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The Importance of Safety Laws and Regulations That Benefit Both Staff and Students in a Special Education Setting

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THE IMPORTANCE OF SAFETY LAWS AND REGULATIONS THAT BENEFIT

BOTH STAFF AND STUDENTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION SETTINGS

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When I got my undergrad, I never thought I would go back to school. I thought that I had done what I was supposed to do and that would be my career. It wasn't until I was very unhappy that I became aware that my true passion was to become a teacher. My friend Estelle made it possible for me to see that I would love to work with special education students. I could not thank her enough for giving me the opportunity and walk me through the steps to be a special education teacher. She has taught me skills and helped with job interviews. As I was going through school there were times and I didn't think that I could do it. I was challenged in ways that I didn't think I would be. My parents have supported me through the entire schooling experience and still support me today in teaching. There were times where I would be crying in frustration and they would need to give me a pep talk. There were times when I wanted to quit and they would not let me and believed that I could do it. I love them and thank them for all they have done to support me in not only school but writing this thesis. I could not have done it without their support. The last people I would like to thank are all other friends and family that all supported me and told me I could do it. You have heard me complain and have joined me in my accomplishments. Thank you so much for all your support and love.

ABSTRACT

In special education there are a variety of settings in which school staff services a population of students who have a wide variety of ages and ability levels. While working closely with these students, these educators may be put at risk themselves by being verbally, emotionally, and physically abused by their students, without receiving the appropriate support and resources that they need from their building administrators. This thesis will shed light on the potentially dangerous situations school staff can face while working with more aggressive students who have special needs and focus on the laws and regulations that currently protect both staff and students who are in these special education settings. This research will also address the importance of administrative support towards their building staff who work with students with high behavior needs, and how that support can positively impact both the educators as well as the students themselves.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Personal Story

The story starts in 2014. During a time in a human resource position thought by this researcher were always wondering about something that could be done where the passion of helping people would be used. When speaking with friends or colleagues a person asked this researcher to come and shadow her classroom in a special education classroom. It was a setting III emotional behavioral disorder classroom (EBD) at an elementary school. When leaving for the day the path was set. The position as a human resource person would be exchanged for a position to become a special education teacher. In the meantime, while waiting to get licensed and complete course work to becoming a paraprofessional, it would give this researcher experience in the field. The first position in the field of special education was as a paraprofessional in a setting III classroom in a development cognitive disorder (DCD) classroom at a local high school. This classroom had six students, one nurse, a teacher, and 3 paraprofessionals. All the students were bound to a wheelchair apart from 2 that would periodically take walks but mostly stayed in the wheelchair. Before school had started the teacher took this writer aside and said the duty was to take care of one of those students and really focus on him. The teacher indicated that he can be aggressive at times and to keep a close watch for him trying to grab hair. She stated that they had all worked with him and for the most part he was safe but to be aware of the possibilities and that staff would always be present to help. Concern was elevated at first but after time this researcher got to know the students and was aware of when these possibilities would take place and how he would act. During the first three months at the school the student was able to grab hair three times after which decided that hair should be cut short to help the situation. The rest of the school year there were attempts but

staff were always there to help with any situation which may occur. After the first year as a paraprofessional the passion for these students grew and amazement, they showed how truly talented and smart they were. As a student during the first year at Bethel University, the college showed the challenges that we may face as special education teachers. It was agreed to at Bethel that a different classroom would help to learn about different disabilities.

The second year for this researcher would also be in a setting III high school but with lower functioning students on the Autism Spectrum (ASD). There were six students in this classroom. All students were mobile except for one in a wheelchair. There were three paraprofessionals and a teacher. The new challenge sounded exciting and therefore ready to take it on. The first day of school the teacher told us which students' paras would be assigned when they got off the bus. As the bus arrived the bus assistant told us that this student might run. They prepared us and when the student got off the bus he ran, far away! The student was chased for about two hours before being able to get a gait belt on him and bring him back into school. The student fought us the entire time and we received many bruises. From that moment it was understood that the student feared buses and he would need to be guided indoors each day and that would require more assistance. As the year went on, this student would run, hit, and kick anyone that would be working with him. Over time the other paraprofessionals and teacher became burnt out on this student and the thesis writer was left to assist this student. At one point this student got out of the classroom, ran to the principal's office and his hands were around the principal's neck when we found him. It was an exhausting year with that student, but we had all made it through. There were thoughts often about why there wasn't more support for this student but never received any concrete answers. Also during this time, the practicum experience was completed and it was in a setting II, learning disabilities (LD) resource classroom

at an elementary school. In this program there were about twelve students ranging from kindergarten to sixth grade. While some students complained about coming to the resource room most students were happy for the help. The environment there was seemingly happy and encouraging. There were no indications in the 12 weeks there that there were incidents of students or staff getting injured by unsafe students. This was the last time as a paraprofessional and completing teaching practicum.

The third year was an area of excitement and growth! The first year as a teacher was in a setting III ASD classroom with five high school boy students and one paraprofessional. The details that were given to me is that these students were in a setting IV and had achieved the goals to be in a setting III. There would be five students in the classroom. The paraprofessional would take one student out of the class each period of the day to attend general education classes. The remainder of the class would be with the researcher to teach other subjects. Two weeks before the school year started the individualized education programs/plans (IEP's) arrived for starting programming the year ahead. Once receiving the IEP's for these young men it was realized that these students were not ASD students. These students under emotional behavior disorder (EBD) label with years in setting IV. The first month of the school year was very challenging. There were days that they would refuse to do anything of the curriculum that the district had given me. Eventually things got much worse. There were days that they would make threats and throw objects, and days of verbal abuse. The first year of teaching was filled with crying and asking others for help. When no help was given, the disturbing truth of that of despair. Then depression set-in and felt hopeless. Administration didn't answer calls for help and guidance and felt alone and helpless that the students were not getting the education they deserved. This was the last year as a teacher in this district. Moving forward it was hard to

decide if teaching again was in this thesis writer's best interest. Colleagues suggested a different school that they thought would be a better fit.

The next year of teaching was amazing! There was support and the students, including the administration, demonstrated confidence in this researcher's teaching abilities and faith in a school system again. Of course, everything is bound to change at some point. The next year with the same school district, people left for many reasons. Since at this point it was the second year of teaching, they had asked this thesis writer to step in and help with a setting IV, mental health students, grades 7-12. This was a very hard year again. During behaviors the team would get punched, kicked, verbally abused for hours. This is not what special education was meant to be!

Because of the challenges this thesis writer encountered, it was felt the topic of safety for special education staff would be an excellent topic to research and study. It is nearing the end of the school year now and this researcher is thankful for the experiences that have occurred the past few years. However, it would be very beneficial to gain a better understanding of the laws and policies that support special education staff. Further to learn more about laws/policies that protect staff and student management systems.

IDEA/FAPE in Review

Two of the most important laws for special education is IDEA and FAPE. IDEA is defined as the Individuals with Disabilities Act. This act states by the US House of Representatives states "Disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to participate in or contribute to society. Improving educational results for children with disabilities is an essential element of our national policy of

ensuring equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities (Quote in Reference)."

(http://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title20/chapter33&edition=prelim)

IDEA started in 1975 when President Gerald Ford signed this into law. This law which excluded 1.8 million students with disabilities to attend school to 6.9 million that are now allowed to attend. Today 62% of students with disabilities are able to attend the general education classroom in more than 80% of their day.

The second important law is FAPE which stands for Free and Appropriate Public Education. This law states: All qualified persons with disabilities within the jurisdiction of a school district are entitled to a free appropriate public education. The ED Section 504 regulation defines a person with a disability as "any person who: (i) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, (ii) has a record of such an impairment, or (iii) is regarded as having such an impairment (Quote in Reference)." (https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/edlite-FAPE504.html).

Thesis Questions

The questions that relate to this topic are that while it is beneficial to have laws and regulations to support students with disabilities to attend school and make it mandatory for school districts to allow them to, where are the laws and supports for the staff and other students that may get hurt during aggressive behaviors? What are the consequences of the students with disabilities that have aggressive behaviors and what can school districts do? The researcher is asking these questions as she is currently a teacher in a setting four special education setting working with students on the Autism Spectrum. Answers to these questions would be able to give the researcher and her colleagues a better understanding of what is there to protect them if a

student should get violent and hurt someone. The supports that are currently in place such as

Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) does not give comfort to the researcher or her colleagues

when she has asked them.

Definition of Terms

IDEA stands for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act - In 1975 Gerald Ford signed into law that people with disabilities would be able to attend school

FAPE stands for Free and Appropriate Public Education-a term to describe the educational rights for students with disabilities

Zero Tolerance-a law stating there is no tolerance for antisocial behavior with strict consequences

Bullying- someone trying to intimidate, or hurt another person through verbal, physical, or emotional abuse

School Resource Officer- an officer obtained to maintain school safety and order but is not employed by the school administration.

Occupational Stress- feelings of being overwhelmed by your occupation

Interventions in schools- tools to be used to intervene in a school setting

Manifestation Determination- to determine if a student's behavior is because of the student's disability

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview of Research Process

Research was done for this project through the internet search engines of Academic

Search Premier and Google. Research was done to explore different educational settings, how to

handle discipline, manifestation determination, and educational placement for dangerous or

disruptive students. Search titles that were used were violence in the workplace, safety for staff

in special education settings, and how staff respond to behaviors. Some of the research was done

looking at the Minnesota Department of Education website where they went into detail about

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Free and Appropriate Public Education. Another

resource that was used is through crisis prevention institute which is training that safely and

effectively manages unsafe behavior.

Violence in Schools

Violence in schools have become part of American culture in the last decade. According

to (Limbos & Casteel, 2008), "Approximately 1.5 million violent incidents occurred on US

school campuses in the 1999-2000 school year" (p. 540). Factors that can contribute to these

incidents include the individual, family, peers, schools, and community are among these. While

many cases have been public there is also violence in schools that are behind closed

doors. Some consider the reasoning behind violence is school culture. Weak school leadership

and disorganization are important roles in a school that affect the climate of the school as well as

clear rules, and support for students. In the same study completed by (Limbos et al., 2008) a

percentage of certified teachers witnessed increased school crime. They also saw a decrease in

school crime when there were increasing student to staff ratios. It was also determined that

"...students who are more attached to teachers, more committed to school, and have stronger beliefs in the schools norms and expectations will display higher academic achievement and less deviant or violent behavior" (Limbos et al., 2008, p. 543). Many outlets have discussed violence in schools that is related to student to student connections. What about student to teacher connections?   To define violence against teachers, (Dzuka & Dalber No Year Indicated), in their article entitled "Student Violence Against Teachers" indicated that aggressive behavior intended to harm the teacher, which students perpetrate repeatedly and intentionally over a certain amount of time. The violent behavior can be broken up into five categories. 1. Harmful verbal, 2. Harmful physical, 3. Damage to personal property, 4. Social coercion and 5. Manipulative behavior aimed at socially isolating the victim. As bullying has become a social concern there is data that shows that bullying can make the victim suffer a variety of feelings. People may feel anxious, depressed, and lonely and feel worse about themselves. In this study completed teachers were asked to report on the experience they have had in the last 15 days based on the 5 categories. It was noted that the results of this study showed that there was an unexpectedly high level of student violence against teachers and having experienced at least one violent student act in the recent past. The study also revealed that teachers were less satisfied with life if they had experienced violence in the last 15 days. (Barnes, 2016) wrote an article indicating that some districts around the country have considered having a school resource officer. Districts believe that having this officer will reduce crime. In (Barnes, 2016 & Scheffer, 1987) discussed the theory of having school resource officers in buildings to support staff.

Also, in the Barnes article, some school resource officers are feeling that schools are not using the school resource officers appropriately and feel that they don't know what they should be used for. School resource officers are not employed through the school administration and

often there are conflicts regarding authority on school security matters. Some school resource officers felt that teachers had become complacent on school infractions and expected them to intervene with these situations.

Studies have shown that there is an increase in violence in schools. According to (Warner, Weist, & Krulak, 1999), there was a 62% increase in juvenile arrests for weapons violations from 1987 to 1991. Most students that maybe socially or academically unsuccessful will me more at risk with having aggressive tendencies as well as students in special education settings will be more likely to be victimized and will have behavioral problems. A strategy used my one study stated that "school administrators and teachers should be aware of the characteristics of students that increase the chance of aggression such as male gender, poor parental supervision, poor frustration tolerance, and impulsivity. When possible, there should be increased monitoring of these students, extra efforts to positively engage them in relationships with staff, and participation in extracurricular activities" (Warner, et al., p. 65). (Wilson, Douglas, & Lyon, 2011) noted a common theme in supporting schools and violence is to take into consideration victimization in students against student violence. What is not taken into consideration is violence against teachers. (Wilson, et al., 2011) indicated that between 5% and 10% of teachers had reported being threatened with injury or physically attacked in the 2003-2004 school year. They also revealed that other significant harm can be experienced by staff such as post-traumatic stress and other stress along with fear. How can these experiences affect a teacher? Some of the effects are avoidance towards the student and situation. Personal safety issues come into place. Also, teachers may have avoidance thoughts and be unmotivated towards their job.

(Taylor, Navaco & Brown, 2016) found that students with intellectual disabilities are more likely to be aggressive toward caregivers. Aggression among people with intellectual disabilities can cause their caregivers absences from work. Aggression can also cause high costs in sick leave and work compensation.

Students with intellectual disabilities as well as other disabilities have a right to attend school but what is the consequence of the actions when it affects a teacher's right to work without being threatened or being afraid when working.

Zero Tolerance and other risk factors

The term "zero tolerance" refers to the policies that punish all offenses severely, no matter how minor. It grew out of state and federal drug enforcement policies in the 1980's (Skiba & Peterson, 1999). In 1994 President Clinton signed the Gun-Free Schools Act into law. This law calls for the expulsion of a student for one calendar year for possession of a weapon. It also requires a referral of the student who violated the law to a criminal or juvenile justice system (Skiba & Peterson, 1999).

While school shootings are rare, they have happened, and this fear has caused for a zero-tolerance approach. Some schools claim that school's hands are tied due to the federal and state laws on the application of the zero tolerance, but they feel it is necessary to send a message to disruptive students. Skiba & Peterson, (1999) also pointed out that there are almost no studies on the effectiveness of zero tolerance strategies. So what should be done? Without limits and classroom management, students with seriously disruptive behavior will eventually turn the classroom to chaos. However, if by choosing control and exclusion are methods of dealing with disruptive behavior, does that mean that our correctional system somehow be the only way we are dealing with troubled or disruptive youth? This article further revealed by (Skiba &

Peterson) that students with disruptive behaviors need to have a consistent behavior plan supported by a team approach and built Functional Behavioral Assessment. It also allows the staff to teach appropriate alternative behaviors.

   (Lamorey, 2010) wrote about the risks that teens may have and how they impact learning. When working with students with disabilities you need to consider sensory, cognitive, language, reading and other modifications. A student's developmental and social emotional maturity is also something to consider when teaching students about risk in teaching them about addiction, sex, and delinquency.

Another thing to consider when talking about risk factors is "least restrictive environment." The law is intended to put special education students into mainstream classrooms and in the total education system. However, at times it is more cost effective to put students in the mainstream classroom instead of what the student really needs. Being in a mainstream classroom can cause frustration and disruption with a special education student when it comes to proper placement.

In another periodical (Journal of Physical Education, 2007), recently pointed out that too much inclusion or mainstreaming of students with disabilities can cause them to not be successful. Therefore, the staffing team needs to carefully plan the student's program around their strengths and needs.

Bullying in Schools

Since IDEA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act came into law in 1975 schools have started integrating special education students in the general education classrooms. This can cause problems for a couple of reasons. General education teachers don't always know how to support the students with special education needs and general education

students often can bully students with special education needs. In a recent article by (Hartley, Bauman, Nixon & Davis, 2015) revealed some thoughtful ideas concerning bullying. Bullying is defined within their writing as ...” aggressive, repetitive behavior with the intention of harming others” (p. 177).   Research has been found that special education services are twice as likely to get bullied then their same aged peers. It seems that because a large percentage of special education students are in general education classrooms, and they are included a large amount of time, they would be more susceptible to being bullied.   It was discovered that school administrators should continually evaluate and monitor behaviors for staff. It was not discussed that school administrators should monitor the behavior of the students to staff though.   It was also discovered that teachers also reported feeling frustrated and threatened by the inclusion of students with disabilities.

Occupational Stress

As many people know as time goes on there is increased accountability for teachers. There is paperwork, lesson planning, functional behavior assessments, individualized education plans, positive behavior support plans, and evaluation reports. That is just the paperwork part of things. Becoming a special education teacher also requires you to work with intervention plans that they must use for behavior management in their classrooms. Due to laws such as IDEA and No Child Left behind teachers have had increased pressure to use evidence-based practices. There are four functions of behavior that special education teachers need to assess in order to come up with the proper intervention plans. (DiGennaro & Martens, 2007) completed a study with 4 special education teachers who addressed different strategies to increase teacher integrity. The results indicated that the more support and training that staff received there is more teaching integrity. This means that teachers are more likely to feel less

stress and demonstrate more effectiveness as teachers. (Borg & Riding 1991) revealed that teacher's emotional stress has increased in the last 15 years. This is not something that has affected just the United States but also teachers in different parts of the world. Teachers stated that much of their stress is due to pupil's behaviors as being the number one factors. Some other factors that contributed to their stress is lack of time for preparing lessons, inadequate disciplinary policies, and the lack of opinion in the school's decision-making process. It was found that in the United States female teachers also feel more stress than male teachers when it came to principal/teacher relationships.

One also must consider the amount of workload that a teacher has. Some teachers might take on extracurricular activities and coach a sport. Some other teachers might have a resource room and get a break from a student who misbehaves often. While still another teacher will have special education students all day without prep time or time to get a break. Any one of these instances can cause a teacher to induce stress. What can be done to help the different teachers to cope with the amount of stress they receive? Often administrators have suggested different ideas or way to cope with stress including mental health days or partnerships with gyms. Teachers need to start taking care of themselves, talking and asking for help from others to avoid teacher burnout, PTSD, and overall lack of motivation.

Why does School Order and Safety Matter

Over the last decade's violence in schools have captured national attention. Some focus on the violence and what causes these outbreaks such as school shootings. Laws have been organized such as the Safe and Drug Free Schools Act in 1986, the Gun Free School Zones Act in 1990 and then again revised in 1996 but what about the school order. Is there a solution to violence in schools? Schools must investigate problems such as playful misbehavior to hostile

environments to violent transgressions. (Cornell & Mayer, 2010) thought that school safety is

relevant to achievement gaps, motivation, dropout prevention and many other educational

topics. As you are looking at school safety you need to consider the functioning of the schools

and the positive engagement in stakeholders. As well as the well-being of students and their

families and consistent achievement of desired outcomes. Instruction alone does not accomplish

school safety and order but rather how to approach the disciplinary actions of those misbehaving

and on what level.

       (McCarthy & Soodak, 2007) thought of another way that school safety becomes a

concern. The politics of discipline. IDEA and FAPE are two laws put into place to make sure

that students with disabilities are able to get an education. What happens when students with

disabilities get violet or have disruptive behaviors in schools. IDEA has conditions under which

a student with disabilities may not be removed from a school. If this happens to be the case a

manifestation determination must be done. This is a meeting to see if the violent behaviors are a

manifestation of the student's disabilities. It is the school's responsibility to follow plans and to

provide services for these students and the school is unable to suspend, expel or change the

placement unless theses supports are in place. Administration has been given little guidance in

and some policies put in place can be inconsistent and arbitrary. (McCarthy & Soodak, 2007)

found that some administrators felt they were being judged by teachers and community members

about the policies they made. While other administrators felt they were more likely find safety

for the larger community than for the rights of the student with the disability.   Administrators

felt that the primary task is to look out for the greater community. (Etscheidt, 2006) found that

while administrators are given this task IDEA has some requirements. First there must be a

manifestation determination to determine if the behavior is part of the student's disability. If

there is not a relation, then the school district can discipline the student as his same non-disabled peers. If the student with the disability is removed from school, the district must find an Interim Alternative Education Setting (IAES). The student can only be removed if the student brought a weapon to school, uses illegal drugs, or inflicts serious bodily injury to another person. The IAES can only be available for 45 days and the student must be able to participate in the general education setting, have the services that is stated on the IEP and that they receive behavior intervention services. IAES is only to be used so that a manifestation determination and a functional behavioral assessment can be done. (Etscheidt, 2006) found there are four things of evidence needed for IAES to happen. The student's current placement would result in injury to the child or others, it was determined on the students IEP that the setting was appropriate. Also, reasonable efforts were made to keep the risk of harm minimized through aids and services and, that IAES would allow the student general education, continue services on their IEP, and address the behavior. Parental consent also needs to be taken into consideration. If a parent refuses the proposed placement of a student, then a hearing needs to be done with the school board to discuss where the student should be located. These laws and regulations are put in place to protect students with disabilities, but does it also support and protect the rights of teachers, other staff, and students?

Administration Support

Administrators around the country have a challenging role in the school system. They are required to keep the safety of students, plan curriculum, and make sure teachers are in accordance and many other duties on their plate. While administrators have this role, they need to also take into consideration teachers, researchers, parents and laws to regulate. When working with special education students they need to consider the varying levels of those students and

how best to accommodate the needs of those students. (Pennington, Courtade, Ault & Delano, 2016) found data that educators determined that because of challenging behaviors due to communication, many special education students end up in holds or restraints to control the behavior. They also found that students with intellectual disabilities are three to four times less likely to have competitive employment compared to their same aged peers. Most administrators have knowledge or experience with students with special needs but have limited knowledge of quality daily programming for those students. So, what should administrators do to ensure safety, proper accommodations, and proper programming for these students? (Pennington, Courtade, Ault & Delano, 2016) gave some suggestions/recommendations for administrators. They agree that student administrators need to make sure that district policies are in place that the teachers teaching them know those policies. They also agree that it would benefit students if administrators and teachers have a way for every student to communicate in their own special needs. Finally, administrators attending IEP meetings need to understand the goals and objectives for the students to make sure they are accommodating both academic and life skills needed.

The Special Education field has evolved over the years from advocacy, practices, supports, and expectations. Even with evolved plans, laws, and practices it is important to remember that as times change, so does the ability for our students to be cared for but also for our teachers, administrators, and support staff.

Evaluating Standards and Interventions in Schools

In writing this section it will be covering FAPE, IDEA, and Functional behavior assessments. This connects with the main topic due to the fact that there are laws behind having students with disabilities having the right to a public education. The laws however do not always

state how administrators, teachers and support staff are to handle the students that have behaviors and how to determine if the behaviors are the cause of the disability.

FAPE in review is the right for students to have a free and appropriate public education. (Huefner, 2008) addressed FAPE in that it guarantees that student needs regarding behavior are addressed to help them be successful in school. In the revision's goals need to be specifically addressing all needs and to have measurable goals. In the article by Huefner it indicated some of the amendments to IDEA.

1. The annual goals must be stated in measurable terms.

2. The annual goals must facilitate progress in the general curriculum for all IDEA students.

3. The annual goals must also address specific needs resulting from the disability.

4. The IEP must state how the student's progress towards the goal will be measured.

5. Regular progress reports must be given to parents.

6. Each student must participate in statewide and district wide achievement testing, with a statement in the IEP of any needed modifications in the testing (an exception was provided if the IEP team determines that the student could not participate, but then another form of assessment had to be developed (Huefner, 2008, p. 370-371).

While this is all protecting a student's needs and via their goals, it does not address the needs of staff to protect their safety.

(Butera, Klein, McMullen, & Wilson, 1998) in there writing indicated that if the IEP is to be effective in protecting the students' rights with a discipline decision you must first evaluate the value of the content. Again that decisions are based on the student needs and does not address the staff needs for their protection. In some schools, some students who may have aggressive

behaviors which are severe, and staff may be physically hurt. These students' IEPs can be changed to provide more support to them to help them be more successful. However, in some Setting IV schools it has been this author's experience that other programming is not available. Some staff have been physically hurt when students' aggressiveness have occurred. Therefore, it seems more provisions for staff need to be in place to protect service providers in these instances.

Manifestation determination under IDEA is a safeguard and programming part to help insure safety for the student and needs to address the safety of staff working with students with significant behavioral challenges. (Katsiyannis & Maag, 2001) spoke to manifestation determination within IDEA. These authors questioned how the manifestation determination is decided. Do we just look at the main disability or do we look at as a staffing team review the history of behaviors and social emotional needs and other possible triggers within individual students? It seems that staffing teams need to carefully address student needs as well as staff needs to protect both students and staff. Due to students having many various needs it must be addressed that these students cannot take a test to see if the behavior was due to the disability. The staffing team needs to address the actual behavior, the triggers for the behavior, and what interventions are in place. Are the interventions in place in accordance to the level of behavior that is being addressed? How are these interventions going to help the students or help the staff with the students? With the training that staff receive in different districts does it account for the level of care the student needs or is it a training for all staff instead of individualized training based on the student's behavior. When taking into account the manifestation determination are these things considered in a pervasive manner.

The researchers found (Ling & Mak, 2012, Cook, 2012, Robertson, Sobeck, Wynkoop & Schwartz, 2017, Gillies, 2014) in that all agree that there are many different interventions that can be used when working with students with disabilities.   Some of these interventions include having students on a positive behavioral support plan and the effectiveness of these plans. It must be addressed that students would require staff competency in knowing how to use these plans effectively. What is the evidence based on these plans and the effectiveness? It was also concluded that parent implemented interventions were investigated to see how the family dynamics affect the student's behavior and how those variables are taken into account. Some stated that different formative assessments to inform staff of different interventions that could be addressed when working with students with special educational needs. It was also address for the response to intervention. What is being done as the interventions are taking place? What are we learning about the antecedent before the behavior? (Reclaiming Children and Youth, 2002) found that training can have positive results. Restraints have been used in students with disabilities when they become a danger to themselves or others. While restraints have been scrutinized by the harm it could cause to the student not only physically but emotionally as well it is training on how to de-escalate a behavior that would increase safety for students and staff. One of the trainings include the Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training and techniques which showcase relationships, responsible learning and caring.

When working with students with special needs you need to consider the severity of the disability. While some students might require more unique needs other can you the resource room as a way of getting their needs met. While in an academic setting some students might express behavior for the lack of knowledge they have in a specific subject and the use of the resource room can be an intervention for those students. (Sabatino, 1972) talked about how

special education classes do not always provide increased academic achievement. It was talked

about that even teachers with the best methods and materials have a hard time differentiating

individualized work for all the different students in the class even if it is 5 up to 15 students.

     In Chapter III the summary, limitations of research, the implications for future research

and the professional application will be addressed.

CHAPTER III: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Summary of Literature

In doing this thesis paper I wanted to keep in mind articles that I found that would give me knowledge on how best to support my students but also to keep myself and other staff safe. During my time in the setting four classrooms with students with disabilities I was constantly wondering how I can make them better. What can I learn from each behavior and how to address it? What were the laws keeping us from expelling this student that put someone in the emergency room**?**

It was important for me to really understand the violence in schools in the articles that I found. It was interesting to see that there are many factors contributing to violence in schools. Growing up I always felt safe at school. I also knew that administration cared for me and I had that trust with the school. I feel that disorganization and school culture is a large factor. I believe that the school culture in the Setting IV seemed disorganized and usually frantic. In order to really understand my questions of where are the laws and supports for the staff and other students that may get hurt during aggressive behaviors and what are the consequences of the students with disabilities that have aggressive behaviors and what can school districts do? I had to do some underlying work when it comes to understanding bullying, administration support, and the laws and regulations surrounding students with disabilities. In the research I found that many other people have the same questions. Administrators are questioning the laws and have little guidance. Others feel that the least restrictive environment for a student might actually be the cause of bullying and behaviors. This is a topic that I feel more research needs to be provided to determine correlation between safety and service.

Limitation of Research

While it was easy to find information on the laws and regulations of IDEA and FAPE it was more difficult to find the correlation between those laws and the safety for faculty. I was able to find many articles were there focus on bullying, violence in schools, and how many administrators find it frustrating in dealing with disruptive behavior. I would have liked to find more information on what schools are doing to ensure the safety of their staff as well as tools that can help students with disabilities. Other limitations I found were finding research that include the most up to date amendments of IDEA and FAPE. I struggled to see if earlier articles were still relevant in the amendments and found that due to the changes made most articles were still valid and relevant.

Implications for Future Research

According to my research there seems to be a common theme. That there are laws and regulations put into place to accommodate and allow students with disabilities to attend school, however, with the laws and regulations there are loopholes. Most administrators don't have the training to work with special education students and therefore the programming for students might not be as great. The training for teachers might be minimal as administrators don't know what training is needed. Some research states that while zero tolerance might work for specific instances such as gang related, drug related, and gun related incidences, how does it work for disruptive behavior? When disruptive behaviors do happen with a special education student what are the proper procedures and are they black and white or are they subjective. When having a manifestation determination meeting does everyone on the team know that disability and how it might affect that student? In my research there was no information on how to protect the teachers and staff that work with a disruptive student and how to keep students and staff safe.

While there have been many amendments to the laws regarding education for students with special needs they still have a far way to go.

Professional Application

I have worked in many different settings with many different students and disabilities. As I have done my research, I can say that I will take many things into consideration as I go through my career. The first thing that I feel I need to take into consideration is the duty I have to my students to make sure that their behavior support plans are conducive to their learning. I also will provide staff with things that have worked to work with the students, how to prevent behaviors, what works for students and what does not. I think that it is important to work with administration to know the rules and that they have in place and ask questions if I don't understand something. When working in my current position, administration made decisions I did not understand; and now I know that they were confused about the law and what needs to be done when there is violence with a special education student. Due to my research I was able to inform many staff about having students be in a separate location for 45 days while determining the manifestation determination. Even with the knowledge we were not able to put them in a separate location as we are a small charter school. Even so, as I move on to my next school in the fall I will be sure to keep the knowledge that I have learned from this thesis to help students but also help administration figure out ways to help staff as well.

Conclusion

The things I have learned throughout this thesis not only in the articles but in the consumption of time it takes to write it is amazing. I can't believe how much we have to consider when making a law or understanding administration. It really is a complicated system that I didn't always understand before. I would look at administration and think how are you

letting this happen to me or to other staff? Why are you not doing anything to punish this student or worse do you think this is safe for anyone including himself? I have a better understanding of the time and effort through the years to get special education students to be acknowledged and welcomed to school and how over time we are thinking of different strategies to make it work for them. When I think back to when I was in school, I don't know that they had behavior intervention plans, resource rooms, sensory breaks or training for teachers. While I still believe, through this thesis, there needs to be more support and training for teachers it really does amaze me how far we have come. I can't thank God enough to put me in the position to work with special needs students but I will show him that I will do anything to make the classroom safe for everyone.

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