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How School Leaders and Teachers Understand the Concept of Inclusion and How They Transform Their Visions of Inclusion into Practice

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Foreword

Background and Motivation

In my own history of schooling there was always this gap between life at school and at home. I never managed to fully connect these two worlds. A couple of teachers however, managed to connect teaching to our daily life experiences. The way they linked to us as students in a social way, and how it affected our growth together as students, appear as special memories from school.

The true adventure of learning beyond books first had its real breakthrough in my life as I studied to become a teacher. This also relates to the connection between how the subject was taught, combined with the way the teacher linked to us as students. Valuable teaching affected my life in productive and life-changing ways, as the teachers' work appeared to be a passionate lifestyle, more than just a job.

When I started to work as a teacher myself, a vision had already developed within me connected to how I wanted to meet and interact with students for all of them to experience school as a meaningful and valuable place to be. I wanted to create an environment where all students could learn and reflect upon learning based on where they came from and who they were, and where students could reflect together and learn from each others experiences as well. My drive and vision was connected to good experiences I had from teachers that managed to create productive, vital and meaningful classrooms when I was a student myself, and also from lacks I had experienced of not feeling connected to either teachers, students or curriculum, especially in early school years. For a short period of time I managed to create the classroom I wanted. But as there was a lack of support in the system, I didn't last very long.

I never actually realized what would need to be different for me to succeed as a teacher before I started the Master Programme in Special Needs Education. First of all research within the field of inclusive education and a sociocultural perspective on learning gave me a language for what I had tried to accomplish working as a teacher myself. I also learnt that being able to implement and sustain productive changes in a successful way means that you need to work through processes collectively.

Rooted in a vision of creating a school where neither *schools* or the concepts of *disability* or *special needs* are seen as given, but as historical situated and related social constructions (Nevøy 2007), the path through this study has lead me into a bigger vision of how to create a school that equally values *all* children.

This study focuses on how school leaders and teachers understand the concept of inclusion and how they transform their visions of inclusion into practice.

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Ann Elin Svensen

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Background and Motivation for my Research

Part of my motivation in writing this master thesis is to be able to take a closer look at schools that have succeeded in creating a challenging environment that is seriously committed both to high academic student achievement, and to creating a safe, socially supportive community where students grow socially and emotionally. I want to gain a deeper understanding of how different schools have managed this challenge as a collective process between administrators and teachers, students and their families as a whole.

The question of how to reduce the gap in achievement between groups of students with different social backgrounds, or to what degree schools are effective in breaking the cycle of social inequality patterns, has been a chief interest of mine, both through working as a teacher, and through the Master Program in Special Needs Education. Research within the field of inclusive education and the socio-cultural perspectives on learning, has propelled my motivation in the direction of how to break established traditions within schools and research, thereby benefiting from new avenues of change in a multicultural society.

Working as a teacher I found it hard to find this balance between linking to the students and meeting their needs, whilst at the same time striving to meet the demands of the national curriculum and policy, which in so many ways dominate the system of schooling. I worked in a junior high school representing 40 different nationalities. The professional requirements weren't always easy to transform into meaningful lessons for the diversity of students.

The theme of this study focuses on how school leaders and teachers at different schools understand the concept of inclusion, and how they transform their vision of inclusion into practice. I look at leadership and pedagogical practice as central activities within an inclusive perspective, trying to find answers that will contribute to the knowledge of how to create a better school for all students.

1.2 Location of Study

Norway experiences ever increasing diversity within society. In the Norwegian context of schooling, individualized, adapted education and differentiation are considered instrumental to fostering educational equity. Internationally, a growing amount of research addresses this issue from a different angle.

Within the frame of how schools can operate to be more beneficial for all students, and with the focus on how school leaders and teachers understand the concept of inclusion and how they transform their visions of inclusion into practice. Two charter schools in California which I call the Sunflower Academy and the Greenhill Elementary School, are chosen as a target for this study. My choice of location is first of all related to the fact that California has a long tradition and experience of major diversity. The objective is to gain knowledge about differentiation and adapted education from a totally different perspective, and from a country with a long tradition and experience of diversity, so as to get an extended view of what inclusion can be in practice. The research approach is to observe and learn from leaders and teachers at the two charter schools.

Charter schools are tuition-free public schools that are free from some of the rules and regulations that apply to regular public schools. In exchange they are held accountable for producing certain results that are set forth in each schools charter. Charter schools are attended by choice, and provide an alternative to regular public schools, while still being part of the public education system. Some charter schools provide a curriculum that specializes in certain fields (e.g. art and science) while others attempt to provide better and more efficient education than nearby public schools. A charter school has its own board of directors and hires its own teachers. Everything is run within the organization, and all the decisions of the school are made on site. A charter school is not dependent on the school district for funding, as is the case with regular public schools, but it has the same level of accountability for state test scores, and for meeting state standards. Still, the charter school has freedom in the way that it pursues the standard.

The charter schools involved in this study explicitly stand out as being inclusive schools. They have inclusion as an overall frame for their vision, even if their charters are framed and shaped differently. As charter schools, they make all their decisions on site, and all their

decisions involve everyone on site. I wanted to see how this strengthens the visions and practice of inclusion on the school sites, as these schools stand out with more autonomy than regular public schools. At public schools, a lot of the decisions are made at district level, before being implemented on the school sites, which means that although the schools do have some independence, they are more likely to be a product of a formula designed at district level, based on what the district believe to be good ideas for the schools.

The questions that form the foundation for my research focus on how charter schools build and work to get all the students through their rigorous academic program: how scaffolding is being erected to support student success; how structures of management and teaching provide the organizational framework for a culture of learning for both teachers and students; and how families are being involved to support student learning and success. Within this context my research focuses on how school leaders and teachers understand the concept of inclusion, and how they transform their visions of inclusion into practice.

Learning from schools and systems that are run differently than our own, can serve as a confrontation and as a resource for our own tradition and school policies. The schools that partake in this study challenge the predominant assumptions within education, that schools alone cannot produce any significant effect in reducing achievement gaps. Scrutinizing how visions of inclusion are being transformed into practice in such a different setting than our own can cause us to question some of our presupposed attitudes and fundamental assumptions about how schooling and school policy should be. This is the reason why charter schools are chosen as the empirical field of study in this research.

1.3 The Structure of the Thesis

As I want to look at how school leaders and teachers understand the concept of inclusion and how they transform their vision of inclusion into practice, I choose to look at aspects of leadership and practice as it unfolds at two charter schools part-taking in this study.

Chapter 1.0 gives a presentation of location of study, as well as defining an overall frame of inclusion for this study. Some of the challenges of inclusion as we face them in the 21st century is presented in this chapter as well.

Chapter 2.0 gives a presentation of the theoretical framework to be used in this study, with the focus on *Leadership, A Systemic Change Framework, The Productive Pedagogies* and *Parent Involvement*.

Chapter 3.0 presents the research process from beginning to end, as it appeared through this study, reflecting aspects of theory that has guided my path through this study.

Chapter 4.0 gives a presentation of the two schools being part of this study. The analysis from both schools is presented in this chapter.

Chapter 5.0 holds the discussion of where I try to highlight significant patterns from both schools, reflected by theory as presented in the theoretical framework.

Chapter 6.0 presents thoughts about innovation in a multicultural society, based on success structures and patterns from the two schools partaking in this study.

1.4 Defining Inclusion

Conventional high schools in the U.S. allocate students to high-, middle- and low-ability groups, or academic and general tracks, something that often correlates with the students' family background, their ethnicity and socioeconomic status. Children from low-income households or from ethnic minority groups are more likely to be assigned to low-ability tracks or groups. Furthermore, Latino and African American students are consistently underrepresented in programs for the "gifted and talented" and over-represented in special education programs (Ferguson, Kozleski & Smith, 2003; Mehan & Betts, 2008). Norwegian national school-reports (Utdanning, 2009) show a tendency in the same direction as the demographic diversity of society expands.

Twentieth century schools and educational system have been dominated by a narrow cultural perspective of schooling (Ferguson, 1995). Researchers suggest that patterns of over representation of ethnic minority groups in special education programs are a result of narrow cultural preferences for particular modes of knowledge, behavior and communication

(Ferguson et al., 2003).

This chapter gives a brief discussion on inclusive ideology, and the need for this ideology to be transformed into practice in the process of creating more inclusive schools that benefit the diversity of students. It serves as a background and understanding of my perspective on inclusion, the way I see and value it as an important part of schooling. And through the analysis it serves as an overall theoretical frame when presenting and discussing how school leaders and teachers understand the concept of inclusion, and how they transform their vision of inclusion into practice to include every student.

Since special education emerged as a separate part of public education throughout the 19th century, fundamental assumptions haven't changed much on how either general or special educators think about students and learning. As the focus on integration and inclusion has developed since the last decades of the 20th century, assumptions are still embedded in the culture and processes of schools as self-evident truths: there is something wrong with students that can't learn. This includes facts that students are responsible for their own learning, and that students need to be directed to different tracks, curricula, teachers and classrooms, based on their level of ability (Askildt & Johnsen, 2001; Booth & Ainscow, 2008; Ferguson, 1995).

Inclusive education is a phrase with international currency, shaping the content of national educational policies around the world. The idea of inclusive education as it was given impetus by the two conferences; one held in Jomtien, Thailand (1990), the other the Unesco conference in Salamanca, Spain (1994), will work as an overall structure for my theoretical framework. Both hold the idea of «education for all», and the Salamanca statement emphasizes that inclusive education:

challenges all exclusionary policies and practices in education; is based on a growing international consensus of the right of all children to a common education in their locality regardless of their background, attainment or disability; aims at providing good quality education for learners and a community based education for all (Booth & Ainscow, 1998: p. 3).

Booth and Ainscow draw on this definition through their own work and research, as they move the focus from students with «disabilities» and «special needs» to a broader focus about

what changes can be made in the system of schooling for all children to be included and valued equally (Vislie, 2003):

Inclusion is: a process (rather than a state) by which a school attempts to respond to all pupils as individuals; regards inclusion and exclusion as connected processes. Schools developing more inclusive practices may need to consider both; emphasizes the reconstructing of curricular provision in order to reach out to all pupils as individuals; emphasizes overall school effectiveness; and is of relevance to all phases and types of schools, possibly including special schools, since within any educational provision teachers face groups of students with diverse needs and are required to respond to this diversity (p. 23).

Ferguson (1995) relates to the same principles as she underlines her definition with the intention of eliminating the gap between «general» and «special» education, and with the same mission; to create one school for all:

Inclusion is a process of meshing general and special education reform initiatives and strategies in order to achieve a unified system of public education that incorporates all children and youths as active, fully participating members of the school community; that views diversity as the norm; and that ensures a high-quality education for each student by providing meaningful curriculum, effective teaching, and necessary supports for each student (Ferguson, 1995: p. 286).

Globally, educators are actively engaging the opportunity to transform education and how we go about the work of teaching and learning in schools. Drawing on other studies, Ferguson et al. (2003) points out the fact that schools no longer can afford to have disposable children. Systems and policies can no longer be built on practices that restrict and restrain, categorize and seek to identify and separate children and youth who do not «fit» the schools profiles of successful learners. Such practices and beliefs have done harm to children, limiting and constraining opportunities for children in poverty, children of color, children with disabilities, and children with cultural and language differences. Instead of creating better and more efficient schooling, and changing existing procedures, rules and requirements to accommodate new circumstances, educators now argue that schools must engage in the activities that will change the fundamental practices, relationships and assumptions within the

organization. These fundamental changes are also important in the relationship between the organization and the outside world, to help create improved student learning outcomes (Ferguson, 1995).

In this study I will look at how these fundamental assumptions appear, how they are being faced and dealt with to create changes, through looking at how school leaders and teachers understand the concept of inclusion, and how they transform their visions of inclusion into practice.

1.5 The real challenge of inclusion

To fully be able to transform schools into systems where *everyone* is valued for their differences, *all* change in schools must address differences in language, culture, gender, ability, class and ethnicity (Ferguson et al., 2003). Based on different studies, Ferguson et al. (2003) highlight that schools must draw on the strength of student diversity, and that diversity must be used as an asset to foster creativity and to leverage new interactions that support learning. Inclusive research and practice challenge the social and educational inequities that exist for students of differing abilities, ethnicities, experiences, religions and wealth (Ferguson, 2008; Nevøy, 2007; Vislie, 2003). To create a coherent vision for transforming the current educational system to a level where these inequities no longer are present, practitioners, families and researchers must engage in a conversation that includes multicultural perspectives on inclusion and the issue of disproportionality. Ferguson et al. (2003) asserts that schools need a true multicultural value system that simultaneously encompasses a concept, a process and a reform agenda based on the notion that all students have the right to equal access and participation in education. Moreover, this value system acknowledges that in our current school system some students are advantaged by their socio-cultural and economic status, ethnicity and gender. In a true multicultural education system, the practices and climate of schools that convey such privileges are no longer present (Ferguson, 1995; 2008).

In this study I will see how the practices and climate of the schools appear in the processes of how leaders and teachers understand the concept of inclusion and how they transform their visions of inclusion into practice to include every student.

A multicultural classroom will include student population with more and more differences. More inclusive practices take place when a shift in focus appears; from ability to diversity; from individual limitations to environmental constraints, which again leads to overall changes at all levels of schools as organizations. This paradigm shift requires a need for more dynamic relationships between students, teachers, other school personnel, families and community members; all working together to construct learning, to adjust support and to document accomplishments. Ferguson (1995) explains how this shift has led her to see *learning membership* as the most important part of inclusion. Meaningful change within the context of *learning memberships* requires a joint effort to reinvent schools to be more accommodating of all dimensions of human diversity. It also requires that processes and purposes of these schools are organized to make sure that all children are prepared to participate in the benefits of their communities, so that others in the community care about what happens to them enough to value them as members. This will be more important than a focus on student learning, where mainly the measuring of students' individual talents, ability and development is in focus. Nevøy (2007) describes this comprehensive inclusive shift in practice as a state where neither *schools*, nor the concepts of *disability* or *special needs* are seen as given, but as historically situated and related social constructions. The focus of profession is moved from special to general education, to how schools are framed and operate, and towards what need and should be changed to meet and encompass *all* students in the community (ibid).

In this study I will scrutinize how multicultural shifts as presented above take place when looking at how school leaders and teachers understand the concept of inclusion, and how they transform their vision of inclusion into practice.

In the following chapter I present the theoretical framework, or rather the theoretical lenses that have guided my research process at the two schools. Through the analysis and discussion this framework will naturally interlink with my overall perspective on inclusion as presented above.

2.0 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework presented in this chapter, lays the foundation for content and

meaning in the construction of data as presented in chapter 4.0. Through the application of this framework, questions emerged that have contributed to the creation of data as it appears in the study. Focusing on *Leadership, the Productive Pedagogies* and *Parent Involvement* as presented below, I look at how school leaders and teachers understand the concept of inclusion, and how they transform their visions of inclusion into practice.

2.1 Leadership

I use Fullan (2007) as a basis for the theoretical framework connected to leadership and the role of school leaders. Successful change processes appear as a vital part of transforming visions of inclusion into practice (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Ferguson, 1995; Ferguson et al., 2003; Fullan, 2007). I highlight the role of the school leaders and teachers as *transformational leaders* (Alexander, 2001), to see how they cooperate in the processes of creating a better school for all. I present Ferguson et al. (2003) *Systemic Change Framework* to highlight the systemic changes as they appear at the two schools. The purpose is to get an understanding of the inner structures of the schools as learning organizations. Fullan (2007) lays the foundation for the analysis and interpretations connected to parent involvement in this study.

2.1.1 The Principal

During the 1990s, research accumulated knowledge that put principals in the forefront in leading improvement at the school and community levels. Today, every serious change effort emphasizes the key role of the principal (Fullan, 2007). The role of the principal has become dramatically more complex and overloaded in latter years. Recent research identifies some specific change-related behaviors of principals who deal effectively with educational change, and focus on what principals actually do in order to create and maintain stability and change within their organizations (Fullan, 2007).

Fullan (2007) refers to research that shows discouragement among principals because of intensified and continual demands on headship that has occurred over the last decade. The study sends a message that principals need autonomy and support in order to feel successful, and that many principals struggle with limitations and lack of support. As we are beginning to

see clear examples of school principals who are successful, insights are available that can help existing principals to become more effective. Even more, these insights provide a basis for establishing a system of nurturing, supporting and holding accountable school leaders. Fullan (2007) describes the importance of combining stronger qualification standards for leaders, with experiences in which they develop themselves and new cultures simultaneously. Developing better leaders, developing the organization and improving the larger system are all part of the same process. To change and develop individuals, and to change and develop school cultures suited to the 21st century is the same work, Fullan (2007) asserts.

In the United States, the Interstate Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) has established a comprehensive set of standards for school leaders that are linked to professional development and training, licensure and assessment for principals. These standards reflect qualities within school management, and are drawing on research presenting successful characteristics about school leadership. They are adapted by many states in the U.S, in full or in part, and are expressed as below:

- 1. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community;*
- 2. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth;*
- 3. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment;*
- 4. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources;*
- 5. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner;*
- 6. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal and cultural context. (Fullan, 2007: p. 294).*

In this study I will reflect upon successful characteristics in school leaders and teachers when looking at how they understand the concept of inclusion, and how they transform their visions of inclusion into practice.

2.1.2 The Principal and Change

The principal is central to success within a school. He or she is in a strategic position to promote or inhibit the development of a teacher learning community. Referring to a systematic review of professional learning communities, Fullan (2007) shows that effective teachers: *leverage teacher commitment and support for collaboration, broker and develop learning resources for teacher communities and support transitions between stages of community development* (Fullan, 2007: p. 162). In so doing, principals spread and develop leaders across the school, and create a critical mass of distributive leadership.

Fullan (2007) shows how head teachers are recognized as being instrumental within schools that manage to consistently raise student achievement levels. What distinctively marks the principal within this context is that they are *relationship centered*, focusing on *professional standards, monitoring school performance*, and that they seek connections and ideas across the country in the process of developing their schools.

The vision and practice of these heads were organized around a number of core personal values concerning the modeling and promotion of respect (for individuals), fairness and equity, caring for the well-being and whole development of students and staff, integrity and honesty.

(Fullan, 2007: p.163).

Fullan (2007) shows that there is ample evidence that people are trusted to work as powerful professionals, and within clear collegial value frameworks that are common to all. Teamwork and participation in decision-making are emphasized. Goals are clear and agreed upon. Everyone has high expectations of both themselves and others, and communications are productive.

Further Fullan (2007) relates to a particular study showing that in schools that evidenced improvement over time:

Principals work together with a supportive base of parents, teachers, and community members to mobilize initiative. Their efforts broadly focused along two major dimensions: first, reaching out to parents and community to strengthen the ties between local school professionals and the clientele they are to serve; and second, working to expand the professional capacities of individual teachers, to promote the formation of a coherent professional community, and to direct resources toward enhancing the quality of instruction (Fullan, 2007: p 160).

Fullan (2007) continues:

These successful principals had:

- 1) *an inclusive facilitative orientation*
- 2) *an institutional focus on student learning*
- 3) *efficient management and*
- 4) *combined pressure and support (pp. 160-161)*

These principals have a strategic orientation, using instructional focus and school improvement plans to *attack incoherence*. The schools show a real continuity from one program to another, where teachers confirm that once a program has begun, there is a follow-up to make sure it is working.

Fullan (2007) also refers to research presenting a more comprehensive concept of *school capacity*:

School capacity consists of the collective effectiveness of the whole staff working together to improve student learning for all.

(Fullan, 2007: p. 163-164).

Five interrelated components of school capacity are identified within this setting:

1. *Teachers knowledge, skills, and dispositions*
2. *Professional community*

3. *Program coherence*
 4. *Technical resources*
 5. *Principal leadership*
- (Fullan 2007: p.164).

An important element of professional development is teachers individual knowledge, skills and dispositions. This can make a difference in the classroom. But unless connected to collective learning, this dimension by itself will fail to influence the culture of the school. As part of the second component, social and relationship resources are the key to school improvement. Fullan (2007) points out: *Individual and collective development need to be twinned if they are to result in increased school capacity* (p. 164). Further, this twinned individual and collective development, needs to be channeled in ways that combats the fragmentation of multiple innovations, through working on *program coherence*. Here programs for student and staff learning are coordinated through a focus on sustaining clear learning goals. This includes organizational focus and integration. Resources (materials, equipment, and access to expertise, time and space) is required to attain instructional improvement. And finally, quality leadership is needed to succeed and further develop the four previous factors on a continual basis:

The job of administrative leaders is primarily about enhancing the skills and knowledge of people in the organization, creating a common culture of expectations around the use of those skills and knowledge, holding the various pieces of the organization together in a productive relationship with each other, and holding individuals accountable for their contributions to the collective result.

(Fullan, 2007: pp. 164-165)

In this study I will relate leadership aspects concerning change as presented above, to how school leaders and teachers understand the concept of inclusion, and how they transform their visions of inclusion into practice.

2.1.3 The transformative leader

Bureaucratic authority and management are no longer the accepted norm when calling for

change in principal and teacher roles. Educators are caught between demands for excellence and efficiency and the constraints of decreased resources and changes in student demographics. This requires new models of leadership (Alexander, 2001; Ferguson et al., 2003; Fullan 2007). *Transformational leadership* is one such model that I want to highlight as an extension of what Fullan (2007) says about quality leadership as expressed above.

What characterizes the transformational leader is that he empowers others to lead: *The transformational leader's mission is to create a relationship with colleagues, community, and students of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents* (Alexander, 2001: p. 8).

A transformational leader directs the drive and force behind a group to an image of shared leadership. Sharing power and empowering others give others voice (teachers, parents and students). Giving others voice, creates an agenda of social change that includes equity, freedom and principles of a democratic society (Alexander, 2001).

Alexander (2001) indicates that: *perhaps the transformational leader, the moral leader, vested in the goal of empowerment and equity for all, extending values that enable others to do the same, working in tandem with others toward a shared purpose which accepts both individualism and collectivism as essential to organizational learning, may provide the leadership necessary for the establishment of the constancy in change that will support the creation of community in schools and facilitate generative learning for the continued life for all* (p. 9).

Through looking at how school leaders and teachers understand the concept of inclusion, and how they transform their visions of inclusion into practice, I want to scrutinize how school leaders empower teachers, students and parents to lead, and how school leaders and teachers create a learning environment founded in a shared purpose to create equity for all.

2.1.4 A Systemic Change Framework

Ferguson et al. (2003) has developed a Systemic Change Framework based on the premise that practitioners, schools and districts must be unified, information rich, and change oriented

in order to guide change efforts so that schools can be inclusive of all learners. This framework is provided to encourage educators, community and family members to discuss their beliefs about student learning, various student outcomes, multiple family goals, and within the context of an inclusive approach to each and every student. The Systemic Change Framework represents the varying levels of effort that combine to effect student learning and achievement. Four interconnected levels are represented: (1) *Student effort*, (2) *Professional effort*, (3) *School organizational effort*, and (4) *District effort and support*. Ferguson et al (2003) underlines that when the efforts at the three outer levels of the Framework are in sync with one another, the result will be a healthy system that better support student learning. Through this framework a shared reference point is provided for diverse members of the school community to collaborate in pursuit of common interests. *The Systemic Change Framework* as presented below serves as a tool to discover concrete ways of how structures of support and management are manifested at the two charter schools represented in this study.

Student Learning and Effort

The framework starts with the student, since student learning is seen as the heart of all school effort. Learning is functional, developmental and socially constructed. In order for learning to occur, students need to act or expend effort. Skills, knowledge and dispositions outside any person's immediate frame of reference, require that a person act or expend effort. Thoughtful, caring and reflective practice in the classroom is required to provide information, role models, conditions, opportunities, tasks and relationships that support and nurture students learning, both individually and as groups.

Professional effort

The skills and creativity of teachers and other practitioners serve as a foundation of how learning environments are established and maintained. Five core features are identified, representing this learning environment: (1) *Learning Standards*, (2) *Learning Assessment*, (3) *Teaching Design and Practices*, (4) *Group Practice and Professional Development*, and (5) *Family Participation in Teaching and Learning* (Ferguson et al. 2003: p. 9). When these elements are well designed and implemented, student learning and effort is optimized, both

students and teachers thrive, and ongoing professional development and support encourage practitioners' creativity and professionalism. This again leads to better student outcomes.

Within the context of professional effort, teachers must organize pedagogies that will connect and engage classrooms to students' individual experiences. *Learning standards (1)* support student effort in providing knowledge of what the students need to know and what they need to be able to do. *Learning assessment (2)* helps the teachers to understand the skills and knowledge of each student, while defining learning goals. *Teaching design and practices (3)* need to honor and address each student's particular learning, connecting to assessment practices as well. *Group practice and professional development (4)* is the hallmark of inclusive schools, as it opens up for communication across traditional roles and cultural boundaries. School professionals need training, coaching and support in order to implement inclusive practices effectively. Multicultural teaching requires skills and knowledge about cultural experiences, language and literacy. Putting teachers with different cultural backgrounds, varying traditions, skills and knowledge bases together, will enhance education for all learners, when professional collaboration is taught and supported in ways where all educators benefit from each other's traditions. The *inclusion of parents and other family members (6)* are also important within the setting of group practice. Schools need families to contribute more to the ongoing mission of the school, and are beginning to be more accessible to family and community members in new and innovative ways. Parents and community members are more involved with planning, instruction, leadership teams, contributing with their talents and resources. Schools are also opening doors for family and community members to continue their own learning through adult courses, meetings and other activities after school (Ferguson et al., 2003).

School Organizational Effort

The school organizational effort links to the professional effort as mentioned above. If the school organization creates an environment that supports professional practice, teachers and other school personnel are able to engage in sustained, continually improving thoughtful and reflective practice. Many of today's successful schools have managed to move from an individual practice of government, to a more collective and shared inquiry and leadership. Six essential features represent the school organization and how it supports professional effort:

(1) *Governance and Leadership*, (2) *Culture of Change and Improvement*, (3) *Physical Environment and Facilities*, (4) *Structure and use of Time*, (5) *Resource Development and Allocation*, and (6) *School/ Community Relationships*. As many schools lack the supports that are needed for teachers to make changes in their work, this framework focuses on shared leadership and the creation of leadership teams as a solution for schools to manage the complexity of change and improvement faced in a multicultural society. Leadership teams include school professionals, school board members, administrators, students and family members (Ferguson et al., 2003).

If a school accepts that the most challenging students require the combined expertise of many individuals, including teacher, students, administrators, health personnel and community advocates, then shared leadership, bringing the collective together, makes sense for everyone involved. All students can benefit from the increased use of diverse instructional procedures in classrooms. Special and general educators as well as other service providers work together in the same classroom. All of them are involved in curriculum, decisions and classroom instruction.

Regarding *Governance and leadership (1)*, leadership teams are important facilitators for a culture of change and improvement. Without a collective sense of responsibility for student learning, teachers are left to themselves in complex decision-making about how to best support students in an increasingly diverse population of students. As leadership teams work together to review practices, risks, plans for progress, achievement and improvement, they provide the intellectual and emotional climate to sustain improvement of practice (Ferguson et al., 2003).

Creating a *culture of change and improvement (2)* requires time for professional development with the focus on collaborative work and planning in order to achieve sustained changes. Some schools manage to create more time for professional interaction through thoughtful and creative scheduling of their schooldays.

When it comes to *physical environment and facilities (3)* it is important that schools are architecturally accessible to all students. Further, organization of *structure and use of time (4)* in classrooms can support students learning preferences. Storage and access to materials should fit the instructional goals and the independence level of the students. Furniture and

seating arrangements can also support learning when thoughtfully arranged to suit each student. The overall physical environment must be clean and kept in good repair. This is important and a visible symbol that the system cares about and is responsive to its teachers and students.

Regarding *resource development and allocation* (5), some transformed inclusive schools, have rethought the traditional class approach where students are assigned to one teacher or a group of teachers, based on equalizing the number of students across teachers. Flexible class sizes based on team approaches are favored to improve learning outcomes among students. Even with limited resources, creative reallocation and innovative reorganization of teachers into teams and partnerships will offer ways to break old patterns and create the flexibilities needed to improve student learning and outcomes. An example can be where general and special education programs have been separate, and they come together to form a new educational setting to provide instruction and additional support to all learners at the same space. The new system contains both organizational and professional effort in student content, performance, and skill standards that are owned by local communities and families, being informed by national and state standards, frameworks, curriculum, and effective assessment strategies as well.

Close school/community relationships, are at the heart of successful, comprehensive, and inclusive schools. Considering the challenges and risks faced by both schools and families in many districts, there is even greater urgency to developing and sustaining strong school-community linkages. Working together often generates the shared vision, practical strategies and needed synergy that can help improve the conditions and outcomes for students, families and the school's neighbors as well. Parents and families can inform school planning and influence curriculum, assessment and instruction, in which they bring an understanding of the broader community and social development needs and strengths of children to the learning environment. School personnel can more sensitively incorporate and honor different cultural perspectives, practices and values into the life and learning at school when strong linkages with families are developed. Families also benefit meaningfully from being involved. Many parents are encouraged to return to school themselves to fulfill high school or college educational programs. It is important that parents from every socioeconomic, ethnic, racial and cultural group are being involved and empowered to participate and contribute within the context of schooling. The schools are responsible for providing opportunities for full

participation. Community schools can provide multiple services for families such as health and mental care, social and juvenile services to meet the needs of students and their families (Ferguson et al., 2003).

District Effort and Support

The last level of effort in *the Systemic Change Framework* involves the supports and capacities that are available from central district administration policies and practices. The work of districts are organized around seven tasks: 1) *district/community partnerships*, 2) *a culture of renewal*, 3) *systemic infrastructure*, 4) *resource development and allocation*, 5) *organizational support*, 6) *inquiry on schools and schooling*, and (7) *student services*.

In this study, I will concentrate on practices as they appear on site. The district level therefore lies outside of my location of study, and I will not deal with this topic in any further depth in the study.

I will concentrate on connecting leadership and classroom practices to elements of *the Systemic Change Framework*, to discover how school leaders and teachers understand the concept of inclusion, and how they transform their visions of inclusion into practice.

2.2 The Productive Pedagogies

The theoretical framework related to pedagogies as they appear in classrooms, is based on the findings of a large-scale study - the Queensland School Reform Longitudinal Study (QSRLS 2001). This study describes classroom practices and organizational processes that make a difference to both the academic and social learning of students (Hayes et al., 2006). Hayes et al. (2006) portray a democratic and critical education in action, where they value the importance of official knowledge, at the same time as they illuminate what can be done when such knowledge is both reconstructed and made available in respectful and critical ways, so that students can understand and act on the world. I will refer to this study as the *Productive Pedagogies Research*. The study is concerned with improving the learning of all students, yet with a more particular focus on how to improve the outcomes of students who traditionally

underachieve and under-participate in education. The researchers explain how forms of teaching that are respectful and caring, and which bring out the best thinking of students, can be enacted. They carefully detail how a rigorous, critical and thoughtful curriculum can be constructed within real schools and communities (Hayes et al., 2006; Lingaard, 2007).

The research-team of the Productive Pedagogy Research believe that in order to make a positive difference in the lives of young people, teachers need to share with each other, and also with their students and communities, a common understanding of the types of student performances they are working towards. Such understanding is achieved through rigorous engagement in a dialogue that stretches further than teachers just working isolated in their own classroom. The researchers primary concern is to contribute to such dialogue by describing what makes a difference, and to suggest how differences can be made in schools. The classroom practices they describe are their contribution to what makes a difference. Descriptions of alignment of these practices with performances serve as a suggestion on how these differences can be made. Schools that make a difference matter in people's lives because they enrich and resource them, and also connect with their concerns and hopes. Alignment here is about teachers` pedagogies and assessment practices, and how these mediate the achievement of valued performances in the classroom. The Productive Pedagogies Research explores the ways in which student performances can be enhanced through particular assessment and practices of pedagogy. It also identifies the kinds of school and systemic supports and structures that are necessary to initiate and sustain such practices (Hayes et al., 2006).

When teachers are asked about their classroom practice and what they do, their accounts are usually personally shaped by their professional experience, and contextualized within their own setting. The isolated nature of classroom practice limits what can be said in more general and collective terms about classrooms. It also put a limit to how these practices may be influenced.

The language of Productive Pedagogies developed out of the Productive Pedagogies Research in both conceptual and empirical terms, elaborated to serve as a framework for describing some of the richness, complexity and detail of classroom experiences from a research base.

Part of the challenge of improving the educational outcomes for students whose social,

cultural and economic backgrounds are not strongly matched to the practices and norms of schooling, can be to expose the pedagogical part of schooling. When exposed, it can further be discussed, described, justified and perhaps also modified (Hayes et al., 2006).

The Productive Pedagogies Research elaborates the concept of productive pedagogies, and also outlines how it may be adopted as a means of challenging the pedagogical core of schooling. It provides a common language to describe classroom practices, which also lays a foundation for the development of a shared understanding among teachers of their professional practice.

The four dimensions of *Productive Pedagogies*, mentioned as; *intellectual quality*, *connectedness*, *supportive classroom environment* and *working with and valuing difference* provide a framework for planning, discussing and analyzing teachers' work. The findings of the Productive Pedagogies Research suggest that each of these dimensions makes an important contribution to the development of students with the skills, understandings, dispositions and knowledge base that will enable them to be informed and active citizens, and to access further education (Hayes et al., 2006; Lingaard, 2007). I detail these dimensions below, as a foundation and a resource to be used in the empiric material and findings in this study.

2.2.1 Intellectual quality

The significance of elements within the dimension of *intellectual quality* is drawn from a number of different sources as described below.

Higher-order thinking requires students to manipulate information and ideas in ways that transform their meanings and implications. This transformation occurs when students combine ideas and facts in order to synthesize, explain, generalize, hypothesize or arrive at some conclusion or interpretation. An example from the Productive Pedagogies Research shows that this in case happened where students were asked to define the difference between a «terrorist» and a «freedom fighter». Manipulating information and ideas through such processes allows students to solve problems and discover new meanings and understandings. In helping students to become producers of knowledge, the teachers' main instructional task is

to create activities or environments that provide students with opportunities to engage in higher-order thinking.

Deep knowledge concerns the central ideas and concepts of a topic or discipline, judged to be crucial to a topic or discipline. Knowledge is deep when relatively complex relations are established to central concepts. Concepts like «colonization», «evolution» and «photosynthesis» were used in the Productive Pedagogies Research for such complex relations to be established. Focusing on deep knowledge gives students opportunities to develop systematic, integrated and holistic understandings of concepts, more than only reciting fragmented pieces of understanding.

Deep understanding demonstrates students' success in producing new knowledge, solving problems, discovering relationships, constructing explanations and drawing conclusions. Evidence of deep understanding is shown when students use knowledge to make clear distinctions or arguments, to solve problems and develop more complex understandings of other related phenomena.

Knowledge as problematic involves an understanding of knowledge as construction, and hence subject to political, social and cultural implications and influences, more than knowledge as a fixed body of information. Substantive conversations are present with both teacher-student and student-student exchanges where the interaction is reciprocal. This promotes coherent shared understanding. This item seeks to assess the extent of talking to learn and to understand in the classroom.

Meta language refers to teacher practices where there are high levels of talk about speech and writing and about how spoken and written texts work. This includes talk about specific technical vocabulary and words, and how sentences work or do not work. It includes meaning structures and text structures and issues of how ideologies and discourses work in speech and writing (Hayes et al., 2006).

2.2.2 Connectedness

This element seeks to determine the extent to which classrooms are connected to the world

beyond them. This includes describing the extent to which knowledge is built on students' knowledge and which connections are made between different bodies of knowledge. It also includes to which extent knowledge and skills are developed in the context of solving real-life issues and problems. Further details on this dimension are mentioned below.

Knowledge integration is identifiable when either explicit attempts are made to connect two or more sets of subject area knowledge, or when no subject area boundaries are readily seen. Themes or problems that either require knowledge from multiple areas or that have no clear subject area basis in the first place, are indicators of curricula which integrate school subject knowledge.

Background knowledge represents the connections that students have the opportunity to make between linguistic, cultural and everyday experiences, and between topics, skills and competencies at hand. *Background knowledge* includes community knowledge, local knowledge, personal experience, media and popular culture sources.

Connectedness to the world seeks to measure the extent to which a class has value and meaning beyond the pedagogical context. The more there is a connection to the larger social context within which students live, the higher score a lesson gets. Areas that can exhibit some degree of *connectedness* can be student work focused on a real-world public problem, or lessons focused directly on students' actual experiences or situations.

Problem-based curriculum is defined as problems having no specified correct solution. This requires knowledge construction and sustained attention beyond the lesson. A problem-based curriculum is identified by lessons in which students are presented with a specific practical, real or hypothetical problem (or set of problems) to solve.

Within the elements of *connectedness*, linking classrooms to the world beyond them is not meant as a substitute for intellectually demanding work. It is seen as an important and complementary dimension of such work. The ability to integrate knowledge within this context may act as a gatekeeper to success within the curriculum. Research shows that learning occurs optimally when there is a good fit between students' background knowledge and the new knowledge structures of curriculum and instruction (Hayes et. al. 2006). It is important for schools and teachers to distinguish between forms of connectedness that expose

students to powerful cultural codes and those that limit their exposure. Making connections between students' cultures and aspects of the dominant culture clearly requires substantial intellectual engagement on the part of the students (Hayes et al., 2006; Linaard 2007).

2.2.3 Supportive classroom environment

This dimension is most often identified by teachers and students as an important aspect of good classrooms. The opportunity to learn in a socially supportive environment is critical and important for all students. The elements of this dimension as a part of the productive pedagogies are detailed below.

Academic engagement is identified by on-task behaviors that signal a serious psychological investment in class work. These can include attentiveness, doing the assigned work, showing enthusiasm by taking the initiative to ask questions, contribution to group tasks and helping classmates. Disengagement may be identified by off-task behaviors that signal boredom or lack of effort by students, such as sleeping, day-dreaming, making noise or otherwise disrupting the class.

Student self-regulation is evident in a classroom where teachers do not have to make frequent statements aimed at managing students behavior, or to regulate students' physical movements and dispositions (e.g. «Stop talking», «Sit down», «Eyes this way»).

Student direction of activities occurs when students influence the specific activities and/or tasks they will do in class, and/or how these are to be realized. Such tasks are likely to be student-centered, as in group work or individual research and/or investigative projects, where the students assume responsibility for the activities they engage in, and/or how they complete them. Where students do not influence the class activities the teacher or some other educational/institutional authority will explicitly determine what activities students are to do, and hence, decide how they are to meet the specified objectives required within the period (Hayes et al., 2006).

Social support is present in a class when the teacher conveys high expectations for all students. These expectations include the necessity of taking intellectual risks and trying hard

to master challenging academic work. They also include the importance of a climate of mutual respect among all members, and how such respect contributes to achievement by all, also emphasizing that all members in a class can acquire important knowledge and learn skills. Mutual respect means that students with less skill or proficiency in a subject are treated in ways that continue to encourage and value them. If disagreement or conflict occurs in the classroom, the teacher will help students resolve this in a constructive way for all concerned.

Social support can be undermined by teacher or student behavior, comments and actions that tend to discourage effort, participation and risk-taking in learning or expressing one's view. This may be teacher or student comments that belittle a student's answer, or where the overall atmosphere of the class is negative due to previous behavior (Hayes et al., 2006).

Explicit criteria are present and identified by frequent, detailed and specific statements about the nature of high-quality student achievement. This involves overall statements regarding tasks or assignments, about a specific lesson or program, or about performance at different stages within a lesson.

2.2.4 Working with and valuing difference

The Productive Pedagogy Research expresses this dimension to be crucial regarding the improvement of social and academic outcomes of marginalized students, as well as improving the social outcomes for all students. (Hayes et al. 2006). To underline the proof for such statements, the study refers to research done by White and Lippitt (1960), Christie (1985) and Hymes (1996). This dimension is also important for a future society of equality, where difference and active citizenship are both desired and valued. The understanding of the items representing this dimension is described below.

Cultural knowledge is treated as being valued when there is explicit valuing of the non-dominant culture's beliefs, languages, practices, and ways of knowing, in the classroom. Valuing all cultural knowledge requires that more than one culture is present and given status within the curriculum. Social characteristics that distinguish cultural groups can be gender, ethnicity, religion, race-economic status, sexuality and youth. Their valuing means legitimizing these cultures for all students, through recognition, inclusion and transmission of

this cultural knowledge. When curriculum knowledge is framed and constructed within a common set of cultural definitions, values, symbols views and qualities, it is seen as a contrast to this (Hayes et al., 2006).

Inclusivity measures the degree to which non-dominant groups are represented in classroom practices by participation, identified in relation to broad societal-level dimensions of social inclusion and/or exclusion.

Narrative is marked by an emphasis in teaching and in student responses on structures and forms. These may include the use of biographies, literary and cultural texts, historical points or personal stories, and identifies a sequence of events chained together to help students expand and create understanding within a concept or a subject.

Group identities in a learning community takes into account a contemporary social theory that emphasizes the need for schools to create learning communities where group identities are positively recognized and developed within a supportive and collaborative classroom community.

The *citizenship* item acknowledges that in a democratic society all groups and individuals have the right to engage in the creation and re-creation of that democratic society, also including the responsibility by all to ensure that no groups or individuals are excluded from practices regarding participation in all of the democratic practices and institutions within a society. This responsibility also includes the insurance that a broad definition of the political encompasses all relationships and structures throughout the social arrangement. Product Pedagogies Research refers to Freire (2001) in this explanation of an active citizenship.

Active citizenship is present in any classroom in any subject domain where the teacher elaborates on the meaning of such citizenship, and where its practice is facilitated both within and outside the classroom. An example of such practice can be to involve students in projects that intend to improve the wellbeing of their community.

2.3 Parent Involvement

In this study, as I want to see how leaders and teachers at charterschools transform their vision of inclusion into practice to include every student, I choose parent involvement as part of my theoretical framework. One reason for that is that a growing number of research and studies show that family members play a significant role in the education of children. (Ferguson & Galindo, 2008; Fullan, 2007). Another reason is that parent involvement appears to be an important part of practice at both the two schools I visited.

I use Fullan (2007) as a basis for parent involvement as theoretical framework. Drawing on a number of studies Fullan (2007) presents a variety of ways in which teachers and administrators, on one hand, and parents and communities, on the other hand, can move closer towards each other for the best interest of all students. To recognize under what conditions parent and community involvement is most beneficial, we have to know and understand the different forms of parent participation and their consequences for students and other school personnel.

In the process of improving the linkages between schools and families, principals and teachers need to reach out to parents and communities. Fullan (2007) underlines that educators need to go out into their communities with empathy, and interact with their constituents in meaningful ways. Being professional is no longer about remaining isolated at the school. This involves shifts in power and influence. And what new power arrangements can accomplish, matters more than just power in and of itself. Within this context it is important to raise the question of what it will take to mobilize more people and resources in the service of educating all students. Research shows that teachers are not able to do this alone. Parents are both crucial and untapped resources who have, or can be helped to have, expertise and assets that are important to the partnership with teachers. Parents have knowledge about their children that no one else have, they are their children's very first educators, and they have a committed interest in their children's success. Parents also have valuable knowledge and skills to contribute with that spring from interests, hobbies, occupations, and their place in the community.

Fullan (2007) refers to a large study of school effectiveness that shows parent involvement practices as one of 12 key factors that differentiate effective from less effective schools. Findings show that parent involvement in the life at school have a positive influence upon students` development and progress. This includes parental help in classrooms and on educational visits, and parents attendance at meetings to discuss students progress. Also teacher`s accessibility to parents appear as important within this context: Schools operating an informal, open-door policy, stand out as being more effective schools. The study also show that parent involvement in student`s educational development within the home, also is clearly beneficial. Parents who read to their children, hear them read, and who provide them with books at home, has a positive effect upon their childrens` learning (Fullan, 2007: p 192).

Fullan (2007) asserts that successful schools are found to be committed to developing engagement of parents and community resources. He points to research showing that schools pursuing a systemic agenda, maintain a sustained focus on strengthening the involvement of parents with the school and their childrens` schooling. Successful schools actively seek to strengthen the ties with the local community, especially with resources that bear on the caring for children. Greater trust and mutual engagement characterize these encounters at schools where personal interactions expand and become institutionalized.

Fullan (2007) underlines that student commitment can be sustained and strengthened by collaborative teacher attitudes where connections to home appear essential to the task. In this study, I will look closer into how leaders and teachers at charter schools connect with parents as part of transforming their vision of inclusion into practice to include every student. As I focus on what`s happening at the school site, I won`t take into consideration how parents support the students at home, even if I see that as an important part of parent involvement as well. I choose to concentrate on the parent involvement as it`s manifested through practice at school, and how both leaders, teachers and parents, at the school site, take the initiative to partnership with each other. Schools that are seen as less successful, remain more isolated from the students` parents and neighborhood. These schools are schools with unfocused initiatives, that do not directly address extant problems related to parental relationships. Fullan (2007) says that integrity, respect, competence and personal regards for others are vital in the process of establishing relational trust between schools and parents. In schools where these elements are constantly talked about and valued, possibilities are opened for teachers

and parents to negotiate complementary roles in childrens education. Fullan (2007)
underlines:

...under conditions of power asymmetry, with poor parents who are vulnerable and unconfident in their relationship to schools, it is incumbent on principals and teachers to reach out, be empathetic, and create nonthreatening possibilities for parent involvement. When they do this, greater connection is made among the triad of student, parent and school, and achievement goes up.

(Fullan 2007: p 193)

Effective schools endeavor to work closely with the student`s immediate and extended families, to promote contact with, and to fully involve them. Schools that have their act together both have the confidence and competence to reach out to parents. In this study, I will show concrete examples of how school leaders and teachers based on confidence and competence reach out to parents, as part of their way of understanding the concept of inclusion, and transforming their vision of inclusion into practice. Fullan (2007) draws the conclusion that part and parcel of professional learning communities is close engagement with parents. He also points out that when the majority of teachers collaborate with the majority of parents, first then a sizable impact on student learning will occur.

3.0 Research Process

My approach in this study draws on the interpretive tradition of symbolic interactionism, which holds that people make meaning of their words through interaction with it (Blumer, 1969). According to symbolic interactionism, people develop their identity in a continuous interaction with others. The researcher tries to understand the symbolic meaning of activities and events as it appears among people interacting with each other. The intention is to get an understanding of their reality, the way they experience it (Thagaard, 2009). I`m also drawing on a qualitative, participatory research approach in which participants are directly engaged in the ongoing inquiry efforts both to collect and interpret data (Thagaard, 2009).

In general, interpretivism describes a set of beliefs about the world, and ask questions that involve what people think, their ideas, and the meaning people attribute them. This is

particularly consistent with the purpose of this study, which seeks to ask questions of how administrators, teachers, students and their families as a whole: 1) build and work to get their students through a rigorous academic program, 2) erect scaffolding to support student success, and 3) construct structures of management to provide an organizational framework for a culture of learning. Education research increasingly asks questions best investigated using an interpretivist approach in order to understand what school leaders, teachers, students, parents and other practitioners think about their schools, classrooms and participation (Ferguson, Hanreddy & Draxton, 2010).

3.1 Location of Study

Data were collected from two urban charter schools in California with a student population of 600 and 400 students. The study included two school leaders and two teachers at one of the schools, and one school leader and two teachers at the other school. There were 7 informants all together. Through my adviser at Chapman University I got in contact with the school leaders at both schools. As a part of looking at how school leaders and teachers understand the concept of inclusion and how they transform their visions of inclusion into practice, it appeared fruitful to observe the teachers' practices when they were teaching in their classrooms. Students were not a direct part of the study, but 7 classes took part through observation, 5 classes at one school, and two classes at the other. Teachers were chosen differently at the two schools. At one school the Principal sent an e-mail to all the teachers, asking if someone was interested in participating in the study. Two teachers responded. At the other school the System Principal asked two teachers she thought would be a good fit for the study, based on the teachers' competence and experience with inclusion and inclusive practices. The schools received a project description, in order for school leaders and teachers to get a brief understanding of what the study was about (attachment 1).

My choice of empirical location was first of all related to the fact that California has a long tradition and experience of major diversity. The objective was to gain knowledge about differentiation and adapted education from a totally different perspective and from a country with long tradition and experience of diversity. The overall aim was to get an extended view of what inclusion can be in practice. The research approach was to observe and learn from school leaders and teachers, how they understood and transformed inclusive principles and

practices of leadership and pedagogy.

The charter schools involved in this study explicitly stood out as being inclusive schools, though their visions were framed and shaped differently through their particular charters. I was interested in looking at how these schools stand out with more autonomy than regular public schools.

3.2 Preparation of Study

It is usually of necessity to prepare an interview-guide for the research dialogue (Thagaard, 2009). In this study I prepared three semi-structured interview-guides, two for school leaders, one for each school, and one for all the teachers together. As I was interested in looking at how school leaders and teachers understand the concept of inclusion and how they transform their visions of inclusion into practice, I found each school's significant charter as a good starting point. Both schools have manifested their charters into inclusive missions for their schools. I looked at brochures and checked the schools' Internet sites to see how they market themselves, and used the information I found as a foundation from where I developed my Interview-guides. I connected valuable information about both schools to the theoretical framework in this study, highlighting aspects of *leadership*, *systemic changes*, *pedagogies* and *parent involvement* (attachment 2, 3, and 4). I also made a form, categorising the elements presented in the Productive Pedagogies that I used in the classrooms when observing teacher practices (attachment 5).

First I chose the Productive Pedagogies as a foundation for my theoretical framework. The plan was to look closely into all the four interlinked elements of how schools succeed in providing a quality education for all students as a collective process between administrators, teachers, students and their families as a whole. I extended the theoretical framework to include aspects of leadership, systemic changes and parent involvement. My objective was that this expansion in choice of theoretical perspectives would help uncovering inner structures of support and management at the two schools, in a way that would give a deeper understanding of how the schools worked to reduce achievement gaps between students of different social backgrounds. I wanted to get a more holistic understanding of how school leaders and teachers understand the concept of inclusion, and how they transform their visions

of inclusion into practice.

3.3 Collection of Data

Before I started to do the interviews and observations, I visited both the two schools together with my adviser from Chapman University. At our visit I got to meet the informants. One school leader from each school took us on a tour and gave us some general information about the schools. My first interview was with the Executive Director and Principal from one of the schools. The interview was supposed to last for 45-60 minutes, but ended up lasting for 90 minutes. I came back for two shorter interviews, where additional or more in depth questions were answered related to elements of leadership, systemic changes, pedagogies and parent involvement. Then I did three days of observations at each school, within a three-week period, where I spent one and a half day in each teacher's classroom to observe their practices. Three to five weeks after doing the observations, I had a 45-60 minute follow up interview with each teacher, relating aspects of *leadership, systemic changes, pedagogies* and *parent involvement* to their practices. The interviews gave a more complete understanding on how they think about pedagogy and practice, relating it to what I saw and experienced through the classroom observations. The interview with the System Principal lasted for 60 minutes. As we didn't get through all the questions at the interview-guide, she offered to answer the rest of the questions in writing. So one part of the interview is through meeting with her in person, the second part I received by e-mail.

3.4 Analysis

My intention was to transcribe the interviews and observations as close to the exact dates they were accomplished as possible. This turned out to be more difficult than I thought. First of all it was a challenge to write in English. After the observations, as English is my second language, the process of combining thoughts and experiences into meaningful words of what I had observed, appeared to be quite challenging. Second, my meeting with all the informants made a deep personal impression as they so openly shared ideas, thoughts, challenges and experiences from their own work and practice. My meeting with them started an in-depth process connected to leadership, changes and practice on how to create more inclusive

schools that benefit all students. As I chose to work through the transcriptions of data with an in-depth approach, it took longer to work through transcriptions than it would have done if I worked at it from a more distant or 'superficial' level.

After I had completed the transcriptions of interviews and observations, I coded the information into the different categories I had prepared related to *leadership, systemic changes, the productive pedagogies* and *parent involvement*. I made one document representing each of the informants. I merged the transcriptions of teacher interviews and observations into the same document per teacher. The Productive Pedagogies were categorized into four groups, which I used as a main focus when I worked on categorizing teacher practices. These were *Intellectual Quality, Connectedness, Supportive Classroom Environment and Working With and Valuing Difference*. When that was completed, I highlighted the most important material in each category with different colours representing each group. Then I wrote a summary, one for each document of analysis, zipping the most important material from each category. The coding into categories is founded in a deductive approach, where theory lays the foundation for how the categories emerge in the study (Thagaard, 2009).

3.5 Ethical Reflection

As I was doing this study in a different country and culture than my own, I tried to be constantly aware of the anthropological challenge of ethics. I wanted my attitude to be appreciative of the culture and the people that I met. I wanted my attitude to be open and absorbing of all cultural difference that I met. And I wanted to learn and be enriched with knowledge and understanding in ways that could be fruitful and serve as a resource into my own culture and profession.

Ethics are connected to caring for other people through taking their perspective both related to thoughts and feelings. Thagaard (2009) points out the importance of being aware of the connection that occurs between researcher and informant within the interview setting. The researcher is a tool herself or himself when collecting information or data, and it's important for the researcher to be attentive in the meeting with the informant. I choose my study within a field that I find interesting and within a field where my own experiences contribute to some of the drive to learn and experience more. As an interviewer and observer it was important for

me to be conscious about how my own experiences, attitudes and values make an impact on what I see and experience.

The project is accomplished in alignment with *personvernombudets retningslinjer* (NESH in Thagaard, 2009) (attachment 6). Informed Consent was prepared and signed before the collection of data started (attachment 7 and 8). Anonymity of individuals was required as I was to do individual interviews throughout the study. The interviews, however, was not touching upon any sensitive, "personal matters". The focus of the study is on school strategies and pedagogies. Still it was important to be aware of the principle of anonymity.

3.6 Reliability, Validity and Generalization

Reliability within a study is connected to the consistency of results in the study. It relates to if the results would have been the same, if questions were asked differently, or the interview or observations done by another person (Kvale, 2009). Silverman asserts in Thagaard (2009) that the reliability of a study can be strengthened through transparency. This includes a detailed description of research process. Then, me as a researcher, need to be open and apparent about research process and strategies as it appear step by step. This requires a clear distinction between data observed, and my own personal interpretations and reflections.

Validity within qualitative research is all about trustworthiness. When working on the data in this study, I leaned on principles developed by Lincoln and Guba as presented in Nevøys (2007) study. Through the process from developing the interview-guides and observation form to the completion of transcriptions, I got constant feedback from my advisers where we discussed details and next steps in the process. This was helpful as it gave me necessary information in the process of methodical procedures, which strengthened the steps of transparency as well (Nevøys, 2007; Silverman in Thagaard, 2009).

The theoretical framework in this study and the categories connected to it, laid the foundation for my collection and interpretation of data. In the interviews, I tried to ask open questions about the schools` strengths and challenges related to the schools` charters and missions. I attended a *change-course* for Ph.D. students at Chapman University the same semester as I was preparing and doing this study, related to *leadership, systemic changes and pedagogies*

within an inclusive setting, which made an impact on choice of theory in the study. I choose to connect some of the validity of this study to the professional impact professors, advisers and Ph.D. students made in the time-period as I was doing my study.

The results in this study reflect some of the strengths and challenge the informants experience connected to leadership and teacher practices at the two schools. The study presents aspects of school management and teacher practices, in a way that reveals patterns of professional development related to each school's mission and vision of creating a better school for *all*. Structures of how the administrators and teachers work to reduce and eliminate achievement gaps between students from different social backgrounds, give indications on how the school leaders and teachers understand the concept of inclusion and how they transform their visions of inclusion into practice. The study can be put within a frame of experiences on inclusive leadership and practice, which together with other studies can serve as a voice and a vision for more inclusive practices in schools. Moved from an American to a Norwegian context, the study may reflect new ideas on how to succeed in the process of creating more inclusive schools, within a constantly increasing diverse society.

4.0 Analysis¹

In this chapter I first give a presentation of the two schools that partake in this study. Then I present the analysis from both schools, to see how leaders and teachers at both schools understand the concept of inclusion and how they transform their visions of inclusion into practice. The school leaders and teachers in this study are anonymous, and their names are changed when referred to in this study.

4.1 About the Sunflower Academy

Sunflower Academy is an urban public charter school located in a city in California. The school consists of an elementary- and middle school. The main building is a regular house in the city, where offices, kitchen and reception are placed on two floors. At the elementary

¹ The observations in this chapter is not marked with any date or time, as they are embedded into the writing at a general basis more than concrete incidents.

school, eight portables are placed in the schoolyard behind the main building, in rows of four and four with a playground in the middle. This is where the classrooms are located. First and second grade classrooms share one portable, divided in two. Third, fourth and fifth grade classrooms have one portable each. The middle school is located across the street from the elementary school.

The school opened its doors in 2001, with 110 kindergarten and first grade students. Since then, one grade level has been added every year, now providing an academic program for over 600 students, preschool through eighth grade. Students may enter the school through its preschool program. The number one goal of the preschool is to prepare students for success in the school's K-8 program. In addition to rigorous academic standards, the school also provides a comprehensive enrichment program that nurtures the development of student interest in and talent for music, art, dance and sciences.

Sunflower Academy's mission is to provide a rigorous academic environment that prepares students for entrance into a college preparatory track at the high school of their choice and to create a culture of kindness, creativity, courage and honesty that will permit their graduates to assume leadership roles in the 21st Century. The school works to achieve this mission through a variety of curricular areas of focus. In particular, Sunflower Academy provides a dual immersion program. This program develops bilingualism and bi-literacy in both Spanish and English. In Kindergarten the percentage of academic instruction in Spanish is 90%, to 10% instruction in English.

The total number of staff is 42 full-time and 37 part-time workers. 3 people work as full-time administrators, 27 as full-time teachers, and 2 as part-time teachers. The school also has 26 paraprofessionals, 4 of them working full-time and 22 working part-time. Paraprofessionals work with students that need extra support or scaffolding throughout a school day. 8 full-time staff and 13 part-time staff work either at the office, as custodians or as music teachers at the school.

All students in kindergarten through fifth grade attend school from 8 am to 3 pm. During the hours of 8 am - 3 pm, 600 students are on campus. From 3 pm to 6 pm, over 300 students attend the Extended Day Program, which is comprehensive in its approach, building upon teaching that takes place in the classrooms during the regular school day. This is also where performing arts are included: drama and dance, fine arts, instrumental music, athletics, chess

and math club. The school has 200 students who are taking instrumental music, and 50 students taking folkloric dance. The students on these programs undertake rigorous instructional training schedules and are frequent performers at local and regional events. From 6 pm to 9 pm over 200 adults attend courses in English Second Language (ESL), literacy, health and other classes. Classes are also held for adults on Saturdays. Sunflower Academy operates as a full service community education site every day except Sundays. This approach to community education has fueled parental involvement at the school, and the administrators report on an overall contribution of more than 1000 hours of volunteer support at the school this year. Parents are involved in campus cleanup and repairs, classroom support, and leadership.

The school's students and their families benefit from a variety of partner organizations. One of these partner organizations is an independent high school in a city next to the one where Sunflower Academy is located. They are connected through a large service-learning program. The freshman class from this high school works with the third grade class on Science, and the sophomore class works with the fourth grade class on Language Arts. The partnership between these two schools has been in place for three years, and is continually growing. Sunflower Academy also has a Family and Children Learning Center that incorporates a variety of partners for on-site services for families including: the Department for Social Services, Public Law Center, 25 volunteer Nurse Practitioners, Health Center and others. The school has also partnered with Rainbow University for several years in a program that matches undergraduates with students from Sunflower Academy, to learn, explore and compose poetry. The result of this project is a beautiful publication that was funded by the Regents of the Rainbow University.

Sunflower Academy believes that all of their programs, partners and services combine to provide their students with a strong foundation for academic success. Two programs or practices that have a direct impact on student success, are the integrated delivery system that ties the daytime program with the extended day program at this school, and one which involves team-teaching and subject matter specialization, allowing the school's teachers to use depth and complexity through a concentrated emphasis on subject mastery.

The target populations of the school concentrate on student groups that are socioeconomically disadvantaged, English language learners and students with disabilities. 70 % of the students

qualify for the federal free and reduced lunch program. 69 % of the students are English Language Learners. Despite challenges connected to these circumstances, Sunflower Academy has an Academic Performance Index (API) of 870, and meet federal Annual Year Progress (AYP) targets.

4.2 About the Greenhill Elementary School

The Greenhill Elementary School is an urban charter school located in a city in California. The school consists of a main building, where a conference-room for teachers and offices are located. The school library is situated next to the main building. Outside the library there is a garden where all the classes have their own area to do planting. The classrooms are placed in 5 portables behind the main building, kindergarten through 5th grade, and the playground is decorated with painted flower walls. There is also a huge field to do sports where Physical Education (PE) classes are held, and a playground for the youngest students next to the portable where kindergarten classes are placed. The school property is surrounded by tall green trees in a quiet neighborhood.

The School has a population of 400 students, and was established as a demonstration site for the Harbor University 10 years ago. The Greenhill Elementary School and the Harbor University partner together, in which teachers and university students in fields related to inclusive education gain experience through participation in classrooms, and faculty from the university support the school through technical assistance and professional development. The school is recognized as a successful charter school for its practice of including students with disabilities in general education classrooms.

The school`s mission is to provide model educational programs in family, school and community-centered environments that support all children, including those who are typically developing, gifted or those who have more special needs, to achieve their maximum intellectual, social, emotional and physical potential.

11% of the students enrolled in the school are considered to be gifted or high achieving. 69% are identified as typically developing, and 20 % of the students have disabilities. Among the students with disabilities, 12% of the students have mild to moderate disabilities, and 8%

experience moderate to severe disabilities. This includes autism, physical, intellectual, sensory impairments, and multiple disabilities.

In each classroom, several students who receive special education services participate in all class routines and activities with their peers without disabilities. Students do not attend separate classrooms to receive specialized services. All special education supports and services are integrated into their general education classrooms. Special education teachers move between classrooms, and co-teach with their general education partners every day. They are viewed by students and parents as equal partners with the general education teacher, and are actively involved in all elements of the classroom. Expanding the scope of the special education teacher from a few students with Individualized Educational Program (IEP) to the entire class, allows for more flexible and dynamic adjustments to the environment and lessons. The special education teachers have conducted coursework and gained experience in assistive technology, positive behavior support, curricular adaptations, and support and accessibility for students with physical needs. Their role includes providing the service directly within a wide variety of class activities, as well as providing support and feedback on the implementation of individualized instruction for both paraprofessionals and general education teaching partners. Through collaboration and team-teaching all team members become extremely knowledgeable on how to best meet each student's needs.

Constructivism is an important part of teacher practices at the school. Through professional development teachers receive training in constructivist education. Constructivism is based on students getting the chance to generate meaning for themselves, rather than just being told facts, and how to memorize these. Students are challenged to analyze and reflect upon topics, interpret and discuss with co-students, and also through their errors to figure out for themselves what their needs are, and what they need to work on to improve. The majority of the instruction at the school is activity- and project-based, where students are challenged to solve problems in a variety of ways, leading to deeper understanding within a subject. Generating and understanding comes before memorizing and reproducing.

Parents play an important role at the school in a variety of ways. The school has embedded a number of systems to ensure that families have input on their children`s program. Parents and other family members are leaders in training faculty and staff on the unique needs of individual students. Each year during the school`s professional development week, new and

returning families are invited to present an in-service on their child. The parents highlight interests, motivations, strengths, and areas of need and behavior supports of their children. Many of the students have a wide variety of medical protocols including the use of feeding tubes, catheterization, support for seizures and administration of medications. Opportunities for parents to train staff are the first step in assuring families that the school takes its responsibilities seriously.

4.3 The Sunflower Academy

4.3.1 Leadership and School Management

Arrangement of teaching and groups of students

Lily and Susan are teachers at Sunflower Academy. Lily teaches Math and Science in two of the four second grade classes. These two classes are divided into two groups, representing an upper- and a lower-level group of achievement. Lily teaches Math and Science in both groups. Her co-teacher teaches Spanish Language Arts and Social Studies in the same two groups. Every morning before the students go into their respective achievement groups they gather in their homeroom. There are 25 students in Lily's homeroom class.

Susan teaches Science and Physical Education (PE) in third grade. There are three third grade classes at the school, and the 74 students are all divided into the three groups according to achievement. Students are placed in achievement groups based on test scores in Spanish, since all subjects except English Language Development (ELD) and English Language Arts (ELA) are taught in Spanish. Group 1 represents the high-achieving students, group 2 the middle-achieving students, and group 3 the lower-achieving students. Students are placed in these groups based on benchmark testing that takes place at the beginning of each year. Testing done throughout the whole year determines whether students are to be moved to a higher or lower level group of achievement. Susan's two co-teachers teach Math, Spanish Language Arts and Social Studies in the same three student groups. This means that all three teachers conduct teaching with various group-level adapted adjustments three times a week. All students in third grade are gathered in their homerooms for ELA. Susan's homeroom class contains 25 students, with students from all three ability groups. Teachers serve as head

teachers for their homeroom classes, which includes a more detailed responsibility for students in this group.

Every day, all the teachers at the school teach English Language Development (ELD) in their grade level. Depending on the students` levels of achievement in English at each grade, they are divided into 5 different groups: *1) Early beginners; students hardly understand any English at all. 2) Early intermediate; students know a little bit of English, but their understanding is limited. 3) Intermediate; students understand most of what is said, but are still limited in using the language because of inadequate vocabulary. 4) Early advanced: students understand nearly everything, and speech in everyday conversation is generally fluent. 5) Advanced; students understand the language, and approximate it as a native speaker.* From third grade all the students know some English, so the first level of early beginners is excluded from third grade teaching and up.

Professional Development

Teachers at the Sunflower Academy can attend one or two conferences each year, paid for by the school. The administration also asks if there is something everybody would like to learn. «Thinking maps» was one of them, and a presenter came to the school so that the school as a whole group, a community, could learn how to use that information and how to best support students with it. Both Lily and Susan think the administration is good at asking teachers what their needs are, or what the school and teachers would benefit from having in order to provide a better quality education for all the students.

Teachers and administrators spend time on staff development every Wednesday from 2.00 to 3.30 p.m. The students finish school early this day, so that administrators and teachers can get together and work on different topics and needs regarding professional development. Twice a month at this hour, all teachers are organized in Productive Learning Community groups (PLC), where they concentrate on team-teaching. Once a month, they also have an English Learning Development (ELD) meeting, and once a month they have staff development on any topic the administration and teachers may choose to focus on together. Susan is in a PLC-group with all the teachers in third through fifth grade, and says about PLC:

PLC is a lot about community involvement. You bring in the parents, and that's why you see a lot of parents in our class. It's supposed to be a community within the school that reaches out to the community outside the school. But how do we start, we start by just the teachers first. And the teachers go outside and then they keep growing (05.19.10: p. 5)

A concrete example from a PLC setting shows how teachers stay connected and support each other through their inner structure of professional development. Susan says:

...There's a person who's taking notes of what we do in every meeting, because we have to e-mail those to the principal ...What we do usually., as soon as we meet, we say, ok what is everybody doing in their class. So, we could say, in our class we notice that the kids are having a hard time with this in grammar, with pronouns, and then the fourth grade teacher might say, you know I see the same thing in fourth grade, so you need to work harder in third grade on pronouns, so that when they get to fourth grade it's not so difficult. So we try to see how we in the grades can improve, so that when they go to the next grade, that teacher doesn't have to stress out, like, «why don't the students know this, if they should have been taught in third grade» (05.19.10: pp. 5-6).

Lily and Susan value the supportive environment that they have with their colleagues, and Susan highlights team-teaching as one important cause of why academic improvement and test scores among students have risen dramatically over the last years. From an Academic Performance Index (API) of 580 in 2004, the school now has an API of 868. The California average API is 780. The teachers underline that the test scores reflect the high degree of dedication and hard work that teachers put into students' learning. Susan says about collegial support structures and professional development at the school:

It affects me, because it makes me reflect; «Am I doing the right thing? Am I not doing the right thing? What am I supposed to improve on?» Because in hearing what the teachers tell me in the next years to come, they'll say; «The kids are having a hard time with a topic sentence». So then I have to go into the classroom and change that ...The reflection always helps me change how I'm going to teach it (05.19.10: pp. 16 ;17).

Twice a week the teachers meet with the other teachers at their grade levels to plan lessons for the following week. On a daily basis they meet through recess and lunch to talk about different things they need to talk about. Once a week the teachers meet with the extended day staff at the After School Program, so that they can get exact information about what the focus will be for the following week. The extended day staff receives input on how to follow up

each student. They make a lesson plan which the general education teachers review, in order to check that it is in alignment with the teaching taking place in class. Lily says about the After School Program:

...our school has such a strong After School Program that I feel that a lot of our students that perhaps would have fallen through the cracks aren't. And they are really, really getting a chance at a good education ...A safety net so to speak. And that is what the after school program is, because there is not always parents there to be able to help the child and those are the children that struggle and so the After School Program, the extended day program is that support for those students, which is nice (05.19.10: p. 4).

Susan says that all teachers have the same goals and the same interest for their school, as expressed through the school's mission. She describes the connection between the teachers and students as a family where everybody embraces and takes care of each other, more than just teachers at a regular school that are hired to do a job. The environment they create is something they want to grow, as they see and experience it as the future of their children. There is a warm and loving atmosphere among teachers and students at the school. Some of the students and their families are related either as friends or families beyond the school environment, which the Executive Director thinks contributes to this caring environment.

The teachers have high expectations of both themselves and their students, and as the teachers are focused on professional development of improving practice, they become living role models and examples for students on how to live up to high expectations and standards as well.

The Executive Director and Principal at Sunflower Academy underline the importance of constant communication that takes place between teachers at each grade level, across the grade levels, and between general teachers and staff at the After School Program. They also point out the importance of being a dynamic system. In order to reach all students, they welcome teachers being flexible and bringing new methods into the classroom. They also value the sense of ownership that teachers bring with them into their pedagogy and teaching. The Executive Director says that they have tried to create something where there are as many adults as possible ensuring every student is achieving success. The principal adds:

Teaching is a very isolated environment, but here I don't think we let them. I think the system here is very outside ...Very transparent ...It literally keeps you conscious of

what you are doing. (03.31.10: pp. 20; 21)

The communication between teachers and administration is also important in the process of evaluating and assessing what needs to be done in helping every student reach their highest potential. The care for each and every student drives the changes and shifts that are taking place within the organization. The professional development as it is built into the system, is constantly focused on identifying where the students gaps are. The professional development is geared towards these gaps, which again represent the needs of the organization. The principal says:

It comes down to, character counts...I mean, are we doing the right thing? Are we teaching the kids to be people of good character? It's all interrelated and essentially, I mean if you've had kids who are doing well in school and are taken care of at home and we can provide some of that support, essentially their educational performance will start going up, sometimes slower than others, but it will (03.31.10: p. 20).

The school's inner structure of professional development shows how the interconnected levels of professional- and school organizational effort are combined to effect student learning and student effort as presented in *the Systemic Change Framework* (Ferguson et al., 2003).

4.3.2 Productive Pedagogies

In this chapter I will focus on the four interlinked elements of the Productive Pedagogies, to see how the teachers understand the concept of inclusion, and how they transform their visions of inclusion into practice.

Intellectual Quality

Lily and Susan say about the pedagogy and teaching at Sunflower Academy, that it is very rigorous. Teachers work hard to provide a rigorous program for all students, and they demand a lot from the students. They both think students rise to the occasions. The school has certain expectations, and the teachers tell the students from day one what is expected of them, and

what goals they're going to work on for the following year. Teachers are constantly talking about the goals, so that the students understand what they are, and what is required of them.

As the base for their curriculum, the Sunflower Academy uses the California Content Standards. Their actual books are state-adopted textbooks. The math book Lily and her students use in class has all the standards for California and what each student at this grade level needs to learn. She teaches what the students need to learn from the beginning to the end, and does long-term planning on what she is going to teach together with the other math teacher in second grade. Every day, Lily writes the objectives and agenda for the day on the board, so the students know what is expected of them and how they will get there. At the end of each chapter they have a quiz, and at the end of three chapters they have a unit test. They also have benchmark tests every six weeks to show what the kids know at the beginning of a trimester, and what they need to know at the end. Through this assessment Lily sees if her students are making progress or not. Her regular routine for each session is first to teach, then for the kids to practice, and then at the end of each session she focuses on assessment before closing.

Lily tries to use many different types of learning styles to reach all of her students. In the higher level group she can move through curriculum a little bit faster, and with the lower achieving group, she moves at a slower pace, where she gives more visuals, writes more examples and gives more details for the students to help them understand. She also tries to use a lot of hands-on activities, so the students can use manipulatives to solve problems with their own hands.

Susan uses a lot of project-based learning in her classroom. Right now her students are working on a Science project, and they are also creating a book on an animal. Through projects the students' own creativity helps them learn how to make their own things, as they are placed in the role of being an investigator. Susan sees this as the key to student learning, as they all have different learning styles. Instead of just lecturing them, they learn a lot by doing the work themselves, and from cooperation. The students use their own reflection through project-based learning. She also values the way that students in concrete ways evaluate themselves and their work in relation to what other students have done. It could be, for example that some students put more effort into a project than others, which again gives other students new ideas on how they can improve and put forth more effort themselves next

time. She tells me there are concrete examples of how students have improved their work and effort by looking at and learning from other students. Students that usually do not ask questions are coming to her asking for feedback about certain ideas etc. She focuses on giving them freedom, and sees that as a key to student learning.

Both teachers make a powerful connection to the element of *Intellectual Quality* as presented within the Productive Pedagogies. They are thoroughly prepared for everything that takes place in the classroom. They both have a high level of intensity when teaching, focused on the subject and what they want the students to know or get through within a lesson or project. They are focused on students' engagement, making sure all of them understand what they do. They ask questions and students answer enthusiastically. They repeat things when needed and move on. They listen and take time to hear what students have to say, and show enthusiasm and interest about their students' sharing. They are vitally and supportively connected to their students, also in relation to their common values and rules as presented through classroom rules. Whenever a situation arises that fails to maintain a high level of expectation and respectful communication, both teachers address the behavior to the classroom rules above the whiteboard, and tell them how they are supposed to be acting or behaving. The students act on their corrections straight away, and the common classroom rules truly help all students stay disciplined and on task.

Connectedness

To help students connect both socially and intellectually to what's going on in the classroom, both Lily and Susan have lots of things on the walls. Lily has the vocabulary on the board for the whole week. She also has different resources on the walls that the students know they can go to on their own. She wants them to learn how to look for the information instead of just asking her. Her overall goal is for them to use their critical thinking skills and be able to figure things out on their own. When they can't, she is there to support them.

In third grade the teachers have named their classrooms after different names of universities, so already in the classroom students are hearing college terms. Susan teaches her students words they will use in college, and talks about her own experiences from college. She relates her stories to the students, so that they can start thinking about the future, and what they want

to do. She prepares her students by having them think above elementary school, and into the future. In order for them to get where they want to be, she sees motivation as the key. In science, she tries to bring in as many things as possible and to use outside sources in presenting, so that it does not just revolve around what the book says. For example, they try to find music, or picture cards, that help students` expression, pictorials (a certain way of drawing pictures to keep students engaged) and realia, (bringing things into the classroom that help students be creative). She mentions the Science Fare Project, where students have to go out and investigate, asking questions of people in the community. Students also need their parents` help in doing this research. Every child has to do one. They come up with any question they want, and then they have to investigate. Susan gives examples on questions developed by students:

I have a student that is going to investigate. I want to say his question was: «Which gum lasts longer?» And then he` s going to do 3 different types of gum. So he` s going to go out and ask 10 different people to chew 3 different gums, and see which one he thinks last longer, the flavor. So he` s going to go and ask 10 different people, and he` s going to say, «ok, this person said this gum, this person..» Then he` s going to look at his results and say; « Now, why does this gum last longer?». Then he has to do the research. «What is inside the gum that makes it last longer, and the other ones don` t?». Do you see what I mean? He needs to do the task; he needs the parents' help, and he needs to go out in the community and do it. ...Like another girl, this is great; «What chocolate melts the fastest. Dark chocolate, milk chocolate or white chocolate?» So she` s going to do that. And I mean, that seems easy, but there is a lot of science to it. Like: «Why does dark chocolate melt slower. What does milk chocolate have that dark chocolate doesn` t have? Why is this substance softer than the other, and what makes it». So, there is a lot of Science to it, that she` s going to have to do research on (05.19.10: pp. 8-9).

Further, within the context of creating connection between students` academic identity and their own backgrounds, Susan thinks being herself is a key. Growing up she was in their position. She had to learn two languages. She had to work her own way through poverty to get where she is today. By sharing her stories and being herself, she thinks many of the students can connect to her and think that since she has accomplished what she wanted, they can accomplish what they want.

Susan's classroom appears to be more than just a classroom. It is an open, connected room where personal life and experiences are welcome to be shared. The teacher creates this connectedness and link to personal life and experiences through pretty much everything she does in the classroom. It appears as a foundation of pedagogy through whatever curriculum she and her class move through.

Drawing links to the definition and challenges of inclusion as presented in the beginning of this study, the two classrooms at this school show evidence of dynamic relationships between teachers and students, other school personnel, families and community members; all working together to construct learning (Ferguson, 1995). The focus of the school is geared towards what need and should be changed to meet and encompass *all* the students, and the school operates in a vital connection with, and as part of the local community as well (Nevøy 2007).

In a wider setting, the Sunflower Academy believes that education, community and diversity are an integral part of a child's character development. The educational structure is based on values and ethics, integrity, social responsibility and positive identity. Through community collaboration this school embraces the multicultural heritage of its community, and provides students with the opportunity to excel in the fields of art, science and technology. Sunflower Academy is a community-based school that partners with organizations in the community to provide help to students and their families in a variety of ways. This includes legal aid, medical and dental aid, to mention a few. This is organized through the Family Learning Center that is run by the school. Once a month, 200 families show up to get food at the school's food bank. **Three** times a week, nurse practitioners come to the school helping out students and their families with medical issues.

Supportive Classroom Environment

Professional dialogues at the school strengthen the communication between teachers in a way that help them catch the students that struggle either academically or socially. The students are their common responsibility; it is just not one teacher working to find solutions for themselves. The children benefit from that too, as there is a link between teachers' ways of doing things. To be taught by different teachers with different teaching styles supports the students as well. The Executive Director says:

...teachers` close relationship based on professional development and team teaching probably makes the students feel protected in some way...Having those teams work together in a positive way, allows the students...they can be more confident with each other because the situation is predictable (03.31.10: pp. 21-22).

At the Sunflower Academy, differentiated instruction is seen as an important part of supporting the students. Support is to make sure that the school can help both students that are falling behind, and students that are beyond what needs to be taught. Students are also placed in different groups to support each other, and placed in certain seats for a reason, so that students at different levels of knowledge can benefit from working together and helping each other out. High expectations in class also serves as a support, as the teachers manage to create a positive and uplifting environment, where students treat both teachers and each other with respect. Susan says about support:

Having the principal support me and my teaching style is key. If he didn't support, it would have been too difficult for me, doing what I want to do ...And through observation he does...He usually does an observation twice a year. A formal one. But he might come in once a month, in to the classroom, and just walk around. Talk to the students, going back out. Sometimes he comes in twice a month. Whenever he has time, he'll come into the classroom by surprise (05.19.05: p. 14).

Working with and Valuing Difference

Lily says that what keeps her challenged, is that every child is different. She has to find a way that works for each child individually, and continuously change her ways of teaching. This constantly keeps her reflecting on what she can do better, and what she needs to change in order to improve.

Susan highlights listening to all the students as important within this setting. She tells each student that she cares about them. Teachers put a lot of effort into more artistic aspects of schooling as well as academic standards and expectations. Susan says:

In this school, even if you're not good in math or science, you may be an excellent dancer. And you can show that to the school. And that's what I think a lot of schools lack. Arts, the performing arts is key (05.19.10: p. 21).

4.3.3 Parent Involvement

At Sunflower Academy, parents are required to do 20 hours of voluntary work per child each year. This is part of the charter. Parents do anything from making copies to sitting with kids and reading with them in the classroom. They bring practical things home to prepare for teachers to use in their classrooms. In kindergarten they have a rotational schedule of preparing snacks for the morning recess. Preschool-students automatically get into the kindergarten, which is a big thing because there is a long waiting list. If parents fail to do the 20 hours of voluntary work in the preschool, then they don't get priority into kindergarten.

Lily says about parent involvement:

We need support from the parents, as well as administrators. Because if we are doing our jobs and trying to teach the students something and then they go home, and they don't do homework. Or the parents...you know...aren't giving them the proper nutrition or they're going to bed late, or the parent doesn't get them to school on time...Then that is inhibiting them from being the best student they can possibly be (05.19.10: pp. 3-4).

Lily tries to create a relationship with the parents, so that they can work together as a team. She tells them what she does at school, and what she expects them to do at home to help their children be the best students they can be.

Susan values and appreciates parents helping out in class. She tells me some parents often come into her class to ask if there is something they can help out with. One parent in particular has been there so often and helped out so much, that she now trusts her with students' work that needs to be read through and corrected. It saves the teacher a lot of work, which then frees her to focus more on planning and teaching. This again raises her level of teaching, which benefits the students with better quality teaching. Susan always keeps the door open for parents if they want to discuss or talk about something regarding their children, curriculum or other things.

One parent comes into the classroom. She asks the teacher if there is something she can help out with, and the teacher gives her some papers and asks her to make copies for all the students. She walks out and comes back 5 to 10 minutes later with the copies. All the students have made small poems on black paper spiders they have cut out. Some parents have helped making a huge spider web on one of the classroom walls. Now the parent that is here to help out, puts all the spider-poems up on the Charlotte's web on the wall.

This project is related to a novel the students are reading in ELD. When the parent is done putting up the spider poems on the Charlotte's spider web, she helps out correcting homework, a big pile of paper. She marks the wrong answers, and journals all students' results. I ask her how often she is in the classroom to help out, and she tells me she comes into class twice a week to correct homework, and to put the data/results on the computer. The parent likes to help out and says: «It's nice to help out. That means less work for the teacher. Then she can spend more time with her family. It's also nice to be around the kids. And I'm at home, so I have the time to». There is an open, light and natural connection between the teacher and the parent. Their conversation flows smoothly about «nothing and everything» (Observation, ELA homeroom; 04.19.10: pp. 7; 9-10).

Once a month the school has an open-air recital, and everybody who takes classes in music, dance, drama or other performing arts, gets to show the piece of art they are working on. Two hundred and fifty kids are involved, and the recital takes about three and a half hours.

The administration says that part of what they are assessing themselves on is parents. Parents see the recital as a valuable part of their family experience, at the same time as they have an appreciation for what the kids are learning. Even though some people are at the beginner stage and some people are actually very advanced, there is this appreciation for the process. For the Sunflower Academy, that is part of the educational program as well, and a part of identifying excellence. The school builds into families this appreciation for the learning process, which is internalized as something they value.

4.3.4 Summary

In order to make a positive difference in the lives of young people, the foundation of the Productive Pedagogies is built on the belief that teachers need to share with each other, and also with their students and communities, a common understanding of the types of student performances they are working towards. According to the teachers and the principal, such understanding is achieved through rigorous engagement in a dialogue that stretches further than teachers just working in isolation within their own classroom. To them, this school is a living example of how achievement gaps can be eliminated through a strong inner structure of management, teaching and scaffolding for administrators, teachers and students. The well-established culture of caring, support and belonging, as well as high expectations in a rigorous academic program, creates a learning environment at this school, where administrators,

teachers and students can thrive. Parents are involved in positive and uplifting ways. Through the Sunflower Academy's Family Learning Center the school reaches out to nurture and support the local community, as well as providing extended nurturing and support for its own students and their families.

4.4 Greenhill Elementary School

4.4.1 Leadership and School Management

Arrangement of teaching and groups of students

Emily and Madelyn are teachers at Greenhill Elementary School. Emily is the teacher of one of two fifth grade classes. Both of them teach all subjects in their own class, except for Art. The school has its own art teacher. Every class has Art once a week. In Physical Education (PE) the two classes are together as one large group, where the two teachers co-teach. One paraprofessional is always in Emily's class to support one of her students with severe disabilities. As part of being an inclusive school, all students operate together in one classroom. Whatever scaffolding is needed among students is being provided for them in the classroom. Greenhill Elementary School has a philosophy of not taking students out of class. If some students need more teaching than what is provided in the classroom, they get this support through after-school teaching. In Emily's class there are 18 students.

Madelyn is one of four kindergarten teachers at the school. The four kindergarten teachers each teach their own class. In Madelyn's class there are 25 students.

Several students at Greenhill Elementary School require ongoing support throughout the day in order to access the environment as well as the curriculum. While teachers, and at times peers, provide some of this support, paraprofessionals play a critical role in the success of students with disabilities. Paraprofessionals also provide additional support to the whole class. Madelyn says about having paraprofessionals in her class:

And when it comes to things that are going on in the classroom sometimes, I don't see certain things, and so it's really nice if one of the paraprofessionals in the class sees

something, and I can go: «Oh, I didn't realize that». And I can really look into it better. It's nice, it's also like you have a few more sets of eyes that are looking in on what you see as well (05.25.10: p. 3).

Special education teachers also come into the classroom to cooperate with the paraprofessionals and the students they are responsible for. Sometimes they help out in small groups, and sometimes they support students with disabilities directly to identify strategies to use with them throughout the day. Sometimes they lead the whole class, which gives the general education teacher a chance to support individual students.

Professional Development

Every year before school starts, administration and teachers at Greenhill Elementary School have a week of professional development. On a yearly basis they meet for professional development once a month on topics needed and wanted. This can include training on how to individualize instruction for students that may be struggling, or for students that need extension and enrichment because they are doing really well. Other topics can be collaboration, severe disabilities or psychological issues on how to meet students that need extra support. Emily and Madelyn appreciate the fact that the administration asks them in what areas they would like more professional development. What the majority of teachers would like, is what they get professional development on. In the classrooms they also get a lot of staff development based on what they need. Many of the teachers at Greenhill Elementary School have taken a class on Inclusive Education at Harbor University.

The teachers at Greenhill Elementary School work together in teams. All teachers make up their own curriculum based on state-standard requirements. They don't use books, but draw out the most practical and important material students need to know at each grade level throughout the year. The students receive copies of what the teachers make, and keep the material in a personal folder.

Emily does a lot of planning with the other fifth grade teacher, and they produce the curriculum for fifth grade together. Once a week the two teachers also plan together with two special education teachers. The special education teachers are responsible for creating and

adjusting programs and modifications for the students in the classroom who struggle with some sort of difficulty or disability. These programs are related to what is being taught to the whole class. General education teachers in fourth and fifth grade get ideas from each other through the two special education teachers, who work closely together with both grade levels. The interconnected elements as presented in *the Systemic Change Framework* (Ferguson et.al. 2003), gives here a concrete example of how the professional and organizational effort at the school interlinks to benefit all students as expressed in the school's mission.

The four kindergarten teachers do their planning together once a week. This is a productive time for the teachers to share and come up with new ideas on how to approach and create teaching in a meaningful way for the children. Here the teachers conduct both short-term, and long-term planning. Together they make up their own curriculum based on goals and expectations from the California Content Standards for this grade level. They use developed teacher programs and resources as a support in planning as well. All the teachers share a great deal when planning together. Madelyn says:

...We also come up with really good ideas when we plan together, big ideas, and we make them better, and more coherent as we go along. And we wouldn't have such good ideas if we didn't meet with each other (05.25.10, p 22).

When planning for John, a student in Madelyn's class that needs extra scaffolding, Madelyn and one of the special education teachers get together an hour a week to prepare the program for him for the following week. Both of them bring in ideas to create appropriate and challenging programs. The special education teacher knows a variety of modifications, and Madelyn, as the one who sees him every day, knows if the ideas brought up will work or not. The special education teacher makes all the modifications for John since Madelyn also has the rest of the class to plan for. The System Principal says that the result of the co-teaching model is that all team members become extremely knowledgeable about how best to meet each student's needs. When general education teachers and special education teachers share the accountability for the whole class, special education teachers begin to meet not only the highly individualized needs of just a few, but also the needs of a broad range of students.

Every second Wednesday from 7.45 am to 8.30 am, all the teachers undergo organized staff development and planning together in larger groups. After school every day, for half an hour,

the teachers, paraprofessionals and special education teachers at each grade level get together in a collaboration meeting to share their success and challenges from the day. This gives the teachers a chance to vent about the events of the day, and they can also give each other feedback if anyone is struggling with something. They discuss together how things can be fixed or improved upon.

Related to the school's mission, Madelyn provides modeling to students that come in from Harbor University. She works with some of the professors there, related to a certain Math program. They do a research study together with student teachers from Harbor, and Madelyn and her class are part of this study. She says that she did not think that she needed math support from the setting they had, but after being part of the study she says she is amazed how much they have improved. Madelyn points out:

Before, we just taught things in a very concrete way all year. And we really didn't spread our wings with it. And lately...we ask a lot more questions too, so it's not just like: «3 + 2 equals 5. Great! Good job! Let's move on». It's like: «How did you know that? How did you solve that? Did anyone solve it in a different way?». We're trying to really do that kind of stuff (05.25.10: p. 10).

This gives a concrete example of how the school operates as a learning organization, and shows how scaffolding is being erected to support student success, through collaboration between Greenhill Elementary School and Harbor University. Through this collaboration the school aims at raising the level of teachers professional knowledge, extending their ways of thinking and at developing creativity. To them, this collaboration serves as an innovative example on how teachers through professional development can raise the extent to which they reach and challenge more students (Ferguson 1995, Darling-Hammond 1998, Ferguson et. al., 2003).

In a wider perspective, the principal and the system principal at the school regularly hold workshops and presentations at local, state, and national conferences, sharing their successes, challenges, and their next steps. They are both on the boards of other organizations working to change policy and achieve more inclusive options for students. They also welcome visitors from other states and countries to visit and engage in dialogue regarding their model.

4.4.2 Productive Pedagogies

In this chapter I focus on the four interlinked elements of the Productive Pedagogies, to show how teachers understand the concept of inclusion, and how they transform their vision of inclusion into practice to include every student.

Intellectual Quality

At Greenhill Elementary School, all students engage in project-based work for most units of study. Sometimes this is a larger project that they complete over several days or weeks. Other times it might be a series of activities that relate to an overall theme. Within this model, students are urged to challenge themselves and complete projects in a manner that is their “best work”. This might vary for different students, but all teachers use the state standards as a guideline, and then differentiate above and below those standards to meet specific student needs. For academic work, material is presented within the student's instructional level whenever possible. A lot of work is done in groups, so that students can utilize their strengths together to develop a more in-depth project than they could do alone.

Emily wants her students to be responsible for what needs to be done in class. She teaches, supports, and does her part, and requires that the students do their part. She pushes her students toward being independent. She says she has high expectations connected to intellectual demands, and she thinks students live up to her expectations. She gives students freedom in how they want to accomplish tasks. She uses a variety of approaches, so that students can learn to choose approaches they are most comfortable with.

Each year, all students at Greenhill work on an annual project, which this year is focused on *written language*. Each student in 5th grade is this year doing individual research on a scientist, and has written a paper about their choice of scientist. Their fields of science to choose from were 1) *Botany*, 2) *Zoology*, 3) *Physics*, 4) *Astronomy*, 5) *Innovation* and 6) *Pharmacy*. The annual project is also a chance for Greenhill Elementary School to demonstrate their model of project-based learning, by having the kids showcase their final products. Art is a big part of the project as they come to their ‘final product’ stage, in which they need to create a product that demonstrates what they have learned.

June, the student with severe disabilities in Emily`s class is working on a similar project individualized for her. Two paraprofessionals are taking turns in teaching her and following her up. Their work is constantly being evaluated by a special education teacher that comes in several times a day to see that June is having a good time, and that there is progress in her work. Several times throughout the day, concrete links are made between the work of June and other students. She shows them pictures and paintings, and the students take turns reading with her or doing other kinds of activities through different types of group activities.

Both Emily`s and Madelyn`s classrooms are living examples of how scaffolding is taking place to include every person, and with all students in the same classroom. No one is separated into special education classrooms because of additional needs of support or scaffolding.

Madelyn focuses on doing extensions in class for those students that need more than just the basic teaching and activities. She differentiates in productive ways. She looks at what the students can do and whether they move through things quickly, and if she sees that they understand, she gives them extensions to challenge them. She starts at one level, and moves on with the next steps when she sees they are ready for more challenges (example: carrying with one or two digits in Math).

Sometimes the program for John matches the program for the whole group, sometimes not. The teacher looks at the lesson and sees how she can make it meaningful to him. Often he has more realia with the same material the rest of the class is working on. In Math where he has a lesson on real objects, he matches them to pictures, so that he can make picture to real object connections. When they have sorting, his sorting just looks a little bit different. He may have real objects to sort, while the others have pictures on paper. Madelyn says:

We`ve learned in the past...that some kids, their goals are going to take them a lot of trials to get there. And if we don`t provide repeated opportunities for things, then it`s going to be hard for him to meet his goals. So it`s been a tough process for us to learn how to sit back and go: «That`s not meaningful for him, and we need to find a way to make it more meaningful.» (05.25.10: p. 4).

As far as creating a learning environment in the classroom, Madelyn focuses on letting the kids understand that being a community means they all are learning at different places, and that that is fine. They are also learning different things - that is fine too. She thinks it is

important to teach them how to work together, and how to understand and be okay with each other's differences. The important part is that they are all doing their best, and that they all do their part. If someone struggles more than others to learn new things, that is okay too.

Madelyn sees art as very important, and her students are working at different kinds of art projects in class every day. She thinks art affects kids in all ways, because it allows them to express themselves. It also allows them to show some of their knowledge in ways they perhaps have not been able to show before. She thinks that if they are learning to be thoughtful about what they are doing in art, it will translate to other academic activities. They will perhaps be more thoughtful about what they write, and possibly how they solve their math problem or how they explain things. Maybe they will use more detail in their writing, or really appreciate and be able to visualize what they are reading in more detail. She thinks art poses a lot of different kinds of lessons, as there is a variety of things that the kids can pick up from with mixing art with everything else that they do in class. Madelyn says about how the different art projects and hands-on activities in class affect her students:

I think that they like that they have a lot of freedom. And they can get up and get materials, where they can do whatever it is that they want to do. There is no set way, they can do it however they want. And they all seem to get like a little secret kick out of like solving a math problem in a different way than their friends do. Some immediately go to drawing, and the next person will be like: «Oh, I used the number-line», «Oh, I visualized it in my head», «Oh, I got cubes». It's like very, it's very cute how they get excited about doing things in different ways. And they'll start looking for different ways to do things (05.25.10: p.11).

Connectedness

Often, project-based work asks students to bring in their home experiences, and homework is designed to make meaningful connections with curriculum, including personal experience and cultural backgrounds. In social studies activities, emphasis is placed on the concept of *multiple perspectives* rather than presenting history or patriotic exercises as neutral.

Emily thinks that the best way for students to learn is to be around peers and people of the same age. Whether good or bad, they learn a lot from their friends about how to act in certain social situations, how to respond, what are socially acceptable ways to behave etc. She thinks

it is important that all students are exposed to that, and sees the inclusive model as the best for students to learn. For students who may struggle socially, if they are in an environment with other students who struggle socially, they are not going to have the benefits of positive modeling. So interacting with other people is more important in learning than just learning from a book, she says.

What Emily likes the most about being a teacher is when she gets into deep discussions or conversations with the class, and they really realize something; when she can see in their faces that a light bulb has been lit, that they get a deeper understanding of something. This mostly happens when they talk about things that are important to them as students, and when they talk about things students really want to know.

Madelyn likes to have her students think about what they can do, if the future or other circumstances are uncertain, because such is life. Madelyn says that sometimes you don't know what's going on. Then it's important to learn to figure that out. She asks them questions about what they can do: *Can you ask a friend? Do you think you could look around to see what everybody else is doing?* And the students act on it. When presenting new material, she likes to present it in ways that enable kids to build on prior knowledge. In kindergarten they start with assuming that the students don't know anything. Then they can make sure that they start building. They teach the fundamentals and building blocks first that are really concrete (e.g. numbers and letters). If they learn the letters, and how to form them, and the students already know them, she asks if students know words containing the letters, or they can create a silly sentence with a lot of words that starts with a certain letter. Her students learn how to be good citizens, and how people in a community can support and help each other. Being part of a community means that even if you didn't make the mess, you can still help clean it up. That's just part of being a community.

Supportive Classroom Environment

Greenhill Elementary School has made a commitment to providing services such as Language and Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Adapted PE, within natural environments. By embedding these supports in each classroom, both students and teachers benefit, through enhanced skills and additional support in a variety of ways. Their

Language and Speech Pathologist regularly provides direct support and modeling for articulation of specific sounds, while teaching phonemic awareness activities to heterogeneous small groups in kindergarten, just to mention one example. The same therapist also works on social and pragmatic language during natural turn-taking events through a conversation taking place over lunch or during a ball game. As a team, therapists and teachers continue to learn from each other, and support each other in the process of providing better service for students with complex needs.

Emily supports the students by trying to be there for them when they are struggling with a situation, or struggling with a friend. She tries to make the personal connection with all the kids, and to build a rapport with them. That helps when she gets into a situation with them where they struggle, or she struggles with them doing something. A personal report makes it easier to make the connection with the students in a difficult situation. She tries to be the neutral force in their life that they can talk to about anything they like.

Madelyn is aware of the fact that she is modeling for the kids, and she has clear expectations. The students know how to treat each other, and she tries to be a model for them. She points out things that are great that are going on in the classroom, and talks to them one to one if they have done something that is not acceptable. She also makes sure to praise all the kids for things they are doing. She wants to acknowledge all the efforts the kids are making, because that is what will keep them wanting to sustain their efforts, and it motivates others to want to do likewise.

At the beginning of the year, Madelyn focuses a lot on how the kids can connect socially, and she focuses on creating a positive learning environment. She has taught them that everyone is different. They went through an important lesson on how words hurt, with *wrinkled Ralph*, a paper-poster person of the same size as the students, that the teacher had cut out. Madelyn says:

All the kids get a chance to go up to Ralph and say something mean to him, and they can crumble or rip him, and hurt his feelings. And they get to see how a person feels, and they look awful and are all crumbled and ripped after people have said mean comments to them. And then we taught them like, if you say something nice, it helps smooth out, and it repairs with a band aid, so he gets all repaired. But they still get to see all the damage that is left. Because even if they say nice things later, it still does

leave some damage (05.25.10: pp. 12-13).

Madelyn tries to give a lot of positive reinforcement, a lot of encouragement, and a lot of praise where due. Everyone receives praise for different things. She tries to make sure that she is available, and that the kids can ask her for help.

Working with and Valuing Difference

Greenhill Elementary School is committed to the concept that *all means all*, and teachers don't give up easily when a child is struggling. They work extensively to make a child's experience successful. Both Emily and Madelyn see it as important to value everybody for their differences. As far as letting students keep their connections to their backgrounds, valuing them for their differences is key. They both acknowledge different cultures in their classrooms. Emily says:

...living in Los Angeles, were really fortunate that it is such a diverse community, that we really have to celebrate each other for their differences...I really try to make the students feel comfortable to share things about their cultures. And as I said, social studies is usually a really good time for that. And they usually have a lot of questions. It's nice. I find that the more diverse class that I get, the more interesting it is. And, I feel like it's things that other students, even though this group of kids, they have been with each other since kindergarten, they don't even know everything about each other. And so, I think it's really important to acknowledge and value everybody for their cultural backgrounds (05.25.10: p. 10).

Emily thinks that being successful within an inclusive setting means to accept everybody's differences, instead of judging each other by their differences. She says that at Greenhill Elementary School they are good at celebrating each other's differences. Some people are really good at art. Some people are good at sports. Some people are good at language or arts. She teaches the kids that it is okay that we know different things, and that we can celebrate and support each other for those differences.

Madelyn's classroom is like a workshop with lots of creative activities going on at the same time. Students draw and paint pictures and posters. They are making bees, ladybugs, beehives, mosquitoes and worms with all kinds of different materials. Madelyn says that it's not always easy for her to be as creative as she is, and still she thinks it's worth it, because it makes the

classroom function more smoothly. She has kids in the class that need extensions, and she has kids that need extra help. The class would be chaos if these kids did not get the support they need, and the kids would be naughty and hard to get in order. This is very beneficial to the class, however hard it is to keep the standard of such a creative classroom. When there is not enough of her to go around, she is lucky enough to have a paraprofessional to help support the kids as well. Her students thrive in the setting of all the different open-ended activities taking place in the classroom. The confidence level among the students is strong, and the differences between them are celebrated in multiple ways through teaching and learning, which appears as a positive force that connects rather than limits, isolates or pulls them apart from each other. All the students are listened to. All the students get to share. All students are respected for what they share as well. The teacher demonstrates through her connection and relationship with the kids that everything that is shared is valuable. Students learn to take turns in presenting in class, they learn to both listen and partake in conversations, discussions and collaboration.

Both Emily and Madelyn think that all children should be able to be educated in the same setting. Everyone has something to learn from another. Maybe a person with more severe disabilities can be getting some modeling from his peers about how to act socially. Some kids need extra support from the paraprofessional. Some kids can just be learning about how there are differences in the world, and learning some empathy. Everyone is getting something. Some kids are just getting friendship from it, because everyone ends up becoming good friends, which she thinks is great.

Both of them think they become better teachers within the setting of being in an inclusive school in a diverse environment. The support from their teams also professionalizes and strengthens them as teachers. This relates to what the system principal says about the co-teaching model, that all team members become extremely knowledgeable through building on each other's competences and learning from each other about how to best meet each students needs. This makes a productive link to *the Systemic Change Framework* (Ferguson et al., 2003), showing a dynamic connection between both student-, professional- and organizational effort where both teachers, students and administrators cooperate to make the school environment a valuable place for all learners. Through the way administrators and teachers transform their vision of inclusion into practice, they demonstrate the importance of *learning membership* as the most important part of inclusion (Ferguson, 1995).

4.4.3 Parent Involvement

Greenhill Elementary School has embedded a number of systems to ensure that families have input on their children`s program. The school is a place for whole families, including siblings with and without disabilities. For many families it is a new experience to be able to drop off all their children in one place. Typically developing siblings learn that they are not alone in having a family member with a disability, and that support and learning for their brother or sister doesn`t come from a different place than support and learning for them. Siblings often provide helpful information about accessibility and diverse strengths in their own classrooms as well.

Together with professionals at the school, parents participate in assessing Individualized Education Programs (IEP) for their students. Families provide feedback regarding student performance at home and in the community as well as critical information about student interests and affinities.

Greenhill Elementary School sponsors parent education nights for the community at large, to bring in experts to discuss all parts of education. Faculty members from Harbor University as well as experts on health, vision, and other community members present to families and share their expertise. In addition, parents and other family members are leaders in training the staff at Greenhill on the unique needs of individual students. Each year during the school`s professional development week, new and returning families are invited to present an in-service on their child, highlighting interests, motivations, strengths, areas of need and behavior supports. Many of Greenhill`s students have a wide variety of medical protocols including the use of feeding tubes, catheterization, support for seizures and administration of medications. It takes a leap of faith to turn these responsibilities over to school personnel. Opportunities for parents to train staff are the first step in assuring families that the school takes the responsibilities seriously. Parent presentations to staff are videotaped, archived and reused as new staff members join them and as students matriculate to new grade levels. This shows how staff benefit from access to the most significant people in a student`s life, and families see and understand the school`s commitment to their expertise.

Parents are key players within the school in other ways as well. The school has a parent association that organizes events to bring the school community together, such as a *back to*

school picnic the week before school starts, and a carnival fund-raiser in the spring. Through fund-raising, the parent association has also been able to support the art and music teacher positions when budget cuts have meant that the school budget could no longer support them. Many parents also volunteer in classrooms, especially in kindergarten.

All the classes have room moms. There are usually one or two room moms for each class. They help out with organizing fundraisers for each grade level. Emily says that in fifth grade they need a lot of fundraisers, as they go out on a field trip, and then parents help out. They have also had school dances put together by room parents. Also, as to involvement, they do have room parents who come and say, “*Do you need any help?*” or the teachers ask them for help. In addition are those parents who come in if they need things cut, prepared or put together in class. Emily says that other than that, she doesn’t have that much need of parent involvement in the classroom. Her experience is that students in fifth grade act more confidently and on task when parents are not around.

Madelyn on the other hand, invites parents to bring in ideas about what to do in class, or how to organize teaching. The way they do reading center in class, was the idea of one of the parents. Sometimes when the students are in reading center, 2 or 3 students may be off reading a chapter book, while 2 or 3 students are perhaps getting a blending of site word activities and reading. And parents are helping out a lot in centers. If there are enough parents, they can do different levels at the reading center. The parents in Madelyn’s class come in Tuesday through Friday to volunteer an hour and a half at centers in the morning. When working in centers, students are divided in four different groups. They rotate between the different centers, doing different activities connected to each center: *1) Reading Center, 2) Writing Center, 3) Math Center and 4) Creative Center*. Madelyn says about volunteering parents:

We’re very lucky to be able to have them, because we can make centers a little bit harder. We can give the kids more challenging activities, because we know that there’ll be an adult there to help support them, so kids who need extra help can get it...Even before school starts, we have parent orientation, and we talk about the importance of parent volunteers, and we really try to jazz up centers. And so everyone ends up finding out about that...Then we give everyone a sheet that says: «How can you volunteer», and they fill it out and they bring it back to us. We also get parents to volunteer as far as driving kids on field trips. We get lots of parent volunteers for that...They’ll come in and sometimes volunteer their time, like I said, just help

celebrate culturally. We stress the importance of parent involvement (05.25.10: p. 16, 17).

Madelyn says it requires a lot to make sure that she has a good rapport with all the parents, and to make sure that they are at her side. She puts a lot of work into it for students, parents and herself to benefit from the great resource it is to have parents support and participation in class.

4.2.4 Summary

Greenhill Elementary School serves as a national and international model, advocating the inclusion of students with severe disabilities in general education classrooms. The school maintains a strong partnership with Harbor University in preparing new teachers for inclusive practices. Through collaboration with the university, Greenhill has developed new approaches for curricular modifications, and for integrating special education teachers into the classroom. According to the teachers and the principal, the school has succeeded in creating an environment where *all* students benefit from each other, in a rich age-appropriate curriculum and in a natural context, where administration and teachers have established and refined their systems and approaches to making this possible (Ferguson, 2008). The school is committed to adapting curriculum to the children, rather than assuming the children will adapt to the curriculum (Ferguson, 1995). The school sees itself as a reflection of larger cultural values, and plays an important role in developing values of students, also making impact by being a part of a broader social change. Within a flexible system of teaching, the school creates a culture of learning through community building where also parents are key players in creating and maintaining the best education possible to include every student (Ferguson et al., 2003; Ferguson & Galindo, 2008; Fullan, 2007; Mehan et al., 2006; Nevøy, 2007).

5.0 Discussion

5.1 Strengths and Challenges at the Two Charter schools

5.1.1 Arrangement of teaching and groups of students

The two schools differ in how they arrange their teaching. The Sunflower Academy divides students into ability-groups based on the students` level of achievement. At Greenhill Elementary School general education teachers, special education teachers, paraprofessionals and therapists operate in the same classroom to provide ongoing support for those who need it. The school has a philosophy of not pulling students out from class. And if some students need more support than what is provided in the classroom, they get this through teaching taking place after school.

At the Sunflower Academy the purpose of dividing students into ability-groups, is based on each student`s need for academic support. The same curriculum is taught to the different groups at one grade level. All students in all groups are provided with the same rigorous academic program, and the same objectives apply to all. The difference is that the lower level achievement groups get more detailed and differentiated teaching, with more concrete examples to support the students` understanding of the subjects.

The theory of inclusion as it is presented as an overall structure for the theoretical framework of this study highlights the importance of not separating students into different groups of teaching based on levels of ability (Ferguson 1995, 2005, 2008). Inclusive research and practice challenge the social and educational inequities that exist for students of differing abilities, ethnicities, experiences, religions and wealth (Ferguson, 2008; Nevøy, 2007; Vislie, 2003). The practice of distributing students to high-, middle- and low-ability groups, or academic and general tracks, correlates with ethnicity and socioeconomic status. Children from low-income households or from ethnic minority groups are more likely to be assigned to low-ability tracks or groups. Furthermore, Latino and African American students are consistently underrepresented in programs for the "gifted and talented" and over-represented in special education programs (Ferguson, 2008; Mehan & Betts 2008). To create a coherent vision for transforming the current educational system to a level where these inequities no longer are present, practitioners, families and researchers must engage in a conversation that

includes multicultural perspectives on inclusion (Ferguson, 1995).

My experience from visiting the Sunflower Academy is that the tracking of students into ability groups, provides support for students in academic subjects. Students in the lower achieving groups individually and as groups receive the extra scaffolding they need to succeed academically. In subjects like PE, however, I realized that the higher achieving groups of students had a stronger sense of fluency in the way they cooperated through activities, as their attitudes and skills of cooperation was more refined than in the lower achieving groups. Students in the lower achieving groups would probably benefit from mixed groups, having co-students modeling skills and attitudes of cooperation. However, I find it difficult to compare the ability grouping at the Sunflower Academy with conventional school tracking. Research done on tracking at conventional schools show a pattern of reproduction of inequality (Ferguson, 2008; Mehan & Betts, 2008). The ability groups as it is arranged and expressed at the Sunflower Academy contribute to reduce and eliminate gaps between students. All the students benefit from being part of a caring and loving environment where administrators and teachers have the same academic goals for all their students. These goals are founded in the vision and the mission of their charter as presented in chapter 4.1.

5.1.2 Professional development

At the Sunflower Academy, conferences, in-service programs, as well as staff development through cooperative planning contribute to meeting the needs of the school. Moreover, the professional development has a firm foundation in ongoing communication between teachers, between teachers and administration, between teachers and the After School Program Staff, and between teachers and parents. The school has managed to create an environment where there are as many adults as possible making sure that every student is having success. Through a coherent program, where the administration, teachers, and the After School Program Staff are moving in the same direction, a safe environment is created that constantly support student success (Fullan, 2007; Nevøy, 2007)

At Greenhill Elementary School, the co-teaching model where general education teachers, special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and therapists collaborate and plan together, serves as a tool to meet the needs of all students. Through a professional development week

every year, monthly staff meetings and collaboration in smaller and larger groups, teachers are constantly improving their understanding and practice on how to work and teach together in multiple classrooms.

The professional development as it is organized and built into the system at both schools, are constantly geared towards identifying where students' achievement gaps are. The teachers are flexible and creative in bringing new ideas and methods into the classroom. The administration at both schools invest in their teachers' professional knowledge, and the professional development is focused on erecting and improving support structures for students to succeed socially and academically. The care for each and every student drives the changes and shifts that are taking place at both schools. The skills and creativity of teachers and other practitioners serve as a foundation for how learning environments are implemented and sustained (Ferguson et al., 2003; Fullan, 2007).

The five elements representing the professional effort in the Systemic Change Framework (see 2.2.4.2) are well designed and implemented through professional development, collaboration and communication at the schools. At both schools environments are created where students and teachers thrive. According to Ferguson et al. (2003), ongoing professional development and support encourage practitioners' creativity and professionalism, which leads to better the students' learning (Ferguson et al., 2003; Fullan, 2007).

The Sunflower Academy and Greenhill Elementary School stand out as vital and productive community schools. They play an active role in producing change and developing values first of all to the students and their families, and to their neighboring communities as well; The Sunflower Academy connects to the community and aim at a mutual exchange of knowledge through their Family Children Center and through cooperation with universities and other organizations. Greenhill Elementary School stretches out to their community through research-based activities, and through cooperating with the Harbor University and other organizations to enrich the lives of children and their community through inclusive education.

Drawing a parallel to Alexander (2001), the school leaders at both schools stand out as transformational leaders. They work closely in tandem with teachers, students, families and people in the community towards a shared purpose embedded in the vision and the mission of their charters. The school leaders stand out as moral leaders, who create trust among staff and

students in a culture of learning, where school leaders and teachers together create and maintain stability and change, autonomy and support among staff are highly valued (Fullan, 2007).

5.1.3 Intellectual Quality

In this chapter I will look at how the teachers' practices interlink with the element of Intellectual Quality in the Productive Pedagogies as presented in chapter 2.2.1.

At both schools students are engaged in project-based learning for most units of study. Within this model, students are urged to challenge themselves and complete projects in a manner that is their "best work". Even if this might be different for different students, experiences from both schools show that students utilize their strengths together to develop more in depths projects when they work together in groups. Through project-based learning students become producers of knowledge. The teachers main instructional task is to create the environment that provide students with opportunities to engage in higher-order thinking: The students learn to manipulate information and ideas in ways where they combine ideas and facts in order to explain, generalize, and arrive at some conclusion or interpretation (Hayes et al., 2006). Through project-based learning students get the chance to get in depth on topics when working on larger projects. The annual project at Greenhill Elementary School is a concrete example, where the project interrelates within all subjects. This gives students opportunities to develop systematic, integrated and holistic understandings of concepts, more than only reciting fragmented pieces of understanding. The students develop deep knowledge where relatively complex relations are established to central concepts (Hayes et al. 2006), also drawing on the complexity of knowledge available through, teachers, practitioners and co-students in a multiple student environment (Ferguson, 1995; Ferguson et al., 2003; Ferguson, 2008).

Through project-based work students are exposed to multiple perspectives on learning, and where their own learning styles serve as tools for intellectual quality (Hayes et al., 2006).

5.1.4 Connectedness

Research shows that learning occurs optimally when there is a good fit between students' background knowledge and the new knowledge structures of curriculum and instruction (Hayes et al 2006). In this chapter I will look at how the teachers arrange for their students to connect to the world outside the school. This includes to which extent new knowledge is building on students' knowledge, and to which extent knowledge and skills are developed in the context of solving real-life issues and problems.

Through project-based work students are asked to bring in their home experiences, and homework is designed to make meaningful connections with curriculum, including personal experience and cultural backgrounds. The teachers give students freedom to invest and solve problems on their own. The students are encouraged to use different resources to learn how to solve things differently. They are made accountable for their own choices, and are prompted to use their own critical thinking and reflection within the frames of necessary teacher support.

Both the Sunflower Academy and the Greenhill Elementary School believe that education, community and diversity are an integral part of a child's character development. Their educational structures are based on values and ethics, integrity, social responsibility and positive identity. Through community collaboration the schools embrace the multicultural heritage of its community and provide students with the opportunity to excel in the fields of art, science and technology. Both schools are community-based schools that partnerships with organizations in the community to provide help to students and their families in a variety of ways. In concrete, teachers use the educational structures and collaboration with community as resources to make the students interlink learning outside classroom practice. Drawing links to the definition and challenges of inclusion as they understand it emphasizing the importance of communication and collaboration, this shows evidence of dynamic relationships between teachers and students, various school personnel, families and community members; all working together to construct learning (Ferguson, 1995). The focus of the schools is geared towards what need and should be changed to encompass all the students. Through the focus of educating critical reflective citizens, school leaders and teachers are creating a culture of learning together with their students, which make them all understand and act on the world in constantly new and reflective ways (Freire, 2000; Hayes et a., 2006; Nevøy 2007).

5.1.5 Supportive Classroom Environment

At both schools professional dialogues strengthen the quality of communication between teachers in ways that benefit their students. Having teams work together in a positive way, creates an environment where both teachers and students benefit, through enhanced skills and various additional support. Students can be more confident with each other, since the professional relationships among administrators, teachers and other practitioners are predictable. High expectations from the teachers serve as a support as well, as the teachers manage to create a positive and uplifting learning environment, where incoherence is attacked and acted upon immediately and where students are encouraged to thrive academically, socially and emotionally (Fullan, 2007; Hayes et al., 2006). This reflects an overall structure of the schools' organizational level. The school leaders have high expectations to themselves, related to the visions of what they want their schools to be. They require a lot from their teachers, and keep the promise of giving them the support they need through various ways of professional support. These support structures give the teachers what they need in order to live out their visions of inclusion into practice to support every student. The teachers practice shared leadership, in a duplicative way in which students are transformed into accountable and confident leaders as well. I see the support as it is built into the structures of professional development, at both schools, as key to how the schools manage to succeed within an inclusive setting (Ferguson, 1995; Ferguson et al., 2003; Fullan, 2007; Freire, 2000; Nevøy, 2007).

5.1.6 Working with and Valuing difference

This last dimension of the four interlinked elements in *the Productive Pedagogies* is important for a future society of equality where difference and active citizenship are both desired and valued. Both schools in this study celebrate the differences among students, and the teachers spend a lot of time in the classrooms, working on *how* they can learn to value each other's differences more. Emily says that being successful within an inclusive setting means accepting everybody for their differences, which highlight *learning membership* as the most important dimension of inclusion (Ferguson, 1995). Ferguson (1995) describes *learning membership* as an extraordinarily complex phenomenon. Examples from Greenhill Elementary School show this complexity as children with and without disabilities are

gathered in the same classroom. Through the co-working model, the school demonstrates that it is possible to create a learning environment where all students succeed, including those with severe disabilities. Madelyn`s classroom, reflects some of this complexity, as she has many different modifications and extensions going on in the classroom and at the same time. Her classroom demonstrates how all cultural knowledge are being present and given status within the curriculum (Hayes et al., 2006). Madelyn proves that even though it is a complex process to create a creative classroom the way she does, it gives all students the right to engage in the creation of a democratic classroom (Freire, 2000; Hayes et al., 2006).

5.1.7 Parent Involvement

This study underlines that family participation takes on new meaning in restructured inclusive schools (Ferguson et al., 2003). Parent involvement is a vital part of the school environment at both schools. And the schools show flexibility and creativeness in the way they invite students into the school and the classrooms.

In the process of improving the linkages between schools and families, principals and teachers need to reach out to parents and communities. Fullan (2007) underlines that educators need to go out into their communities with empathy, and interact with their constituents in meaningful ways. Being professional is no longer about remaining isolated at the school. This involves shifts in power and influence. And what new power arrangements can accomplish matters more than just power in and of itself (ibid).

The two schools show significant patterns of cooperation between teachers and parents. Some of the teachers have managed to break down the formal barrier of relationship that so often is there between teachers and parents. They cooperate within the classrooms as they were best friends. The teachers say that it takes a lot of time and energy to build these strong relationships with parents. At the same time they are willing to do what it takes, because they see how it benefits the class and the students. Parents are always welcome to come and talk to them about anything they like, and they are not shy to ask parents for help, either in class or with practical things that needs to be prepared for class.

Research underlines that parent involvement in the life at school have a positive influence

upon students development and progress (Fullan (2007)). This includes parental help in classrooms and on educational visits, and parent attendance at meetings to discuss student's progress. Also teachers accessibility to parents appear as important within this context: Schools operating an informal, open door policy, stand out as being more effective schools.

Research shows that schools pursuing a systemic agenda, maintain a sustained focus on strengthening the involvement of parents with the school and their children's schooling. Successful schools actively seek to strengthen the ties with the local community, especially with resources that bear on the caring for children. Greater trust and mutual engagement characterize these encounters at schools where personal interactions expand and become institutionalized (Ferguson et al.2003; Ferguson & Galindo, 2008; Fullan 2007) Both schools in this study show in concrete ways how they reach out and interact with parents academically and socially to provide student success. Fullan (2007) says that student commitment can be sustained and strengthened by collaborative teacher attitudes, where connections to the home appear essential to the task.

Integrity, respect, competence and personal regards for others are vital in the process of establishing relational trust between schools and parents (Fullan 2007). In schools where these elements are constantly talked about and valued, possibilities are opened for teachers and parents to negotiate complementary roles in children's education. Fullan (2007) also points out that when the majority of teachers collaborate with the majority of parents, first then a sizable impact on student learning will occur.

6.0 Innovation in a Multicultural Society

The two schools in this study show evidence of reducing achievement gaps between students from different social backgrounds, which holds promises that it is possible for schools to make a difference in ways that break the cycle of socially reproduced inequality. Through a collective process between administrators, teachers, students and their families as a whole, these two schools provide quality information on how they build and work to get all the students through their rigorous academic program related to the California Content Standards.

What is the difference between these schools, and schools that have less success in providing

a rich, nurturing and supportive education for their students? Both schools show multiple structures of management that provide the organizational framework for a culture of learning for both teachers and students. The schools reaches out to nurture and support the local community as well. What these two schools demonstrate in practice is that their focus always is geared towards what they can do to provide *all* their students, individually and as groups, with whatever scaffolding they need to succeed both academically, socially and emotionally. Their successful changes built into their systems of professional development, relates to the fact that everyone in the organization is focused on the same goal for their students. There is an interconnected sync between, the professional and organizational levels at the schools, that provide the best environment for student effort to take place (Ferguson et al., 2003).

The schools attention is not directed to whether they *change*, but to how well they continue to handle the problems they must face (Fullan 2007). As charter schools, they also have more freedom in the way they pursue things, as they are free from a lot of the regulations that apply to traditional public schools. All the decisions that are made are made at the school site. This indicates that a key to changing a school lies in the particular configuration of characteristics that give *that* school its distinctive identity (Tye, 2000). The schools also show evidence of the existence of a unique personality dynamic, which school leaders and teachers at the two schools relate to their structures of professional development, and the support structures that develops as a result of constant and open communication among colleagues (Ferguson, 1995; Freire 2000). The schools engage with other organizations through research, in ways that benefit both teachers and students. Teachers are encouraged to go to conferences or take new courses in fields where they feel that they need more professional development, and they are enriched through sharing and building on each others competences, as part of a continually process that improve their professional knowledge as individuals, and as groups. Darling-Hammond (1998) says that teachers learn best by: *1) studying, doing, and reflecting; 2) collaborating with other teachers; 3) looking closely at students and their work, and 4) by sharing what they see* (p. 8).

One of the principals in this study highlighted the fact that *character counts*, and that educating students also include teaching them to be people of good character. Research show that when students are provided with the support they need individually, their educational performances will start going up (Freire 200, Fullan 2007). Practices from the two schools in this study show the same.

In a multicultural society, where *learning memberships* seem to be a more loud need than *student learning*, Ferguson (1995) says that meaningful change will require a joint effort to reinvent schools to be more accommodating to all dimensions of human diversity. This includes that the purposes and processes of these reinvented schools will be organized to make sure that all children are prepared to participate in the benefits of their communities, so that others in the community care enough about what happens to them to value them as members.

When I asked the school leaders if they had any advices to Norway on how to create more inclusive schools, one of them answered:

.setting high expectations, staying really focused on the outcome, not of necessarily a single test. But on the kids making progress, that you can see, you can see it from the test, but you can also see it from how they play the keyboard. And you can also see it on how they behave, and you know it's the whole, focus on making sure that each individual is reaching their highest potential and then so it's celebrating, when, even though my expectations are up here, every step they take till that potential I'm just going "Wow, wow, wow" and then having a real respect for the challenges that they bring with them. Because they bring lots of challenges here, and they just don't disappear. Whatever those challenges are outside, they don't disappear (03.31.10: p 14).

The other school leader answered:

For me, it comes from the position that "all means all" and the commitment to adapt to the child rather than assume the child will adapt to the curriculum. It is this philosophical shift that must take place in order for schooling to be more inclusive. This teacher commitment might be elicited through teacher education programs.

Tye (2010) underlines the results from the two schools in this study when he says that a well functioning system is one in which people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning to see the whole together. It is one that is characterized by total employee involvement of collaboratively conducted accountable change directed toward shared values and principles.

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Attachments

How Teachers Transform Their Vision of Inclusion Into Practices That Include Every Student

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Project Description

Purpose

Norway is experiencing an ever increasing society of diversity. In the Norwegian context of schooling, individualized, adapted education and differentiation are considered instrumental to foster educational equity. Internationally, a growing amount of research addresses this issue from a different angle. The purpose of this project is to learn how things can be done differently from one culture to another, and to generate knowledge that can serve as a resource into our own tradition and schoolpolicy. Within this context I want to focus on how teachers design their curriculum and instruction to include all learners in two American schools.

The focus of this study is to investigate how teachers in two charterschools in the U.S. translate their, and their schools, vision of inclusion into practice. How do they work to get all the students through their academic program? How is scaffolding being erected to support student success? And how do these structures provide the organizational framework for a culture of learning for both teachers and students?

Internationally there has been a growing amount of research on inclusion the last two decades (Lipsky & Gartner 1997; Meijer 2003; O` Hanlon 2005; Vislie 1995). Inclusive research based on principles developed by Booth and Ainscow work as an overall structure for my study. Vislie (2003:10), presents these elements as follows:

Inclusion is:

- a process (rather than a state) by which a school attempts to respond to all pupils as individuals;
- regards inclusion and exclusion as connected processes. Schools developing more inclusive practices may need to consider both;
- emphasises the reconstructing of curricular provision in order to reach out to all pupils as individuals;
- emphasises overall school effectiveness;
- is of relevance to all phases and types of schools, possibly including special schools, since within any educational provision teachers face groups of students with diverse needs and are required to respond to this diversity.

Method

The research will take place at two different charterschools, one in the Los Angeles Unified School District, and one in the Santa Ana Unified School District. The schools were selected

because they have explicitly stated the mission of being inclusive. The schools have a common vision of inclusion, still they differ regarding what groups of students they consider most vulnerable to exclusion.

The study includes teacher interviews and classroom observation at each school. One lower grade class and one upper grade class are invited to participate at both schools. I also want to interview one administrator at each school regarding the school's and the school district's vision of inclusion. Teacher interviews will focus on how the teachers design their practice based upon their understanding of inclusion and learning. I will visit each classroom two or three times during the two last weeks of March, and the two first weeks of April, 2010. Teacher interviews will take place within 3 weeks after completed classroom observations, and will last for 45 minutes to an hour. Teachers volunteering in this project will receive a giftcard of \$ 25 each.

Risks

The risks are minimal for both students and teachers. The main focus of the observation is how teachers manage to include all students through teaching and choices of pedagogy. In the interviews teachers will share information and reflections about their practices. No personal information about either students or teachers will need to be collected. I anticipate no negative effects from either classroom observations, or teacher interviews.

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Interview guide - Executive director and Principal

Charter schools

- 1.1 What is the foundation and idea of a charterschool? How does a charterschool differs from «regular» public schools?
- 1.2 What is the particular charter of this school, and how would you explain the difference from this particular charterschool compared to other charter- and public schools?

***Mission.**To provide a rigorous academic environment that prepares students for entrance into a college preparatory track at the high school of their choice and to create a culture of kindness, creativity, courage, and honesty that will permit our graduates to assume leadership roles in the 21st century.*

Tell me about your mission, and how your organization has built upon it for both administrators, teachers and students to succeed within the context of it:

- 2.1 How do you work to get all the students through your rigorous academic program?
- 2.2 How is scaffolding being erected to support student success?
- 2.3 How do structures of management, teaching and scaffolding create a culture of learning for both administrators, teachers and students? Can you give concrete examples?

Your internet page says about the school that «it demonstrates high levels of educational performance and accountability.»

- 2.4 Can you give concrete examples on how this is provided among administrators and teachers, and among teachers and students?
- 2.5 How does this effect student - student relationships?
- 2.6 How do you define, or what is the content of these concepts:

Educational performance
Accountability
Excellence

Research shows how important it is for academic success, that students develop a reflective system of beliefs and a critical consciousness without sacrificing their neighborhood identities. Your strategies give students the opportunity to keep their connections to their own backgrounds as they develop their academic identity. This is also something I find interesting

as a source to eliminate the achievement gap between children.

- 3.1 How do you manage to include this «neighborhood identity» dimension as a part of your organizational framework?
- 3.2 How do you succeed in taking care of this «multiple formation» as a practical part of teaching?
- 3.3 How are parents invited to be involved - and in what ways do they contribute as a resource to the school for both teachers and student?

A Recipe for Learning. *El Sol believes that education, community and diversity are an integral part of a child's character development. The educational structure is based on values and ethics, integrity, social responsibility and positive identity. **Through community collaboration, corporate involvement and extended learning programs,** El Sol embraces the multicultural heritage of its community and provides students with the opportunity to excel in the fields of art, science and technology.*

- 4.1 How is this «recipe for learning» transformed or manifested into practical school life? Can you give some examples?
- 4.2 What students or vulnerable groups of society would not be a good fit within the charter and focus of your school? Are there kids that you would have a problem serving, within the frames of your organization?
- 4.3 From your highlights as described at your internet page, how do you explain, and can you give concrete examples of:
 - a) Well-rounded educational curriculum
 - b) Project-based learning --> techniques, technology, community services
 - c) Educational structure --> diversity, community involvement, values, ethics
 - d) Community resource center and support network for parents, students and faculty
 - e) Professional development programs and incentives
 - f) Public and private partnerships to incorporate the best practices in education and business

Arts and Sciences

- 5.1 Can you tell me about the mix of arts and sciences emphasized in your curriculum, and about the specialized courses offered to students at El Sol?
- 5.2 How does this program effect the school- environment, both academically and socially?

Systemic changes

- 6.1 Since you started here, what have you been able to create or change that you

wanted to create or change?

- 6.2 Why did you want these changes?
- 6.3 What positive consequences appeared as a result of your strategy that you didn't anticipate?
- 6.4 What negative consequences, if some, has appeared that you didn't anticipate?
- 6.5 What are the greatest challenges you face as the principal of the school?
- a) at the professional level
 - b) at the organizational level
 - c) at the district/ community level
- 6.6 Based on your own experience, if you look at all the teachers at this school, on a horizontal line from the most traditional to the most innovative, where would you place each teacher?

Traditional

Innovative

Equity

Research within the field of inclusive education and a sociocultural perspective on learning, has propelled my motivation in the direction of how to break established traditions within schools and research, to the advantage of new avenues of change in a multicultural society.

- 7.1 In which degree do you think schools have sufficient effect to break the cycle of socially reproduced inequality?
- 7.2 Are you satisfied with the way this school manage to reduce the gap in achievement between groups of students of different social backgrounds?
- 7.3 Is there things you would like to see different, changed or added to the way things are today?
- 7.4 What are the following steps to improve or extend your strengths and structures of the school as a learning organization for both teachers and students?
- 7.5 What are the most important keys for this to happen, the way you see it?

To expand the mission of inclusion

When I told you a little about where we are in the Norwegian process of schooling, and that

we have a lot to learn from your long tradition and experience of working with and valuing difference, and how you have moved from the narrow focus on student achievement and test scores, back to a broader more holistic view on your students, you said «good luck».

- 8.1 What did you mean, or what lies behind this «good luck» regarding struggles, fights, experiences and barriers that you had to face through your own transformation from the narrow to the broader focus on the students?
- 8.2 What are the struggles and challenges you face now in this process?
- 8.3 Based on your own experiences within this process, what advices or recommendations will you give educators in the Norwegian society, (based on where we are) in the process of being able to creating more inclusive schools and a more inclusive society?

Interview guide - System Principal

Charterschools

- 1.1 What is the foundation and idea of a charterschool? How does a charterschool differs from «regular» public schools?
- 1.2 What is the particular charter of this school, and how would you explain the difference from this particular charterschool compared to other charter- and public schools?

***Mission:** The XX Institute provides model educational programs in family, school and community centered environments that support all children including those who are typically developing, gifted or have special needs to achieve their maximum intellectual, social, emotional and physical potential. XX provides dynamic research and training environments for the development, implementation, and dissemination of best practices for educating a diverse learning community from birth on in collaboration with California State University, YY College of Education.*

- 2.1 Tell me about your mission, and how your organization has built upon it for both administrators, teachers and students to succeed within the context of it.
- 2.2 How do you work to get all the students through your rigorous academic program?
- 2.3 How is scaffolding being erected to support student success?
Can you give concrete examples?
- 2.4 How do structures of management, teaching and scaffolding create a culture of learning for both administrators, teachers and students?
Can you give concrete examples?

Your school-brochure gives information on how your *Inclusive Educational Model* makes a difference in the lives of all, through a variety of approaches:

A) ***Co-teaching model:** Special and general education teachers are partners in planning, teaching and assessment of each child.*

- 2.5 Can you give concrete examples on how this is implemented at your school?

B) ***Related Sevices:** Professionals such as early childhood intervention specialists, speech and language therapists and physical therapists train teachers at this school how to provide customized support to students throughout the schoolday.*

- 2.6 How is this training being provided?
Can you give concrete examples?

C) Paraprofessionals: *Paraprofessionals work closely with teachers to provide support for children's learning needs. These teachers become valuable members of the team.*

- 2.7 How is the work between paraprofessionals and teachers manifested into everyday practice of planning and teaching?
Can you give concrete examples?

B) Family partnerships: *Teachers, specialists, paraprofessionals and parents collaborate to determine the best type of instruction to develop the student's long-term educational goals.*

- 2.8 Can you give concrete examples on how this is being implemented at your school?

- 2.9 As concepts, how would you define the following:

- 5) Educational performance
- 6) Accountability
- 7) Excellence

Research shows how important it is for academic success, that students develop a reflective system of beliefs and a critical consciousness without sacrificing their neighborhood identities.

- 3.1 How do your strategies give students the opportunity to keep their connections to their own backgrounds as they develop their academic identity?
- 3.2 In what ways, (other than those you have mentioned) do parents contribute as a resource to the school for both administrators, teachers and students?
Can you give concrete examples?
- 3.3 What students or vulnerable groups of society would not be a good fit within the charter and focus of your school? Is there kids that you would have a problem serving, within the frames of your organization?
- 3.4 How does your way of schooling affect the community that you are a part of? Give concrete examples.

Art

- 5.1 Art seems to be an important part of your curriculum at school. Tell me a little bit about your annual art-project. Why is this project so important to the school, included teachers and students?

Systemic changes

- 6.1 Since you started here, what have you been able to create and/ or change that you wanted to create and/ or change?
- 6.2 Why did you want these changes?
- 6.3 What positive consequences appeared as a result from these changes?
- 6.4 What negative consequences, if some, has appeared that you didn't anticipate?
- 6.5 What are the greatest challenges you face as the system-principal of the school?
 - a) at the professional level
 - b) at the organizational level
 - c) at the district/ community level
- 6.6 Based on your own experience, if you look at all the teachers at this school, on a horizontal line from the most traditional to the most innovative, where would you place each teacher?

Traditional

Innovative

Equity

Research within the field of inclusive education and a sociocultural perspective on learning, has propelled my motivation in the direction of how to break established traditions within schools and research, to the advantage of new avenues of change in a multicultural society.

- 7.1 In which degree do you think schools have sufficient effect to break the cycle of socially reproduced inequality?
- 7.2 Are you satisfied with the way this school manage to reduce the gap in achievement between groups of students of different social backgrounds?
- 7.3 Are there things you would like to see different, changed or added to the way things are today?
- 7.4 What are the following steps to improve or extend your strengths and structures of the school as a learning organization for both administrators, teachers and students?
- 7.5 What are the most important keys for this to happen, the way you see it?
- 7.6 How do you define *Excellence*?

Vision

8.1 How do you work:

a) To become a national leader in collaborative and inclusive education

b) To affect change in national education policy

c) To disseminate nationally the institute's inclusive model program information and training

To become partners with the community, parents, teachers and specialists to ensure that all children, whatever their academic, social and emotional needs, have access to quality education.

To enrich the lives of children and our community through inclusive education.

To expand the mission of inclusion

Your school-brochure expresses: *Imagine a world where all children are equally valued, a world where each child is seen as a gift.*

9.1 On this horizontal line from low to high, place a mark on the line representing your schools ability to equally include each student, the way you experience it.

Low

High

Explain why you choose this position?

Norway experiences an ever increasing society of diversity. In the Norwegian context of schooling individualized, adapted education and differentiation are considered instrumental to foster educational equity.

9.2 Based on your own experience and knowledge of inclusion, and from a country with long tradition and experience of major diversity; what advices or recommendations will you give me, and others, both school administrators and teachers in Norway, in our process of being able to creating more inclusive schools and a more inclusive society?

Interview Guide - Teachers

1.1 Tell me about your mission, and how you build or work upon it as a teacher.

School charter

- 2.1 What is the school-charter to you?
- 2.2 What are the most important elements of the charter to you?
- 2.3 How have you developed your pedagogy and teaching according to the school charter?

Your internet page says about the school that «..it demonstrates high levels of educational performance and accountability.»

3.1 How do you define, or what is the content of these concepts to you:

Educational performance
Accountability
Excellence

Productive Pedagogies

Intellectual demands

- 4.1 How do you present your class to academically demands?
- 4.2 How do you define the content of such demands?
- 4.3 How do you assess the way students accomplish academically demands?

Connectedness

- 5.1 How do you help students to both socially and academically connect to and create a learning community?

Research shows how important it is for academic success, that students develop a reflective system of beliefs and a critical consciousness without sacrificing their neighborhood identities.

- 5.2 How do your strategies give students the opportunity to keep their connections to their own backgrounds as they develop their academic identity?
- 5.3 How are parents invited to be involved - and in what ways do they contribute as a resource to the school for both teachers and student?

Supportive classrooms

- 6.1 What kinds of supports do you deliver to create a supportive classroom environment?
- 6.2 What kinds of supports do you need to create a supportive classroom environment?

Working with and valuing difference

7.1 How do you work with and value difference among your students?

7.2 How many nationalities are represented in your class?

The School as a Learning Organization

Research shows that a real challenge for improving students' academic performance is in improving teachers' professional knowledge and collegial support structures.

8.1 Do you have any examples of how you - at this school - work on teachers professional knowledge - and on developing collegial support structures?

8.2 Do you manage to find time to professional dialogues at your school?

8.3 How does this affect your teaching?

On this horizontal line from low to high, place a mark on the line representing the level of collegial support structures, the way you experience it to be at this school.

_____ Low High

8.4 Explain why you choose this position.

8.5 What type of support is not sufficient?

8.6 What would you need, or what do you think would contribute for your mark to be moved to a higher score than where you now put it?

also related to

As teachers, our professional knowledge is developing continuously. New types of insights, new classroom challenges, and new school contexts place teachers in a lifelong learning environment, we might say.

On this horizontal line from low to high, place a mark on the line representing your level of professional knowledge as you experience it today, linked up to the challenges and requirements you meet as a teacher.

_____ Low High

8.7 Explain why you choose this position.

8.8 What would you need, or what do you think would contribute for your mark to be moved to a higher score than where you now put it?

Based on your own experience, if you look at all the teachers at this school, on a horizontal line from the most traditional to the most innovative, where would you place each teacher?

Traditional
Innovative

9.1 Explain why you choose this position.

9.2 Is there anything you would like to be different?

Arts and Sciences

10.1 How does the mixture of art and academics effect the students academically and socially?

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

Elements	What	When	How
Intellectual Quality 1. Higher order thinking 2. Deep knowledge 3. Deep understanding 4. Knowledge problematic 5. Substantive conversation 6. Metalanguage			
Connectedness 1) Knowledge Integration 2) Background knowledge 3) Connectedness to the world 4) Problem-based curriculum			
Supportive Classrooms 1. Engagement 2. Student self-regulation 3. Student direction of activities 4. Social Support 5. Explicit criteria			
Working with and valuing difference a) Cultural knowledges b) Inclusivity c) Narrative d) Group identities in a learning community e) Citizenship			

Based on how these elements are presented and described in the theoretical framework, I will explain and discuss in which degree these are integrated in each classroom. The focus will be on how each teacher corporate some, or all, of these elements in his or her teaching, and how it affects the student engagement in each class.

When observing these elements, I will make judgments on a 1-5 scale, as an overview, linked to the discussion on how, and to what extent each element is implemented in the teachers` practice within each class.

Low value 1 2 3 4 5 High value

Meldeskjema

for forsknings- og studentprosjekt som medfører meldeplikt eller konsesjonsplikt
(jf. personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter)

Kopi av innsendt meldeskjema

Prosjektnummer: 23998

1. PROSJEKTTITTEL			
How Teachers transform their Vision of Inclusion into Practices that include every Student			
2. BEHANDLINGSANSVARLIG INSTITUSJON			
Institusjon: Universitetet i Stavanger			
Avdeling/fakultet: Det humanistiske fakultet		Institutt: Institutt for allmennlærerutdanning og spesialpedagogikk	
3. DAGLIG ANSVARLIG			
Navn(fornavn og etternavn): Anne Nevøy			
Arbeidssted(avdeling/seksjon/institutt): Institutt for allmennlærerutdanning og spesialpedagogikk Universitetet i Stavanger		Akademisk grad: Høyere grad	Stilling: Førsteamanuensis
Adresse – arbeidssted:		Postnummer: 4036	Poststed: STAVANGER
Telefon: 51833447	Mobil:	Telefaks:	E-post: anne.nevoy@uis.no
4. VED STUDENTPROSJEKT (studiested må alltid være samme som arbeidssted til daglig ansvarlig)			
Navn(fornavn og etternavn) på student: Ann Elin Svensen		Akademisk grad: Høyere grad	

Adresse – privat: 2222 E. Walnut Ave, Orange CA 92867 USA		Postnummer:	Poststed:
Telefon: 0017148656383	Mobil:	Telefaks:	E-post: annelin27003@yahoo.no
5. FORMÅL MED PROSJEKTET			
Problemstillinger, forskningsspørsmål, eller lignende.	Jeg er student ved Universitetet i Stavanger, og skriver masteroppgave i California. Formålet å se hvordan lærere ved 2 charterskoler i California legger opp sin undervisning for å ivareta alle elevene både faglig og sosialt, og hvordan de evner å jevne ut forskjeller mellom elevene tross kulturelle og evt andre forskjeller.		
6. PROSJEKTOMFANG			
<input type="checkbox"/> Enkelt institusjon <input type="checkbox"/> Nasjonal multisenterstudie <input type="checkbox"/> Internasjonal multisenterstudie			
Angi øvrige institusjoner som skal delta:			
7. UTVALGSBESKRIVELSE			
<u>Beskrivelse av utvalget.</u> Gi en kort beskrivelse av hvilke personer eller grupper av personer som inngår i prosjektet (f.eks. skolebarn, pasienter, soldater).	2 charterskoler i California er valgt som utgangspunkt for undersøkelsen.. En skole i Los Angeles og en i Sa Ana. Utvalget består av 2 klasser fra hver skole hvor fokuset blir lagt på lærers undervisning i disse klassene. tillegg vil en person fra ledelsen ved hver skole delta som både førstekontakt og via intervju i tillegg til inter med lærerne fra de representative klassene. Charterskolene er valgt fordi disse er kjent for å kunne ivareta alle elever både faglig og sosialt, tross forskjeller mellom elevene både hva kultur og faglig nivå angår.		
<u>Rekruttering og trekking.</u> Oppgi hvordan utvalget rekrutteres og hvem som foretar rekrutteringen/ trekkingen.	Studiet i California er basert på en samarbeidsavtale mellom Universitetet i Stavanger og Chapman University i Orange, California hvor jeg oppholder meg.. Jeg er blitt tildelt veileder ved Chapman University. Veileder h forbindelse med prosjektet etablert kontakt med de to skolene, da disse også fungerer som samarbeidsskoler forhold til forskning forskning og annet arbeid/aktivitet.		
<u>Førstegangskontakt.</u> Oppgi hvem som oppretter førstegangskontakt med utvalget.	En kontaktperson i ledelsen ved begge skolene, har fått tilsendt prosjektbeskrivelse, brev til lærere og brev ti foreldre (se vedlegg). Denne kontakten er opprettet gjennom veileder ved Chapman University. Kontaktpers ledelsen for hver skole etablerer videre kontakt med lærere og representative klasser, utfra hvilke lærere som melder seg frivillig til prosjektet. Planen er å besøke/undersøke et lavere klassetrinn (1-3 klasse) og et høyere klassetrinn (4-6 klasse) ved hver skole.		

Oppgi alder på utvalget	<input type="checkbox"/> Barn (0-15 år)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ungdom (16-17år)	<input type="checkbox"/> Voksne (over 18 år)
Antall personer som inngår i utvalget.	2 personer fra lskoleledelse og 4 lærere = 6 voksne (intervju) Og 4 elevklasser med ca 20 elever i hver klasse (observasjon)		
Dersom det inkluderes personer med redusert eller manglende samtykkekompetanse, beskriv denne del av utvalget nærmere.			
8. INFORMASJON OG SAMTYKKE			
Oppgi hvordan informasjon til respondenten gis.	<input type="checkbox"/> Det gis skriftlig informasjon. <input type="checkbox"/> Det gis muntlig informasjon. Redegjør for hvilken informasjon som gis Veileder ved Chapman University har gitt informasjon til kontaktperson ved hver skole om at jeg er en internasjonal student på besøk fra Norge, hvor hun også har fortalt litt om prosjektet mitt før jeg har sendt e prosjektbeskrivelse.		
<u>Samtykke</u> Innhentes samtykke fra den registrerte?NB. Se veiledning for krav til samtykke.	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja Oppgi hvordan samtykke innhentes. Ved brev til lærerne som skal intervjues (se vedlegg)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Nei Gi en redegjørelse for hvorfor det anses nødvendig å gjennomføre prosjektet uten samtykke fra respondentene		
9. METODE FOR INNSAMLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER			

<p>Kryss av for hvilke datainnsamlingsmetoder og datakilder som skal benyttes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Spørreskjema <input type="checkbox"/> Personlig intervju <input type="checkbox"/> Observasjon <input type="checkbox"/> Gruppeintervju <input type="checkbox"/> Psykologiske/pedagogiske tester <input type="checkbox"/> Medisinske undersøkelser/tester <input type="checkbox"/> Journaldata <input type="checkbox"/> Registerdata <input type="checkbox"/> Biologisk materiale <input type="checkbox"/> Utprøving av legemidler <input type="checkbox"/> Annen innsamlingsmetode, oppgi hvilken:
	<p>Kommentar til metode for innsamling av personopplysninger:</p> <p>2-3 dager med observasjon i klasserom ved hver av skolene hvor jeg deltar som deltakende observatør.</p> <p>Lærerintervju 3 uker etter at observasjonene er avsluttet, med lærerne fra de representative klassene, samt med en person fra skoleledelsen. Semi-strukturerte intervjuer med hver lærer, à ca 45 min - 1 time.</p>

10. DATAMATERIALETS INNHOLD

<p>Gjør kort rede for hvilke opplysninger som skal samles inn. Legg ved spørreskjema, intervjuguide, registreringsskjema e. a., som foreligger ferdig utarbeidet eller som utkast.</p>	<p>Opplysninger som samles inn vil knyttes til forskningsspørsmålet: How Teachers transform their vision of inclusion into practices that include every student : How do they work to get all the students through their academic program? How is scaffolding being erected to support student success? How do these structures provide the organizational framework for a culture of learning for both teachers and students?</p>	
<p>Registreres det direkte personidentifiserende opplysninger?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nei</p>	<p>Hvis ja, oppgi hvilke:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Navn, adresse, fødselsdato <input type="checkbox"/> 11-sifret fødselsnummer
<p>Registreres det indirekte identifiserende personopplysninger</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nei</p>	<p>Hvis ja, oppgi hvilke:</p>
<p>Behandles det sensitive personopplysninger?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nei</p>	<p>Hvis ja, oppgi hvilke:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Rasemessig eller etnisk bakgrunn, eller politisk, filosofisk eller religiøs oppfatning <input type="checkbox"/> At en person har vært mistenkt, siktet, tiltalt eller dømt for en straffbar handling. <input type="checkbox"/> Helseforhold. <input type="checkbox"/> Seksuelle forhold. <input type="checkbox"/> Medlemskap i fagforeninger.
<p>Behandles det opplysninger om tredjeperson?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nei</p>	<p>Hvis ja, hvordan blir tredjeperson informert om behandlingen?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Får skriftlig informasjon. <input type="checkbox"/> Får muntlig informasjon. <input type="checkbox"/> Blir ikke informert.

11. INFORMASJONSSIKKERHET

<p>Redegjør for hvordan datamaterialet registreres og oppbevares.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Direkte personidentifiserende opplysninger (spesifiser hvilke på punkt 10) erstattes med et referansenummer som viser en manuell/elektronisk navneliste som oppbevares atskilt fra det øvrige datamaterialet.</p> <p>Oppgi hvordan koblingsnøkkelen lagres og hvem som har tilgang til denne. Listen lagres i et eget dokument som slettes når arbeidet avsluttes og oppgaven leveres inn..Kun min veileder ved Chapman University og meg har tilgang til denne listen.</p> <hr/> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Direkte personopplysninger lagres sammen med det øvrige materialet.</p> <p>Oppgi hvorfor det er nødvendig med oppbevaring av direkte identifikasjonsopplysninger sammen med det øvrige datamaterialet:</p> <hr/> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Annet</p> <p>Spesifiser:</p>
<p>Hvordan skal datamaterialet registreres og oppbevares?</p> <p>Sett flere kryss dersom opplysninger registreres flere steder.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Fysisk isolert pc tilhørende virksomheten</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pc i nettverkssystem tilhørende virksomheten</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pc i nettverkssystem tilknyttet Internett tilhørende virksomheten</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Isolert privat pc</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Privat pc tilknyttet Internett</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Videoopptak/fotografi</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Lydopptak</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Manuelt/papir</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Annet:</p> <p>Hvis annen lagring, beskriv nærmere:</p> <p>Behandles lyd/videoopptak på pc?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ja</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Nei</p>
<p>Sikring av konfidensialitet.</p>	<p>Beskriv hvordan datamaterialet er beskyttet mot at uvedkommende får innsyn i opplysningene?</p> <p>Datamaterialet lagres på egen privat pc, som kun brukes av meg. Her vil ingen identifiserbare personopplysninger framkomme. Arbeidet inneholder ingen sensitive opplysninger, da det i hovedsak fokuserer på skolens og lærers visjoner om inkludering, og lærers oversettelse av disse til praksis. Pc oppbevares innefor utenfor tilgjengelighet for andre, når jeg ikke er tilstede.</p>
<p>Vil prosjektet ha prosjektmedarbeidere som skal ha tilgang til datamaterialet på lik linje med daglig ansvarlig/ student?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Ja</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Nei</p> <p>Oppgi hvilke:</p>
<p>Innhentes eller overføres personopplysninger ved hjelp av e-post/internett/eksternt datanett?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Ja</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Nei</p> <p>Hvis ja, beskriv hvilke opplysninger og hvilken form de har.</p>
<p>Vil personopplysninger bli utlevert til andre enn prosjektgruppen?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Ja</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Nei</p> <p>Hvis ja, til hvem:</p>

Skal opplysninger samles inn/bearbeides ved hjelp av databehandler?	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nei	Hvis ja, redegjør for hvem som skal samle inn data og hvilke data dette gjelder:
Hvis multisenterstudie:	Redegjør for hvordan samarbeidet mellom institusjonene foregår. Hvem har tilgang til materialet og hvordan reguleres tilgangen:	
12. VURDERING/GODKJENNING AV ANDRE INSTANSER		
Er prosjektet fremleggelses-pliktig for Regional komité for medisinsk og helsefaglig forskningsetikk (REK)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nei	Hvis ja, legg ved eller ettersend kopi av tilråding/tillatelse.
Dersom det anvendes biologisk materiale, er det søkt REK om opprettelse av forskningsbiobank?	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nei	Hvis ja, legg ved eller ettersend kopi av tilråding/tillatelse.
Er det nødvendig å søke om dispensasjon fra taushetsplikt for å få tilgang til data?	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nei	Hvis ja, legg ved eller ettersend kopi av tilråding/tillatelse.
Er det nødvendig med melding til Statens legemiddelverk?	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nei	Hvis ja, legg ved eller ettersend kopi av tilråding/tillatelse.
Andre	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nei	Angi hvem.
13. PROSJEKTPERIODE		
Oppgi tidspunkt for når datainnsamlingen starter – <u>prosjektstart</u> samt tidspunkt når behandlingen av person-opplysninger opphører – <u>prosjektslutt</u> .	Prosjektstart (ddmmåååå): 01.02.2010 Prosjektslutt (ddmmåååå): 30.09.2010	
Gjør rede for hva som skal skje med datamaterialet ved prosjektslutt.	<input type="checkbox"/> Datamaterialet skal anonymiseres. Gi en redegjørelse for hvordan datamaterialet anonymiseres. Datamaterialet makuleres. <input type="checkbox"/> Datamaterialet skal oppbevares med personidentifikasjon Hvor skal datamaterialet oppbevares? Gi en redegjørelse for hvorfor datamaterialet skal oppbevares med personidentifikasjon:	
14. FINANSIERING		
15. TILLEGGSPPLYSNINGER		

16. ANTALL VEDLEGG	
Oppgi hvor mange vedlegg som legges ved meldeskjemaet.	3

How Teachers Transform Their Vision of Inclusion Into Practices That Include Every Student

Informed Consent: Executive Director/ Principal

University of Stavanger
Kjell Arholmsgate
4036 Stavanger
Norway

Investigator: Ann Elin Svensen

Adviser: Ph. D. Dianne Ferguson, Chapman University and Ph.D. Anne Nevoy, University of Stavanger

I have been invited to participate in a research study that investigates how administrators and teachers design curriculum and instruction to include all learners. The focus of this study is to investigate how administrators and teachers in two charter schools translate their, and their schools, vision of inclusion into practice. How do they work to get all the students through their academic program? How is scaffolding being erected to support student success? And how do these structures provide the organizational framework for a culture of learning for both teachers and students? Data collected will serve as information on how every student is being supported and included, through the teachers choice of practice. The study seeks to learn how two schools in California, with its long tradition and experience of a diverse student population, manage, both academically and socially, to be inclusive in ways that are beneficial for all students.

In participating in this study I agree to parttake in an interview that will last from 45 minutes to an hour. In this interview I will be asked to reflect upon how I, and we as a school transform our vision of inclusion, into practice, and how we design curriculum and instruction to include all learners. As a volunteer in this project I will receive a giftcard of \$ 25.

I understand that:

7. The possible risks of this study are minimal to both me, the teachers and our students. No personal information about me, teachers or students will be needed or collected. The researcher anticipates no negative effects of the classroom observation.
- b) My participation in the study may help other schools and teachers to better understand inclusive practices and enable them to be more inclusive in their own practice.
- c) I may refuse to participate or may withdrawal from this study at any time without any

negative

consequences. Also, the investigator may stop the study at any time.

d) Any questions I may have concerning my participation in this study will be answered by

Ann Elin Svensen	annelin27003@yahoo.no	(714) 685 - 6383
Dianne Ferguson	dferguson@chapman.edu	(314) 609 - 6198
Anne Nevøy	anne.nevoy@uis.no	011 47 51 83 35 30

e) No information that identifies me, the teachers or students will be released. All the identifiable

information will be protected to the limits allowed by law. If the study design or the use of data

is to be changed, I will be so informed and my consent re-obtained. I understand that if I have any

questions, comments or concerns about the study, or the informed consent process, I may write or

call Elaine Munthe, Dr. polit. Head of Department, Department of Education, University of Stavanger, 4036 Stavanger, Norway. Phonenummer: (47) 51 83 10 00.

I have read the above and understand it, and hereby consent to the procedure(s) set forth.

Signature of Participant or Responsible Party

Date

Signature of Witness

Signature of Investigator

How Teachers Transform Their Vision of Inclusion Into Practices That Include Every Student

Informed Consent: Teacher

University of Stavanger
Kjell Arholmsgate
4036 Stavanger
Norway

Investigator: Ann Elin Svensen

Adviser: Ph. D. Dianne Ferguson, Chapman University and Ph.D. Anne Nevoy, University of Stavanger

I have been invited to participate in a research study that investigates how teachers design curriculum and instruction to include all learners. The focus of this study is to investigate how teachers in two charter schools translate their, and their schools, vision of inclusion into practice. How do they work to get all the students through their academic program? How is scaffolding being erected to support student success? And how do these structures provide the organizational framework for a culture of learning for both teachers and students? Data collected will serve as information on how every student is being supported and included, through the teachers choice of practice. The study seeks to learn how two schools in California, with its long tradition and experience of a diverse student population, manage, both academically and socially, to be inclusive in ways that are beneficial for all students.

In participating in this study I agree to allow the following data collection to take place. These will include 2-3 classroom observations in my class, and a semi-structured teacher interview with me. The classroom observations will take place two or three days in April, 2010. Three weeks after the classroom observations, an interview with me will serve as a completion of data collected in the class. In the interview I will be asked to reflect upon how I transform my vision of inclusion, and the vision of my school, into practice, and how I design curriculum and instruction to include all learners. The interview will last for 45 minutes to an hour. As a volunteer in this project I will receive a giftcard of \$ 25.

I understand that:

8. The possible risks of this study are minimal to both me and my students. No personal information about me or any of my students will be needed or collected. The researcher anticipates no negative effects of the classroom observation.

b) My participation in the study may help other schools and teachers to better understand

inclusive practices and enable them to be more inclusive in their own practice.

c) I may refuse to participate or may withdrawal from this study at any time without any negative consequences. Also, the investigator may stop the study at any time.

d) Any questions I may have concerning my participation in this study will be answered by

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e) No information that identifies me or my class will be released. All the identifiable information will be protected to the limits allowed by law. If the study design or the use of data is to be changed, I will be so informed and my consent re-obtained. I understand that if I have any questions, comments or concerns about the study, or the informed consent process, I may write or call Elaine Munthe, Dr. polit. Head of Department, Department of Education, University of Stavanger, 4036 Stavanger, Norway. Phonenummer: (47) 51 83 10 00.

I have read the above and understand it, and hereby consent to the procedure(s) set forth.

Signature of Participant or Responsible Party

Date

Signature of Witness

Signature of Investigator