AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS AND SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

A Dissertation

by

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Abstract

Hickman, Akweta, <u>An Analysis of the Relationship of the Emotional Intelligence of Special Education Teachers and Special Education Student Achievement</u>, DOCTOR OF EDUCATION (Educational Leadership), December, 2017, 96 pp., 8 tables, 1 figure, bibliography, 109 titles.

For this study Bar-On's (1997) definition of emotional intelligence (EI) was used. *"Emotional Intelligence* is defined as a set of emotional and social skills that influence the way we perceive and express ourselves, develop and maintain social relationships, cope with challenges, and use emotional information in an effective and meaningful way" (Bar-On, 1997, p. 3). Researchers have investigated the role of EI in school leaders. The classroom teacher is the leader of his/her respective classroom. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between the special education teachers' EI and its impact on student reading achievement. Results of the study illustrate the connections of aspects of EI and student achievement. Specifically, the study results showed stress management was a statistically significant predictor of student reading achievement. Results and implications for practice are discussed to improve student achievement and teacher effectiveness.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The impact of special education teachers on student achievement is significant in the current age of accountability and high stakes testing. State tests are a non-negotiable part of the current educational system and while the expected outcomes of special education student performance on state tests are inherently contradictory in nature to the purpose of special education, state tests have become reality. Students provided special education services are required to participate in state assessments and perform as well as their non-disabled peers. The testing requirements have placed special education teachers at the front line of instructional accountability and student achievement outcomes. The increasing rigor of state testing has added pressure on special education teachers to deliver quality instruction so students achieve at higher levels. Such pressure has had an emotional impact on teachers and leaders across the nation.

Teachers have been rated among the 10 professions requiring high EI in order to be successful (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004). A large body of research regarding EI and educational leadership has been accumulated and teachers are the leaders of their classrooms (Merideth, 2007). Crucial to the field of education is the professional development of teachers especially related to the improvement of student achievement. The role of the classroom teacher is evolving, as well as the role of the special education teachers whose role is multifaceted (Dipaola & Walther-Thomas, 2003). Legislative mandates, such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015), have provided provisions that impact special education teachers and their responsibilities beyond implementing student instructional

services for accountability and the legal compliance of creating individualized educational programs (IEP) for students.

The passage of No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB, 2002) resulted in educators, specifically special education teachers, being faced with unprecedented measures of accountability through high stakes testing (Zane, 2012). Vannest, Mahadevan, Mason, and Temple-Harvey (2008) stated by default, measuring annual student progress through an IEP was no longer sufficient to account for progress, because student's academic achievement has been measured through student performance on standardized assessments. Given the mandates of state testing, special education teachers' responsibilities have exceeded implementing specially designed instruction, classroom management, and monitoring the implementation of students' IEPs. The NCLB (2002) law had specific requirements that held schools accountable for how well students with disabilities performed in meeting the general curriculum and connected federal funding to the success of students receiving special education being included in general state tests (Darrow, 2016).

NCLB, as a result of the perspectives of school administrators and teachers of special education changed because students had to participate in the same state accountability testing as their non-disabled peers (Mott, 2013). Vannest et al. (2008) stated, "Adequate yearly progress (AYP) under NCLB mandates academic achievement of students in special education in the same manner as that of their non-disabled peers" (p. 149). The state testing accountability system mandates of NCLB required school administrators to be agents of change within the school organization or risk failure.

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Additional pressure on school administrators influenced their expectations of teachers to produce successful student achievement results measured through state testing.

NCLB (2002) was repealed in 2014 and replaced in December of 2015 with ESSA. ESSA provided states some autonomy in determining which of their current systems of education work well, and what improvements needed to be made. Each state had to develop and refine their systems for improvements to ensure academic success of students to make them ready for college, career, and life success (Darrow, 2016). For example, ESSA requires states to ensure both general and special education teachers provide appropriate accommodations in an effort to increase the number of students with significant disabilities participating in grade-level instruction and assessment (Darrow, 2016). The enactment of the ESSA discontinued NCLB, but did not remove accountability standards for special education and state tests (Granelli, 2016). Darrow (2016) explained that although the testing requirements of NCLB remained, accountability is now referred to the states and local districts. Although many responsibilities shifted to the individual states, the implications for students with disabilities to achieve and be assessed as general education students remain. Students' IEPs must be aligned to state academic standards to provide students with disabilities under special education access to the enrolled, grade-level curriculum standards. The hallmark of the educational accountability for schools was the expectation of all students to be included in general state testing (Katsafanas, 2006).

The strict oversight of state assessments for students with disabilities and educational accountability post-NCLB (2002) currently remains through ESSA (2015). For example, ESSA also requires each state continue to separate and report the

performance of students with disabilities on states tests, given from Grades 3-8 and once in high school (Darrow, 2016). The importance of state testing outcomes and of students with disabilities continues to be a priority for special educators. Many school districts use student achievement results and state test scores for determining administrator and teacher effectiveness (Davenport & Jones, 2005). Student performance outcomes are often used to make decisions for continued employment for educators (Deming, Cohodes, Jennings, & Jencks, 2016). According to Cook (2006), the added pressures, resulting from accountability standards to produce optimal test scores, require that teachers possess a high level of emotional intelligence (EI).

Marzano (2003) suggested the most important factor that contributes to student success is teacher effectiveness. For special education teachers, their EI can play a significant role in instructional decisions related to the implementation of interventions and the level of support provided to students. Doley and Leshem (2016) stated teachers' personal competencies, and more specifically EI, are particularly important for teacher effectiveness.

EI comprises self-control, zeal and persistence, and the ability to motivate oneself (Goleman, 1995). Special education teachers are required to teach students with disabilities, manage paperwork, and maintain positive communication with parents. The disabilities of students often include maladaptive behaviors that require special education teachers to maintain physical restraint and emotional control while making decisions. Working to meet the varied needs of students, parents, and administrators has contributed to the increasing stress levels of special education teachers (Billingsley & Cross, 1992).

Drew (2007) specifically argued the Bar-On model of EI was particularly suitable for teachers. However, Bar-On (2002) attended to the emotional and social behavior-related competencies underlying EI and defined EI as a "cross-section of interrelated emotional and social competencies, skills and facilitator that determine how effectively we understand and express ourselves, understand others and relate to them and cope with daily demands" (p. 91). Lack of awareness about EI may impact teachers' support of students, and therefore adversely impact student achievement. As leaders of the classroom, teachers play a significant role in the achievement of their students (Marzano, 2003). According to Merideth (2007),

> Leadership is not something bestowed upon a teacher to rise above one's role, but should be a part of a necessary step to fulfilling that role in the classroom as a model learner, effective teacher, and participant in the continuous school improvement. (p. 2)

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between the special education teachers' EI and its impact on student reading achievement. Results of this study could influence future research in special education teachers' behavior as a relationship with student achievement. Additionally, results of this study could influence how school districts hire, place, and provide professional development designed to empower teachers as they strive to reach and achieve high levels of student academic growth.

Significance of the Problem

This researcher investigated the relationship between the EI of special education teachers and state reading test attainment of the Grade 3-8 students they serve. This researcher will attempt to determine if students of special education teachers with differing levels of EI demonstrate identifiable and measurable differences in reading achievement scores. The current body of research is sparse on the relationship and role of teacher EI and student achievement, and no similar or replicable studies were identified. Rust (2014) contended there are no existing studies that investigated whether differences in EI of teachers result in an enhanced ability to generate meaningful relationships with students resulting in increased educational benefits. The current researcher aimed to explore the relationship between special education teachers' EI and students' reading achievement.

This researcher's inquiry will assist in identifying which, if any, of the components scales of the special education teachers' EI may correlate to student reading achievement. It is significant to identify the particular component area, or combinations of EI that may be a related to student achievement in reading. Therefore, results may help school district leaders become better suited to hire teachers that may have greater impact on student outcomes.

Educators continue to seek ways to improve student achievement. Research on predictors of achievement for students receiving special education services could inform college and university programs for pre-service teachers. School districts could use EI instruments to determine the placement of newly-hired teachers, and influence professional development of teachers. This study also provided information that will

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bring clarity to the need for further research on EI, specifically for special educators who strive to improve student academic achievement. Given the increased level of pressure associated with special education student achievement, special education teachers are a crucial target group for study.

Theoretical Framework

The EI definitions offered by Bar-On (1997) and Goleman (1995) provided the theoretical framework for this study. Bar-On (1997) described EI as a set of non-cognitive competencies and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands. Goleman described EI as the ability to motivate others, and to manage interpersonal and intrapersonal emotions. EI plays an important part of the social interaction and emotional integration with others in various aspects of one's life. Goleman (1995) argued EI is equal to, if not more important, than intellectual ability in the success of people throughout their life span. Bar-On (1997), Goldman (1995), and Mayer et al. (2004) have identified five main components of EI in their research, which was utilized in the current study: self- perception, self-expression, interpersonal, decision-making, and stress management.

A study conducted by Singh and Dali (2013) found teachers need to have high EI to be successful. Sutton (2003) stated the emotional competence of teachers is necessary for their well-being, effectiveness, and quality in carrying out the teaching and learning process in the classroom, and in particular for the socio-emotional development of students. EI plays an important part in the social interaction and emotional integration with others in various aspects of one's life.

This researcher provided significant insight when determining which, if any, of the five component areas of the special education teachers' EI relate to student reading achievement. The identification of these key components, based on the research, could help to improve the preparation of pre-service special education teachers and better inform school administrators as they hire, place, and develop professional develop opportunities to improve the academic achievement of students identified as receiving special education services.

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework for the study and the relationship of the various components. The researcher compared student achievement as the dependent variable of STAAR Reading test assessment results to the independent variable of the EI combined composite score and each composite area. Each composite area (self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, decision-making, and stress management) either individually or in combination and students' reading scores were compared to determine a relationship.

Research Questions

The research questions which guided the study included:

1. What is the relationship between special education teachers' combined composite emotional intelligence scores and students' reading achievement as measured by the end of the year the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) program?

2. What is the relationship between special education teachers' composite area scores (self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, decision-making, and

stress management) either individually or in combination and students'

reading scores?

Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

The following null hypothesis drove this study:

H_0 There no relationship between special education teachers' combined

composite emotional intelligence scores and students' reading achievement

as measured by the end of the year the state of Texas Assessments of

Academic Readiness (STAAR) program.

H_1 There no relationship between special education teachers' composite area

scores (self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, decision-making, and

stress management) either individually or in combination and students'

reading scores.

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Definition of Terms

The listed terms are defined for the purpose of this study with current definitions found in the literature.

Academic Achievement−defined in this study as student scores on the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) assessment in the area of reading, designed to measure basic academic competency on grade-level standards aligned to the curriculum, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

Emotional Disturbance (ED)−means a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance:

1). An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.

2). An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.

3). Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.

4). A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.

5). A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems. (IDEA, 2004, Regulations 300.8)

Emotional Intelligence−for the purpose of the study is defined as "a set of emotional and social skills that influence the way we perceive and express ourselves, develop and maintain social relationships, cope with challenges, and use emotional information in an effective and meaningful way" (Bar-On, 1997, p. 3). In the current

study, EI was measured through the total EI score and composite scores on the EQ-I 2.0, which was developed based on the Bar-On (1997) model of EI.

Emotional Quotient−means an overall Emotional Intelligence Quotient (EQ) score (Bar-On, 2000).

Special Education−is defined as specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability (IDEA, 2004).

Special Education Teacher−refers to the individual responsible for teaching students with disabilities that hold a state licensure as a special education and or educational training in special education (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017).

State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR)−"an assessment program designed to measure the extent to which students have learned and are able to apply the knowledge and skills defined in the state-mandated curriculum standards, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skill" (Texas Education Agency [TEA], 2017a, para. 1).

Student−for purposes of this study means a student identified as receiving special education supports and services (Teach.com, 2017).

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)−refers to the curriculum standards for every subject area adopted by the Texas State Board of Education (TEA, 2017b).

Structure of Study

Chapter I included the purpose of the study, the problem statement, an overview of the background of the study, the rationale and importance of the study, the conceptual framework and constructs, research questions, research hypotheses, definition of key terms, and the organization of the study. Chapter II contains a comprehensive review of the literature regarding findings related to each of the constructs in the conceptual

framework.   The review of literature focused on research regarding special education, special education teachers, the importance of reading, Texas state assessments, and EI.

In Chapter III, the researcher details the methodology employed, a description of the population and selection of participants, research questions and hypotheses, variables (dependent and independent), procedures for collecting data, and the process of data analysis. Chapter IV includes a presentation of the findings based on the statistical analysis. Chapter V provides a summary of the findings, conclusions, and implications, along with recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter represents a review of literature related to special education evolution, special education teachers' roles, state testing, the importance of reading, and emotional intelligence (EI). There were significant publications regarding special education, state testing, and EI compared to the limited literature on special education teachers' EI as it relates to their students. This literature review sets the groundwork for the study by first, a) providing the history of special education, its purpose, and a special education teacher's role; b) the importance of reading; c) an examination of the relevant state testing in Texas, and d) the research on EI.

Evolution of Special Education

The identification of children with learning differences pre-dates the 1800s and Jean-Marc Gaspard Itard's work with a boy, Victor, referred to as *The Wild Boy of Avryen* (Friend, 2014). Itard's techniques to teach the boy to be civilized led to the boy learning acceptable behaviors, although he never was able to speak (Friend, 2014). Itard's work influenced other teachers of children with learning differences, which were later coined as *disabilities*. His work influenced others, such as Maria Montessori and Edouard Sequin (Baglieri, & Shapiro, 2012). Terms such as idiocy, mental retardation, and currently intellectual disability were and are used to describe students that need specialized teaching (Friend, 2014).

During the 1770s, most children with disabilities resided in asylums to receive protective care; but these students were not provided an education aimed at developing their physical, intellectual, academic, or social skills. Instead, these students were viewed

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by some as burdens to society. During the 1950s and 1960s, courts allowed states' mandatory attendance policy to include exemptions for students that were *feeble-minded* or *mentally deficient*. By the 1960s and 1970s, although most states required schools to educate students with disabilities, the provided services were often inadequate and under-funded (Baglieri & Shapiro, 2012).

Research into the efforts and issues that influenced special education dates back to *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954), this case addressed racial segregation in public schools. Laws born from the *Brown vs. Board of Education* case made it illegal to segregate based upon race, and denying equal opportunity. Legal precedence from the *Brown vs. Board of Education* case gave way to the entitlement of all people, regardless of race, disability, or religion, to have the right to a public education (Esteves & Rao, 2008). However, federal law did not mandate the inclusion of students with disabilities, but left this matter to the individual states to decide.

Although the access to public education was funded to provide schools with monies to support special education initiatives, school districts held the participation of educating students with a disability as an option (Esteves & Rao, 2008). School districts were not required to educate students with a disability until the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1965 (Esteves & Rao, 2008). Previous legislation that marked the inclusion of students and provision and opportunity for equal educational access to all students in the educational system was not enough. ". . . in 1970, U.S. schools educated only one in five children with disabilities, and many states had laws excluding certain students, including children who were deaf, blind, emotionally disturbed, or mentally retarded" (Rhodes, Fisher, & Adelstein, 2007, p. 1). Educating

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students with disabilities was an issue and remained an issue for parents and schools eventually requiring legislative intervention.

According to Esteves and Rao (2008), "In 1973 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act stated that a person with a disability cannot be excluded or denied benefit from any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance, either public or private" (p. 1). Critical issues continued regarding equal access for children with disabilities. Congress passed the landmark law *Education for All Handicapped Children Act* (Public Law 94-142) in 1975 to support states in protecting the rights of, meeting the individual needs of, and improving the results of infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities and their families (Rhodes et al., 2007).

The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* of 2004 (IDEA) is the current federal law that provides provision for the special education process and directs how students with disabilities are to be educated. Special education has a main purpose to ensure a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for students with disabilities. The law emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet the unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living (IDEA, 2004). The term *special education* indicates "specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability" (Statewide Leadership for the Legal Framework Project Team and the Texas Education Agency, 2016, p. i).

Today, public schools in the United States consider it their duty to provide a FAPE to students that require special education services. However, the rights of these students to receive FAPE have not always been provided by public schools. In fact, if it were not for parents of students with disabilities filing lawsuits, such as *Mills vs. Board*

of Education in DC or *Lau vs. Nichols*, to assert and fight for access to an appropriate education, special education as one sees it today may not exist (McCarthy, 1976).

Today, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2006) and IDEA (2004) mandate the education of students with disabilities. No students are exempt from these provisions. Also, schools must actively seek out children suspected of having a disability through the process called Child Find (Statewide Leadership for the Legal Framework Project Team and the Texas Education Agency, 2016). Second, schools must use unbiased methods to evaluate and identify students for Special Education services. For students who do not speak English as their first language, evaluation procedures must be conducted in the child's native language (IDEA,2004). Also, evaluation procedures must be culturally and racially sensitive (IDEA, 2004). For example, *Larry P. vs. Riles* (1984) focused on the over-identification of minority students. The court decision stated intelligence tests were biased against minorities. The use of intelligence tests alone led to the over-identification of African Americans with a disability. Because of the court findings, IDEA requires identification and evaluation methods must consider and be responsive to an individual's language and culture when making eligibility decisions. Thus, the use of multiple data sources and evaluation measures are required for every evaluation for special education (IDEA, 2004). The influence of lawsuits such as *Larry P. vs. Riley* (1984) has caused the need for IDEA to ensure non-discriminatory assessment procedures are used to evaluate students. Non-discriminatory assessment procedures means instruments used must be valid and reliable and administered by trained professionals. Further, the testing form must consider the possible impact of the suspected disability, using the language with

which the child is most comfortable, and include a variety of assessment tools and multiple measures (Friend, 2014).

Related to the concept of unbiased evaluation procedures is the over-identification of minority students in Special Education. At one point in time, 60% to 80% of students that received special education services under the category of intellectual disability were from Latino, African American, and Native American groups (Artiles & Trent, 1994). Currently, students identified with specific learning disabilities account for nearly one-third (39.5%) and speech or language impairments comprise about 17.9% of students eligible for special education services (Friend, 2014). However, there is no longer a pattern of rapid growth; while specific learning disabilities have declined, autism and Other Health Impairments have increased (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2010). For example, before a child is placed in special education, multidisciplinary assessment teams must determine if the found disability is a true disability, or if it is due to language or culture. Under IDEA (2004), children can receive special education services in 13 categories. The categories include autism, deaf-blindness, deafness, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairments, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, and visual impairment (IDEA, 2004).

A student's eligibility is established through the ARD committee (Statewide Leadership for the Legal Framework Project Team and the Texas Education Agency, 2016). The committee considers the findings of a Full Individual Evaluation (FIE). In this evaluation, a student is assessed in all areas of suspected disability including speech, language, and communication ability; health and motor abilities; emotional and behavior,

intellectual and adaptive behavior abilities, academic ability, and the need for assistive technology (Statewide Leadership for the Legal Framework Project Team and the Texas Education Agency, 2016). To qualify for special education services, the student must meet the definition of one or more eligible category and display an educational need for specialized instruction. As the ARD committee makes the decision to determine a student's eligibility for special education, there are three fundamental questions that must be answered to the affirmative:

1) Does the student have a disability?

2) Does the disability adversely affect educational performance?

3) Can the student's needs be addressed through special education (National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities, 2012)?

Affirmatively answering these questions requires the ARD committee to develop an Individualized Education Program (Statewide Leadership for the Legal Framework Project Team and the Texas Education Agency, 2016).

The third principle of IDEA is the provision, originally mandated by EAHCA, of a FAPE. FAPE is provided to students requiring special education by the development an Individualized Education Program (IEP). An IEP is developed to create a legally binding contract between the parents of the child with the disability that details how the child is to be educated. The IEP includes a statement of the child's present levels of academic achievement of functional performance, annual measurable goals and objectives, and describes the specific special education and related services that are needed to assist the student in attaining those goals (Friend, 2014). The IEP also reflects the fourth principle of IDEA, Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). The goal of LRE is

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to ensure to the maximum extent appropriate individuals with disabilities are educated with their non-disabled peers (Heward, 2013).

Parents play a vital role in the development of the IEP for their students. IDEA (2004) states school districts are to include parents as a required member of the IEP team. Litigation by parents against schools have compelled courts to set standards for parents to have meaningful participation in the IEP development process. The fifth and sixth principles of IDEA are important protections for the parents of children with disabilities and the child with a disability. IDEA (2004) makes efforts to provide protections to parents through the due process safeguards. These safeguards allow the parent to be an active participant in the evaluation and development of IEPs. Also, it allows parents to receive an independent evaluation by selecting an evaluator if the parent disagrees with evaluation results, as well as to seek an impartial hearing when in disagreement of the IEP recommendations (Statewide Leadership for the Legal Framework Project Team and the Texas Education Agency, 2016). Students may not be evaluated or placed into special education without receiving informed parental consent. While these protections may not remove the uncertainty experienced by families, they do promote parents to be active collaborators in the education of their children (Heward, 2013). Not only is parental involvement a key principle of IDEA, the Council of Exceptional Children's (CEC, 2015) professional standards state educators must develop relationships with families built on shared respect and involve families and the individual with a disability in educational decision-making. This standard reinforces the critical role of special education teacher to student achievement.

Special Education Teacher's Role

Early pioneers such as Itard, Braille, and Gallaudet understood the importance of high expectations for the individuals with whom they worked (Friend, 2014). Universities must provide education and training for preservice teachers in the area of special education. Many teacher-training programs provide the general education and special education for teachers in separate teacher training models (Carroll, Forlin, & Jobling, 2003). Teacher preparation programs provide training that prepares teachers to meet the teacher certification, test standards for the states successfully. Fundamentally, special education teachers' coursework is aligned to ways to provide instruction based on the pedagogical needs of students with disabilities. Students with disabilities have varied needs and require different techniques, strategies, and levels of intensity from teachers. Therefore, training of special education teachers is specialized to provide instructional intervention to students with disabilities (Friend, 2014).

NCLB (2004) required teachers to be *highly qualified* to teach in a content area class. Significant improvements in the education of students with disabilities have been made. Several professional organizations, such as the CEC (2015), founded by Elizabeth Ferell, have established professional and ethical standards for individuals working with children with disabilities. Standard One of the Professional Learning and Ethical Practice Standards states educators have high expectations for the maximum possible learning to improve the individual's overall quality of life (CEC, 2015). In addition to having high learning expectations for students, the CEC states educators and those working with individuals with disabilities must rely on evidence, instructional data, research, and professional knowledge to inform their practice with students. This standard is reflected

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in federal law as well, IDEA (2004) also required educators to use evidence-based practices to teach students. Green (1996) indicated evidence based teaching and intervention strategies should be encouraged, while avoiding those supported through speculation, subjective evidence, indirect measures, non-comparative data, and descriptive research. Therefore, teachers are not to use exploratory and experimental methodologies when educating students with disabilities. Evidenced-based practices are established through empirical research (Green, 1996). This provision is necessary because students with disabilities require different instructional needs, and their time spent receiving academic instruction is very important. Therefore, it is important that educators have specialized training in the practices and programs that have documented effectiveness to maximize their instructional time.

Special education teachers' responsibilities are much more than providing instruction effectively to students with disabilities. Their responsibilities include providing day-to-day instruction and support, specialize or serve varying disabilities, prepare instruction, adapt materials, assess progress, and consult with colleagues (Friend, 2014). Additionally, they provide specialized services, which may include doing paperwork; collaborating with instructional staff, along with other duties such as lunch and recess duty (Friend, 2014).

Recently, the Texas Education Code (2016), Chapter 231 mandated that special education teachers providing instruction to students in the content areas must have content-specific state certification in the areas for which they teach. All Texas school districts are required to have certified special education teachers appropriately placed by September 1, 2017(Texas Education Code, 2016).

This rule is similar to the highly qualified teacher standard associated with NLCB that became null in 2016 with the passage of ESSA (Granelli, 2016). However, ESSA's processor set a standard that remains at the discretion of the state of Texas (Darrow, 2016). The idea is special education teachers must have content knowledge to meet the educational needs of students who will be also required to participate in the state assessments.

Beyond providing students classroom instruction and planning as typical teachers, special education teachers are required to participate in the development of students' individualized education plans. Special education teachers are required members of each student's IEP committee or ARD committee in Texas (Statewide Leadership for the Legal Framework Project Team and the Texas Education Agency, 2016). Special education teachers provide instructional insight, and most often direct the design of the recommended instructional goals, how to modify instruction for students' IEPs. Special education teachers served as specialized personnel, available to students, and also to work alongside related services providers. For example, they may support speech therapists, occupational therapists, and physical therapists. Specifically, the ARD committee must develop measurable, attainable annual goals for students, based on the student's present level of academic and functional performance. Special education teachers are responsible for providing specially designed instruction, and implementing and maintaining data for the completion of students' IEPs (Friend, 2014).

At the center of attention to the field of special education is accountability and student achievement on state tests. Progress for students with disabilities is often measured by the use of standardized assessments. However, the associated premise of

standardized tests contradicts the core principles of individualization required for special education. Hence, students that receive special education supports and services must pass the same state test as their non-disabled peers (Mott, 2013). This creates difficulty for schools in implementing the student IEPs and preparing them to take and be successful on a standardized test that may not reflect the student's IEP level of performance, due to the student's disability challenges.

Special education teachers have daily responsibilities, which vary based on their specific type of assignment. Each school district has a continuum of services, or service delivery models, that are unique to that district. Typically, special education teachers can be assigned to a self-contained classroom, as a co-teacher, or itinerant teacher. The largest percentage of students are serviced through an inclusive model, such as a co-teach model (Region One Education Service Center, 2015).

Special education teachers that serve as co-teachers, work alongside general education teachers to teach identified students in the general education classroom setting. The *Texas Co-Teaching A How To Guide* defines co-teaching as, "a learning environment in which two or more certified professionals share the responsibility of lesson planning, delivery of instruction, and progress monitoring for all students assigned to their classroom" (Region One Education Service Center, 2015, p. 8). The co-teach instructional model aligns the general education and the special education teacher working alongside each other simultaneously with distinct assigned roles. The special education teacher is the strategist responsible for differentiation and individualization, learning process expertise, individual and specialized needs of students, paperwork, and

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required legal procedures, and teaching to mastery (Region One Education Service Center, 2015).

Special education teachers' responsibilities exceed those of the general education teacher which also leads to special education teacher retention issues (Billingsley, 2003). Billingsley (2004) attributed additional paperwork, lack of support by administrators, stress, and special education teachers' failure to have input in their work environment as major factors causing special education teachers to leave the field.

Recently, a new Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos was appointed and approved by President Donald Trump. Critics of DeVos are concerned she may undo the accomplishments that legislators, judges, and parents have collectively established as the foundation for special education as we know it (Toppo, 2017).

Importance of Reading

Palo Freire (1970), in his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* wrote of his efforts in Brazil and Chile working to promote literacy. During his time of living in exile during the 1950s and 1960s, he worked to promote literacy and the right to learn to read. While in Brazil, it was the law for only the wealthy landowners to have the right to read, and therefore vote. Freire (1970) considered the acts of government to withhold the right to learn to read as a way of dehumanizing and oppressing those born of lessor means. Freire's life was spent promoting work literacy and providing people the empowerment of reading. His perspectives on the importance of literacy were hinged upon knowing that one's ability to read offers freedom to access the world in which they live, and to be a contributor to society (Kirylo, 2012).

Decades earlier than Freire's 1970 literacy work, governmental entities in the United States shared the views of denying access to being taught to read as important to control its slaves. Marable and Mullings (2009) stated, "Knowledge was power, and virtually all slave codes established in the United States set restrictions making it illegal to teach slaves to read or write" (p. 39). Reading was an important part of the social construct that was withheld, among other things, as a control mechanism of slaves. Many states in the south passed laws prohibiting slaves from being taught or learning to read:

Whereas the teaching of slaves to read and write, has a tendency to excite dissatisfaction in their minds, and to produce insurrection and rebellion, to the manifest injury of the citizens of this State:

Therefore,

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, That any free person, who shall hereafter teach, or attempt to teach, any slave within the State to read or write, the use of figures excepted, or shall give or sell to such slave or slaves any books or pamphlets, shall be liable to indictment in any court of record in this State having jurisdiction thereof, and upon conviction, shall, at the discretion of the court, if a white man or woman, be fined not less than one hundred dollars, nor more than two hundred dollars, or imprisoned; and if a free person of color, shall be fined, imprisoned, or whipped, at the discretion of the court, not exceeding thirty nine lashes, nor less than twenty lashes. (State of North Carolina, 1831, para. 1)

Requiring laws with major consequence to prohibit reading was evidence of the importance of reading at a political level. Reading has for many years been considered a

powerful ability used to gain access and power, as well as evidence of social status (Freire, 1970). From slavery in the United States to the civil rights era of the 1960s, illiteracy has been prevalent among minorities and people of low economic status (Reich, 2017). Illiteracy has been a significant topic garnering political and civil action in the United States for many years (Davenport & Jones, 2005).

The ability to read gives a commonality among people to share and interact at social settings. According to Snow, Burns, and Griffin (1998), "Reading is not only a cognitive psycholinguistic activity but also a social activity" (p. 13). Socialization of people is an inherit need for people as social beings. Culture and civilization are developed from the need to socialize. While being illiterate does not totally isolate one from socializing, it does create boundaries that limit socialization of topics derived from written text. Maslow in his theory of self-actualization maintained socialization contributed to every individual's need to belong and thrive as a healthy individual (Ryckman, 2013). Ryckman indicated "self-actualization is the process whereby the healthy development of people's abilities enables them to fulfill their own true natures" (p. 316).

During his presidency, William Bill Clinton made reading a priority. During his November 4, 1996, State of the Union address, he announced his America Reads Initiative (Maughan, 1997). Clinton was a proponent of administering a national assessment and establishing standards as he worked to secure federal assistance for children's literacy (Davenport & Jones, 2005). He successfully promoted his perspectives about literacy by explaining the economic impact of literacy to the nation. He called upon one million volunteers to ensure every student could read independently

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by the end of third grade (Maughan, 1997). As the nation's president, his concern about illiteracy empowered him to call upon others for assistance (Davenport & Jones, 2005). Clinton convinced Americans that "improving literacy is not just an educational or social need; it is essential if the United States is to compete in the new global economy" (Davenport & Jones, 2005 p. 46). Zhao (2009), a leading contemporary researcher in globalization and education, supported President Clinton's views. His research asserts the world is going through a dramatic transformation brought about by economic globalization and technological advance (Zhao, 2009). Currently, a little over 20 years after President Clinton's speech-nothing has changed, having a more global society makes literacy a requirement to be competitive in a global economy.

Nearly 141 years post-slavery and 40 years beyond the Civil Rights movement in the United States, during the 2000 presidential campaign, George W. Bush and his wife Laura, spoke of reading as *the new civil right* (Davenport & Jones, 2005). His administration worked to create legislation that tied financial strings to the states to address his education initiatives. George W. Bush brought literacy into legislation with the passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2002. The George W. Bush administration's NCLB (2002) required annual testing and reporting of reading proficiency scores with the goal that virtually all children will meet grade-level proficiency standards by 2014 (Deming, Cododes, Jennings, & Jencks, 2016). Although it was not the first national conversation about reading, the Bush Reading Initiative spent over $5 billion in five years, making it the country's most expensive endeavor to promote literacy (Davenport & Jones, 2005).

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Globalization of the world today makes literacy a priority to remain competitive in the workforce. It is commonly stated among educators that correctional officials could determine the number of prisons to build and allocated prison beds by using third and fourth graders' reading test scores (Sanders, 2013). This researcher was unable to identify any evidence to verify these claims. However, according to Reading Partners (2013),

> While there isn't evidence of State Departments of Corrections using third- (or second- or fourth-) grade reading scores to predict the number of prison beds they'll need in the next decade (. . .) there is an undeniable connection between literacy skills and incarceration rates. (para. 4)

Students with lower reading ability before Grade 3 are at a higher risk of dropping out, which leads to lower paying jobs, higher risks of committing crimes, and causing a strain on the economic system of the country. According to Fiester (2010), "Low achievement in reading has significant long-term consequences in terms of individual earning potential, global competitiveness, and general productivity" (p. 9). It is easily concluded that literacy provides access, and illiteracy causes limitations to a prosperous life and limits freedoms (Freire, 1970). Although, the Bushes considered reading the *new civil right*, literacy was not included as a Constitutional Right; but time has revealed literacy to be a necessity (Davenport & Jones, 2005). Regardless of its omission from the United States Constitution, literacy is essential to ascertain certain unalienable rights. Americans, in pursuit of these unalienable rights, must be literate for gainful employment and participation in a democratic society.

Reading Instruction

In 1997, The National Reading Panel (NRP) was established to research and evaluate the status of research-based knowledge, including the effectiveness of different

approaches to teaching children to read (Cunningham, 2001). The results from the study would provide educators an in-depth understanding of how to teach reading. Educators and lawmakers would be able to use the research from the NRP to address literacy in the nation (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). The NRP's conclusions, established from a synthesis of research studies that met established criteria, define scientifically based-reading strategies. A fundamental principle of NCLB and the Reading First Initiative was the use of instructional strategies and programs that reflect scientifically-based reading strategies (Learning Point Associates, 2004).

The National Reading Panel Report (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development [NICHD], 2000) summarized several decades of scientific research that clearly shows effective reading instruction addresses five critical areas:

- Phonemic awareness

- Phonics

- Fluency

- Vocabulary

- Comprehension (as cited in Learning Point Associates, 2004, p. 1)

These five components of reading were written into NCLB (Learning Point Associates, 2004). Through the research of NRP, several approaches to teaching the components were identified (Cunningham, 2001). However, the most reliably effective approach to teaching reading is called Systematic and explicit instruction. Systematic instruction means that skills and concepts are taught in a planned, logically progressive

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sequence (Cunningham, 2001). Explicit instruction means the teacher states clearly what is being taught, and models how a skilled reader uses it effectively (Cunningham, 2001).

Essential to NCLB, teachers must use evidenced-based materials and practices to teach students. Teachers need professional development to ensure the fidelity of instructional practices for reading instruction. Providing instructional programs alone is not enough to ensure teachers are prepared to provide sound instruction (Hernandez, 2011). The NRP report explained professional development aligned to the instructional programs would ensure teachers understand and use instructional practices that foster high student achievement consistently (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000).

Learning to Read

According to Chen (2016), "The process of becoming a fluent reader is typically a natural process that occurs as easily as learning to walk or talk" (p 34). Children acquire language through communication and learn to talk as part of its use. Similarly, Snow et al. (1998) stated "learning to read and write begins long before the school years, as the biological, cognitive, and social precursors are put into place (p. 43). Snow et al. (1998) also indicated a child's cognitive capacity and developmental level will influence the rate at which a student learns to read fluently. Reading is a complex developmental challenge that we know to be intertwined with many other developmental accomplishments: attention, memory, language, and motivation (Snow et al., 1998).

Reading instruction in the school setting starts at the early grades. In Texas, the state's academic standards, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, introduce pre-reading skills at Kindergarten (TEA, 2017b). According to Fiester (2010), "From the

time students enter school up until the end of third grade, most students are *learning to read"* (p. 9). As the grade levels increase, the instructional demands increase for students to move from holding a book properly to identifying letter sounds and blends to create words. Teacher-made assessments, locally developed and adopted assessment tools, and screeners are used across Texas. At Grade 3, students are required to complete a state assessment in reading, with results used extensively for instructional planning for students.

However, research has established that students in the fourth grade are *reading to learn*, using their skills to gain more information in subjects such as math and science, to solve problems, to think critically about what they are learning, and to act upon and share that knowledge in the world around them (Fiester, 2010). Academic success in subsequent educational years is based on a student's reading ability at the third grade (Fiester, 2010). Additional instructional demands that include writing are impacted by a student's reading ability. Not only is it important that reading instruction occurs, but also, there is a need to measure student progress on grade-level standards, which comes to the surface through high stakes testing (Darrow, 2016).

State Tested Reading in Texas

High-stakes testing and accountability originated in the state of Texas and California. Billionaire Ross Perot of Texas was the head of the Select Committee, which was in charge of creating a plan to ensure that Texas schools were up to the demands of a technology-based economy; and state testing was born (Hobby & Tiede, 2010).

President George W. Bush initiated the national requirement of state tests. In the 1990s, as governor of Texas, he implemented a series of tests that he later made claims to

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dramatic educational performance improvements, specifically with minority students, that he called the "Texas Miracle" (Davenport & Jones, 2005). Prior to Bush's reign as Governor of Texas, in 1979, the state of Texas instituted a statewide testing program (TEA, 2011).

Over time and changes in legislation, state testing has evolved. The Texas Legislature created state law pertaining to statewide student assessment program located in the Texas Education Code (TEA, 2011). The Texas Administrative Code includes rules adopted by the State Board of Education and the Commissioner of Education to address the legislative requirements of the Texas Education Code. Changes made in the Texas state law required changes to the state test.

In 1990, Texas introduced the criterion referenced test known as the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) (TEA, 2011). The Texas accountability system implemented in 1993 provided data to every Texas school based on the results of students' TAAS scores in reading, writing, mathematics, along with their attendance and high school drop-out rates (Pazey, Heilig, Cole, & Sumbera, 2014). Schools were given one of four ratings: Low performance, Acceptable, Recognized, or Exemplary (Deming et al., 2016). Ratings from the state tests that were low-performing underwent evaluations that in some cases led to serious sanctions, such as layoffs, reconstitutions, and school closures (Deming et al., 2016). Students, identified as special education however, were many times not included in the schools' results. Due to increased pressure to achieve a favorable rating, students were often exempted from participating in the state test or influenced to drop out of school to avoid the accountability system (Deming et al., 2016).

From the Texas state plan for education, President Bush modeled the legislation NCLB and high-stakes testing and accountability was born at the federal level (Davenport & Jones, 2005). NCLB (2002) mandated reading and math testing in Grades 3 and 8, as well as at least once in high school. According to Zhao (2009), "Through NCLB, the federal government has been telling Americans that reading and math are the most valued subject areas and what schools should teach" (p. 38).

The state testing required students receiving special education services be tested on grade level with their peers, making the stakes high for all student outcomes. "High-stakes" testing is "when significant consequences are tied to the performance of students on test" (The Iris Center, 2017, p. 1). Zhao (2009) noted "the cornerstone of NCLB is accountability through standardized testing in math and reading" (p. 32). Table 1 shows teachers, administrators, and students all shared the accountability and high stakes, due to the passage of NCLB.

Table 1

The Effects of High-Stakes Tests on Stakeholders

Stakeholders	Good Performance	Poor Performance
Schools	Increase budget, positive label (School of Excellence, etc.)	Reduced budget, bad press, poor public image, probation, sanctions
School Leaders	Cash bonus, promotion, good press	Loss of job, forfeit of cash bonus
Teachers	Cash bonus	Forfeit of cash bonus
Students	Promotion to next grade level, high-school diploma	Retention in current grade level, remedial instruction, document other than high-school diploma

In 2008, NCLB was reauthorized, which highlighted the defining characteristics of education reform efforts in the United States during the early years of the 21st century: a) excellence equals good test scores in math and reading, and b) standards- and test-based accountability is the tool to achieve such excellence (Zhao, 2009). The movement of testing experienced through the Bush administration emphasized reading. Testing mandates emphasized the importance of reading and math as a major priority for American students (Zhao, 2009). In 2008, students in Texas were being offered the option of being administered one of three types of state tests selected by the student's IEP committee, referred to in Texas as the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee (Statewide Leadership for the Legal Framework Project Team and the Texas Education Agency, 2016).

To fulfill the federal requirement, Texas developed the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)–Alternative, designed for students with significant cognitive disabilities. TAKS Accommodated was for students who met special education eligibility requirements for specific accommodations and TAKS-Modified was an alternate assessment based on modified academic achievement standard meeting participation criteria (TEA, 2011).

In 2011-2012, Texas introduced The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) test, which also included an alternate and modified version (TEA, 2011). However, the U.S. Department of Education (2010) announced that it prohibited states from using tests based on modified academic achievement standards in federal accountability calculations beginning in the 2014-2015 school year (Williams, 2015).

The state of Texas responded by offering only one version of the STAAR test with allowable accommodations for students with disabilities in the 2014-2015 school year.

NCLB was repealed in 2015 and replaced by ESSA (Darrow, 2016). The high-stakes testing requirements remained. ESSA (2015) also requires states to ensure special education student have access to grade level standards (Granelli, 2016). The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, commonly referred to as TEKS, are the standards tested through the STAAR. Currently, STAAR remains Texas' answer to the federal mandated testing requirements. However, STAAR Alternate is available for students with significant cognitive disabilities that meet eligibility requirements. Although there are no modified versions of the STAAR, the accommodations, which are now referred to as *designated supports*, remain for students with a disability (TEA, 2017a).

Emotional Intelligence

Salovey and Mayer (1990) introduced the term *emotional intelligence* (EI) in their article of the same name. Research for social intelligence and emotions form the basis for the construct of Salovey and Mayer's model of EI. As a result of their research to dispel the value placed on an individual's intellectual ability as a predictor of one's success, the concept of EI was introduced (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). EI can also be acquired as in a set of dispositions in which a person is predisposed to behave (Ritchart, 2001). Salovey and Mayer (1990) viewed "emotions as organized responses, crossing the boundaries of many psychological systems, including the physiological, cognitive, motivational, and experiential systems" (p. 186). Emotions formed an important basis for Salovey and Mayer research. Intelligence as defined by Wechsler, Thorndike's and

Gardner's theories of social intelligence are included in Salovey and Mayer's research that lead to EI.

Mayer et al.'s (2004) model of EI viewed EI as typically functioning as a system but divided into four branches. The first branch of EI, *emotional perception*, involves registering, attending to, and decoding emotional messages from the external world. Individuals lacking this basic branch of EI fail to integrate emotion and cognition. The second branch of EI, *emotional integration*, focuses on how an emotion enters the cognitive system and alters cognition to assist thinking. Emotions can change thoughts, making them positive when a person feels happy and negative when a person feels sad. The third branch of EI, *emotional understanding*, allows the individual to recognize and label emotions (Allen, 2013). The implications of emotions are considered, along with their interactive and temporal applications. The fourth branch of EI, *emotional management*, is based on the idea that emotional management must begin with perception (Allen, 2013). Only with high emotional attitudes can an individual make use of mood changes and understand emotions (Goleman, 1995).

Human relationships are unpredictable; emotional management involves the capability to consider various emotional situations and make choices among them. Mayer et al. (2004) stated EI, conceptualized as a mental ability and measured with objective tasks, constitutes a singular intelligence. The study of EI has its roots in the works of Darwin, who suggested emotional expression was essential for survival (McPheaqt, 2002**)**.

The definition of EI varies in the literature. EI is a relatively new concept not heard of a century ago (Allen, 2013). Goleman (1998) claims EI dates back to the 1920s

with the work of educational psychologist, E. L Thorndike. Thorndike (1927) explained the concept of social intelligence as the ability to get along with people. According to Goleman (2006),

> Gardner's book, *Frames of Mind* (1983), was a manifesto refuting the Intelligence Quotient (IQ) view, it proposed that there was not just one monolithic kind of intelligence that was crucial for the life success, but rather a wide spectrum of intelligences with seven varieties. (p. 38)

Reynolds and O'Dwyer (2008) provided this explanation for Gardner's concept of intrapersonal (emotional) intelligence, noting "intrapersonal intelligence relates to the ability to understand and use one's emotions to direct one's thinking and behavior" (p. 475). Gardner's work was more of a study of the cognition, and did not pursue in detail the rules of emotion and feelings (Goleman, 2006). Cook (2006) asserted the three leading theories on EI were created by Goleman (1995), Salovey and Mayer (1990), and Bar-On (2000).

EI received the most attention in the literature because of Goleman (Cook, 2006; Harms & Crede, 2010). "Goleman (1995) popularized the notion of EI with a somewhat different conception, defining EI to include knowing one's emotions, managing emotions, motivating oneself, recognizing emotions in others, and handling relationships" (Chan, 2002, p. 188).

Goleman's (1995) model of EI is one of many discussed in the current literature on EI. Goleman defined EI as "the ability to identify, assess, and control one's emotions, the emotions of others, and that of groups" (pp. 43-44). This model of EI has five areas including: a) self-awareness, b) self-regulation, c) social skills, d) empathy, and e)

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motivation. Goleman's model of EI focuses on success in the workplace. The author asserts the five components of EI can be taught and learned. Goleman (1995) also argues EI can be more important than one's intellectual quotient for overall life accomplishments and success of individuals.

Goleman (1995) asserted "academic intelligence has little to do with emotional life" (p. 4). He communicated IQ has not shown itself to be a great predictor of one's life outcome and success; yet, he acknowledges there are exceptions (Goleman, 2006). Specifically, Goleman (1995) stated IQ contributes to about 20% of the factors that determine life success, which leaves 80% to other forces attributed to characteristics found in EI.

Moore (2009) stated the second most often cited model of EI is that of Salovey and Mayer (1990). Salovey and Mayer (1990) defined EI as "the ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (p. 190). Harms and Crede (2010) argued the model of EI proposed by Salovey and Mayer (1990) can be expressed as an ability; whereas, Goleman (1995) suggested a conception of EI as a trait. Hams and Crede (2010) noted, "As an ability, EI is considered to be important for not only comprehending and regulating emotions but also understanding and integrating them into cognitions" (p. 7).

The third major theory relating to EI, according to Cook (2006), is a result of the work of Bar-On (2000). The Bar-On model interpretation of EI is discussed as a group of traits, rather than intelligence (Bar-On, 2005). Bar-On (2005) further explains EI as an array of interdepended emotional and social abilities, skills, and behaviors that impact

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one's behavior. Bar-On expounded on several researchers' work, such as Darwin, Gardner, Thorndike, and Weschler, to construct the theoretical basis of the Bar-On EI model.

Bar-On (2000) developed an instrument designed to assess EI, and he devised the term *emotional quotient*. Cook (2006) stated, "All three theories seek to develop an understanding of how individuals recognize, understand, and apply and manage emotions to predict and improve individual effectiveness" (p. 19).

Thus far, this review has provided a theoretical overview of the understanding related to EI. However, the purpose of the study is related to EI and special education teachers. Greenockle (2010) asserted EI is multifaceted and includes aspects of the following: self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, communication skills, relationship management, emotional monitoring, and empathy. These are critical skills that teachers must have in their tool belt.

Emotional Intelligence and Special Education Teachers

As mentioned earlier, the literature on EI, as it relates to special education teachers, is limited. However, a large body of literature was found regarding EI and how it relates to leadership and leader effectiveness. Therefore, the contrast of teachers as leaders of their classroom is appropriate for review.

Leadership is a complex, multifaceted process. Teachers are leaders in their classroom, and are required to influence and motivate learning in their classrooms (Merideth, 2007). Special education teachers often are required to work with students with varied disabilities. Given the state testing requirements, they must transform students' performance to meet the grade level standards. Thus, special education teachers

employ tenants of transformational leadership (Billingsley & McLeskey, 2004; Mathew & Gupta, 2015).

According to Harm and Crede (2010), "Transformational leaders act as mentors to their followers by encouraging learning, achievement, and individual development. They provide meaning, act as role models, provide challenges, evoke emotions, and foster a climate of trust" (p. 6). Stephens and Hermond (2009) that leaders are in a position to influence others and must have the social skills to maximize the ability to lead and influence. Baglieri and Shapiro (2012) noted, "Children are influenced by their interactions and encounters with others especially parents, friends, classmates, and siblings" (p. 8). Students with disabilities are often placed in classrooms for extensive periods of time with special education professionals with limited access to other teachers. Being with an established special education teacher and professional group may be consistent for the students with disabilities; yet, it also requires special education teachers to build and maintain relationships with the students they serve. Special education teacher relationships are particularly influential to a child with a disability (Baglieri & Shapiro, 2012).

Teacher-student relationships are important to establish and build trust in the classroom environment. Goleman (2005) asserted building relationships with others requires one to exert empathy and self-awareness, and to perceive the feelings and emotions of others. Special education teachers tend to be empathic, caring individuals, which caused many to join the field. However, the intense, ongoing need of the students, colleagues, and parents substantiate the need for high EI for special education teachers

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(Billingsley, 2004). Special education teachers can build strong relationships that will support student learning (Marzano, 2003).

Ghosh, Shuck, and Petrosko (2012) found EI played a critical role in the psychology of a team, and was positively related to team learning. The research on EI in the workplace indicates EI has a significant relationship with job performance, motivation, decision-making, successful management, and leadership (Chan, 2002). Teachers who play an active role in the school community are leaders beyond their classrooms. Thus, the role of leader transcends an identified role in an organization. Teachers serve on committees and head organizations within the school environment, making their active role in the decision-making of the organization important. Noe (2012) stated, "The leader with high emotional intelligence positively impacts others in the organization toward success" (p. 22).

Greenockle (2010) argued to be successful in these responsibilities, leaders need to have high levels of EI. Greenockle asserted leadership in the field of education is not much different from the business world, "except for the added and often conflicting responsibility of teaching and scholarly productivity" (p. 260). The extended role of the special education teacher brings the need for high EI.

While the literature on EI and educational leadership are extensive, the literature on EI as it relates to special education teachers and its impact on student achievement is limited. However, there exists a growing body of research discussing the role EI plays for teachers, the role EI plays for student success, the impact of EI on school culture, and the role EI can have on organizational change.

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The climate of the classroom has shown to be a direct reflection of the teacher as the leader (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). A teacher's EI can have an effect on classroom climate (Galler, 2015). Schools with a positive school climate foster teamwork, innovation, collaboration, job satisfaction for teachers, and positive working relationships (Marzano, 2003). Teacher retention is a major struggle for many school administrators (Billingsley, 2004). The school climate can affect teacher retention in a school and job satisfaction of teachers (Boe, Cook, & Sunderland, 2008).

Fabio and Palazzeschi (2008) investigated the self-efficacy of teachers as measured by their self-reported level of EI. Teachers in the study with higher EI also reported having higher self-efficacy in the areas of managing the classroom, motivating and involving their students, and utilizing appropriate teaching strategies for their students (Fabio & Palazzeschi, 2008). Despite limited research on the importance of a special education teacher's EI and the relationship with teacher effectiveness, the study conducted by Fabio and Palazzeschi (2008) provides the framework detailing why the relationships between teacher efficacy and special education teacher EI deserves further exploration.

Special education teachers are the classroom instructional leaders in charge of ensuring that their students make progress academically, socially, and in some cases, behaviorally (Dipaola & Walther-Thomas, 2003). Special education teachers are being held accountable for their student success beyond their classroom doors with instructional models that require them to collaborate with other professionals. Special education teachers are more likely to leave the profession when compared to those of general education teachers (McLeskey, Tyler, & Flippin, 2004). Special education teachers are

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often required to have a greater level of patience, have greater problem solving and flexibility, stress management, and optimism. Special education teachers, like general education teachers, have numerous additional responsibilities and concerns related to working with students with significant learning and or behavioral problems (Billingsley, 2004). Special education teachers report more significant workloads that include managing paperwork, making accommodations for instruction and testing, developing and monitoring IEPs, scheduling students, and collaborating with teachers, paraprofessionals, parents, and related services personnel (Billingsley, 2004). In addition to the demands of the working with students with varied disabilities and areas of needs, special education teachers must cope with lack of support by administrators (Billingsley, 2004).

Teacher attrition is a state and national issue for education. It can be defined as *the loss of employees* (TEA, 2009-2016). Over the last decade, during every five years nearly half the teachers that entered the field of education leave to join another profession. McLeskey et al. (2004) reported 98% of the nation's school districts report special education teacher shortages. Special education teachers are among the highest reported rates of attrition and stress in the field of education (Billingley, 2004). Varied reasons that teachers leave the education profession include lack of training and the pursuit of other career opportunities. However, caseload and high levels of stress are areas more often reported as the reason for special education teachers leaving the special education field or education together (Billingsley, 2004). Special education teachers serve in a variety of settings, such as self-contained, resource, and inclusion classrooms. Each special education classroom type and individual student's needs determine the

intensity of effort from the special education teacher. Among special education teacher groups, self-contained classroom teachers report the highest level of stress (Billingsley & Cross, 1992). Specifically, teachers of students that are emotionally disturbed reported given the high level of stress experienced, these teacher use coping mechanisms such as eating (61%); using alcohol, drugs, or prescription medications (44%); or smoking (37%) (Pullis, 1992). These findings make the need for special education teacher EI important to consider.

Special education teachers, while working under high levels of stress have the responsibility to make decisions, regulate one's emotions, perceive others' emotions and remain professional at all times. Considering the high demands placed on special education teachers, it is expected that to be an effective special educator, one must possess a high level of EI. Special education teachers must be able to produce student results to be an effective special educator.

Many characteristics of effective special education teachers coincide with elements of EI. Students with disabilities were found to be more successful in classrooms in which the teacher developed good relationships, provided positive feedback, maintained a supportive environment, and provided supportive responses to all students (Larrivee, 1985). The current exploratory study aims to investigate the relation between the special education teacher's EI, and their students' achievement scores on the end-of-year state standardized assessment.

Summary of Key Literature Findings

Special education students and their needs are inherently different from their general education counterparts (Friend, 2014). However, the fight for equal access to

education has given special education students the right to a free and appropriate education as well as the other aspects that follow in state testing. Special education students must participate in state testing based on the federal mandates of ESSA of 2015 (Darrow, 2016). Texas led the charge in state testing in the Ross Perot era and further in the Governor George Bush era (Davenport& Jones, 2005; Hobby & Tiede, 2010).

Currently, special education students in Texas must participate in the state accountability system of the STAAR test (TEA, 2017a). Individualized educational programs regain but performance on state test is the focal point of the administrators' and teachers' efforts. Special education teachers are the greatest area of attrition and retention issues across the nation and are no different in Texas (Billingsley, 2004). Special education teachers provide instruction to students with varied disabilities and instructional needs (Friend, 2004). Many special education teachers have reported drinking alcohol and prescription drugs as coping mechanisms (Pullis, 1992).

Teacher effectiveness is an important aspect for student achievement (Marzano, 2003). Therefore, teachers as leaders in the classroom will be required to ensure a climate of trust to promote student achievement (Galler, 2010; Harms & Crede 2010; Merideth, 2007). With the different needs of students with disabilities, the flexibility involved with daily decision-making for instructional strategies, classroom management, and discipline of students all play a part in the daily operations of special education teachers.

Salovey and Mayer (1990) in their introduction of EI as "a set of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking

and actions (p. 189). The Salovey and Mayer model of EI simply explains EI as one's ability to perceive and manage emotions to facilitate thinking. "The concept of EI and the term emotional intelligence could be considered an oxymoron, as cognition conveys the idea of reason, and emotion that of irrationality" (Chan, 2010, p. 185). However, intelligence and the study of intelligence has included the cognitive proponents with the aspects of how emotions play a part in cognition from research by Wechsler (Allen, 2013).

Goleman (1995) popularized EI with his expansion of research that EI can be developed. Goleman's (2006) model of EI assortment of emotional and social competences contribute to leadership ability.

Bar-On's (2000) model of EI explains EI as an array of interdepended emotional and social abilities, skills, and behaviors that impact one's behavior. Bar-On developed a psychometric approach to measure EI the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) (Multi-Health Systems, 2012). Bar-On (2000) attributes Darwin's work on the importance of emotional expression for survival and adaption influence to the development of his model of EI.

Salvey and Mayer (1990), Goleman (1995), and Bar-on (2000) agree EI is a significant factor in the success of individuals across multiple settings. Further, these researchers assert EI and not one's intelligence quotient alone is a predictor of one's success. Researchers emphasize EI as an important component for intelligent behavior and effective social and emotional functioning (Bar-on, 2000; Goleman, 1995; Salvey & Mayer, 1990). Table 2 is a list of key researchers identified in this literature review.

Table 2

Key Literature Findings

Date	Source	Findings
1990	Salovey & Mayer	Defined emotional intelligence as "the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (p. 189).
1992	Pullis	Special education teachers of students with emotional behavior disorders have self-reported having to use coping strategies such as alcohol and prescription drugs due to high levels of stress.
1992	Billingsley & Cross	Working to meet the varied needs of students, parents, and administrators has contributed to the increasing stress levels of special education teachers. Therefore, teacher retention research revealed the need for special education teachers to cope with high levels of stress to be successful.
1995, 2006	Goleman	Popularized emotional intelligence in current research. Goleman's (1995) model of EI has five areas including 1) self-awareness, 2) self-regulation, 3) social skills, 4) empathy, and 5) motivation. Goleman's (1995) model of EI focuses on success in the workplace. Goleman (1995) asserts that the five components of EI can be taught and learned. Goleman (1995) argues that EI can be more important than one's intellectual quotient for overall life accomplishments and success of individuals.
1997, 2000, 2005	Bar-On	The Bar-On model interpretation of EI discussed as a group of traits, rather than intelligence.
2002	Chan	Explored the educational implications for the development of social and emotional learning programs
2003	Marzano	Research has suggested that the most important factor that contributes to student success is teacher effectiveness
2003, 2004	Billingsley	Completed a meta-analysis of issues with Special Education Teacher retention and identified causes as work load, lack of power in their role and student behaviors.
2007	Merideth	Teachers are leaders in their classrooms and leadership is not bestowed upon them.
2010	Greenockle	Asserted that EI is multifaceted and includes aspects of the following: self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, communication skills, relationship management, emotional monitoring, and empathy.
2016	Darrow	ESSA provided states some autonomy in determining which of their current systems of education work well, and what improvements needed to be made. Each state had to develop and refine their systems for improvements to ensure academic success of students to make them ready for college, career, and life success.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides an overview of the research methods used in this study, and includes the research design, a discussion of the population sample, and sources of data. It concludes with a discussion of the specific instrumentation, procedures for data collection, and analysis.

Research Design

This study included a non-experimental, exploratory design that used a series of multiple regression analyses to measure the relationships of the predictor variables (emotional intelligence [EI], EI composite scores) and the dependent variable of student achievement in the area of reading on the end-of-year State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR). The two research questions were examined through correlational analysis to discover if the independent variables (EI and EI composite scores) predict the dependent variable (student achievement). The research questions that guided the study included:

1. What is the relationship between special education teachers' combined composite emotional intelligence scores and students' reading achievement as measured by the end of the year the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) assessment?

2. What is the relationship between special education teachers' composite area scores (self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, decision-making, and stress management) either individually or in combination and students' reading scores?

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The null hypothesis were:

H_0 There is no relationship between special education teachers' combined composite emotional intelligence scores and students' reading achievement as measured by the end of the year the state of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) assessment.

H_1 There is no relationship between special education teachers' composite area scores (self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, decision-making, and stress management) either individually or in combination and students' reading scores.

Participants of Study

The study included special education teachers and their respective students from the district's elementary and middle schools. There are six elementary schools, which maintain three grade levels (third, fourth, and fifth) that participated in the STAAR state assessment. The middle schools maintain three grade levels (sixth, seventh, and eighth) that took part in the STAAR state assessment. This study was conducted using data collected by the cooperating facility in a small, suburban district located in North Texas. The cooperating facility was a district serves approximately 9,800 students across 11 campuses with two alternative education programs and employs 1,178 employees. The district includes one early childhood center, six elementary schools, three middle schools, and one high school. At the time of the data collection, 78% of the students were African-American, 18% Hispanic, and 4% were identified as White. Of the total student population, 69% were identified as economically disadvantaged. The district provided special education services to 899 (9%) students.

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The targeted sample for the study included special education teachers providing special education support and services to students enrolled in Grades 3-8 during the 2016-2017 school year and participated in the regular, end-of-year state assessment, STAAR. Teachers of students who are primarily served in self-contained units and who participate in the alternate state assessment, STAAR-Alt 2, were not included in this study. The study included approximately 30 Special Education teachers who provided either resource or inclusion support to students eligible for special education. These teachers served approximately 150 students who took the STAAR end-of-year state assessment.

Institutional Review Board

IRB exempt status was obtained from Tarleton State University before completing this study. Informed consent documents were not obtained due to the fact the participating district administered and collected assessment data and provided the results to the primary researcher after excluding all personally identifiable information. A letter from the school district's superintendent's office was obtained stating the primary researcher would be provided district-collected data, and provided teacher and student assessment results. The primary researcher obtained the Superintendent's letter of approval, which has been kept on file.

Instrumentation

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between the special education teachers' EI and its impact on student reading achievement. For this study, only STAAR results from students served through special education were utilized. All

data used in this study was collected by the cooperating facility and provided to this researcher.

STAAR results were used to assess the degree to which students have learned and are able to apply the knowledge and skills defined in the state-adopted curriculum, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEA, 2017b). Students in Grades 3-8 are administered the reading and mathematics assessment annually (TEA, 2017a). Additionally, students are assessed in writing in Grades 4 and 7, in science in Grades 5 and 8, and in social studies in Grade 8 (TEA, 2017a). Spanish versions of STAAR in all subjects were provided for students in Grades 3-5 (TEA, 2017a). As part of the Texas Student Success Initiative (SSI), students in Grades 5 and 8 had two additional opportunities to pass the reading and math test if they are not successful on the first administration (TEA, 2017a). However, for the purpose of measuring student achievement in the current study, only student scores on the first administration of the 2017 STAAR reading test were analyzed to determine the relationship between student achievement and special education teacher's EI.

The STAAR assessment program was first implemented in the 2011-2012 school year, replacing the TAKS program. The development, administration, and scoring of the state assessment system was managed by Pearson Assessment in the first four years of the STAAR program. In the 2015-2016 school year, the Educational Testing Service (ETS) was awarded the state contract for STAAR, while Pearson maintained the TELPAS and the STAAR Alt 2 components of the state assessment system (TEA, 2016b).

STAAR tests are designed to assess the state curriculum, as outlined in the TEKS. Since not all curriculum-learning standards may be assessed in a single test administration, only certain TEKS student expectations are addressed, which are outlined in documents provided by the Texas Education Agency (TEA, 2017a). The content of the STAAR reading test assessments in Grades 3-8 are organized into three sections, or reporting categories: understanding (and analysis) across genres; understanding and analysis of literary texts; and understanding and analysis of informational texts (TEA, 2017a). However, since the reading TEKS vary across grade levels in terms of content, context, and cognitive rigor, STAAR assessments also vary in length and complexity of skills assessed as one progresses from Grade 3 to Grade 8 (TEA, 2017a).

Each year the Texas Education Agency publishes psychometric data for state assessments administered (TEA, 2016b). In 2016, the number of multiple-choice items on the STAAR reading test assessments varied from 40 items on the Grade 3 test to 52 items on the Grade 8 exam as shown in Table 3. In 2017, the STAAR assessments were shortened in an effort to reduce the amount of time required for students to complete the assessments, with all tests reduced in length by approximately 15% (TEA, 2017a).

Scores for the STAAR reading test assessments have historically demonstrated high internal consistency reliability, measures as coefficient alpha. Reliability estimates for the 2016 reading assessments ranged from .890 for the Spanish versions of the Grade 3 and Grade 5 assessment to .913 for the English version of the Grade 5 assessment. Nunnally (1978) provided rules of thumb for the adequacy of internal consistency reliability estimates, such that values of .70 are considered as fair and adequate for basic research, values of .80 are good and useful for applied research, and reliabilities of .90 or

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higher are excellent and required for high-stakes decisions about students. Using these guidelines, STAAR reading test assessments appear to approximate this highest standard for internal consistency reliability.

Table 3

2016 Statewide STAAR Reading Summary

	English Version					Spanish Version				
Grade	N	Items	Mean	SD	Alpha	N	Items	Mean	SD	Alpha
3	357,304	40	26.37	8.37	.899	36,453	40	24.06	8.29	.890
4	353,342	44	29.87	8.41	.891	24,267	44	26.19	9.37	.904
5	359,086	46	31.88	9.38	.913	13,006	46	27.68	9.06	.890
6	365,046	48	32.00	9.71	.911					
7	363,019	50	33.86	9.83	.910					
8	356,699	52	36.16	9.22	.895					

Since the number of possible items correct varies between grade levels, it would follow that mean raw scores achieved on the assessments would also vary by grade level, making it difficult to compare performance across grade levels based on raw scores. Thus, in order to standardize performance on reading assessments between grade levels, individual student raw scores were converted to z scores, using the district-wide means and standard deviations for each grade level in the calculations. Since analysis was at the level of the teacher, a mean z-score for each teacher was determined and incorporated as the dependent variable in the regression analyses.

To measure the EI of special education teachers, participants completed the Bar-On E.Q-i 2.0 Emotional Intelligence Assessment Workplace as part of the district's professional development program. The cooperating facility agreed to provide the results

of the EQi 2.0 to this researcher for the current study. This assessment is available through Multi-Health Systems, a psychological assessment publisher. The EQ-i provides an electronic survey administration that participants complete online. The school district purchased the electronic administration option to collect data on the special education teacher's EI and administered the survey to the teachers during the spring semester.

The EQ-i 2.0 provided one overall score for the respondents' overall level of EI, as well as composite scores in five areas of application: self-perception, self -expression, interpersonal, decision-making, and stress management. The overall score was used as a single predictor variable to address Research Question 1, and scores on each the composite were used as the five predictors of student achievement addressing Research Question 2.

Reliability and Validity of the EQ-i

The EQ-i 2.0 is normed on the self-reports of 4,000 adults, representative of the U.S. population in regards to race/ethnicity, education level, and geographic region distributions. Dawda and Hart (2000) found the EQ-i to be a reliable and valid measure of one's EI with a reported internal consistency of Cronbach's alpha of .98 for males and .96 for females. According to the EQ-i2.0 technical manual, the EQ-i 2.0 is characterized as having strong reliability, regarding internal consistency and test-retest reliability. The internal consistency for total EI is reported to be .97. For the composite scales, the internal consistency ranges from.88-.93. The internal consistency for the subscales is reported to be .77 and above. Additionally, the EQ-i 2.0 has a test-retest reliability of 0.92 (Multi-Health Systems, 2012).

The EQ-i 2.0 provides a measure of the respondent's consistency in response. The purpose of this inconsistency index is to help identify whether the subjects respond to survey items in an inconsistent or random manner (Bar-On, 2005). Before data analysis, the inconsistency scale for each participant was reviewed to determine if the participant's results were acceptable, and that respondents answered survey items in a consistent and fair manner. Additionally, these two scales provided a correction that automatically adjusted the participants' scores based on the instrument's validity indices. The Positive Impression and Negative Impression indices reduced the potential adverse effects of response bias, and increased the accuracy of the results for self-reported measures (Bar-On, 2005).

Data Collection Procedures

IRB exemption was obtained and provided to the researcher, and the school district provided the administered EQ-I 2.0 Special Education teachers' assessment results from the three middle schools and five elementary schools. The school district provided the assessment results to the primary researcher in a pre-coded format by assigning each participant an identifier that started with the letter T to replace personally identifiable information. All teacher and student data were collected by the cooperating facility. Personally identifiable information associated with the data was not disclosed to the researcher. Therefore, the information used for this research should be considered as *data mining*.

The online scoring platform converted participants' self-ratings to standard scores that had a mean score of 100 with a standard deviation of 15 (Multi-Health Systems, 2012). The EQ-i 2.0 provided a five-page individual summary report for each

respondent. This report included demographic information, results of the EQ-i 2.0 including total EI, standard scores for the composite scales including self-perception composite, self-expression composite, interpersonal composite, decision-making composite, and stress-management composite, and results for the 15 subscales used to derive the composite scales. Appendix A contains a sample results report.

To acquire student achievement scores, as measured by the reading end-of-year STAAR test, the primary researcher obtained student results from the school district in a pre-coded format on an Excel spreadsheet that corresponded to the appropriate teacher and the student's primary disability. For example, a student receiving instruction from teacher coded as T25 was coded with the first portion of the teacher identifier and an assigned coding that started with the letter S, T25-S1.

<center>**Data Analysis**</center>

To explore possible relationships between the special education teacher's EI and reading achievement of the students served through special education, a series of multiple regressions were run between student achievement scores and several predictor variables. A multiple regression is the appropriate statistical procedure to analyze the variability of a dependent variable based on a set of independent variables (Kraha, Turner, Nimon, Zientek, & Henson, 2012). The predictors included special education teachers' total EI standard score, and teachers' standard scores on the five composite scores of the EQ-i 2.0. Each of the predictor variables was measured on a continuous scale. The dependent variable, student achievement, was also measured on a continuous scale.

To answer Research Question 1, What is the relationship between special education teachers' combined composite emotional intelligence scores and students'

reading achievement as measured by the end of the year the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) program?; the primary researcher independently ran a standard simple regression with mean student achievement scores on the STAAR reading test assessment regressed on the total EQ score. The statistical significance of the regression and effect size (R^2) was evaluated to answer the research question.

To answer Research Question 2, What is the relationship between special education teachers' composite area scores (self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, decision-making, and stress management) either individually or in combination and students' reading scores?; the most critical composite of a special education teacher's EI in predicting student achievement. For this analysis, composite scores on the five application areas of the EQ-i 2.0 were analyzed to determine their ability to predict student STAAR scores. Mean student z-scores were independently regressed on the five predictors in Research Question 2. One simultaneous, standard multiple regression was run for reading. The researcher determined the statistical significance of the overall model, as well as inspected the resultant coefficients, including β-weights, structure coefficients, and squared semi-partial correlations to determine the predictive power of each application area on student STAAR scores.

For each analysis, the researcher utilized an alpha-level of .05 to check for statistical significance and relative importance of each predictive variable. Additionally, the unstandardized coefficient β-weights, structure coefficients, and squared semi-partial correlations of each predictive variable were evaluated. An R^2 was used to examine the significance of the relationships between the various predictive variables and the dependent variable.

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CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

With the current exploratory study, the researcher sought to determine if a significant relationship exists between special education teachers' levels of emotional intelligence (EI) and student academic achievement. Increased levels of EI suggest teachers may possess greater levels of patience with students, problem-solving capacity, stress management, and optimism than individuals with lower EI levels. Levels of EI were determined through administration of the EQi 2.0 self-assessment, which is comprised of five composite subscales: self-perception (SP), self-expression (SE), interpersonal (IC), decision-making (DM), and stress-management (SM). In addition to standard scores for each subtest, an overall EI score was determined for each participant. Two research questions were addressed in the analysis:

1. What is the relationship between special education teachers' combined composite emotional intelligence scores and students' reading achievement as measured by the end of the year the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) program?

2. What is the relationship between special education teachers' composite area scores (self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, decision-making, and stress management) either individually or in combination and students' reading scores?

Teacher Demographic Characteristics

Data from a total of 22 special education teachers were utilized in the study. The age of teachers ranged from 26-65 years at the time of data collection, *M* = 44.5 years, *SD*

= 11.8. Counts by gender and race/ethnicity of teachers are in Table 4. The majority of teachers were female (73%) and African American (73%).

Table 4

Teacher Demographic Characteristics

Sex	Race/Ethnicity			Total
	African American	Caucasian	Hispanic	
Male	5	1	0	6
Female	11	4	1	16
Total	16	5	1	22

Emotional Intelligence Results

Data from 22 elementary and middle school special education teachers were included in the analysis. Mean standard scores were well above those for the normative group, ranging from 111.1 for the self-expression subscale to 118.0 for the decision-making subscale as shown in Table 5. Mean score for the overall scale was 117.7, also well above the norm. These results suggest relatively high levels of EI among the teachers included in the sample. Skewness of the distributions of standard scores for each sub-test ranged from -0.30 for the stress management scale to 0.51 for self-expression. Distributions were slightly platykurtic, with the most extreme kurtosis value being -1.16 for the interpersonal scale. The ranges of values for both skewness and kurtosis suggest scale score distributions were relatively normally distributed. Results of Shapiro-Wilk tests of normality produced a non-significant result for each of the scales. These results suggest the EI data are reasonably normally distributed and appropriate to use for regression analysis.

To estimate internal consistency reliability, of scores obtained from the EQ-i 2.0, Cronbach's alpha were calculated based on individual responses using SPSS Version 23.0. To ensure consistent directionality of responses across the instrument, response codes were reversed for the 44 negatively worded items, such as, "I don't feel good about myself" in the self-regard subscale. Alpha coefficients for each scale and the overall instrument are in Table 5. Reliability of scores for the individual scales was high, ranging from .829 for the self-expression scale to .934 for the self-perception scale.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for the Emotional Quotient Inventory 2.0

Subscale	*M*	*SD*	Min.	Max.	Skewness	Kurtosis	Alpha
Self-Perception	115.6	11.1	95	130	-0.271	-1.046	.934
Self-Expression	111.1	10.0	94	135	0.514	0.148	.829
Interpersonal	113.5	10.7	100	132	0.344	-1.160	.906
Decision Making	118.0	12.6	95	136	-0.118	-1.085	.901
Stress Management	116.3	11.3	96	133	-0.296	-1.097	.914
Overall EI	117.7	11.5	97	136	-0.099	-1.197	.975

Note. $N = 22$

STAAR Reading Results

STAAR reading test scores from 320 students in Grades 3-8 for each teacher were included in the analysis to determine the potential relationship between EI and academic achievement. The number of students at each grade level ranged from 37 in Grade 3 to 74 in Grade 8 as shown in Table 6. Mean *z*-scores were negative at each grade level,

ranging from -0.640 at Grade 4 to -1.101 in Grade 8. On average, overall reading

performance of the students served through special education included in the analysis was

nearly one standard deviation below the mean for all students, with a mean *z*-score of -

0.945. While mean performance of these students lagged behind the district means, some

students demonstrated relatively high levels of performance, as indicated by maximum *z*-

scores well above 1.0 at several grade levels as shown in Table 6. The skewness and

kurtosis of the overall data set suggest STAAR *z*-scores are slightly positively skewed,

but appear to be reasonably normally distributed to be included as the dependent variable

in the regression analyses.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for STAAR Reading z-Scores

Grade Level	*N*	*M*	*SD*	Minimum	Maximum	Skewness	Kurtosis
3	37	-0.887	0.757	-1.957	1.256	0.762	0.437
4	39	-0.640	0.979	-2.192	1.436	0.826	-0.249
5	61	-0.946	0.843	-2.283	1.116	0.815	0.064
6	58	-0.972	0.977	-2.552	1.879	0.752	0.151
7	51	-0.960	0.892	-2.284	1.277	0.455	-0.574
8	74	-1.101	1.017	-2.906	1.005	0.369	-0.753
Total	320	-0.945	0.929	-2.906	1.879	0.571	-0.189

Research Question 1

To address Research Question 1 as to whether a relationship exists between EI of

special education teachers and student achievement, a simple weighted regression

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analysis was performed using overall standard scores on the EQ-i 2.0 as a predictor variable and mean STAAR z-scores as the outcome variable, using number of students attributed to each teacher as the weight. The number of students attributed to the 22 teachers ranged from 1 to 35, with a mean of 14.0 students ($SD = 9.6$). The regression model was not statistically significant, adjusted $R^2 = -.025$, $p = .492$, indicating that, for this sample, overall EI of the special education teacher was not related to student reading achievement as measured by STAAR reading.

STAAR Academic Achievement and EQ-i Scales

To address Research Question 2 pertaining to the potential relationship between the five application areas of the EQ-i and student academic achievement, a standard multiple regression was performed using teacher scores on each of the five scales as predictor variables and weighted mean STAAR z-scores as the outcome variable, using the number of student scores included in the mean as the weight. The overall model was not significant, F (5, 16) = 1.94, $p = .143$, adjusted $R^2 = .183$; however, the standardized regression coefficients were significantly different from zero for both the interpersonal scale, $\beta = -1.092$, $t(17) = -2.24$, $p = .040$, and the stress management scale, $\beta = 1.104$, $t(17) = 2.31$, $p = .035$ as shown in Table 7. It is of note that the regression coefficients for the interpersonal scale are negative, suggesting students of those teachers with greater interpersonal skills scored lower on the STAAR assessment than those of teachers with lower scores in the interpersonal scale. Inspection of the squared semi-partial correlation coefficients for the interpersonal and stress management scales suggest each of these variables uniquely contribute approximately the same proportion of the variance in STAAR z-scores explained by the model, 20% and 21% respectively.

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Table 7

Multiple Regression Statistics

Variable	b	β	t	p	sr^2	r_s
Intercept	-0.367		-0.611	.550		
Self-Perception	0.018	0.809	1.746	.100	.119	-.059
Self-Expression	-0.008	-0.344	-0.995	.335	.039	-.341
Interpersonal	-0.024	-1.092	-2.238	.040	.195	-.424
Decision Making	-0.015	-0.705	-1.597	.130	.099	-.217
Stress Management	0.024	1.104	2.308	.035	.207	.094

Note. pr^2 = squared semi-partial correlation coefficient; r_s = structure coefficient

Conclusion

With the current study, the researcher attempted to determine if a relationship exists between special education teachers' levels of EI and student academic performance. Results presented suggest teachers' overall scores on the EQ-i 2.0 is not a significant predictor of special education student performance on the STAAR reading test assessment. Therefore, the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis; the total composite score of EQi is not a significant predictor of the special education student achievement performance on the STAAR reading test assessment. Multiple regression analysis suggested the interpersonal and stress management components of the EQ-i explain some of the variance in STAAR scores. The researcher also failed to reject the null hypothesis as decision-making, self-expression, and self-perception are not significant predictors of special education student achievement of reading. Thus, as interpersonal and stress management showed significance in scores as predictors of

special education student achievement on STAAR reading, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis. It is of note that the small sample size ($N = 22$) did not provide adequate power to detect a small to medium effect size for simple and multiple regression analyses, and these results should be interpreted in recognition of this fact.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between the special education teachers' EI and its impact on student reading achievement. Specifically, the study addressed two research questions:

1. What is the relationship between special education teachers' combined composite emotional intelligence scores and students' reading achievement as measured by the end of the year the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) program?

2. What is the relationship between special education teachers' composite area scores (self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, decision-making, and stress management) either individually or in combination and students' reading scores?

EI in this study was defined as "a set of emotional and social skills that influence the way we perceive and express ourselves, develop and maintain social relationships, cope with challenges, and use emotional information in an effective and meaningful way" (Bar-On, 1997, p. 3). This researcher explored special education teachers' EI and its relationship to special education student's reading achievement as measured through performance on the 2017 administration of the Texas STAAR reading test.

This study included teachers' EQ-i 2.0 assessment results and students' 2017 STAAR Reading test data obtained from a North Texas school district. EQ-i 2.0 had been recently administered by the North Texas school district for unspecified reasons and the district allowed the results to be included in this study. Results obtained by the

school district included 22 special education teachers of Grades 3-8 students from across the school district. The researcher included the 2017 Reading STAAR test results of 320 students receiving special education services in this study to analyze the relationship of the students' reading achievement to the special education teachers' EI scores.

In this chapter, the researcher provides a summary of the results, a discussion of the limitations and delimitations of this study, implications for educational practice, and recommendations for additional research of special education teachers' EI and its impact on students' reading achievement.

Summary of Results

The quantitative results of this study were analyzed for this section. The first research question was, "What is the relationship between special education teachers' combined composite emotional intelligence scores and students' reading achievement as measured by the end of the year the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) program?" There was no relationship between the teachers' EI to students' reading achievement found in this study. The findings for this research question were straight forward and showed no relationship to the overall composite score of the special education teachers' EI and the students' reading achievement.

Research Question 2 was to answer if there was a relationship between one of the special education teachers' composite areas of EI individually or collectively to their students' reading achievement. Specifically, the interpersonal composite (IC) was negative, and the stress management composite (SM) was positive, suggesting individuals with higher interpersonal scores had lower student performance than teachers with lower interpersonal scores. Also, teachers with higher SM scores had significantly

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higher student test scores than those with lower SM scores. Therefore, the study results would indicate teachers' SM score had a significant positive impact on students' reading achievement as measured by the STAAR test. However, teachers' higher IC scores revealed a relationship to students' lower reading scores. To the converse, student performance of teachers with lower IC scores' was significantly better than those whose teachers recorded relatively higher IC scores.

The findings of this study place SM as a priority for teacher effectiveness. SM measured on the EQi-2.0 includes subscales that measured the participant's flexibility, stress tolerance, and optimism. Given the high levels of stress associated with the role of a special education teacher, it would make sense that those who can better manage and control stress can impact their students' achievement.

This researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis as decision-making, self-expression, and self-perception are not significant predictors of special education student achievement of reading. Interpersonal and stress management showed significance in scores as predictors of special education student achievement on STAAR Reading, thus the researcher rejected the null hypothesis.

Limitations and Delimitations

There were some limitations and delimitations to this study. For this analysis, limitations mean barriers or challenges to the research study, and delimitations mean choices made by this researcher important to mention for this study's implications.

The EQ-i 2.0 assessment was administered by the school district to its special education teachers. Less than 100% of the special education teachers completed the assessment as requested by the school district. Therefore, the data received by the district

did not contain enough special education teachers to ensure a significant sample size to establish power in this study. The use of the self-report assessment required the participants to provide honest self-reflective answers to each question. Self-reporting assessments leave the participant responsible for providing honest answers, thus placing the results of the assessment at risk. However, the use of the EQi 2.0 was a delimitation due to this assessment being the most comprehensive tool available that aligned with the EQ research by Goleman (1998) and Bar-On (2000).

The second limitation to the study was the fact that students have varying educational needs and disabilities. Students included in this study were not categorized based on their differentiated disability characteristics or the severity of their educational needs. Students in this study received different levels of special education instructional support, intensity, and instructional interventions which were not included in the study. For example, the study did not differentiate or correlate the students receiving specially designed instruction in multiple settings including the mainstream classroom and resource classroom for those students placed in a behavior intervention class or a self-contained classroom setting. Although special education teachers are required to have a special education teacher state certification, each instructional setting requires additional certification and training that may have contributed to this study's findings.

Students having a different number of test items were an issue to consider for comparison. To best correct the variances that existed in the students' achievement test item numbers, students' scores were converted to z-scores. Student achievement was determined by their performance on the 2017 STAAR reading test assessment, measured as raw scores, which were converted to z-scores based on district-level results for each

grade level. The *z*-score conversion was necessary since STAAR results from Grades 3-8 were utilized in the analysis, and each test version contained a different number of items.

TEA (2017a) and ESSA (2015) requires students receiving special education supports and services to participate in their enrolled grade level state assessments and does not require a particular classroom setting or level of support to do so. However, each student has an IEP that targets individualized instructional needs that impact their performance on grade level state test. Self-contained classrooms are defined by the 2016-2017 Student Attendance Accounting Handbook based specifically on students' time in a special education classroom setting (TEA, 2016a). The term "self-contained" means that an eligible student receives instruction in a special education setting for a duration of 50% or more time of the instructional day (TEA, 2016a, p. 78).

Students placed in a self-contained classroom receiving reading instruction are provided modified reading instruction from a special education certified teacher. On the other hand, students placed in an inclusion or co-teach setting may or may not have modified reading instruction and would receive instruction delivered by two certified teachers. Students instructed in the inclusion/co-teach instructional arrangement receive their instruction from a general education certified teacher and a special education certified teacher. Also, students in the mainstream setting may receive instructional support through a paraprofessional supervised by a state certified special education teacher and would have no direct contact with a special education teacher. Considering the different type of teachers and their training may have contributed to this study.

The third limitation to this study was the exclusion of information which established how each student's state test was administered and taken. The TEA provides

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school districts with options for testing students to be determined by the student's ARD committee. Each student's ARD committee in consideration of their individualized needs selects particular accessibility and designated supports for students to access the STAAR test. Some students' state assessments were administered in a small group administration setting or provided extended time to complete the test, which was not included in this study. Students receiving some designated supports were administered the STAAR test through a computerized online version of the test while others completed the traditional paper and pencil version of the test. Information regarding the modalities in which the test was administered may have influenced the results.

Conclusions and Discussion

Empirical research has established that special education teachers' stress is a significant factor in special education teacher retention and longevity in the field of teaching (Billingsley, 2004). Results from this study align with the research from Goleman (1998), Bar-on (2005), Baglieri and Shapiro (2012), and Salovey and Mayer (1990) that an individual's ability to manage their stress influences their performance ability and their ability to influence others.

Billinglsey and McLeskey (2004) examined the retention of special education teachers and identified stress as a significant contributor to special education teacher attrition and negative opinions about their role. High levels of stress associated with special education teachers confirm the significance of teachers needing to have stress management techniques to be successful at their jobs.

Goleman (1995) defined EI as "the ability to identify, assess, and control one's emotions, the emotions of others, and that of groups" (pp. 43-44). The EQi-2.0 evaluates

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stress management by an assessment of three sub composites flexibility, stress tolerance, and optimism. Sub-composites of the SM composite are defined in Table 8.

Table 8

Stress Management Sub-Composites Definitions

Sub-Composites	Defined
Flexibility	Is explained as changing one's feelings emotions, thoughts, and behaviors to unfamiliar, unpredictable, and dynamic circumstances or ideas.
Stress-Tolerance	Includes coping with stressful or difficult situations and believing that one can manage or influence situations in a positive manner.
Optimism	Operates as a gauge of one's positive attitude and outlook on life. It involves remaining hopeful and resilient, despite occasional setbacks

Note. Multi-Health Systems, 2012.

Specific details of the sub composites listed in Table 8 such as "coping with stressful situations and remaining hopeful and resilient despite setbacks" align to the role of a special education teacher (Multi-Health Systems, 2012). Special education teachers work with students that at times show regression of skills daily, and behavioral characteristics that are challenging (Friend, 2014). Nonetheless, special education teachers are leaders in their classroom and are required to maintain composure, and positively model behavior for their students (Merideth, 2007). Empirical research places stress-management at the epi-center of effective teaching. The findings of this study further support the important of stress management and its effects on student achievement.

Marzano's (2003) and Baglieri and Shapiro's (2012) research aligns with this study's results regarding relationship and influence of teachers, which confirms the need

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for teachers to have better control of their stress to form relationships and positively influence their students. Marzano (2003) asserted that building a relationship with students supports student learning which requires special education teachers to be able to tolerate and manage the challenges that come with teaching students' with disabilities. For example, students with a

> *Specific learning disability* (SLD) is a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language that is spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. (Code of Federal Regulations, 2012, p. 13)

Therefore, learning in academic areas, such as reading, requires teachers to have specialized skills, tolerance, and empathy to instruct students with a SLD. Seventy-eight percent of the student sample used in this study included students with a SLD. Although specific students' disabilities were not identified in this study, it is reasonable to believe that stress management for teachers of students with SLD is a significant incidental correlational finding. Given the majority of the students included are identified as SLD, the results of this study align with the specific success factors for teacher effectiveness. This study directly confirmed Billingsley's (2004) special education teacher retention research detailing the need for special education teacher to cope with high levels of stress to be successful.

Research by Harms and Crede (2010), aligned with this study. Their research supported the impact of teachers' acting as a role model and cultivating a climate of trust, which further confirms the need for teachers to manage their stress levels better.

Students with disabilities most often display maladaptive behaviors (Lloyd, Kameenui, & Chard, 1997). Students' behaviors vary from the intensity and cause, given the characteristics of the identified disability.

Special education teachers of students with emotional behavior disorders have self-reported having to use coping strategies such as alcohol and prescription drugs due to high levels of stress (Pullis, 1992). Factors of students' verbal and physical violence pose a challenge for teachers of the student population with an emotional disturbance (ED). Sometimes daily teachers of students with an ED endure physical and verbal attacks from their students. Teachers as leaders in their classrooms are there to influence and change students' behavior and teach students alternative replacement behaviors. The need to manage, and maintain behavior as the teacher leader further substitutes the significance of this study's findings of higher stress management influencing positive student achievement. The study results corroborated Marzano's (2003) need for teachers to have high levels of stress management as an influence on student achievement.

The interpersonal composite area of the EQ-1 2.0 consists of the sub-composites interpersonal relationships, empathy, and social responsibility. Interpersonal relationships are important for special education teachers working with different professionals, parents, and teachers. Bar-on (2012) describes interpersonal relationships as developing and maintaining good relationships. There is value in maintaining good relationships for a teacher.

Empathy and social responsibility are the remaining sub-composites of the total interpersonal composite used in this study. The study results indicated teachers that scored higher in this composite area appeared to have a negative effect on student

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achievement. The negative effects of the student achievement in this area can reasonably be attributed to the social aspect of the teacher having more empathy and emotional connection to the students and not focusing on the core instructional purpose of a teacher.

Implications for Educational Practice

The lack of the existence of research about the EI of special education teachers served as the catalyst for this study. The study results will add to the literature to enhance special education teacher EI as a factor for teacher effectiveness. Further, the delimitations and limitations in this study are areas to influence future research perspectives and provide different viewpoints to add to the field of teacher effectiveness as it pertains to special education teachers and students.

Special education teacher roles are increasingly changing in workload and should be examined for further training and education for teacher stress management. Universities that provide special education teacher training should facilitate the education of stress management techniques. Special education preservice teachers should be provided an opportunity to observe special education classroom settings during their training.

The development and or implementation of a stress management and wellness incentive should be required in all school districts. A stress management system would allow teachers free access to therapeutic stress management intervention upon request. Also, special education teachers should be required to participate in stress management training to provide insight and understanding of their stress and ways to manage.

Currently, many school districts use screening assessments as part of their employment procedures to establish hiring compatibility and for placement. Given the

importance of stress management and student achievement, every special education teacher should consider the results of assessment such as the EQ-i 2.0's stress management results for appropriate special education teacher placement.

The EQ-i 2.0 workplace assessment provides school leaders with a coaching tool to assist teachers. The outset of the EQi 2.0 handbook provides one with tools to promote and gain buy-in from the participants (Multi-Health Systems, 2012). Results from the assessment are individualized and provide specific detailed strategies for coaching teachers to improve their areas of weakness (Multi-Health Systems, 2012). Individuals that have completed the assessment receive the results that include an analysis of the scores and provide a real work perspective of how their emotions impact their behaviors toward themselves and others. The coach results sections provide the coach with a framework for coaching the client/teacher to set goals, timelines, and strategies. Training for coaching using the EQi 2.0 models provides a distinction between counseling and coaching. Also, the publisher offered strategies for coaches that are not professional coaches to stay safe in the process and assist their client as they work to improve their EI (Multi-Health Systems, 2012).

School district administrators should provide professional development for administrators and special education teachers to ensure they understand the need for collaboration. School administrators, by becoming more aware of factors that contribute to teachers' stress, could improve teacher effectiveness by eliminating stressful factors within their control. Specifically, include special education teachers in the processes of decision-making that will most likely affect them will be a contributing factor to reducing teacher stress.

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Recommendations for Future Research

The study results provide significant data to consider for future research. The limitations detailed in this study provide opportunity for extended research of special education teacher EI and student achievement. To improve this topic of research this researcher recommends: 1) replicate this study with a larger teacher sample size, 2) replicate this study targeting a specific disability group, and 3) replicate this study examining a specific instructional arrangement.

Further investigation of the relationship of special education teacher EI in the interpersonal area is needed. The study results provided preliminary data supporting that teachers with higher levels in the interpersonal composite had a negative effect on students' reading scores. Further research in this area should examine the composite areas and sub composite areas' of special education teachers EI. Research in this area could be expanded by utilizing a commonality analysis to determine a more in-depth examination of the sub composites that contribute to students' achievement.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Sample Overall EI Report

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APPENDIX B

Sample Confidential Student Report

Explanation of Results

A Student's Scale Score

This is your child's scale score, which shows his or her performance on the test. The STAAR scale score lets you compare your child's score with the Satisfactory and Advanced performance levels. The scale score indicates how far above or below these performance levels your child's achievement is.

B Level II: Satisfactory and Level III: Advanced

To the right of the scale score, the "YES" or "NO" shows whether your child achieved Level II: Satisfactory or Level III: Advanced on the test.

C Test Information

This column shows whether your child took a specific version of a STAAR test. Different letters indicate different versions: *s* for STAAR Spanish, *l* for STAAR L, *a* for STAAR A, and *b* for braille. If there is not a letter in this column, your child took the general version of the STAAR assessment.

D Progress Measure

The STAAR Progress Measure gives you information about how much your child has improved in a subject area. For reading and mathematics, this measure is based on a comparison of your child's score last year with his or her score this year. For English language learners, an English Language Learner (ELL) Progress Measure is reported. This progress measure provides information about whether your child has made progress toward passing STAAR. The ELL progress measure is based on your child's level of English language proficiency and the amount of time he or she has attended school in the United States. This measure will help you better understand whether your child is making reasonable progress in acquiring on-grade-level academic skills based on his or her English proficiency and schooling. For more information about the STAAR and ELL progress measures, contact your child's school or visit TEA's website at http://tea.texas.gov/Student_Testing_and_Accountability/Testing/State_of_Texas_Assessments_of_Academic_Readiness_(STAAR)/Progress_Measures/.

E Scale Score Bar

This bar shows how well students could perform on the test. The arrow shows where your child actually performed on the test. The scores needed to achieve Level II: Satisfactory and Level III: Advanced are also marked on the scale score bar.
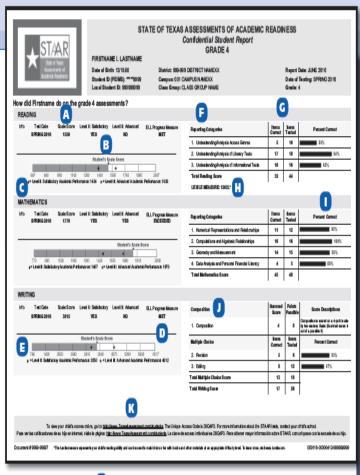
F Reporting Categories

The content and skills tested on each STAAR assessment are grouped together. Each group is called a reporting category. The categories for each subject are listed in this column.

G Items Correct and Items Tested

The Items Correct column shows the number of questions your child answered correctly for each reporting category. The Items Tested column shows the total number of questions tested for each reporting category.

H Lexile Measure

A Lexile measure is reported for students who took grade 3-5 reading tests in English and grade 3-4 reading tests in Spanish. The Lexile measure represents both the complexity of a text, such as a book or article, and an individual's reading ability. The purpose of the Lexile measure is to appropriately match readers with books.

I Percent Correct

The shaded bars show the percentage of questions your child answered correctly for each reporting category.

J Writing Performance Results

On the writing test, your child wrote one composition and answered multiple-choice questions related to revision and editing. In addition to the number and percent of multiple-choice questions your child answered correctly, your child's score on the composition is shown. For the written composition section of the writing results, the first column lists the composition your child wrote. The second column shows the points your child earned on the composition. The third column shows the total points possible on the composition. The final column describes the rating score, showing the level of writing performance your child demonstrated on the composition.

K Student Data Portal

Through the student data portal, parents and students can access assessment information across test administrations and years. You may access the portal by using the web address and student access code that are listed at the bottom of your child's actual test report.

STATE OF TEXAS ASSESSMENTS OF ACADEMIC READINESS
Confidential Student Report
GRADE 4

FIRSTNAME I. LASTNAME

Date of Birth: 12/15/00
Student ID (PEIMS): ***99.99
Local Student ID: 999.999.99

District: 999-999 DISTRICT NAMEXX
Campus: 001 CAMPUS NAMEXX
Class Group: CLASS GROUP NAME

Report Date: JUNE 2016
Date of Testing: SPRING 2016
Grade: 4

How did Firstname do on the grade 4 assessments?

READING

Info	Test Date	Scale Score	Level II: Satisfactory	Level III: Advanced	ELL Progress Measure	Reporting Categories	Items Correct	Items Tested	Percent Correct
	SPRING 2016	1550	YES	NO	MET	1. Understanding/Analysis Across Genres	5	10	50%
						2. Understanding/Analysis of Literary Texts	17	18	94%
						3. Understanding/Analysis of Informational Texts	10	16	63%
						Total Reading Score	32	44	

LEXILE MEASURE: 1202L*

MATHEMATICS

Info	Test Date	Scale Score	Level II: Satisfactory	Level III: Advanced	ELL Progress Measure	Reporting Categories	Items Correct	Items Tested	Percent Correct
	SPRING 2016	1770	YES	YES	EXCEEDED	1. Numerical Representations and Relationships	11	12	92%
						2. Computations and Algebraic Relationships	16	16	100%
						3. Geometry and Measurement	14	15	93%
						4. Data Analysis and Personal Financial Literacy	4	5	80%
						Total Mathematics Score	45	48	

WRITING

Info	Test Date	Scale Score	Level II: Satisfactory	Level III: Advanced	ELL Progress Measure	Composition	Summed Score	Points Possible	Score Descriptions
	SPRING 2016	3815	YES	NO	MET	1. Composition	4	8	Composition is scored on a 4-point scale by two readers. Basic (Summed score: 4 out of a possible 8)

	Items Correct	Items Tested	Percent Correct
Multiple Choice			
2. Revision	5	6	83%
3. Editing	8	12	67%
Total Multiple Choice Score	13	18	
Total Writing Score	17	26	

Document #999-99997   *The Lexile measure represents your child's reading quality and can be used to match him or her with books and other materials at an appropriate difficulty level. To learn more, visit www.Lexile.com.   000116-000004134999999999

APPENDIX C

Sample Items Response

Item Responses

Reality Testing

72	I get stuck when thinking about different ways of solving problems.	1
75	I feel overwhelmed when I need to make a decision.	2
64	If I have trouble solving a problem, I get frustrated and give up.	1
112	I let my emotions get in the way when making decisions.	1

Reality Testing

14	I see situations as they really are.	4
36	I make realistic plans to achieve my goals.	4
43	I recognize my own biases.	3
57	I have a good sense of my strengths and weaknesses.	4
77	I know when I need to be more objective.	4
85	I know when my emotions affect my objectivity.	3
107	Even when upset, I'm aware of what's happening to me.	5
111	I have a good sense of what is going on around me.	4

Impulse Control

2	I make rash decisions when I'm emotional.	3
5	I interrupt when others are speaking.	4
34	My impulsiveness creates problems for me.	3
44	I am impulsive.	4
46	When I start talking, it's hard to stop.	3
50	I tend to react hastily.	1
56	It's difficult for me to control my impulses.	3
67	It's hard for me to resist temptation.	3

Flexibility

8	It's difficult for me to change my opinion.	4
33	I do not like being in unfamiliar situations.	4
42	It's hard for me to change my ways.	3
82	It's hard for me to compromise.	3
87	I feel uneasy with last-minute changes.	4
95	It's hard for me to make changes in my daily life.	3
120	I need things to be predictable.	4
122	Change makes me uneasy.	3

Stress Tolerance

1	I keep calm in difficult situations.	2
28	I can't think clearly when I'm under stress.	2
55	I thrive in challenging situations.	5
79	I handle stress without getting too nervous.	4
88	I perform well under pressure.	5
99	I cope well with stressful situations.	4
113	I handle upsetting problems well.	4
123	I do not react well to stressful situations.	1

Optimism

29	I stay positive even when things get difficult.	4
32	I am optimistic.	4
35	I expect the worst.	2
80	I am hopeful about the future.	5
83	I see the best in people.	2
90	I have good thoughts about the future.	4
98	I expect things to turn out all right, despite setbacks from time to time.	5
116	I have a positive outlook.	5

Happiness

12	It's hard for me to enjoy life.	3
26	I am not happy with my life.	1
51	I am enthusiastic.	4
71	I am happy.	4
92	I am satisfied with my life.	4
101	I'm excited about my life.	4
108	When I wake up in the morning, I look forward to the day.	3
128	I am content.	3

Inconsistency Item Pairs   🔁 Indicates inconsistent responses

80.	I am hopeful about the future.	5
90.	I have good thoughts about the future.	4
29.	I stay positive even when things get difficult.	4
32.	I am optimistic.	4
130.	I respect myself.	4
132.	I'm happy with who I am.	4
92.	I am satisfied with my life.	4
101.	I'm excited about my life.	4
71.	I am happy.	4
116.	I have a positive outlook.	5

110.	I am sensitive to the feelings of others.	5
124.	I care about other people's feelings.	5
26.	I am not happy with my life.	1
31.	I don't feel good about myself.	1
88.	I perform well under pressure.	5
99.	I cope well with stressful situations.	4
🔁 70.	I'm in touch with other people's emotions.	2
78.	I relate to the emotions of others.	4
108.	When I wake up in the morning, I look forward to the day.	3
128.	I am content.	3

Positive Impression/Negative Impression

25	I make mistakes.	2
59	I like everyone I meet.	1
94	I have bad days.	3

119	Things bother me.	3
127	I only care about what is best for others.	3
131	I know the right answer.	5

516381-04162011-2.0   **MHS**

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