Reflections of a Special Education Administrator in a Northern First Nations School

A Project

Submitted to

The College of Graduate Studies and Research
University of Saskatchewan

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Education

Department of Educational Administration

by
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August, 2001

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer acknowledges the those individuals who have offered their support and contributions for the work towards the Master's and also towards the completion of this project.

I would also like to thank my project supervisor Dr. Keith Walker for his support and guidance through the preparation and completion of this document.

And most of all I would like to acknowledge the many children, with physical, mental, and challenging behaviors, that are faced with challenges in their lives, that we as "normal" able bodied and minded individuals take for granted.
DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my husband Darrin and our four children; Kelly, Tanya, Blair and Justine. To my husband for his love, support and continuous encouragement and not to mention the numerous times he drove the nine hours for me to attend the University of Saskatchewan and then to drive back home, nine more hours. To my children, also for their love, and understanding that their mom had to “go to work” and for their patience in the long rides they had to take.

This project is also dedicated to my parents who have gone home to be with the Lord. David Ninine who passed-on on July 6, 1984. And Rose Anne Hardlotte who passed-on on August 16, 2000.
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this project was to give an insight into a special education administered area in a northern First Nations school from the perspective of a First Nations educator. It gives the reader insight into a multi-faceted role of the special educator. Through compilation of reflective journal writing the writer shares her experience in the First Nations school as a special educator. The study was undertaken in a three month period using reflective journals. The reflective journals included:

(1) day to day activities; (2) the role of the special educator; (3) the various responsibilities of the special educator; (4) the on-going community involvement; and (5) the continuous contact with other professional organizations outside the community.

The study revealed that the special educator’s role is multi-faceted and has multi-responsibilities attached. The ability to speak a First Nation language was important because the dominant language spoken by the community was Woodland Cree. The writer also found that having an administrator that was supportive was important.

In conclusion, the special educator in a northern First Nations school has many roles, with various responsibilities attached. The special educator’s role has changed from the traditional paradigm of administering special education, to the present multi-faceted role of the special educator. The administrator’s guidance and support is also of importance.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

I am the decisive element in the classroom. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher I possess tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous.

I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or hurt or heal. In all situations it is my response that decides whether crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanized or de-humanized.

Dr. Haim Ginott

First Nations education has progressed somewhat arduously, however little written documentation is available in the area of Special Education, especially in a northern First Nations education system. There is a lack of written documentation available from the Special Education area from a First Nations perspective.

The increasing number of students within the First Nations schools, and the significant varying needs for First Nations students within these educational institutions remains imperative to offer better ways to serve their educational needs.

In the past, Special Education has been operating in a deficit oriented mode. However, as change is inevitable, this area has gone through a change, as society has changed. It no longer has a narrow perception of serving children that have
“deficiencies”. However, it is serving all children with various disabilities, from mild to severe. The role of the special educator has also changed from that of a narrow role to that of a wide and expanded role. From that of working in isolation to that of a resource collaborator.

STATEMENT TO THE PROBLEM

Many researchers, to name a few, Battiste (1995), Hampton (1995), Miller (1996), have studied the history of First Nations peoples’ education and its effects, however, little written information is available in the area of special education for First Nations, especially among northern First Nations’ schools.

Much has changed in the area of special education, it is no longer a narrow one paradigm perception, however it has branched out and expanded its branches to various angles. The special educator is now serving a broader spectrum of student learners. The special educator also serves various student needs and provides services to students with more complex disabilities. For example; the special educator is now expected to have expertise in a broad array of disabilities. Also, the area of evaluating students is no longer contained in a standardized assessment alone but a broad array of evaluation techniques are now available.

The special education area has indeed changed its perception, and has come to realize that every child has abilities. However, in many educational institutions we, as educators, often overlook those abilities when a child is physically, mentally, or
behaviorally challenged. There is a need to “fix” the child, when in fact it may not be the child herself or himself that needs “fixing”, but it may be other issues that the child is facing; such as their environment. We as educators need to examine the bigger picture.

BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

As a minority group in Canada, First Nations peoples are considered socially and educationally disadvantaged. Many First Nations advocates have stressed concern about the inadequacies of mainstream education to appropriately educate these unique learners. Much of the literature on First Nations education claims that mainstream education commonly fails to incorporate information about the First Nations culture into its instruction and teaching methods, which results in First Nations students having no choice but to learn in a mainstream manner (Gruber & Coldevin, 1995).

In the traditional paradigm of special education, the use of exhaustive lists and templates have been developed outside of First Nation communities, so that the end result would be a disconnection with the different cultural learner and what they really are able to perform, especially the northern First Nations learner. This is an area that still requires refining to suit First Nations learners.

It is important that educators recognize the learning needs of their First Nations learners because many of these learners are at a high risk of not participating in or completing their education.
Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to give an insight of a special education administered area in a northern First Nations education system from the perspective of a First Nations educator. This situation is unique in own sense but not totally unique. Also to give an insight of the expanded role and the various responsibilities that a special educator now has.

The principle outcome of this project is to help educators, gain an awareness of the roles and responsibilities that a special educator encounters in a First Nations school. First Nations people represent a unique culture of traditions, language, socialization, and learning that is different from that of the dominant society. Therefore, the many characteristics of this culture mesh into every aspect of First Nations peoples lives, including their learning. Therefore, educator’s have to be aware and learn about the various techniques in teaching First Nations learner’s. First Nations learners have to be exposed to a curriculum which values and incorporates their culture, experiences, and world views, and not one that alienates.

Researcher’s Story

This short story of my life will hopefully give the reader a clearer understanding of my interest in the area of special education. As a First Nations individual, I am aware that my values and beliefs will have an influence on this project.

I was brought up on my dad’s hunting grounds. Then when I reached school age
my parents moved to the reserve. I entered school at the age of six and I remember it to be a frightful experience; I was crying and I did not want to let go of my mother’s waist. I grew up in a good home, with loving parents. As a child, I recall my dad telling me in our language “don’t give up on attaining education” and it was with those simple but strong words that have encouraged me to go on with my education. (My dad had only attained a grade one education and thus was unable to read or write.)

I attended the reserve school and then I moved to Prince Albert to attain my high school diploma because the reserve school did not have a high school at that time; I wanted to attain my grade twelve. At that time, I had not given a thought of what kind of career I wanted to go into. However, I had always wanted to be in a position to give assistance to those who needed it.

Upon receiving my high school diploma, I enrolled in a certificate program in Indian Social Work. I thought this would be a good way for me to help those who needed help. When I attained the certificate, I moved back to my community. However, I soon learned there was no work available in the field that I had gone into. Therefore, I found a teacher’s associate position. During my work, I worked with special needs children.

After a year, I moved to Saskatoon to attend the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College to attain my Bachelor of Indian Social Work. Then, after much thought, once I had attained the bachelor’s degree, I then enrolled into the education degree through the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program in Prince Albert. Having attained an education degree, I moved back to my community.
I was hired at the high school. After a couple of years teaching in the high school, I was offered the Special Education position and I accepted. However, I did not have prior training in that area. So, the writer self taught herself in the area by reading up on material and going through the documents which had been left by previous special education teacher’s. Then, I enrolled special education classes.

I have learned quite a lot about this area since I first began. I have learned to take my own initiative to learn about the current issues which face special education. I have learned not to wait or depend on anyone to get a job done. However, I would not classify myself to be an “expert” in the area of special education because there is still much to be learned.

The writer enjoys her position, it is very rewarding, yet a challenging occupation. Ironically, I have found myself to be in that “helping” mode. However, it has not been what I had first envisioned it would be. The students that I work with are unique with unique learning needs. For some of the students, they are physically, mentally and behaviorally challenged, and some are limited to what they can do but they have strengths which offset what they cannot do. I have learned a very precious insight from these students and that is not to focus on the negative but on the positive. And also not to take things for granted in life. For example, not to take walking for granted because some of these students are not able to walk.
Delimitations

This project was delimited in the following ways:

1. The project was compiled in one location. In one northern First Nations school.
2. There was only one perspective and that was of the perspective of the writer.
3. The data was collected from one specific role and that was of the special education role.
4. The data was collected in a specific time span. The data was collected in a three month period of September, October and November of 2000.

Limitations

The data collection was limited by the information gathered from one location. There was also a limited perspective in the data collection in which there was only one source in gathering the data which was the writer’s reflective journals.

Definition of Key Terms

For the purpose of this project, the following terms have been defined to assist the reader understand the writer’s meaning:

First Nations

Previously referred to as Indian Band/Reserve, now the preferred term is First Nation (as in Montreal Lake First Nation). Also, it is often used as an adjective (as in
First Nations education) instead of using the phrase “Indian education” or a noun to describe a First Nations person or people.

First Nation Education System

Federally funded school, according to legal and financial obligations as outlined in the Indian Act, operated by First Nations people on First Nations reserve. (The treaties do not outline such though I recognize that First Nation people believe education should be provided on the basis of the treaties.)

Education Committee

The Education Committee serves the same as the Board of Education would serve in the southern region of Saskatchewan.

Education Manager

The Education Manager is the overseer of the local education system. The position is similar to the Director of Education.

Principal/Administrator

An individual who has completed the professional requirements necessary to provide children with educational instruction or has attained higher education, and has been appointed by the local school committee to the position of senior in-school administrator of an educational institution.

Culture

The collection of rules, values, and attitudes held by a society which allows people to communicate, to interpret behavior and to attach shared meaning to behavior and.
events (Brizinski, 1993).

World View

Constitutes the fundamental presuppositions or deep structures which comprise the basis of any culture (Martin, 1996).

Organization of Project

This project is organized in five chapters, a summary of each chapter follows:

Chapter One: Introduction

In this chapter, the background, the purpose, and the description of the study is presented. This includes the problem of the study. The writer also shares her experience which connects to the study.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter includes a review of the literature related to the topic of changes in the special education, ways of learning, measurement of intelligence, evaluation of students, mainstream education, First Nation's education and the administrative perspective.

Chapter Three: Methodology

This chapter outlines the research strategy and methods used for data collection
and analysis. Through written and oral communication and observation, the writer shared experiences within and out of the First Nations school involvement.

**Chapter Four: Presentation of Reflective Data**

This chapter presents the narrative reflective data. Data is presented in the way the writer works in the special education area, in the northern First Nations education system.

**Chapter Five: Contextualization and Analysis of Reflections**

This chapter contextualizes the data and also analyzes the data. It analyzes the information obtained from the reflective journals.

**Chapter Six: Summary, Implications and Recommendations**

In this chapter, it provides the researcher's interpretation of the data, including references to the literature where applicable. The summary of the study is provided along with the findings, implications and recommendations for practice and recommendations for further research.
CHAPTER TWO
A REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

The researcher found minimal written literature pertaining to the area of First Nations special education, especially in a northern First Nations education system. Similarly, advocates of First Nations special education agreed that very little literature, and virtually no research exists which pertains to special education in First Nations educational organizations (Special Education Conference, 2000). Therefore, due to the apparent lack of research studies from which to draw, the writer made use of as many reliable sources as possible which pertained to the field of special education. These sources, considered an important part of the background information, which included book chapters, journal articles, and research studies on special education. In many instances authors did not specify whether the participants discussed were of First Nations ancestry. In these cases, the writer felt that the oversight of this magnitude was necessary due to the lack of literature in this field.

The organization of the literature review includes an examination of the changes in special education, measurement of intelligences, and evaluation of students. As well, this literature review investigates the area of the mainstream education. It also investigates the area of First Nations learners. Last of all, the area of administration perspective is
presented. The chapter concludes with a summative statement compilation of the literature review.

Changes in Special Education

Society and school has changed. There is also no exception that the area of Special Education has changed from the traditional paradigm of service delivery to the current paradigms of service delivery. Special educators had entered the field with "one set of expectations" (CEC, 1995). The expectations of providing instruction to students eligible for services in resource rooms, special classes, and special schools has changed.

The traditional paradigm had a narrow scope of serving students. The traditional paradigm only focused on the deficit or giftedness of the student. And thus, in the deficit orient, expecting for something to get cured. The traditional paradigm was based on formula's. The standardized assessments only focused on the cognitive aspect and not a holistic approach, "authentic assessments" were non-existent. The programming centered on labels. The traditional paradigm negated diversity. The service delivery had an individualized approach and not a team approach. If students required assistance, then the referral process was initiated and then this got them into self-contained, segregated and pull-out programs. The traditional paradigm did not address holistic programming and thus had a limited inter-agency perspective. In many educational organizations, administration did not notice the special education department.
The special education area has moved from the least to the most restrictive continuum of alternative educational placements of students'. The most restrictive aspect refers to the extent to which the student spends no part of his/her educational program with non-disabled peers. Whereas, the less restrictive setting, the student may spend part of his/her educational day with non-disabled peers. In the current education for students with exceptionalities, it is highly recommended that all students be educated in the least restrictive educational system (Bos & Vaughn, 1998). (Please refer to Figure 1 for changes made in special education for alternative educational placement for special needs students.) Many of the special needs students are now working in mainstreamed classrooms and still many more in inclusive classrooms.

Over the past several years special education area has undergone numerous changes. Special educators have expanded their roles, in addition to working with students with physically, mentally, and behaviorally challenged students, they have expanded their role toward a team effort (working together), as collaborator and consultant, and further have expanded their role to work with other professionals (CEC, 1995). The role has also moved toward collaborating with educators within the educations system’s and other support personnel to meet the needs of all learners. The role change present new opportunities for professional growth and increase teachers’ ability to impact the lives of children with exceptionalities. The change in roles of special education has been a positive move because it has only enhanced special education.
Figure 1: Alternative educational placement for special needs students.

The increase of interactions with other professionals and the community, has enabled the special educator to better serve students in the classroom. This has also enabled many students to have an easier transition to the workplace and adult life, which otherwise would not have occurred if the traditional paradigm of special education was in place (CEC, 1995).

Currently, special educators are required to possess a variety of new skills. Some of these area’s have been to increase their knowledge of instructional leadership. To learn management and communication skills, as well as knowledge about change and methods to facilitate change in the educational environment. They have to learn about collaboration and interpersonal skills. They have to increase their knowledge of the general education curriculum, and current educational happenings. Special educators also have to be able to adapt materials and curriculum from subjects at all levels for all students (CEC, 1995).

With the change in the special educators role, they also have to work with students who have varying types of disabilities and learning needs. For example, rather than specializing in a specific area such as learning disabilities, they have been expected to be knowledgeable in a variety of learning problems. Special educators have come to be knowledgeable about general education, the curriculum and the students it serves. They have come to serve students with all diverse learning needs.
Ways of Learning

It is not possible to pick up a recent educational journal without encountering at least one article, if not several, on school improvement, theory or practice. Through these articles run common themes: brain research, multiple intelligences and emotional intelligence, among others. These areas have much to tell us regarding optimal learning conditions for a diverse student population. But what, really, do they mean? What are the relationships amongst them? Are findings in each area supportive of initiatives in the others? And, what are the implications for the practice of educators? We must seek answers to these questions and others if we truly seek to learn about learning.

Brain research, multiple intelligences, and emotional intelligence are areas which help us to learn about learning, each with a unique focus. To name a few Gardiner (1983), Goleman (1995), Sylwester (1998) have been in the forefront researching about the ways of learning and knowing. In the early 1900's, there were attempts on the part of Binet and Terman to measure "intelligence" resulting in one of the individual standardized tests of intelligence in current use. Piaget's monumental contribution which began in the 1920's identified developmental milestones in children's learning (Ginsburg and Opper, 1969). These examples only highlight the historical interest, speculation, and subsequent theorizing in the area of the brain. Since then, technological advances have made it possible to pursue research questions never before thought possible. The result has been an explosion of information from the field of scientific inquiry. According to
Sylwester (in Brandt, 1998), there has been similar parallel boom in the area of theory based on practice and on research in the social or behavioral domains.

Two theories which have emerged are Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences (1983) and Goleman’s theory of emotional intelligence (1995). Within the work of Goleman and Gardner, there are numerous references to new learnings from brain research, such as the level of brain activity during flow, appear to be based on some of the theoretical underpinnings of theorists and behavioural-social researchers such as Gardner and Goleman.

There are certainly instances of differentiation in the work of each “expert”. The areas each have a different focus, so one, such as multiple intelligences, for example, speaks to the wide array of capabilities while another, emotional intelligence speaks to a specific aspect. There are multiple references throughout the literature to the work of significant others in the field. For example; Goleman’s references in *Emotional Intelligence* to the work of Gardner), and the tone, in the main, indicates either agreement, agreement in part, or genuine respect as a basis for future learning about the way we learn. This approach provides a good example of the provision for “emotional safety” and the building of community amongst the key players in the field.

Based on new information regarding the way the brain grows and develops, the multiplicity of intelligences, and the importance of emotional intelligence, educators and others are revisiting that “place called school” (Goodlad, 1984) and the priorities for
learning that exist there. It is common for new ideas in education, research based or not, to arrive on the scene with a flash intent on supplanting older models, strategies, and goals. Teachers are often influenced to abandon previous practice and get with the program.

Educators have to know more about the brain and its intricate system, so as to have better learning outcomes for their students. For example,

Neural branching is one area that is being considered by educators for students to have a better learning outcome. Neural branching is 'brainwork' which strengthens the brain and overcomes the brain's natural tendency to limit information. Neural branching attempts to "create the opportunity to look at something for the first time... before our mind-set becomes rigid (Cardellichio and Field, 1997)." Educators need to study the brain and its functions, and make their own discoveries about improving instruction.

Measurement of Intelligence

In the past, considerable attention has been given to assessing the intelligence of students using standardized intelligence tests. The Intelligence Quotient (IQ) test is the generally accepted measure of intelligence. But what does it really measure? According to Sylwester (1990), "[i]ntelligence tests that focus on efficiency rather than on adaptability in problems and solutions thus miss a critical element of human cognitive
functioning”. Intelligence and achievement tests are (for the most part) more related to factors that enhance success in school than in non-school life.

The IQ test was developed about a century ago as a way to determine which students would be successful in school. These traditional tests measure linguistic ability, logical-mathematical ability and occasionally spatial ability, but do not inform us of other abilities, such as creativity or physical prowess. They also don’t take into account such factors as motivation and effort, which according to Black (1994) often drive brilliant achievement. Sternberg (1997) asserts that if we expand the range of abilities we assess for we would also “expand the range of students we identify as smart” (p.27).

Gardner’s definition of intelligence deviates significantly from established practices. The classic concept of the IQ test presumes a quantitative certainty. Most definitions of intelligence focus on the capacities important in a school setting. According to Sternberg (1997), the ability test we currently use predict school performance reasonably well because they emphasize the same abilities that are emphasized in the classroom. Multiple intelligence theory challenges the entire notion of intelligence quotient.

Findings in the area of brain research have supported the notion that intelligent response is more than what intelligence tests measure, it “requires brain systems which can identify and focus on important problems”, and it is the brain’s emotional and attentional systems which carry out that function (Sylwester, 1998). “Genes do not
determine mental traits, but instead they determine how the brain will react to the physical and cultural environment. One does not inherit intelligence, [she or he] inherits genes which make the development of intelligence possible” (Klemm, 1972, p.43). An individual’s physical, mental, and cultural attributes result from the interaction of their heredity and environment. Intelligence then becomes an elusive concept that is somehow related to how and how well these brain-processing systems function individually and collectively to solve specific-to-general problems. According to Robert Sylwester, intelligence is whatever intelligence test measure, and scholars aren’t really sure what that is.

Evaluation of Student’s

As with the changes in education, the change has also been evident in the way an educator evaluates student performance. Contrary to popular opinion, assessment is not simply the administration of standardized intelligence tests. Assessment is the process of gathering information to determine a) if there is a problem, b) if so, how it can be changed, and c) whether the desired change is taking place (Ontario Regional Office, 1986). Therefore to evaluate something, he or she has to focus on the process of examining the evidence and finding value in it. It is during the evaluation process that judgements and interpretations are made on the collected data.

Through research and various studies, special educator’s have come to learn of
various assessment techniques. Special educators have learned to utilize these assessment techniques when evaluating student performance. Therefore, there is no longer one specific tool to use when assessing students but multiple evaluation formats are available; which are known as authentic assessment. Authentic assessments are ideal to get an accurate picture of a student's performance. Some examples of authentic assessment are as follows: progress graphs and charts, performance records, anecdotal records, student portfolios, journals, learning logs, and so forth.

Through the assessment process, information is gathered by direct observation, from existing records, and through interviews, work samples, and assessments. This information allows the educator to describe the child's history, current functioning, and the ways in which she or he finds it easiest to learn. This information will permit informed decision-making relating to the students' placement, program, and progress (Ontario Regional Office, 1986).

There are certain kinds of assessments which are more appropriate than others. However, the most useful procedures are those that can be accommodated readily into regular teaching routines, cause little change of pace for the student, and whose results are easily translatable into program changes. With whatever assessment tools or evaluation processes a special educator utilizes, it would be best to coordinate the evaluation system with the education system and then collect and use the data to make sound instructional decisions.
Mainstream Education

As researchers present the history of First Nations peoples’ education, they have echoed throughout literature the need for distinction between First Nations education and dominant mainstream education, specifically, the inadequacies of mainstream education to appropriately educate these unique learners (Ambler, 1994; Hampton, 1993; Simonelli, 1993).

The literature of First Nations education suggest that First Nations learning needs have rarely been accommodated because they have gone unnoticed by non-First Nation educators and administrators, in mainstream educational organizations. First Nations advocates have pointed out that the current educational system, primarily structured for the dominant culture, which has resulted in First Nations students having no choice but to learn in the dominant mainstream education (Gruber & Coldevin, 1995).

Diverse learners such as First Nations people have different learning approaches than the dominant culture; specifically, they use and practice the skill of observation before attempting a task (Hampton, 1993; Spronk, 1995). Researchers on First Nations learner’s have found various ways that the First Nations learner best acquires learning (Ambler, 1994; Hampton, 1993; Martin, 1996; Wiesenberg, 1992).

As First Nations advocates have illustrated, non-First Nations teaching methods do not foster First Nations’ cultural or learning needs; it lacks the incorporation of First Nations’ life values and world views. Furthermore, in mainstream education, these
teaching methods are disseminated by non-First Nations teachers. Therefore, not only are First Nations students at a disadvantage as soon as they walk into a classroom to attain knowledge, but they are being taught, perhaps inadvertently, that their cultural ways of learning are not acceptable or respected in mainstream education.

In the current education system, teacher’s have to be aware of the various approaches to learning and teaching. Teachers also have to be aware and learn about the various techniques which allow the implementation of the Adaptive Dimension and of the alternative services that are now available. The dominant mainstream education has to incorporate information about First Nations culture into its instruction and teaching methods.

It is important that educators recognize the learning needs of their First Nations learners because many of these learners are at a high risk of not participating in the education. In general, First Nations students’ needs have rarely been accommodated since these needs have gone unnoticed by non-First Nations educators and administrators.

Mainstream educators must go beyond teaching the superficial aspects of cultures, such as traditional foods or festival customs. Therefore, building a culturally responsible curriculum is equally as important in assisting teachers become culturally responsive (Martin, 1996; Spronk, 1995). Students have to be exposed to a curriculum which values and incorporates their culture, experiences, and world views and not one that alienates. Curricula that respects cultural diversity helps learners to learn about their own culture as
well as other cultures; this in turn facilitates an understanding of diverse social, cultural, and value systems (Ukpokodu, 1996).

**First Nations Education**

The destiny of a people is intricately bound to the way its children are educated (RCAP, 1996). First Nations education has traditionally been a holistic process, not fragmented. As Watkinson (1996) points out, First Nations education is a life-long process that involves a simultaneous and balanced development of the mind, body, and spirit. First Nations education is a process that begins before birth and continues long after formal education is over. First Nations education relied on children looking and listening, in order for them to grow into healthy and successful adults (Miller, 1996). Further, researchers have described traditional First Nations education as an integration of cooperative and experiential learning, through oral histories, teaching stories, ceremonies, hunting, fishing, agriculture, learning games, tutoring, and formal instruction (Barman, Hebert, & McCaskill, 1986; Hampton, 1993; Watkinson, 1996). These processes reinforce First Nations learners’ approach to the search for acquiring knowledge.

The education of First Nations people has gone through many changes, from traditional education to the formal schooling sponsored by the federal government and
often run by religious entities to the present time where most schools are administered by First Nations under the policy of Indian Control of Indian Education.

First Nations have been struggling to "preserve their historical, cultural identity as an 'original' or 'First Nations' people (Peavy, 1997, p. 1). "[M]ost 'First Nations' peoples are dedicated to retaining their ... [First Nations] cultural identity and, in many instances, interested in developing a bi-cultural ability to navigate harmoniously back and forth between ...[First Nations] and dominant culture" (p. 1).

The "education of modern ...[First Nations] people spans two distinct value systems and two world views". (p. 12). An individual's world views and value system are part of the self like the color of his or her skin is part of the body; it cannot be wiped off. In contrast to the mainstream education, First Nations education exists for the sole purpose of assisting others (Hampton, 1993).

First Nations advocates argue that if more First Nations become teachers of First Nations then their students will have more opportunities to succeed in the current educational system. The teaching profession continues to be drawn largely from the non-First Nation population, and although First Nations graduates with degrees are increasing in number, there are still insufficient numbers to meet the demand (Spronk, 1995). First Nations advocates, assert that First Nations believe that they are more qualified to teach their own than non-First Nations individuals (Barman, Heber, & McCaskill 1986; Hampton, 1993). However, Hampton contends that First Nations "education will not be
truly ...[First Nation] until we develop our own research, our own philosophies of education, our own structures, and our own methods” (p. 270).

Through research and various studies, experts have discovered various learning styles. However, it is important to point out, that there is no generic First Nations learning style (MacIvor, 1995). In the school, matching tutors and learners with compatible learning styles is one of the ways to accommodate the First Nations learner.

Educator’s need to create an environment that can accommodate all learning styles. For example; how to incorporate social skills into learning. The educator has to maximize benefit’s for the students’ by incorporating the various learning styles; such as group setting’s or to enhance a one-on-one involvement.

Administrative Aspect

The administrator can play a key role in the delivery of learning opportunities to the First Nation’s learner’s. He or she can also play a major role in the delivery of special education services in the educational environment. The administrator in the First Nations educational system will encounter more challenges.

The administrator in the First Nations educational system will encounter, far more variables versus in a non-First Nations educational organization. As Pavlik states in his article, First Nations “schools are characterized by the existence of a multitude of
variables such as native culture and tradition, entangled community kin relationships, bilingualism or native lingualism, and often physical isolation, factors which most traditional trained administrators perceive as threatening” (p. 18). [This is one of the reasons why the writer believes that many of the previous administrators that have held the administrative position’s in Namikos have not stayed longer than two years or more, many have only stayed in the position for one year.]

Summary

Indeed the area of special education has changed. The traditional paradigm is no longer the mode of operating special education. However, special education has broadened its perspective. Special education now serves a broad spectrum of students. The special educator now works in a team approach, as collaborator and consultant. He or she also works with other professionals to better serve students. The increase of interaction with other professionals and the community has enabled many students to be better served.

As more research is being produced, educator’s are learning more about the area of learning. Certainly, as one reads the literature, it is apparent that there is much crossover between brain research and social and behavioral theory. Within the three areas, there is an overwhelming support from one for the other. In reading the literature, there were few indications that the experts in brain research and theory want their particular part of the
puzzle to compete with any other part. In brain research and social/behavioral theory each provide at least one piece of the puzzle.

The multiple intelligence theory has broad implications for special education, which has typically worked out a deficit-oriented paradigm (Armstrong 1994). One could argue that this belief has also been pervasive in the education of all students. Educators need to recognize and focus on the strengths of the total student, using these abilities in developing areas where the student experiences difficulty, such as the First Nations learner.

First Nations are culturally diverse. First Nations culture is certainly unique and yet complex. The many characteristics of this culture mesh into every aspect of First Nations peoples lives, including their learning. The First Nations culture is based on a holistic way of viewing the world and First Nations individuals bring this way of thinking to each new encounter. As non-traditional learners, First Nations have distinctive learning needs. However, much of these needs have gone either unnoticed or overlooked by mainstream education. The literature asserts that First Nations learners require their own traditional teaching methods incorporated into the mainstream instruction.

The writer has included a concept map at the end of this chapter. (See Figure 2) The rationale for the map is to give the reader a visual "picture" of how the related literature is connected with the data (reflections).
Figure 2: Concept Map of Major Themes
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

In this chapter, the research strategy and the method used for data collection and analysis are outlined. The primary purpose of this research was to give an insight into a special education administered area in a northern First Nations school, from the perspective of a First Nations educator. The writer shares her perceptions as a special educator in a northern First Nations education system.

Research Methodology

This research study was designed to specifically shed insight into a special education administered area in a northern First Nations education system, from the perspective of a First Nations educator. A qualitative research method was utilized. The investigation of a lived experience was used in which the method of inquiry was done through daily reflective journals. The researcher perceived herself as the primary instrument for collecting data; thus, interacting closely with the First Nations school and community during the study (Borg and Gall, 1989).

The journals contained the writers day to day activities, observations, interactions with students, education personnel and the community, personal thoughts and personal
reflections. It is recommended that the reader keep in mind that each individual has a personal way of viewing the world. The writer has found this method to have been effective. This method has proven to be very useful in cross-cultural studies (Bishop 1996). This method would allow the First Nations individual the comfort of sharing their experiences in their unique way.

Data Collection

In this section the site and the data collection method of the study are described.

Selection of Site

This study was conducted in a semi-remote northern Saskatchewan First Nations school. A First Nations school was selected because there is little known written information in the area of special education in a First Nations school, especially in a northern First Nations school. Also these types of schools are under-represented in the literature when it comes to special education. The site was selected because that was the ideal location in which to collect relevant data pertinent to the topic.

Twenty-five people staffed the school, including 19 teachers, one full-time administrator, and six support staff.

Data Collection Method

The primary source of data collection was the daily reflective journal. The daily
reflection journal and notes were employed to record the writers responses or perspectives. Since this study was seeking to identify the multi-faceted role of the special educator in a First Nations school, issues and factors arising from the daily reflective journal and notes, led to further data collection and analysis.

The daily reflective journals were titled to provide an easy reference to the reader. For the first entry of the reflective journal the writer decided to share her recent loss of a loved one. Then the entries thereafter were entered on a daily basis. For the first week the entries were entered once per day, at the end of the day. However, the writer learned that there was far too much time spent on thinking about what to write. Then for the next couple of weeks the entries were written twice per day; once in the morning and once in the afternoon. The writer learned that the thoughts and experiences needed to be written more intensely. Therefore notes were written once in a while throughout the day when the need arose. For the next couple of months the entries were written twice a week with scribbled notes written in between to maintain the thought and observation.

Data Analysis

Verification of Data Collection Procedure

The reflective daily journal entries were constantly reviewed. The data was analyzed simultaneously along with the data collection, by the researcher. This allowed the researcher to focus on and shape the study as it proceeded, consistently reflecting on
organizing the data, while seeking to uncover what the special educator had to reveal about the position she held (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). This method used constant analysis and subsequent comparison of incidents or events arising from data collection.

**Analysis**

Data collection was a continuous process; therefore, the constant comparative method of data analysis was used. This method allowed the data to be organized on a continuing basis and connections in methodology to be made between each data gathering session.

**Time Line**

The proposal for this project was put before the Education Manager of the Reindeer Lake school in June, 2000. The reflective journal were begun in September and were taken in a three month period. During the month of October and November, 2000, the data was continually compiled. Then during January to March the data was then analyzed and completed. Then the project written.

**Research Ethics**

The research looked at the world of education through the eyes of an educator, and therefore, the study was not an experimental design which warranted consent for those
individuals who “crossed paths” with the researcher. The compilation of the data was done anonymously.

Ethical considerations were adhered to ensure all individuals who “crossed paths” with the researcher were afforded respect and consideration. Furthermore, in order to protect the anonymity of the education system, the name of the First Nations education system is a pseudonym. The writer also used pseudonyms of the individuals in the reflective journals.
CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION OF REFLECTIVE DATA

In this chapter, the narrative reflective data is presented. This information will give the reader an inside view of a special education administered area into a northern First Nations education system. In the reflections the writer shares her role as a special educator, the daily community interactions, working with other professional’s in and out of the community setting, and also the various roles and responsibilities she has in the northern education system.

Presentation of Narrative Data

The First Entry (September 5, 2000)

Today is the day that I finally decided to begin my daily log of personal reflections for this project. I have been putting the data collection process off because of my recent loss of a loved one. My mom died on August 16 of this fall. The doors had opened for the beginning of the school year in mid-August, however I have not been at work. Today was my first day of work.

Today was a difficult day for me. I did not know where to begin at work. Well, I
will begin with this log by sharing who my mom was. My mom was a precious woman, who had worked hard for what she had. My mom lost her husband, my dad, when she was quite young, at the age of thirty five. My dad lost his life on the highway, upon returning home from a trip from a day of shopping, in the nearest town. My mom and my younger brother were in the accident. The accident left my mom in a very critical condition (the doctors did not think my mom would make it). She ended up in the hospital for a number of months.

My mom worked for the education system. She was a Teacher’s Associate. She had been one of the first community members to have been hired when the band took operation of it’s education. Upon the accident, my mom did not return to work for one year. Then in a year, she returned to work. From the day of my dad’s death, she worked for fifteen years. My mom worked hard to provide for her family. On August 16, my younger sister found her, in her bed. She had died in her sleep. My mom was only 50 years old.

Today, I walked in the school where my mom had worked and where she had dedicated a lot of her time for the children that she provided her services to. She was a dedicated worker, on many occasions, one would find her working in the school by herself, long after all the staff had left for home to their families, and she was there preparing material for the following day.

As I walked in the door, the Vice Principal greeted me. She came to my room and told me that I had “a lot of work waiting for me”. She informed me of some of the
pertinent information that I needed to know.

Today had been a difficult day, for me. As I got started, I did not know where to begin. I work as a Special Education Teacher. I am a First Nations person. This is my third year in this position.

As I walked into my room and looked at the pile of boxes, which contained resource material. I just stood and looked. I sat down and thought for a while of where I was going to begin. As I began to work, I did not realize that I would attend to one task, and all of a sudden be doing another thing. So, I finally stopped myself and just sat down and said a prayer. I asked for guidance because I was not thinking straight. Then, I got started again.

During the morning sometime, I went to see the Principal. He stated that he would leave all the Special Education decisions up to me. He also told me that my position had been redirected. I was now fully responsible for High Cost students, throughout the school. He also informed me that I would have a teacher working with me in the Resource Room area, to assist in the remedial area. Lastly, he told me that he understood my situation and that if I needed help, that his door would be open. (This year the school had a First Nations principal, from northern Manitoba.)

Then I resumed with my duties in my classroom for the rest of the day. I tried to organize my room as best as could be arranged. I had teacher’s in and out of my room for the rest of the day. Sometime during the afternoon, I went to locate all the high-cost students enrolled. Today had been a very busy day.
Vice-Principal's Visit (September 6, 2000)

I began my day at school, with the Vice-Principal visit. She had some issues that she wanted to discuss with me regarding high-cost programming, tutor's, and remedial assistance. She also informed me who was new at our school and who would require high-cost programming. So, once she left, I compared my list of student’s, I had a total of sixteen students on my list. Some of the students had various disabilities and therefore I needed to prioritize according to the need. For example, some of the student’s had cerebral palsy, spina bifida, intellectual deficiency, and so on. Then I began shifting tutor’s by name and matching them with student’s. Through this process, I was also able to distinguish who had worked well with a particular student. and I began by deciding which high-cost students would require the most assistance. Then, I continued down the list with tutor placements.

At about ten thirty, I received a call from the principal from a nearby First Nations school, which is the nearest reserve approximately 263 kilometers away. The principal wanted to know about a high-cost child who had transferred to their school. I informed her that I would be sending the information to them and that the cum. file would be a separate file from the Special Education file. She was appreciative of the information.

Later in the morning, I informed the principal and staff, by way of a memo, that there would be a Special Education meeting a four in the afternoon, in the school library. The staff would only include teacher’s who would have high-cost student’s in their classrooms.
The afternoon was very busy with sorting student files and locating student grade placements. Plus, with teacher’s coming and going. There was just so much to do. Late in the afternoon, I made my way to the high school to go and locate information on some students which would require high-cost programming. However, before I made it to the old Middle Years and High School Special Education Room, I was stopped by a couple of teachers. Both wanted resource material. So, I stopped in to see the previous Middle Years and High School Special Education teacher, who was now the English High School teacher. She informed me of where I would find the specific material which I was looking for.

By four o’clock, once all the student’s had left, I made my way down to the school library. Once the meeting began the staff in attendance were the administrator, seven teachers and six tutor’s. The staff in attendance were a mix, from the primary to junior high teacher’s. I informed them about high-cost programming. Some staff were not too pleased, and then to top it off to hear that there would be no middle-years and high-school special education programming was another sore spot. Then, I informed them about high-cost student placements and tutor assignments. I also informed them that I would be speaking to them individually concerning the children placed in their classrooms. Scheduling of the high-cost programming was also brought up. Then, we discussed the aspect of bussing and that some of the students would need to be dismissed early. However, it would be up to the classroom teacher to go for a home visit and speak to the parents or care-givers individually concerning their children. There was a lot of
discussion's which occurred at the meeting. And by the time the meeting was over it was already half-past-five.

**Special Education Teachers (September 7, 2000)**

I was on supervision today. I had begun the process of developing the Individualized Education Program’s, at home last night. This year I had decided that I would need to review the Individualized Education Plan (I.E.P.) format and thus decide which would best suit the make-up of my student’s. It had taken me a while to do the format last night because I always ensure that the material I use are relevant and suit my work situation. Each year, at the beginning of the school year, I update and review whatever material I will be using for the school year; whether it be evaluation formats, up-dating special ed. school forms, I.E.P.’s and so forth. So, it was a slow process. But I always use my computer to change and up-date my forms and I find that it is a good tool to use.

When I had first begun work in this area, I had re-arranged the whole classroom. The classroom had been such a mess (unorganized files, misfiling, resource material all over the place). In the past there had never been a First Nation’s person who occupied the Special Education classroom, at this First Nations Education System. Let alone a local community member. I have also found, by speaking to other Special Education teacher’s within the Prince Albert Grand Council, which is the district the Namíkos First Nations belongs to, that they themselves were not aware of any First Nation Special Education
Teacher's in the northern schools. In the Namíkos education system, there had always been non-First Nation’s who would only stay in the position a year or two and then move on to better positions, in other schools. I had found this out through speaking with other teacher’s, in and out of our school system. To me, they seem to have used the First Nation’s schools as a training ground.

I began this work with a lot of challenges. I had previously been a high school, therefore this was a change over. I have learned a lot over the past few years. I also have come to really enjoy this position because it seems to me that this position can be comparable to an administrative position because of the issues and decisions that have to be made on a daily basis. (Also, I would not state this if I had not had taken the administrative training that I have.) Since I began this position, it seems like I am the middle person. I am the liaison to the parents, the staff, other professionals and outside organizations.

Late this morning, I had a parent come to my room and ask if I could assess her child. She informed me that her child was in Kindergarten and that she was able to do Grade 1 work. The mother stated that her child was able to state the alphabet by rote. I informed her that I would assess her child sometime this week when I had the opportunity and that I would let her know of the results.

All afternoon I was busy doing my administrative work in my classroom. I had to make a few phone call’s to the Special Education Consultant in Prince Albert, who works for the Prince Albert Grand Council. Then I contacted the Alvin Buckwold Centre.
regarding assessments on some of our students. I also had to phone the local Health Centre regarding student referrals.

By late afternoon, I had managed to begin an I.E.P. on a child who had cerebral palsy. This child is such a delight. She has a charming disposition. She always has so much stories to tell. I always look forward to working with this little girl. In all the time since I began working with her I can not remember a time in which she was in a negative mood.

At four o’clock, I had a couple of tutor’s come in and ask questions on what they needed to write in their Day Books’ (this had been explained to them in the meeting the previous day). Then, I got a visit from the principal. He wanted some information on the behavior classroom. I informed him that all the students that would be enrolled into that classroom had been assessed, but that we also needed to set up the program. However, the teacher had not been hired for that classroom. [As it is our system has a difficult time recruiting teacher’s because of the semi-remote area of our community. Even still difficult to do is to hire specialized teacher’s but that problem is not a unique problem because it is occurring all across our province.] For the Behavior Disordered classroom, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada had made a policy for the operation of this classroom and therefore there were guidelines that had to be followed. (To the writer it seems that their policies are forever changing and giving the First Nations education system’s are getting the run around.)

I had decided today that I would do assessment’s, even though it was no longer
expected of me to do remedial work and spend a whole lot in Resource work, I felt that the least I could do was to assess students for teacher’s that requested it. I had previously done school wide testing, however there were two of us previously, but now there was only one of me, and I would be unable to perform the duties that I had done previously.

Another day come and gone.

**Collaborating with Teachers (September 8, 2000)**

I arrived at the school by 8:29. I knew that I had supervision today. The principal came and asked me to go and see him. When I arrived at his office, he told me about the situation which was occurring regarding teacher concern’s of remedial assistance for students and also about some teacher’s concerned about high-cost students. Apparently, some teachers were concerned and apprehensive about having high-cost students in their classrooms. He informed me which teacher’s they were, and he asked me if I would go and speak to them this morning.

During supervision, I had to report an incident which occurred. A student had accidently bumped into another child at the playground. (Staff are responsible for reporting incidents which occur during the school hours.) So I did my report and by this time supervision was over, then I made my way to go and see the teacher’s that had concern’s. The first teacher was only concerned because she had a lack of knowledge about the child’s condition and once I told her briefly about the condition, and how she should deal with the situation, then she felt much better. I also told her that I would give
her more information to read. Then, I went to see the next teacher, this teacher was concerned that there were two high-cost student’s placed in her class and that there were too many bodies in the classroom. I informed her that there would only be one full time tutor and one half time, because one of the students had qualified for full time funding and one had only qualified for half time funding. Therefore, there would only be one tutor there in the morning and two in the afternoon. I told the teacher that there was also the seminar room available if her classroom got to be too congested. But I cautioned her that the seminar room would only be used for a short period of time and not to be used all day long because I did not want the students to be segregated from their classmates. I informed her that I wanted the high-cost student’s to be included with the rest of their classmates as much as possible in the classroom setting. The teacher felt much better with the situation.

Once I had spoken to the teacher’s, I then went to see the Education Manager. [The Education Manager is the overseer of this First Nations Education System. He is part of a team in which he works with two other Education Manager’s, along with the Director of Education. The Namíkos Education System is a semi-education system, which consists of five federally funded schools in a multi-community setting.] I needed to speak to him because there were a few issues which I wanted to discuss with him. I needed to discuss the issue of high-cost funding and which student’s were being funded, according to the Prince Albert’s Grand Council’s Special Education Consultant. I also wanted to know what the situation was regarding the Specialized Behavior classroom which we
have named the Multi-grade Classroom. The Education Manager also had a few issues he had wanted to discuss with me and so we had an informational meeting.

Once I had spoken to the Education Manager, I then had to do some administrative work. And that took me the rest of the morning to do. During that time I had a couple of teacher’s come in to ask for resource assistance.

This afternoon was as busy as this morning. I received a call from the Prince Albert Grand Council (PAGC) Special Education Consultant, she informed me that she would be arriving at the school on early next week. We also discussed which students she would be seeing and what they were to be seen for. Also, she would be bringing another Educational Psychologist with her, which was good to hear because I knew there would be more work accomplished. After I had spoken to her, then I had to make arrangements to make home visits, for parents/care-giver’s to sign consent forms. I also had to fax the Consultant some information which she required before her visit.

I was preparing to make the home-visits when I had a couple come to see me regarding their daughter. It was good to see them because these were also the parents that I had included to go and see. The couple had just recently moved to the community and their daughter had been enrolled in our school, however I had not been able to get any information regarding their daughter. The mother tried to explain the condition of her child and what had happened to their daughter. I asked her if she had taken their child to the Alvin Buckwold Children’s Development Program and also which physician’s her daughter had seen. I also asked if their daughter had ever been assessed by an Educational
Psychologist. However, they were unsure. I then asked the parents to sign a *Release of Information* and also a *Consent for an Educational Assessment*. I was so thankful for the visit because this is a child which I had needed information about and had been unsuccessful in attaining it. I could see from the visit that the parents wanted the best help their child needed and that they wanted to be a part of the educational process. I told the parent's that they should not hesitate in contacting me regarding any concern's they may have about their child.

Once the parents left, I then went for my home-visits. This is a part of my work which I enjoy. I am able to go to parents at any time and talk with them. Many times they have questions and I am freely able to talk with them in my own language. The parent's are more comfortable talking with me in our own language, and I have found that they are more open versus if a visitor came to their door and only spoke in English, many times it is a barrier because you could only say so many words in the English language. I had made a total of five home visits and all the parents were home which was good because I would not have to go back and make a second visit.

By the time I got to the school it was already a quarter to five and time to go home for the day.

**The Home Visit (September 11, 2000)**

This morning I had a couple of teacher visits. But most of my time was spent on filling out some Behavior Assessment System for Children (BASC) forms for a couple of
students that would require assessments for Behavior Disorder designation. (The consultant had suggested that this was a route to go because of the behavior that I had described to her.) I also had to make a quick home visit for one child.

When I arrived at the home of the child, the mother was preparing smoked moose meat. She told me about how her husband had killed the moose and about smoking the meat. She offered me something to drink and then I explained the reason I had come. She was glad to hear that her some might receive some assistance in the school and she also stated that she and her husband would give me their support in educating their son. Once I had her sign the consent, it was time to leave and she offered me smoked meat and I accepted.

At the school, I continued with filling the forms and getting ready for the Consultant’s visit. This took all morning. (Sometimes, I wonder whether the filing of all the forms is realistic.)

This afternoon we were notified that we would have a staff meeting, at four. During the afternoon, I managed to get one I.E.P. completed, however it was not fully completed because I needed to have a Multi Action Plan Meeting, with the parents and staff involved with the child. So, I set the meeting for next week. (I usually like to get parental input in the I.E.P. and having the M.A.P. meeting is a great way to get that information.) I contacted the parents and invited them to the meeting.

(I have learned that making an Individualized Program for a child is one of the most time consuming tasks a Special Education Teacher can spend on. For me it usually
takes a number of people involved because I do not only want to solely rely on my investigation of previous work accomplished by the child’s previous year’s I.E.P. and also on background personal knowledge. I enjoy getting as much feedback from other individuals who are involved with the child, so that the I.E.P. is accurate.)

At four and once the students had left the school premises, all the staff gathered in the Home Economics classroom. There were various items that were discussed. Such as Open House, administrative issues, updates and so forth. The meeting lasted for forty five minutes. And it was time to call it a day.

I took some of my work home because work needed to get done and there was not enough hour’s in a day to get what I wanted to get completed. I usually spend a couple of hours at home doing my work.

The Special Education Consultant’s Visit (September 12, 2000)

Today was a hectic day, I did not have supervision today. The day began with two teacher’s waiting for my arrival. One was a Grade 4/5 teacher, who wanted reading material for her class. I listened while she explained what she was looking for. Then, I showed her the material that were available in the Resource Room. The next teacher was a high school teacher, she wanted to talk about a personal issue.

Once the two teachers were done, then I headed for the xerox machine. I had to get some paperwork ready for the Special Education Consultant’s visit. She was early in visiting our school this year. Upon returning from xeroxing, I rechecked my files and the
forms that needed to be ready for the visit.

At ten-past-ten, the Special Education Consultant arrived, along with another Educational Psychologist. I took them to the classroom across from (the Seminar Room) mine which I had made available for an assessment space. (The other Educational Psychologist was retired, and had been a past administrator for the School for the Deaf in Saskatoon.) Once I got Zane all the material she would need, then I took the Special Ed. Consultant to my room. After some discussion, we planned to get five students assessed, and this would be a goal for one day; mainly because there were two Educational Psychologists present.

All morning, we went over the number of high cost students that were in the school. We discussed which students have previously been assessed which would require assessment in the near future. Then, we reviewed some of the Educational Psychological Reports. (I had been recalled to work during my summer holidays, to have students assessed, but had not received the reports for those students.) After I skimmed through the reports, we then reviewed the number of students that were designated behavior disordered. We also discussed the funding requirements for the Behavior Disordered Classroom. (The Namikos education system had already set up its own behavior classroom because our education system has seen a need for this type of classroom. However, we had not received the funding because it had not been in place.) I needed to know what needed to be in place before the classroom became operational because we had to meet the funding requirements in order to receive the funding allocation.
All the while, the Consultant and myself were talking, the other educational psychologist was testing students in the room across from mine. During that morning, the other Ed. Psych. was able to do one complete assessment.

In the afternoon, the Special Ed. Consultant assessed one child, while I attempted to fill BASC forms. Then, once she had completed her assessment, then we resumed our work. Once we had addressed all my concerns, then we attempted to access the Education Manager, however, he had to go home for medical reasons. By mid-afternoon, I had phoned to the Health Centre to borrow an Audiometer, and I was told there was one in the school. Therefore, I went to locate the device in the school. As I entered the library, there were nurses in there, and the Acting head nurse informed me that she wanted to talk to us. So, I called the Sp. Ed. Consultant and the three of us met in a small room. The nurse went on to discuss with us some of the concerns that she had regarding students that had failed their hearing test. Then we discussed who needed to be referred to the nearest town which held the traveling clinic; in which the Alvin Buckwold team would assess.

Towards the end of the day, the five assessments were completed and it had been an altogether busy day. This year, the Special Education Consultant made an early arrival at our school. Usually, the Consultant is unable to make it to our school until mid-winter. She also stated that she would try to be back to our school within the next couple of month’s.

I have enjoyed working with the Special Education Consultant. She has been a big
help to me when I began this position. She also keeps a very busy schedule and there is only one of her and so many schools to work with.

The Assessment's (September 13, 2000)

Today was spent mostly on assessing 24 children. I began my day with a teacher at my door. She wanted to know where we were heading with the Multi-grade classroom. I informed her that further discussion would need to be had with the Education Manager and the Principal. Once she was gone, I went out at 8:40 for my supervision. I was out supervising on the playground. While I was out, the principal came to get me. He informed me that there was a parent waiting for me in my room. When I arrived in my room, there stood a mother who had come to register her child. The mother informed me that they were late in registering their child because they had been out on the lake up until yesterday. (The child was high-cost and the mom knew that I had worked with her child the year before.) After I had registered the child, I took the child to her classroom. In the hallway, I met the principal, and I informed him that I wanted to sit down with him.

Once I got to my room, I began my work on the computer. I made a report to the principal informing him of the Sp. Ed. Consultant’s visit. Midway in my report, I stopped because I remembered that I had told the Grade 4 teacher that I would assess her students. So I went and told her that I would be in her classroom after the morning recess, so that she would know when to expect me.

I wanted to make sure that I had enough time to meet with the principal before I
began the testing. Then, once I was done with my report, I then proceeded to the principals office. At our meeting, I told him of what was discussed at the meeting and informed him of what we needed to do in order to meet the funding criteria from INAC. Once I told him all that he needed to know, he informed that he was surprised of the high number of high-cost that we had in the school. I told him that we needed to sit down and meet with the Education Manager, to discuss the number of personnel that we would require in order to meet the needs of the children that I would be working with.

Then I went out for supervision. On my way out, I was approached by a teacher (through experience I became aware that during recess was the only time teachers would have time to talk to me), she had some questions to ask me and I gave her the information that she needed. After recess, I proceeded to assess the Grade 4 students. I was late in getting in from recess, because I had to make a couple of stops on my way in. By the time I arrived in the classroom, all the students were quietly waiting for me. However, I was unable to complete my assessments in the morning.

So, I continued with the assessments again in the afternoon, I did not want to wait too long to complete the testing because I did not know if I would have time again. By three thirty this afternoon, I had completed all testing, and scored all the tests. I then wrote the answers on a summary sheet which I had made, in order for me to have easy access to the test scores of students.

[When I began this position, I had self taught myself on how to assess students, which took a lot of reading of the various assessment manuals available in the Resource
Room at the time. I also spent a lot of time reading material to familiarize myself with the various forms of disabilities and also the jargon used in the Special Education area. Along the way, I had also learned that the assessments were not all inclusive of themselves and so I have shared this with the teacher’s, whenever I assess student’s. I have also reminded them once in a while that the assessments are not all inclusive and that there are many other areas the teacher has to examine before coming to a conclusion about making decisions. For example; during Reporting periods, I inform the teacher’s not to use the scores retrieved from the assessment and that if parents would like to see the assessments that they would have to see me. I have also made the teacher’s aware that I would not give my assessment sheets out to teachers to take into their classrooms, however they were free to come into my room and review any assessments they wanted to review. I took it very seriously to keep things confidential."

When I had completed this task, I then tackled my desk, it was piled with a ton of paper. However, I did not complete the task because the Cree teacher came in and wanted some information. Then, another staff member was at my door, which was one of the tutor’s. She waited for a while but left shortly. By four o’clock, a teacher and the principal were at my door. So, I told them to excuse my mess (my room was chaotic). They came to discuss about the Multi-grade classroom, however, nothing was really solved because I informed them that we would know all the details when the Education Manager, the principal and myself had met. By the time they left it was already close to four thirty.
I was about to head down the hallway, when one of the Grade One teachers asked me where I was going. I told her, I would be right back, but then after a second thought, I turned and said “what can I do for you?” She looked tired, and once we were in my room, she informed me that she needed help finding material for her students, in learning how to read. So I asked her what she kind of activities and skills she was teaching and after she told me, I then suggested some material. She was grateful for the suggestions, and I showed her some of the material that she might want to use and also informed her to sign out the material that she was going to borrow. (I have a sign out sheet which I hang on my wall and in the education storage, so that staff can just sign out the resource material and then I will also be able to track the material.)

By the time I was out of the school it was 4:48.

Tutor Situation (September 14, 2000)

This morning, I began my day with supervision. Then I went to the principal’s office because one of the teacher’s had left a note regarding a need of a tutor in her classroom, and I myself wanted to know what was happening with the tutor situation, whether there would be any more tutor’s hired. I learned that we would have to wait and that we would not know until a couple of weeks if whether there would be any extra tutor’s hired because that would be when the Education Manager would meet with the Director of Education and the funding people.
By this time it was a few minutes after nine o’clock. I was about to go to the elementary office when my name was called. It was one of the tutor’s and she wanted to speak to me privately. The tutor informed me that she had received a note from the child’s parent’s which she was tutoring. She showed the note to me and in it were a bunch of questions. She stated that she did not know if it was appropriate for her to answer the questions and what she should say. I asked the tutor when she had received the note and where the parent was. As she informed, I told her to return to the classroom with the child and that I would handle the situation. She stated she had not been confronted by a parent before in this manner. She left and I then went looking for the parent (who happened to be in the school foyer). I invited him to my classroom. I sat down with the parent and we talked over the note. The end result was, the parent did not mean to offend the tutor, however, the questions came mainly due to a meeting him and his wife had attended the previous week in Prince Albert. I answered the questions for him and he seemed pleased. Afterward, I informed him that if he had any further questions, to please forward them to myself because I was the person who dealt with high-cost parental concerns. I informed him that we would be having a Multi Action Plan meeting, and that he and his wife would be invited, and they would be free to address any concerns that they had at the meeting. He gave no further comment and left afterward.

Shortly before lunch I had a visit from the Principal and one of the Middle Years teacher’s, the teacher had a concern about one of her student’s learning ability. She wanted to know what I could do for her student. I told the Principal and the teacher that I
would assess the student this afternoon. The teacher also asked if it would be possible to put the child on an Individualized Program and I informed her that it would depend on my finding’s of the assessment.

When I arrived at school at a quarter to one, I made the preparation to assess student’s. At one o’clock, the first child that I assessed was the Kindergarten child whose mother had come to see me. However, I did not calculate the scores. Then, I assessed the middle years student. Once, the assessments were completed, I then proceeded to calculate the scores. I found that the child who was able to state her alphabet by rote was all she could do. So, I phoned to the parents house and told the dad that I had completed the assessment and that I wanted to meet with them. Then, I buzzed the middle years teacher. Once she arrived at my classroom, I gave her my findings. She was surprised but not too surprised. (This teacher had previously been a Special Education teacher but had not enjoyed the work, and so decided that she would prefer to teach in a regular classroom setting.) She asked if I would prepare an I.E.P. for the student, but I informed her that I would not be able to do so, because the student was not high-cost, and therefore she would have to do one if she wanted one. (I knew that she was capable of preparing an I.E.P.)

Later on this afternoon, I received a visit from the parent who had wanted her child assessed. I explained the test that I had used and the scores and also my assessment procedure. I then went on to explain that there are various skills that a child must learn before they reach a certain academic level. I also explained that a child being able to state
the alphabet by rote was only one skill however a child would also need to recognize the letters, in which the Kindergartner was unable to perform. The parent thanked me for the explanation and for having assessed her daughter.

By this time, it was already close to home time. I decided to gather some of the material that I thought would be beneficial to use in the Behavior Program, once the planning got underway. I gathered the material and put them in a box and then set the box aside. And before I knew it was home time.

**Paperwork (September 15, 2000)**

My day began with more administrative work. There is so much to do in this area. One thing that I learned was that there is a ton of paperwork a person has to do in this position. There is a lot of work behind the scenes. And I believe, and have heard from other Special Ed. personnel from other schools, that this kind of work entails work which many educational staff are many times unaware of the work that is done because it is work done on paper. And at his point, I was not even working with student’s on a one to one basis. When working with student’s on a one-on-one basis, there is much documentation that has to be one. Such as anecdotal comments, observational comments, assessments, tracking, referrals, collaboration with teachers, meetings, and so on. While I was working, I had teachers and tutor’s coming and going from my room.

In the afternoon, I met the Education Manager and we discussed the allotment of student funds for high-cost funding for the 2000-2001 school year. I also discussed the
proposed allotment for the next school year. I also informed him of the proposed student bodies for the Behavior Disordered classroom which is the Multi-Grade Classroom. I also gave him the copy of my report on the Special Education Consultant’s visit. He informed me that he was unsure of when there would be a specialized teacher hired for the Behavior Disordered classroom, however they were in the process of recruiting. ("they" are the Education Manager and the Education Committee)

[The Education Committee are the elected Education body for our Education System. Each of the communities which have federally funded schools have elected Education Committee’s in their respective communities. For the Namikos education system there are seven committee member’s. They are the body which are governed by guidelines to operate the Education System. They also do the recruiting and the termination of staff. They hold their meeting’s regularly or when an urgent matter arises that requires immediate decision making. The education staff do not meet with the committee, only when the school year begins it’s yearly operation which is in the fall. Plus when the contracts are signed. The Education Manager works along side the Education Committee. However, the Education Manager works under the Education Committee.]

I was glad of the information he shared with me because now I had an insight of where things stood in the matter of the Multi-Grade teacher. (At this time, there was also a need of a space because the school had no space available, but we would think about that when the time arises.)
Another Monday (September 18, 2000)

I was on supervision today. Our supervision are rotated and we work as a team; this year we have Team A and B. This year I am on Team B, and we have a mixture of teacher’s and tutor’s on the teams. There is a committee which decides how the supervision schedule should work, the committee is called the Supervision Committee.

This morning I decided to begin working on my schedule. This usually takes me a while to do because I would need to know which child required more time and more one on one versus children that require less time. Because I had sixteen children on my list, I had to be more realistic on how I would meet the needs of the students that I would be working with. I also had to keep in mind that I required administration time. In between interruptions, I managed to get my schedule done. In my schedule, I had also managed to squeeze in the behavior disordered classroom, in which I was required to spend quite a bit of time in. This took up most of my morning.

Then, I decided that I would have to get my I.E.P.’s completed as soon a possible. So, I began to tackle the I.E.P.’s again. To date, I had managed to almost complete four of them. More work to be accomplished with the I.E.P.’s.

At the end of the day, there were two more I.E.P.’s almost complete, so altogether there were six semi-complete I.E.P.’s. Sometime in the afternoon, I decided to remind the parents of the M.A.P.’s meeting for tomorrow. The meeting was scheduled for three o’clock.

By four o’clock, I was tired, the first day of the week usually tire me out. So, I
decided to go for some tea. I rarely have the time to go and interact with the staff in the staff room, and so I made my way down there. However, before I got down there, the vice-principal who is also the Grade 2 teacher (who also happens to be my son’s teacher) asked me into her classroom. She wanted me to assess some of her students and I stated that I would let her know when I would be able to do so.

While I was in the staff room, I received a phone call from the Health Centre. The Holistic Worker invited me to come to her office for a Case Conference, and she asked when I would be available. I told her that I would have to notify her when I could arrange to meet with her. (I had come to work closely with the Holistic Worker because we both worked with student’s. She worked in the counseling aspect and from time to time I had referred some of the student’s to her.)

The Little Visitor (September 19, 2000)

Today was mostly spent on working on I.E.P.’s. I was able to semi-complete two this morning and again two in the afternoon. Now I had a total of ten and six more to go. With the high-cost students that required immediate programming, I had been giving the tutor’s modified work for the student’s to work on. For the primary students, such as Nursery to Grade 1, I had encouraged the tutor’s to do the same activities as the rest of the student’s. So I was halfway done with the I.E.P.

This afternoon, I had a student come into my classroom. She was apparently new to our school and she asked, “What are you doing?” and I answered, “Working”. She told
me her name, I did not need to ask. Then, she asked, “Why do you have a small
classroom?” and I answered “Because I have so many little people that come into my
room”. And she said, “Oh” and left. Once in a while I have children that come into my
room to check it out. They are curious to know what I do.

At three o’clock, the parents arrived. Then the administrator, the teacher and tutor
arrived shortly thereafter. In the meeting’s, I usually use various kinds of colored markers
to enhance the “map” as it develops. So, I began with introductions and then I proceeded
to tell them about the meeting. Once I had explained then, we started the maps process.
The meeting was informational and the teacher and tutor were now able to get a better
picture of the child they were working with. I thanked all the participants of the meeting.
I especially thanked the parents because parents usually are the one’s that bring in the big
picture. After the meeting, the principal thanked me for the meeting and also stated that
this was something new to him.

Once the meeting was over, I then got the child’s folder and began to fill in the
missing parts in the I.E.P., such as the strengths and weaknesses of the child and so on. I
did not even realize the time. It was already almost five o’clock.

Another day gone by and still so much to do. I decided not to take work home with
me because we would be going for a boat ride. It was a nice day, one of those nice
autumn days.
Health Services (September 20, 2000)

This morning, I went through my Day Book to determine what needed to be done. I had been so busy with the I.E.P.'s lately, that I did not have time to do anything else. So according to my Day Book, I had to make some phone call's regarding locating information on one high-cost child and then placing an order on another high-cost child. Then, I also had to complete the I.E.P. from the information gathered from the M.A.P.'s meeting yesterday. And also working on the rest of the I.E.P.'s.

My day began with making a phone call to the Health Centre. But I was unable to contact the Nurse in Charge. Then I phoned the child's parents, the mother answered the phone. I explained the situation with having to locate additional information about their child and that I would require access to the medical files at the Health Centre. The parent understood and she responded that they would come to the school to sign a Release of Information. I also asked her if she had taken her child to the Early Intervention Program in LaRonge and she stated that she had. After I had spoken to the mother, I then called the Early Intervention Program in LaRonge and I spoke to the coordinator. She remembered me because we had conversed back and forth the previous school year. She stated that she would send me all the information they had on the child. I then decided to wait for the parents to come and sign the Release of Information.

Next, I decided to contact the Saskatchewan Abilities Council. I spoke to the technicians and told them that I wanted a quote on a computer with a colored printer. I also wanted a quote on Intelli Keys with Intelli Talk (this is a communication device for
children that have difficulty in communicating). They informed me that they would contact me once they got the information.

Then I continued with my work on the I.E.P. and I completed it. It was already late morning and close to lunch. Before lunch I had one of the parents come to sign the Release of Information and I was appreciative of him coming by the school and thanked him for coming.

In the afternoon, I was able to get a hold of the Nurse in Charge, I informed her that I needed to see some medical files on a certain child. She told me that I needed a Release of Information from the parents and I told her that I had it with me. Then I informed her that I would be by this afternoon to go over the file.

Once I had spoken to her, then I informed the office that I would be out for a while. So, I decided to go and see the medical files at the Health Centre. Once I got there, the Nurse in Charge of the Health Centre met me, with the file on hand. She led me to her office and I went over the file. I then informed her that I would need copies of some of the files. She allowed me to make a photo copy of the files. It took me a while to do what I needed to do.

I was about to leave when I remembered that I needed to contact the Wholistic Worker about setting up a Case Conference. So when I got back to my classroom, I went over my Day Book and then called her. I told her that I would be able to meet her next week. Then, I faxed some of the more pertinent information about the child to the Special Education Consultant.
By this time, it was late afternoon and school was almost out. I then decided to spend the remaining of the time working on my I.E.P.'s. I was working on the eleventh I.E.P.

The Grade 4 classroom (September 21, 2000)

This morning, I began my day with making a few phone calls. I needed to get a few children referred to the Alvin Buckwold Child Development Program but it had to be done through Health Services. I called the Health Centre and I asked the nurse in charge with school programming, whether she had made the referrals and she informed me that she had not had the time to do it yet. She stated that she would do it this week. Once I made that phone call, then I proceeded for supervision.

Upon my return, I received a phone call from the Health Services, they apparently had made appointments for a few of our students. I decided to let the parents and caregiver’s know immediately. First, I phoned the Therapeutic Group Home and informed them that one of the children in their care had an ADHD appointment and I gave them the date and time. Then, I made another phone call to one of the parents and informed her that her child had an appointment at the Health Centre. I tried the next parent, however, I was unable to reach her. So, I phoned the Health Services to inform them and the receptionist informed me that one of their C.H.D’s (Community Health Development Worker) would do a home visit to notify the parent.

Then, I proceeded to follow my Day plan. Later on that morning, I was making my
way down the hallway when I got called and it was a teacher wanting information regarding one of the children in her classroom. I gave her the information she needed. She was grateful for the information.

This afternoon, when I arrived at work, the principal told me that he was short staffed and in a bind. He asked me if I would be willing to go to the Grade 4 classroom for a while. He informed me that the classroom teacher had been called to go to the Health Centre for medical reasons. I told him that I would go. As it turned out, I was in the classroom for most of the afternoon. The classroom was a good environment, and I had not been in a classroom in quite a while and I enjoyed the time spent away from my busy classroom. Although, the classroom was busy at a different level, the student's were busy working on their assignment. They made no fuss of my being in their classroom, usually students will make a big fuss when they have a sub in the classroom. The students seemed to enjoy my stay.

Back in my classroom, after four, I was busy getting back into my role. A few teacher's came in for Resource Material. And before I realized it was already time to go home for the day.

The Behavior Disordered Classroom (September 22, 2000)

Today began with gathering data for the Special Ed. Consultant. There was some paperwork which I had just been unable to work on due to having to deal with more urgent matters. I then prepared some Summary Educational Profiles on a couple of the
Behavior Disordered students. These took a while to do because I had to search through the cumm. files and locate pertinent information and include them on these summary sheets. Then, once I had completed the task, then I faxed the information to the Special Education Consultant. (That was it for now, until the next visit.) Next, I faxed some

*Student Referral Forms* to the Health Center. I had not had the time to fax them the day before because I had been in a classroom. Once I completed the faxing, I then proceeded with my plans for the day. Which was to try and get as many I.E.P.'s completed.

By mid-afternoon, I received a phone call from the Behaviour Consultant. I had not heard from him since last spring. So, he informed me that he would be working with me with the aspect of behaviour programming this year.

[The classroom as it is termed by the funding officials “Behaviour Disordered Classroom” had been operational in our school since the early nineties. Therefore, a procedures manuals was already in place. In the manuals, everything was included according to what the funding officials required. Such as classroom availability, teacher, teacher’s associate, number of student bodies, limit, mainstreaming guidelines, and so forth. However, according to the funding officials we required the corrective behaviour skills, and that is what I had to work on before the classroom became operational. This would entail setting up a social skills program and behavior corrective skills program. The academic aspect for this classroom would not be as important, as the behavioural aspect, targeting to correct the negative behavior was the main area. However, I had decided that I would rather have the teacher’s input (the teacher who would be

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working in the position) instead of me working and developing the programming alone because two or more heads are better than one.]

Then I continued with the I.E.P.’s. At the end of the day, I had now semi-completed a total of fourteen of them. The time just flew by, I had been so busy.

**Case Conference at Health Centre (September 25, 2000)**

I came to work feeling good. I did not know what this day would bring. Today before I began my work, I opened my bible and read a chapter. Then, I set my mind that this would be the day that I complete the I.E.P.’s, and so I began working on the fifteenth I.E.P. I was able to semi-complete the fifteenth one this morning and I also began the next one. However, I ran out of time this morning.

This afternoon, at one o’clock, I went to the Health Centre to attend the Case Conference. At the meeting the parent was present. The Holistic Worker informed me that this child had gone for a psychological assessment and that she had received the Final Report. So we went over the report. Once we went through the report, we then reviewed the recommendations of the report. Then we brainstormed what else we could do; we went over the resources we had in the community. After a good round table discussion, we then came up with a few solutions to help the child. And we all agreed to follow through certain aspects of what we stated we’d do. The meeting took quite a while.

Once I returned to the school, it was already close to three o’clock. So, I decided
to work on the remaining I.E.P. I worked on it until after four. After the bell rang, I had a few teacher's coming to get resource material.

[There are so many things I enjoy about this position, every day when I come to work it is unpredictable of what will come my way. It has been like that ever since I began this position. In one day there are so many things that will occur. However, I believe that, no matter what position an individual holds, it is up to that individual to make a difference. So, I try to be the most help as I can be to the education staff, no matter what position they hold. I would also say the same to the outside organizations that phone to our school, I try to be the best help that I can be. I find this position to be rewarding for me because I come into contact with so many different individuals and also it is a learning experience for me. I learn something everyday and I am also able to think about things in a different light. I do not find this position to be difficult but it is at times challenging because I sometimes have deadlines to meet and not much time to lose. Yes indeed I enjoy this position. Who knows how long I will be in this position because things only last for a season. (As it says in the Word of God)]

Open House (September 26, 2000)

This morning, I quickly began by looking for student files. My classroom is such a mess. When I got to work in the morning my room was a mess, and by the end of the day it is still in a mess. My room looks like I have not even been to work. I have tons of paper at my desk, books all over the place (some in their own magazine box and some just lying
on shelves, in an unorderly manner), shelves not properly organized, unfinished borders, etc. etc.

I went to the elementary office and located some student files. Then, I went to my supervision area. There were a lot of sleepy eyed children; some looked tired and others just moved quite slowly. After my supervision, I went to my classroom. Then, I went to check on one of my students’ computer. I tried to locate the sound to the computer, however I was unsuccessful. (I decided to do it later.)

I waited for the prayer, and then I went to see a few of the students that I would be working with. I was quite satisfied with one of the youth’s progress. Then, I returned to my paperwork however I was interrupted twice. Once by an occupational therapist from the Alvin Buckwold Center and another by local Child Family Services agency. By this time it was recess and I went to my supervision area. It was indoor supervision because it was drizzling outside. I was supervising the classroom next to mine, a couple of the children wanted to go to my classroom, however, I discouraged them from going into my room because it was still a mess.

When the bell rang the rest of the morning went without any interruptions. Before noon, I had to quickly deal with a couple of things. I had to go pick up some forms at the office and fill them out and fax them to the Health Centre.

In the afternoon, I arrived at school at twelve-forty, because I was on supervision. It was a chilly outside. After supervision I got called because one of the tutors was running late and therefore, I had to work with a Downs Syndrome student. Once the tutor
arrived, I returned to my work. I got interrupted, it was the Alvin Buckwold Center; they required some information from a child which they were trying to track. I notified them that the child was in our school. So they inquired whether I wanted this particular child seen by their *Traveling Clinic*, I told them that I thought it would be better to wait for the Ed. Psych. *Final Assessment Report*. However, I would give them a call if the child required an assessment. Then, I worked away on my paperwork.

In the afternoon I notified the parents that we had a M.A.P.s meeting on Thursday. All afternoon I was busy shelving books and organizing material that I would need. During my second last period, one of the tutors asked if she could see me later on before the end of the day and I told her come by at three-forty five. I continued working and it sure did not seem long when the tutor arrived. We were five minutes into our conversation when another knock came at my door and it was a teacher requiring resource material for a non-reader. Then, I continued my conversation and another knock came to my door and it was one of the Grade 4 teachers. The teacher told me that she had forgotten to tell me about a Case Conference that we were to have in five minutes time. By that time I was almost done with speaking with the tutor and I quickly said what I needed to say and I told her that I needed to attend the meeting. I was on my way out of my room when the principal came to apologize for the short notice.

The meeting was held in the library. The Case Conference was held due to a concern regarding a child’s inappropriate behavior in the classroom. The care-giver, principal, teacher and myself were present at the meeting. We discussed the concerns of
the child’s behavior and after the discussion. We then decided the action plan for the child. The participants came up with solutions to deal with the problem and the parent was informed of the action that would be taken. The parent was also informed of the consequences, if the child did not respond to the action plan. Once the meeting was over, I was out of the school by a quarter to five. I had to come back to the school because this was the night of our Open House.

This evening I went back to work at six-fifty. Our Open House was from seven to nine o’clock. Whenever these functions are held, there are usually not many parents that come to see me regarding their children because I usually make a point to contact the parents to notify them that I would be working with their children. This evening there was a good turn-out and there is usually a good turn out when we have school functions. This evening there were a few parents that came to see me and ask questions. A few minutes after nine o’clock I decided to call it for the day and went home.

The Grade One Teacher (September 27, 2000)

This morning, I decided to go get some coffee before I started for the day. While I was in the staff room, one of the middle years teachers came to discuss an idea that she had regarding modified programming in her class. She wanted to know if that if her idea was good or not. I told her that her idea sounded good but I cautioned her about making the work appropriate to the learners. Then I made my way down to one of the Grade One classrooms. (I had heard good comments from staff and from some parents about her
work with the students.) The teacher was at the chalk board writing a chant. While I was there she told me that she was enjoying the class. (She had always taught in the upper grades and this would be her first year as a grade one teacher.) I told her to keep up the good work.

I then went to work on the student I.E.P.'s, they were all by now semi-complete and I only needed to add some minor areas. I then put them in separate binders. (I usually like to keep them in binders so that I can keep them on my bookshelf and they would also be handy whenever I needed to use them that they could be easily taken out.) But I ran out of binders and I had to go look for some at the high school Guidance office. I was only able to locate a few, so I decided to put the rest of them in a duo tang.

In the afternoon, I asked a few of the tutor's to come into my room and I went over the I.E.P.'s with them. I had to teach a few of them what the I.E.P. was and how it was to be used because a few of the tutor's were new and some of them had not previously worked with high-cost students. I was able to review the I.E.P.'s with four of the tutor's this afternoon. I also informed them that once I had the opportunity to go through it with the classroom teacher, then the I.E.P. would copied and be made available in their classroom.

[When working with high-cost students, I inform the teacher's and tutor's that the I.E.P. is a very important piece of document. I also inform them that it is not written in stone that they can not be changed but that they are to be used for the student's overall program; as a teacher would use in a long range plan (yearly plan) for academic]
programming for the rest of the students in the classroom. I have also informed the teacher's that according to the funding officials, the programming is the responsibility of the Special Ed. Teacher. And it is all up to the teacher, tutor and special education teacher to review the I.E.P. once in a while and make any changes or to add to it at any time when appropriate to do so, and if the teacher and tutor do it themselves just to make me aware of the changes or the add on's. I also inform them that they are responsible for the day to day programming of the high-cost students program and not to expect me to prepare the material for the child because that is why the tutor is there to assist the teacher in that area, when the child goes home for the day. In the past, I have had some teacher's expect me to do the Report for them at reporting periods. But I have informed them that it is not my responsibility because I do not work with the child on a moment to moment basis.]

Special Equipment (September 28, 2000)

This morning, I phoned to the Alvin Buckwold Centre and spoke to the technician area. I spoke to my contact person in that area. I wanted her to send me a letter stating that this particular student needed this certain kind of track ball because of the condition she had. I had to get this on paper because this would be the only way I could prove that this child required this piece of equipment. I then had to present this documentation to the funding officials (INAC).

During my work in this area, I have learned to do thing's in a certain way. For
example, dealing with the area of funding and purchasing items which are required by the children. Many of these children require special equipment to assist them in their everyday lives; even things that many people take for granted. For example; feeding oneself, I have had to purchase special feeding instruments so that a child would be able to learn how to feed themselves. Many times these equipment are very expensive. In a federally funded school, we come against glitches and we are restricted to what we can do when it comes to funding. Many times we have to wait a long time before we got what we needed.

By mid-morning, I was notified by the office that I had a message. So I went to check and it was from the Saskatchewan Abilities Council, they had faxed me the quote for the equipment that I had requested. I then made some phone calls inquiring about the funding aspect. I had been asked by the Education Manager to ask for a quote so that we may order a computer for one of high-cost students. So now I needed to know where the funds would come from so that I could purchase the computer. I found out that I needed to wait for the Education Manager, to take the proceed with next step.

This afternoon, I was busy filing some of my work from the previous year. I needed to put some of the paperwork and begin afresh for this year. I decided to make new folders for my files this year. This took a while to do. I then went over my schedule and made a few changes. In my schedule I had decided to go with half hour time segments because this was the only way that I would be able to see all the students.

Just before three thirty, I got ready for my M.A.P.S's meeting. At a quarter to four,
the principal came to ask me whether we were having our meeting and I informed him that we were but the parents were running late (so I thought). At four, I decided to give the parents a call, but it there was no answer at their home. So, I went to the principal and informed him that if the parents did not arrive within five minutes that we would cancel our meeting, and he agreed with me. So, I resumed with organizing material for the remaining of the time. After, I had done most of the filing, it was already four forty.

**Purchasing Non-Perishable Material (September 29, 2000)**

Today was a day that I had been looking forward to, we were given a Preparation Day. The Education Committee had given us this day solely to do preparation because the teaching staff did not have any preparation time. Back at my desk, not knowing just where to begin. I had so many things that I should be doing to prepare for the students on Monday. But I decided that this would be an appropriate day to go and see teachers regarding programming for their high-cost students and go over the I.E.P.’s with them.

I was able to see five of the teacher’s and to go through the I.E.P.’s with them. Meanwhile I had three tutors working on extra duties for me. I had so many resources that had been compiled over the previous years that had just been sitting in one spot, and so I decided that it would be good to utilize the tutors to work on these. (I wanted to compile learning centres for students.)

I received a call from the Kinsmen Children Center and they informed me that one of the students had an appointment at the Traveling Clinic in a nearby town. So, I made
arrangements, by calling the Health Services and notifying them that this child had an appointment. I also notified the tutor that this specific student was to see the Traveling Clinic and that her attendance would be required at the appointment.

Then by two o’clock, I was approached by the Education Manager, to compile some information regarding material that teachers required in their classrooms. He had apparently allocated some funds and had decided to make the funds available to the teaching staff to purchase non-perishable material. The teacher’s were to order text book material, plus various other non-perishable material. He was leaving me responsible with the material ordering and making sure to keep within the budget. This was good news because I knew there was a need for textbooks in the school.

I knew I had to begin on this task immediately because it would be a big order and there was no knowing how long the order would take. For the remaining of the day, I worked on this order. I decided to begin with the elementary teachers and go from classroom to classroom. I made a list of the different text’s the teacher’s needed in their classrooms. At the end of the day, I had spoken to six elementary teachers and my task was incomplete. Before, I left I made copies of my schedule to distribute to the staff. I gave one to the principal and left one each in teacher’s and tutor’s mailboxes. I also decided to organize my classroom to make it a bit neater. (I usually like to return to a neat organized atmosphere when I arrive at work in the morning, that is if I can manage.) By the time I headed out the door it was almost five o’clock.
A Possible Transfer of a Student (October 2, 2000)

By eight forty five this morning I had four teachers in my room. All were wanting to know whether I would be able to order resources for their classrooms. Each teacher asked for a specific textbook and I told them that I would note down their request and that I would get back to them. There was so much noise because we were conversing back and forth regarding resource materials; some of the teachers wanted to order material that they were aware were good material.

Once they all left, at nine, I began to work with my first student of the year. Usually I do a number of things when I begin to work with the student’s at the beginning of the year. I do a diagnostic assessments to determine where the student’s are at. For example; for some of the students that are able to read, I usually have them read word lists; such as the Dolch or the Fry list. Then from time to time throughout the school year, I have the children read the list over, and then I put the date to show how many of the words they were able to read. I also chart it to show their progress.

By ten-forty five, I worked with the fourth student. He informed me that his head was bleeding. The student had apparently banged his head earlier and his head was now bleeding. So I attended to the wound. The tutor came to advise me that this child would be leaving our school for a short period of time, and that the principal was making arrangements for the student to attend another school while they were away.

Once my session was over with the student, I then went to the administration office to speak to the principal about the matter. He informed me he had not begun the
process because he had wanted to speak with me first. He gave me the information I needed to know regarding the situation. He then asked if I would attend to the matter, and informed me that he would appreciate it if I would make some phone calls for the student to attend the other school (since I already knew the school). We discussed the matter further, I asked him where we stood with regards to the high-cost issue, where the funds would go once the student left. (I did not want to jeopardize the student’s funding once he wanted to return to our school.) He needed to know that allocating high-cost funding was not an easy task, that it took time. He stated that he would look into the matter. Shortly before lunch the principal came to inform me that we could keep the funding but we had to allow the tutor to go with the child. (I had some apprehensions about the situation, but it was his call.)

After lunch, I had some time to do some administration work because the time slotted for the Multi-grade was open because of the classroom being unoperational. So, I decided to go through the Curriculum Guides to check what kind of current textbook material they had. I found out that some of the text books the teacher’s had requested were out dated. So, I checked for the next best available resource. I also saw that this would take time to do because I would also have to find some of the catalogues where some of the textbooks would be located and also to compare the prices.

During the afternoon, I found out that some of the high school high-cost student’s were becoming tardy. They were skipping classes. I decided that if this remained, then by the end of the week, I would have to go for home visits because the parents/care-giver’s
At nine o'clock, I began my day with my day schedule. I only had two
may be unaware of what was occurring.

At four we were notified that we had to prepare reports for our community and
they had to be ready to submit by tomorrow. So, I decided to proceeded to get my report
completed because I knew I would not have the time to do it tomorrow. (The education
staff usually have to prepare individual classroom reports, and in the reports we have to
include which position we hold, what activities we have done, what we will be working
on and we may also include some goals for the year. Once each teacher or tutor has
completed their report, then they are combined and then presented to the band
membership at the Chief and Council community meeting’s. The Chief and Council along
with the department heads travel to each community on a quarterly basis. The community
meetings are usually held, so that the membership are updated of what is occurring within
the operations of the band and within each department.) By a quarter to five, my report
was complete.

The Audiologist (October 3, 2000)

This morning, I tackled the school order again. I was able to see three more
teacher’s. The teacher’s that I went to see were glad to hear about the news of the order.
They themselves also had some specific material they wanted ordered.

At nine o’clock, I began my day with my day schedule. I only had two
interruptions during my sessions with the students. (I had made individual Tutoring
Record’s for each student that I would work with this year. In the Tutoring Record I had
included the headings *Date, Day Plan* and *Comments*. For each day when working with high-cost student’s, I usually fill in the date and day plan and then make short anecdotal comments for each session, while working with them either in the students classroom or out of the classroom. I usually follow this process so that I can keep a record of what we work on each day. This also makes it easier for me when I show the tutor’s what skill’s we were working on or had worked on. I also utilize this information when I have my yearly Special Education Review with the funding officials (INAC). This record keeping takes time but I usually fill in the remarks before the conclusion of my session with each child because I have learned that if I do not fill in the information immediately, then I am unable to keep up with the record keeping. When I had previously worked with students that required remedial skills, I usually completed the *Tutoring Record’s* according to class groups.)

During the morning, I received a phone call from the Health Services, the nurse in charge with school programming informed me that one of my high-cost students had an appointment with the audiologist. I asked her whether the parent had been notified and she stated that they had been unable to locate her. I informed her that I would inquire about the parent and inform them once I knew of her whereabouts her.

At one thirty, the student that I had for this slot was absent, so I had time to look into the matter of the transfer of the high-cost student. I decided to phone the Special Education Consultant of what was occurring with this situation. She gave me a name of a person to contact and she felt that it should be alright. I made the call and spoke with
the Special Education Teacher. I explained the situation to her and also made her aware of the tutor situation. She told me that she would contact me later on this week because she had to discuss it with her administrator.

At four o’clock, I decided to make a home visit in regards to the phone call I had received from the Health Services. I went to the child’s grandparents home. At the home, I learned that the grandparents were keeping the child. So, I informed the grandmother that the child had an appointment in our nearby town. I informed her of the date and time of the appointment. Once, I got back to the school, I relayed the information to the Health Services. The nurse thanked me for the assistance.

Aboriginal Headstart Coordinator (October 4, 2000)

This morning, I began with the school order again. I went to see three more teachers. I had now spoken to all the elementary teachers and were now seeing the middle years teacher’s.

At nine o’clock, I began my day with the first child on my slot. This student is a pleasant child. He always seems to have a good attitude. While I was working with my third student, I received a from Health Services. It was the nurse in charge with school programming, she informed me that the assessment results for the students regarding A.D.H.D. had arrived and she wanted to know if I would have time to go and pick up copies of the results. I informed her that I would be unable to go, so she stated that she could arrange for one of the C.H.D.’s to drop off the information. I told her that I would
appreciate that.

By mid-afternoon, I had a visit from the newly hired Aboriginal Head Start Co-ordinator. She required some assistance with her programming. She wanted to know from the educational perspective what kinds of activities the children were to be involved with. So, I canceled my next two sessions and spent some time with her because I believe that it is crucial for First Nations children to get an early start with the educational aspect. Even today many of our children in the community do not have many occasions to interact with age peers and be exposed to literature. Then once they enter school, in many instances, it is their first exposure to this kind of an environment. I also gave the Aboriginal Head Start Co-ordinator some of the skills the Nursery students learned during their first year in school. The Aboriginal Head Start Coordinator thanked me for the time I spent with her. I told her that I was glad to have been some assistance to her and I would be glad to help at any time.

At three thirty, I worked on the school order again and went to see the rest of the middle years teachers. By this time my list was lengthy and there was a variety of materials requested. There are so many materials out there. However, I usually prefer to go with material that are culturally relevant and culturally sensitive to the students. Since, I had occupied this position, there have been a lot of material that I had been asked to analyze, to determine whether it was appropriate for the students. Therefore, I was keeping this in mind when speaking to teacher’s with the school order.

At the end of the day, I reviewed my Day Book and I planned some of the next
day’s activities. However, my plan’s were unpredictable because there was no knowing what may occur tomorrow.

Curriculum Guides and LRDC (October 5, 2000)

In the morning, I went to see the remaining of the teachers. I told the High School teachers to write down the textbooks or resources they required and to give me the information by the next day. Through my overview of the materials requested by the teachers, I found out that there was a commonality of the kind of materials requested by the elementary and middle years teacher’s. For example, science, math and social studies and so forth.

At nine o’clock, I began my day’s schedule. In the morning, there was one student that was absent. So, I headed down to my room to work on the school order. I continued through my search, using the Curriculum Guides. I also went through the Learning Resource Development resource guide.

During the morning, I received another visit from the Aboriginal Head Start Co-ordinator. She wanted to borrow some catalogues. She planned to order some of the material that I had suggested to her.

This afternoon, I found out that four of the high-cost students had been skipping school. I went to the High School office to make a print out of the student’s attendance. (The High School keeps of their students attendance on a computer program.) I wanted to know when each student began skipping and how frequently they were skipping because
this concerned me. I decided to make the home visits the next day because the parents and care-giver’s needed to be informed.

At three thirty, I made arrangements to hold another M.A.P.S’s meeting with another set of parents. I asked them which dates would be appropriate for them. So we decided to hold the meeting the following week on Thursday at four.

I decided to continue working on the school order, I wanted to complete the order as soon as possible. I continued through my search with the various catalogues. Then, I began filling the elementary order. I had decided to order class sets of text books. And also additional resource material in a given subject. For example; I made an order of twenty five math textbooks and also some additional elementary math material. By the time I looked at my watch again, it was four forty-five.

The Speech and Language Consultant (October 6, 2000)

This morning, I received a fax from the Speech and Language Consultant. (She had just recently been hired by the Prince Albert Grand Council, this past spring.) She informed me that she would be coming to our school next week with the Behavior Consultant. She had also faxed me a Speech Language Student Inventory sheet which were to be distributed to the teaching staff for the students in their classrooms which they thought would require Speech and Language assistance.

I decided that I would distribute the Speech and Language Student Inventory sheets immediately, since this would be a long weekend and the teachers would have
limited time to fill the inventory sheets. I made a memo out to the classroom teacher’s and in the memo I stated that I required inventory sheets by a certain date. I also photocopied enough of the sheets for the elementary and middle years teachers. Then, I went to place the memo’s and the sheets in their mail boxes.

By this time it was already time to begin my work with the student’s for the day. The time seemed to just fly by because I had been so immersed with working with the student’s. During that time, I had only gotten a few interruptions.

This afternoon, I received a call from the Special Education Teacher regarding the high-cost student whose parents wanted to move. The Special Education Teacher informed me that she had decided that she would be unable to take the high-cost student because her programming was now in full swing and therefore she did not want her student’s to be exposed in having to introduce another student and thus creating havoc in her classroom. I told her that I understood her situation and thanked her for her time. After I spoke to her, I then went to speak to the principal and explained where things stood. So, that was that. I went to inform the principal about the news.

At two thirty, I decided to go for the home visits regarding the students skipping school. I went to see two parents and two care-givers. I made the visits. The parents had apparently not been aware of their children skipping school and they informed me that they would talk to them.

Once I returned, I gave the Special Education Consultant another call. I wanted some ideas of what we could do with the high-cost student’s that were skipping school.
She suggested the Store Front Program. She informed me of the steps that I needed to take to get the program operational. I decided to give it a try, because I did not want to lose the student's. I felt that being exposed to some educational learning experience was better than receiving none at all. I also felt that other student's might benefit from the program.

**Store Front Program? (October 10, 2000)**

It had been a nice long weekend. This morning, the rest of the high school teachers came to drop off their school order. I also had a couple of teacher's drop off the *Speech and Language Student Inventory* sheets.

I decided to speak to the principal with regards to the Store Front Program and he was in favor of it. He told me to begin the work. I then decided to inform the Education Manager idea of the Store Front Program. I explained that we were beginning to lose some of our high-cost students and I thought that this idea would at least give them the opportunity to stay in school. He told me that it was a good idea, but we would be unable to hire because we had minimal funds available. He stated that it would be a good idea to have the program in place for the next school year. So, there went my idea. However, he stated that there might be a change of teaching staff because of the inability to recruit the specialized teacher. I did not question further and informed him that I would await to hear from him.

By the time I had finished talking with the Education Manager, it was already a
quarter after nine. The student that I had at this time slot had gone to the Traveling Clinic, held by the Alvin Buckwold Centre. The tutor had gone with the student because it was a requirement for the tutor to go with the child at these appointments. The student had to see an occupational therapist. On occasions when students have to go for physical therapy, I arrange for the sessions to be video taped because if there ever comes a time when the tutor that works with the child is unable to come to work, then the sub will be able to provide the therapy by watching the video tape. (Some of the high-cost students require physical therapy, and so while the student(s) were in school, either the tutor or myself will give the student(s) physical therapy, depending on how intensive the physical therapy is.)

This morning at nine thirty, I began my work with the students. The day went with minimal interruptions. It was a good day and I did not get called away as frequently. At three thirty, I continued with the school order, I now had all the teacher requests and was still working on placing the order for the elementary teachers.

By four thirty, I organized my classroom. The Behavior Consultant and the Speech/Language Consultant would be arriving sometime in the morning. For both consultants, this would be their first visit for the year. I did not have much to prepare for the visit because both of the Consultants did not have prior histories with working with students.
The Consultant's Visit (October 11, 2000)

This morning, I received a couple more of the inventory sheets. I canceled my programming for the day and for the next day because the consultants would be in the school for the next two days. I knew that it was going to be a busy couple of days.

At nine-thirty, the consultants arrived. They had apparently drove in from Lairing which was a three hour ride. I took them into the principal's office and introduced them to the principal and to the Education Manager. After the introductions, I then took both of them to my room. I informed them that I had made the Seminar Room available for the Speech and Language Consultant because I knew that she would require an assessment room. I told the Behavior Consultant to excuse me while I took the Speech Pathologist to the room across from mine. I told the him to make himself comfortable and set up while I spoke to the Speech Pathologist. Once in the Seminar Room, I gave the Speech/Language Consultant the inventory sheets and I also updated her on the students that would require speech and language assistance. Then, I told her to come and get me once she was ready to begin her assessments and that I would go and get the first child for her to assess. Out of curiosity, I asked her what kind of assessments she used when she assessed students. She shared her assessment tools.

In my classroom, I informed the Behavior Consultant of the situation with the Multi-Grade classroom. (The behaviourist had seen the classroom in operation last spring. Therefore, he had an idea of how it had operated but he had not worked with the
students at that time.) Then, we discussed the aspect of programming. I asked him what he knew about specific programs and if whether he knew what programs the other schools were using. He shared information he had on disk. While I was working with the Behavior Consultant, the Speech/Language Consultant assessed students. I was busy coming and going out of my room.

By four o’clock the Speech/Language Consultant had gotten three assessments. And, I had begun to put the Multi-grade behavior program on disk. When the consultants left, I decided to get a couple of things done. I also reminded the parents about the M.A.P.S’s meeting tomorrow. (I usually like to remind participants of any meeting’s that I would be holding a day before because sometimes they forget about them.)

Working with the Consultants’ (October 12, 2000)

In the morning, I continued working on the school order before the consultants arrived. I was now working on the middle years order. I ordered material that would coincide with the Curriculum Guides.

The consultants arrived at the school shortly after nine o’clock. For the remaining of the day, I spent my day working them. We worked basically the same like we did the last day.

During the morning, the Behavior Consultant and I got interrupted by a phone call from the Health Services. The nurse in charge with school programming informed me that the Alvin Buckwold Traveling Clinic was coming to our community. There would be a
team of eight (8) to ten (10) people coming. The Health Centre was therefore requesting for my help. I told the nurse to send a letter to the principal informing him of their need of my assistance concerning this. (I was glad to hear about this information because the Traveling Clinic had never been to our community before, let alone one professional who specialized with children’s health care. Such as a pediatrician. So this was good news.)

In the afternoon, I made arrangements for the Behavior Consultant to go and observe a classroom in which a teacher wanted behavior management assistance concerning one of her students. While the Behavior Consultant was in the classroom, I had time to spend with the Speech/Language Consultant. She informed me of what she had been doing with some of the students. Then, I asked her to clarify some of the areas that I was unfamiliar about in her field; such as speech, phonological processing, and other. I wanted a lesson from her because I did not have many student’s in the school with these kind of problems and therefore I had not read up on these areas. (But I should have, right?) I also wanted to know what she had to say about these areas because she just came out of training. After our discussion, I learned quite a bit from her. She also suggested some material that I could read.

Before three thirty, the Behavior Consultant was back in my room, and the Speech/Language Consultant went back to the Seminar Room to resume her work. The Behavior Consultant informed me about his findings through his observation and anecdotal comments. He stated that he would be having a post conference with the teacher at four o’clock. He also stated that he would make a report and send it to myself
and the teacher. Shortly before four o’clock, I informed the consultants that I had a meeting at four.

At four o’clock, I prepared for the M.A.P.S’s meeting. The parents arrived. Then the rest of the participants of the meeting arrived. I did the same process as any other M.A.P.S’s meeting. The parents had an opportunity to share their fears about their child and the participants had an insight about the parents situation. After the meeting, the teacher shared that she had a better understanding about the child she was working with.

I felt good about the meeting, I always enjoy the meetings because it gives everyone a chance to have a better picture about the child their working with. By the time I went home it was close to five thirty.

Wrap-up with the Consultants (October 13, 2000)

This morning, I began with the school order again. I was now midway into the middle years order. Then shortly after nine o’clock, the consultants arrived. They informed me that they would only be in the school for half a day. The Behavior Consultant spent some time working on tracking student performance because I was unsure of how that would work. Meanwhile, I spent some time with the Speech/Language Consultant, she informed me about what she had found out concerning one of the high-cost students. She then made some suggestions, I informed her that the child had a full-time tutor. I told her that I wanted her to speak with the tutor and explain to her what she needed to know. I also told her to recommend some of the resources we had in the
resource room for the tutor to use. After I spoke with her, I went to get the student and the tutor.

I then went to my classroom, the Behavior Consultant explained the tracking system. I asked him if what he was recommending for the Multi-grade classroom had been previously used in an actual classroom setting. He stated that he was unsure, that he himself had not tried it. So, I was apprehensive about trying it, but I guess I would know how effective it was when I actually tried it. (To tell you the truth, I was actually doubtful about his recommendation.)

Then, he asked me for my opinion about an idea he had. He wanted to know if it would be possible to hold an inservice for the teaching staff, in the area on student behaviors. I told him that it was a good idea but I informed him that I would have to get in contact with him about the idea at a later date because I would have to inform the principal. I asked the Behavior Consultant, if it would be possible to arrange for a visit in a behavior classroom in another school. I told him that I wanted the Multi-grade teacher to visit the classroom once the teacher was hired. I wanted the teacher to observe and see how the classroom operated and to give the teacher ideas. The behaviourist was able to give me a name for a contact person for a school that we could go and visit.

Shortly before lunch, the Speech/Language Consultant came to join us in my classroom. We decided at that time to go and sit down with the principal and inform him of the work we had done. I also informed him about the Behavior Consultant’s suggestion of holding an inservice for the teachers. At a quarter after twelve, the consultant’s were
on their way out.

In the afternoon, I worked on inputting some data into the behavior disk. I was also working towards compiling data to make a program manual by feeding data on a disk. Then, I decided to leave that aside and I began to fill in the I.E.P. from the last day’s M.A.P.S meeting. By this time it was already four thirty.

**Students Skipping (October 16, 2000)**

This morning, I went to talk to the principal about the idea of holding an inservice. He stated that it was a good idea and so we began discussing the dates. We were able to set a date. I informed him that I would get in touch with the Behavior Consultant to inform him of the dates that we had set. I was on supervision today, and it was indoor supervision so I went to supervise in the next room. When I arrived, the children were all looking tired and just sat and stared. I asked them “Did you just get up?” and some nodded their heads in agreement. Then they slowly proceeded to be busy with something else.

When the bell rang, I went to see a couple of the elementary teachers. I had to make some changes with regards to one of the tutors. There was one child that required more assistance than another child. So I spoke to both teachers. We discussed their schedules to determine what time of the day the academic skills were taught, and we discussed the aspect of the behaviors carried out by the students, and then we determined when the children required the most assistance. By the time I was done, I was able to get
a tutor in one class for a quarter of the time, and the remaining of the day in the other classroom. (This is an example of how I have to coordinate the tutor’s, in order to meet the children’s needs. There must be careful planning because the tutors cannot be pulled from one area and dumped in another area.)

Then I began my day’s schedule. I had one student absent this morning, so I proceeded with my work on the school order. And in the afternoon I had two of the student’s skip school. (It was not looking good for three of the high-cost students at this time.)

In the afternoon, I contacted the Behavior Consultant regarding the inservice. I informed him about the dates and he stated that he would require three days (which the principal and I had only planned on two days), I told him that I would get to him. So, I quickly went to talk to the principal and he stated that the three days would be alright. So, I contacted the Behavior Consultant again and told him that the three days were okay. So the dates were set.

At four o’clock, I made a report to the principal regarding the Consultant’s visit. (I always like to make a report whenever I have a consultant coming to work with me. That way the principal has an overview of what kind of work was done during the visit.) Shortly before four thirty I went to drop off the report at the principals office.

**Shifting Tutors (October 17, 2000)**

This morning I arrived at the school at eight-twenty five. I began with the school
order again. At a quarter to nine, a high school teacher came to see me regarding a child that required an assessment. I looked at my schedule and informed her that the earliest that I would be able to assess would be at one this afternoon.

At nine o’clock, I proceeded in seeing the first child on my schedule. I assisted him with a computer program. He was quite interested with the task. I was with the student for half an hour. Then I continued with working with the next two students until recess. At ten-forty-five, I had to speak to a parent regarding a tutor that needed to be moved. I spoke to the parent over the phone and she understood with the change that needed to take place. The parent was understanding and I also informed her that we needed to get a meeting in place as soon as could be arranged.

Before I left for lunch, I was met at the door by a teacher, she informed me that she required assistance with some of her students. A couple of the students were apparently becoming quite intrusive in the classroom and something needed to be done. I informed her that I would have to discuss this over with the principal. (I knew this was not my area because the student’s were not high-cost.)

At one o’clock, I assessed a few student’s that required assessments. Once I completed the testing, I then proceeded to get back to my room. On my way back to my classroom I was stopped in the hallway by a tutor. The tutor informed me that one of the parents whose children that he was working with needed to talk me. I informed him that I would make the call at two-thirty.

After I had scored the assessments, I then proceeded to speak to the parent that
needed to speak to me. I was informed by the parent that her child needed to see a specialist and was therefore telling me that her child would be away. I told her that I appreciated her informing me of the appointment date and asked if she could share the information when they returned from the appointment. (In my position, I am glad to be working with such cooperative parents. I have learned that when you treat parents as “part of the team” then they are more able to freely talk to you.)

At four o’clock, I received a message from the Health Centre. They were inviting me to an inservice which would be broadcasted on Tele-Health at the Health Centre on Thursday. So, I notified the Principal about the invitation and I informed him that I would be unavailable on that date. So, I suggested that one of the Guidance Councillors attend the inservice because it was related to their field. The topics were “Abused Child” and “Child Sexual Abuse”. So he took me up on that offer and asked the elementary Guidance Councillor to attend.

**Contact with out of community B.D. Classroom (October 18, 2000)**

Today was a very busy day. I began my day with a teacher wanting resource material for her class. Then, I went to my supervision area. In between my supervision, I attempted to continue with placing orders. However I was unsuccessful because I was continually interrupted.

This morning, I was interrupted four times during two of my sessions. Twice it was by teachers wanting information and twice it was by tutors wanting specific teaching
material.

This afternoon, I had a parent come to my room wanting her children to be assessed. She stated that she wanted to know how her children were performing. She stated that she was particularly concerned about one of her children. I informed her that I would assess them as soon as possible and that I would notify her and her husband when the results were complete (her children were currently enrolled in the school).

During one of my sessions, I remembered that I needed to inform the principal about the situation with one of the teacher's request for assistance. So, after my last session with my last student of the day, I made my way to the principals office. I informed the principal of the situation and he told me that he would deal with it.

Then I made a call to the school which the Behavior Consultant had given me. I wanted to set a date as soon as possible because I was unsure if it would even be possible to go in and observe the behavior classroom. I was able to get in touch with the teacher, so I identified myself and went on to explained the schools situation with regards to the behavior classroom. Once, the explanation was done, she stated that she would be glad to be of help to us. However, she stated that she would have to consult her principal and that she would get back to me.

Before four thirty, I received a phone call from the Therapeutic Group Home. They were arranging a Case Conference's for some of the children that they had in the home, which included two of the high-cost students. The Case Conference was set for Monday. I needed to file some of my paperwork, so I did that before I left for home.
It had indeed been a busy day. Some days, I rarely even have time to sit for a few minutes, let alone grab something to drink. Today had definitely been one of those days.

**Family Priorities (October 19, 2000)**

I was unable to go to work today because one of my children became ill.

As it turned out, I was also unable to go to work on Friday October 20 because my child was still ill. I put my family a main priority and so there have been occasions when I was unable to go to work because of family priorities.

**Therapeutic Group Home Case Conference (October 23, 2000)**

This morning, I began with catch up work. I had not been at work for the past two days and work was piling up. I had teacher’s coming and going from my room from time to time this morning. Then, I still had the school order to complete and this week was only a two day week for the students because the inservice would be held on Wednesday until Friday.

At nine o’clock, I began my day’s schedule. During the morning, I had two interruptions. Once by the principal and once by a tutor. My next session went without interruptions. However, in my third session, I had three interruptions. Then during my fourth and fifth session I had only one interruption.
This afternoon, I had two students absent, so I assessed some students. And in between the assessments, I spoke to one of the teacher’s that had requested an assessment. During the afternoon, I began working on the school order again. I was now in the process of doing the High School order. I had also had time to do the parental request assessment’s. However, I did not have the time to score the assessments.

At four o’clock, I attended a Case Conference held by the Therapeutic Group Home. The conference was held in the library. The first case was about one of my high-cost students. The conference was informative, it included the social history of the child and the environmental impacts of the child. The information discussed was highly confidential because it dealt with sensitive issues. The conference was informational to the teacher because she had not had much prior information about the child. By the time the meeting was over it was already close to five o’clock.

(I was used to hearing this kind of information because I also had previously dealt with extreme cases with regards to children who had been abused.)

More Paperwork (October 24, 2000)

This morning, I went to check my mailbox. I had numerous messages and faxes. So I attended to them before my day began with the students. I also had time to go to the Education Manager’s office to ask him about the computer that was to be purchased for the student that required the computer. He stated that he would give me an update by the end of the week.
At nine o’clock, I began my day with the students. I worked with the students in their classrooms. The morning just slipped by, or so it seemed.

This afternoon, I was able to calculate the assessment results. Then, once I had an opportunity, I notified the parents about the completion of the assessments they had requested. The parent stated that she would be in at three. Then I continued with my other tasks.

Shortly after three o’clock, the parents arrived. So I explained to them the assessment process and about percentiles and grade equivalents. I also informed them that the assessments were not “the end all”. Once I had explained the assessment process, then we went through the document. The parents understood the whole process and at the conclusion of the meeting the parents thanked me for everything. I told them that my door was always open, and I could be contacted at any time.

At four o’clock, I attended another Case Conference, in the library. The Case Conference was again informative for those that came. These conferences usually deal with explicit information which otherwise the educator would have no insight into the “home setting”. This meeting centred around the children and we discussed the aspect of working together to open the communication lines. We discussed the children’s education and we discussed their strengths and weaknesses.

**Teacher Inservice (October 25, 2000)**

This morning, I worked on the school order. I planned on working on this task for
the next couple of days. At nine o’clock the Behavior Consultant arrived at the school. I proceeded to show him the science room and helped him locate the equipment he required for his presentation.

At nine-thirty, I introduced the Behavior Consultant and made opening comments. Then the inservice began. This topic was all too familiar to me, so therefore, in the afternoon I decided to sit out. I went to work on the school order. I had to insure that all the order’s coincided with the Curriculum Guides. And this is all that I had time to work on.

**Day Two of Inservice (October 26, 2000)**

This morning, I sat in on the inservice and the groups were working in dyads. By mid morning, I decided to go and complete the school order. Shortly before lunch, I had completed the school order. And so I had to submit the order to the person that dealt with them, which we were unsure of what title she possessed. However, she was knowledgeable about the administrative aspect.

This afternoon, I sat in on the in-service. I assisted the Behavior Consultant. At this portion of the inservice, the discussion centred around setting realistic consequences. At a quarter to four the inservice was wrapped-up.

**Wrap-up of Inservice (October 27, 2000)**

The morning was a wrap-up of the inservice. After the inservice was over, I spoke
to a few of the staff, I was curious to know whether the inservice applied to their classroom situation. And also whether, they see it benefitting their current classroom setting and if they would use what they had learned. Three of the staff stated that the inservice was good and that they were going to try what they had learned. Two other staff stated that the inservice was a refresher of what they already were using in their classrooms. In conclusion of this inservice, I would say that it was beneficial and teacher's were willing to give it a try and still other's were already using this information.

This afternoon, while I had some time, I went to work on the set-up of the Multi-Grade classroom. I had to inquire who would be working with the Multi-Grade classroom. By mid-afternoon, I was notified by the principal that there was a teacher on staff that would fill the Multi-Grade position. There had apparently been a resignation by one of the staff and that they were going to move students and place them different classrooms. Apparently, one of the middle years classrooms had a low enrollment and therefore this is where a majority of the students would be enrolled. Therefore, the Multi-grade classroom would be placed in the classroom once the students were moved into the other classrooms. The principal gave me the teacher’s name and I told him that I would speak to her.

The name of the teacher the principal gave me was of a teacher that had previously worked in the Multi-grade classroom. I gathered all the behavior and social skills material and placed them in several boxes. Afterward, I went to speak to the Multi-grade teacher. I informed her that I had just recently heard the news. I told her not to put too much
thought into the Multi-grade classroom for now, until she was in the position. I informed her that I would assist her in any way that I could. She stated that she was looking forward to going back to that classroom.

By this time it was already four thirty and so I left for the day.

The Multi-Grade Classroom (October 30, 2000)

Today had been mostly spent on working toward the behavior classroom set-up. In the morning I conversed over the phone with the Behavior Consultant. Shortly before recess, I received a message regarding a visit to the other behavior classroom. Therefore, I returned the call and then a date was set to visit the behavior classroom in the other school.

I had seen the Structured for Success classroom in Saskatoon. So therefore, I knew the layout of the classroom and knew how it operated. I knew of the administrative aspect. However, the goal for us in the Namíkos school was to work with what we had in the school. I also wanted to make use of the resources that we had in the community.

I went to speak to the teacher again. I told her about the initial visit, she was glad to hear about it. "Pat" wanted to know if she would have time to work with me in getting the classroom set-up. I told her that I would speak to the principal.

In the afternoon, once I had time, I went to see the principal. I informed him of "the visit" to the other First Nations school and he was glad to hear about it. I also reminded him about the situation of the Multi-Grade classroom. I told him that the
teacher and myself needed time to work towards the set-up of the classroom. I informed him again that the classroom required the behavior corrective skills and also the social skills program. Also, that it would be beneficial for the teacher to have some time before she had students in the classroom. The principal was in agreement to have some time to work toward the set-up of the classroom. However, he stated that he would get back to me in regards to how much time he was going to give us to set-up.

Shortly before school was out, the principal came to inform me that he would give us a week to work on the set-up of the classroom. He also informed me that the teacher’s last day in the current classroom would be on Friday. This was good news. Therefore, I went to inform the teacher about the decision and she was happy about it herself. I also informed her that her last day in the current classroom would be this Friday.

At four o’clock, I had a parent come in to see me regarding the assessment results of her children. Therefore, I explained the whole process to her about the assessment process. About the percentile ranks and the grade scores. I answered some of the questions she had. Once we had completed discussing the assessments, she thanked me. Before she left I gave her some simple but useful recommendations she could use to help her children at home. And she was all the more grateful.

CMD Child (October 31, 2000)

I began my day with sorting some of my files. I had been so busy with the school order, that I had let my filing slack. I had to tend to some administrative tasks, therefore I
had to attend to these matters. I had to contact the local Child and Family Services and the Health Centre, with regards to a couple of students.

Later on this morning, the vice-principal came to see me regarding a student that required some assistance during recess. She informed me that a few of the staff had noticed something peculiar about this child and they were concerned. Therefore, I needed to know this information, so that I could inquire this further with the parents. I thanked the vice-principal for the information and told her that I would attend to the matter. I continued working with a couple of students. While in the classrooms, I spoke to the teacher regarding the students progress. The teacher informed that one of the students would require modification to her work. Therefore, I informed her that we could discuss it further this afternoon. And we left it at that.

At one o’clock, one of the students was absent. Therefore, I decided to look into the matter with the child who required assistance. I phoned to the parents home and both parents were home, I informed them that I wanted to go and see them. The mother invited me. So, I notified the office that I was going to make a home visit. So, I left the school premises, and headed for the child’s home. When I arrived at the home, the mother invited me in and offered me something to drink. She also offered me something to eat. Then, she began sharing with me about her children and also told me a few stories of things that had occurred a few days prior. After a short while, I talked to both parents about the situation regarding their child. They informed me that she had been born with congenital hips, and also they further informed me that she had previously had physical
therapy. I thanked them for their openness, and further informed them that I would be contacting them again soon.

When I got to the school, I went to have a short talk with the vice principal. I informed her that I recommend that the student have a supervisor during recess. (This was already being done for another child who had C.P.)

Late in the afternoon, the principal came to see me. He came with further information on the Multi-grade classroom. He informed me that he would allow me and the teacher to work on the behavior disordered classroom for two weeks, before the students became enrolled in the classroom. This sounded real good to me.

At four fifteen, I went to see the teacher that required assistance with modifying the high-cost student’s work. We discussed the aspect of what the student could not do. Then we went from there. (When I work with a teacher in terms of a student’s program, I usually put forth ideas and then let the teacher work with that. That way, it is not only coming from me, however, the teacher has ownership of the program. I do not like to dictate, however, I prefer that teacher’s have as much ownership of their students’ programming.) By the end of our working session. The teacher had figured out a way of modifying the student’s work load. We had worked for half an hour and did not even realize it.

The Trip (November 1, 2000)

This morning, I had one of the high-cost student’s going on a medical trip. So I
made a note of that in my calendar. Shortly before nine o’clock, I received a call from one of the child’s parents. The parent informed me that only one of them was being allowed to go with their child on the medical trip. She further informed me that the Alvin Buckwold Centre had requested for a few of the child’s equipment to be taken along on the trip because they wanted to ensure that the equipment fit well for the student. So therefore, the one parent that was allowed to go would not be able to care for the child, plus carry the equipment. I understood their predicament, so therefore, I told her that I would make some phone calls and would phone them back before the medical taxi left.

So, I immediately got on the phone. I phoned to the Health Centre, I asked them what the situation was with regards to the medical transportation. They informed me that they were limited to what they could approve for medical trips. Then, I phoned to the band office, and spoke to one of the Counsel. Afterward, I phoned back to the Health Centre and told them to be realistic. So, after a while, I was able to get the other parent to go on the medical. The Health Services were willing to pay for the other parent to go on the trip. So, I phoned the parents and informed them that both of them could go on the medical trip. They thanked me for the help.

In the afternoon, I was informed by the Education Manager that there would be no more tutor’s hired. Therefore, I would have to work with the tutor’s that I had in the school. In the afternoon, I evaluated the situation with the high-cost programming. I needed to set priorities, of which students needed the most assistance.

The rest of the afternoon was mostly spent on working on the high-cost program. I
needed to switch tutor’s around. I also needed to re-evaluate which students required the most assistance. I was not too happy about the situation, however, these things happen, and I had to work with what resources I had. I also had to evaluate the situation with the students that had been skipping school. At the end of the day, I learned that a few of the students were not attending school, or rather they had not been in school for the past few weeks. Therefore, it was more then likely that we would be losing those students. So, the end result was I had to switch four of the tutor’s.

By four ten, I went to see the administrator, regarding the tutor re-arrangement. I also informed him that I would be speaking to some of the teacher’s about the re-arrangement of tutor placements. I was able to see two of the teacher’s before I left for work and informed the other two teacher’s that they would be minus a tutor in their classroom.

**Medical Trip (November 2, 2000)**

I did not go to work today because I had a medical. I had to take one of my children to an out of community doctor’s appointment.

I was also unable to go to work on Friday.
Planning for the Multi-Grade Classroom (November 6, 2000)

When I got to work, I went to see the rest of the two teacher’s regarding tutor placements and the other two that would be minus a tutor. The teacher’s that would be minus a tutor were not all too pleased with the situation, however I informed them that there was nothing else that could be done because we were short tutor’s. I also had a brief meeting with the tutor’s regarding their reassignments.

Once, that issue was dealt with, I then wrote a memo to the staff and informed them that the next couple of weeks would be spent on the Behavior Program and therefore, the Special Ed. Program would be minimally available. Before, I distributed the memo’s, I had to run the memo by the administrator. (At any time during the year, before I distribute anything to the staff, I usually notify the administration office first, so that they are aware of what I am doing in the Special Education area.)

This morning, as expected, the Multi-grade teacher came to see me. Upon her arrival we discussed what our goal would be to get the classroom operational and what we had to be in place before we arrived at that goal.

Therefore, we began discussing the aspect of what we needed to work on. So, we brainstormed some ideas. (I wanted this teacher to have a personal input into the planning of this classroom because I wanted her to have ownership of the classroom.) For the day we had a goal of laying out a skeleton plan of the behavior program. So, this is what we worked on for most of the day.

At the end of the day, we went over what we had talked about. We also discussed
the upcoming visit of the other school. I gave her some general ideas of what she should be looking for upon her visit.

**Interagency Meeting (November 7, 2000)**

Today was the day of the anticipated visit at the other First Nations school. The Multi-grade teacher and the principal would be visiting the school. They had left the community for the two and a half hour ride and they would be back in the school tomorrow. The Behavior Consultant had informed me that he would be meeting the principal and the Multi-grade teacher at the school. Then he would be traveling to our school tomorrow and remaining for the rest of the week.

This morning, I had been invited to attend the Inter-Agency meeting at the band office. This was a very important meeting because this is where all the various community organizations would meet to discuss a wide variety of topics, which concerned the community. These meeting have always been very informational and a lot of good has been produced. The meetings are usually held every month. However, this has been impossible due to each organization being busy with their own responsibilities in carrying out and providing services.

By ten o'clock, I made my way to the band office. As mentioned, there were a lot of items to be discussed. Usually these meetings are held to solve solutions. Each organization in the community had their own topics to discuss. By noon, the meeting was adjourned and would resume in the afternoon.
In the afternoon, the main topic was curfew for the community. There was a lengthy discussion on this issue. The end result was to have community volunteers to take children and youth home by a certain time.

The meeting was over at four, so I went back to work. Back at work I made some notes to myself regarding the meeting. Then I went gathered some material together to get ready for the planning meeting tomorrow.

**Planning Underway (November 8, 2000)**

This morning, when I arrived at work, I began the process of gathering more material for our meeting regarding the behavior disordered classroom. Once the Multi-grade Teacher arrived we began discussing the visit. She was so excited. She stated that she had a lot of ideas.

By nine fifteen, the Behavior Consultant arrived. So we began debriefing. They discussed what they had observed, the various ideas which stemmed from the visit, and so forth. We were on that discussion for a good part of the morning.

Afterward, I discussed the aspect of behavior programming. I dug into the box that contained all the behavior material. We discussed what we had in the school. And I informed them that we had to work with what we had. Which were the Reality Therapy, Day Treatment Program, Lions Quest and Second Step, which I think were very good material.

So we had a goal for the day and that was to go over each material, and to see
which of the material the teacher was familiar with. So this was our task for the day.

Behavior Program Planning Continues (November 9, 2000)

The planning process for the behavior disordered classroom continued all day. Towards the end of the day, we had decided that the B.D. class would use parts of the programs which would encompass the behavior corrective skills program. This plan was workable for the teacher.

By late afternoon, the Behavior Consultant shared his ideas with us. He gave us a lot of reading material. And this is what we spent our time on for the remaining of the day. This day did not seem long, we had been so busy.

The Behavior Consultant’s Last Day (November 10, 2000)

This morning, we continued discussing some of the Behavior Consultant’s ideas. The morning was mostly spent discussing what we could use of the Behavior Consultant’s ideas. Then we discussed what was workable for “Pat”.

By early afternoon, the Behavior Consultant had to depart. He had a long drive home and it would be getting dark soon. So before he left, we went to make a verbal summative report of what we had accomplished and where “Pat” and I were headed with the program. Afterward, the Consultant left.
Back in my room, “Pat” and I continued working on the programming aspect. By the end of the day, we reviewed what we had discussed. Then we set a goal for the coming week because we had to accomplish a lot by next week.

**Social Skills Program (November 14, 2000)**

Back at work after the long weekend. This morning “Pat” and I began working on the Social skills area. Our goal for the day was to lay out a framework for teaching the social skills aspect. By mid-morning we had decided that we would make a brief year plan of what the students would be working on. And so this is what we worked on all day long.

By the end of the day, we had been able to make an outline of what “Pat” would be teaching the students. This had been a lot of work, because we had to go through the various programs we had in the school and we went from there. However, it sure helped to work together because one can only do a limited amount of work. For the next day, the Multi-grade teacher stated that she wanted to begin organizing her classroom and so I encouraged her to do so.

**Interactions with staff, community and others (November 15, 2000)**

This morning began with one thing happening after another. I tried to contact the PAGC Special Education consultant, however, I had to phone to three school before I was able to locate her. But it ended up with me having to leave her a message because she was
in the process of assessing a student. I required a final summation of the Behavior Disordered students assessments. One of the High School teacher’s popped in to say “Good Morning”. Which was nice of her.

Then, the Multi-grade teacher came to ask if whether I would have time to go and see her sometime this morning. I told her that I would go and see her as soon as I could. By the time I looked at my watch, it was already 9:37. Then I remembered that I had to go and drop off paperwork at another classroom.

While I was at the middle years area, I decided to quickly pop into the Multi-grade classroom. The teacher was glad to see me and immediately asked whether she was on the right track. She stated that work was beginning to get “overwhelming”, I told her to relax. I suggested that she get herself a day plan and set objectives for the day of what she should work on. I did give her a suggestion about the priority in getting the classroom operational. I also gave her some suggestions about how she should organize her material. [I did not in any want to impose on what she was doing, and I informed her that what I was telling her were only a suggestion, and that she could go with it or not.] I informed her that we also needed to do some home visits by tomorrow. I was in the middle of explaining to her about the I.E.P. format when I was buzzed to go to the administration office because the Education Manager wanted to speak to me.

So, I left the Multi-grade Teacher’s classroom. Then, I made my way down the hallway and headed to the administration office. The Education Manager informed me that he was assigning me to work with a teacher. The teacher would be working under my
supervision and that the teacher would begin this afternoon at one o’clock. [The teacher had been on staff before however, he had had an accident. The plan was for him to progressively work back into our education system.] The Education Manager gave me an observation sheet to use and record my supervision of the teacher and also make anecdotal comments.

So I made my way back into my classroom. While I was in the middle of inputting data into the disk for the Behavior Program Manual, I was interrupted with a phone call and it was the teacher who would be coming in to work with me at one o’clock. I informed him that I would prepare material for him to work with when he came in. By the time I was done speaking to him, the bell rang for the morning recess.

During recess, I decided to go to the Education storage and gather some material for the teacher to work with. While I was there I came across some material that I thought would be helpful for the Grade 4 teacher to use. By this time it was already bell time, so I went to the Grade 4 teacher’s classroom and gave her the material, she was appreciative. She also voiced a concern about a child who was having extreme difficulty reading and she was getting little support from home. I told her that I would look into the matter.

After recess, I decided to go and pick up a cumm. file in the elementary office which I needed regarding the child in Grade 4. Upon my investigation, I found that the child had been retained twice and there was no way of returning the child back a grade because of his age and his physical stature. Later on that morning, I went to speak to the administrator regarding my findings. I gave my recommendation to the principal, that the
child should remain in that classroom and he should be psychologically assessed when the Special Ed. Consultant came to our school again, however in the meantime that he should be given work at his own level.

At 11:47, I proceeded to take some necessary paperwork to the Multi-grade teacher. I also had to inform her that we would be doing some home visits the next day. Upon returning to my room the noon bell rang.

When I arrived at work at 12:43, I tried to get some of my paperwork straightened out because my room looked like a crazy place. I also got some work ready for the teacher who would be coming in at one o’clock. I remembered that I had to inform the Grade 4 Teacher about her student, so off I went. Upon relaying the information with her, I headed back to my classroom and I saw the other teacher walking by and heading toward my room. Once I got to my room, I told the teacher that I was glad to be getting some help. I gave him some work to do and he stated that he was glad to be returning to work. I informed him that I would be leaving him and asked if he would be alright by himself and he stated that he would be. While I was busy doing other tasks, I had made sure that he did not run out of work to do.

I then proceeded to get my paper work ready for the parents/care giver’s for tomorrow’s home visits. I found that I had not updated my Parent Consent Form for the Multi-grade Classroom and so I had to go down to the elementary office and type out an updated parent consent form (I had to go down there because my printer was out of ink). Once I was done typing I then quickly took the form to the principal’s office and had him
sign the bottom of the form. Then, I proceeded to do more paperwork.

By the end of the day, I had managed to complete all the necessary forms that needed to be filled out for the Multi-grade students. The Multi-grade teacher and I also had an opportunity to discuss the I.E.P.’s for her students.

The Home Visits (November 16, 2000)

This morning was just as busy as yesterday. I was called to go to two classrooms this morning. I went to give my assistance, one was in the middle years classroom and the other was in the elementary classroom.

Once I had a chance, I proceeded to go to the Multi-grade classroom. The teacher was glad to see me, she showed me what she had accomplished. So we discussed the work she had produced and we also discussed the behavior disordered I.E.P.’s which had to be completed. Afterward, I informed her that we would be visiting parents and care giver’s today. I informed her that we would leave this afternoon, at around one thirty because I needed to get some things ready before I left. By lunch time, I had managed to change the behavior disordered I.E.P. format, so that it was appropriate to be used in that classroom.

Shortly after one o’clock, I informed the Multi-grade teacher that I was ready to leave. On our way out the teacher asked if I had seen her jacket because she had misplaced it, I told her to relax because she was getting things way over her head. I told her that she had time to look for her jacket. By the time she came back and ready to leave
it was already 1:49. As we were about to leave, she stated that she had forgotten to make parental copies of parent consents for outings. I held her that I would go and xerox copies for her. On my way in, I noticed that she had not had the principal sign the letters, and so I tracked the principal down and got him to sign. Then, I went to make copies and then we were off to our home visits.

Just before two o’clock, we were on our way for the home visits. The home visits went quite well. We visited with a few parents for a while. We also were offered a variety of food. The home visits lasted close to four thirty.

Upon my arrival at the school, I went to sit down with the principal and made decisions about the student list, and about other concerns. The principal was cooperative and stated that he was willing to try anything that would work. He stated, “if you don’t try something, then you won’t know if it works”. I then went to see the Multi-grade teacher and informed her of her classroom capacity and who she would have in her class. I also informed her that if she had additional ideas for the classroom that she should share them with me, and we would present them to the principal.

The Administrator’s (November 17, 2000)

Today was spent mostly on working on the behavior disordered students I.E.P.’s. I had to give a mini-lesson to the Multi-grade teacher regarding the Individualized Educational Program’s. She stated that she was grateful for my help and that she was also pleased about the support that was coming out of the principal’s office. (This was the
second year this teacher would be working in this classroom.)

I knew what she was talking about because ever since I had occupied this position, I have had some experience in working with administrators. In one situation, I had worked with a female administrator and she had been quite supportive and willing to hear the ideas that I had. In another situation, I had worked with another administrator who was a male and he was just blew everything out of proportion. He was an “expert” to everything. He would always keep referring to what he used to do at the “urban” location. In yet another situation, the administrator gave me all the work to carry. He seemed at first to be very supportive however, that soon wore off and I was mostly left alone to work. So, I knew what it means to work with an administrator who is supportive.

Resuming to Duties (November 20, 2000)

This morning I resumed with my high-cost programming duties. I was on supervision this today. I went to quickly pop into the Multi-grade classroom to see how they were doing. The students were all working quietly and the teacher gave me a thumbs up.

So I proceeded to begin my day. I went to check up on a little girl that had not shown up in class at the 9:30 session. When I got to her classroom, she was working on her printing (well attempting to anyway). I informed the classroom teacher that we would be working in the classroom for a while. (The teacher had just started yesterday in the Grade 1 classroom and therefore, I had not had the opportunity to speak with her
Concerning the student. It is difficult to recruit teacher's during the mid-year because of the semi-remote location of our reserve.)

Then I went to the next student on my schedule. When I walked in the classroom, the student was under the table. The teacher came and informed me that the student was not having a good morning. So, I told her that I will take the student to my room. So, I went to kneel down to the child’s level and talked to her in a non-threatening tone and asked her to come with me. And she did. So we proceeded down the hallway to my classroom. In my room I tried to get the student to talk about what was bothering her but she would not talk. So I decided to try play therapy. The student responded well, so I had her tell me what was bothering her and we went from there. (There are instances in which I would have to take a child to my classroom because of whatever reason they will not work in the classroom setting.)

I went to the next session with my next student. I got him started with some work, and I also gave some assistance to a student that was sitting beside us. The student had some difficulty with his math. I worked between students during the session.

When I looked at my time again, it was already 11:21, so I went to work with the next student on my schedule. When I arrived at the classroom, the little boy was busy with his math. The classroom teacher informed me that the child was trying hard to do the work. (At the beginning of the school year, this was a child who did not want to do any work and was quite immature; and it was so good to hear and see that he was improving in his social and academic skills.) I worked with the student in the classroom and we
worked while the other student's did their own work.

In the afternoon, I continued working with students. By mid-afternoon, I went to the Multi-grade classroom to see how they were doing. The class was working quite well. So, I returned to my classroom and compiled my anecdotal comments. It was already four thirty by the time I was done.

The Big Meeting (November 21, 2000)

This morning, we had power outage twice. However, this was not uncommon. Power outages are common at any time of the year in the far north. I had received a call from the Health Centre and they were inviting me to sit in on a Tele-Health meeting. This sounded interesting to me and so therefore, I agreed. I had a few absenteeisms this morning so I worked on the Behavior Manuals.

In the afternoon, I attended the meeting at the Health Centre. At the meeting, the Tele-Health had a Pediatrician, two Social Workers, and a Psycho-metrist. The meeting was about providing services via Tele-Health to the community of Namíkos. So we had quite a lengthy discussion, however, the meeting good. After the meeting, those of us that were at the Health Centre discussed the overall topics. I was asked for my input and also the participants required a few clarifications, and I was willing to do so. By the time the meeting was over, it was already close to five o'clock.

The school is hosting a Dinner Theater.
Power Outage (November 22, 2000)

This morning, shortly before the staff went to work, the power went off. By nine thirty, the power was still off. By ten o’clock, we were notified that the power would remain to be off all day, so therefore the school would be shut down.

Inservice at Health Centre (November 23, 2000)

This morning, I was invited to an inservice on Alcohol Related births. So by nine thirty, I was at the Health Centre. There were not many of us in the inservice. Only a few Health Services staff, myself, and a Child and Family Services worker.

The inservice was informational and I had wished that this be opened to the whole community, however it was not possible. When the inservice was over, it was already four forty-five.

Preparation Day (November 24, 2000)

Today was a Prep. Day. I was glad to have this day because there was so much to do. However, I spent this day mostly helping other staff. I also spent quite a bit of time in the behavior disordered classroom because the paperwork was piling up. So, I assisted the teacher in trying to get minimal paperwork for her to do because, she was finding that there was more paperwork to tackle than there was time to prepare for student’s work.

Family Priorities (November 27, 2000)

One of my children was ill and therefore I did not attend work.
**Snack Program (November 28, 2000)**

This morning, I was invited to sit on a meeting which concerned the Snack Program. The Snack Program was already operational, however, administration wanted to know how the program could be beneficial to some of our students.

At the end of the meeting, we agreed to give a couple of our students an opportunity to work with the Snack Worker. One of the students had Downs Syndrome and the other had multiple disabilities. The students would be working on a rotating basis.

In the afternoon, the power went out again. So, the school was closed again.

**Holistic Worker (November 29, 2000)**

This morning, I received a call from the Holistic Worker. The worker wanted me to sit on their planning meeting in regards to offering services to community, in particular to students. I notified the Holistic Worker that I would be glad to attend.

For a good part of the morning, my assistance was required in the middle years area. Some of the students, apparently required modifications to programming and therefore, I had to assist the teacher to modify a few of the students program’s.

In the afternoon, I attended the meeting at the Health Centre. In the meeting there were various topics discussed, including school programs. The area that I had required information on was not to overlap student services, and so that area was clarified.

In the evening, the Multi-grade Teacher and myself held a parent and care giver informational meeting in the Multi-grade classroom. We had five parents show up for the meeting which was a good turn out.
Special Education (November 30, 2000)

I would say that in any occupation an individual holds, it is up to that person to make a difference. Anyone can hold any position however, not much will be accomplished if they are just there for the money. (As I have known individuals to view their work as a stepping stone to get to the higher level.)

As a special educator, I am no ordinary educator, but one that takes her position very seriously because of the close ties I have with this community and this education system. I don’t see my position as just “fixing the deficits” but as helping my people prosper and learn in every aspect. For example, when I am asked to assist in whatever situation, either in school or out of school, then I try to make myself available so that I can help.

I would say that working and interacting with people comes naturally. I don’t have to struggle and make myself interact with people. It is not a chore for me.

Yes indeed special education has changed and it has for the better. Not only in offering better services to students but also keeping in mind that the student’s are unique individual’s and not to be put on a shelf and forgotten. The opportunity for special educators to work within their educational environment’s, and in working with other professionals, has moved in the direction of a teamwork approach. Special education is no longer an occupation where one works alone all day long, but it is of getting other education staff, support personnel and outside organizations to work together in providing better services to the students. For the First Nations people, this has been a way of life, interacting and working as a team, within our people has been our way of life. This
process has always been present within First Nations people.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the writer hopes that the narrative data will be of assistance to the educator who has minimal knowledge of the special education area in a northern First Nation’s education system. The purpose of the presentation of the data was to give an insight in the area of special education from the perspective of a First Nations educator. However, the reader has to keep in mind that this is only a representation of one First Nations educational organization and thus does not represent all First Nation’s education system’s. Therefore, the reflections are not interchangeable to all First Nation’s educational organization’s.

The following chapter will provide a synthesis, contextualization, and analysis of the data presented in Chapter 4.
CHAPTER FIVE

CONTEXTUALIZATION AND ANALYSIS OF REFLECTIONS

The main purpose of this study was to give an insight into a special education administered area in a northern First Nations education system, from a First Nations educator’s perspective. This chapter contextualizes and analysis the reflective journal. To give the reader an insight into the research setting, the following description is given.

Description of Community

The community of Namākos is a semi-isolated community. It is located on the southern tip of a beautiful lake, north of the 51st parallel; it is at the end of the international CanAm Highway in northern Saskatchewan. This northern community, in the rugged Canadian Shield, is one of eight multi-communities comprising one of the largest bands in Saskatchewan. The communities are sparsely distributed in northern and southern Saskatchewan. However, the majority of the reserves are located in northern Saskatchewan.

The population of the community of Namākos is over one thousand. It is rich in the cultural tradition of Woodland Cree; Woodland Cree with the “th” dialect remains the first language in the vicinity. The majority of the residents are First Nations.
Description of Education System

The Namīkos education system is First Nations operated with a modern and well-equipped Nursery to Grade 12 education system. The Namīkos education system is a sub educational organization within the large band. The band currently has four other sub-educational organizations which fall under the umbrella of the band.

The education system has an Education Manager and he oversees the education system at the local community level. However, he does not work alone. He works alongside the local Education Committee. The Education Committee consists of seven individuals that are elected locally. The Education Committee and the Education Manager, work closely to monitor the educational progress of the community.

The Namīkos education system has approximately seventy percent First Nations education staff, and many of the teachers are from the community. The Namīkos education system has hired many First Nations educators because the Education Committee has determined there was a need for them. They also felt that First Nations educators could relate better to the First Nations children and vice versa.

The Namīkos education system, has placed a strong emphasis on the Woodland Cree First Nations language, the beliefs, traditions and culture. As in many of the other First Nations operated education system, one of the objectives was to incorporate relevant cultural curricula. The curricular content of the Namīkos education system is slightly different from the western curricular content. There are many examples of this. For
example, the high school has developed Locally Developed programs which are an accredited component structured around the Woodland Cree culture and language.

Whereas the elementary, has the Woodland Cree language component for it’s students. The education system also employees Cree language instructors for both high school and the elementary school. As pointed out by Stairs 1995, the linguistic and curricular content of First Nations education can be adequately pursued only when embedded in traditional cultural values concerning ways of using language, of interacting, and of knowing.

The Namíkos education system is the focal point for the community. There is an interconnectedness between the school and the community. The school makes itself available to the community. The community in turn makes itself available to the school. The education system perceives the importance of having the community involved in the school. Community members are invited and encouraged to take part in the students’ learning process. They are encouraged to come as parents, volunteers, or as resource people.

The Namíkos education system is demonstrating the determination to provide culturally relevant material to its students. The education system would like to have their children have a strong identity of who they are as First Nations people. They desire for their children to succeed and to be successful in both worlds; in the dominant mainstream society and in their First Nations society. The Namíkos education system want all students’ learning to be a pleasant and relevant part of their everyday lives.
Description of Self and Analysis

The following description is to give the reader a sense of the writers involvement in the school and out of school setting. The writer began the position of the Resource Room/Special Education Teacher in the 1997-1998 school year, prior to that the writer was a high school teacher. Prior to the writer being hired as a Resource/Special Education Teacher, there had never been a First Nations individual that had held that position in the Namikos education system. Therefore, this was the first time ever that the Namikos education system had ever employed a First Nations individual in the Special Education area.

Soon after the placement in the Special Education area, the writer quickly learned that there was much work to be done, and much learning had to be attained in the “new” role. The writer first went through the documents that were in place. The “new” role entailed working with high cost students and a remedial pull-out program. The writer found that there were three high cost students, which individualized programs needed to be in place and guidelines to follow as expected from the funding officer’s (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada). During the first year, a lot had to be learned in terms of an administrative role. Then, as time passed the writer learned a lot from the special education role and from the students.

The role of the special educator soon became apparent that there needed to be more players involved in the programming of the special education area. Therefore, it
seemed natural that community resources be utilized, and soon thereafter the writer began contacting the other outside organization’s that could be of assistance to the student’s; both high cost and students that required remedial assistance.

The writer also learned a lot of new skills through the reading various material that were available, and further updated skills required were attained from the internet. The writer took her own initiative and self taught herself because she soon found that much was required to work with the students and the teachers. For example; it seemed only natural that the writer give support to the teachers (and as the writer acquired training in special education she found that it was called “collaborative support”). For example; in the journal entry of Collaborating with Teacher’s, the writer worked with a child who had Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, however the teacher who would be working with the child had minimal knowledge about the condition and therefore required information. The writer also worked with the teacher to modify the child’s program and from then on ongoing meeting’s were frequently set up to ensure that the program was in place and followed. The meeting’s were also in place to ensure that the teacher had continuous support, not only from special education, but also from administration.

During the second year and thereafter, the writer acquired training in the area of special education. Throughout the writer’s work in the area of special education, much valuable knowledge and insight had been gained with working with the community of Namíkos and the community resources. The writer also found much value in the
uniqueness of each individual, the writer has worked with, both children and adults.

As an educator, the writer places a high emphasis on the corroboration between the education system and the students’ homes. The writer values the open communication between the school and the parents or care givers, in which there is a strong belief that the communication benefit’s the child or children; whether they are physically, mentally, or behaviorally challenged or any child for that matter, in the Namíkos education system. As the Special Education teacher, the writer makes it a point to communicate with all individual’s who are associated with the child in which the writer works with.

Therefore, the writer makes frequent contacts with the home to inform parents or care giver’s of any information that the writer feels they should be aware of; either by a phone call, a brief letter or home visits. For example; a child may have not wanted to do a specific task at a specific time; the child hurt another child; a child ran out of the school without proper outer wear and so forth. The writer also holds frequent meetings for the high-cost student, with the parents or care giver’s concerning the child the writer works with. The attendees of the meeting are usually: the administrator, the classroom teacher or the teachers who work with the special needs child, the tutor (if the child has one), the parents or the child’s care giver’s and any other support organizations. In the meetings, discussion evolves around the child’s educational plan, the advantages and disadvantages in a given area, how to best accommodate the child’s area of need, what works and what does not, also what changes need to be made in the education plan or in the school, to
best accommodate the child. For example: in The CMD Child, the child in this situation required a tutor, however aside from that the child also required a supervisor during recess and so therefore this was discussed with the Supervision Committee and thus the arrangements were made for this child to have a supervisor during recess.

As a First Nations person working in this area, I have a sense from the parents or care giver’s that they are more comfortable with the special educator being a First Nations person, and thus the writer is also able to relate to them and able to speak to them in their first language.

The writer has also had some experience in working with various administrators while in the position as a special educator. Since the writer began work as a special education teacher, the writer has worked with three administrator’s. All of the administrator’s have had their own leadership style’s. However, whereas the special education area was concerned, only one of the three administrator’s had a genuine interest in special education issues and it’s development’s.

While in the first year as a special education teacher, administrator one, gave the writer guidance and support with whatever work that needed to be done and also gave suggestions. The administrator was always approachable and easy to talk to. The writer always felt that the administrator gave fair treatment to the education staff. In year two, administrator two, gave the impression that he would be supportive. However, as the year progressed the writer soon learned that the administrator was a dictator and thus the
support was gone. In working with administrator two, the writer at times felt quite frustrated because much talk was produced but little product produced. During, the year the writer basically worked in a semi isolated situation, without the guidance and support of the administrator. Finally, toward the end of the year due to much frustration, the writer decided to make due without the administrator’s input concerning special education because of the lack of support. (The writer notified the Education Manager of the decision not to involve the administrator concerning the decisions that needed to be made. However, the writer did consult the Education Manager with whatever decisions needed to be made.) In year three, the writer was yet again working with another administrator. Administrator three, was kind but had a lack of interest in the special education area. The administrator basically stated that he was leaving the special education area all up to writer. Throughout the course of the year, when approached by the special educator, concerning decisions that needed to be made, the administrator would simply state that he would leave it all up to the writer, which was not helpful to the writer.

The principal can play a major role in providing assistance for the special educator. The administrator should consider the areas of assistance and provide support which will create an environment where the special educator can develop to their fullest potential.
Incident and Roles of the Northern Special Educator

The following information is given to give the reader an insight of the special educator’s position in her work in the northern First Nations education system. (Refer to Figure 3 for the multi-faceted role of the special educator.) The incidence’s are typical to the Namikos education system.

Typical Critical Incidence’s

Incidence One. The writer receives a call from the Special Education Consultant, she is notified that a child requires a Fetal Alcohol Syndrome assessment. The writer is informed that the assessment can only be attained by medical personnel that have been trained to give the diagnosis. The writer is given a name and a number. Once the call has ended, then the parents or care giver’s are informed of the recommendation made by the Special Education Consultant; either the special educator makes a home visit or a phone call is made to the parent’s or care giver’s. Once they have been informed and they are in agreement that the special educator initiates the process to attain a diagnosis for the child, then the process begins. (At all times, the parent’s or care giver’s have to be notified of anything that will affect their child.) The writer therefore begins the process by contacting the appropriate resources. She contacts the organization, however she is informed that there is a year long waiting list. She asks whether there is any way of making the waiting list shorter in order to attain a quicker diagnosis. She is informed
Figure 3: Multi-faceted Role of the Northern Special Educator.
there is no way. So, without much choice she puts the child on the waiting list. When she has completed the phone call, she then informed the local Health Services that an appointment has been made for this child and all information is given. (This has to be in place due to the fact that the child has treaty status and therefore the medical aspect has been covered.)

This incidence is typical because when a child requires professional services it takes a while to attain the proper services. In many instances there is an inability to attain professional services due to the fact of the remote location of Namikos. In many instances, the child and their family have to wait a couple of months or even several months or even a year before services are attained.

**Incidence Two.** The writer phones to the local Health services and speaks to the nurse in charge, after some discussion concerning a child who requires medical diagnosis, an appointment is made for the student. The appointment date is given to the special educator and this information is then relayed to the parent’s or care giver’s; either by way of a phone call or a home visit. After a few days or a couple of weeks, the appointment date finally arrives. However, during the morning the writer is notified by the Health services that the doctor canceled due to unfavorable weather. Therefore, another appointment is made and the child has to wait a while longer before they will be able to attain the medical diagnosis.

This is a typical incident, because on numerous occasions medical appointments
Incidence Three. A teacher enters the Special Education classroom and informs the special educator that a student requires an assessment and may even require high-cost programming. The special educator therefore informs the teacher that she will assess the student when she has some available time. Therefore, during the course of the week or even the following week, the special educator finally has an open slot on the schedule. The special educator informs the teacher of the open slot and therefore the special educator assesses the student. Once the assessment has been completed and the scores tallied, the results indicate that the child requires remedial assistance in English. However, the special educator’s schedule is already full and therefore, no further students could be assisted by the special educator. The teacher is informed of the results and of the assistance required in English and is further informed of the special educator’s full schedule. Often times the teacher feeling frustrated and helpless, due to the inability to offer special education assistance to the student. However, the teacher is not left alone to figure out how to assist the student but the special educator assists the teacher in recommending teaching material and strategies that may be tried in providing learning opportunities to the student.
This is a typical incidence because of the large population of students that require remedial assistance in a given area. However, due to the tight schedule the special educator has to follow, there are no available time slots to assist other students which require the assistance. Therefore, the writer has a limited number of students to work with and therefore is unable to work with as many students as she would like to assist.

**Incidence Four.** The child enter’s the Special Education classroom, the Special Education Teacher welcomes the child in the first language. She invites the child into the classroom and asks her or him to sit in one of the four chair’s available in the classroom. The Special Education Teacher continually speaks to the child in the first language and informs the child that he or she will be doing some work for the teacher. The Special Educator informs the student that they will doing a test and that he is to listen to the instruction of the teacher. Then the Special Education Teacher informs the child that the teacher will now speak in English and for the remaining of the test.

This incidence has occurred numerous times since the writer has begun her position as a special educator. For the writer, this incidence is the least favorite aspect as a special educator. Due to the fact that the assessment’s that are available are not geared for northern First Nations students. With this fact known, the Namíkos education system had made a decision not to utilize the standardized tests for school wide assessments, including the Canadian Test of Basic Skills. However, the assessments are mostly utilized for diagnostic assessments and in determining the progress attained by the student at the
end of the school year. Therefore, the writer had made a decision to utilize the assessments only at the beginning of the school year and at the conclusion of the school year.

Summary

These incidences are in themselves critical but typical in the Namīkos education system. However, each First Nations education system is different, therefore these incidences may or may not be isolated incidences in the Namīkos education system. (Refer to Figure 4, for the writer’s various contacts.)

Significant Roles

**Educator.** Of all the roles that the writer has to partake, the role of the *educator* is of utmost significance. This role is in the forefront of all the roles because if the writer was not in this position then she would not be partaking in the other roles. As an educator, the writer holds this position to be central to the education experience of the students she works with. The educator is a role model whose behavior and attitude are absorbed by students. The educator is the manager of the learning environment. The educator must observe, analyze, and exercise ingenuity and flexibility in adjusting that environment for the benefit of the learners; whether or not they are physically, mentally, and behaviorally challenged.
Figure 4: Northern Special Educator's various Contacts
The writer makes every effort to close the gap between the culture of the home environment and that of the school system. This is mainly due from the writer’s experience; both as an educator and from conversations held with various community member’s in time past. As an educator, the writer has been involved with a few situations which the parents would not become involved with the school system which was mainly attributed to their negative experience in the infamous residential school system (this information was shared to the writer by some of the parents). Therefore, the writer has become more cognizant of the parent and school relations. With this reason, the writer has made every effort to maintain communication between parents and the school.

**Advocate.** As an advocate for the children that I work with or the parents whose children I work with. I take this role very seriously because I see how the children are very vulnerable and many of them require more than academic assistance. When a decision has to be made concerning a child, I have to take consideration of all sides in a particular situation. I do not want to make a mistake and only make a decision based on only a one sided perspective. (The decisions made cannot only come from my perspective.) I need to know all sides of a situation. For example; a child was referred to the Behavior Disordered classroom. So therefore, I examined the situation, I went over the referral form and also investigated by speaking to the teacher, and also made a couple of in-class observations, went through the *incident reports* and lastly assessed the child to
determine academic level standing. In this situation, the writer needed to determine what course of action to take; either to place the child to the referred area or continually place the child in the current classroom.

The writer has to take all area’s into considerations when she is in the advocate role because in many situations, the circumstances are of a sensitive nature. Also, every situation is unique and therefore the writer deals with each situation differently.

**Advisor.** Another most significant role the writer has is that of an advisor: either for the school with the knowledge of the area that I have been trained in; for the parents whose children that I come in contact with or work with; for the other community organizations that I work with on a daily basis; and even for outside organizations that require the writer’s assistance in a given area. For example; the writer was invited to sit on a meeting concerning pediatricians, psycho-metrists and social workers (*The “Big” meeting*). The writer was invited to sit on the meeting because the other local organizations did not have anyone in the community that was knowledgeable in the area of disabilities. At the conclusion of the meeting, the writer was asked to explain about some of the terms that were used. Also, advise was asked of the writer about the course of action to take concerning out of the community referrals for students.

Another example would be the numerous times teacher’s seek the writer’s advise concerning teaching methods, selecting teaching material, modifying material content,
and so forth. However, in these situations the writer prefers to work with the teachers and thus work as partner's versus telling them what to do or what to use in their classrooms. The writer usually prefers to work as a team. The writer finds the role of the advisor of utmost importance.

**Resource Attainer.** The role of resource attainer is yet another significant role. This role entails accessing and gathering information to better serve student needs. This is a continuous process because of the various organizations that are out there in mainstream society which offer various professional services in which many First Nations educational organizations do not have. Through the various contacts the writer has, these contacts are where the inquiries for services begin. Then once further contacts are made, information is gathered to determine whether these particular services will be required or even beneficial for a particular student. For example; a child required a communication device, so therefore the writer contacted the Alvin Buckwold Child Development Program (ABCDP) to inquire about acquiring a certain communication device. However, the ABCDP technician was unsure of the procedure in purchasing or acquiring the device, and therefore was informed to contact the Saskatchewan Abilities Council. So, the writer contacted the Saskatchewan Abilities Council, and that particular organization gave further information and they also assisted the writer in purchasing the communication device.
This role is significant in the aspect that it enables the writer to attain services or important information which otherwise would not be attained, due mainly to the services or information being unavailable in the community. With the knowledge of being aware that there are services or other avenues of providing services for students are available, then the writer is able to use that knowledge, and bring the services to the student or else take the student to the services.

**Interagency Networker.** The role of *inter-agency networker* is yet another significant role. This role entails being in a constant continuous contact with the various community organizations. This is a constant process and does not entail that only one organization get's all the benefits but that all parties involved exchange information and share whatever is relevant in a given area. For the special educator, this information exchange is of great benefit for the students' because then the writer is then able to share relevant information with colleagues. This also enables the writer to offer better services to the students, whereas if this process was not in place then the writer would be working in a segregated environment and would not be able to get easy access to relevant information or be able to share services and idea's. For example; being invited to "the "Big" meeting" or to the “Interagency Meeting”, in which the writer was invited to sit on these groups to attain and share information with in community and out of community organizations.
This role enables the writer to get the job done quicker and more efficiently, instead of being blocked by barriers. The writer prefers to work with individuals that are knowledgeable in a given area, because the writer only has a limited perspective and with more input the better outcome there is and more work is produced.

**Reporter.** The role of the *reporter* is a significant role because this role enables for other’s to get feedback on various information or else to be aware of up coming events. The writer is a reporter; to the employer, the parents, and the educational staff. With the aspect of reporting to the employer, it is an aspect of accountability; to relay information in which the employer will know what the activities of the special educator and where special education is going. For example; in *the Assessments*, the writer made a summative report to the administration and to the Education Manager, to inform them of what was discussed, and the direction of special education for the coming year.

To the parent’s or care giver’s, the special educator reports to them regarding any information which pertains to their children, including any assessment reports. For example; the writer informs the parent’s or care giver’s of any educational assessment reports that may have been received at the special education area. The special educator invites the parents to the school and informs them what the report contains.

To the colleagues, the writer reports any pertinent information regarding educational issues or issues which pertain to individual teachers’ students’. If this role
was non-existent, then where would the information go?

**Supporter.** The role of the *supporter* is a significant role. The writer engages in various supportive aspects; to the inter-agency organizations, to the education system, colleagues, parents and most importantly to the students. The writer is a supporter to the various inter-agency organizations within the community. If the writer is in the position to assist other organizations then she does not hesitate because she see's the benefits to the educational environment and also to the community as a whole. For example; in *the Holistic Worker*, the writer was invited to sit on a planning committee for holding various community activities. The writer was involved in the aspect to give her support and to partake in what she perceived would benefit the community.

To the education system, the writer has on many occasions been invited to various school meetings to give input in how a certain area in the education system would benefit the special education area. For example; in *the snack program*, the writer was invited to sit on this meeting to give her input on how the program could be utilized to assist students. In this situation, the writer suggested that students that required functional living skills would be benefitted from being involved in the program. The writer supported the initiative and therefore she had two high cost students working with the Snack Program worker. The students worked on a rotating basis, one of the students had Downs Syndrome and the other student had multiple disabilities.
To her colleagues, the writer provides support in every aspect. For example; in the Grade one teacher, the teacher had not previously worked in the primary elementary and therefore she required assistance in her classroom regarding Language Arts. The teacher was unsure of what kind of material to use in her classroom. Therefore the special educator assisted her and once the educational material were selected, the writer would check with the teacher once in a while to see how she was managing.

To the parents, the writer supports the parents by working with them in whatever decisions they make regarding their children. The writer encourages the parents to participate in their children learning process. The writer lets the parents know that she is there when and if they require assistance.

To the students, the writer is a supporter in all students educational experience, whether or not they are physically, intellectually, or behaviorally challenged. The writer encourages and gives a lending hand whenever students require assistance. For example; a student had a difficult time with her assignments, especially in the area of English Language Arts. The student informed the writer that she had difficulties with “getting the meaning” from what she read. So the writer taught the student a couple of strategies, and the writer also informed the student to come and see her. From that encounter, the writer would informally check on the students progress and also checked with the student in how she was doing in her work.

The role of a supporter is significant because this role empowers the individuals
Counselor. The role of the counselor is yet another significant role. For the writer to engage in this kind of role is unique, because who has heard of the “counseling special educator”; or maybe this is typical in other educational organizations. Anyhow, the writer has on many occasions been approached in the work place by various individuals that required personal assistance; either from staff, parents or students. At the conclusion of these situations, there is satisfaction knowing that the writer was able to provide personal assistance; even though it was not in the job description of the writer to do so. However, the writer is able to have the rapport with individual’s and that they can trust her enough to confide with her, and share aspects of their personal lives. This role of a counselor is not an every day occurrence.

Passer on of Cultural Knowledge. Another significant role is the one of passer on of cultural knowledge, as a Woodland Cree First Nations teacher. To pass on the knowledge of our culture, its values, beliefs, and customs to the young children by incorporating these into the teaching material content when I teach children with disabilities. For example; the writer worked with students during a Language Arts period. The writer worked with the students on language experience, the lesson was in the first
language and the theme was on “dwelling’s”. As a First Nations educator, not only as a special educator, the writer perceives the need to incorporate relevant teaching content when teaching students whether or not they are physically, intellectually, or behaviorally challenged because the writer believes this is a critical area because the children that I teach need to know who they are as Woodland First Nations individuals. They need to know that their identity as First Nations people is important. And this is what is advocated in the Namīkos education system.

Summary

These roles are significant because these roles enable’s the writer to work closely with various individuals; both in the community and out of the community. These roles are an important aspect in the writer’s title as a special educator.

Frustrating Roles

Advocate. The role of the advocate, is both positive and negative. This role entails advocating for the child and parents. There are instances in which the writer will have to intervene and advocate for parents in various situations. For example; in The trip, the writer was notified by a parent that their child had an appointment with the Alvin Buckwold Child Development Program in Saskatoon. However, the problem was that the local medical services would only pay for one parent to go with the child on the medical
trip and also the child’s equipment were requested and therefore the parent that was going
with the child would be unable to manage by themselves. So therefore, through numerous
phone calls, I was able to get both parents to go with the child on the medical trip. In
another example; a child had been placed in the local therapeutic group home. The child
was now in the process of returning home to the biological mother, however I had some
apprehensions and I had some documentation from a professional source which stated
that the child was better to be placed in a structured and stable environment where the
child would be better served; in terms of services. The child was asked by the writer
whether the child wanted to return home or stay in the therapeutic group home, and at
that time the child stated that she would prefer to remain in the home. So therefore,
through contacting the various organizations that were involved in this child’s case, the
write argued for the child to be continually placed in the local therapeutic group home.
However in this situation, the writer was unsuccessful, primarily due to the conditions
that were placed on the agreement between the local child and family services agency and
the biological parent. Even though the writer believed that this was in the best interest of
the child. Still, the writer was unsuccessful in advocating for the child and in this
situation, the writer, had no personal gain or loss in this situation.

Service Provider. The role of service provider, is another frustrating role. To
provide professional services to the students that the writer works with has not been an
easy task. The delivery of professional services to the Namīkos education system has been limited. Due to the Namīkos First Nation being in a remote location, bringing professional services to the community for the students has been nil. The writer has heard of various reasons why professional's don’t come to the community of Namīkos; for example: the road is “too bumpy”, the road is “unsafe”, the cost of bringing professional individuals is too high, they can not fly, and so forth. A child from Namīkos would have a better chance of being seen by a professional or to receive professional services if they were taken to an urban location in southern Saskatchewan.

**Assessor**. The role of the *assessor*, is one of the most frustrating roles. This role is the least enjoyed roles. From the perception of the writer, the use of standardized assessments is a narrow minded approach to determine the students abilities, in which the scales are not geared for northern First Nations students. The standardized assessments are an invasion to the cultural learner. When the writer first began her position as a special educator she tried to attain assessment tools that would be appropriate for the northern First Nations learner. However, to date the writer has been unsuccessful due to a major reason, the issue of funding, on many occasions the writer has been informed that the cost would be too expensive to research and produce First Nations assessment tools. The writer would like to access assessment tools that would be appropriate and geared for the northern First Nations learner.
**Labeler.** This next role is closely tied in with the previous role, this role is that of the *labeler*. This role is also least enjoyed. It infringes on the First Nations learner. This role entails labeling students’ in order for them to attain certain services, which is *high cost funding*. As mentioned previously, the writer is opposed to the use of standardized assessments because they are not geared for northern First Nations students’. In the beginning standardized assessments were designed and formulated for the majority mainstream students. Now in many educational organizations, including First Nations educational organizations, educator’s have to use these foreign assessment tools on the First Nations students because they do not have a choice but to use these tools. Therefore on many occasions, First Nations student’s come out of these assessments “labeled”. Thus the label entitles the students’ to receive educational assistance which wasn’t there prior to the assessment being given. The label entitles them to receive individualized programming along with a tutor; either half time or a full time tutor depending on the designation.

The writer does not enjoy the aspect of using the assessment tools and also labeling students, however in order for the students’ to receive additional assistance, then the special educator has to continually use these foreign instruments on the First Nation learners. Not until assessment instruments are produced which will be geared for the First Nations learner will these current standardized assessments be discarded. Until then, these instruments will continually used in the First Nations and non-First Nations
educational organizations.

**Summary**

As in any other occupation, the writer has roles that are frustrating however, this does not diminish the fact that the writer has the determination to move past those situations and move forward and continue to strive to better serve students that require the writer’s services.

**Significant Challenges**

**Behavior.** Working with students that have *challenging behaviors* has always been a challenge for the writer. The issue of dealing with students that have disorders combined with other disorders is a challenge. For example, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome combined with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, or Conduct Disorder (where a child does not fully realize the ramification of what they are doing [the behavior may be a danger to them or to others]). However, there are also issues in which students become non-compliant. For example; frustration, of being unable to do the work assigned by teacher; seeking attention, seeking attention from teacher/audience; testing authority, power struggles with teacher and administrator; lack of consistency; home environment is not good; lack of sleep; or even at times things that are outside of our control.

When these negative behavior’s surface, as educators we can not make students do
what we want. When working with these kind of students there is no knowing where things will lead. However, we can work with them and teach and assist them in choosing appropriate behaviors.

**Data Collector.** One of the most significant challenges the writer has is the aspect of a *data collector,* either in terms of anecdotal records, recording the various students evaluation’s, reporting records for various individuals, and so forth. This aspect is very challenging because there is so much paperwork involved in a special educator’s position. There is an insurmountable amount of written material that the special educator has to keep up with and produce.

Therefore, aside with working with students, behind the scene, the writer on various occasions throughout the day collect’s data, then analyzes the data, and from the data makes reports. For example: the writer has to ensure that the tutor’s are documenting with the work they do with the high-cost students; on various occasions the writer has to make summative weekly reports to administration; the writer has to ensure that the Behavior Disordered classroom numerous forms are up to date; the writer has to produce daily anecdotal records for high-cost students for the purpose of accountability to the funding officials (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada); and so forth. This record keeping is a constant process, however this has to be in place in order to operate the special education area efficiently.
Contributing Independent Member’s of Society. To lead students in “becoming a contributing independent member’s of society” is a challenge. This is a challenge for the writer because for many children that are physically or intellectually challenged or combined, this is not a realistic goal because some of the students have severe disabilities. However, for other students with less severe disabilities this will take a number of years to attain this goal, depending on the resources available within the area where the student resides. In the writer’s situation, some of the students will have difficulty in becoming “contributing independent member’s of society”, due to some of the disabilities the students have. For example; when a child has Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, particularly when accompanied by a moderate degree of mental retardation, requires and demand that these children require regularity of the environment. However, even as adults these children require extra external structure and guidance in their lives.

The writer has minimal resources to work. Resources that one would find in the urban centres. The lack of resources are primarily due to the factor of being in a remote location.

Personal Goals

My goal is to make a difference in the lives of the children that I work with. To the parents that I offer my assistance to. To the school in which I work with; to be the best educator that I can be in no matter which title that I may possess. The writer does not
want to just leave things the way they are, to have come out of university with what she had been taught and not grow professionally. The writer would like to continually challenge herself and not just fade into the teaching profession.

Another goal that I have is to be a life long learner, not only as an educator but also as a First Nations cultural individual. As a life long learner, I would continually partake in inservices, workshops, and seminars as much as possible. As a cultural learner, I need to learn more about my culture and traditions. I have only recently learned about the deep rooted aspect of who I am as a First Nations individual and what I would like for my children to know about who they are. For example; I am learning which parts of my late dad’s specific hunting grounds are located, where I can locate first nations medicine which you cannot buy off of a store shelf, and other meaningful aspects to my life.

Another goal that the writer has is to be involved in the research for producing an assessment tool that will be culturally sensitive and relevant to the northern First Nations learner’s.

Conclusion

The writer takes the special education role personally, primarily due to the fact that the writer works with her people. The Namikos education system is also a better place because it has employed individual’s in the system that are from the community and thus they want their children to succeed. These individual’s are also better able to relate
to the students.

In my field, I have continued to assist my colleagues develop techniques to work with both disabled and non-disabled students; sharing information on different learning and teaching styles (CEC, 1995). Since I have begun this position, I have been called to give inservices or assist someone who has been brought into the school to give in service or training. I have also assisted consultants assess the needs of the students and offered suggestions so that the training meets those the needs and that of the entire student population. Positive changes in the education system can only occur with the enthusiasm of all players working together; as teachers, administrators, and the community.

As a First Nations educator who speaks the language of the community, I have a unique situation where the language barriers are not present, as I have come to learn that my colleagues who do not speak the First Nations language have encountered the language barriers and cultural differences. For example; the information that is expected from students such as parental information, then that information is given incorrectly, incomplete, vague, or even at times misleading. Whereas being able to speak the language has led me to encounter trust and honesty, even when the information was not meant to be shared with the writer.
CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Project

The purpose of this narrative study was to shed light into a special education administered area in a northern First Nations education system, from the perspective of a First Nations educator. Indeed the fast pacing world of today has brought with it changes not only in the area of regular education but also in the area of special education.

This change has brought the special educator with new challenges and the educator to take into account the background information of a community and literature on educational and cultural issues facing First Nations learners.

The writer found that many characteristics of the First Nations culture blend into every aspect of their lives, including learning. As non-traditional learners, First Nations have particular learning needs. Many of these needs have gone either unnoticed or have been overlooked by the mainstream education system.

The literature review revealed that mainstream instruction needs to be adapted to incorporate First Nation learners’ traditional methods for learning. First Nations’ learning styles affect how they approach the learning process. If educators in general, are aware of the backgrounds and needs of different learners and thus modify the programming to meet
the needs, then the educator can greatly increase the learner’s chances for educational success.

A majority of educators of First Nations people are non-First Nations. The writer’s literature review indicated that minimal research has been done to provide guidance for non-First Nations educators in working with First Nations students in the northern areas. First Nations learners come from a distinctive culture that is full of traditions, distinctive world views, learning styles and methods that are different from the mainstream society.

**Review of Literature**

The issue of assessing the intelligence of students by using standardized intelligence tests has been a question on a part of what kind of intelligence. The results of these assessments have been used for various purposes including predicting future achievement (Hernstein & Murray in Goleman, 1994). What Hernstein and Murray found was that the likelihood of an individual to succeed in life had less to do with test scores than a host of other personal characteristics resident within that individual. Another view of intelligence offered by Sternberg and Salovey (in Goleman, 1994) defines it “in terms of what it takes to live life successfully” (p. 43) and doesn’t easily succumb to standardized measurement and assessment.

Given our present understanding of the nature of intellectual abilities, current research on the brain could assist in the development of new instruments to assess
intellectual abilities. Rather than asking how much intelligence a person has, Hatch (1997) postulates one needs to ask "In what ways does this child demonstrate intelligence?" (p.26), keeping in mind the context in which they live and learn. Although intelligence tests’ were originally designed to classify individuals according to their academic potential, our education system is now faced with a more diverse set of students who possess a wide range of expressible abilities. Present assessments measure cognitive abilities and are likely better used for diagnostic purposes, that is to assess current functioning so as to inform instructional needs, rather than for classification.

Gardner (as cited in Armstrong, 1994) would argue that “we can best assess students’ multiple intelligences by observing students manipulating the symbol systems of each intelligence” (p. 116). Rather than characterizing an individual’s intelligence by a single test score one should determine the profile of an individual’s intelligences, taking into account culturally valued activities that can be expressed in a familiar context.

As Sternberg (1997) suggests the more we assess students based on a broader set of abilities, the more diverse our achievers will be. For example, one has only to look at the many professional athletes who have defied race and socioeconomic status as a barrier to success to recognize that many students have strengths in areas that have not been measured, addressed or valued in traditional school systems.

Brain research, multiple intelligences, and emotional intelligences each have their own body of information and emphasis for educators. However, these three borrow
heavily from each other. As we learn more about the brain, so too may theories continue to evolve and eventually strategies will emerge which may impact the education of our most precious resource, our children.

A growing body of evidence from brain sciences and evolutionary psychology suggests that “we can teach all students to be more intelligent in many more ways and on more levels than we ever thought possible” (Lazear, 1992, p. 24) For example, since everyone possesses all seven ways of knowing, the challenge for educators is to assist in developing these intelligences in our students so that their full potential can be reached. Using multiple intelligences theory does not imply that one teaches everything in seven different ways. It prescribes the use of a wide variety of teaching strategies throughout the course of a day and within units of work. Armstrong (1994) purports that ideally, “there will always be a time during the period or day when a student has his or her most highly developed intelligence’s actively involved in learning” (p.65). By exposing children to a wide variety of experiences involving the seven different intelligences, they are given the opportunity to extend the neural networks of the brain, deepening their understanding of the way their minds create meaning.

Schools can no longer ignore the latest cognitive and neurological research, which indicated that neurological pathways critical for later life, are established in the early years of life. These pathways affect the way individuals interact with their environment, and their beliefs about themselves and their world. Students in our school may be highly
talented and interested in one of the five or six intelligences not valued or recognized as indicators of success in the more traditional approaches to education. As educators we must acknowledge and “tap into” these areas of intelligence if we want students to be successful learners and to feel good about themselves. For example, by using approaches, such as McCarthy’s 4MAT instructional model (1997) and Sternberg’s model involving four abilities (1997) indicate two learning strategies, each of which are designed to reach and teach all students regardless of their strengths and weaknesses.

Gardner’s multiple intelligences theory challenges teachers to accept the plurality of the intellect recognizing that not all students learn in the same way. By using this knowledge schools can move towards excellence as they address the fact that students may excel in other abilities that are at least as important as those we now reward.

**Methodology**

The research was conducted using a qualitative research method. The primary research method was the use of reflective journal’s. The reflective journals gave an insight of the special educator’s role and responsibilities. The data was compiled on a three month time span. The writer reflected on:

1. The day to day activities.
2. The role of the special educator.
3. The various responsibilities of the special educator.
4. The on-going community involvement.

5. Continuous contact with other professional organizations outside of the community.

Findings of the Study

The study reveals that the special educator’s role has indeed changed. It is no longer a one paradigm facet, however it has branched out and is now multi-faceted, with multiple responsibilities attached.

For an educator to teach in a First Nations education system, speaking the first language of that education system is an asset. Also an awareness of the role culture plays in First Nations communities is essential. Educators in current classrooms must possess a well developed cultural awareness and must have the necessary skills and training to challenge First Nations students academically and intellectually. Educators must learn to treat First Nation learners with respect and dignity, allowing them to practice and share their First Nations background.

The principal can play a major role in the administering of the special education area in a school. As Tippeconnic (1984) stated that an administrator on a First Nations reserve is not only expected to be an effective public school administrator, but also be knowledgeable about the culture, and the First Nations way of life and also to understand how federal policy impacts on First Nations education.
As educators in whatever teaching situation one is in, we must encourage students that they must know that their home language and culture are viewed as assets rather than obstacles to learning (Altwerger & Ivener, 1994).

Concluding Comments

As a special educator, I feel that I must practice within the scope of the knowledge and skills I possess, while continuing to acquire new knowledge and skills to better serve and assist my people, both young and old.

I believe there is no aspect of a culture more vital to its integrity than its means of education. The strength of this effort has been on the reliance on the local community. This is not to diminish the many problems and issues which First Nations people continue to face, and not to insinuate that these problems and issues have been resolved solely because the community of Namíkos took operation of its education system. However, First Nations have begun to “move from models of colonial domination and assimilation to those that are culturally, linguistically, and philosophically relevant and empowering. First Nations cultures have ways of thought, learning, teaching, and communicating that are different than but of equal validity to those of the [western] cultures” (MacIvor, 1995).

The improvement of the performance of northern First Nation students in the elementary and secondary education depends heavily on the integration of First Nations
values, perceptions, and behavioral patterns in the pedagogy, curriculum and didactic materials available to educator's in non-First Nations or First Nations educational organizations. Teacher's are teaching in an environment marked by cross-cultural factors; with students who in most cases are learning in a second language and occasionally even in a third language environment. Learning styles and perceptions of students are rarely totally shared or understood by non-First Nation teachers which creates additional stresses in the classroom.

Within the school organization, perfection is not easily found. It is unrealistic to expect every individual to follow a certain set of principles or rules to create an ideal organization. There is no doubt that we can all improve in one area or another, but individuals can not all deal with the same issues in the same way and leave experiences with the same thoughts and ideas because each individual is unique. And each individual has their own opinion and ways of perceiving the world.

All of us as, educators, who are interested in educating children and youth have learned a great deal in the last number of years. Research indicates, that the earliest years of education are absolutely crucial to a child's development. Educators are recognizing the amazing learning tools that young children come equipped with on their very first day in a classroom: curiosity, perseverance and daring. Children learn best when they enjoy, share and contribute to what is going on around them. The effective primary teacher understands the benefits of play, of watching children's behavior, of individual attention
to each child and of showing each child that he or she is an important individual.

There is no psycho-metrist specializing in First Nations education. There are no National Standards for First Nations students, especially for students who reside in northern remote areas. Therefore, the traditional assessment procedures are used still used for labeling students. The labeling is required for designating students. High cost designation is a numbers game. One has to really understand the delivery of specialized services in northern remote communities to realize the need for the services. Most importantly to provide educational opportunities that will instill pride and dignity in First Nations children while at the same time validating the First Nations culture, history, language and traditions.

Hopefully, the knowledge gained from this study will help educators become more aware of these areas and also become cognizant of their First Nations learners' educational and learning needs. This in turn may improve the probability that First Nations students will be more successful in both First Nations and non-First Nations educational system's.

Implications

Implications generated from the project are as follows:

1. On most First Nations, the people are closely-knit, and tend to interact with each other at a very personal level. The writer established a good rapport with the
community during the work of the project. The community was sincere, open and honest with their interaction with the writer. With this in mind, this is one of the most frequently discussed characteristic that the writer encountered from the contact with the community. Educational administrators should realize that connection between working in a closely-knit community and the openness and honesty of the people in the community and work towards becoming more people oriented. Administrators need to communicate effectively with all of the various education stakeholders. To have open communication lines in order to maintain a healthy environment.

2. The concern for the writer was expressed that First Nations culture and language should be emphasized. Administrators should emphasize the importance of culture and language to their staff at the beginning of the school year.

3. First Nations teachers should continue to further acquire training in the area of special education.

4. Social problems exist not only on First Nations lands, but at all levels of Canadian society. As the writer has suggested, the school has to deal with the social skills and values before academic skills can be taught. Administrators should ensure that definite plans, policies and protocol be in place in the event that unforeseen problems arise. For example behavioral problems manifested as discipline problems amongst the students.
5. Administrators have to be sensitive to the causes of the problems that occur amongst the student population, so as to take a preventative and intervention approaches.

6. In the current research on multiple intelligence theory, what implications does this have on special education? How will this theory impact the special education area? Which has typically worked out of a deficit-oriented paradigm.

7. Are an individual’s intelligences fixed or are they able to be strengthened? How will this impact for the way we educate students?

Recommendations for Further Research

Investigating the area of special education for First Nations students is necessary if we are to gain a better understanding of their unique situations. Based on this project, further research could include:

1. Studies involving urban, rural and First Nations school students which would provide a broader view of their needs and areas of educational assistance.

2. To design assessment tools that will be culturally relevant for northern First Nations students.

3. To design culturally appropriate programs for First Nations exceptional learner who reside in northern remote areas. To find the best techniques to help these
learners learn successfully.

4. Designing programming for northern First Nations students in the area of the various learning styles.
As Lorna Williams would say:

"YOU are the child’s greatest resource"

not

"OUR children are our greatest resource"
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