



Washington State University

College of Education, Sport and Human Sciences

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Will defend their dissertation on

Date: March 5, 2026

Time: 9:00 A.M.

Zoom: Link by request ceshs.gradstudies@wsu.edu

Faculty, students and the general public are encouraged to attend

Title:

AN EXAMINATION OF THE SUCCESS OF STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES AS COMPARED TO THEIR EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Chair: Michael Dunn

Abstract:

Education is a human right, and students with disabilities have the right to learn alongside their non-disabled peers (Hehir, 2002; McPhail & Freeman, 2005). Students' educational academic and social outcomes need to be the leading factor regarding these crucial decisions (Cole et al., 2021; Joshi & Bouck, 2017; Palmer et al., 2020). Students with learning disabilities in this study received specially designed instruction on a continuum of services and placements spanning from no removal from general education up to 20-25% of their school day. Students who were also designated as English Language Learners received additional targeted language services resulting in more time out of the general education environment. The decision to pull a student out of general education to work on specific skills was done with the intention of increasing student academic and/or social success. High school students provide insight on their personal experiences with IEP services and placements highlighting classes and teachers where they feel successful and where they feel belonging. Those teachers share aspects of their classroom environment and strategies they use to help students be successful. The student's parents share beliefs regarding their child's success in school. Findings indicate that students feel most success and belonging in school when they have a positive relationship with their teacher, have peers they connect with in class, and they like the subject.