

A SURVEY OF PARENTS' OPINIONS ON MAINSTREAMING
THE HANDICAPPED INTO THE REGULAR CLASSROOM
AT HARRY SPENCE SCHOOL
LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN

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LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN 1974-75

ABSTRACT

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this study: (1) to determine by means of a questionnaire the opinions and attitudes of parents in the Harry Spence Elementary School district concerning mainstreaming of handicapped children into the regular classroom; (2) to ascertain whether there was a relationship between opinions and attitudes toward mainstreaming and such variables as type of residence, annual income, leadership in the community, levels of education, and age of parents; (3) to review the literature and research studies pertaining to mainstreaming the handicapped child; and (4) to formulate any other conclusions from the results of the survey which may be regarded as significant by the surveyor.

Procedure used. Fifty families from a random sampling of parents whose children were enrolled in the Harry Spence Elementary School were sent a seventeen-question questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of three parts. The first part

consisted of questions describing the respondent by sex, annual income, type of residence, level of education, age, and community leadership. The second part consisted of questions pertaining to the respondent's personal views on how he felt about the handicapped when he was in the elementary grades and in high school. The final part consisted of questions about the respondent's views toward mainstreaming the various types of handicapped children into the regular classroom. Questions in parts two and three could be answered yes, no, or uncertain. There were provisions for comments by the respondent on these statements. The raw data was tabulated and treated with the statistical formula chi-square, $\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$. The 1130 IBM computer at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse was used in analyzing the data. The data was also reported in percentages.

Summary. The findings from the survey of Harry Spence Elementary School parents indicated that there was a significant difference in responses to two questions. The null hypotheses were rejected. It was also noted by this investigator that there were two other statements which were statistically close enough to being rejected to merit special notice or consideration.

The percent of the responses throughout the survey indicated general agreement in attitudes and opinions among the Harry Spence Elementary School parents in regard to mainstreaming most types of handicapped children into the regular classroom.

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CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this study: (1) to determine by means of a questionnaire the opinions and attitudes of parents in the Harry Spence Elementary School district concerning mainstreaming of handicapped children into the regular classroom; (2) to ascertain whether there was a relationship between opinions and attitudes toward mainstreaming and such variables as type of residence, annual income, leadership in the community, level of education, and age of parents; (3) to review literature and research studies pertaining to mainstreaming the handicapped child; and (4) to formulate any other conclusions from the results of the survey which may be regarded as significant by the surveyor.

Background and significance of the study. In August of 1973, the Wisconsin State Legislature passed into law Chapter 89 promoting equalized education for the handicapped. Current readings have suggested that many handicapped children will no longer remain in segregated classrooms, but will attend school in regular classrooms.

This study was designed to examine opinions and attitudes of parents in Harry Spence Elementary School district about the mainstreaming of handicapped children into the regular classroom.

EXPLANATION OF TERMS

Attitude. A feeling of emotion toward a fact or state.¹

Chapter 89. A law concerning the education of exceptional children in the State of Wisconsin.

Community leader. A past or present office holder in a local political, social, or religious organization.

Exceptional child. Any child who has mental, physical or learning disabilities, and who requires special educational services to supplement or replace regular education.²

Handicapped. Any disadvantage or hindrance, which may vary from a minor speech impairment to extremely serious multiple handicaps, making success in a regular classroom difficult.

Harry Spence School. A kindergarten through grade six elementary school at 22nd and Bennett Streets, La Crosse, Wisconsin. Enrollment at the time of this survey consisted of 532 children from 261 homes.

¹Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, Mass.: G & C Merriam Co., 1973).

²Legislative Council Staff. Report to the 1973 Legislature (Madison, Wisconsin: February 1973).

Integrate. To program children for spending part of the day in classes with regular children and the rest of the day in segregated classes.

Mainstream. To place children in a regular classroom which they leave for special help with specialist.

Opinion. A view, judgment or appraisal about a particular matter.³

Regular class. A classroom where a child follows a standardized program geared for the majority of children enrolled at that level.

Slightly mentally retarded. I.Q. within a range from 50 to 69.⁴

ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Assumptions. The investigator made the following assumptions: (1) the questionnaire was truthfully and honestly answered by all respondents; (2) the questionnaire was a reliable and valid instrument; (3) the parents who did not return the questionnaire did not significantly affect the conclusions drawn from the survey; and (4) each of the participants involved in this study was not directly identified in the study.

³Webster, op. cit.

⁴Comley, Dr. Ronald W. Economics of Mental Retardation (Baltimore, Mass.: The John Hopkins Press, 1973), p. 6.

Limitations. The findings in this study will be limited for the following reasons: (1) the survey was limited to Harry Spence School; (2) the survey was limited to one hundred people; and (3) the survey questioned people on a subject which was new to them, and they perhaps were not aware of the real meaning of mainstreaming.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Procedure used. This study was designed to survey opinions and attitudes of Harry Spence Elementary School parents about mainstreaming the handicapped into the regular classroom. A questionnaire had been devised as the instrument to gather data to satisfy the problem. The questionnaire contained seventeen questions. The first part consisted of general information questions about the respondent. The second part was designed to gather information concerning the respondents' personal views about the handicapped during his years in school. The final part dealt solely with parents' opinions and attitudes concerning mainstreaming the handicapped in the Harry Spence Elementary School. When completed, the questionnaire was tested for validity, reliability and clarity by four parents. These individuals were not part of the survey population.

After final revision, the questionnaire was distributed to a random sample of parents from the Harry Spence

Elementary School. For the purpose of this study all parents' names were listed for all students who were living with their mothers and fathers. From this list fifty sets of names were checked off. The complete list involved 261 families. After permission to distribute the questionnaire was received from the Superintendent of Schools' office (see Appendix A), two copies of the questionnaire were sent to each selected family to get independent responses from both the father and mother. Each questionnaire was accompanied by a letter and a self-addressed, stamped envelope (see Appendix B).

The questionnaire was mailed April 14, 1975 to fifty families in the Harry Spence Elementary School District (see Appendix C). At the end of two weeks, 86 questionnaires were returned.

The formula Chi-square $\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$ was used to determine if there were a significant difference among the opinions and attitudes of the respondents toward mainstreaming and the variables: type of residence, income, leadership, education, and age. The null hypothesis was rejected or accepted at the 0.05 level of significance.

The statistical computations were accomplished on the 1130 IBM computer at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.

The null hypotheses. The null hypotheses were accepted at the .05 level of significance. There was no significant difference in responses between opinions and

attitudes of the Harry Spence Elementary School parents:

- (1) among parents of various annual incomes toward mainstreaming the physically handicapped child into the regular classroom;
- (2) between those who own their homes and those who rent their homes toward mainstreaming the physically handicapped child into the regular classroom;
- (3) between parents who are community leaders and parents who are not leaders toward the mainstreaming the physically handicapped child into the regular classroom;
- (4) among parents of various age categories toward mainstreaming the physically handicapped child into the regular classroom;
- (5) between those with a high school education and those with a college education toward mainstreaming the handicapped child into the regular classroom;
- (6) between those who own their homes and those who rent their homes toward mainstreaming the emotionally disturbed child into the regular classroom;
- (7) among parents of various annual incomes toward mainstreaming the emotionally disturbed child into the regular classroom;
- (8) among parents of various age categories toward mainstreaming the emotionally disturbed child into the regular classroom;
- (9) between those with a high school education and those with a college education toward mainstreaming the emotionally disturbed child into the regular classroom;
- (10) between parents who are community leaders and parents who are not leaders toward mainstreaming the emotionally disturbed child into the regular classroom;
- (11) among parents of

various annual incomes toward mainstreaming the slightly mentally retarded child into the regular classroom; (12) between those who own their homes and those who rent their homes toward mainstreaming the slightly mentally retarded child into the regular classroom; (13) among parents of various age categories toward mainstreaming the slightly mentally retarded child into the regular classroom; (14) between parents who are community leaders and parents who are not leaders toward mainstreaming the slightly mentally retarded child into the regular classroom; (15) between those with a high school education and those with a college education toward mainstreaming the slightly mentally retarded child into the regular classroom; (16) among parents of various annual incomes toward mainstreaming the hearing impaired child into the regular classroom; (17) among parents of various age categories toward mainstreaming the hearing impaired child into the regular classroom; (18) between those with a high school education and those with a college education toward mainstreaming the hearing impaired child into the regular classroom; (19) among parents of various annual incomes toward mainstreaming a child with learning disabilities into the regular classroom; (20) among parents of various age categories toward mainstreaming the child with learning disabilities into the regular classroom; and (21) between those with a high school education and those with a college education toward mainstreaming a child with learning disabilities into the regular classroom.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Society's reaction to handicaps is a timely issue for research and development as county and state governments are becoming markedly less inclined to house the handicapped in institutions. State legislatures, the federal government, and courts are insisting that the handicapped children be mainstreamed into the regular classrooms.

There are approximately six million handicapped school-aged children in the United States.¹ About one-third of the children have pronounced organic or functional speech disorders which interfere with oral communication. Approximately one-fifth of them are classified as mentally retarded, unable to benefit sufficiently from the standard school program.² A sixth of the total school-aged handicapped, about one million, are seriously emotionally disturbed and have only limited ability to control their own behavior.³ Some three hundred thousand are deaf or hard of hearing, and about as many are crippled or otherwise health impaired.⁴

¹Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Psychology and the Handicapped Child (Washington, D. C.: Printing Office, 1970), p. 1.

²Ibid. ³Ibid. ⁴Ibid.

The Bureau of Education in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare estimated at the time of this study that there are about one million handicapped children of pre-school age. The department has placed the highest priority on providing educational services to the very young children.⁵

Schools are trying to provide educational services to these children. The Madison School in Santa Monica, California has set up a learning center model that provides for the education of the educable mentally retarded, the emotionally disturbed, and the learning disabled students in settings allowing a free flow of children between regular classrooms and specialized resource facilities.⁶ The Madison Plan is based on two premises: (1) that all exceptional children are learners who have often been labeled and placed in self-contained classrooms because of their handicap; and (2) that it is desirable to remove as many handicapped children as soon as possible from the self contained classroom and integrate them for short periods of time into the regular classroom.⁷

In the Madison Plan the child must be ready to function in the regular class and have a basic set of behaviors and abilities to succeed in the regular classroom.⁸ Some of the

⁵Ibid.

⁶Michael Soloway and Frank D. Taylor, "The Madison Plan," Instructor LXXXIII (November, 1972), pp. 94-95.

⁷Ibid. ⁸Ibid.

behaviors and attitudes needed are the ability to pay attention, respond, and follow directions.⁹ The child must have academic abilities such as the ability to read, write, spell, and compute. He must be able to concentrate and function in an instructional setting that occurs in the regular class; and the child must be capable of being motivated by regular classroom rewards or reinforcers.¹⁰

In California there has been a steady growth in the number of integrated programs.¹¹ A study was set up to examine the programs that integrated the mentally retarded in eight California school districts.¹² Interviews were conducted with seventeen administrators and thirty-one teachers. The attitude of administrators toward the integration program was, with one exception, positive. In the one exception the administrator expressed neutral views toward the integrated programs.¹³ The majority of the teachers also had positive attitudes. Positive attitudes were held by sixty-two percent of the teaching staff. Nineteen percent of the teachers had neutral attitudes, while nineteen percent were negative toward the integrated programs.¹⁴

⁹Ibid. ¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Gilbert R. Guerine and Kathleen Szatlocky, "Integration Programs for the Mildly Retarded," Exceptional Children XLI (November, 1974), p. 173.

¹²Ibid. ¹³Ibid. ¹⁴Ibid.

It has been assumed that a person's attitude toward physically disabled persons is related to his degree of contact with and his knowledge about the handicapped individual.¹⁵ Data analysis revealed that persons with a high degree of contact tended to have more information about physical disabilities and have more positive attitudes toward the physically handicapped person.¹⁶ Results also indicated that females generally have more knowledge, higher contact ratings, and more positive attitudes than their male counterparts.¹⁷ High school subjects had lower contact ratings, lower levels of knowledge, and less positive attitudes than other subject groups.¹⁸

This study reaffirmed the premise that attitudes change as a result of advancing age, related experiences, and changes in the individual's level of information.

A study to assess teacher attitude and expectations in treating a moderately disturbed youngster revealed that teachers did care enough to want to keep the disturbed children in their classes provided they had assistance.¹⁹ It appeared that teachers had the attitude that as long as they were provided with the necessary support to maintain

¹⁵Reginald W. Higgs, "Attitudes Formation--Contact or Information," Exceptional Children XLI (April, 1975), p. 496.

¹⁶Ibid. ¹⁷Ibid. ¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Thomas P. Gullotta, "Teacher's Attitudes Toward the Moderately Disturbed Child," Exceptional Children XLI (October, 1974), p. 49.

and help this type of child they were willing to keep the youngster in their class.²⁰

Regular classroom teachers often show resistance toward mainstreaming because they have never taught the handicapped and they are concerned about their ability to cope with problems that could arise in teaching the handicapped.²¹

Some parents of handicapped children dislike the concept of mainstreaming.²² The reason, as explained by Yetta W. Galiber of the Information Center for Handicapped Children, is that these parents have worked hard to get their children into special education, and they are afraid that their children will be "dumped" into the regular classroom without supportive services.²³

The writer used the Educational Index, ERIC, Psychological Abstracts, and the New York Times Index but could find very little material related to this paper, a survey of parents' opinions and attitudes toward mainstreaming the handicapped into the regular classroom. .

In summary, the investigator found that writers writing in the subject believed that attitudes in general change with contact with handicapped children and with greater knowledge about handicapped children. Mainstreaming may be an enriching experience in human relations for us all.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Myron Brenton, "Mainstreaming the Handicapped," Today's Education LXIII (March-April, 1974), p. 25.

²²Ibid. ²³Ibid.

CHAPTER 3

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This study was designed to survey the opinions and attitudes of parents toward mainstreaming the handicapped child into the regular classroom in the Harry Spence Elementary School in La Crosse, Wisconsin.

PROCEDURE

After the problem was determined, it became necessary to construct an instrument to survey the parents. From an examination of questionnaires used in similar types of surveys, the investigator developed a seventeen-question questionnaire. It was field tested on four parents for clarity. These individuals were not part of the survey population. Comments from members of the field test led to rewording part of the original questionnaire. The revised questionnaire also contained seventeen questions.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The data-gathering instrument used to obtain parental attitudes toward mainstreaming the handicapped child into the regular classroom at the Harry Spence School contained three distinct sections.

Part one of the questionnaire consisted of questions describing the respondent by sex, annual family income, type of residence, level of education, age, and community leadership. The second part consisted of questions pertaining to the respondent's personal views on how he felt about the handicapped when he was in elementary school and in high school. Part three dealt with specific information regarding opinions and attitudes about mainstreaming the handicapped child into the regular classroom at Harry Spence Elementary School. The respondents had a choice of three answers--yes, no, or uncertain. There were provisions for comments by the respondents on these questions.

METHOD OF GATHERING DATA

After testing and revising the questionnaire, it was rewritten. On April 14, 1975, a questionnaire, a letter to the parents, and a return envelope were mailed to each of a random sample of one hundred parents of children in the Harry Spence Elementary School in La Crosse.

On April 28, 1975, eighty-six responses had been received. This was the final count of parent responses.

TREATMENT OF THE DATA

Chi-square (X^2) was used for the statistical treatment of data tabulated from the questionnaire. The formula $X^2 = \sum \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$ was used to find significant differences among

opinions and attitudes of parents toward mainstreaming the handicapped child into the regular classroom at the Harry Spence Elementary School in La Crosse. The statistical computations were accomplished on the 1130 IBM computer at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. The responses were tallied and converted to percentage scores for each question on the survey instrument (see Appendix C).

The null hypotheses were accepted at the .05 level of significance.

Suggestions and comments offered by the respondents were not treated statistically, but provided a basis for the writer's observations and generalizations regarding the opinions and attitudes of parents toward mainstreaming the handicapped child into the regular classroom at the Harry Spence Elementary School in La Crosse.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The statistical data of this study were treated by Chi-square scores for each question from number twelve through seventeen. Chi-square was used to determine if there were significant differences between opinions and attitudes of the parents toward mainstreaming the handicapped child into the regular classroom in the Harry Spence Elementary School and the variables: residence, income, leadership, education, and age of the respondents. Parental responses to the questions cited in this chapter were taken from the questionnaire. The null hypothesis was accepted at the .05 level of significance. A percentage analysis was also made of the items on the questionnaire.

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

The following hypotheses were examined in this study:

1. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of significance among respondents because of annual income toward mainstreaming the physically handicapped child into the regular classroom. The null hypothesis was accepted at the .05 level of significance. The basis for

accepting the null hypothesis was taken from the following data:

$\chi^2 = 2.75$	$P < .05$		
	$p = 5.99$		$df = 6$
<u>Group</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
\$3,000 to \$7,999	5 (72%)	1 (14%)	1 (14%)
\$8,000 to \$11,999	13 (54%)	5 (21%)	6 (25%)
\$12,000 to \$14,999	14 (67%)	3 (14%)	4 (19%)
\$15,000 and over	29 (73%)	5 (15%)	4 (12%)

The percentages resulting from responses comparing opinions and attitudes of parents toward mainstreaming the physically handicapped child into the regular classroom indicated twenty-five percent of the parents with an income of \$8,000 to \$11,999 were undecided. It should be noted that all income groups felt the physically handicapped should be mainstreamed.

2. There was a significance at the .05 level of significance between respondents who own their homes and those who rent their homes and their attitudes toward mainstreaming the physically handicapped child into the regular classroom. The null hypothesis was rejected at the .05 level of significance. The basis for rejecting the null hypothesis was taken from the following data:

$\chi^2 = 11.93$	$P > .05$		
	$p = 5.99$		$df = 2$
<u>Group</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
Rent	12 (63%)	7 (36%)	0
Own	46 (69%)	6 (9%)	15 (22%)

The percentages resulting from responses comparing opinions and attitudes toward whether the physically handicapped should be mainstreamed into the regular classroom indicated a difference of opinions between the two groups. Whereas none of the renters were uncertain about whether the handicapped should be mainstreamed, twenty-two percent of the owners were uncertain. It should be noted that both groups felt that the physically handicapped should be mainstreamed.

3. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of significance between parents who were leaders of the community and parents who were not community leaders and their attitudes toward mainstreaming the physically handicapped child into the regular classroom. The null hypothesis was accepted at the .05 level of significance. The basis for accepting the null hypothesis was taken from the following data:

$$X^2 = 3.13$$

$$P > .05$$

$$p = 5.99$$

$$df = 2$$

<u>Group</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
Leaders	22 (79%)	2 (7%)	4 (14%)
Non-Leaders	35 (60%)	12 (21%)	11 (19%)

The percentages resulting from the responses comparing opinions and attitudes of parents toward mainstreaming the physically handicapped child into the regular classroom indicated that parents who were leaders in the community were

more agreeable than parents who were not leaders in the community toward mainstreaming the physically handicapped child into the regular classroom. It should be noted that both groups felt that the physically handicapped child should be mainstreamed.

4. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of significance among respondents because of the age of the respondent toward mainstreaming the physically handicapped child into the regular classroom. The null hypothesis was accepted at the .05 level of significance. The basis for accepting the null hypothesis was taken from the following data:

$$\chi^2 = 12.49$$

$$P < .05$$

$$p = 18.31$$

$$df = 10$$

<u>Group</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
Younger than 30	11 (85%)	1 (15%)	0
30-34	17 (74%)	1 (4%)	5 (22%)
35-39	14 (58%)	4 (17%)	6 (25%)
40-44	9 (75%)	2 (17%)	1 (8%)
45-49	3 (42%)	2 (29%)	2 (29%)
50+	3 (43%)	3 (43%)	1 (14%)

The percentages resulting from responses comparing opinions and attitudes of parents toward mainstreaming the physically handicapped into the regular classroom indicated general agreement. It should be noted that respondents of age 50 and over were forty-three percent for mainstreaming and forty-three percent against mainstreaming while fourteen percent in this age group were uncertain.

5. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of significance between respondents with a high school education and those with a college education toward mainstreaming the physically handicapped child into the regular classroom. The null hypothesis was accepted. The basis for accepting the null hypothesis was taken from the following data:

$\chi^2 = 2.29$	$P < .05$		
	$p = 5.99$	$df = 2$	
<u>Group</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
High School	33 (64%)	11 (21%)	8 (15%)
College	25 (75%)	3 (9%)	6 (18%)

The percentages resulting from responses comparing opinions and attitudes of parents toward mainstreaming the physically handicapped into the regular classroom indicated general agreement. It should be noted that both groups felt that physically handicapped children should be mainstreamed.

6. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of significance between respondents who own their homes and those who rent their homes and their attitude toward mainstreaming the emotionally disturbed child into the regular classroom. The null hypothesis was accepted. The basis for accepting the null hypothesis was taken from the following data:

$\chi^2 = .46$	$P < .05$		
	$p = 5.99$	$df = 2$	

<u>Group</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
Rent	3 (16%)	8 (42%)	8 (42%)
Own	14 (21%)	30 (45%)	23 (34%)

The percentages resulting from responses comparing opinions and attitudes of parents toward mainstreaming the emotionally disturbed child into the regular classroom indicated forty-two percent of the parents that rent were uncertain. It should be noted that both groups felt that the emotionally disturbed child should not be mainstreamed.

7. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of significance among respondents because of annual income toward mainstreaming the emotionally disturbed child into the regular classroom. The null hypothesis was accepted. The basis for accepting the null hypothesis was taken from the following data:

$$X^2 = 3.73 \quad P < .05$$

$$p = 12.59 \quad df = 6$$

<u>Group</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
\$3,000 to \$7,999	2 (29%)	1 (14%)	4 (57%)
\$8,000 to \$11,999	5 (21%)	10 (41%)	9 (38%)
\$12,000 to \$14,999	4 (19%)	10 (48%)	7 (33%)
\$15,000 and over	6 (18%)	18 (53%)	10 (29%)

The percentages resulting from responses comparing opinions and attitudes of parents toward mainstreaming the emotionally disturbed child into the regular classroom indicated that the group with an income of \$3,000 to \$7,999 was uncertain, whereas the other groups felt that the emotionally disturbed child should not be mainstreamed into the regular classroom.

8. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of significance because of the age of the respondents and their attitudes and opinions toward mainstreaming the emotionally disturbed child into the regular classroom. The null hypothesis was accepted. The basis for accepting the null hypothesis was taken from the following observed data:

$\chi^2 = 13.33$	$P < .05$		
	$p = 18.31$		$df = 10$
<u>Group</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
Younger than 30	3 (23%)	4 (31%)	6 (46%)
30-34	7 (31%)	6 (26%)	10 (43%)
35-39	4 (17%)	11 (46%)	9 (37%)
40-44	1 (8%)	7 (58%)	4 (33%)
45-49	1 (14%)	6 (86%)	0
50+	1 (14%)	5 (71%)	1 (14%)

The percentages resulting from responses comparing opinions and attitudes toward mainstreaming the emotionally disturbed child into the regular classroom indicated that the age groups 30 and younger, and 30-34 were more uncertain than the other groups, whereas the other groups were in agreement not to mainstream the emotionally disturbed child into the regular classroom. In all age groups the differences were not significant.

9. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of significance between respondents with a high school education and those with a college education toward mainstreaming the emotionally disturbed child into the regular classroom. The null hypothesis was accepted. The basis for accepting the null hypothesis was taken from the following

observed data:

$$\chi^2 = 2.42$$

$$P < .05$$

$$p = 5.99$$

$$df = 2$$

<u>Group</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
High School	10 (19%)	20 (39%)	22 (42%)
College	7 (21%)	18 (53%)	9 (26%)

The percentages resulting from responses comparing opinions and attitudes of parents toward mainstreaming the emotionally disturbed child into the regular classroom indicated that the parents with a high school education were forty-two percent uncertain. It should be noted that both groups felt that the emotionally disturbed child should not be mainstreamed.

10. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of significance between parents who were community leaders and those who were not community leaders and their opinions and attitudes toward mainstreaming the emotionally disturbed child into the regular classroom. The null hypothesis was accepted at the .05 level of significance. The basis for accepting the null hypothesis was taken from the following observed data:

$$\chi^2 = 3.89$$

$$P < .05$$

$$p = 5.99$$

$$df = 2$$

<u>Group</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
Leaders	6 (21%)	8 (29%)	14 (50%)
Non-Leaders	11 (19%)	29 (50%)	18 (31%)

The percentages resulting from responses comparing opinions and attitudes toward mainstreaming the emotionally disturbed child into the regular classroom indicate fifty percent of the parents who were community leaders were uncertain and fifty percent of the parents who were not leaders in the community were uncertain about mainstreaming the emotionally disturbed into the regular classroom. It should be noted that both groups thought the emotionally disturbed should not be mainstreamed.

11. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of significance among respondents with different annual incomes and their attitudes and opinions toward mainstreaming the slightly mentally retarded into the regular classroom. The null hypothesis was accepted at the .05 level of significance. The basis for accepting the null hypothesis was taken from the following observed data:

	$\chi^2 = 2.18$	$P < .05$		
		$p = 5.99$		$df = 6$
<u>Group</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>	
\$3,000 to \$7,999	4 (57%)	2 (29%)	1 (14%)	
\$8,000 to \$11,999	11 (46%)	7 (29%)	6 (25%)	
\$12,000 to \$14,999	8 (38%)	9 (43%)	4 (19%)	
\$15,000 and over	17 (50%)	9 (26%)	8 (24%)	

The percentages resulting from responses comparing attitudes of parents toward mainstreaming the slightly mentally retarded child into the regular classroom indicated, although not significant, a difference of opinion among those with an income of \$12,000 to \$14,999. This group was

forty-three percent in disagreement toward mainstreaming the slightly mentally retarded, whereas the other groups thought the slightly retarded should be mainstreamed into the regular classroom.

12. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of significance between respondents who own their homes and those who rent their homes and their attitudes and opinions toward mainstreaming the slightly mentally retarded child into the regular classroom. The null hypothesis was accepted at the .05 level of significance. The basis for accepting the null hypothesis was taken from the following observed data:

$\chi^2 = 2.25$	$P < .05$		
	$p = 5.99$		$df = 2$
<u>Group</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
Rent	6 (32%)	8 (42%)	5 (26%)
Own	34 (52%)	19 (28%)	14 (20%)

The percentages resulting from responses comparing opinions and attitudes of parents toward mainstreaming the slightly mentally retarded child into the regular classroom indicated that forty-two percent of the respondents who rent their homes did not want the slightly mentally retarded mainstreamed, while fifty-one percent of the respondents who own their homes felt the slightly retarded child should be mainstreamed. The differences were not significant.

13. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of significance among respondents of different ages and their attitudes and opinions toward the mainstreaming of the slightly mentally retarded child into the regular classroom. The null hypothesis was accepted at the .05 level of significance. The basis for accepting the null hypothesis was taken from the following data:

$\chi^2 = 14.67$	$P < .05$		
	$p = 18.31$		$df = 10$
<u>Group</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
Younger than 30	4 (31%)	5 (38%)	4 (31%)
30-34	16 (69%)	2 (9%)	5 (22%)
35-39	11 (46%)	7 (29%)	6 (25%)
40-44	6 (50%)	5 (42%)	1 (8%)
45-49	2 (29%)	4 (57%)	1 (14%)
50+	1 (14%)	4 (57%)	2 (29%)

The percentages resulting from respondents of various age groups and their attitudes and opinions indicated a tendency towards a difference of opinion but it was not significant. Respondents in the age group 30-34, 35-39, and 40-44 felt that the slightly retarded should be mainstreamed into the regular classroom. Respondents that were in the age groups of younger than 30, from 45-49 and 50+ felt the slightly retarded should not be mainstreamed.

14. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of significance between parents who were leaders in the community and parents who were not leaders in the community and their attitudes and opinions toward mainstreaming the slightly mentally retarded child into the regular classroom.

The null hypothesis was accepted at the .05 level of significance. The basis for accepting the null hypothesis was taken from the following data:

	$\chi^2 = 3.45$	$P < .05$	
		$p = 5.99$	$df = 2$
<u>Group</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
Leaders	17 (61%)	6 (21%)	5 (18%)
Non-Leaders	23 (40%)	21 (36%)	14 (24%)

The percentages resulting from responses comparing opinions and attitudes toward mainstreaming the slightly retarded child into the regular classroom indicated that although there was no significant difference of opinions, there was a tendency for respondents who were not leaders to be against mainstreaming, whereas the respondents who were leaders were less prone to be against mainstreaming. Both groups felt the slightly retarded should be mainstreamed.

15. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of significance between respondents with a high school education and those with a college education and their attitudes and opinions toward mainstreaming the slightly mentally retarded child into the regular classroom. The null hypothesis was accepted at the .05 level of significance. The basis for accepting the null hypothesis was taken from the following data:

	$\chi^2 = 5.27$	$P < .05$	
		$p = 5.99$	$df = 2$

<u>Group</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
High School	20 (39%)	21 (40%)	11 (21%)
College	20 (58%)	6 (18%)	8 (24%)

The percentages resulting from responses comparing opinions and attitudes of parents toward mainstreaming the slightly mentally retarded child into the regular classroom indicated a tendency towards a difference of opinion. It appears that parents with a high school education were more likely to be adverse to mainstreaming the slightly mentally retarded child into the regular classroom whereas the parent with a college education felt the slightly retarded child should be mainstreamed.

16. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of significance among respondents because of annual income toward mainstreaming the hearing impaired child into the regular classroom. The null hypothesis was accepted at the .05 level of significance. The basis for accepting the null hypothesis was taken from the following data:

$$x^2 = 5.02$$

$$P < .05$$

$$p = 12.59$$

$$df = 6$$

<u>Group</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
\$3,000 to \$7,999	5 (72%)	1 (14%)	1 (14%)
\$8,000 to \$11,999	14 (58%)	3 (13%)	7 (29%)
\$12,000 to \$14,999	12 (57%)	4 (19%)	5 (24%)
\$15,000 and over	27 (79%)	2 (6%)	5 (15%)

The percentage of responses comparing opinions and attitudes of parents toward mainstreaming the hearing impaired child indicated that the parents were in general

agreement toward mainstreaming the hearing impaired child into the regular classroom.

17. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of significance among respondents because of the age of the respondent toward the mainstreaming of the hearing impaired child into the regular classroom. The null hypothesis was accepted at the .05 level of significance. The basis for accepting the null hypothesis was taken from the following data:

$\chi^2 = 8.03$	$P < .05$		
	$p = 18.31$		$df = 10$
<u>Group</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
Younger than 30	8 (62%)	2 (15%)	3 (23%)
30-34	18 (78%)	1 (4%)	4 (17%)
35-39	18 (75%)	1 (4%)	5 (21%)
40-44	8 (66%)	2 (17%)	2 (17%)
45-49	3 (42%)	2 (29%)	2 (29%)
50+	4 (57%)	2 (29%)	1 (14%)

The percentages resulting from responses comparing opinions and attitudes of parents of various age groups toward mainstreaming the hearing impaired child into the regular classroom indicated general agreement.

18. There was a significant difference at the .05 level of significance between respondents with a high school education and those who had a college education toward mainstreaming the hearing impaired child into the regular classroom. The null hypothesis was rejected at the .05 level of significance. The basis for rejecting the null hypothesis was taken from the following data:

$$\chi^2 = 7.75$$

$$P > .05$$

$$p = 5.99$$

$$df = 2$$

<u>Group</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
High School	30 (58%)	9 (17%)	13 (25%)
College	29 (85%)	1 (3%)	4 (12%)

The percentages of responses comparing attitudes of parents toward mainstreaming indicated that respondents with a college education felt the hearing impaired child should be mainstreamed into the regular classroom. The respondents with a high school education were more uncertain. It should be noted that both groups felt the hearing impaired child should be mainstreamed.

19. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of significance among respondents of various annual incomes toward the mainstreaming of a child with learning disabilities into the regular classroom. The null hypothesis was accepted. The basis for accepting the null hypothesis was taken from the following data:

$$\chi^2 = 3.72$$

$$P < .05$$

$$p = 12.59$$

$$df = 6$$

<u>Group</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
\$3,000 to \$7,999	4 (57%)	2 (29%)	1 (14%)
\$8,000 to \$11,999	9 (38%)	7 (29%)	8 (33%)
\$12,000 to \$14,999	10 (47%)	6 (29%)	5 (24%)
\$15,000 and over	19 (56%)	5 (15%)	10 (29%)

The percentages resulting from responses comparing opinions and attitudes of parents toward mainstreaming a child with learning disabilities into the regular classroom

indicated general agreement. It should be noted, however, that respondents with incomes of \$8,000 to \$11,999 were more uncertain than the other groups.

20. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of significance among respondents of various age groups toward the mainstreaming of a child with learning disabilities into the regular classroom. The null hypothesis was accepted. The basis for accepting the null hypothesis was taken from the following data:

$\chi^2 = 11.86$	$P < .05$		
	$p = 18.31$		$df = 10$
<u>Group</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
Younger than 30	5 (39%)	6 (46%)	2 (15%)
30-34	14 (61%)	1 (4%)	8 (35%)
35-39	13 (54%)	5 (21%)	6 (25%)
40-44	6 (50%)	3 (25%)	3 (25%)
45-49	2 (29%)	2 (29%)	3 (42%)
50+	2 (29%)	3 (43%)	2 (28%)

The percents resulting from responses comparing attitudes and opinions of respondents toward mainstreaming a child with learning disabilities indicated no significant difference of opinions.

21. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of significance between respondents with a high school education and those with a college education toward the mainstreaming of a child with learning disabilities into the regular classroom. The null hypothesis was accepted. The basis for accepting the null hypothesis was taken from the following data:

$$\chi^2 = 5.15$$

$$P < .05$$

$$p = 5.99$$

$$df = 2$$

<u>Group</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
High School	21 (40%)	16 (31%)	15 (29%)
College	21 (62%)	4 (12%)	9 (26%)

The percents resulting from responses comparing attitudes and opinions of respondents toward the mainstreaming of a child with learning disabilities into the regular classroom indicated no significant difference of opinions. It should be noted that both groups felt that learning disabled children should be mainstreamed.

SUMMARY

The final analysis of the data gathered from the survey of the parents in the Harry Spence Elementary School indicated that there was a significant difference in responses to two questions. Two null hypotheses were rejected. It was also noted by this investigator that although they were accepted at the .05 level of significance, there were two other hypotheses which were statistically close enough to being rejected to merit special notice or consideration. All other null hypotheses were accepted at the .05 level of significance.

It appeared that the respondents felt in general that most handicapped children (with the exception of the emotionally disturbed) should be mainstreamed into the regular classroom. The respondents felt the emotionally

disturbed child should not be mainstreamed into the regular classroom.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

After the completion of the survey which stated opinions and attitudes of the parents in the Harry Spence Elementary School concerning mainstreaming the handicapped into the regular classroom, the results were tabulated. The statistical analysis of the data was treated by two different methods. The statistical formula Chi-square $X^2 = \sum \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$ was used to compare the opinions and attitudes of parents in the Harry Spence Elementary School. The responses were also tallied, converted to percentage scores and then compared. The null hypothesis was rejected or accepted at the .05 level of significance.

The survey revealed that parents of children in the Harry Spence Elementary School were in general agreement toward mainstreaming most of the handicapped into the regular classroom. Parents felt the emotionally disturbed should not be mainstreamed. It was noted by the investigator that the parents, in their comments, did express a desire for smaller classes and paraprofessional help instead of the help of a teacher's aide. It was concluded by this investigator that

although the parents were in favor of mainstreaming most handicapped into the regular classroom, they felt that additional help would be needed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There is more to be researched concerning mainstreaming. The researcher feels that the following questions are worth further study: (1) Will the opinions and attitudes of the parents in the Harry Spence Elementary School change once children are mainstreamed into the regular classroom? (2) How do the parents in other elementary schools within the district feel about mainstreaming?, and (3) How do classroom teachers feel about mainstreaming the handicapped child into the regular classroom?

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APPENDIXES

JOINT
DISTRICT
No. 5

APPENDIX A

Superintendent of Schools
EUGENE C. BALTS
782-4655

**LA CROSSE AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
5TH AND CASS STS., LA CROSSE, WIS. 54601**

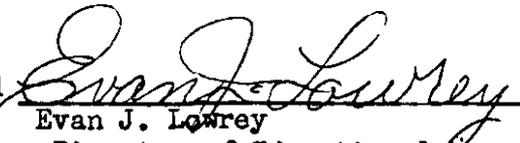
April 14, 1975

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to approve the distribution of a questionnaire -- survey -- by Mrs. Berniece Medinger regarding information she wishes to collect on Chapter 89 to assist her in fulfillment of her requirements for a master's thesis.

Should you have any questions, please contact me regarding this questionnaire.

Signed



Evan J. Lowrey

Director of Educational Services

APPENDIX B

Dear Parents:

In August, 1973, the legislature passed into law "Chapter 89" of the laws of Wisconsin, which mandates each local school district--

"to promote equalized and appropriate educational opportunities at the pre-school level, elementary and secondary age level for physically and mentally handicapped children in order to contribute to the goal of a self-sufficient, productive, responsible individual, competent to function independently or semi-independently in the community at the adult level. Preference is to give, whenever possible, to educate the child in classes with children who do not have exceptional needs."

This means that every handicapped child from the age of 4 to 21 will be in a school, head start program, or special education program and will perhaps be mainstreamed into the regular classroom.

What are your views on mainstreaming? How do you feel about mainstreaming the less severely handicapped into the regular classroom?

As part of a research paper that I am doing as a requirement for an advanced degree, I am asking for your help. Copies of the enclosed questionnaire are being sent to parents of students at various grade levels.

Please fill out the questionnaire and return it to me in the enclosed envelope on or before April 28, 1975. You

may feel assured that you will not be identified since your name does not appear on the questionnaire.

Please do not omit the question pertaining to income as it will effect the complete evaluation of this survey. Your name will not be known and this question is very important in the evaluation of this questionnaire.

Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Berniece Medinger

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE

DIRECTIONS: Read each question carefully before answering. Be sure to answer all questions. There are seventeen questions on the questionnaire. Please answer questions 1 through 6 as completely as possible. On questions 7 through 17 check the choice that best reflects your thinking, not your spouse's. Following each question 7 through 17 is a space to make comments or give reasons for your answer if you wish.

1. What is your sex?
(1) Male (21%) (2) Female (79%)
2. Where do you live?
(1) Rent our home (22%) (2) Own our home (78%)
3. What is your annual family income?
(1) \$2,999 or less _____ (2) \$3,000 to \$7,999 (8%)
(3) \$8,000 to \$11,999 (28%) (4) \$12,000 to \$14,999 (24%)
(5) \$15,000 or over (40%)
4. In the past five years, did you hold any office (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, or chairman of a committee) in any of the local political, social, or religious groups?
(1) Yes (33%) (2) No (67%)
5. What was your highest completed level of education?
(1) Grade school _____ (2) High School (60%)
(3) College (40%)

6. How old are you?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| (1) Younger than 30 (<u>15%</u>) | (2) 30 to 34 (<u>27%</u>) |
| (3) 35 to 39 (<u>28%</u>) | (4) 40 to 44 (<u>14%</u>) |
| (5) 45 to 49 (<u>8%</u>) | (6) Older than 49 (<u>8%</u>) |

At the time you attended elementary or secondary school, was there a handicapped child attending regular classes such as;

7. A physically crippled child?

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| (1) Yes (<u>47%</u>) | (2) No (<u>53%</u>) |
|------------------------|-----------------------|

Comments:

8. A child who was slightly mentally retarded?

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| (1) Yes (<u>55%</u>) | (2) No (<u>45%</u>) |
|------------------------|-----------------------|

Comment:

9. A child who was emotionally disturbed?

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| (1) Yes (<u>31%</u>) | (2) No (<u>69%</u>) |
|------------------------|-----------------------|

Comment:

10. A child with a hearing impairment? (with or without a hearing aid)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| (1) Yes (<u>43%</u>) | (2) No (<u>57%</u>) |
|------------------------|-----------------------|

Comment:

11. A child with a learning disability?

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| (1) Yes (<u>60%</u>) | (2) No (<u>40%</u>) |
|------------------------|-----------------------|

Comment:

Do you think the following handicapped children should be mainstreamed into your child's regular classroom?

12. A physically crippled child?

(1) Yes (66%) (2) No (16%) (3) Uncertain (18%)

Comment:

13. A child who is slightly mentally retarded?

(1) Yes (47%) (2) No (31%) (3) Uncertain (22%)

Comment:

14. A child who is emotionally disturbed?

(1) Yes (20%) (2) No (44%) (3) Uncertain (36%)

Comment:

15. A child with a hearing impairment?

(1) Yes (69%) (2) No (12%) (3) Uncertain (20%)

Comment:

16. A child with a learning disability?

(1) Yes (48%) (2) No (23%) (3) Uncertain (29%)

Comment:

17. If any of these handicapped children are mainstreamed into the regular classroom, do you think the teacher should have the help of a paraprofessional or a teacher's aide?

(1) Yes (86%) (2) No (4%) (3) Uncertain (10%)

Comment:

This is only a survey. If you have any questions, feel free to call me at my home, 783-1731. Thank you.