Perceptions and Knowledge of Special Education Law among Building Administrators in a Selected Georgia School District

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Date of Award
Summer 8-2008

Degree Type
Dissertation

Degree Name
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

Department
Educational Leadership and Research

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Abstract
The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has impacted every school district in the United States and significantly altered the role of administrators. Requirements for the administration and supervision of special education have developed exponentially since the enactment of Public Law 94-142 and its reauthorization as the IDEA.

The purpose of this study was to compare the perceptions and knowledge of building administrators regarding special education law. The following research questions were developed to facilitate this study: (a) is there a difference in the level of knowledge about special education law among building administrators regarding the seven provisions of the IDEA; (b) is there a difference between principals and assistant principals and their level of knowledge in the areas of special education law; (c) what are the relationships between the building administrators’ level of knowledge of the areas of special education law; and (d) is there a difference between the building administrators’ level of knowledge of special education law related to years of classroom teaching experience and years of experience as an administrator?

Results of the study suggest administrators perceive they did have sufficient knowledge of the IDEA and had received adequate training in school law. However, administrators’ perceptions of knowledge and adequate training were not substantiated through data analysis. In addition, the majority of the administrators were not aware of this deficit in knowledge.

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Recommended Citation
Grasso, Patricia Claire, "Perceptions and Knowledge of Special Education Law among Building Administrators in a Selected Georgia School District" (2008), Dissertations. 1202. https://aquila.usm.edu/dissertations/1202