design for Instruction (UDI). UDI focuses on the use of instructional strategies that will benefit all learners in an educational setting. Universal Design for Instruction follows several instructional tenants which include: equitable use, flexibility in use, instruction that is simple and intuitive, perceptible information, tolerance for error, and the understanding that students bring previous experience to the learning task. Of equal importance is the understanding that each student has their own pace for learning and that instruction occurs in a community where interaction is encouraged and the climate of instruction emphasizes high expectations for all (McGuire, Scott, Shaw, 2006).

Three Systems of Learning

Research in Universal Design for Learning is based in neuroscience and how the individual brain takes in information or, in simpler terms, learns. Research in this area has found that learning within each individual brain is both varied and distributed. This means that in one classroom there will be multiple ways students access instruction and ultimately learn which means that educators must attend to these learning differences when considering appropriate lesson planning and supports (Hall et al., 2012).

CAST identifies three guiding principles that provide the framework for UDL as a service delivery model. The first principle is providing multiple means of representation with the understanding being that each individual learner will process and understand information in different ways. The second principle is providing multiple means of action and expression so that there are several options available for learners to demonstrate their understanding. Finally, the third principle is providing multiple means of engagement as learners will vary in their desire or motivation to engage in learning. The aim behind each principle is to provide a checkpoint for educators to follow in order to ensure that the curriculum as planned for, instructed and presented to students is truly accessible to all. “When children enter a classroom that allows for multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression, they are able to develop and enhance their physical, social, and cognitive abilities in addition to building their levels of independence and local autonomy” (Stockall, N. S., Dennis, L. & Miller, M., 2012, p. 10).

In a diverse classroom, there is no single method that can reach all learners. Multiple pathways to achieving goals are needed. In a UDL classroom, educators can support those multiple pathways by presenting concepts in multiple ways, offering students multiple means of expressing their knowledge, and providing a variety of options to support each student’s

engagement with learning. When educators approach teaching and learning with a UDL mindset, they must enter into teaching and planning with a proactive and positive lens. They must have a positive presupposition that each student can and will succeed and the awareness that each student is unique and needs a wide-ranging menu of learning opportunities and supports in order to engage in the learning process (Hitchcock et al., 2002).

Spooner et al., (2007) argued that the barriers to learning are immediately created when educators present only one way for students to acquire and represent their knowledge and understand and engage in their own learning. Education should be about creating learning pathways that broaden the areas of acquisition, representation and engagement. When educators represent and present a learning concept in a variety of ways, they are responsive to the fact that there will be a variety of learners in a classroom who access and take in information in a multiple of ways. Some will respond to written text, others to a speaker presenting to the class, others still to a movie, song or poem. The way we can present and invite students to take in information or content and engage in learning is limitless (Jimenez et al., 2007).

Expression includes the methods of communication that students are able to engage in and use (Spooner et al., 2007). Providing students with options for how they express their learning and understanding ensures that the learner has achieved a particular educational outcome, and has not just learned how to respond in a rote manner to a specific assessment form, such as a written test or report. The question educators must ask themselves is whether the students understand the concept being taught or have learned how to respond in a very rote way due to the repeated use of single assessment format (Jimenez et al., 2007; Hitchcock et al., 2002). Fostering and maintaining engagement in the classroom can be a challenging task for educators, especially if the teacher operates under the assumption that there is only one way to teach a

particular curriculum objective or concept. Students have to be involved in learning in order to engage in learning. Students are more likely to engage in learning when they are afforded multiple ways to respond and represent their learning (Spooner et al., 2007). “Teachers who create multiple means of engagement support affective learning by tapping into learners’ interests and offering appropriate challenges to increase their motivation” (Jimenez et al., 2007, p. 45).

The second base of research that the CAST model of UDL draws on is the use of evidence-based practice within the UDL framework. CAST identifies three systems as being at play when learning occurs. The *recognition system* refers to the way in which a child recognizes information, builds factual knowledge, and relates new information to their prior knowledge and in effect determines how that child learns and takes in information (Delaware Department of Education, 2004). The understanding that each learner will attune to specific components of a lesson or a topic is the reasoning for providing information in multiple forms and multiple ways. The second system that the learner employs is a *strategic system* to make sense of information. The learner uses strategies they have been taught or exposed to in order to make sense of information and how to use information (Pisha & Coyne, 2001). “Everything we encounter involves a strategic process (strategic network) to identify, plan, and execute an action. The manner in which we accomplish this, determines, in part, how we learn” (Delaware Department of Education, 2004, p. 6). The third system is referred to as the *affective system* and reflects a person’s preferred style of learning and her/his own individual interests. The affective system is tied to the feelings associated with learning which can impact student engagement and motivation in either a negative or positive way. An additional working model of Universal Design has been developed by Jennifer Katz and is known as *The Three Block Model of*

Universal Design for Learning (2013). As in the CAST model, the Three Block Model emphasizes a flexible approach to delivering the curriculum, including the use of multiple instructional methods and assessment practices. The Three Block Model directs teachers to develop a learning profile of their students by determining the areas of multiple intelligences that make up each individual student's learning mode. Differentiated instruction is the foundation for all lesson planning and assessment. The social/emotional culture and concept of belonging plays key roles in Katz's UDL model. In this model, social/emotional learning is considered foundational to academic learning. Katz argues that the lack of a safe and caring learning environment is a roadblock to all students accessing their full learning potential (Katz, 2012).

UDL is a fairly new phenomenon in the history of inclusive education. The research base has been predominantly qualitative in nature and has focused on educators' responses regarding the use of UDL strategies (as outlined by CAST) in proactive planning and instructional design to support students (Rao et al., 2014). The lack of quantitative research is most likely due to the fact that Universal Design service delivery models are considered to be in the infancy stages of development when compared to models that have a more seasoned body of research behind them (Rao et al., 2014).

Professional Development and Teacher Training

In 2007, Spooner et al., embarked on an investigation to determine how UDL teacher training affected lesson plan design and implementation. The results of this study indicate that teachers were able to create appropriate programming and learning opportunities that respect and address the diversity of all learners in a classroom when they receive specific training regarding the step-by-step art of lesson planning that includes the principles of Universal Design for Learning (e.g., representation, expression and engagement). The researchers found that training

teachers on the principles of UDL and ensuring these principles are incorporated into lesson planning helped to create access to the curriculum for all students. The researchers also emphasized that although many educators assume that UDL's main focus is how technology enhances learning, it is really about how dynamic teaching strategies and understanding student need can ensure inclusion for all (Spooner et al., 2007).

The use of student learning profiles is in alignment with the practice of differentiated instruction that has been supported in the province of Manitoba (Manitoba Education and Training, 1996). Both student learning profiles and differentiated instruction are based on the premise that students learn differently, and that instruction should be tailored to address a student's unique learning needs. However, there is no recipe for instruction that will reach every student.

Differentiated instruction means offering students multiple options at each stage of the learning process. This does not mean attempting to offer a different course to each student, individualized for his abilities and needs. Instead, classroom experiences can be differentiated by offering choices and by varying teaching and assessment methods (Manitoba Education and Training, 1996, p. 1.4).

Manitoba Education and Training scripted this statement more than twenty years ago, and the fact remains that we continue to see classrooms where a one-size fits all approach is the standard for instruction and learning.

The service delivery model of Universal Design for Learning serves to meet the needs of all students, not just those identified as struggling or needing additional supports and interventions. There needs to be a shift in thinking away from the idea that diverse learners are the exception.

Even when publishers explicitly include techniques for diverse learners, the writers seem to consider those diverse learners as outliers and exceptions. These exceptions include not only students with disabilities but also students with exceptional talents, those whose native language is not English, and many others (Hitchcock et al., 2002, p. 8).

Key elements of a UDL curriculum service delivery model include differentiated instruction and differentiated assessment methods, learning goals that are both appropriate and challenging and materials that allow for multiple representations of student learning/knowledge to support all learners (Hitchcock et al., 2002). The premise of UDL is that all students have a right to equal access to the curriculum and to opportunities that support their individual learning strengths. The planning is strength-based, not deficit based. UDL is a framework educators can work within when developing instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments for all learners.

Proponents for a UDL system of service delivery describe the need for instruction and programming to be rooted in a strength-based system of instruction and assessment. Educators do not wait to see if the student will struggle with content or concepts, instead they do work at the front end and determine what the student needs to succeed (Stanford & Reeves, 2009).

The underlying philosophy of UDL is that a child can succeed if provided with the instruction, materials and opportunities that best match their learning style. Diversity is at the heart of all learners. The myth that there is such a thing as an average student has been debunked and research regarding how individuals learn has shown that every learner is unique in how they process information and how they apply that information (Hall et al., 2012). It is not appropriate to think that the ‘general curriculum’ and ‘general instruction’ actually serves the ‘general population’.

Diversity in a UDL Service Delivery Model: Learners and Teachers

Proponents of Universal Design for Learning argue that the shift that is needed must happen in the curriculum and not in the child. Hartman (2015) maintained that schools must recognize that a student's disability does not define their role as a learner. All students require supports to access learning. Some supports just look different than others. "When teachers embrace the conceptual shift of the UDL framework and learner variability, they understand that severe disabilities are part of the natural diversity that is to be expected and embraced in classrooms" (Hartman, 2015, p. 58). A flexible service delivery framework frees up teachers to be more flexible in their teaching style and delivery of curriculum content. It has been argued that providing options for students leads to greater engagement in school, so it stands to reason that providing options in teaching style may lead to greater teacher engagement as well.

The UDL framework encourages teachers to expect more from their learning environments and consider what would happen if the curriculum was developed to include multiple ways in which learners with severe disabilities can: (a) engage in learning, (b) be resourceful, and (c) act on or show what they know. Considering learning in this way puts the onus for reform on the curriculum and not on the learner with severe disabilities to conform (Hartmann, 2015, p. 58).

Collaboration in the classroom setting is one of the key features of a UDL service delivery framework. The mandate of UDL is inclusion of all children in the home classroom. In order for inclusion to occur, it is important that collaboration occurs among the classroom teacher and resource/special education teacher and a host of other stakeholders. The bringing together of professional skillsets offers a supportive and enriched learning environment for all students (Courey et al., 2012).

Professional Development and Training

If every learner approaches and accesses learning in a unique way then it is absolutely necessary for educators to utilize more diverse instruction and assessment methods. Inclusion is about respecting and welcoming diversity in students and learning communities. The same supportive methods that we advocate for students must be applied to teachers as well. Teachers must be given the resources and support to be innovative, flexible and inclusive leaders in their classrooms. This support should include providing rich professional development opportunities that guide teachers in the use of flexible planning and assessment practices. Support also should be provided in the area of collaborative teamwork. If the expectation of a UDL service delivery model is that all professionals work together then it is necessary to ensure the skills of collaboration and communication are well entrenched prior to a school team embarking on the intricate process of collective instructional planning.

The Three Block Model of Universal Design for Learning

In 2012, Dr. Jennifer Katz published a book entitled *Teaching to Diversity: The Three Block Model of Universal Design for Learning*. Katz developed a UDL model that focused on the whole child and highlighted the need to educate students not just about content/curricula, but to also give as much attention to teaching students to identify their own strengths, how they learn best and what it means to be a member of a learning community. Katz's Three Block Model of Universal Design encourages educators to spend time focusing on developing safe, trusted learning communities prior to presenting students with required academic content. Several schools in Manitoba have elected to follow the UDL service delivery framework that has been created and developed by Dr. Jennifer Katz. Katz has defined her Three-Block Model of Universal Design for Learning as an inclusive educational approach to classroom management,

planning, instruction and assessment while focusing on creating an environment that fosters social and emotional learning as well (Katz, 2012).

Katz has organized her UDL model into 3 different blocks or sections. They include: Block One: Social and Emotional Learning, Block Two: Inclusive Instructional Practice, and Block Three: Systems and Structures (Katz, 2012). Social and emotional learning is the basis for Block One and it emphasizes developing a compassionate learning community and environment for all students. Diversity is accepted, appreciated and valued through a purposeful study of multiple intelligences and the brain. Block Two is devoted to inclusive instructional practice and addresses the need to differentiate both assessment and instruction in order to ensure inclusion of all students, including those with exceptionalities. Focus is placed on essential understandings and integrating curriculum in order to teach essential content. Block Three of Katz's UDL Model looks at the systems and structures that are part of special and general education. Katz identifies the need for strong leadership and professional development to support collaborative practice, authentic assessment and the allocation of human resources (i.e. student services personnel, educational assistants) to classrooms, not to individual students (Katz, 2012). The understanding is that social and emotional learning must be programmed for and ensured so that all students in the classroom are seen as contributing members, with each individual possessing strengths that can enhance their own learning and the learning of their peers.

The purpose of some of the most recent research by Katz was to determine if the instructional framework (Block Two) of the Three Block Model of UDL had a positive impact/influence on academic engagement, as well as social engagement (Katz, 2013). This research is critical as one of the challenges faced by Universal Design for Learning is the fact that there is not a great deal of quantitative research to establish that the model has a positive

impact on student learning. The recent research of Rao et al., (2014) also pointed to the fact that there was a “scarcity of empirical examinations exploring the efficacy of UD models. Most of the literature consists of descriptive studies about the importance of using UD in education” (p. 164). There is a lack of research regarding whether or not interventions based on the UDL model improved content and skill learning/acquisition, making it difficult to argue whether UDL interventions are evidence-based practices.

Research findings from Katz (2013) affirm the inclusion assumption that pulling services and supports into the classroom and providing differentiated instruction/assessment/evaluation to match student strengths and needs will ensure that all students feel included in the academic and social milieu of the classroom. “In the big picture of UNIVERSAL design for learning...it appears that students in treatment classes were significantly more academically engaged in UDL classrooms than in typical inclusive classrooms” (Katz, 2013b, p. 182). A caution regarding this research study is that it did not focus on achievement and whether not an increase in both academic and/or social engagement leads to an improvement in academic achievement. Additionally, a further limitation of the study occurred when students identified as having significant cognitive disabilities were excluded from the data collection/survey portion of the study. Generalizations cannot be made that the Three Block Model of UDL does in fact increase both student engagement and achievement for all learners.

Co-teaching

Approach: Collaboration within a Co-teaching Model

Co-teaching is a service delivery approach that includes two or more educators working together to deliver instruction to a group of students in a single classroom. The educators work together to assess students' understanding, plan instruction, and evaluate students' learning. The co-teaching team also reviews and critiques the effectiveness of the co-teaching plan (Manitoba Education and Training, 2014).

Cook and Friend (1995) describe co-teaching as involving two or more professionals who work together to deliver instruction to a diverse group of students in an inclusive classroom setting. In Cook and Friend's model this professional pairing usually consists of a classroom teacher and resource/student services teacher. Each teacher is actively involved in the planning, programming, teaching and assessment components of this instructional approach. Cook and Friend emphasize that the additional teacher(s) does not take on the role of educational assistant. It is the responsibility of both co-teaching partners to be actively involved in planning, executing and evaluating instructional methods. The goal of co-teaching is to deliver educational programming to a diverse group, most often delivered in the home classroom (Cook & Friend, 1995).

A true co-teaching collaboration involves a sharing of instructional delivery. Both teachers are actively involved in the planning and the teaching of curricular content. There should be no hierarchy between co-teaching partners.

The basis for an effective co-teaching relationship is parity, ensuring each professional's instructional contribution is equally valued. This implies that teachers share power – neither makes the decisions alone, neither directs the other. Instead, co-teachers

collaborate to make decisions, divide responsibilities to be efficient, and share accountability for their students' learning. Many factors contribute to parity in co-taught classes (Friend, 2014).

Walther-Thomas (1997) described how co-teaching was one of the only collaborative instructional practices that required active participation by team members. She argued that other educational structures of collaboration see many professionals gather together to discuss learning difficulties and offer suggestions of support, but more often than not, the execution of the professional suggestions rests with the classroom teacher. "Most classroom teachers engaged in collaborative relationships receive many good ideas but little actual help in implementing these strategies. Cooperative teaching, or co-teaching, is a notable exception" (Walther-Thomas, 1997, p. 396).

Fennick and Liddy (2001) describe co-teaching as a collaborative partnership where the classroom teacher and the student services teacher share the planning and the instructional delivery. The idea is that the partnering teachers will combine curricular knowledge with specific student support knowledge to ensure that all students in the classroom are engaged and can access learning. Co-teaching can help foster greater awareness, understanding and responsibility for the strengths and needs of each student, as well as the learning support strategies that each individual student requires. Fennick and Liddy (2001) refer to this as shared responsibility. "When teachers work as collaborative teams they move from their separate special education and general education environments to new roles and responsibilities involving shared management for a large number of students, only some of whom have disabilities" (Fennick et al., 2001, p. 229).

A co-teaching relationship is essentially a partnership where communication is key. Co-teachers must be ready to enter into conversations and negotiations regarding effective classroom management, identifying essential learning outcomes, fostering student engagement and planning lessons that build on student strengths, while providing appropriate supports to address learning needs. The co-teaching service delivery model is doomed for failure if the bulk of the planning and instruction falls on one teacher, leaving the other teacher to feel devalued and, perhaps less invested in learning outcomes (Bouck, 2007).

Co-teaching Methods

There are many different co-teaching methods or styles that allow the co-teaching professionals to have some flexibility and choice as to how instruction is planned for and delivered. Co-teaching options include: (1) one teach, one observe, (2) station teaching, (3) parallel teaching, (4) alternate teaching, (5) team teaching, and (6) one teach, one assist (Scruggs, Mastropieri & McDuffie, 2007). Educators have specific roles in whichever system is selected and implemented. In the one teach, one observe model, one of the teaching partners is responsible for instructional delivery to the whole group while the co-teaching partner collects specific data that may include observations regarding behavior, academics or another pre-determined domain. In the station teaching structure, students are divided into three groups. Each group rotates through three different teaching/learning stations where instruction is delivered by a different teacher at two of the stations and the third station acts as an area of independent learning or study. In the parallel teaching style, both teachers are responsible for the same curricular content but they deliver this content through different styles. The hope is that this differentiation of instruction will increase student participation and engagement. The fourth style, known as alternate teaching, involves one teacher leading the bulk of the class while the

second teacher works with a smaller group of students who require additional support, further assessment or smaller teacher/pupil ratio for other learning purposes. Team teaching occurs when both teachers lead the class in instruction but demonstrate alternate ways to solve a problem or approach learning. A final style in co-teaching is one teach, one assist where one teacher leads the class through instruction and the teaching partner circulates to offer extra support and assistance to those students who may be struggling with the learning outcomes (Friend, Cook, Hurley-Chamberlain & Shamberger, 2010). Scruggs et al., (2007) conducted a review of the research on the co-teaching approach. Their synthesis of available research highlighted the need for specific structures within a school to ensure that co-teaching is as successful as possible. These structures include adequate planning time and a good working relationship between co-teaching partners where both partners are engaged in true collaboration. “The individuals in each pair should be on equal footing unless it is mutually understood that one of the pair is clearly advanced in...experience, expertise, or professional judgment” (Scruggs et al., 2007, p. 412). The co-teaching partnership must ensure that the participants are engaged in professional dialogue regarding the roles and responsibilities of each partner when it comes to planning, instruction and assessment.

Co-teaching: The classroom teacher and the resource teacher

Research conducted by Hang and Rabren (2008) examined the academic success of students with special needs when instruction was delivered via a co-teaching approach. This research reported that both classroom teachers and student services teachers felt that there were definite strengths to a co-teaching instructional approach. The student services teachers had more positive perceptions than the classroom teachers about whether students with special needs were adequately supported in a co-teaching classroom. “This significant difference in perception may

be attributed to the fact that the special education teachers were primarily responsible for providing support to students with disabilities in the co-taught classroom and, therefore, felt more strongly that students were receiving sufficient support” (Hang & Rabren, 2008, p. 266).

Fennick and Liddy (2001) conducted a survey that asked special education teachers and general classroom teachers to respond/rank their responsibilities in regards to teaming and planning as part of a co-teaching duo. Both groups of teachers had positive responses regarding the service delivery model of collaborative teacher or co-teaching and were consistent in their responses regarding planning time and preparation. However, an interesting finding in the rank survey was the continued endurance of traditional teaching perceptions amongst co-teaching partners, where classroom teachers felt that the removal of small groups of identified students from the classroom for individual instruction is still the main responsibility of the resource teacher. This research showed the work that needed to be done over ten years ago around the understanding and use of inclusive classroom practices, continues to be the work that is still relevant in today’s learning communities, as schools struggle to determine the most effective and inclusive ways to support diverse learners in the classroom setting.

Co-teaching is an instructional option that can be used to teach a diverse group of learners, but it does not promise inclusion. Friend and Cook (1995) argue that co-teaching is often looked at as a means to inclusion, but really co-teaching is an instructional tool that can assist with inclusion. Just because two or more teachers may follow the approach of co-teaching does not mean that this practice is occurring in an inclusive environment.

Service Delivery Models: Alignment amongst the Models

One can identify commonalities amongst the four service delivery models known as Consultative-Collaborative, Response to Intervention, Universal Design and Co-Teaching. The emphasis regarding professional development in the areas of evidence-based practices and evidence-based assessment occur throughout all four models. The realization that teacher professional development requires a commitment of both time and financial resources is evident throughout each review. All four models require elements of collaboration, effective communication and teaming in order to achieve successful inclusion and learning for all. Finally, each model identifies that there cannot be a one size fits all approach to teaching and learning. There is a recognition that every child learns differently which requires planning, instruction and assessment to be flexible and multi-faced.

An extensive amount of research and literature has focused on the service delivery models of Response to Intervention, Universal Design for Learning, Consultative-Collaborative and Co-teaching. It is imperative that the professionals involved in delivering student supports and programming, understand their roles and responsibilities within the specific model or models that their schools select as the preferred method of service delivery.

Role clarity is essential and crucial for any resource teacher in Manitoba as their presence as an influential team member is documented and recommended in Manitoba's provincial document for resource teachers. "School divisions will determine the type of service delivery model within which resource teachers will work. Resource teachers should always be knowledgeable about the policies, guidelines, procedures, and practices of the school division in which they are employed" (Manitoba Education and Training, 2014, p. 4). Given these

provincial directives it is prudent to ask and receive answers regarding the following research question:

“How do resource teachers describe their role and experiences with student service delivery models in supporting students with diverse learning needs?”

Chapter 3

Method

Design of the Study

The purpose of this study was to focus on the perspectives of resource teachers in regards to their knowledge and experience with service delivery models as a means of supporting students with diverse learning needs. I wanted to learn about the current and previous delivery models that resource teachers have experienced, as well as how they defined their own roles/responsibilities and the roles/responsibilities of team members within these models.

I used qualitative methods for this study as the qualitative approach to research allowed participants to share and describe real-life experiences with student service delivery models. Creswell (2012) describes qualitative research as the collecting of information around a central phenomenon. “When conducting qualitative research, the investigator seeks a deep understanding of the views of one group or single individuals” (p. 128). The purpose of qualitative research is to learn about the experiences of the participants. The researcher sets their own biases and opinions aside, allowing the participant to provide responses and feedback to specific questions (Creswell, 2012).

In the case of this particular research study, the central phenomenon was the notion of utilizing a service delivery model as a framework for providing supports and services to students with varying abilities and/or additional needs.

I conducted individual interviews to collect qualitative data regarding resource teachers’ perspectives and experiences with service delivery models. Creswell (2012) describes individual interviews as a standard approach in educational research, noting that one-to-one interviews “are ideal for interviewing participants who are not hesitant to speak, who are articulate, and who can

share ideas comfortably” (p. 218). All interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed. Field notes were taken during each interview and recorded in the *Interview Protocol* (Appendix B). Creswell also directs researchers to ask open-ended questions, so as not to lead participants. Equally as important is to support participants in staying focused during the interview and ensure that you seek concrete details (Creswell, 2012).

Recruiting the Participants

I began the recruitment process upon receiving ENREB approval on April 7, 2017 (Appendix G). I emailed School Division Superintendents a *Letter of Information* (Appendix E). This letter was sent to both metro and rural area superintendents as a means of introducing the study and providing the criteria for interview participation. Several divisions replied requesting that I complete specific research application forms that were unique to each school division. In early June, 2017, I received research approval from an urban school division to conduct my study and recruit resource teachers from this division. I initiated the recruitment process by emailing the *Participant Recruitment – Call for Participation* document (Appendix C) to over twenty school principals in this division and asked them to forward the information on to their resource teaching staff. I received interest from one resource teacher in late June, 2017. This teacher met the requirements of the inclusion criteria detailed below:

1. Currently employed as a resource teacher in the public school system
2. Participants must have a special education certificate, obtained in Manitoba, and hold a PBDE or equivalent
3. Minimum 5 years’ teaching experience
4. Minimum 3 years’ experience as a resource teacher
5. Willing to discuss experiences as a resource teacher
6. Available to spend 60-90 minutes being interviewed and another 30 minutes in checking/reviewing the transcript of the interview

During the summer of 2017, I received some additional interest in the study, but these participants did not meet the inclusion criteria, specifically the criteria which stated that participants must have acquired their Special Education Certificate in Manitoba, as well as a PBDE or equivalent. These specific criteria were interfering with my ability to secure participants for the study. I applied to ENREB on August 9, 2017 requesting an amendment to the study that would allow me to remove the Special Education Certificate and PBDE requirements from the participant criteria list. ENREB approved this amendment effective August 9, 2017 (Appendix H). With this approval, I was able to recruit four additional participants, bringing the total number of resource teachers interviewed to five. All interviews were completed by October, 2017.

The five participants were assigned pseudonyms and were identified as Anna, Beth, Clara, Dina and Ella in the thesis. All five interview subjects worked for the same urban school division. All five participants had over five years' experience as a resource teacher or student services teacher. Anna had experiences as an educational assistant, classroom teacher and student services teacher. Beth worked as a teacher in both the early and middle years' settings before moving to the role of resource teacher/student services teacher. Clara had worked as a specialist teacher and classroom teacher in a variety of kindergarten to grade 9 classroom settings in this province and other Canadian provinces. Clara supported staff and students in multiple schools as an itinerant resource teacher. Dina was a classroom teacher for seven years before moving into the role of resource teacher. Finally, Ella had experience as an educational assistant, classroom teacher and resource teacher at both the school and divisional levels.

Data Collection

Data for this research study was collected through individual interviews. I followed a scripted interview format, as shared in Appendix B. The interview questions focused on each participant's teaching experience, their perspective regarding the necessary skillset and competencies required to successfully undertake the role of the resource teacher in supporting students with additional needs, as well as their understanding and experiences working with various service delivery models throughout their teaching careers. Interview locations were selected by the participants. The first interview occurred at the participant's home. The second interview was conducted at the participant's school and the third interview was conducted at my home. The remaining two interviews were completed by phone. All interviews were digitally recorded and consent was obtained in writing through a Letter of Free and Informed Consent (Appendix D). The nature of the study was explained in this same letter. All participants were made aware that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time by contacting me via email or phone. If any participant had withdrawn from the study, their data would have been immediately destroyed.

Water/coffee was offered for the interview that occurred in my home. I began each interview by thanking the participant for their time and willingness to participate in the study. I referred to the Interview Protocol (Appendix B) during the interview. Ongoing interview questions were based on the participant's answers and sharing. Interviews lasted between forty-five minutes and one hour. I transcribed each interview myself and emailed participants a PDF copy of their interview. In the email to participants, I explained the member checking process and requested that each participant review the transcripts and notify me within two weeks if they would like to clarify or change any of their responses. I received feedback from two participants

indicating they had reviewed the transcript content and their responses remained the same. I followed up with the other three participants via email after the two week deadline. Each of the three participants replied to the email, indicating their approval of their interview transcript. As previously explained, I transcribed all interviews myself to ensure that participants remained anonymous. At no point were any of the participants' names or any closely identifying information included in any documents generated from this study. As previously stated, all participants were assigned pseudonyms and their true identity is only known to myself. All digital recordings were deleted immediately after transcription. All digital files were scrubbed and hard copies were shredded.

Data Analysis

Creswell (2012) recommends that researchers adhere to some basic steps when analyzing data. These steps are not necessarily sequential, but support the researcher in making sense of the data to answer the research question. The steps of data analysis include: reviewing the data and coding it for overriding themes, creating a visual and/or narrative summary of the findings, as well as interpreting the results of the findings and their impact on future research (Creswell, 2012).

I reviewed the transcribed interviews several times in order to code and categorize the data by themes. "Themes in qualitative research are broad units of information that consist of several codes aggregated to form a common idea" (Creswell, 2013, p. 186). I cross-referenced the transcribed interviews against my own field notes from each individual interview. I chose to hand analyze all the data as the database is less than five hundred pages and did not warrant the use of qualitative data analysis computer program (Creswell, 2012).

Trustworthiness

In this study I remained committed to key characteristics of qualitative research, one of which is the process of gathering data from participants' experiences and presenting that data in a truthful manner. I also analyzed the data for themes and trends and tried to interpret the overall meaning of the findings into a central phenomenon (Creswell, 2012). I took deliberate steps to enhance the quality of my analysis by collecting data through open-ended questions so that participants could talk freely about their thoughts and experiences. On many occasions during the interview process, participants did not discuss the concept of service delivery in ways I had expected. I did not try to guide interviews in a direction away from the participants' authentic experiences. I asked each participant to review the transcripts and advise me of any discrepancies in their responses. I analyzed the data several times and reviewed the data again when I began to develop themes to ensure I had data to support my analysis.

Positionality of the Researcher

In my previous work as a Behaviour and Learning Support teacher and currently as a Student Services Consultant, I am a member of several different student service delivery teams across one school division. I was a school-based resource teacher for over ten years, followed by 6 years as an itinerant student services teacher in the role of Behavior and Learning Support Teacher. I assumed the role of Student Services Consultant in September, 2017. In my current role I work directly with student services teams across multiple schools on a daily basis.

As a person in a divisional leadership and support role working in multiple schools with many school teams, I need to have a clear understanding of my role as member of the school's student support team. I need to have a clear vision of how I can collaborate with colleagues, including resource teachers, to best support students in our care. My experience has been that many resource teachers have varying views of their roles/responsibilities in regards to supporting

students with special needs. This role ambiguity is made even more confusing when the members of a school team do not have a framework or model to follow when providing programs and supports to all students, including those with additional needs. Conducting this study has allowed me to explore this issue more carefully.

I am genuinely interested in the perspectives held by resource teachers regarding student service delivery models. I am interested in exploring the different perspectives that exist among various resource teachers regarding this structural framework.

Manitoba Education and Training also believes that resource teachers play a key role in service delivery and they emphasize the need for role clarity and responsibility within a service delivery framework. As schools/school divisions examine the service delivery model or combination of models they currently employ, they need to ensure that the responsibilities of resource teachers correspond to the model(s) used (Manitoba Education and Training, 2014, p. 7).

Chapter 4

Findings

Interview participants shared their experiences and perspectives in regards to supporting students and providing services, which ultimately is the definition of service delivery. Many of the experiences shared by these five participants reveal complex wonderings about their own role as resource teachers and the responsibilities they have in regards to supporting students with diverse learning needs. Even though interview participants did not often reference experiences to service delivery models using the specific terms of Consultative-Collaborative, Response to Intervention, Universal Design for Learning and Co-teaching, they did identify important frameworks that serve to provide a structure for decision-making and planning which again, is how education defines service delivery.

Several themes, directly and indirectly related to service delivery, began to emerge after extensive review and analysis of the interview data. These themes included (a) collaboration, (b) post-secondary training and professional development, and (c) the importance of class profiles as a service delivery structure. Finally, in listening to the perspectives and experiences of each participant and reviewing the data it became clear that theme (c) and the focus on class profiles was directly linked to the province's move towards block funding. This final theme is one of the most prevalent throughout the interview data and reflects the shift in thinking that has and is occurring regarding the support and allocation of resources for students with additional needs in the province of Manitoba.

I will present and discuss each theme separately using the information provided by interview participants to explain the identified themes.

Theme A – Collaboration

Collaboration in the Context of Service Delivery

All five interview participants spoke about the concept of collaboration and how it enhanced their work as student services teachers/resource teachers, however participants did not speak to it in terms of the service delivery model known as the Consultative-Collaborative model. In reviewing the interview data it became apparent that the processes the participants described were actually tenants of collaboration and consultation. Interview participants described how collaborative skills were essential to the role of the resource teacher/student services teacher. Each interview participant described the milieu of working relationships that student services staff must engage in and navigate, in order to ensure that they are able to work within many systems to deliver supports to students. Each participant discussed the processes they engage in with other team members in order to consult and problem solve regarding specific issues related to student learning and support. Unfortunately, participants did not identify any formal training, course work or professional development that they themselves, or their school teams, experienced that would enhance their collaborative skills. The data analysis revealed that resource teachers were left to ‘learn as they go’ in regards to acquiring the necessary skills of collaboration.

Collaboration and Teaming

Anna described how the ability to build strong, trusting working relationships is an important core competency of the resource teacher. She acknowledged that relationships and collegial collaboration were an integral part of her work as a resource teacher. She added that the ability to establish positive relationships with students, their families and their outside support

network was equally important compared to the relationships she had forged with fellow educators in her school.

Anna discussed the need for all organizations that support a student to work together. She reported experiencing service models where each support system was compartmentalized. The school had their expertise in education and the family service support specialized in the home environment and supporting the family unit. Anna argued that issues and needs faced in the home bleed into school and vice versa. She had experienced models of support where organizations rarely connected or communicated regarding how they were supporting the child. She did not find this model to be effective.

Each interview participant discussed the absolute necessity for collaboration amongst all team members. Beth, Clara and Ella described the school team as being composed of the classroom teacher, resource teacher, administrator, and parents. All three of these interview participants stressed the importance of collaboration between the school and parents, emphasizing that the voice of parents should be respected and part of the planning process.

Anna felt she was best able to support students when she had developed a strong relationship with the family. She said that often meant daily communications with many of the families whose children were part of her regular caseload. She acknowledged that this communication was a big investment of time that most often paid off in a positive, shared partnership between home and school.

Beth viewed her role as resource teacher as more of a liaison between parents and the school, and parents and outside systems. She had found it most effective when a key point person, usually the resource teacher, coordinated connections and meetings between all the different stakeholders involved. She discussed the need to really listen to parent concerns and

perspectives regarding their child's strengths and needs. "I'm a big liaison between parents and teachers often. So I listen to parents, especially the kids who have plans."

Beth acknowledged that the voice of the student can often be overlooked in the collaborative process and felt the role of the resource teacher was to include the student, as developmentally appropriate, in setting goals and creating a plan.

Collaboration: Building and Expanding the Team

Clara and Ella had interesting perspectives regarding their working relationships with school teams, given the fact that they are both itinerant resource teachers who work with many different school teams. Ella described the process that occurs when she becomes involved with a school team. She described it as collaboration from the very initial stages of getting to know a student and their strengths and needs. She described the need to collaborate with many professionals in order to develop an evidence-based, supportive plan for the student. Ella talked about the need for all members of a team to share their knowledge around a student and to be open to different ideas or suggestions regarding programming and supports. She viewed the team approach as most effective when the school team, which included classroom teacher and student services teacher, met regularly to plan, delivered instructional supports and follow-up with a review meeting to determine if there needed to be tweaks or adjustments made to the plan. The move to building a team around the student occurred when the student was not progressing as anticipated and the supports in place did not appear to be impacting student progress and performance. Ella said communication and collaboration were essential when the team around a student is expanded to divisional and/or outside agency supports. She described how teams came together which she said should involve "classroom teacher, other specialists, whoever worked with the child and then together we created a plan for this child". She described how school

teams work through agreed upon processes or frameworks to determine next steps for student planning and programming. She shared how all student services staff were trained in collaborative problem solving and how valuable it was for professionals to have a shared understanding of the process, whatever it may be, that the team would undertake together for the benefit of the student.

Dina described the teaming that occurred with divisional support staff, including clinicians. She felt strongly that, although the resource teacher was often seen as the key point person in supporting the teacher and the student, it was essential that supports extended beyond them, especially when students' needs were complex and multi-faceted. Dina saw real value in including clinicians in regular team meetings and classroom profiles. She felt these meetings helped to inform divisional staff of, not just the student and their needs, but also the context of the classroom and the needs of the teacher in regards to student support. Dina felt that the inclusion of clinicians in routine meetings would also be a time investment in fostering those important collaborative relationships.

All five participants stated that they valued collaboration and felt that the ability to collaborate with school personnel, families, divisional staff and outside agencies was a necessary skillset for any resource teacher or student services teacher. Beth provided a clear and concise example of why she felt collaboration was so important in the role and daily responsibilities of a resource teacher.

You have to be able to work with others because you are working with your entire staff and everyone has a different personality. What happens when you don't get along with a colleague or see eye-to-eye, even with administration. How do you manage that? How do you cope with that? How do you move on from that and continue to be professional?

Collaboration: Respect and Parity

Beth shared the collaboration that must go in to creating and documenting student specific plans, such as Individualized Education Plans (IEP) or Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP). As the resource teacher/case manager she understood the value in working with the student, classroom teacher and family to develop goals and support strategies. Beth described how schools needed to develop a culture where all the professionals believed they were valued and that their expertise was respected and needed. She has found that when schools take the time to develop a positive school culture and strong relationships through team building opportunities, then the school also established connections that promoted a working together kind of attitude. Beth shared that one of the most challenging components of providing supports to students was the management and training of the educational assistants. She tried to work with classroom teachers to develop the agreement and understanding that they were a team that worked together to direct the educational assistant about how they were to provide supports to students. She shared her frustration when a classroom teacher was critical of an educational assistant and instead of discussing this directly with the assistant, the classroom teacher viewed this discussion as the role of the resource teacher. Beth felt this deferral of responsibility for managing and directing the educational assistant put her in the middle of the working relationship between the teacher and the EA.

Anna echoed the sentiment that when resource teachers were held in a different hierarchy than classroom teachers, it created a dynamic that was not conducive to collaboration. She maintained that classroom teachers and resource teachers needed parity in their working relationships. Anna went further to say that she found the most successful working relationships

occurred when there was no ego amongst the professionals or a belief that one professional had more/less to offer the team and the student than another professional. Anna described the need for collaboration and the development of a school culture that was not built on hierarchy, but rather the construct that each professional brought a certain skillset and experience that contributed to the success of the team in supporting students. She emphasized that collaboration was authentic when there was not a perception that some roles were more valued than others. She shared that collaboration unfolded when each team member held a shared belief that centered on the best interests of the student.

It's really about servicing the children well... the belief that it is a job of service and so we are here to serve students and we are here to serve the families. We are here to provide kids with the best opportunities possible.

*Theme B: Post-secondary Training and Professional Development*Post-secondary Training and Professional Development in the Context of Service Delivery

Interview participants discussed professional development and training as being rooted in their own teaching career experiences and post-secondary education courses, including their undergraduate degree in education, as well as Post-Baccalaureate courses at the PBDE level. Their experiences with this professional development most definitely shaped how each of them approached the role of resource teacher/student services teacher. All participants defined professional development provided by their school division as essential in enhancing their capacity and capabilities to provide support and services to students, families and staff. Although no participant referenced specialized training specifically in service delivery, their experiences with divisional professional development regarding neuroscience, self-regulation, social/emotional learning and developmental readiness speak to a value and belief in their approach to providing evidence-based practices which support the learner.

Post-secondary Education: Highlights and Lowlights

Clara, Dina and Ella discussed the importance of post-secondary course work. These three participants, along with Anna, identified the need for special education classes that focus on child development, especially around behavior. Ella recalled her education practicum and placed a high value on the hands-on learning a practicum provides. Anna and Ella felt strongly that post-secondary courses, at both the undergraduate and graduate level, needed to incorporate a teaching practicum component. Anna felt that graduate level courses in education faculties must mirror the realities of today's classrooms. She questioned the focus of post-graduate courses and their relevance to the classroom and school setting.

Clara discussed the need for having varied teaching experience as a prerequisite for becoming a resource teacher. She added that post-secondary courses provided her with a foundation and basic understanding regarding inclusive education and supporting students with additional needs. Clara felt that taking a graduate course was a way to prepare teachers for a student services role. Clara admitted that the demands of the job and the importance of additional training, have in her opinion, made the role of the resource teacher much less desirable over the years. She viewed the role as one that is becoming more and more difficult to fill with qualified professionals.

They're just getting so much put on their plates. People are leaving the classroom to go into student services and then leaving student services to go back to the classroom because they're finding they have to do so much with so much less than there was at one time.

Ella discussed her role as an itinerant teacher who supports both resource teachers and counsellors. She shared how she has observed teachers new to the profession who seem to lack an understanding of some basic tenants that are key to addressing the learning needs of many students. She wondered if post-secondary courses were providing information on self-regulation, social/emotional learning, lagging skills, and delving into the concept that behavior is often the symptom a student displays that stems from a more complex need.

I believe they (graduating teachers) need so much. I want to say information, experience, stories about real life in the classroom, and that's why student teaching is wonderful, but they need background understanding on child development, which I know I never received. They need background information on why kids behave, and about lagging skills, and about how to communicate with kids who are stressed, and about regulation, and about, that whole piece of

understanding mindset philosophy. I don't see new teachers coming in with that necessarily, and that idea that social/emotional learning is as important, if not more important than academic learning, because unless you have someone who is regulated and not stressed, they will never learn the academic content. So, that's number one, and I don't want to say it's not happening at universities. I just wonder about that.

Dina's sentiments echoed the wonderings Ella had regarding post-secondary training and learning. Dina also felt strongly that both undergraduate and graduate courses do not prepare resource teachers to undertake the (often unidentified) administrative role that can be a significant part of the student services teacher's responsibilities. Dina explained that "there's no component to that (the administrative role) in the post-secondary education piece and it really depends on your experience and who you are as a teacher and a person, if you're able to fit into that model." Dina reported that in her experience, many resource teachers/student services teachers have left the role due to the administrative aspects of the job, which can include staff scheduling, budgeting, and supervision and monitoring of educational assistants. Dina also felt that the move to a dual role where student services teachers have both counselling and resource responsibilities has made course selection more complicated for those teachers wishing to pursue a graduate degree in special education or inclusive education. Dina argued that it is difficult to choose an area of focus when the job responsibilities can be so diverse. She has observed situations where experienced resource teachers placed in a dual role of resource teacher and counsellor have really struggled with supporting students whose needs really require a counselling based approach. She argues that the same can be said for traditionally trained counsellors taking on a more resource/academics based support role. Dina wondered about the dual role and if this model is better suited to support students? Dina does saw the benefits of the

dual role because it leads to more flexibility in roles and supports. In Dina's opinion the dual role allows for greater equity in case management. Dina felt that in a model where roles are more traditional and strict, with resource and counselling being seen as two separate areas of responsibility, you may find that either the resource teacher or counsellor has a much heavier and more demanding caseload, depending on the profile of students for any given year.

I feel like it's (the dual role) been a good fit and something that is not foreign to me because I've worked really closely with the counsellors in the past and felt that I was doing counselling as well in my resource role.

She discussed how she has observed the changing profile of students since starting her teaching career decades ago. She shared the example of newcomers to Canada and the need for school staff, including student services personnel, to have some understanding of trauma-informed care.

Professional Development: Vision and Responsibility

All five participants shared their beliefs that professional development helps to mold the resource teacher and student services staff. Each participant shared their gratitude for the extensive professional development that they have been afforded in their current and previous school divisions. Dina described the need for school divisions to have a clear vision for how they see service delivery being administered at both the school and divisional level. Her experience was that the professional development followed when the school division was able to articulate their beliefs around service delivery. She shared that staff understood the need for specific professional development when it was part of a larger message, or vision statement. Dina also acknowledged that some of the most valuable professional development occurred through the

collaboration with school support team members, including clinicians, consultants, school-based colleagues and outside agencies.

Anna described the need for professional development to be ongoing and available to all staff working with students, not just those whose jobs are related to student services. In recent years, Anna has seen a professional development focus on neuroscience and the understanding that schools need to support children in getting their mind and body ready for learning. She described how her own learning in this area has impacted her work with both students and staff. Anna described how she works with the clinical team to ensure that the school staff, including teachers, administration and educational assistants, also receive professional development around neuroscience. “Everyone in the building speaks the same language, has the same understanding.” Anna described herself as a self-motivated learner and she believed strongly that this is the quality required of resource teachers. She acknowledged that children are entering school with many complex needs, from cognitive, sensory to mental health needs. In her opinion and experience, teachers who work in a student services role, must be equipped with an understanding of these needs and how to support students. She feels there needs to be a continuous effort on behalf of the resource teacher to enhance their own knowledge and skillset, and ultimately a willingness to share newfound learning with their school teams.

Many of the interview participants understood and articulated that part of their role in a service delivery model was to lead school staff in professional development. Each interview participant seemed to have an appreciation for the access to quality professional development that is often available to them as resource teachers and the need for them to put professional development into action by supporting both students and staff.

*Theme C – The Importance of Class Profiles as a Service Delivery Structure**Class Profiles in the Context of Service Delivery: Faye Brownlie and Judith King*

A shared theme from four out of five interviews was the emergence of the classroom and school profiles as vehicles for identifying student strengths and needs and determining the allocation of human resources to support students. Participants spoke about the change in the provincial funding process, moving from a categorical, application-based model to a block funding model. These four participants spoke passionately about the need to allocate resources where and to whom they are most needed and described the classroom profile as a valued decision-making structure in their respective schools

It is important to describe the class profile/class review process as part of my research findings as it was not part of the earlier service delivery model literature review. Faye Brownlie and Judith King (2011) have written extensively about the class review process and how this structure acts as a vehicle for service delivery. Together, Brownlie and King, have created a formal structure for class profile/review meetings so that data rich information is shared and there is time allotted to create a plan of action for the team supporting the student. Brownlie and King advise that all members of a school-based support team should be in attendance at class profile/class review meetings. In some schools the team may include the resource teacher, counsellor, administrator, EAL teacher and classroom teacher. They argue that divisional support staff, including clinicians or other specialists should be invited to attend these meetings when the school-based team has identified a student with additional needs as being part of a particular class review. The classroom teacher is provided with a list of questions to review prior to the class review meeting. These questions include: (1) What are the strengths of your class? What are the positive things about this group as a whole? (2) What are your concerns about the class as

a whole? What are their needs? (3) What are your main goals this year? and (4) What are the individual needs in your class? The classroom teacher must be prepared to speak to the strengths and concerns of his/her class as a collective group. There are clearly defined roles and responsibilities in a class review meeting. A team member is selected to act the class review facilitator when the group meets for the class review. The facilitator guides the conversation and poses the questions to the classroom teacher. Another group member is responsible for recording the information that the classroom teacher provides. The focus is on the observations and data that is provided by the classroom teacher. The facilitator and recorder are not the main speaker. The end of the meeting focuses on the individual needs of each student and at this point in the meeting other team members are given an opportunity to add information to this part of the conversation. The final phase of the meeting focuses on next steps and actions that can be assigned to team members. The teacher must identify three to four goals that may be based on the strengths, needs, curriculum or an area of interest. The needs of individual students are discussed following the identification of learning goals for the class and the focus for these students is how they can progress and learn within the classroom learning environment (Brownlie & King, 2011).

Identification of Strengths/Needs and Appropriate Programming

According to four of the five interview subjects, the new funding reality was the catalyst that propelled them to review service delivery, and along with their school teams, begin to have conversations regarding student need and student support. Beth, Clara, Dina and Ella identified the provincial move from categorical funding to block funding as a new reality that they felt had both positive and concerning outcomes for service delivery. All four participants described how their schools were using class profiles and school profiles to develop a detailed picture of student

strengths and needs. The pressing questions for student service teachers and their teams were what do we do with the resources we have and how do we determine who/what to direct these resources towards?

Beth, Clara, Dina and Ella referred to classroom profiles throughout the interview process. Each participant discussed how they valued the time school teams allotted to profiles and how the information collected at these meetings was often a starting point for planning and programming. In essence, they saw the classroom profile as a vehicle that allowed them to delve more deeply into student profiles and collaborate with the team that was present during the profile meeting. All four subjects discussed the need for these profile meetings to be focused and efficient. Dina explained that profile meetings work best when the key people including: teachers, student services staff, administrators, and clinical staff are gathered together to review the students' strengths and needs in each classroom.

Beth described using classroom profiles as a process for first identifying students that may require additional supports in either academic or social/emotional learning. She said the first step in the profile process was to meet with the teacher to discuss the strengths of their class as a whole, and then to identify the needs where a more targeted approach may be warranted. Beth shared at this early stage in the development of a class profile, interventions or programming were usually geared towards the whole class and not small groups or individuals. In Beth's experience, the classroom teacher continued to be the lead in regards to programming and intervention, but the student services staff was part of the planning to support identified needs. The classroom teacher monitored student progress and was in communication with the resource teacher should the students not respond to programming and continued to struggle with meeting specific learning outcomes. Beth reported at that point the classroom teacher shared

assessment data with her and together they looked at more intensive or targeted programming for those students who continued to require additional supports. She described how at that stage of intervention she took on a direct instruction component. Beth shared that in order for her to work directly with students she expected that the classroom teacher would have had ongoing communication with parents regarding any learning concerns. She discussed how communication with parents might have been overlooked by the classroom teacher and this was not helpful, especially if the student was struggling in the area of behavior and social/emotional learning.

Once an intervention is done with a whole class, should a few students continue to struggle, it usually comes from the teacher first, the odd time it will come from the parent, but that's kind of a different situation. So in terms of managing their behaviors and their learning here at school, teachers are usually the first to identify. They will come see me with some data, and I always tell teachers you've got to come see me with data. I'm open to a conversation but I need some data. So I need some assessments academically or some documentation of concerning behavior, how frequently they happen, and/or emails back and forth because I always say parents are key, involving the parents, what have you done to try to solve the concern with the parent?

The Class Profile Team

Beth discussed the need for expanding the team if a student or students continued to struggle in spite of school based programming and supports. In her experience, it worked well when the clinical team met with the school team regularly, at least every two months. During

these large team meetings, it was the responsibility of the resource teacher and school administrator to highlight cases that may have required clinical involvement and expertise.

Clara placed a great deal of value in the classroom profile as a means to identify student strengths and needs, which then acted as a starting point for appropriate programming. She described how profiles produce the most effective planning when all team members were present at the table. She has experienced this profile meeting configuration with many school teams and has found that when there was a full team compliment including the classroom teacher, resource/student services teacher, school administration, divisional support teachers and clinicians, there was very focused and strategic planning that occurred. Clara talked about how the classroom teacher must come to the meeting with specific learning data and the areas she/he felt the team needed to attend to more closely. Clara said that the profiles may have amounted to a wasted meeting without the classroom teacher collecting and sharing data on student learning. Clara also discussed how the skillset of the school administrator determined the direction and tone of the meeting.

You know I think a lot of the times it is to again look at strength-based so the administrator needs to be able to shut down the negative “I can’t. They can’t.” and really be the one that is focused on the strength-based and who has a really good, firm understanding of diversity and inclusion and differentiation so that they can be teaching that to their staff.

Clara was encouraged to see school teams looking at profiles for all types of learners, including those that were working beyond curricular outcomes. She said school teams often did not address the needs of this population. She commented how services should really be directed to the outliers in the classroom profile, meaning the students who needed to be challenged

beyond the curriculum outcomes and the students who needed support in their learning. Clara experienced positive results for student learning when the school team took the time to identify a student's strengths and interests at the profile meeting and then used this information as a jumping off point for programming in other learning areas.

Dina's experiences with class profiles were similar to Clara's and Beth's, in that she found them to be a useful tool in identifying students' needs. She saw the class profile as a preliminary step in the information gathering process, prior to a school team deciding which intervention would be most appropriate. She also shared that she used the information collected at the classroom profile to determine her co-teaching commitment and co-teaching timetable in the specific classrooms she support. Dina saw the classroom profile as a way to look at the global needs of a classroom and determine learning that needed to occur for the whole class and for specific students or groups as well. She used the RTI terminology of Tier 1, 2 and 3 with Tier 1 being the universal supports that applied to all learners, and Tier 2 and 3 programming involving more targeted interventions for students that needed greater support. She shared her beliefs around co-teaching and how she used the class profile meeting as a way to explore the classroom teacher's commitment to work with her in a co-teaching service delivery model.

I feel like before getting to do the co-teaching and determine how we are going to meet the needs of the different tiers. We can talk about what needs to be taught universally and what as a team can be more targeted in the classroom. We are able to determine that better once we have had the class profile. We are able to have that conversation about the needs globally in the class. The planning piece depends on the teacher too and the value they give to the co-teaching. Some

teachers see it more as the resource teacher or counsellor comes in and does a presentation and leaves. That's not really a co-teaching approach.

Dina shared that she appreciated the time to collaborate and work as a team to identify the needs of students. She expressed that in recent years she struggled with her own role and not having enough time to work with teachers to meet what she felt was the ever-increasing needs of a diverse learning population. She described how the move to block funding sometimes made it feel like there were fewer resources, both human and financial, to go around. Dina wondered what the next few years would bring and if there would be further clarity from the school division and the province around the allocation of resources.

Although Ella did not specifically discuss class profiles and school profiles, she did reference the need for schools to find a way to prioritize student need so that resources can be directed accordingly. Ella felt that school administrators needed to take more of a lead and responsibility for how and to whom resources were directed. Ella admitted that that kind of decision making and responsibility was difficult if an administrator had a limited experience and knowledge in supporting students with additional needs, and specifically had never been in the role of resource teacher/student services teacher.

Chapter 5

Conclusions

In this chapter, I will discuss the implications of this study and how it may impact the delivery of supports and services to all learners in both the classroom and school settings. The three themes regarding service delivery that emerged from the interview data will be related to the literature that was reviewed in Chapter 2.

Consultative-Collaborative Model as the Overriding Service Delivery Model

The theme of collaboration was central throughout the interviews. All participants discussed how collaboration was woven throughout their daily work with school-based colleagues, parents, divisional staff, and outside service providers. Interestingly, participants definitely supported the concept of collaboration but did not delve too much into how they themselves, and members of their school team acquire collaborative skills, nor did they elaborate on a definition of collaboration.

Friend and Cook (1996) define collaboration as a “style for direct interaction between at least two coequal parties voluntarily engaged in shared decision making as they work toward a common goal” (p. 6). Friend and Cook have identified some key elements that must exist in order for authentic collaboration to occur. Collaboration must be voluntary and occur where there is equal value of the contributions of each member and there is a balance of power in the collaborative pairing or grouping. The collaborative group also must have a shared goal or goals where there is a shared responsibility for participation and decision-making. Finally, the collaborative pairing or group should understand that as part of their partnership, resources which may include time, expertise, and social capital will be shared with the group, and all group members will be responsible or accountable for the results of the collaborative process (Friend

and Cook, 1996). Collaboration also involves multiple interactions and partnerships between various stakeholders (Murawski & Hughes, 2009).

Gajda & Koliba (2007) researched how collaboration is a successful framework for schools and school reform, in general. They identified six traits of collaboration which include: (1) shared purpose, (2) cycle of inquiry, (3) dialogue, (4) decision making, (5) action and, (6) evaluation.

A shared purpose occurs when two or more groups work together to achieve a common goal. The groups understand that they are more likely to achieve the goal as a team, rather than as independent units working in isolation from one another. The cycle of inquiry has its own subset of actions, which include dialogue between team members.

Resource teachers, classroom teachers, administrators and other school personnel must communicate with one another on a fairly regular basis in order to determine best practice and appropriate programming for all students. Without this constant dialogue there will likely be gaps in the understanding of student strengths and needs and as a result, gaps in supports and programming. “In a school-based context, dialogue is focused on making sense of complex data related to practice and effects of practice on essential student outcomes; thus, important disagreements and therefore tension will inevitably arise” (Gajda & Koliba, 2007, p. 30).

The dialogue and the evaluation of data leads a school team to informed decision making, the action of evaluating supports and determining next steps for student programming. Gajda and Koliba (2007) argue that this dialogue and decision making is not a time for sharing stories or a mere exchange of possible teaching strategies. Instead, team members must be ready and willing to evaluate practices and to engage in conversations that focus on reviewing the educational pedagogy to best support the student, which may mean altering their own educational practices.

These collaborative relationships, and dialogue, exist at the school level where student services teachers find they must create trusting working relationships with a multitude of professionals and support staff including classroom teachers, school administrators, students, parents, and educational assistants. The need to collaborate also extends to outside systems that may support the student or family. These systems can include child support agencies, child advocacy agencies and medical specialists. These professionals may work within a system that does not follow the same service delivery model or adhere to the same policies that the resource teacher/student service teacher works within. Working with outside professionals can in fact be very beneficial to the student, their family and school staff, but working alongside organizations outside of the school system can also bring its own set of challenges to the working relationship.

There must be a call to action once there is an agreed upon and shared understanding of appropriate programming and pedagogy. There must be a plan that indicates the course of action that will be taken and who is responsible for these actions so that supports to the student are initiated without delay. There has to be an assurance that the plan is more than just words on paper or ideas expressed in a meeting.

Finally, ongoing evaluation of the plan determines if the decisions and actions taken have made a difference in student learning and performance. “Systematic evaluation of practice is a critical characteristic of high-functioning interpersonal collaboration in any organizational setting” (Gajda & Koliba, 2007, p. 32).

It is imperative that systems and professional groups actually work together to become one large, comprehensive team around a student. The framework described by Gajda & Koliba is a structure that schools can work within to support the development of collaborative partnerships and collaborative action

The partnerships between schools and families also must be collaborative. All participants spoke to the success that occurs when parents are encouraged and invited to be part of the dialogue and planning around the child. The ongoing invitation for parents to share their knowledge and experiences of how their child has developed and accessed learning is essential in the development of a trusting relationship between home and school. Educator, Gordon Porter (2011) has advocated for parents to be at the core of team planning related to the successful inclusion and education of their children. “Parents are situated at the heart of inclusive education. Their love, understanding and hope for their children must be respected and honored in the complex process of education” (Porter, 2011, p. 173).

During the initial stages of this study while reviewing and summarizing the literature I believed that the Consultative-Collaborative model was an approach to service delivery, not necessarily a model. Information and perspectives gained from the five research participants has refined my thinking regarding this model. I heard time and time again that collaboration was an essential component of how resource teachers deliver services to all students. In the absence of collaborative skills, the resource teacher felt ill-equipped to carry out the duties of his/her role as a support teacher to students, parents, fellow teachers, and the broader school team. The experiences shared by the five participants enhanced my views related to collaboration. I, like the five participants, understood the importance of professionals working together, but I did not take the time to define or research how collaboration needs to unfold in order to best serve students. Freeze (1995) penned a chapter entitled “Collaboration and Consultation in elementary schools: Strategies to Manage Diversity” which can be found in the educational text *Teaching Students with Diverse Needs: Elementary Classroom*. In this chapter, Freeze described the importance of educational stakeholders dialoguing and problem solving together in a collective effort to

determine appropriate and successful teaching and learning for students with identified needs.

Although Freeze wrote about the need for both school-based and interagency collaboration more than twenty years ago, the need for this communication, consultation and planning remains valid and even more applicable given the increasing complexity and diversity of students in today's classroom setting.

Post-secondary training and Professional Development

All participants referenced and discussed the role post-secondary course work and education played in preparing educators to support students with additional needs, and in essence supporting the teacher's understanding of service delivery. There was an acknowledgement amongst participants that course work needs to focus on the reality of the classroom and address the ever-changing profile of learners. Participants spoke of the need to train teachers about child development, behavior management and understanding self-regulation and trauma-based care. The participants' perspectives align with what other researchers have prioritized in regards to supporting students from more of a neurological and mental health approach. Lechtenberger, Mullins & Greenwood (2008) reported on the need for educators to become more skilled and knowledgeable regarding mental health difficulties that are part of the learning profile of many students. Lechtenberger et al., (2008) advocated for specific, relevant post-secondary courses that would prepare educators to deliver services that both identified and supported children and youth facing mental health issues, including trauma.

In order for school personnel to be better equipped to identify and address the mental health needs of their students, ongoing professional development opportunities must provide in-service training for current educators as well as revised curriculum for university preservice teacher and school administrator preparation programs (Lechtenberger et al., 2008, p. 58).

Participants discussed the concept of a dual role in which there is no delineation between counsellor and resource teacher roles, and the role being identified as a dual role or student services teacher role. The participants had mixed impressions about the dual role and how effective it would be going forward in supporting all students.

Further research focusing on the offerings of post-secondary institutes, especially local ones, regarding the dual role would be a curious and worthwhile undertaking in order to see if there are indeed gaps between course work offered at both the undergraduate and graduate levels and the expectations of school hiring personnel have regarding the core competencies of resource teachers, counsellors, and/or student services teachers. Additionally, it would be interesting to do a comparative study looking into the number of educators returning to graduate studies with a student services focus and those who actually pursue the opportunity to use that course knowledge and post graduate work in a student services role.

All of the interview participants were very grateful for the professional development opportunities they had experienced over the course of their teaching careers. It was clearly evident that all participants had received professional development that enhanced their skills and knowledge as they discussed many ways in which they support learners. Interestingly though, none of the participants discussed partaking in professional development training that focused on a particular model of service delivery. This finding is important as it speaks to the lack of service delivery understanding and how it impacts appropriate educational programming for all. Professional development is not only tied to capacity building and ensuring educators are equipped with the knowledge and tools they need to support students, but it also plays a role in ensuring that educators feel competent in teaching students and providing appropriate

programming. A feeling of competency contributes to job satisfaction and is linked to a desire to remain in the field of special education.

Research conducted by Stempien and Loeb (2002) focused on teachers who worked with students identified as having emotional and behavioral needs. Stempien and Loeb wanted to determine if there was a link between the job satisfaction of this group of teachers and their desire/likelihood to remain in this education role. They found that job dissatisfaction and the likelihood of exiting the support services role were closely linked. “Special education teachers, particularly new special education teachers, express dissatisfaction and are thus particularly at risk for leaving the profession” (Stempien & Loeb, 2002, p. 264). As reported by participants in this study, access to quality professional development contributes to teacher efficacy and competence.

School divisions need to be clear with all staff, including student services personnel, about all facets of service delivery. Once a school or school division has selected a model for service delivery they need to start to envision how professional development will be organized and delivered so that all staff have a shared understanding of the process for identifying need and providing support. Without this understanding, educators are left feeling like leaves blowing in the breeze. They may feel that they have no direction and no destination.

Avramidis & Norwich (2002) conducted a review of literature that focused on teacher’s attitudes and beliefs regarding inclusion. Their review found that when teachers receive training at both the university level, and as part of their professional development in schools, they are more likely to feel confident and competent in their skills to bolster inclusion and provide appropriate programming. This research aligns with the responses and dialogue shared by the five interview participants.

Class Profiles as a Service Delivery Framework

It is necessary to provide a brief explanation of the former provincial categorical funding model in Manitoba and the current block funding model in order to articulate the perspectives of the research participants and how they view class profiles as a way to allocate supports in a service delivery framework. The purpose of this research study was to analyze and review the perspective of resource teachers regarding service delivery. There is an understanding that funding to education does, and will continue to have an impact on decisions made regarding service delivery and, ultimately, the way in which supports are allocated to all students.

The province of Manitoba had followed a categorical funding process for over thirty years. In November, 2015 the *Task Force on Special Needs Funding* released a comprehensive report for the Minister of Education and Advanced Learning. The report recognized that the categorical funding model was not in line with the province's beliefs regarding inclusion and student support. The Task Force encompassed representation from multiple stakeholders including: Manitoba Teachers' Society (MTS), Manitoba Association of School Superintendents (MASS), Manitoba School Boards Association (MSBA), Manitoba Association of School Business Officials (MASBO), Manitoba Association of Parent Councils (MAPC), Student Services Administrators' Association of Manitoba (SSAAM), and representatives from four school divisions (Manitoba Education and Training, 2015).

The Task Force reviewed historical funding data that included the number of students previously funded, the percentage of applications that were either approved or denied, attendance rates of funded students, and the real dollars that were allocated to school divisions as a result of the categorical funding process. The Task Force also reviewed funding models that were being used in other Canadian provinces, as well as taking part in formal presentations and focused

conversations involving all stakeholders. The Task Force reviewed all of the information collected and proposed specific areas of focus in regards to reviewing the categorical funding model and implementing change. These focus areas or goals included the need for a new funding model or process, the need for improvement in services and student learning outcomes, as well as the need for an efficient system that was favorable to both educators and families. The Task Force also documented that any changes to the funding model should result in an overall increase to education funding (Manitoba Education, 2015).

The Task Force created four different options to address funding and support students with additional needs. These options ranged from keeping the categorical funding model as it existed, refining the categories and criteria that made up the current model, developing a formula-based funding model that would combine categorical funding and specialized grants to schools and finally, developing a formula-based model that replaced the categorical model with a few exceptions including applications for students with significant behavioral challenges (EBD-3) or significant medical needs (URIS-A). Ultimately, the Task Force chose the latter option and recommended that the Minister endorse a formula-based funding model that would replace the categorical model, excluding the students whose needs met the criteria for EBD-3 or URIS-A funding.

Some school divisions piloted the new approach to funding during the 2016-2017 school year, while other school divisions in the province continued to work within the categorical funding model. During the 2017-2018 school year, the majority of school divisions in Manitoba were operating within a new funding structure. At the time of the completion of this thesis, a new and revised funding formula has not yet been shared by Manitoba Education. School Divisions

have been tasked with determining how resources will be allocated and how they will manage the funds dispersed to them through Manitoba Education.

The concept of class profiles and how they inform service delivery was a recurring theme throughout four of the interviews. These interview participants spoke about how the practice of classroom profiles was often the catalyst for intervention and supports. The interview participants described with confidence their work and experience using classroom profiles to identify strengths, needs and plans of action. They were, in essence, describing a model of service delivery, whether they realized it or labeled it as such.

The Consultative-Collaborative Service Delivery Model and the Class Profile Structure

The conclusion from this study is that the structure and process of class profiles drives service delivery. The class profile structure requires collaboration and consultation with all team members, both at the school and divisional level. It would appear that a lack of training and understanding regarding RTI and UDL made it difficult for participants to see the connection that these two models also have with the class profile structure. The classroom profile structure is strength-based and aligns with Universal Design for Learning and the recognition that each student learns differently and teachers must work from a strengths-based lens so that students are able to display and showcase their full range of knowledge and skills. The class profile structure also demands that team members determine the skills that students currently possess and then create the plan and accompanying services that would support the student in moving forward. This action plan and allocation of supports and services is very much linked to the Response to Intervention Model of Service Delivery. Finally, school teams that excel in the area of collaboration can implement co-teaching as an instructional practice that supports programming

in the classroom setting. The goals identified through the classroom profile process would be the foundation for lesson plans and interventions led by co-teaching instructional teams.

The analysis of data supports the finding that the Consultative-Collaborative Service Delivery Model is the model most used and favored by these interview participants. The experiences and perspectives shared by resource teachers also indicates that they value the class profile process and view it as an important team decision-making tool in programming and planning for students with diverse learning needs. A conceptual map identifying the Consultative-Collaborative Service Delivery Model as part of the Class Review Structure is displayed below in Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1: Consultation and Collaboration within the Structure of Class Profiles (Team Members)

Figure 2: Consultation and Collaboration within the Structure of Class Profiles (Service Delivery Options for Programming and Instruction)

Manitoba Education and Training highlighted Consultative-Collaborative, Response to Intervention, Universal Design for Learning and Co-teaching models as possible service delivery models in education. It is important to understand and emphasize that no one model can stand alone as the outstanding exemplar in service delivery. In fact, the combination of models will provide the most comprehensive service delivery framework. Using the Consultative-Collaborative model as the guiding framework for shared decision-making and shared responsibility will allow school teams to set goals and actions that may incorporate the organizational tiers of RTI, the multi-systems of learning in a UDL model and/or the instructional practices of Co-teaching as part of a rich and comprehensive service delivery framework. Finally, the goals and actions that are generated from a service delivery team must be grounded in evidence-based practice that is understood and followed by all the professionals supporting students.

Limitations

Reviewers and readers of this research should not conclude that because the literature review of each model was not equal in commentary length, that one model was favored over another. The quantity and quality of previous research for each of the service delivery models varied greatly in scope and availability.

This research study was small in scope and involved resource teachers from one school division and should be considered as exploratory. The participants in this study represent a convenience sample as resource teachers self-selected to take part in the study. I did not choose participants from a collection of people who agreed to participate in the study. I am confident that I have enough data to understand the perspectives of these educators. I also realize that I may not have all of the potential perspectives that exist. I believe the findings in the study are relevant and they add to the existing literature on resource teachers' perspectives and understanding of service delivery models. Future research studies could investigate the same research question as this study, but include recruit a larger sample of resource/student services teachers in both metro and rural school divisions.

Implications

An interesting outcome of this study was the fact that all five participants discussed service delivery in terms of their own work experiences, but participants did not elaborate on specific models of service delivery as outlined by Manitoba Education and Training. Imagine how the effectiveness of support, fluidity of service and ultimately the success of support interventions would look for all learners if every educator and professional, identified as part of a student team, had a shared understanding of the service delivery model they were directed to follow.

This is exactly what needs to happen, especially given the change to block funding and the responsibility now placed on school divisions to determine how to allocate resources. School divisions must adopt and clearly articulate a framework of service delivery that enables them to make the best supports and programming decisions for students in their care. Schools and school divisions need to think carefully about service delivery and the type of framework that will guide strategic planning and lead to evidence-based practice. The vision must be formed by leaders, in consultation and conversation with front line staff, including student services teachers and classroom teachers. This kind of leadership regarding service delivery is crucial as it determines the road map for how educational stakeholders, including resource teachers/student services teachers, classroom teachers, clinicians, school administrators and outsider service providers, will approach their work in regards to supporting all students.

School administrators are key in directing and providing support and professional development that focuses on service delivery. “(School administrator) involvement is essential to the lasting success of inclusive education programs. Administrative leadership ensures better implementation by securing resources needed to prepare staff members for new roles and responsibilities (Walther-Thomas et al., 1996).

A future research question should address the role of the divisional leaders and school administrators in promoting staff understanding regarding service delivery and the necessary administrator core competencies associated with that undertaking.

The timing of the research interviews brought to the surface the wonderings and concerns that professionals in a student services role have regarding the support of all students and the future of inclusion under a new model of funding. I would recommend that in a few years the concept of service delivery in Manitoba schools be reviewed again, in an effort to determine

those service delivery models that were effective and considered the gold standard in providing programming and supports under a block funding model.

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Winnipeg school division.

<http://www.winnipeg.sd.ca/schools/WilliamWhyte/AcademicsAndClasses/lac/Pages/default.aspx>

Appendices

Appendix A- Human Ethics Protocol Submission Form – February, 2017

Appendix B- Interview Protocol

*Appendix C – Participant Recruitment – Call for Participants in Master’s of Education Thesis
Research Project*

Appendix D – Letter of Free and Informed Consent

Appendix E – Letter of Information for School Division Superintendents

Appendix F – Human Ethics Response to Submission Form: March 24, 2017

Appendix G – ENREB Approval Letter: April 7, 2017

Appendix H – ENREB Amendment Approval Letter: August 9, 2017

Appendix I – Volunteer Recruitment (updated to reflect Ethics Amendment Approval)

Appendix A: Human Ethics Protocol Submission Form – February 2017

1. Project Summary

In the province of Manitoba inclusion is defined as “a way of thinking and acting that allows every individual to feel accepted, valued, and safe. An inclusive community consciously evolves to meet the changing needs of its members” (Manitoba Education, 2007, p.4).

Provincial legislation regarding appropriate educational programming, as well as, federal legislation in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom influence decisions and policies that are developed by school divisions to address the concept of inclusion and how schools will develop systems to ensure that the strengths of diverse learners are celebrated and enhanced and that the needs of these diverse learners are supported in the school setting and classroom (Manitoba Education, 2007).

Manitoba Education and Training has recommended that schools and school divisions identify and implement a student service delivery model to support programming and inclusion for all students. The provincial document, *Supporting Inclusive Schools: A Handbook for Resource Teachers in Manitoba Schools* (Manitoba Education, 2014), identifies four separate service delivery models that align with Manitoba’s inclusion philosophy.

The Consultative-collaborative, Co-teaching, Response to Intervention and Universal Design service delivery models have been highlighted by Manitoba Education and Training as models to review and implement in the school setting. It is up to schools and school divisions to determine which model they will employ to support diverse learners (Manitoba Education, 2014).

Manitoba Education emphasized the need for selection of a student service delivery model and the need for all staff to understand the system of service delivery that their school and/or division is operating under.

Decisions about which service delivery model or combination of models will be used are typically made at the school division level. The school division or school may already have a service delivery model in place or may be considering changing or expanding the existing model. As the service delivery model is the basis for resource support in a school, it is important that all staff understand the model being used (Manitoba Education, 2014, p. 8).

This study will focus on the perspectives of resource teachers in regards to their knowledge and experience with student service delivery models to support children with diverse learning needs.

Specifically, the objectives of this research are: (1) to record the perceptions of resource teachers regarding their role in supporting students with special needs, (2) to analyze the various perceptions of resource teachers regarding student service delivery models, (3) to document and report resource teachers' perceptions regarding the roles and responsibilities of each member of a service delivery team and (4) to collect and synthesize scholarly research on student service delivery models in regards to supporting students with diverse learning needs, (5) to report findings in my Master's of Education thesis. I intend to both present and publish my findings.

Theoretical Framework and Positionality:

In my work as a Behavior and Learning Support teacher, I am a member of different student service delivery teams that support seven schools within my school division. I was a

resource teacher for over ten years prior to the role of Behavior and Learning Support teacher. In my current role I work directly with resource teachers at these seven schools on a daily basis.

As an itinerant teacher who works in several schools, I need to have a clear understanding of my role as member of the school student support team. I need to have a clear vision of how I can team with colleagues, including resource teachers, to best support students in our care. My experience is that many resource teachers have varying views of their roles/responsibilities in regards to supporting students with special needs. This role ambiguity is made even more confusing when the members of a school team do not have a framework or model to follow when providing programs and supports to all students, including those with special needs. Conducting this study will allow me to explore this issue more carefully.

I remain genuinely interested in the perspectives held by resource teachers regarding student service delivery models. I am interested in exploring the different perspectives that exist among various resource teachers regarding this structural framework.

Manitoba Education also believes that resource teachers play a key role in service delivery and they emphasize the need for role clarity and responsibility within a service delivery framework. As schools/school divisions examine the service delivery model or combination of models they currently employ, they need to ensure that the responsibilities of resource teachers correspond to the model(s) used (Supporting Inclusive Schools: Handbook for Resource Teachers in Manitoba Education, 2014, p.7).

Methods:

An information search on Google Scholar spanning the years 2000-2016 regarding “resource teacher’s perspectives on service delivery models” garners limited findings. The search highlights articles that deal with the retention and attrition of special education teachers, the relationship between resource teachers and classroom teachers or the use of paraprofessionals to support students with special needs in the school system. It is difficult to readily find research that investigates how resource teachers experience, view or understand service delivery in their roles as educators. I will use qualitative research methods to answer the following question:

“How do resource teachers describe their role and experiences with student service delivery models in supporting students with diverse learning needs?”

Prior to finding potential participants, ethical approval from University of Manitoba Education Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB) will be obtained.

Data will be collected through one-on-one interviews with participants who have responded to the call for volunteers. The Interview Protocol has been included in Appendix B.

I will interview 5 resource teachers individually for approximately one hour each. I may interview an additional 3 or 4 participants if I have not reached data saturation. I will submit an ENREB amendment before I recruit additional participants. I will carry out a member checking process. I will ask each participant to select the preferred method of delivery for transcribed interviews. Delivery options include email or mail. I will ask that each participant review the transcribed interview(s) for accuracy. I will inform all participants that I will email them two weeks after sending the transcripts as a follow-up to the member checking process. If participants do not respond to the follow-up email, I will assume that they have no issue or discrepancies with the transcripts. This process is explained in the letter of consent. A note

explaining this same process will also be attached to the transcripts when they are sent to each participant. I will conduct follow-up interviews if participants respond to the follow-up email with transcript discrepancies. I anticipate that it will take participants about 30 minutes to review their transcripts if they wish to do so. I will allow for the removal of data, or a portion of data, if in review the participant feels there are discrepancies. This practice will also apply to second interviews.

Following the concept of grounded theory, data collected will be used to generate a theory/statement regarding participants' experiences with service delivery models in their work as resource teachers.

I will conduct interviews in a mutually agreed upon location. Interviews will be digitally recorded and transcribed immediately by myself. I will provide participants with the research questions at least one week prior to our agreed upon meeting date. Interview data will be analyzed for key and recurring themes.

Research Instruments:

I will use a semi-structured interview format. All interviews will be audio-recorded and later transcribed fully by myself. Each interview will take approximately one hour. Please see Appendix B for the Interview Protocol.

Recruitment of Participants:

This study does require divisional permission from school division superintendents. Please note that participants will not be asked to discuss their school division's policies, but rather to discuss their own perspectives on service delivery models more generally, from the perspective of a practicing professional.

I will contact School Division Superintendents by email regarding the recruitment of resource teachers from their school division. The email will include a “Letter of Information for School Division Superintendents” (Appendix E) and a “School Division Superintendent Letter of Consent” (Appendix E). The Letter of Information describes the research project and details the process for School Division Consent. Superintendents are asked to indicate their willingness to approve the project by completing the Letter of Consent, scanning the completed document and emailing it to myself at (email). When superintendents approve the research study they are agreeing to distribute the recruitment letter as indicated in the “Letter of Information for School Division Superintendents” and the “School Division Superintendent Letter of Consent”. I am not seeking consent from school principals as the process for school division consent and distribution of the recruitment letter is clearly stated and described in the “Letter of Information for School Division Superintendents” (Appendix E) and in the “School Division Superintendent Letter of Consent” (Appendix E).

Participants may include resource teachers from within the school division where I am employed, but will not include resource teachers from schools that I work directly with as part of a student services team. Resource teachers that I work with directly will be excluded from this study as stated in Appendix C: Participant Recruitment

I am not in a position of power in regards to resource teachers. A Behavior and Learning Support Teacher is a resource teacher. I do not hold any teacher supervisory responsibilities or administrative responsibilities in my role as a Behavior and Learning Support Teacher.

Inclusion criteria:

1. Resource teachers have taught for 5 years or more and have a minimum of 3 years' experience as a resource teacher.
 2. Participants must be currently employed as a resource teacher in the public school system.
 3. Participants must have a special education certificate, obtained in Manitoba, and hold a PBDE or equivalent.
 4. Participants must be willing to speak about their experiences as resource teachers.
 5. Participants must be able to spend between 60 to 90 minutes being interviewed and engaging in follow-up member checks at approximately 30 minutes per interview.
- Transcribed interviews will be sent each participant to check for accuracy. If I have not heard back from participants after 2 weeks I will assume that there are no issues with the interview transcriptions and no need for follow up interviews. I will conduct follow up interviews if participants contact me with discrepancies within 2 weeks of receiving the interview transcriptions.
1. Exclusion Criterion: Resource teacher(s) with whom the researcher works directly with will be excluded from this study.

Please see "Appendix C" for Recruitment – Call for Participants.

Informed consent:

As indicated, school division superintendents will be sent a Letter of Information for School Division Superintendents and a School Division Superintendent Letter of Consent (Appendix E) as the initial process for recruitment and informed consent. Superintendents will be asked to review the Letter of Information. Divisional assent to the study will be indicated through the completion of the School Division Superintendent Letter of Consent.

Superintendents are directed to scan and email this document directly to me at (email).

Superintendents agree to arrange the distribution of Appendix B: Recruitment – Call for Participants through their office when they provide consent to this study, as indicated in Appendix E: School Division Superintendent Letter of Consent.

Participant consent will be obtained in writing. Please see Appendix D for Informed Consent Form.

Potential participants who contact me will be sent the consent letter ahead of time. The nature of the study will be explained in these forms. All participants will be made aware that their participation is voluntary and that they may withdraw from the study at any time by contacting me via email or phone. If a participant withdraws from the study, his/her data will be immediately destroyed. All digital files will be scrubbed and deleted. All hard copies will be shredded.

Deception:

There is no deception involved in this study.

Feedback and Debriefing:

On the consent form, participants will be provided with the opportunity to request whether or not they would like a summary of the study once the research is completed.

Risks and Benefits:

There are minimal risks involved in taking part in this study. Direct benefits to the participants may include the opportunity to receive feedback about the study results, including a greater understanding of one's own practices in comparison to others.

Anonymity and Confidentiality:

At no point will any of the participants' names or any closely identifying information be included in any documents generated from this study. Although the participants will be identified to the researcher directly, participants will be assigned pseudonyms. Interviews will be transcribed by the researcher. All digital recordings will be scrubbed and deleted immediately after transcription.

Identifying names, locations and other identifying information will be excluded or masked with distracting information to protect participants. Identifying roles will be excluded to avoid specific identification. Consent forms and contact information of participants will be stored separately from anonymized data. Paper copies of these forms will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's office.

Only the principal investigator will have access to view the data. The research advisor will only have access to non-identifiable data. All data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in my home to which only I have access.

All interview information received will be stored digitally by pseudonym on password protected laptop computer to which only I will have access. The informed consent sheet containing participants' names will not be kept with the interview data, and will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in my home office. My faculty advisor, Dr. Zana Lutfiyya, and I are the only two people who will have access to the data. Participants have the opportunity to request a copy of the summary of the study's results. The data will be confidentially destroyed by shredding all hard copies and scrubbing and deleting all digital files. Data destruction will occur after April, 2021.

Compensation:

I will conduct interviews in a mutually agreed upon location.

Dissemination:

Summary of the research findings will be shared with participants if they wish to receive this information. Research findings will be published in my Master's of Education Thesis. Research findings may be published in scholarly articles or presented at educational conferences.

References:

- Creswell, (2012). Educational Research, Planning, Conducting and Evaluating and Qualitative Research. Pearson Education.
- Manitoba Education. (2007). Appropriate Educational Programming in Manitoba: A Handbook for Student Services.
- Manitoba Education. (2006). Appropriate Educational Programming in Manitoba: Standards for Student Services. Manitoba Education. (2014). Supporting Manitoba Education. (2014). Inclusive Schools: A Handbook for Resource Teachers in Manitoba Schools.

*Ethics Application: Appendix B - Interview Protocol*Opening Statement:

We will review the consent form prior to beginning the interview. Please let me know if you have any questions.

I am interested in further understanding and exploring the resource teacher's perspectives and experiences with student service delivery models. The following questions will ask you to reflect on your experiences as a resource teacher. Data collected from the interview will be analyzed and reported on in a final research summary document. Your confidentiality will be respected and maintained at all times.

Interview Questions

Opening Questions:

1. Please describe your work history as an educator and your current role as a special education resource teacher/student support services teacher.
2. How would you describe your role in supporting students with special needs?

Transition Questions:

3. How would you describe the necessary educator qualifications needed to support students with special needs?
4. Please describe how you have seen student services organized. What models/approaches are you familiar with in regards to how schools support students with diverse learning needs.

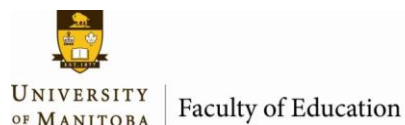
4a. Prompt: What roles and positions were included in these structures?

Main Questions:

5. Please describe the steps/processes the student services team goes through when delivering supports to students with diverse needs? Identification? Response system? Personnel involved?
6. Please describe the components of student delivery that you feel work well to meet the diverse learning needs of students.
7. Please describe the components of student delivery that you feel are not working well to meet the diverse learning needs of students.
8. Please describe for me the similarities and differences you have seen amongst various structures/models that are used to support students with diverse learning needs.

Conclusion:

9. Is there anything else that you would like to add?



Ethics Application: Appendix C - Participant Recruitment – Call for Participants in Master's of Education Thesis Research Project
Resource Teacher Perspectives on Student Service Delivery Models

Researcher:

My name is Robin Stacey and I am a Graduate Student completing my Master's of Education Thesis. I am interested in the perspectives of resource teacher in regards to their experiences with student service delivery models

Research Project Overview:

Individual interviews will be conducted with resource teachers to examine how resource teachers describe their role and experiences with student service delivery models in supporting students with diverse learning needs. Interviews will be used to collect data and examine the perspectives of individual resource teachers regarding their role and experiences with and within student service delivery models. Data will be presented and shared in a final thesis document to be presented to a graduate studies committee. As well, research findings may be published in scholarly articles or presented at educational conferences.

Participant confidentiality and anonymity will be respected at all times.

Participant inclusion criteria:

7. Currently employed as a resource teacher in the public school system
8. Participants must have a special education certificate, obtained in Manitoba, and hold a PBDE or equivalent

9. Minimum 5 years teaching experience
10. Minimum 3 years' experience as a resource teacher
11. Willing to discuss experiences as a resource teacher
12. Available to spend 60-90 minutes being interviewed and another 30 minutes in checking/reviewing the transcript of the interview

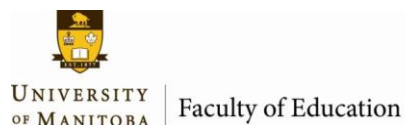
Participant exclusion criterion:

- ✓ Resource teacher(s) with whom the researcher works directly with will be excluded from this study.

If you are willing to participate, or you would like additional information, please contact Robin Stacey, Master's of Education student, by email or by telephone. You may also contact the faculty advisor for this study, Dr. Zana Lutfiyya, Professor, Faculty of Education.

This study has been approved by Education, Nursing Research Education Board (ENREB) at the University of Manitoba.

For further information, or to report any concerns, you may contact the Human Ethics Coordinator.



Ethics Application: Appendix D – Letter of Free and Informed Consent Form

Project Title: The Resource Teacher's Perspective and Experience with Student Service Delivery Models.

Researcher: Robin Stacey, Master's of Education Student

Faculty Advisor: Zana Lutfiyya

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

The study is being conducted by Robin Stacey a graduate student from the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba, in Winnipeg, Canada. The purpose of the study is to discuss the resource teacher's perspectives and experiences with student services delivery models.

You are asked to take part in one interview that should last no more than one hour. The time and location of the interview will be determined by mutual convenience. You will receive the interview questions at least one week prior to the scheduled interview. A digital audio recorder will be used to record the interview. All digital files will be stored on a laptop. Files on the audio recording device will be scrubbed and deleted immediately after they have been saved to the laptop. Digital files will be transcribed verbatim and will explore the various experiences you have had as a resource teacher in the public school system, specifically discussing your perspective regarding student service delivery models as utilized in your current work as a resource teacher and in previous years as a resource teacher. A copy of the interview transcript will be returned to you so that you can check the accuracy of the researcher's representation of what you said during the interviews. As part of the consent process, you will be asked to indicate your preferred method (email or mail) regarding transcript delivery. This member checking process should take approximately 30 minutes of your time. As a follow-up to the review, I will contact you via email two weeks after sending you the transcripts. Within this two week time frame you may report any discrepancies you discovered in your review. I will assume that you approve the transcripts if you do not respond to the follow-up email.

There is minimal risk involved in this study. Benefits include the opportunity to receive feedback about the study results, and a greater understanding about your practices as a resource teacher compared to others in supporting students with special needs.

Please understand that you have the right to withdraw from this study at any time by simply contacting me. All data collected from participants who choose to withdraw from the study, at any point, will be immediately destroyed. Paper copies of data and contact information will be shredded. Digital copies of the same will be scrubbed and deleted.

Please be assured that your confidentiality will be maintained at all times. At no time will your name or any closely identifying information be included in any documents generated from the study. You may choose a pseudonym for yourself if you like.

All interview information received from you will be stored digitally by pseudonym on computer to which only I will have access. My faculty advisor, Dr. Zana Lutfiyya, will have access to the anonymized data. Interviews will be transcribed by myself. All data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in my home office to which only I have access. All digital recordings will be scrubbed and deleted immediately after transcription.

Identifying names, locations and other identifying information will be excluded or masked with distracting information to protect participants. Identifying roles will be excluded to avoid specific identification. Consent forms and contact information of participants will be stored separately from anonymized data.

The informed consent sheet containing your name will not be kept with the interview data, and will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in my home office where only I have access to it, avoiding the possibility of connecting your name to any information that you have given. You have the opportunity to request a copy of the summary of the study's results. The study has been approved by The Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact Robin Stacey at (cell) or (home) or by email. You may also contact the researcher's faculty advisor, Dr. Zana Lutfiyya by email or by phone. You may also contact the Human Ethics Coordinator. The University of Manitoba may review the research records to assure that all research has been completed in a safe and proper way. If you are interested in participating in this study, please read the following statement and sign and date it. Please keep one copy for yourself.

I _____ agree to participate in this study. I understand that participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at any time by simply telling the researcher. I have read and understood the above description of the study. I understand that my privacy will be safeguarded as explained above. I understand that if I have any questions or concerns, I may contact the researcher, Robin Stacey at (cell) or by email. I can also contact the researcher's faculty advisor, Dr. Zana Lutfiyya by email or by phone.

My signature on this form indicates that I have understood to my satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive my legal rights nor releases the researcher or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, and/or refrain from answering questions I prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. My continued participation should be as informed as my initial consent, so I should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout my participation.

This research has been approved by The Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board Course. If I have any concerns or complaints about this project I may contact any of the above named persons. A copy of this consent form has been given to me to keep for my records and reference. An additional copy has also been given to the Human Ethics Coordinator.

Signature of Participant _____

Date _____

Signature of Researcher _____

Date _____

Interview Transcript Delivery (Please indicate with an X your preferred method of transcript delivery.)

____ Please mail the interview transcript to:

____ Please email the interview transcript to:

Summary Report of Findings (Please indicate with X if you would like to receive a summary of the research findings or if you prefer not to receive the summary findings).

____ Yes, I wish to receive a summary of the research findings.

Please mail the summary report to:

or email at: _____

____ No, I do not wish to receive a summary of the research findings.



Ethics Application: Appendix E - Letter of Information for School Division Superintendents

Re: Protocol #E2017:029 (HS20643)

“Resource Teacher Perspective and Experiences with Student Service Delivery Models.”

(Date)

TO: **(Superintendent Name)**, Superintendent of Schools
(School Division Name & Address)

FR: **Robin Stacey**, Principal Investigator
Master’s of Education Graduate Student

RE: **University of Manitoba Master’s of Education Research Investigation: “Resource Teacher Perspective and Experiences with Student Service Delivery Models”**

My name is Robin Stacey and I am a Graduate Student at the University of Manitoba. I am currently conducting research in order to complete my Master’s of Education Thesis. I am interested in the perspectives of resource teachers in regards to their experiences with student service delivery models. I am collecting data through interviews with resource teachers.

Enclosed is a package describing the research project and the process I will follow for interviewing resource teachers, collecting data and summarizing the research findings? I respectfully request that School Division Superintendents take the time to review the information regarding this research project and the process for School Division Consent.

Please do not hesitate to contact myself at the above email address or by phone should you require further information.

You may also contact my faculty advisor, Dr. Zana Lutfiyya or by phone.
In addition, you may also contact the University of Manitoba Human Ethics Coordinator at ____.

Thank you for taking the time to review this research project and consider the participation of this school division’s resource teachers in the interview process.

Appendix F: Human Ethics Response to Submission Form – March, 27, 2014

Human Ethics
208-194 Dafoe Road
Winnipeg, MB
Canada R3T 2N2
Phone +204-474-7122
Email: humanethics@umanitoba.ca

March 24, 2017

TO: Robin Stacey
Principal Investigator [REDACTED]

FROM: [REDACTED]
Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB) [REDACTED]

Re: Protocol #E2017:029 (HS20643)
"Resource Teacher Perspective and Experiences with Student Service Delivery Models."

Your above-noted protocol has been reviewed by members of ENREB. The review process has been completed, and some additional information, clarification, and revision are required. **Please note: the issues that ENREB has brought up in this letter must be reviewed again before receiving the "Protocol Approval". Research is NOT to start until final approval is obtained.**

1. Basic Question #4 and Inducement

It is not necessary to describe the offer of a beverage at the beginning of the interview as inducement or coercion.

2. Storage of Data

- a) Clarify in basic questions 5 and 7 the location of the locked office where the data will be kept. It's unclear if the data will be kept in an office in the researcher's home, in one of the schools, or in the school division office in which she works, and if the laptop will be kept in this location.
- b) Please specify where the paper copies of the signed consent forms and contact information for participants will be securely stored

3. Participant Recruitment and Dual Role

Research Ethics and Compliance is a part of the Office of the Vice-President (Research and International)
umanitoba.ca/research

- a) The researcher is an itinerant Behaviour and Learning Support Teacher who works [REDACTED]. She intends to ask colleagues who are known to her, but over whom she is not in a position of power to "pass the recruitment letter to resource teachers they know." It's not clear if these resource teachers are in school division in which the researcher works or does not work. This needs to be clearly stated.
- b) The administrators (school division superintendents and school principals) will need to give their assent to the study and the participation of their resource teachers. Letters of information and consent forms for these administrators will need to be written and submitted to ENREB for review. (Alternatively, please provide a justification for why superintendent and principals' agreement to recruit teachers employed in their schools is not being sought.)
- c) Please specify if the researcher is not contacting resource teachers in the school division in which she is employed. If this is the case, it should be an exclusion criterion (for non-participation) mentioned in the Call for Participants (Appendix B).

4. Consent Form

- a) There is no mention of the interview questions being sent to participating resource teachers at least one week prior the scheduled interview (as stated on p. 5). Please add.
- b) Please clarify if the researcher is using a digital audio recorder or an analogue audio recorder (tape)? State how the digital file or audio tape be destroyed? (p. 14, final paragraph)
- c) Please clarify what will happen to all data collected from a participant who makes the decision to withdraw from the study. Consent Form (p. 15, paragraph 1).
- d) The researcher's advisor should be identified as [REDACTED].
- e) Masters Student should be changed to Master's Student or Master's of Education Student.

5. Member checking

- a) Explain how you will know that the participant received the transcript and was not too busy to review it in the 2 week timeframe. The assumption of consent is problematic.
- b) It is stated that a second interview will occur in cases of discrepancies. Please clarify what will happen if discrepancies involve a participant's request to remove a portion of what he/she said. Will the second interview allow for this possibility?

A response to these items must be submitted in writing to ENREB before an amendment certificate will be considered/provided. As part of your response, please submit: a) a cover letter in which you explain how you have addressed each of the items listed above, AND b) a **revised and complete** protocol in which the revisions and changes are made in **TRACK CHANGES** function, or **HIGHLIGHTED** in some way to make the revisions easily identifiable. Please send your revised protocol to the Human Ethics Coordinator by email to humanethics@umanitoba.ca.

Appendix G: ENREB Approval Letter – April 7, 2017

Human Ethics
208-194 Dafoe Road
Winnipeg, MB
Canada R3T 2N2
Phone +204-474-7122
Email: humanethics@umanitoba.ca

PROTOCOL APPROVAL

TO: Robin Stacey
Principal Investigator

FROM: Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB)

Re: Protocol #E2017:029 (HS20643)
"Resource Teacher Perspective and Experiences with Student Service
Delivery Models"

Effective: April 7, 2017

Expiry: April 7, 2018

Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB) has reviewed and approved the above research. ENREB is constituted and operates in accordance with the current *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*.

This approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. Approval is granted only for the research and purposes described in the application.
2. Any modification to the research must be submitted to ENREB for approval before implementation.
3. Any deviations to the research or adverse events must be submitted to ENREB as soon as possible.
4. This approval is valid for one year only and a Renewal Request must be submitted and approved by the above expiry date.
5. A Study Closure form must be submitted to ENREB when the research is complete or terminated.
6. The University of Manitoba may request to review research documentation from this project to demonstrate compliance with this approved protocol and the University of Manitoba *Ethics of Research Involving Humans*.

Funded Protocols:

- Please mail/e-mail a copy of this Approval, identifying the related UM Project Number, to the Research Grants Officer in ORS.

Appendix H: ENREB Amendment Approval Letter – August 9, 2017

Human Ethics
208-194 Dafoe Road
Winnipeg, MB
Canada R3T 2N2
Phone +204-474-7122
Email: humanethics@umanitoba.ca

AMENDMENT APPROVAL

August 9, 2017

TO: Robin Stacey
Principal Investigator [REDACTED]

FROM: [REDACTED]
Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB) [REDACTED]

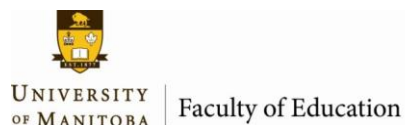
Re: Protocol #E2017:029 (HS20643)
"Resource Teacher Perspective and Experiences with Student Service Delivery Models"

Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB) has reviewed and approved your Amendment Request dated **August 9, 2017** to the above-noted protocol. ENREB is constituted and operates in accordance with the current *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*.

This approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. Approval is given for this amendment only. Any further changes to the protocol must be reported to the Human Ethics Coordinator in advance of implementation.
2. Any deviations to the research or adverse events must be submitted to ENREB as soon as possible.
3. Amendment Approvals do not change the protocol expiry date. Please refer to the original Protocol Approval or subsequent Renewal Approvals for the protocol expiry date.

Research Ethics and Compliance is a part of the Office of the Vice-President (Research and International)
umanitoba.ca/research



*Appendix I: Volunteer Recruitment (updated to reflect Ethics Amendment Approval) – Call for Participants in Masters of Education Thesis Research Project
Resource Teacher Perspectives on Student Service Delivery Models*

Researcher:

My name is Robin Stacey and I am a Graduate Student completing my Masters of Education Thesis. I am interested in the perspectives of resource teacher in regards to their experiences with student service delivery models

Research Project Overview:

Individual interviews will be conducted with resource teachers to examine how resource teachers describe their role and experiences with student service delivery models in supporting students with diverse learning needs. Interviews will be used to collect data and examine the perspectives of individual resource teachers regarding their role and experiences with and within student service delivery models. Data will be presented and shared in a final thesis document to be presented to a graduate studies committee. As well, research findings may be published in scholarly articles or presented at educational conferences.

Participant confidentiality and anonymity will be respected at all times.

Participant criteria:

1. Currently employed as a resource teacher in the public school system
2. Minimum 5 years teaching experience
3. Minimum 3 years' experience as a resource teacher
4. Willing to discuss experiences as a resource teacher
5. Available to spend 60-90 minutes being interviewed and another 30 minutes in checking/reviewing the transcript of the interview

If you are willing to participate, or you would like additional information, please contact Robin Stacey, Masters of Education student, by email or by telephone. You may also contact the faculty advisor for this study, _____.

This study has been approved by Education, Nursing Research Education Board (ENREB) at the University of Manitoba.

For further information, or to report any concerns, you may contact the Human Ethics Coordinator.