

APPENDIX C:
Documentation of Support for
Program

Interest and Need Survey: Ed.S Program in Special Education

N=133

Demographic Variables

Gender: (100% response rate)

Female (86%)	Male (14%)
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Age: (100% response rate)

20-29 years (38%)	30-39 years (36%)	40-49 years (20%)
50-59 years (5%)	60-69 years (1%)	

Race: (99% response rate)

African American (17%)	Caucasian (80%)	Hispanic (1%)
Native American (2%)		

Current Position: (100% response rate)

Teacher (85%)	Technology Support (1%)
Full Time Student (7%)	Other (7%)

Hold a Masters Degree: (100% response rate)

Yes (11%)	No (89%)
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Of Those Who Do Not Hold a Masters Degree, Those Currently Enrolled in Masters Program:
(103% response rate from above question; 92 % response rate for all surveyed)

Yes (102%)	No (1%)
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Completed or Enrolled in Special Ed Degree Program: (100% response rate)

Yes (58%)	No (42%)
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Current Certification Level: (95% response rate)

T-4 (51%)	T-5 (7%)	Provisional (37%)
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Program Related Questions

Are you interested in pursuing a specialist degree in special education? (99% response rate)

Yes (56%)	No (43%)
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Persons with special ed degree interested in specialist 66/132=50%

Persons with special ed degree not interested in specialist 11/132=8%

Persons with regular ed degree interested in specialist 8/132=6%

Persons with regular ed degree not interested in specialist 47/132=36%

If yes, how interested are you in pursuing a specialist degree in special education? (Choose one)
(128% response rate from above question; 72% response rate for all surveyed)

Very Interested (38%)	Somewhat Interested (17%)	Not Interested (14%)
Uncertain (3%)		

If a specialist degree in special education were offered at Georgia College & State University, what could be potential obstacles to enrollment? (Choose all that apply)

- No scholarships/grants to support tuition costs (58%)
- Program too rigorous (23%)
- Distance/travel (42%)
- Program lacks rigor (2%)
- Inflexibility of class offerings (38%)
- Insufficient coursework in area of interest (3%)
- Other (10%)

When could you begin your specialist degree program in special education? (69% response rate)

- 2005 (46%)
- 2006 (20%)
- 2007 (3%)
- 2008 (1%)

What size classes would you prefer in a specialist program? (84% response rate)

- 6-10 students (29%)
- 11-15 students (50%)
- 16-20 students (11%)

What sort of supports would be helpful in your pursuit of a specialist degree? (Choose all that apply)

- Encouragement or support from school/system (56%)
- Possible release time from your school/system (53%)
- Program consideration of current responsibilities (52%)
- Recognizing faculty in program (15%)
- Financial support (71%)
- Classes on the Milledgeville campus (30%)
- Classes on the Macon campus (61%)
- Opportunities to use technology for specific assignments (44%)
- Possibility of Saturday classes (52%)
- Other (7%)

What benefits do you see as the primary reason for completing the specialist program? (Choose all that apply)

- To receive a salary increase (84%)
- Preparation for a terminal degree (25%)
- To design and implement best practices in classroom teaching (67%)
- To develop and facilitate school improvement (54%)
- To develop research and writing skills (20%)
- To further develop leadership skills/abilities (60%)
- To prepare for a university position in teacher training (28%)
- To prepare for a university position as an adjunct instructor (21%)
- Other (1%)

If you could describe the best possible specialist program in special education for you, what three words would best describe the program? (Only most recurring responses reported)

- Flexible (21%)
- Convenient (13%)
- Informative (11%)
- Affordable (11%)
- Practical/applicable (10%)
- Short/quick (10%)



**Georgia Department of Education
Office of the State Superintendent of Schools
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**Kathy Cox
State Superintendent of Schools**

January 27, 2005

Dr. Amy Childre, Associate Professor
Department of Special Education and Leadership
Georgia College and State University
CPO 072
Milledgeville, Georgia 31061

Dear Dr. Childre:

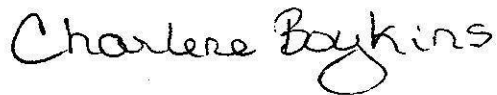
It is a privilege for me to write this letter supporting Georgia College and State University's proposal to establish an Educational Specialist Program in the area of Special Education. As the Georgia Department of Education's liaison to the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the foremost professional organization for persons working with students with disabilities, I am afforded the opportunity to meet with students majoring in Special Education at Georgia College and State University at regularly scheduled Executive Committee meetings and at state and national conferences. I can attest to the professionalism displayed by your students. They are punctual, organized, articulate, conscientious, and dedicated--all qualities that competent educators should possess. While others in their peer group are involved in trivial pursuits, these students sacrifice their leisure time to involve themselves in fund-raising and other civic-minded activities to benefit students and families of students with special needs. They exemplify high standards for themselves and high expectations for those in their charge. They take the initiative to explore and implement projects that have been valuable to their community. It is apparent that the training provided by Georgia College and State University has properly prepared these students for careers as educators.

The Department of Special Education at Georgia College and State University intends to emphasize the application of research-based instructional practices designed to improve educational outcomes. This focus aligns with the Georgia Department of Education's goal to ensure that all students with disabilities are presented with instructional programs that are designed to meet their unique needs and that prepare them for desired and productive post-secondary living.

Dr. Amy Childre
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January 27, 2005

In times where career options are virtually unlimited in scope, it is essential that post-graduate programs exist to enhance the skills of those who have chosen to pursue the challenging field of Special Education. It is my hope that Georgia College and State University will be granted its request to establish an Educational Specialist Program in Special Education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charlene Boykins". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Charlene Boykins
Education Program Analyst
Division for Exceptional Students

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Baldwin County Schools

October 29, 2004

Dear Sir or Madam:

It gives me great pleasure to write this letter in support of the Department of Special Education at Georgia College & State University (GC&SU). The request to establish an Educational Specialist (Ed.S.) degree program would truly benefit the teachers of this community. By having the Ed.S program at Georgia College & State University, it would mean that teachers who are wishing to earn this degree would not have to travel very far, and they would be able to continue working while pursuing the Ed.S.

Throughout my tenure as director of special education in Baldwin County, I have worked very closely with staff from GC&SU. They have provided many practicum students and student teachers to the system. Many of these persons have gone on to earn their undergraduate and graduate degrees and are now working as teachers in the Baldwin County School System.

Because of the "No Child Left Behind Act" we must employ highly qualified teachers; therefore it would certainly be worthwhile to have an Ed. S. program at GC&SU. The program at GC &SU is designed to lead professionals to serve as change agents within their systems and also prepare them to pursue National Board certification. Most importantly, with the emphasis on closing the achievement gap between special education and general education students, the Ed.S. will better prepare teachers to adequately meet the needs of all students.

Without hesitation, I am proud to recommend the establishment of the Ed.S. program at Georgia College and State University.

Sincerely,


Gloria Wicker,
Director

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Laurens County Board of Education

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Office (478) 272-4767
Fax (478) 277-2619

Dr. Larry N. Daniel
Superintendent of Schools

Jerry E. Hatcher
Morris C. Knight
Associate Superintendents

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing in support of the establishment of an Educational Specialist (Ed.S.) degree program in Special Education at Georgia College and State University. As a former principal, superintendent, and now a member of the Laurens County Board of Education, I have personally witnessed the quality of the special education programs at Georgia College and State University. There are many reasons for my unqualified support:

- The quality of the preparation of prospective special education teachers is exemplary.
- The graduates are always prepared for graduate level training.
- There is a great need in this area for well trained special education teachers.
- There is an acute need for a special education specialist degree in this area.
- The quality of the special education faculty at Georgia College and State University is second to none. Their expertise and concern for their students and the special education curriculum content insures that a quality program will be the result of this effort.

Please call me if there are any questions concerning my enthusiastic endorsement of this much needed program improvement at Georgia College and State University.

Sincerely,



Dr. William R. Rowe

November 7, 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

Recently I was informed that Georgia College & State University (GC&SU) was interested in starting an Educational Specialist degree program in special education. When I heard of this news I became excited with anticipation as there now maybe some hope in my being able to further my education in special education.

Currently GC&SU does not have a specialist program that will help further the educational standards of teachers in the special education. Teachers like myself who choose to advance their education must travel a significant amount of distance in order to attend a college or university that does offer this type of program. Time spent traveling does take away the teacher's ability to perform their duties in order to educate our children, and causes more stress in the life of the teacher in the specialist program. This all adds up to a teacher who may not be teaching to his or her fullest potential and in the long run the children are the ones who suffer the most. As a result, most teachers of children with special needs in this area do not attempt to even further their education.

Georgia College & State University special education program offers its students a wide variety of areas in which to further their knowledge in teaching students with special needs. The professors have much expertise in a wide variety of issues that are important in special education, and as a result, they are able to provide the students with the most current information. As a graduate of GC&SU's undergraduate program in special education, I came into the teaching profession with more confidence and had little of the stress that is common for first year teachers. My principal, who was not the person that hired me, did not know at the time that I was a first year teacher. As a student in GC&SU's graduate program, the professors have helped me to fine tune my skills as a teacher, provide me with the most current teaching practices, and guide me through the process of becoming the most effective teacher possible.

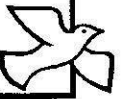
In most states there is a critical shortage of teachers of children with special needs. As more children are being identified as having disabilities, there is a significant shortage of qualified teachers to help in the educational process of these children. In my school alone, I am the only teacher who has a degree in special education. The other special education teachers are teaching out of field on provisional licenses. GC&SU has recognized the need of offering a program that will cater to the needs of the teachers in central Georgia.

In closing, GC&SU department of special education has always been committed to the education of all children. They provide the teachers in this area with the knowledge and support that they will need to bring out the best for children with special needs. The close proximity of the college, along with the satellite campus, allows teachers to further their education with out having to expend time and money traveling elsewhere.

Thank you for your support in the education of children with special needs.

With deepest regards,

Laurie Carroll
7th grade Interrelated teacher



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Milledgeville, GA 31061

Phone: 478-445-5726
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November 15, 2004

Amy Childre, Associate Professor
Georgia College & State University

Barbara Coleman, Director
Baldwin Service Center

RE: Educational Specialist Degree Program

I am excited to hear that you are pursuing the establishment of an Educational Specialist degree program at GC&SU. With all the challenges faced by today's special education teachers, we need an avenue for specialized learning. If we ever hope to improve on the quality of special education services offered in Georgia, then we have to start by advancing the knowledge of our current and potential teachers. There is an abundance of strategies that can be utilized in the classroom setting that goes untapped due to lack of knowledge and experience. As a professional in the field, I recognize the need to prepare teachers to be able to translate research and apply its proven strategies in today's classroom. As you know, I am a member of the Georgia Association of Mental Retardation Professionals Executive Committee and we depend heavily on the GC&SU Special Education Department and their students to assist us with developing and presenting our annual conference held in middle Georgia. Because of this collaborative effort we are able to offer additional educational opportunities to local professionals in the field.

Ongoing education is a crucial component to upgrading our current system. I applaud your efforts and wish you the best of luck in your endeavors.

Barbara Coleman
Barbara Coleman

The University of Kansas

Special Education

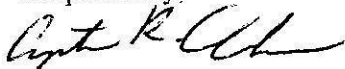
Dear Dr. Childre,

As a former graduate of Georgia College & State University's undergraduate teacher training program, I am pleased that the Department of Special Education is extending their programs to reach more and more students. In Georgia and now extending beyond those borders, GC&SU is recognized for the quality of its graduating teachers as well as those graduates like myself who plan to pursue positions in academia. GC&SU's faculty has been supportive in my career development in gaining those skills necessary to be an effective teacher in the classroom as well as furthering my professional skills, such as presenting at national conferences and engaging in research endeavors. My studies and continued collaboration with the faculty at GC&SU helped prepare me for my Master's program at Vanderbilt University and my doctoral program at the University of Kansas.

Through my experiences as a classroom teacher and a researcher, I have seen the great need in our school systems for highly qualified teachers. Teachers in the field are working really hard to meet legislative acts such as *No Child Left Behind* and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, yet too often their skills fall short of connecting research to practice. An Ed. S. program, like the Department of Special Education is pursuing, could provide the guide necessary for teachers to move towards evidenced and research based practices. Although the faculty in the Department of Special Education at GC&SU are already making great strides in encouraging and supporting evidenced based practices, an Ed. S. program would further support this implementation. Graduate level courses are needed to help teachers translate research into practices that are useful and effective within their classrooms and schools.

I am encouraged and excited about the Department of Special Education's movement towards greater services and supports for teachers. I look forward to hearing and seeing the great accomplishments that this program generates.

Respectfully,



Cynthia R. Chambers