

Provide Time for Visitations and Observations

Most educators felt that the school administrators should facilitate staff visits to observe classes of teachers who have experience in integrating exceptional students. The educators also indicated that it was important for the school administrators to advocate at the district level for teacher visitations. In addition, the principals should arrange the visitations and be in direct contact with other principals.

Teachers said they gained a great deal of knowledge from these visits. They also felt rewarded by their principal when they were given the opportunity to visit on a school day and learn from their colleagues.

One case involved two students with severe disabilities who were being educated in a segregated class. The staff considered them to be too severely handicapped to be integrated into regular classes. The principal wanted to have these students participate in the regular class but knew his staff needed assurance that this was possible and beneficial. He contacted a principal in another school district where a student with similar needs was integrated in a Grade 6 class. Arrangements were made for two teachers to visit this school. By visiting the Grade 6 class and meeting with the principal, classroom teacher, and methods and resource teacher, the two visiting teachers were able to see the possibilities for integration in their school. Upon their return, the information gleaned from their visitation helped the principal and the teachers to initiate the integration process for their two students.

Provide Scheduled Preparation Time

The methods and resource and classroom teachers were supportive of principals who planned for and scheduled additional preparation time for them. This was done in a variety of ways. For example, one principal developed an extensive integration plan and presented it as a school project. She requested additional supply teacher days for her staff so that the classroom and methods and resource teachers could meet on a