ASPIRATIONS AND LEGAL OBLIGATIONS OF NEWLY ELECTED GOVERNING BODIES OF SCHOOLS FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

by

JANINE WESSELS

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MAGISTER EDUCATIONIS

in the

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MANAGEMENT, LAW AND POLICY

at the

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

Supervisor
Prof. Dr H.J. Joubert (Rika)

September 2011

I

© University of Pretoria
DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my beloved parents, Margeret and Jan Wessels. Thank you for the patience, love and support that you offered me throughout my studies.

You are indeed my inspiration.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the following role-players who have supported me and who assisted me throughout my research.

• My supervisor, Prof. Rika Joubert. You guided me and believed in me throughout this project. Thank you!

• Professor Tinus Kühn. Thank you for editing the dissertation.

• The participants. Thank you for your participation and your willingness to help with the project.

• My grandmother, Anne du Preez. You made me laugh and gave me courage to carry on throughout those long nights.

• To God. Thank You for the wisdom, courage, insight and ability that You have given me!
KEY CONCEPTS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Aspirations
Governance
Management
Newly elected governing body members
School Governing Body
Special Needs Schools

AAC  Augmentative and Alternative Communication
DoE  Department of Education
HoD  Head of Department
IDSO Institutional Development and Support Officer
LSEN Learners with Special Educational Needs
MEC Member of Executive Council
SMT School Management Team
DECLARATION

I, Janine Wessels (student number 27418074), hereby declare that this dissertation for the degree of Master of Education at the University of Pretoria has not been submitted for degree purposes at this or any other university. The entire dissertation is my own work and work from other sources has been duly acknowledged.

Signature: ________________________________

Date: ________________________________
SUMMARY

The Schools Act has brought about a change in the way in which schools are managed and governed. Each public school should be governed by a governing body and the professional management of the school is vested in the principal (South African Schools Act, 1996b). The governing body of a special needs school consists of various role-players that include, among others, parents, educators, learners, and representatives of sponsoring bodies and of various organisations. Furthermore, these role-players should be knowledgeable about the legal requirements pertaining to the functions of a governing body. It is legally expected of each governing body member to know what the legal requirements of a governing body are. The governing body is expected to draft the school’s policies, such as the language policy, admission policy, religious policy, disciplinary policy and the financial policy (Schools Act, 1996).

There are various types of public schools: mainstream schools [full-service schools] and special needs schools [special needs schools as resource centres] (DoE, 2005). Very little research has been conducted on the governance of special needs schools. The governance of a special needs school is more complicated than that of a mainstream school in respect to drafting the various policies. There are aspects such as limited resources to accommodate specific disabilities and the type of disability that the school caters for in terms of the admission policy that must be kept in mind. These aspects complicate the governance of special needs schools and require more thought and planning (Department of Education, 2007).

This research specifically focuses on the governance of special needs schools and the aspirations that the individual governing body members of these schools have. The governing body members come from different backgrounds; they have different qualifications and different experiences. These factors contribute to the ideas (aspirations) that they have in terms of their role as governing body members. The aspirations of the governing body members should correlate with the various school policies, due to the fact that the governing body draft these policies. The policy documents provide a clear indication of where the school is heading and of its mission. Not only should the governing body participants’ aspirations correlate with
the school’s policies; they should also correlate with the legal requirements set out in the Schools Act.

This research consists of two separate case studies relating to two special needs schools. Three governing body members from each school were interviewed, using semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interviews assisted in ensuring that the participants were understood correctly and in getting clarity on certain aspects that were addressed.

The various policy documents of each school were analysed to establish an idea of the school’s mission and for the purpose of triangulation. These documents include, among others, the language policy, admission policy, religious policy and the code of conduct for learners.

The interview responses and the documents were compared to establish to what extent the governing body members’ aspirations correlate with the policy documents. The schools were not compared in any way; each school was regarded as an individual entity.

In this study the following has been found:

1. Governing body members are not fully briefed or knowledgeable about their functions.
2. Governing body members refuse to attend training sessions provided by the Head of Department on grounds that these sessions are not meaningful or convenient.
3. Most of the schools’ policy documents, such as admission policies, language policies and religious policies have not been revised in up to nine years.
4. Some of the participants in the research contradicted one another and the schools’ policy documents.

In conclusion it can be stated that the governing body members who participated in this research have served on governing bodies for many years, the shortest term of service being four years; they should be knowledgeable about their function and should have the best interest of the school at heart. This seems to be in contradiction
to the findings of this research. Even though the governing body members lack sufficient knowledge and insight, they are extremely positive and have the best interest of the learner at heart.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 1</th>
<th>INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>PURPOSE OF THE STUDY</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>RESEARCH QUESTION</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.1</td>
<td>Learners with Special Education Needs (LSEN)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.2</td>
<td>School Governance</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.3</td>
<td>Legal Framework</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.4</td>
<td>Quality Education</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6.1</td>
<td>Research Paradigm</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6.2</td>
<td>Research Approach</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6.3</td>
<td>Research Design</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>RESEARCH METHODS</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7.1</td>
<td>Sampling</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>DATA COLLECTION</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8.1</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8.2</td>
<td>Document Analysis</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>TRUSTWORTHINESS AND CREDIBILITY</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>ANALYSING FINDINGS</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>ETHICS</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>EXPOSITION OF CHAPTERS</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
<td>ROLE AND FUNCTION OF THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>GOVERNING BODIES AFTER 1994</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>ELECTION AND THE COMPOSITION OF THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY OF SPECIAL NEEDS SCHOOLS</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.1</td>
<td>Parents as Governing Body members</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2</td>
<td>Educators as Governing Body members</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.3</td>
<td>Co-opt members on the Governing Body</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.4</td>
<td>Experts in appropriate fields of Special Needs Education</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.5</td>
<td>Principal as Governing Body member</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>ROLE OF THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>FUNCTIONS OF THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.1</td>
<td>Best interest of the learner and the school</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.2</td>
<td>Appointment of Educators</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.3</td>
<td>Non-educator staff</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.4</td>
<td>Financial Management</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.1.2</td>
<td>Access to respondents/participants</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.2</td>
<td>Data collection</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.3</td>
<td>Data analysis</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>TRUSTWORTHINESS AND CONFIDENTIALITY</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.1</td>
<td>Triangulation</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>ETHICAL CONSIDERATION</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.1</td>
<td>Informed consent / Confidentiality</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 5 PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION                                       79
5.2 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION                          79
5.3 DATA ANALYSIS                                     81
  5.3.1 Methodology                                    81
  5.3.2 Results of policy analysis                     82
  5.3.2.1 Vision and mission statement                 83
  5.3.2.2 Constitution                                87
  5.3.2.3 Financial policy                             93
  5.3.2.4 Religious policy                             95
  5.3.2.5 Admission policy                             96
  5.3.2.6 Language policy                              101
  5.3.2.7 Code of Conduct for Governing Body members   102
  5.3.2.8 Code of Conduct for staff members            103
  5.3.2.9 Code of Conduct for learners                 104
  5.3.3 Unavailable policies                           105
5.4 DATA COLLECTION                                    106
  5.4.1 Interview responses                            106
    5.4.1.1 Training provided to the governing body members by the Head of Department 106
    5.4.1.2 Main functions of the governing body       108
    5.4.1.3 Aspirations for the recommendation of the appointment of educators 109
    5.4.1.4 Aspirations for the financial management   112
    5.4.1.5 Aspirations for the admission policy       117
    5.4.1.6 Aspirations for the language policy        119
    5.4.1.7 Aspirations for the mission and vision statement 121
    5.4.1.8 Aspirations for the religious policy       122
    5.4.1.9 Aspirations for the code of conduct for learners 124
    5.4.1.10 Aspirations for the extra-mural activities / curriculum 127
    5.4.1.11 Aspirations for the purchasing of textbooks 127
    5.4.1.12 Defining quality education                129
    5.4.1.13 Inclusive Education                       130
5.5 CONCLUSION                                         132

Chapter 6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION                                       133
### 6.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.2.1</td>
<td>Training provided to the governing body members by the Head of Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.2</td>
<td>Recommendation for the appointment of educators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.3</td>
<td>Financial management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.4</td>
<td>Admission policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.5</td>
<td>Language policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.6</td>
<td>Mission and vision statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.7</td>
<td>Religious policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.8</td>
<td>Code of Conduct of learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.9</td>
<td>Extra-mural activities / Curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.10</td>
<td>Purchasing textbooks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.11</td>
<td>Quality Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.12</td>
<td>Inclusive Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.13</td>
<td>Role of the principal concerning the governing body</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

### 6.4 GOVERNING BODY MEMBERSHIP

### 6.5 CONCLUSION

### REFERENCES

### ANNEXURES A

### ANNEXURES B

### ANNEXURES C

### ANNEXURES D

### ANNEXURES E

### FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>SHIFTING FROM SPECIAL EDUCATION TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.1</td>
<td>EXPOSITION OF PARTICIPANTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.2</td>
<td>LOCATION WHERE THE VARIOUS PARTICIPANTS WERE INTERVIEWED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.1</td>
<td>BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF SCHOOL A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.2</td>
<td>BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF SCHOOL B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1

Introduction and Problem Statement

1.1 Introduction

Before White Paper 1 laid the foundation for the democratic governance of schools, very few schools had a structure in which stakeholders were given the opportunity to make a valid input (Colditz, 2009:1). The decision-making power was thus vested in the principal of the school and the community had no real input into matters concerning the school. South African Schools Act, 1996 (RSA, 1996b, hereafter Schools Act), Sec. 23 and Sec. 24 make provision for various stakeholders to be elected to serve on a governing body. Furthermore the Schools Act, Sec. 16 (1) states that the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body and it may perform only such functions and obligations and exercise only such rights as prescribed by the Act. This provision in Schools Act makes it quite clear that the governing body of a public school is responsible for the governance of the school and the governing body members are responsible for performing certain functions, also specified in Schools Act, Sec. 20. Governing body members can apply for additional functions that are stipulated in Sec. 21 of the Schools Act.

This research deals specifically with the aspirations that the governing body members have in terms of the various functions set out in the Schools Act, both Sec. 20 and Sec. 21. Two special needs schools were used in this research and both have Sec. 21 status. This means that these schools have applied to the Head of the Department of Education to be allocated additional functions in terms of Sec. 21 of Schools Act and these functions have been allocated to them. This research also focuses on special needs schools, because the governance of a special needs school is somewhat different from that of a mainstream school. This statement will be explained in detail in the course of this research.

Two case studies were conducted. Three governing body members of each school were interviewed and each school’s policy documents (language policy, admission policy, religious policy, disciplinary policy and financial policy) were analysed.
1.2 Statement of the problem

I have been teaching at a mainstream school for a few years. Various learners with different kinds of disability have enrolled in our school. As an educator with no remedial training I had to cope with these learners and learn how to teach them effectively without infringing on their right to basic education (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, hereafter Constitution) Sec. 29 (1) (a)). About three years ago a little boy was enrolled in the school. He had no physical disability but his behaviour was worse than that of any other learner in our school. As mainstream educators no one knew how to handle this little boy. After about two years the parents of the boy were called to the office and advised to take him to a different school. Later on we were made aware of the fact that the little boy was admitted to a special needs school for learners that suffer from epilepsy. This was a shock to me because the boy was not epileptic at all.

I realised that when mainstream schools struggle with learners’ behaviour they tend to ask the parents to take the learner to a special needs school. It also seemed to me that special needs schools admit almost any learner. This realisation gave rise to this research based on the premise that special needs schools must have an admission policy and other policies in place that state that a special needs school specifically caters for a certain disability. Owing to previous studies I was aware of the fact that the governing body drafts the admission policy along with other policy documents for the school.

I became interested in finding out what the aspirations of the governing body members of schools for learners with special education needs are in terms of their legal obligations. Sec. 16 (2) of Schools Act states that the governing body stands in a position of trust towards the school. Case law (State v. De Blom) states that a person should know the legal provisions of the area that he/she is involved in and ignorance of the law is no excuse. Therefore the governing body members are legally required to be knowledgeable about their function as governing body members.
1.3 Purpose of the study

The literature suggests that governing body members still consider the principal as the main decision maker and the governing body members’ ignorance and incapacity to perform some of their functions causes the governing body to act like crisis committees (Poo, 2005:8). Thus the purpose of this study is to:

- examine the aspirations that newly elected governing body members have in terms of the functions as stipulated in Schools Act, Sec. 20 and Sec. 21;
- determine how knowledgeable the governing body members are about their specific function;
- determine to what extent the aspirations of the governing members are in line with the Constitution and the Schools Act.

1.4 Research questions

This research consists of two questions, one main research question and one sub-question.

The main research question of this research is the following:

- What are the aspirations of newly elected governing body members of schools for learners with special education needs?

The sub-question of the research is the following:

- How do the aspirations of the governing body members of special needs schools correlate with the provisions on governance in the Schools Act?

The phrase “newly elected governing body members” does not necessarily refer to governing body members that have never served on a governing body; it merely refers to the governing body members that have been elected in the latest governing body elections. Thus the governing body member might have served as a member of a governing body at a previous school or the governing body member has been serving on the governing body of the specific schools used in this research.
1.5 Conceptual framework

Governance, quality education and special needs schools form the basis of this research. *The promotion of the best interest of the school and the provision of quality education are the most important functions of a governing body underpinning all other functions in the Schools Act* (Joubert, 2007:41). This statement summarises the conceptual framework used in this research; there are specific references to governing bodies (governance), quality education and the Schools Act, which form the legal framework of the study. Furthermore, the study focuses on these concepts from a special needs school’s perspective.

**Figure 1.1 Conceptual Frameworks**

1.5.1 Learners with special education needs (LSEN)

Learners with special education needs are blind, deaf, spastic and intellectual or behavioural deficit learners (Davies, 2008:51). Learners that have some kind of imperfection physically, mentally or psychologically are regarded as disabled. According to the United Nations (in Lehohla, 2005:6) there are large numbers of people worldwide that are regarded as disabled due to mental, physical or sensory impairment. These specific learners are mostly accommodated in special needs schools to ensure that their specialised needs are met.
However, there has been a shift from a Special Education Theory towards an Inclusive Education Theory (DoE, 2005). This entails that disabled learners that can be accommodated in mainstream schools should in fact be allowed to enrol in mainstream schools. Because of this new theory different types of school have been identified. These schools include the following:

- Special needs schools
- Special needs schools as resource centres
- Mainstream schools
- Full-service schools

1.5.2 School governance

The introduction to this chapter quotes Schools Act, Sec. 16 (1), which states that the governance of a school is vested in the governing body. One of the governing body members, according to Schools Act, Sec. 24 (1) (j) is the principal in his or her official capacity. Furthermore Schools Act, Sec. 16 (3) states that the professional management of a public school must be undertaken by the principal. These sections create confusion among the terms governance and professional management. In an attempt to clarify these terms and the roles of the governing body and principal, I will supply a definition of governance and of management of a school.

Management

Management has been defined as follows:

- … the process of planning, organising, leading and controlling the efforts of organization members (Stoner & Wankel, 1986:4).
- … the action of measuring quantity on a regular basis and of adjusting some initial plans (Van Rooyen & Rossouw, 2007:19).
- There are five management functions:

  1. Planning
  2. Organising
  3. Leading
  4. Co-ordinating
From the definitions and the functions listed above it is clear that management has to do with the execution of tasks and the implementation of policy rather than the drafting or development of policy.

**Governance**

Governance is defined as follows:

- *... the processes and systems by which an organization or society operates ...* (Van Rooyen & Rossouw, 2007:19).

- *Governance policy for public schools is based on the core values of democracy:*
  1. *Representation*
  2. *Participation*
  3. *Tolerance*
  4. *Rational discussion*

It becomes clear that governance revolves around the drafting of policies and decision-making, whereas management revolves around the implementation of the policies. This conclusion is underscored by Schools Act, Sec. 16 (1), which states that governance is vested in the governing body, and Sec. 16 (3), which states that professional management should be undertaken by the principal.

**1.5.3 Legal framework**

There are various sections in Constitution and Schools Act that are directly related to governance and special needs education.

**Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, no. 106 of 1996 (Constitution):**

- Sec. 28 (2). *A child’s best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child.*

  The governing body should keep the best interest of the child in mind when it drafts the various policies for the school.
• Sec. 29 (1). Everyone has the right (a) to a basic education including adult basic education. This section also relates to the drafting of policies. When drafting the admission policy, language policy or religious policy, the governing body should not attempt to exclude certain learners, which means that the policies should not be drafted in such a way that they discriminate. These policies should be focused on the ethos and character of the school.

South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996 (Schools Act):
• Sec. 20 and 21. These two sections set out the compulsory functions of all governing body members as well as the additional functions that the governing body can apply for. These functions are all related to the governance of the school.

The following sections elaborate on who is responsible for the various functions in a school; it is similar to the functions as stipulated in Schools Act, Sec. 20 and 21.
• Sec. 5 (1). A public school must admit learners and serve their educational requirements without unfairly discriminating in any way.
• Sec. 5 (2). The governing body may not administer any test related to the admission of a learner to a public school.
• Sec. 5 (3). No learner may be refused admission to a public school on the grounds that his or her parent:
  o (a) is unable to pay the school fees determined by the governing body.
  o (b) does not subscribe to the mission statement of the school.
• Sec. 6 (2). The governing body of a public school may determine the language policy of the school.
• Sec. 7. ... religious observances may be conducted at a public school under rules issued by the governing body if such observances are conducted on an equitable basis and attendance of them by learners and members of staff is free and voluntary.
• Sec. 8 (1). A governing body of a public school must adopt a code of conduct for learners.
• Sec. 16 (2). A governing body stands in a position of trust towards the school.
• Sec. 24 lists the categories of persons that should be represented in a governing body of a special needs school.

1.5.4 Quality education

According to Colby and Witt (2000) the following criteria describe quality education:
• Healthy learners
• Well-nourished learners
• Ready-to-participate learners
• Learning support by families and communities
• Child-centred teaching approaches
• Well-managed classrooms
• Outcomes that encompass knowledge and skills

The above mentioned criteria relate to the school and the resources that the school has available. These resources refer to both the learning material as well as the educators that are available. Rayner (2006:107) is of the opinion that quality should be assured in all aspects of provision. These two different definitions of quality education both relate to the resources that are available. In a special needs school the school caters for a specific disability; it is therefore possible that the school may have specific resources that might not be helpful to a learner with another disability.

1.6 Research methodology
1.6.1 Research paradigm

Because of my specific background and experiences I believe that a governing body member has his or her own interpretation of the function and roles that a governing body member should fulfil. In this research I made use of the interpretive paradigm. Interpretivism foregrounds the meaning that individuals or communities assign to their experiences (Jansen, 2007:21). The interpretive paradigm allows the researcher to understand the individual’s experience; therefore it allowed me to focus specifically on the individual’s aspirations and experiences as governing body member.
The context of the interpretive paradigm is to understand the subjective world of human experience” (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007:21). I have formed my own interpretation of what governing body members’ aspirations are by analysing the interviews and policy documents of the schools. Each participant had a story to tell about being a member of the governing body and why he or she had certain aspirations. These narratives gave me the opportunity to understand why they had certain aspirations and to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences.

1.6.2 Research approach

This research was conducted using a qualitative research approach. According to Pring (2000:44) one of the major differences between qualitative and quantitative research is that quantitative research can be applied to the physical world and qualitative research to one’s personal and social world. A qualitative research approach was specifically used because of the personal approach in terms of each individual’s aspirations relating to the governing body and its function. The qualitative researcher’s goal is to better understand human behaviour and experience (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007:43). As stated earlier, the individuals have their own aspirations and reasons for serving on the governing body and those aspirations form the basis of the research; the research is based on personal aspirations.

According to Ivankova, Creswell and Clark (2007:257) qualitative research creates a holistic picture and is a study done in a natural setting. I could gain a clear and complete picture of the aspirations of the governing body members by using the interviews and by analysing the policy documents of the school. Qualitative researchers try to interact with their subjects in a natural, unobtrusive and no threatening manner (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007:37). At no stage did I try to influence the participants’ answers or pose any kind of threat to them. Throughout the interviews my aim was to make the participants feel at ease and to get them to provide honest answers to the questions.
1.6.3 Research design

Burton, Brundrett and Jones (2008:66) state that a case study concentrates on the specific rather than the general. This study focuses specifically on special needs schools and their governing body members’ aspirations. There are specific criteria that have been used for this study and the results have not been generalised; each school was regarded as an entity. A case study provides a *unique example of real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly* ... (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2005:181). In terms of this study the emphasis is on the unique example of real people. No two schools’ governing bodies have members with the same backgrounds or qualifications; therefore this study focuses on a unique group of people that have been elected as members of a specific governing body.

Basit (2010:21) is of the opinion that *insight from case studies may be directly interpreted and put into action for improvement of policy and practice*. By using a case study I was able to identify certain discrepancies in terms of the participants’ aspirations and the school’s policy documents. The ideal for a school would be that the entire governing body has the same aspirations and that those aspirations correlate with the legal requirements and with the school’s policy documents.

1.7 Research methods
1.7.1 Sampling

There are nine special needs schools in the Pretoria area. For the purpose of this study I chose two conveniently situated schools. These schools are both Sec. 21 special needs schools. As stated earlier, when I refer to Sec. 21 schools, it means that the schools have applied for Sec. 21 status and have been granted Sec. 21 status. According to Cohen et al. (2005:102) convenience sampling means the nearest individuals serve as the respondents and this process is continued until the sample size has been obtained. I chose two special needs schools that would allow easy access in terms of distance and location; these schools comply with the specific criteria used for this research and that are stipulated for special needs schools with Sec. 21 status.
1.8 Data collection

Yin (2003:4) is of the opinion that a case study cannot rely on a single data collection method. I have made use of both interviews and data analysis. These two methods have been used for triangulation purposes as well.

1.8.1 Interviews

Nieuwenhuis (2007:87) is of the opinion that an interview is a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participant. Interviews with the participants in this research provided a clear indication of each individual’s perception, experiences and aspirations regarding the various governing body functions. The participants had the opportunity to share their points of view on the governing body functions and their personal aspirations.

Cohen et al. (2005:268) list different purposes of the interview:

- To evaluate or assess a person in some respect.
- To gather data.

Cohen et al. (2005:268) provide an entire list of purposes of the interview; I chose the purposes that suited this research. Interviews were used for the following purposes:

- To evaluate the understanding that participants had concerning their legal obligations as governing body members.
- To gather data to get a clear understanding of what the participants’ aspirations were and why they had specific aspirations.
- To correlate the participants’ aspirations with the Schools Act’s provisions on governance.

Semi-structured interviews were used. DeMarrais and Lapan (2004:52) say that semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to ask follow-up questions to gain in-depth knowledge and a complete picture as far as words are possible. Semi-structured interviews allowed me to understand why the participants had certain aspirations, to
gain a deeper understanding of why they felt as they did about certain aspects pertaining to the governing body. Follow-up questions could be asked to get a better understanding of statements made by the participants.

1.8.2 Document analysis

Wilkinson and Birmingham (2003:77) are of the opinion that document analysis begins with identifying themes or issues to explore. Document analysis in this research assisted in the identification of various issues that need further research. With document analysis the research can be narrowed down and become more focused on specific areas of need within the school’s policies. *The documentary source provides a known point against which evidence from other sources can be compared* (Burton et al., 2008:112). Analysis of policy documents of the various schools was used as a “known point”. In other words, the policy documents gave me an idea of what the school was aiming at. They could also be used to compare the aspirations of the various governing body members with the actual goals that were stated in the policy documents.

1.9 Trustworthiness and credibility

Lincoln and Guba (in Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2005:108) list a few factors that must be taken into consideration to ensure credibility. I took two of these factors that were applicable to this study. These factors are the following:

- Prolonged engagements in the field
- Triangulation

The follow-up questions that were asked in the semi-structured interviews confirmed what the participant had already said. The questions were not repetitive but approached the same concept from different angles, thus ensuring that I correctly understood what the participants meant.

Burton et al. (2008:167) explain the concept of triangulation as combining different data sources, perspectives, settings, times and methods by looking for convergent
messages. Triangulation was used in this research to ensure that the aspirations of the governing body members were in line with the policy documents that the governing body had drafted. Participants’ aspirations can never be exactly the same as those specified in policy documents but these documents provide a “knowing point”, in other words a starting point.

1.10 Analysing findings

To analyse the findings I made use of various methods of analysis. It is important to state that the two schools were not compared in any way; they were regarded as two individual entities. Kvale (1996:203) suggests an ad hoc meaning generation approach; this approach suggests that the researcher make use of different approaches and techniques.

The various methods that I made use of were the following:

- Cross-sectional and categorical indexing (Mason, 2002:150-171).
  This method entails creating headings and sub-headings under which the data is categorised. It also entails developing a coding system that can be used to group the data.
- Content analysis (Basit, 2010:194).
  This method entails the identification of patterns and themes that have developed and are repeated in the data.
- Atomistic approach (Burton et al., 2008:144).
  This method entails that the data is kept separate. The participants’ interviews were regarded as entities and the two schools were not compared in any way.

1.11 Ethics

The participants were thoroughly briefed on the objectives of the research, after which they signed a document (Annexure D) that states that participants partake voluntarily, they are free to withdraw at any stage and their names will be kept confidential. Cohen et al. (2005:62) describe confidentiality as being explicit in explaining the limits of confidentiality to the participants. Throughout the dissertation the schools
have been referred to as School A and School B and the participants were identified as AP, A1, A2, AB, B1 and B2.

1.12 Exposition of the chapters

This dissertation is divided into the following chapters:

Chapter 1 – Contains the statement of the problem, research questions, conceptual framework, research methodology and methods, methods of data collection and ethics.

Chapter 2 – Deals with the role and functioning of the governing body.

Chapter 3 – Deals with special needs education.

Chapter 4 – Deals with the research methodology.

Chapter 5 – Presentation of the research findings.

Chapter 6 – Deals with the conclusion and recommendations.

1.13 Conclusion

In conclusion this chapter deals with the statement of the problem, research questions, conceptual framework, research methodology and methods, methods of data collection and ethics. It provides a brief indication of what the research entails and an overview of the research.

This research provides an understanding of the aspirations of the governing body members of two separate special needs schools. There are certain discrepancies that can be attributed to either ignorance of the law or negligence in the training provided. The research can assist the Department of Education as well as principals and governing body members in understanding the importance of being knowledgeable
about the law and knowing and understanding the functions and role of the school governing body.
Chapter 2
Role and Function of the School Governing Body

2.1 Introduction

Governing bodies are not new phenomena in South Africa. Prior to the 1994 elections governing bodies were not a legal requirement in South African schools. This chapter deals with the governing body, its function and role and how the governing body and the governance of a school have changed since 1994. The concept *governing body* is discussed and aligned with the various legal requirements specified in Chapter 1.

The members that serve on the governing body of a special needs school differ from those serving as members of governing bodies of mainstream schools. Special needs schools have to deal with disabled learners. This research is based on special needs schools, because very little research is available on the governance of special needs schools and the governance of a special needs school is more complex regarding adopting an admission policy, the requirements of instruction and learning support material, professional teaching staff and non-teaching and non-professional staff.

2.2 Governing bodies after 1994

Prior to 1994 governing bodies were not legal requirements in schools. According to Nyambi (2005:10-20) the change from School Committees to School Governing Bodies was a milestone in improving school governance and these bodies were given more responsibility than the previous committees. Chaka (2008:7) is of the opinion that the introduction of school governing bodies signalled a break from the centralised system of education and the acceptance of a democratic education system. The democratic education system supports the constitutional values of a democratic society. The change is generally seen as an improvement on the old system that gave power as well as accountability to those that elected and those that were elected. According to an article *School Management Teams* (DoE, 2000:1) prior to 1994 schools were managed by principals and the Department of Education made the
managerial decisions. Power was centralised and few people had a say in the management of schools. The legal requirements of school governing bodies introduced the constitutional value of a democratic practice in all schools. When considering all the above, it can be concluded that school governing bodies contribute to forming a uniform system for the organisation, governance and funding of schools; to amending and repealing certain laws relating to schools, and to providing for matters connected herewith (Schools Act).

2.3 Elections and the Composition of the School Governing Body of Special Needs Schools

Before the election of the governing bodies the Department of Education (2009) (hereafter DoE) released the document National Guidelines for School Governing Body Election. This document provides guidelines to ensure that the elections are in line with the Schools Act. The elections should occur at the same time; the elections should be fair and free; they should demonstrate democratic practice and allow community participation (DoE, 2009:2). The Schools Act sets out various guidelines for the election of governing body members. According to Joubert and Prinsloo (2009:75) the Schools Act also provides for these democratic structures and for a democratic process. The entire process should be conducted in a democratic manner. The election process as described by the Department of Education should be as follows: a copy of the notice should be given to the parents at least 14 days prior to the nomination and election meeting; the nomination form that has been completed by the proposer, seconder and nominee must be submitted to the Electoral Officer no more than seven days before or less than 24 hours before the nomination and election meeting; a quorum of 15% of the number of parents registered on the voters’ roll should be present for the nomination and election meeting to take place; if the quorum is not met, the meeting should be rescheduled; rejections on various grounds can be made by the Electoral Officer, such as no school stamp on ballot paper, etc.; the votes are counted and each nominee is stated with the number of votes received; a declaration of those elected should follow. Schools Act sets out criteria for the different members that can serve on the governing body.
Specific representatives should be elected on the governing body. According to Schools Act, Sec. 24 (1) (a-i) the representatives on a governing body of special educational needs schools should be the following:

- Parents of learners at the school
- Educators at the school
- Non-educator staff at the school
- Learners in the eighth or higher grade
- Representatives of sponsoring bodies
- Representatives of organisations of parents of learners with special education needs
- Representatives of organisations of disabled persons
- Disabled persons and experts in appropriate fields of special education needs

All stakeholders are included and there is a wide spectrum of representatives on the governing body of a special needs school. Sec. 24 (2) of Schools Act gives the Member of the Executive Council (Hereafter MEC) the responsibility to determine the number of members in each of the above-mentioned categories.

There is a difference between mainstream school governing body members and special education needs school governing body members. Special needs schools have additional members that mainstream schools do not have. These additional members provide expert opinions. The expert members that serve on the governing body and their function are discussed later in this chapter. Parents as governing body members, educators as governing body members, co-opted members, experts in appropriate fields of special needs education and the principal as governing body member are subsequently be discussed.

2.3.1 Parents as governing body members

Every governing body member needs to know the legal implications of having to represent groups that have democratically elected him or her. (Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosoge & Ngcobo, 2008:150). If a candidate stands for election he/she must
know what the requirements are and what is expected of a person in a governing position as stated in Chapter 1. Ignorance of the law is no excuse (*State v. De Blom*). All governing body members must know their legal obligations to ensure that they know what is legally expected of them by the law, school and parents. No person can stand in a position of trust if he or she is not familiar with the relevant legal obligations.

According to Clarke (2007:193) parents need to be briefed more fully on their duties and responsibilities on the governing body as they are not involved in the day-to-day running of the school. According to the DoE (2009:9) a parent is … *the biological parent or guardian of a learner or the person legally entitled to custody of a learner*. Parents might not fully understand their duty or responsibility on a governing body and should therefore be briefed so that they can contribute and fulfil a role in the governance of the school. As stated earlier ignorance of the law is no excuse; therefore it is extremely important for parents to be fully aware of their duties and the expectations of both the school and the other governing body members. To help the governing body members understand what is expected of them the Department of Education provides training to newly elected governing body members and after that ongoing training to ensure that they can perform their functions effectively (*Schools Act*, Sec. 19 (1) (a), (b)). Even though parents do receive training, they might still feel *out of their depth*. McKenzie and Loebenstein (2007:189) are also of the opinion that parents experience problems to understand their rights due to their socio-economic status and the ability to exercise individual and collective powers. Parents struggle to make decisions because they are under the impression that they are less informed than educators and therefore choose to be left out.

According to Oosthuizen (2003:201) the school is a secondary societal relationship because it is regarded as an extension of the family. The family (parents) and school must work together in educating the learners. Parents are therefore regarded as important role-players in the education system. *Some governors find it difficult to contribute in meetings – they feel out of their depth* (Creese & Earley, 1999:28). As parents form a crucial part of the governing body it is important for them to be active in the governing body and help with decision-making. Joubert and Prinsloo (2009:76) are of the opinion that parents’ involvement in the function of the governing body
recognises the **significance of the parents’ interest in their children’s education.** Some parents find it difficult to participate because they are portrayed as conservative consumers of education and have different levels of access to education, depending on their economic wellbeing, etc. (Sayed & Carrim, 1998:38). Seeing that parents form the majority of the members on a governing body it is extremely important for parents to voice their opinion and to be active members. Parents should feel comfortable enough to contribute to the significance of governing body meetings. According to Oosthuizen (2003:202) parents can make meaningful contributions as some *activities fall outside the expertise of the educator.* Due to a wide spectrum of careers and coming into contact with certain situations outside a school, parents may have new ideas and provide valuable insight. *Parents might have a more balanced perspective about certain issues because they are not directly involved or influenced by the inner political workings of the organization* (Clarke, 2007:194).

Parents make a valuable contribution to the governing body; they provide an outsider opinion in the sense that they experience the school environment from a different perspective. Singh, Mbokodi and Msila (2004:304) say that teachers often complain about the fact that parents do not involve themselves in decision-making. As stated above parents might feel threatened and *out of their depth.* However, the lack of parental involvement might signify other problems. McKensie and Loebenstein (2007:191) are of the opinion that educators are not in touch with the detrimental effect that poverty has on the community — issues such as single parents, grandparents and learners that act as the parents, especially in special needs schools. Parents are supposed to make up the majority of the governing body members but in some instance this is not possible because of the circumstances at home.

### 2.3.2 Educators as Governing Body members

According to the DoE (2009:9) an educator is *... a person who teaches, educates or trains other people, or who provides professional educational services.*... According to Clarke (2007:194) the educator representative should give feedback to the teachers on a regular basis and allow teachers to raise issues that they would like to discuss in a board meeting. Teachers experience different problems and scenarios in their
classes and they should have the opportunity to raise issues. This will help the governing body to be more effective in dealing with real problems.

Clarke (2007:175) is of the opinion that when parents, educators, non-educator staff members and learners are elected as governing body members for the first time, they are ignorant of their duties and responsibilities. Parents might not be the only governing body members that are unaware of their duties. As most teachers are not familiar with the functions of the governing body they might experience the governing body functions as ordinary day-to-day activities.

2.3.3 Co-opted members on the Governing Body

According to the DoE (2009:10) there are two different types of co-opted member: a co-opted member with voting rights and one without voting rights. Co-opted members without voting rights provide the governing body with expertise in areas that are beneficial to the governing body and to the school. According to Oosthuizen (2003:204) a co-opted member can assist in performing the governing body functions, but is not allowed to vote. Joubert and Prinsloo (2009:76) are of the opinion that co-opted members possess expertise that the governing body can use in performing their functions to the benefit of the school.

A co-opted member with voting rights is a member that has been co-opted after a member with voting rights has left and the position is filled by the co-opted member. This type of co-opted member can serve for a period no longer than 90 days. In general co-opted members assist the governing body with expert opinions or with the filling of positions.

2.3.4 Experts in appropriate fields of Special Needs Education

According to the National Research Council (2002:25) additional resources, specialised personnel and services are dependent on the individual classification of disability. It is important to provide the necessary resources and specialised staff for the various disabled learners to ensure that learners receive quality education. It would, for example, be useless for an educator that is not familiar with Braille to help
a blind learner to understand and read Braille. Swanepoel and Engelbrecht (2009:51) are of the opinion that organisations for people with impairments can give advice on how to deal with the specific impairment.

The additional members on the governing body of schools for learners with special education needs assist with the various needs of the learners. They supply the necessary knowledge to help the school to provide quality education and how to work with disabled learners. White Paper 6 (2001:27) stipulates that the Ministry will review membership of advisory bodies and ensure appropriate expertise (DoE, 2001). A certain degree of expertise is required to ensure that the learners receive quality education and that the needs of the learners are met. The experts provide the governing body with insight into working with disabled learners and how to handle certain situations.

2.3.5 The principal as Governing Body member

Schools Act, Sec. 16(1) states the professional management of school should be undertaken by the principal. Furthermore Schools Act, Sec. 24 (1) (j) states that the principal must be a governing body member in his or her official capacity. Thus the principal has dual involvement in the sense of both management and governance. Schools Act, Sec. 29 (2) makes it clear that only a parent member of the governing body, who is not employed at the school, may serve as the chairperson. Thus the principal may not serve as the chairperson on the governing body. De Groof, Bray, Mothatha and Malherbe (1998:107) state that the governing body was established to limit the principal’s role of primary decision-maker and to make the parents and the community responsible and accountable to the school. This is also evident in Sec. 29 (2) (Schools Act) where the principal’s power to serve as chairperson has been taken away. Colditz (2005:19) states only the principal reports to the governing body and all other subordinates report to the principal. Thus the focus is on the community and parents to take over the decision-making at the school in terms of governance; the principal’s duty is to manage.

The function of the principal on the governing body is thus only to fulfil the functions of the governing body as a delegate; he has to report to the governing body (Colditz,
2005:16). Mahlangu (2005:65) states that the principal must implement the policies that the governing body formulates. These two statements made by Colditz and Mahlangu underscore Sec. 19 (2) in Schools Act, which states ... the principal and other officers of the education department render all necessary assistance to governing bodies in the performance of their functions. The principal reports to the governing body and must ensure that the policies, drafted by the governing body, are implemented in the school.

The role of the principal may be interpreted as difficult because of the confusion that exists between who is responsible for what. Colditz (2005:17) believes that conflict develops between governing body members and the principal due to the confusion between figuring out who is responsible for what. The only way in which this confusion and conflict can be resolved is if the governing body members know their functions and how these functions relate to the principal’s function (Gauteng Department of Education, 1997:6-7).

Van der Merwe (2011:5) states that a clever governing body would reserve a seat for the principal on all committees because the principal is ultimately accountable to the governing body and other stakeholders for the implementation of policy, strategies and decisions. The principal can make an input, but the majority will rule if a matter is put to the vote. The principal does not have the final say if the majority is against a specific idea.

### 2.4 Role of the School Governing Body

According to Schools Act, Sec. 16 (1) the governance of a public school is vested in its governing body and the professional management (Sec. 16 (3)) is the responsibility of the principal under the authority of the Head of Department. To ensure a thorough understanding of what professional management entails and what governance entails, I will supply definitions of both terms.
Professional management

The School Management Team (hereafter SMT) consists of the principal, deputy principal and the heads of departments. There are various perceptions of what the actual functions of the SMT are. Some of these perceptions include the following:

- According to Heystek (2004:3) the SMT is responsible for the daily activities of the school.
- Van Rooyen and Rossouw (2007:19) are of the opinion that management is the art of conducting and directing.

The management of a school has to do with the implementation of policy and the management of the day-to-day functions of the school.

Governance

Van Rooyen and Rossouw (2007:19) are of the opinion that a government is established to administer the processes which form part of governance. Thus the governing body acts as a government to the school, hence the term governance. According to Van Rooyen and Rossouw (2007:19) governance deals with processes and systems by which an organisation or society operates. The policies drafted by the governing body assist in the day-to-day running of the school. Governance does not entail managing day-to-day activities.

Joubert and Prinsloo (2009:78) state that governance is about determining focus, policy and strategy and management on the other hand is the execution of these tasks. The governing body does not perform management functions; it is only responsible for the governance of the school. Joubert and Prinsloo (2009:78) make it clear that the function of a governing body revolves around drafting policies. Potgieter et al. (1997:11) are also of the opinion that school governance is the act of determining policy and rules by which a school should be organised and controlled. The statement made by Joubert and Prinsloo (2009) as well as the statement by Potgieter et al. (1997) summarises the functions of the governing body set out in the Schools Act and they encompass the constitution of protecting the right of learners. According to Chaka (2008:13) the concept of governance begins with understanding the structures and functions of the system; the education vision and legislation guide the system’s
structure, content, objectives, funding and access, and the roles and responsibilities of the staff. As stated earlier in this chapter, governing body members should be aware of and fully briefed about their roles and the functions that they have to perform; only then will the members be effective.

Joubert (2007:50-51) believes that there are general functions and administrative functions that the governing body must perform. The general functions of a governing body include adopting a constitution, determining a code of conduct and developing a mission and vision statement. The administrative functions include administering and controlling property, managing assets, purchasing learner support materials and managing the use of school facilities. These functions are set out in Schools Act, Sec. 20 and Sec. 21: *School governance means determining policy and rules by which a school is organised and controlled ... are aimed at protecting learners’ rights* (Joubert & Prinsloo, 2001:42).

Kezar and Eckel (2004:375) point out that the most important aspect in understanding governance is to examine organisational structures such as lines of authority, roles, procedures and bodies responsible for decision-making. According to Creese and Earley (1999:3) the effective governing body is defined in terms of its key role in raising standards and contributing to a climate of improvement. The governing body can only improve if the best interest of the school is protected. *The governing body acts on behalf of the school and for the benefit of the school community. It is therefore placed in position of trust towards a school* (Joubert & Prinsloo, 2001:43). According to Oosthuizen (2003:206) Sec. 15 of Schools Act implies that the governing body as executive organ of the school functions within the law as legal person. Thus the governing body has a duty to perform certain legal functions and, as stated earlier, stands in position of trust towards the school (Schools Act, Sec. 16 (2)). Davies (2008:60) is also of the opinion that a governing body should act on behalf of the school, with the best interest of the child at heart.
2.5 Functions of the School Governing Body

As stated in Chapter 1, the main functions of a governing body are set out in Constitution as well as in Schools Act. Subsequently I discuss these functions in more detail.

2.5.1 Best interest of the child and school

The main goal of the school should be to promote the best interest of the child. With the various governing body functions every need of the learner must be met. All the decisions that the governing body makes must take the best interest of the child into consideration. According to Constitution, Sec. 28 (2) the best interest of the child is of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child.

The governing body will be able to meet the needs of the learner by identifying the barriers that the learners experience rather than by labelling learners according to their disabilities. Rault-Smith (2010:5) is of the opinion that there is a shift from categorisation or labelling learners according to disability to addressing barriers experienced by individual learners. The support offered should be based on the barrier that the learner experiences. The specific barrier that a learner experiences must be identified to ensure that the learner receives the help he/she requires, thus protecting the best interest of the learner and assisting the learner so that education becomes first priority.

Besseling (2010:2) agrees that the labelling of learners creates a negative attitude. Learners are sometimes placed in a certain environment due to labelling and not necessarily to assist them with the barriers that they experience. This creates a problem because different barriers can exist and learners may encounter additional barriers that they might never have experienced. The governing body can protect the best interest of the child by ensuring that all the learner’s needs are met, that the learner’s needs and disabilities are identified and by ensuring that all policies promote and protect the best interest of the learner. Schools Act, Sec. 20 (1) (a) states that the best interest of the school should be promoted and the governing should strive to
ensure development through the provision of quality education for all learners in the school. The best interest of the school as well as of the child should be protected.

The governing body stands in a position of trust towards the school (Schools Act, Sec. 16(2)). Joubert and Prinsloo (2009:76-78) are of the opinion that when an individual is elected to the governing body, the individual becomes a governor and must promote the best interest of the school and quality education. They point out that the governing body should act in a supporting role and members should be honest, have integrity and promote openness. The governing body members should do everything possible to remain loyal to the school and always keep the best interest of the school at heart.

2.5.2 Appointment of educators

According to Schools Act, the responsibility of recommending educators for posts and establishing additional posts is that of the governing body. Schools Act, 20 (1) (i) states that the governing body must recommend to the Head of Department the appointment of educators and Sec. 20 (4) and (5) state that ... a public school may establish posts for educators and employ educators additional to the establishment determined by the Member of Executive Council and ... a public school may establish posts for non-educators and employ non-educator staff additional to the establishment.

According to Joubert and Prinsloo (2009:101) the governing body can promote quality education and help educators by appointing additional educators. The governing body must be aware of the types of disability that the learners have and of the needs of all the learners to make informed decisions on the recommendation of educators.

According to Archer and Green (1996:126) a classification system of learning difficulties is effective if there can be sufficient intervention that will facilitate learning. Some believe that “labelling” learners is degrading and discriminates against the learners but that it can assist with the process of assigning a suitable educator with training in that specific field. The “labelling” of learners is done
merely to ensure that learners receive the help that they need. Labelling is not used to place the learner in a certain category but merely to assist the learner and the decision-making of the governing body in the recommendation of educators. As stated earlier, there are certain barriers that must be identified so that they can be overcome and attention can be paid to education and the facilitation of education; therefore for the purpose of this study labelling of learners will merely refer to the identification of disabilities.

The governing body should take certain important aspects into consideration when recommending educators for appointment. Engelbrecht and Green (2007:7) are of the opinion that Classroom teachers have to act as facilitators ... avoiding alienating any member of the team. Thus the teacher should make the learners feel comfortable and able to do their work effectively. There is a difference between facilitating mainstream learners and special needs learners. The educator must have sound knowledge and training in a certain field so that he or she can assist the learners and meet all their needs. In this way the educator can be a facilitator and quality education will be the main objective. The governing body should take the educator’s knowledge, training and experience into consideration when recommending him or her for appointment.

According to Rault-Smith (2010:8) the staff members who deal with special needs learners should provide the required expertise to determine the support that learners need. It is thus expected of the staff members to have sufficient knowledge and training to help learners. The problem exists that there might not be trained staff members that have the skills needed to help these learners. Stofile and Green (2007:57) believe that the majority of teachers in South Africa were never trained for these roles and that many teachers do not have the capacity to address the diverse needs of learners. The problem arises that even if the disability is identified, there might not be a trained educator to assist a learner with a specific type of disability. This might result in an infringement of the learner’s right to basic education. The barriers that the learner may experience will remain and directly affect the learner’s right to quality education. Engelbrecht and Green (2007:85) agree that teachers should be empowered with skills to address the unique needs of learners. It becomes the responsibility of the governing body to ensure that when educators are
recommended they should have had sufficient training. Colditz (2006:3) mentions various aspects that the governing body needs to bear in mind when recommending educators. These aspects include the following:

- Democratic values, prescribed procedure and requirements
- Registration with SACE (South African Council of Educators)
- The child’s rights
- Promoting the school’s best interests
- Promoting and developing the school, and providing quality education

These aspects should be kept in mind when the governing body takes its decision in terms of the recommendation of an educator. Furthermore Colditz (2006:4) says that the post requirements should be clearly stated. Post requirements include the following:

- Curriculum requirements
- Extra-curriculum requirements

These requirements are all inclusive and provide a good basis for the governing body to start.

### 2.5.3 Non-educator staff

The governing body must recommend the appointment of non-educator staff to the Head of Department (hereafter HoD) (Schools Act, Sec. 20 (1) (j)). Furthermore the school may establish posts and employ non-educator staff (Schools Act, Sec. 20 (5)). There are certain criteria that need to be taken into consideration but the criteria as set out in Schools Act, Sec. 20 (8) are not limited to these criteria only. The criteria include:

a) the ability of the candidate;
b) the principle of equity;
c) the need to redress past injustices;
d) the need for representivity.

The DoE (1995) refers to Education Support Services; these include education-related health, social work, vocational and general guidance and counselling, psychological
programmes and services. Some learners with disabilities need additional help provided by psychiatrists, speech therapists, etc. These additional non-educator staff members are employed if there are certain needs that the learners have that cannot be met by the educator staff. These provisions depend on the educational support that learners need. The DoE (1995) gives way to Schools Act. According to Schools Act (Sec. 24) a special needs school can have a representative of an organisation of disabled persons, disabled persons and experts in appropriate fields of special needs education. The expert in an appropriate field of special education needs can form part of the non-educator staff. These experts provide insight into helping or assisting learners with disabilities. According to Gous (2009:90) the support that learners get might differ even if the learners have the same disability. The non-educator staff members should be familiar with the disability and the level of support that the learner needs. According to DoE (2007:13) the Professional Specialist Support Staff assists the learners in achieving the maximum benefit from learning. This also contributes to quality education that will be discussed later in this chapter.

2.5.4 Financial management

According to the Schools Act, Sec. 38 (1) the governing body must prepare a budget each year according to prescriptions by the Member of the Executive Council. Furthermore, Schools Act, Sec. 38 (2) states that the budget must be approved by the majority of parents present at the budget meeting before the governing body can approve the budget. The school may not charge any registration, administration or any other fees, except school fees (Colditz, 2006:4). Thus the proposed school fees should be all inclusive. Schools Act, Sec. 34 (1) also states that the State must fund public schools on an equitable basis and Sec. 34 (2) states that the State must provide sufficient information to the public school staff so that they can prepare a budget for the next financial year. Thus the State has the responsibility towards the school in terms of financial management to supply the school with the necessary information to draft their annual budget effectively.

According to Van Rooyen (2007:128) all members of the governing body are collectively accountable for the management of a school’s finances. The budgeting process is, however, not carried out by the entire governing body but allocated to the
financial committee, although the entire governing body is accountable for financial management. Van Rooyen (2007:130) states that each stakeholder must prepare a mini-budget and then this is passed on to the financial committee. From here the mini-budgets will be consolidated into the final budget. The budget should include all expenses to ensure that the school can generate enough money from school fees etc. to cover these expenses.

Schools Act, Sec. 30 states that the governing body may establish committees; thus a financial committee may be established. According to Joubert and Prinsloo (2009:93-97) the financial committee manages the school’s finances and ensures that money is spent wisely to ensure quality education. They are also of the opinion that every school should have a policy document drawn up by the financial committee and approved by the governing body. It is clear that the school should have a financial policy that clearly sets out all the financial regulations for the handling of money. This will also ensure that all school funds are used for educational purposes only. Van Rooyen (2007:141) suggests that a financial policy should include the following information:

- School’s vision and mission statement
- Organisational structure for financial management
- Clear (detailed) information on issuing of receipts
- Petty cash and the use thereof
- Deposits and the management thereof
- Requisitioning of payment (All requests should have been budgeted for)
- Approval and authorisation of expenditures
- Payment for an acquisition
- Recording filing
- Accountability, feedback.
- Auditing.

All governing body members should be aware of the fact that money can only be used for items that have been budgeted for; hence the budgeting process and the approval of the budget by parents. Joubert and Prinsloo (2009:99) clearly state that the entire governing body is accountable for the management of a public school’s finances.
Therefore the finances of a public school should be managed properly; it is not the sole function of the principal to manage the school’s finances. Van Rooyen (2007:124) mentions various steps that a governing body must take to manage the schools finances. These steps include the following:

- Determining your strengths and weaknesses – establish needs
- Setting objectives
- Planning the finances – budgeting
- Creating infrastructure and procedures
- Monitoring progress
- Taking remedial action
- Reflect on the process
- Provide feedback to the stakeholders

2.5.5 Adopting and developing policy

The governing body of a public school must:

- *adopt a constitution (Schools Act, Sec. 20 (1) (b))*
- *develop the mission statement (Schools Act, Sec. 20 (1) (c))*
- *adopt a code of conduct for learners (Schools Act, Sec. 20 (1) (d))*

Besseling (2010:6) states that policy should be aimed at the creation of education and the development of all learners. The different needs of the learners should be taken into consideration when developing policy. As stated earlier, the governing body must identify the different learning barriers to ensure that the learners receive quality education and that the needs of the learners are met in terms of the best interest of the child. After identifying the barriers the governing body must draft the policy of the school bearing the barriers in mind.

Policy should be aimed at helping the learners to receive quality education as policy is there to create an environment of order and harmony (Constitution and Schools Act). When policy is drafted or adopted, the main objective should be to provide quality education. Thus all policies should be developed and aimed at a certain aspect that will ensure that learners receive the quality education that they deserve. Policy goes
hand in hand with the protection of the best interest of the child (Schools Act, Sec. 20 (1) a). In this case policy protects various rights of the child, e.g. the right to basic education (Constitution, Sec. 29 (1) a) as well as compulsory attendance (Schools Act, Sec. 3), the right to receive education in an official language (Schools Act, Sec. 6).

Various types of policies are discussed. The first one is the admission policy. Some learners are labelled and are placed in the wrong environment. If a learner is placed in the wrong environment (he/she is classified as having a certain disability which he/she does not have); then the learner experiences certain barriers that are unnecessary. Therefore the admission policy should ensure that the school caters for specific disabilities; the policy should not unfairly discriminate against any learner.

The second policy is the language policy. Because special needs school provide for disabled learners, we need to take into consideration that certain learners may require different communication methods and skills. The language policy should provide for the various language options available to the specific learners.

Thirdly the constitution of the school is discussed, followed by the vision and mission statement, the religious policy and the code of conduct for learners. As mentioned earlier, all these policy documents should promote equality and abstinence form unfair discrimination.

2.5.6 Admission policy (Schools Act, Sec. 5)

Schools Act, Sec. 5 sets out various points pertaining to the admission policy of a school. The first aspect that Schools Act, Sec. 5 (1) mentions is that the admission policy should not discriminate in any way. The admission policy of the school must clearly state which disabilities are provided for. The school’s admission policy cannot be drafted in such a way that it knowingly excludes certain learners and thereby takes away the learner’s right to basic education. The school’s admission policy should support the values mentioned in Constitution, namely equality, non-discrimination and access to education. Therefore the admission policy should include all the values mentioned in Constitution into consideration and promote the
best interest of the child as well as protect the right of the child. Before considering the admission of a learner to a special needs school, the school has to assess the learner to ensure that the learner has certain disabilities that the school caters for (DoE, 1998).

According to the DoE (2007:7) a special school should give careful consideration to their available material and human resources. The document (DoE, 2007:7) also states that placement in special needs schools is limited and the admission policy should be drafted to ensure that material and human resources are applied where needed. Learners, who require lower levels of support or with another disability that a specific school does not cater for should not be admitted to these schools. Learners with lower levels of support might be admitted into mainstream schools. Consultation with the parents, educators and other support personnel must be arranged which forms part of the assessment of a learner before the learner is referred to another public school (DoE, 1998). Thus there are certain tests (assessments) that a disabled learner must submit to before he/she can be placed in a school that will ensure that the learner receives quality education.

A school caters for a specific disability; therefore the school has specific resources that will assist in the education of a learner with a specific disability. The school might not have the resources to provide quality education to another learner with a different disability. The assessment is therefore not done to exclude certain learners but to ensure that the learner will benefit from the programmes that the school offers.

2.5.7 Language policy

Constitution, Sec. 6 (2) states that the governing body may determine the school’s language policy. The governing body of a public school can draft the school’s language policy but it should keep the values mentioned in the Constitution, Sec. 29 (2) that everyone has the right to receive education in the official language of choice in mind. In the case of some special needs schools, Sign Language might be included in the language policy because Schools Act, Sec. 6 (4) also states that a recognised Sign Language has the status of an official language. If a special needs school caters for deaf learners, then Sign Language will be applicable to ensure that learners receive
quality education and the opportunity to advance their education. In some schools learners do not receive education in their home language. According to Besseling (2010), if the medium of instruction and learning is not a home language but an additional language, learners are at a disadvantage, which can also lead to linguistic difficulties and can result in learning breakdown. The same will happen to learners in special needs schools. As mentioned earlier, special needs schools are there to assist learners with certain disabilities. Thus a Sign Language will help the learners who cannot hear to receive quality education. Besseling (2010:15) is also of the opinion that Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) enables learners to engage in the learning process. The AAC system can also provide alternative communication systems that are a supplement to vocal communication. Sign Language thus forms alternative so that learners will be provided the opportunity to receive quality education. According to Joubert and Prinsloo (2009:82) the norms and standards for a language policy are divided into three sections:

- Rights of individuals
- Rights and duties of the school
- Rights and duties of the provincial education department

It is important to remember that the governing body drafts the language policy. The language policy must be in line with all legal provisions and a learner has the right to be educated in one of the official languages of his or her choice, but only if this is reasonably practicable. *Reasonably practicable* would mean that the learner can receive instruction in the official language of his choice if the school already instructs in the learner’s language of choice (Colditz, 2003:3).

Oosthuizen (2003:207) clearly states the governing body should draft the language policy using various legal documents as guidelines; the legal documents that must be used include the provisions of provincial legislation, provisions of the Schools Act, norms and standards as set out in the Government Gazette and provisions in the Constitution. The governing body must ensure that the language policy of the school promotes multilingualism to eliminate unfair discrimination against any learner.
Joubert and Prinsloo (2009:82) list three ways in which the governing body can ensure that the school promotes multilingualism:

- More than one language of instruction
- Additional languages as subjects
- Special immersion or other language programmes for learning additional languages

2.5.8 Constitution of the governing body

*Functions of all governing bodies (Schools Act, Sec. 20)*

20 (1) (b) adopt a constitution.

Oosthuizen (2003:206) is of the opinion that a constitution determines *character and mission and sets out principles*. A constitution provides clear guidelines on what the institution stands for and how the institution operates.

2.5.9 Mission and vision

*Functions of all governing bodies (Schools Act, Sec. 20)*

20 (1) (c) develop a mission statement of the school.

Pearce and Robinson (1982: 81) state that a mission statement is the *broadly framed but enduring statement of ... intent*. The mission statement therefore sets out what the school wants to achieve. It clearly defines what the school stands for and what the goal of the school is. Joubert and Prinsloo (2009:78) are of the opinion that the governing body does not need to adopt a new mission statement if it is satisfied with the current mission statement. Before the mission statement is adopted the governing body must form clear objectives of what it believes the school should be. After the governing body has agreed on what the school should stand for it can adopt the mission statement. According to Joubert and Prinsloo (2009:78) the vision should be translated into a mission statement; the vision and mission statements should be compatible and reflect the values of all the stakeholders. Both the vision and mission statements are therefore a combined effort and a shared goal of all the governing body
members. Colditz (2005:5) says a mission statement is *that within which a society community expresses its unique character, ethos, world and life philosophy and sovereignty within its own ranks.*” The mission statement should therefore spell out what the school stands for and what the school wants to achieve.

Nicol (1995:57) sets out various concepts that should be included in the mission statement of a school:

- Rationale
- Target groups and market
- Services
- Orientation – survival and growth
- Management philosophy
- Satisfaction of interest group needs
- Orientation – Public business image

Taking the above criteria into consideration, the mission of the school should be an all-inclusive plan of how the school intends to operate, what the school wants to achieve and how the school will achieve its goals.

### 2.5.10 Religious policy

Constitution, Sec. 15 and Schools Act, Sec. 7 state that the school’s religious policy should be conducted on an equitable basis and it should be free and voluntary. Sec. 7 (Schools Act) also states that the governing body should draft the religious policy of a school while bearing this in mind. Joubert and Prinsloo (2009:87) state that *the state cannot limit the rights of a school, or determine the religious policy of a school.* Therefore the governing body should determine the religious policy of a specific school. The governing body can draft the religious policy but it should ensure that the policy promotes equity and is free and voluntary.

Oosthuizen (2003:208) states that the governing body should consider the following when drafting the religious policy:

- Requirements in accordance with provincial legislation.
• Religious observances must take place in a fair manner.
• Attendance must be free and voluntary.
• The policy should be in accordance with the Constitution.

Taking all the above into consideration there is one universal concept that should drive decisions regarding the religious policy. Joubert and Prinsloo (2009:88) state that the best interest of the child should be taken into consideration when the religious policy is formulated and adopted. Thus one can state that the universal concept of formulating religious policies is the best interest of the child. The DoE (2003:6) mentions six values against which they can test the religious policy of a school. These values are the following:

• Equity
• Tolerance
• Diversity
• Openness
• Accountability
• Social honour

If a school’s religious policy adheres to these values it will be consistent with the requirements of the Department of Education.

2.5.11 Code of conduct for learners

The Code of Conduct should be drafted by the governing body (Schools Act, Sec. 8 (1)). The Code of Conduct for learners should be aimed at establishing a disciplined environment and improving the quality of the learning process (Schools Act, Sec. 8 (2)).

A code of conduct for learners should provide guidelines on what is expected and what is not expected of learners. The code of conduct is aimed at creating an environment that promotes instruction and learning and that is especially aimed at quality education. The Schools Act refers to due process and according to Joubert and Prinsloo (2009:130) due process refers to a fair process that should meet
standards of fundamental fairness. This basically means that the code of conduct for learners should clearly set out various processes. These processes can refer to the process of a disciplinary hearing, the process of punishment or the process of an appeal. All these processes should be described and should promote fairness or equality.

Joubert and Prinsloo (2009:130-135) provide an example of such a process that is fair:

- Hearing and notice
- Impartial tribunal
- Right to information
- Right to representation
- Reasons for the decisions
- Right to appeal

Although the governing body must adopt its own code of conduct for learners, the above list provides a good example of steps that should be included in a disciplinary process. As stated earlier, the main aim of the code of conduct, according to the Schools Act, is to create a disciplined and purposeful environment. According to Oosthuizen (2003:38) the purpose of a code of conduct is to ensure correctness of appropriate behaviour. Thus the entire code of conduct is aimed at the behaviour of learners.

Joubert and Prinsloo (2009:119-123) provide the following basic guidelines on the content of a code of conduct for learners:

- Preamble
- Rules of conduct
- Punishment
- Disciplinary procedures
- Disciplinary investigations and hearings
- Appeal process

These guidelines supply a good understanding of what is expected in the code of conduct. When the code of conduct is all-inclusive, there is little room for unfair
punishment. All the necessary information will be taken up in the code of conduct and help educators when dealing with misconduct and punishment.

2.6 Additional Functions of the Governing Body

As mentioned earlier, the governing body members of a school may apply for Sec. 21 status to the Head of Department. This entails that the governing body will have additional functions that its members have to perform. If these additional functions are allocated to the governing body, then it will have both Sec. 20 and Sec. 21 functions to perform. According to Joubert and Prinsloo (2009:99-100) the Head of Department may refuse the allocation of these functions if the governing body does not have the capacity to perform these functions.

2.6.1 Extra-mural curriculum

Allocated functions of governing bodies (Schools Act, Sec. 21).
21 (1) (b) Determine the extra-mural curriculum of the school and the choice of subject options in terms of the provincial curriculum policy.

According to the DoE (2001) there should be expanded opportunities for learners that experience disabilities; such opportunities include teachers with specialised competencies, adapted or modified classrooms, workshops, computer rooms, etc. for addressing all barriers to learning and the teaching of work-related skills where applicable. This goes hand in hand with most of the other functions of the governing body.

2.6.2 Purchasing textbooks etc.

Allocated functions of governing bodies (Schools Act, Sec. 21).
21 (1) (c) Purchase textbooks, educational materials or equipment for the school.

The purchasing of textbooks can be difficult as there are special needs among the learners, such as blind learners that need Braille books, etc. According to DoE (2007:11) the school should adhere to the principle of one textbook per learning area.
and support material should be supplied to all learners. The availability of these books and the delivery period of the books can also become a barrier in certain schools as instruction and learning cannot commence before the study material is available. Besseling (2010:16) is also of the opinion that serious barriers can be found within the curriculum. This can have a negative effect on learners. Besseling (2010:16) refers to the tempo of teaching, the management of classrooms as well as the materials and equipment that are used. The resources that are needed form one of the biggest barriers that governing bodies must manage.

Colditz (2006:9-10) mentions an amendment to the Schools Act and it is important to take note of the fact that school fees should be all-inclusive. Some schools expect learners to pay extra for textbooks, sports, etc. These fees should now be included in the annual school fees. Therefore the school fees payable as indicated in the budget should include textbooks.

2.7 Problems Experienced by the School Governing Body

There are certain problems that the school governing body may experience when governing a school and performing its legal obligations/functions. According to Naidu et al. (2008:152) due to the fact that the governing body is re-elected every three years there is no assurance of permanence or continuity in governance structure. If new members are elected on the governing body they should be allowed to make inputs and they should be informed about the plans that the governing body has. Schuster, Smith, Corak, and Yamada (1994:384) mention different challenges for governance, namely efficiency, effectiveness, participation, leadership and responsiveness to the environment.

_We cannot assume a priori that if a governing body becomes skilled at discharging responsibility, this necessarily means that the school becomes more effective or more efficient_ (Deem, Brehony & Heath, 1995:112). Creese and Earley (1999:112) point out that these governing body goals may not be self-evident and that the governing body must discuss its purpose, objectives, etc. as a whole. The governing body members must have the same goal that they strive to achieve.
According to the Xaba (2011:201) one of the main problems that governing body members experience is understanding what is expected of them, the language used in meetings, legal requirements and the capacity to govern. This is all a result of poor training provided by the Head of Department. Schools Act, Sec. 19 (1) (a) states that the Head of Department must provide training for the newly elected governing body members and Sec. 19 (1) (b) (Schools Act) stipulates that the governing body should be promoted with continued training to ensure effective performance.

### 2.8 South African Constitution and Legal Aspects pertaining to the School Governing Body

… every SGB member needs to know the legal implications of having to represent interest groups that have democratically elected them (Naidu et al., 2008:150). As stated earlier, all governing body members must know what is expected of them; hence the training provided by the Head of Department (Schools Act, Sec. 19). According to Creese and Earley (1999:27) all governors require a broad knowledge and understanding of their schools and wider educational issues.

Schools Act, Sec. 18 (1) states that the governing body must function under a constitution. This constitution must include the frequency of meetings, recording of minutes and rendering reports. Atkinson (1981:60) supplies a list of the content in the constitution of a governing body:

- Description and definition of concepts
- Name and objectives of governing body
- Members of the governing body (categories, election procedures and term of office)
- Office-bearers
- Procedures for filling of vacancies
- Resignation
- Committees of the governing body
- Expulsion
- Functions
- Meetings
Quality education is a difficult concept to define because quality is a term that is perceived differently by individuals. According to Creese and Earley (1999:5) a school can be deemed effective when the pupil’s attainment is greater than what might have been expected in the light of his/her past record. A school is considered effective and provides quality education when the learners outperform their previous records. This specific definition focuses on the learners’ abilities.

The concept under discussion is difficult to define because every educator, principal and governing body member defines the term *quality* in a way that he/she sees fit. The only way in which to understand quality education is to find a definition that suits everyone and that encompasses all aspects that might be associated with quality education. Arcaro (1995:1) is of the opinion that quality management is a vehicle that educational professionals can use to cope with the forces of change. This definition is applicable in South Africa because of the change that we have undergone, inclusive education and the awareness of human rights.

The change can also be interpreted as the ever-changing education policy in the search for the best policy. Hoy, Bayne-Jardine and Wood (2000:10) are of the opinion that *quality in education is the development of talents of the customer [learners] and meets the accountability standards of the clients [parents] who pay for the process or the output.* These two definitions are closely linked in the sense that they focus on the output. The concept of quality, whether it is quality education or quality management, focuses on the outcome of a process. In education the outcome will be the life-skills that someone has mastered and the basic skills that are helpful in fulfilling a lifelong dream. Arcaro (1995: 56) states that quality is the creation of an environment where the role-players work together to provide learners with the resources they need to meet certain challenges. The second definition that Arcaro gives also concludes that quality can be measured by the outcome achieved. Arcaro
(1995:3) continues and describes the key component of the development of a quality programme as a measurement system and a structural process for improving the output. A measurement system enables all role-players to measure what they consider quality effectively and it seems that quality can be measured by the outcome.

Before the governing body attempts to find a measuring system or tries to improve the quality of education, it needs to identify the problems that the school experience. This process according to Hoy et al. (2000:31) demands a painful process of self-examination, honesty, openness and acknowledgement. The governing body members must look at the school and consider all its negative aspects. By examining the negative aspects the governing body members will be able to identify the problematic areas and take on an attitude of improvement. According to DoE (1995) quality should be evident across the board; quality is connected to the commitment of teachers, appropriateness of the curriculum and the standards that are set. Thus, when considering the problems that lead to poor quality, there is not a single aspect that the governing body should not examine.

According to Arcaro (1995:2) the quality of education will improve when role players [governing body members] develop new attitudes that focus on leadership, teamwork, cooperation, accountability and recognition. This definition of how to improve the quality of education links with the challenges for governance that Schuster et al. (1994:384) mention, namely efficiency, effectiveness, participation, leadership and responsiveness to the environment. The governing body members must all cooperate and function as a whole; they must have the same aspirations.

It becomes clear that governance and quality go hand in hand and when you govern the school properly, the quality of education will improve. According to Hoy et al. (2000:10) the development of a quality culture is to advocate an effective route to successful enhancement of performance in education. In an attempt to govern the school effectively the governing body may create an environment/culture of quality. This will encourage all role-players on the governing body and all role-players involved in the school to improve the quality of their work.
According to Oldroyd, Elsner and Poster (1996:94-95) there are three levels of ensuring quality:

- Quality control – after process
- Quality assurance – before and during
- Quality management – before, during and after

In the school situation it is important to take the before, during and after process into consideration. If a problem arises it can be addressed, rectified and the process can continue. The quality measurement system that the governing body devises must not be limited to measuring the outcome. If the quality of education is poor then steps can be taken to rectify the situation, but only if the measurement system can be used earlier in the process. The quality of education must be measured throughout the entire process, year or month, to ensure that the outcome is desired. Steps should then be taken to ensure that all problems have been solved.

Some schools may consider the achievement of learners as the quality of their education. Thus, if learners achieve more than what was expected, then the quality of the school is deemed good. When a learner performs better than he/she was expected to the school is effective and provides quality education.

In this research the governing body and the effectiveness of the school and not the individual achievement of learners are taken into consideration. The school is evaluated as an entity and an overall picture is created. Overall performance of the school relates to the following:

- Standard of achievement
- Quality of education provided
- Efficiency with which the resources are managed
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils (Creese & Earley, 1999:5).

When considering Creese and Earley’s (1999) model of evaluating overall performance, one must take various factors into consideration. The governing body must utilise its resources in such a way that it achieves the optimum results with the
resources available. The school must be a safe environment where learners can learn and grow.

Arcaro (1995:7) identifies different steps that need to be taken into consideration when the school wants to transform to a Total Quality School. These steps are similar to the overall performance idea that Creese and Earley (1999) propose.

Arcaro (1995:7) identifies six steps in the process of transforming to a Total Quality School. These steps are:

1. Quality vision and mission
2. Meet the needs of the customer
3. Community involvement
4. Systems to measure added value of education
5. Support systems
6. Continuous improvement

Both Arcaro’s and Creese and Earley’s steps are consistent with the functions of the governing body as stipulated in the Schools Act. The functions of the governing body are inclusive functions that ensure the effective governance of a school, or as stated earlier, ensure quality education.

2.10 Conclusion

There are certain functions that the governing body must perform, as set out by the Schools Act. In an attempt to perform these functions the governing body must ensure that all the learners’ rights are protected.

In special education needs schools the governing body must pay careful attention when drafting the school policies. Certain aspects, such as the kind of disability that the school caters for and the specific needs of those learners should be taken into consideration. The main aim of all schools, irrespective of being a mainstream or special needs school, should be quality education and the propagation of the best interest of the learners.
Chapter 3
Special Needs Education

3.1 Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to gain a clear understanding of the unique nature of a special needs school and learners with disabilities. If the focus of the study revolves around schools for learners with special education needs the study will not make sense if I do not supply a clear background and understanding of the concept of special needs education and disabled learners. The function of the governing body of a mainstream school and a special needs school might be the same, but there are certain factors that need to be taken into consideration in a special needs school. These factors include the admission policy that does not discriminate because it clearly states that learners with a specific disability and not learners with other disabilities will be admitted to the school. Sign language may be included in the language policy as one of the languages of instruction. Therefore this chapter supplies background information and outlines the uniqueness of special education needs and the task that the governing body of a special needs school has at hand.

Learners with disabilities may not adapt in mainstream schools because of their disabilities. A learner may have to move around in a wheelchair; therefore a mainstream school with many stairs may be problematic to this learner. Some learners have disabilities that require additional needs. The specialised attention that these learners require is catered for in special education needs schools. Some of the disabilities can be catered for in mainstream schools. The level of support that a learner needs determines whether or not the learner should be admitted to a special needs school or to a mainstream school. The admission policy determines which learners will be accommodated in a specific special needs school and the measure of support as well as the disability catered for. This policy is drafted by the governing body (Schools Act, Sec. 20).

Inclusive education is a concept that refers to mainstream schools that accommodate learners with certain disabilities. Mainstream schools can accommodate certain
disabled learners that do not need specialised support. Special needs schools assess the learners and refer them to mainstream schools if they need a lower level of support than the special needs school provides.

People with disabilities are accepted into society in all walks of life. It is important to understand the views that people used to have and the views people have today concerning disabled people to understand the importance of special needs schools. By looking at the history of the concept disability we can form a clear picture of how important it is to include disabled people in society. There are certain learners that require high levels of support that cannot necessarily be integrated in mainstream schools due to their disability and level of need required. Thus, by defining and explaining inclusive education, the alternative option to place these learners in special needs schools and not mainstream schools will become clear.

This chapter attempts to distinguish between special needs education and inclusive education. There are differences between special needs education and inclusive education but both options should provide quality education. This research focuses on special needs schools, but since the emphasis has moved from special education to inclusive education, I cannot omit inclusive education from my research.

3.2 Special Needs Education and its History

When you hear the word disability you immediately think of a person that has a physical impairment; in other words the body is shaped differently than any other person’s (Barnes & Mercer, 2003:23). Johnstone (2001:vii) is of the opinion that the image of impairment is linked to the judgement of social acceptance. According to Du Toit (1996:5-6) children with disabilities in primitive societies were exterminated. These children were literally abandoned or hidden away to prevent humiliation because they were physically different from others. A negative attitude was taken on to people with disabilities (Borsay, 2005). However, in the late 1960s and 1970s people experienced a new sensitivity to human rights and there was an increased awareness of the indignities suffered as a result of discrimination and denial of the rights of people with disabilities (Alexander & Hunter, 2004:ix). People became more aware of individuals with disabilities and of the need to protect their rights.
This newly experienced sensitivity and awareness of human rights gave rise to the development of specialised education. According to Du Toit (1996:7) the development of specialised education was originally an initiative of religious organisations, involvement of the State and an addition of a new type of school. This entire approach can be summarised as a *community-based approach* as various role players were involved.

1981 was declared as the International Year of Disabled Persons by the United Nations; however, this was not recognised by the South African government (DoE, 1997:19). By the end of 1991 the Interdepartmental Co-ordinating Committee for the Care of the Disabled had not succeeded in their task and a new council, the South African Federal Council for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons (DoE, 1997:19) was formed. The Constitution was another important document for the disabled community in South Africa, especially the equality clause, Sec. 9, which prohibits discrimination on any grounds. Thus people with disabilities now have the right to be treated in the same manner as their peers with no disabilities. The idea that *those with any obvious disability [are to be] judged to be incapable* (Engelbrecht & Green, 2007:2) is no longer applicable and learners with disabilities have the same opportunities as their able peers.

In 2000 the South African government committed itself to the Education for All goals; these goals include meeting the learning needs of all young people and adults as well as improving all aspects of quality education (DoE, 2010:8). Throughout the ages various movements and policies have been created to protect the rights of disabled people and to give them equal opportunities, including the right to education. *All learners, not only those that are vulnerable to marginalisation, require schools that are responsive to all aspects of learners’ diversity* (Engelbrecht & Green, 2007:83). This statement by Engelbrecht and Green suggests that disabled learners’ needs should be catered for in special schools as they have different needs than their peers with no disability. Special needs education was developed to accommodate learners with certain disabilities and help them achieve their educational goals. White Paper 6 states that some learners require specialised forms of support and more intensive support to ensure that they reach their full potential (DoE, 2001:16): *Special Education is education first and special second* (Oldroyd et al., 1996:103). Oldroyd
et al. make it clear that the main aim of special needs schools is still education; the fact that learners have disabilities should not restrict their opportunities to be educated and to receive quality education. According to Farrell (2009:1) *special education is a distinctive provision, including education for pupils with disability.* It is informed by a range of foundational disciplines, and encourages academic progress and personal and social development. Special education provides for more than just educational purposes; social and personal development is also improved to help the learners cope with their disabilities and handle certain situations.

### 3.3 Disabilities and the Learner

According to Rayner (2007:22) a child with special education needs is a child that has a learning difficulty and thus requires special education provision and more intensive support to ensure that he or she reaches full potential. These learners with special needs have certain disabilities; they thus require additional support in certain areas. Hodkins and Vickerman (2009:4) are of the opinion that special education needs refer to *children who have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it more difficult for them to learn or access education than most children of the same age.* Rayner (2006:20) distinguishes between three different groups of learner who require special education needs. These are learners with severe or complex physical, sensory or intellectual disabilities, learners with severe emotional or behavioural disorders and learners with less severe disabilities who do not perform well in ordinary schools. Walton, Nel, Hugo and Muller (2009:107) refer to the disabilities that learners have as intrinsic barriers; these barriers come from inside the learners. The intrinsic barriers include physical, neurological and development impairment, chronic illness, psycho-social disturbances and differing intellectual ability. According to Walton et al. (2009:107) there are some extrinsic barriers as well that include family, culture, and social and economic factors. For the purpose of this research I look at the intrinsic barriers that learners experience only. According to the DoE (2005:7) barriers to learning can be imposed on any framework that relates to instruction and learning.

There are certain categories of disability and specific disabilities. According to Gous and Mfazwe (1998:7) the different categories (signs and symptoms) of disabilities are the following:
- Learning difficulties
- Behavioural problems
- Physical disabilities
- Chronic illness
- Emotional problems
- Intellectual disability

Apart from these signs and symptoms, there are certain specific disabilities that learners experience. According to the Guidelines to Ensure Quality Education and Support in Special Schools and Special Resource Centres (DoE, 2007:9) the specific disabilities may include the following:

- Severe learning difficulties
- Hearing impairment
- Vision impairment
- Restricted mobility
- Language use and social communication
- Complex, multiple and pervasive disability
- Behavioural and psycho-social factors
- Social and economic neglect

Thus the main aim of the special needs schools should be to cater for learners suffering from different disabilities. However, different disabilities require different levels of support and methods of support. A specific special needs school should cater for a specific disability and ensure that it has appropriate resources to ensure that the learners receive quality education and that they do not experience extrinsic environmental disabilities. According to the document on Vocational Training (SANASE, 2005:6-7) learners with disabilities experience certain problems that have an impact on their education. These problems include moderate to severe learning disabilities, inappropriate communication skills, poor scholastic abilities and inadequate social skills.

The severity and type of disability determines in which type of school the learner should be enrolled. In the previous chapter I discussed the admission policy of the
various special needs schools. The admission policy is directly linked to the
disabilities that the school caters for, as the school will have resources for
accommodating only specific disabilities. Learners with disabilities that one special
school does not cater for should be accommodated elsewhere in special needs schools
or even in mainstream schools.

The term *special education* will no longer exist as it used to in the Special Education
Model (DoE, 2002:11). This statement made by the Department of Education refers
to the philosophy in White Paper 6. According to the document *Draft Conceptual
and Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of Inclusive Education* (DoE,
2002:12) the Special Education Model “set ceilings” on learners, prohibiting them
from reaching their full potential. New terms that are used to describe special needs
schools and mainstream schools include special schools, special schools as resource
centres, full-service schools and district-based support teams. In 2007 South Africa
signed and in 2008 approved the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons
with Disabilities (DoE, 1997). Article 24 of this document states that all persons with
disabilities should have the right to inclusive education at all levels (DoE, 2010:8).
To get a clear picture of what inclusive education entails and what the role of special
schools is in the new model, I subsequently discuss inclusive education and the role of
special schools in this model.

### 3.4 Inclusive Education

#### 3.4.1 Defining Inclusive Education

Naicker (1999:19) is of the opinion that inclusive education is defined as an education
system that is *responsive to the diverse needs of learners*. Thus a school should cater
for various learners with or without disabilities. Some writers refer to inclusive
education as social inclusion (Gerschel, 2005; Walker & Walker, 1997).

According to Rayner (2007:35) some educationists state that inclusive education
refers to *a quality provision, an educative process, an ideal or a political and social
issue related to human rights*. Clark, Dyson and Millward (1995: v) believe inclusive
education is a move towards extending the scope of ordinary schools to include a
greater diversity of children.
According to the DoE’s document on Full-service Schools (2005) inclusive education as defined in White Paper 6 is the following:

*Special Needs Education, Building an Inclusive Education and Training System is a framework to build a single, inclusive system of education and training. This system is based on the principles of human rights and social justice for all learners: participation, social integration and redress; equal and equitable access to education; community responsiveness; and cost-effectiveness.*

Inclusive education is thus a system that provides the same opportunities to all learners. Irrespective of the barriers to learning that they experience, schools should accommodate learner diversity.

### 3.4.2 History of Inclusive Education

In the 1960s a system called the “Integration System” was established; it entailed that disabled learners were integrated in mainstream schools but these learners were taught in different classrooms (Links, 2009:4). This differs from inclusive education as the term is used today. Inclusion entails that learners who experience barriers to learning should attend neighbourhood schools to be educated alongside their peers in the same classrooms (CSIE, 2000:12; Giangreco, 1997:194; Morgan & Demchak, 1998:26). Learners with disabilities should not only be integrated into mainstream schools but should be educated in the same classrooms as their peers with no disabilities.

In 1994 the Salamanca Conference (UNESCO, 1994) held in Spain provided a framework for countries on how to implement inclusive education. The Salamanca Conference concluded that all children have a right to education; they should be accommodated in schools, the curriculum should be flexible and give every learner the opportunity to succeed. According to Links (2009:5) this framework influenced the education system that emerged in South Africa after 1994. According to the DoE (2001) inclusive education entails that young people can learn and need support; learners have different needs. To build the inclusive education system certain changes needed to be made. According to Walton et al. (2009:108) inclusive practice
refers to strategies adopted, technical support provided, structures and procedures applied and actions carried out in the pursuit to including learners who experience barriers to learning. According to DoE (2005:7) there are two steps in changing the way people see special education. The first step is to move from seeing disabilities from a medical perspective to seeing them in terms of the rights of the learner. The second step is to identify barriers to learning in the system and make the necessary interventions. The table below illustrates the shift from special needs education towards inclusive education and the variation of terms as used in the two different models/approaches.

Table 3.1 Shifting from Special Education to Inclusive Education (DoE, 2005:11)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>Special Education Theory</th>
<th>Inclusive Education Theory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Assumptions | • Pathological  
• Deficits within the child  
• Categories | • Barriers to learning  
• Barriers in the system and environment  
• Levels of support needed, e.g. high, moderate and low levels of support |
| Practices | Segregation of learners into special facilities | Includes all learners and reorganises support |
| Tools | Standardised tests | Criterion-referenced tests  
Teacher-produced tests  
Assessing the potential to learn |
| Model | Special Education Act | South African Schools Act |
| Pedagogy | Limited pedagogical possibilities | • Pedagogy of possibility, taking into consideration barriers to learning, multiple styles of intelligence and learning  
• High expectations, expanded learning opportunities |

Subsequently I discuss the different models that relate to disabilities, the identification and shift to acceptance by society according to the medical model, the social model and lastly the disability movement model. These models represent the movement
towards inclusive education. They also represent the different perspectives from which society sees special and inclusive education (Slee, 1998).

3.4.3 Models relating to classification of disabilities

3.4.3.1 Medical model

This model places the learners’ disability unproblematically in their individual pathology (Thomas & Loxley, 2007:3). According to Skidmore (1996) the medical model arose from the psychological, neurological or physiological limitations that learners have. Furthermore Skidmore (1996) is of the opinion that the learner is medically assessed and the disability screened after which the learner is labelled according to the pathology of impairment. This entire model is based on a medical perspective and medical identification of the various disabilities.

When learners were classified as disabled they were placed in special needs schools; thus they were excluded from mainstream schools because of the disability that was thought to be a natural and irremediable characteristic of the person (Naicker, 1999:12). These learners were regarded as having an illness (Rayner, 2007:37).

This model was also established so that people with disabilities could be pitied and to illustrate to people that the disabled were not to be feared (DoE, 1997:13). This entailed that disabled people were excluded or isolated from society (DoE, 1997:13). According to the DoE (1997:14) the exclusion of disabled people was evident in the following areas: the family, built environment, mainstream services, social relationships, communication and the labour market and employment opportunities. People were excluded from all walks of life when they were labelled as being disabled.

3.4.3.2 Social model

The Social Model’s aim is to challenge the idea that disabilities cause bodily impairment (Hodkinson & Vickerman, 2009:23). This model’s principle is that society causes disability by placing barriers of accessibility in disabled people’s way (Hughes & Patterson, 1997). Thus this model implies that barriers are being created
by people without disabilities in the way they construct the environment. Hodkinson and Vickerman (2009:24) are of the opinion that this model is important in overcoming the prejudicial attitudes that people propagate towards impairment. This model clearly suggests that if the environment is more accessible to the disabled they will struggle less, but due to the barriers that the non-disabled create around themselves they create barriers for the disabled. According to the DoE (1997:15) there are certain paradigm shifts that the non-disabled should make in the way that they think, such as the following:

- The stairs in a building restrict disabled people and not their wheelchairs.
- Deficits in the design of everyday equipment and not the ability of the person cause difficulty.
- The lack of finding alternative communication methods creates exclusion of certain disabled people.
- The inability of mainstream schools to deal with diversity forces some learners into special needs schools.

The above mentioned paradigm shifts imply that non-disabled people should change the way they think about disabled people and the barriers that the environment creates. This model moves away from the social model towards the inclusive model.

3.4.3.3 Disability movement model (Affirmative Model/Existing disability model)

This model was developed as a result of the Medical and Social Model. According to Hodkinson and Vickerman (2009:28) disabled people should have control over their own lives. They point out that this model consists of two ideas. Firstly, it should be identified how society excludes disabled people and secondly the image should be portrayed that disabled people are strong and proud. Disabled people should not be pitied and regarded as different from non-disabled people; they should be accepted into society and offered the same opportunities as their peers with no disabilities.
3.5 Difference between Special Needs Education and Mainstream Schools (Inclusive Education)

Subsequently I discuss the roles that various schools play from an inclusive education viewpoint. As inclusive education already plays a role in many South African schools, I cannot merely rely on the old model of special schools only.

3.5.1 Special schools and special schools as resource centres

In the inclusive education model special schools do not cease to exist but have a certain purpose. Special schools as resource centres move away from categorising learners according to their disability. These schools cater for learners with high levels of support and provide support to full-service schools and ordinary schools (DoE, 2005:8). Special schools will also be strengthened, their curricula will be reviewed to ensure that they apply Outcomes Based Education; learning support material must be developed to be in line with the Revised National Curriculum Statement and meet the needs of the disabled learners (DoE, 2005:9). Special schools cater for learners that require very high levels of support.

The function of special schools as resource centres, among others, is to provide education for diverse needs, develop a plan to ensure maximum use of human resources, develop a pattern for placement of disabled learners, and provide a network to support mainstream schools, provide curriculum support and to provide therapeutic support to disabled learners (DoE, 2005:20-21).

3.5.2 Full-service schools

*Full-service schools, colleges, further and higher education institutions are first and foremost mainstream education institutions that provide quality education to all learners and students by supplying the full range of learning needs in an equitable manner. They should strive to achieve access, equity, quality and social justice in education* (DoE, 2005). Learners who experience barriers to learning are included in mainstream schools and *the practice that facilitates inclusion* (Walton et al., 2009:107). Full-service schools will only acquire additional resources and skills to
ensure that the school can cater for barriers to learning that the learners, enrolled in the school, experience.

Full-service schools should strive to overcome barriers that could arise from impairments, psycho-social problems, different abilities, certain life experiences or socio-economic dispossessions. The barriers are not necessarily from within the learners, but could also arise from the environment (DoE, 2005). The Social Model can assist the school in ensuring that the environment does not create additional barriers for disabled learners. The school should thus examine the school terrain and ensure that all areas are accessible to the disabled learners enrolled at that specific school.

3.6 Screening, Identification and Assessment of Learners

Large numbers of learners used to be referred to special needs schools from mainstream schools due to the lack of a rigorous assessment and identification system (DoE, 2008:2). Therefore the Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support has been drafted to rectify this problem (DoE, 2008:2). As stated earlier, if learners require a high level of support they can be accommodated in special needs schools, but if they require a medium to low level of support they can be accommodated in mainstream schools. Screening or testing of learners will ensure that they are placed in the right special needs school or that they receive appropriate support in mainstream schools in the sense of inclusive education. The Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (DoE, 2008:1) was implemented to ensure that appropriate identification and assessment are done so that the necessary programmes are implemented. For the purpose of this research I do not discuss the various types of screening, identification and assessment methods; these methods relate to a psychological approach to inclusive education. However, it is important to remember that these assessments are referred to in the school’s admission policy.

3.7 Conclusion

People with disabilities and their inclusion into society has been a long struggle for all parties involved. Inclusive education is the new approach. Although this research is
not based on inclusive education, I cannot exclude it from my research in general. Inclusive education forms part of special needs education and all research is based on this model. Schools in South Africa should implement this system. Therefore I cannot base my research on the old model; if this research excluded inclusive education it would not be accurate or reliable.

Certain changes have taken place, such as the changing of terms to fit the new inclusive education model and the restructuring of schools to ensure the inclusion of disabled learners. Special needs schools still have to cater for certain disabilities but they have the extra responsibility of supporting full-service schools. Special needs schools should assess the learners that apply to the school. They must still accommodate disabled learners and provide quality education with the available resources.

As mentioned earlier, this chapter’s aim is to provide background to special needs schools and disabled learners. This research revolves specifically around the aspirations of school governing body members of schools for learners with special education needs. To understand fully what a special education needs school stands for and the job at hand one needs to understand that there are learners with different disabilities that require different levels of support. It is specifically the function of the governing body to ensure that skilled and trained educators are recommended to the Head of Department, to adopt a code of conduct for learners and to maintain and improve the school’s property. The governing body members must take the disability that the school caters for and the specialised need that the learners have into consideration when performing their functions.
Chapter 4  
Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The chapter depicts the methods used in collecting, interpreting and analysing the data. This research consists of two separate case studies of two special needs schools. The governing body members of the schools were interviewed individually in semi-structured interviews. They had the opportunity to express their views and aspirations with regard to their governing body functions.

Furthermore, this chapter aims at explaining why this research was based on the personal experiences and interpretations of each individual participant in the respective school. By using an interpretive approach I had the opportunity to interpret what the participants meant and to construct reality through the participant’s viewpoint. This chapter provides a description of the research design and an indication of how I gained access to the participants.

Various other concepts like the ethical considerations as well as the validity of the study are described in detail.

4.2 Methodology

4.2.1 Research paradigm

As mentioned in Chapter 1, this study was conducted using an interpretive research paradigm. According to Denscombe (2002:18) an interpretivist does not believe that the social world has material qualities that can be touched or observed in some literal way. This reality only exists in the way people believe in it, relate to it and interpret it. In other words, this research revolves around what people experience and aspire to in their roles as governing body members. Each individual, because of his or her background, interprets the functions and associated supposed roles on the governing body differently. By sharing these interpretations and aspirations, I have been able to form my own interpretation of what they aspire to as governing body members.
There is thus no set reality, but rather a reality as formulated and experienced by the researcher. Bassey (1999:43) is also of the opinion that reality is a construct of the human mind. Reality is being constructed as the researcher is conducting the research and as the researcher is experiencing the case scenario. Thus, prior to this study I had not constructed a reality or a specific expectation of what I would find at the schools. The research had to be undertaken and the data gathered before I formed an idea of what the aspirations of the governing body members were.

Basit (2010:14) is of the opinion that in the interpretive paradigm the research focuses on smaller numbers, in-depth analysis of human behaviour and it acknowledges differences and similarities. Basit (2010:14) is also of the opinion that in this paradigm the researcher does not generalise but interprets social reality as viewed by the participants. The governing body members have their own personalities, different backgrounds and expectations; however, the functions that they need to perform are similar but they interpret their roles as governing body members differently. The differences that exist between the governing body members are their expectations and the similarities are the functions that they need to perform.

Except for the interpretation of reality, Burton and Bartless (2009:21) are of the opinion that an interpretive researcher creates this reality by the interaction between individuals. The interpretevist also tries to show how choices are made by the participants. The interpretevist is thus trying to construct a reality based on these choices. Each participant has had different experiences guiding his or her opinions and aspirations for the governing body. In the research I attempted to find the reason for these opinions and aspirations. In other words, the participants had to explain why they had certain aspirations and why wanted to see certain changes made in the school. Cohen et al. (2007: 21) are of the opinion that the interpretive paradigm is characterised by concern for the individual. Thus the community, school and each individual play an important role in this research. The individual, the special needs learner and his/her needs/rights are the focus point of this research.
4.2.2 Qualitative research

This research was conducted using a qualitative research approach. According to Woods (2006:2) qualitative research is concerned with life, things as they happen and situations as constructed in day-to-day events. There are various scenarios that arise at a school each day, scenarios that must be handled by the educator, learner, school and governing body. By using qualitative research the focus was on each school and the specific problems that the specific school experiences. According to Basit (2010:16) qualitative methodology focuses on the subjective view of the research participant and the researcher can explain the data from the participant’s viewpoint. Each individual participant was interviewed and gave his/her interpretation of the various governing body functions. When certain problems arose the governing body members had to come up with ideas to resolve the issues that exist at school. By revising or writing policies the governing body deal with issues that generally arise at school.

Silvermann (2000) is of the opinion that qualitative research emphasises the dynamic, holistic and individual aspects of human experience. The governing body consists of members that are part of a specific community. Each community solves problems and handles situations in its own way; therefore by using a qualitative approach the researcher can focus on the individual school and the community. Kruger (2010:53-54) points out that qualitative research wants to gain models from the researcher’s own genuine experience. The researcher becomes part of the school and the problems as experienced by each school. As stated earlier, there are certain issues that arise at school and as a governing body each member shares in the experience and tries to come up with suggestions to solve the problems. These experiences steer their aspirations in a certain direction and this forms the basis of this study.

Creswell (1998) states that qualitative research is used when variables cannot easily be identified and theories are not available to explain the behaviour of the participants. The members of the governing body differ markedly with reference to their level of education and social status. This makes it difficult to assign a single theory to all the schools or to pre-determine their behaviour as governing body members. Using qualitative research each school was regarded as an entity and no
comparison was made between the two schools. Basit (2010:16) is of the opinion that a qualitative method allows the researcher to focus on a detailed study of a small number of participants and the participants are able to clarify particular aspects of social reality. Only a few of the governing body members were included in this research and they had the opportunity to share their experiences.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007:3-8) there are five characteristics of qualitative research:

1. Naturalistic – An actual setting as direct source of data.
2. Descriptive data – Data takes the form of words.
3. Concern with process
4. Inductive – The theory is grounded in the data that has been gathered.
5. Meaning – The research is concerned about the way in which people make sense of their lives.

I will attempt to illustrate that the research conducted has all the characteristics mentioned by Bogdan and Biklen (2007:3-8):

- The setting for each interview was a familiar venue to all the participants. Some participants were interviewed at home, some at work and others at school. Each of these settings had one common denominator, namely a governing body member as the participant.
- The data that gathered was transcribed and analysed. The data supplied me with a clear description of what the participant experienced and wanted to achieve as governing body member.
- The governing body has certain functions that it must perform; these functions cannot be regarded as individual tasks but rather as an entire process that comes down to governance of the school. Thus the research focused on the functions of the governing body but also on the entire process of governing and performing the various functions.
- The data was used to give me an idea of what each governing body member wanted to achieve and strove after.
- The research specifically focused on the individual’s experiences and aspirations as governing body member.
4.2.3 Research design: Case study

A case study provides a unique portrayal of real people in a real social situation by means of vivid accounts of events, feelings and perceptions (Basit, 2010:19). When taking the definitions given on qualitative research, an interpretivist approach and a case study it is clear that they all revolve around people’s experiences and day-to-day events. Terms such as individual, real people, society, in-depth and smaller numbers form part of the definition of these terms. Thus this entire research is based on the individual’s experience, aspirations and goals as governing body member.

According to Cohen et al. (2007:259) the objective of a case study is to “probe deeply” and to “analyse intensively”. The governing body, their beliefs and goals were observed and analysed to find the similarities between their aspirations and their legal obligations. The participants were allowed to explain in detail why they had certain aspirations and where their ideas had originated. Thus I could “probe deeply” into why they had certain aspirations.

Nieuwenhuis (2007:75) is of the opinion that a case study is a systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain a phenomenon of interest. As each individual governing body member was interviewed, the goals of the individual members as well as the common goals of the governing body were identified. The experiences of each participant reflected their aspirations and goals as governing body members. Not all governing body members were used in the case study. Stake (1995:16) is of the opinion that a researcher can use a group of individuals in a case study to find greater understanding of the case and to appreciate the complexity and uniqueness thereof. The number of participants was limited to ensure that an in-depth understanding could be gained instead of shallow information on all governing body members.

Cohen et al. (2007:253) are of the opinion that a case study establishes cause and effect. Each governing body member has certain ideas and goals, and these goals and ideas are transformed into aspirations in terms of the governing body functions. Thus using a case study helped to determine why the participants have certain aspirations. Cohen et al. (2007:85) point out that a case study is to portray, analyze and interpret
the uniqueness of real individuals and situations through accessible accounts. As each individual’s aspirations and experiences differ, they can be regarded as unique. The data cannot be generalised; the research focused on the individual and his/her aspirations as governing body member.

There are certain advantages and certain disadvantages when using a case study. The advantages of a case study according to Adelman et al. (in Cohen et al., 2007:256) are the following:

- The data is strong in reality and speaks for itself.
- Case studies recognise the complexity of social truths and provide clear insight into others.
- Case studies are a step to action and catches unique features that might have been lost otherwise.
- The data and research of a case study are represented in a more publicly accessible way and easily understood by a wider audience.
- A case study can be conducted by an individual researcher.

The uniqueness of the individuals has been captured in the form of their aspirations. The reasons for the aspirations and goals of the governing body members depend on various factors. Acting as a governing body member of a special needs school is one of the factors that guide the governing body’s aspirations.

However, there are certain disadvantages to using a case study. These disadvantages, according to Adelman et al. (in Cohen et al., 2007:256) are the following:

- The results may not be generalised.
- The data is not easily available for cross-checking.
- The research is prone to bias.

Although a disadvantage of a case study is not being able to generalise the findings, this research’s intention is not to generalise. Each governing body member has his/her own ideas and these participants were included in the study because their aspirations were important.
4.3 Research methods

4.3.1 Sampling

Oppenheim (1992:38) states that the term *sample* is a smaller group that represents the population. In this research the population refers to the special needs schools in the Pretoria area. According to Cohen et al. (2007:100) the success of research not only depends on the appropriateness of methodology and instrumentation, but also on the suitability of the sampling strategy. Sampling forms one of the most important aspects of the research. The sampling that I used for this research included two special needs schools with different primary disabilities that they cater for. The sampling is suitable because it can directly be linked to the research question that focuses on special needs schools.

Cohen et al. (2007:101) mention four factors that need to be considered when choosing sampling:

- Sample size
- Representatives and parameters of the sample
- Access to the sample
- Sampling strategy

As mentioned in Chapter 1, there are nine special needs schools in the Pretoria area. I chose two of those schools that would fit the criteria of the research, which included Sec. 21 special needs schools (These schools have applied for Sec. 21 status and were granted this status (Schools Act, Sec. 21(1))). According to Cohen et al. (2007:114) convenience sampling is when the researcher chooses the sample from those that he or she has access to. I chose two special needs schools that are easy accessible to ensure that there were no logistical problems. The two schools were chosen in the Pretoria area and are situated in close proximity. However, these schools cater largely for learners with different disabilities. Gray (2004:88) warns and says that when a researcher makes use of convenient sampling the representativeness of the sample cannot be determined.
4.3.1.1 Participants

Table 4.3.1 Exposition of participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>AP</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>14 years</td>
<td>Honour's degree in Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>A1</td>
<td>SGB</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>9 years</td>
<td>Mechanical Engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>SGB</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Matriculation Certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>BP</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>BA (Ed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B.Ed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>B1</td>
<td>SGB</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>12 years</td>
<td>B.Ed (Hons)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>HOD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>B2</td>
<td>SGB</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12 years</td>
<td>PhD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participants were chosen on the basis of their role on the governing body. The first participant of each school was the principal. The principal was chosen because he acts as a governing body member and he serves on the School Management Team as well. Thus the principal must ensure that the policies and decisions made by the governing body are performed or implemented in the school. The principal forms an integral part of both the governing body and the school management team.

The second participant was the chairman on the governing body. The chairman has a good idea of what is going on and what the governing body’s intentions are. The chairman could provide an overview of the governing body functions and aspirations. The third participant was the treasurer. Financial management forms a big and integral part of the governing body functions. Therefore the treasurer was selected to ensure that the data included aspects of financial management as well. This did not jeopardise the study. Every special needs school has a governing body and certain representatives. Thus choosing two special needs schools in any area supplied a sufficient case study.

4.3.1.2 Access to respondents/participants

According to Basit (2010:59) gaining access to participants might not always be easy. There may be various reasons why participants are not eager to take part in the
research. I wanted to eliminate possible uncertainties that the participants might have and made use of various steps to ensure willing and eager participation. Burton et al. (2008:48-49) mention three levels of access that need to be negotiated. These three levels are:

- The gatekeepers should be in agreement with the research and the tools used.
- Ethical requirements must be met.
- The purpose of the research must be explained to the participants.

I followed various procedures when I first approached the participants of each school to ensure that they were fully aware of my intentions and the specific purpose of the study. The following steps that are in line with the levels of access mentioned by Burton et al. (2008:48-49) were taken:

**Step 1: Contacting the principal**
Before I approached any of the participants I made an appointment with the principal of the school. I did not interview the principal the very first time that I approached each school. I went to the principal and explained to him what I intended and what the research entailed. Both principals were in favour of the study. I handed the principal a copy of my research proposal and he offered to take it to the governing body for approval.

**Step 2: Contacted the various governing body members (Participants)**
After I had been granted permission by the governing body to conduct the research at the school I contacted the various participants and scheduled meetings for the interviews. All the participants were extremely excited about the research and offered their assistance. I did not experience any negative behaviour concerning the study or the interviews.

**Step 3: Interviewing**
The participants were interviewed at locations and on times that suited them. An interview was conducted with each of the individual participants over a time period of two weeks. As stated earlier, the interviews were scheduled according to the preference of the individuals. The interviews were not conducted in any
specific order, but randomly according to the time slots that suited each participant. The table below is an illustration of where the individual interviews were conducted.

Table 4.3.2 Location where the various participants were interviewed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School A</th>
<th>Location of interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>At the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant A1</td>
<td>At the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant A2</td>
<td>In her office at work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>At the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant B1</td>
<td>At home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant B2</td>
<td>At home</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.2 Data collection

Data collection by interpretive researchers is usually verbal; transcripts and reports of conversations (Bassey 1999:43). In this research I made use of semi-structured interviews, which represent the conversations as stipulated by Bassey. In the process of collecting the data I followed the following steps:

Step 1: Introduction

I firstly took the opportunity to familiarise myself with special needs schools by speaking to various people that are involved in these schools. I went to the IDSO (Institutional Development and Support Officer) to get more background on special needs schools and to be introduced to the different disabilities that the various schools cater for. Subsequently I spoke to various people about their involvement in special needs schools — principals, educators and students engaged in studies. These conversations gave me a clear understanding of what special needs schools offer disabled learners and to what extent they provide assistance to these learners. It also supplied me with information on how special schools were different from mainstream schools.
Secondly I consulted the literature to gain more insight into what journals, books and legal documents say about special needs schools. In the process I looked at school governance, specifically for special needs schools.

Thirdly I scheduled the interviews with the various governing body members.

**Step 2: Interviews**

The data collection process for each of the two separate case studies involved semi-structured interviews with governing body members. According to Kvale (1996:187) the purpose of qualitative interviewing is to describe and interpret the themes in the *subject lived world*. The governing body members either have children in the special needs school or they are staff members at the special needs school (educators or the principal).

According to Mason (2002:63-64) there are certain reasons why researchers make use of qualitative interviews to collect data. These reasons include the following:

- The ontological perspective suggests that people’s understanding, interpretation and experience are meaningful to social reality.
- The epistemological perspective suggests that interacting, talking and listening to people is a valid way of gathering data.
- Data may not be sufficient in any other form.
- The researcher’s view might include giving the participant more freedom.

When considering the research that I conducted, these reasons formed a fundamental part thereof:

- It was essential to determine what the participants understood and interpreted when they were elected onto the governing body. The members had certain experiences before they were elected as governing body members and they had certain experiences while being on the governing body. These understandings, interpretations and experiences formed the basis for my research.
• Analysing the policy documents gave an overall idea of what the governing body planned. However, to get a clear understanding of what the individual’s aspirations were, I had to conduct interviews and listen carefully to what they said and what they had planned as governing body members.

• The data cannot be retrieved in any other form as these aspirations of the individual members have not been written down somewhere. The data had to be gathered through interaction with each individual participant.

• To ensure that the participant could answer various questions on his or her aspirations, I made used of semi-structured interviews. With each individual I had the freedom which allowed the participant to express him-or herself fully.

Truckman (1994:216) is of the opinion that with interviews a researcher might have access to:

• What a person knows
• What a person likes or dislikes
• What a person thinks

Thus, by making use of interviews, I was able to gain a deeper understanding of what the participants knew about their legal obligations as governing body members in a special needs school, what they liked about the system, what they disliked and what their aspirations were. The interviews allowed me to gather the data that I needed to answer the research question.

According to Basit (2010:103) a semi-structured interview poses certain pre-formulated questions and a number of supplementary questions. The supplementary questions are then linked to some of the interviewee’s responses. Burton et al. (2008:86) are of the opinion that semi-structured interviews are formulated to start with key questions that focus on the study. The interviewer knows what she wants to find out and can ask follow-up questions to ensure that she gets the necessary information. All the participants might not be asked the same questions but the basic questions are asked. The follow-up questions relate to answers that were either not clear or that gave rise to another issue that I wanted to explore further.
Step 3: Document analysis

As stated in Chapter 3, each school must have certain policy and documents in place; the specific documents and policies are stipulated in Schools Act, e.g. admission policy, language policy and code of conduct. These documents and policies are extremely important as they provide insight into the school and the system that the school uses. The analysis of these documents and policies was used for triangulation. According to Burton et al. (2008:112) policy document provide a “known point”. The documents give a clear indication of what the school strives after.

There are certain strengths that are associated with document analysis. These strengths include the following (Burton et al., 2008:123):

- An unobtrusive method
- The data is permanent and can be used for reanalysis
- It assists in past events.
- It helps with triangulation.

When taking the strengths of document analysis into consideration, it assisted my research in the following ways:

- The documents were handed to me in a file after consultation with the principal. One school e-mailed the documents. Thus I had no problem gaining access to do the documentation.
- As I worked on the research I constantly went back to the documents to re-analyse them.
- Some of the policies have not been revised by the new governing body. Thus I could get an idea of what the previous members had in mind in comparison to the aspirations of the new governing body members.
- The policies were primarily used for triangulation.
4.3.3 Data analysis

According to Cohen et al. (2007: 461) qualitative data analysis is the participant’s definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities. As each school is regarded as an individual and no comparisons were made, the data set gathered at each school was analysed individually. The only similarities were the governing body functions as stipulated in the Schools Act. Cohen et al. (2007:467) are of the opinion that data can be organised according to issues that are raised. All the issues raised by the individuals of each school were grouped according to the similarities of the issues.

Cohen et al. (2007:184-185) set out certain steps by which data can be analysed:

- Indicating issues that are similar and different
- Putting together items that are similar
- Ensuring that there are links between the groupings of the similarities
- Analysing the groups/issues
- Summarising the key issues

When I analysed the data I made use of different approaches to ensure that I analysed the data correctly and accurately. According to Kvale (1996:203) ad hoc meaning generation makes use of different approaches and techniques for the generation of meaning. I did not use only one specific data analysis method but made use of a combination of methods. These methods included the following:

- **Cross-sectional and categorical indexing**
  Mason (2002:150-171) mentions three different approaches to sorting and organising qualitative data. One of the approaches is called cross-sectional and categorical indexing. According to Mason (2002:150-171) this approach involves the development of a universal system of indexing, categorising or coding. It is similar to using headings and sub-headings. In an attempt to analyse the data I coded the different governing body functions. Before analysing the data I coded every interview according to the coding system used for the governing body functions. By coding the aspirations according to the functions of the governing body, I could get a clear picture of which
aspiration, as mentioned by the participant, related to which function as mentioned in Schools Act. The coding system directly helped with the analysis of the content of the entire document.

- **Content analysis**
  According to Basit (2010:194) content analysis is an explanation of written communication, which involves coding or categorising sentences or phrases. Basit (2010:194) is also of the opinion that content analysis can be used for the analysis of interviews. Content analysis can be used to *ascertain the trends and patterns of words used, their frequency, their relationship and the structure and discourses of communication* (Grbich, 2007:112). Certain words and phrases relate to a certain governing body function; therefore when using content analysis and the coding of the data, I could easily relate what the participant aspired to in relation to the specific governing body function. According to Basit (2010:195) text is analysed by a researcher into different components to order and understand the meaning and to produce the components to tell a story.

- **Atomistic Approach**
  Another approach for the analysis and presentation of data is the Atomistic Approach (Burton et al., 2008:144). This approach entails that the data from each source is presented separately. In the analysis and presentation of the data I kept the different participants’ answers separate. This study was not intended for comparison and therefore the schools and participants were not compared. Each governing body has its own ideas and aspirations, therefore the Atomistic Approach allows for the participants to be treated as individuals with the same legal functions on the governing body.

4.4 **Trustworthiness and Credibility**

Although the terms *trustworthy* and *credibility* are used in qualitative research, most literature sources refer to *validity* and *reliability*, terms usually used in quantitative
research. Thus for the purpose of this section I refer to trustworthiness, credibility, reliability and validity to be in line with most literary sources.

According to Kvale (2002:302) validity refers to the truth and correctness of a statement. The “correctness” of this research has been verified by using triangulation. By analysing the various schools’ policies, one can determine whether or not the governing body members are really stating what their aspirations are. Thus the “correctness” or validity of the study is ensured.

There is a second definition of validity. According to Burton et al. (2008:168) validity can be ensured when the findings are directly related to the problems that have been identified. The questions asked during the interviews were linked to the research question. The correlation between the research question and the interview questions is the governing body functions and the governing body members’ aspirations. The research questions revolve around the aspirations that the governing body members have in terms of the governing body functions.

In this research I looked at internal and external validity. I could not ensure external validity as the research findings cannot be generalised. Each governing body members has his/her own personal ideas and views of what needs to be done by the governing body; therefore the findings will differ from school to school and from governing body member to governing body member. External validity specifically refers to the extent to which the findings can be generalised to the wider population (Basit, 2010:65). However, the policies that the governing body has drafted should define what the governing body wants to achieve and what its collective aspirations are. Thus the data can be generalised to the governing body as whole. Internal validity is the specific way in which the phenomena have been described and to what extent they can be upheld by the data (Basit, 2010:65). Hammersley (1992:71) is of the opinion that internal validity can be upheld by paying attention to the following:

- Plausibility and credibility of the research.
- Evidence required (In relation to the claim made).
- Clarity on the claims made (Definitions, descriptions and explanations).
As this research is based on the individual governing body member’s aspirations, the findings cannot be generalised. The data specifically illustrates what the individual on the governing body aspires to and how knowledgeable the governing body members are in terms of the law. The evidence required in this research was individual perceptions and an in-depth analysis of why the governing body members have certain aspirations and ideas.

4.4.1 Triangulation

According to Basit (2010:67) triangulation is a strategy used to establish concurrent validity in research by looking at the same issue from different perspectives. In this research I made use of interviews as well as document analysis to establish the aspirations that the governing body members have. The interviews that I conducted provided the primary data. Secondly I made use of document analysis by examining the schools’ different policies that have been drafted by the governing body members.

Bogdan and Biklen (2007:115) are of the opinion that triangulation merely means that the researcher has used multiple sources to get a fuller understanding. By analysing the policies I could get a clear understanding of what the school’s aims were and by conducting interviews I could establish whether or not the governing members were aware of the content of the policies and whether or not their aspirations were in line with the policies and the governing body functions as stipulated in the Schools Act.

4.5 Ethical consideration

The word ethics has been defined by different authors as follows:

- Ethics is concerned with the attempt to formulate codes and principles of moral behaviour (May, 2001:59)
- ... search for rules of conduct that enable us to operate defensibly in the political context in which we have to conduct educational research (Simons, 1995:436).
These definitions make us attentive of the way in which we conduct research. There are certain issues that you have to take into consideration when doing research. These issues might change from research to research. In the previous chapter I made use of case law that states a person must be aware of the legal obligations in the field that he or she works in (State v. De Blom). Thus governing body members should be aware of their functions. The State v. De Blom case states that there might be certain consequences if you are not aware of the law. Thus the ethical issues that I had to bear in mind with this research were the effects of not knowing the law.

Basit (2010:56) is of the opinion that the researcher should consider ethics throughout the study in the following areas:

- Design stage
- Gaining access to samples
- Collecting and analysing data
- Writing up the report
- Disseminating the research findings

All the above areas were considered in this research. Each of these stages is discussed in different sections of this chapter.

4.5.1 Informed consent/Confidentiality

Basit (2010:60) points out that confirmed consent is when participants agree to take part in the research after they have been informed of the facts pertaining to the research. The participants must be fully aware and informed of all aspects of the research, what is expected of them and what the data will be used for. Before I contacted any of the participants the principal had to obtain permission from the entire governing body. The principal discussed the research with the governing body members after which I was given permission to conduct the research in the various schools. All participants were briefly made aware of the intentions of the research when I contacted them to arrange the interviews. Before each interview commenced, each participant was made fully aware of the intentions of the research. I clearly explained to the participants what the research entailed and what I intended to do with
the data that I intended to gather. The participants were also made aware of the fact that all data would be treated confidentially and that the privacy of both schools and participants would be protected at all times. Each participant signed a document (Annexure D) that clearly states that he or she was informed that he or she would participate voluntarily, could withdraw at any given time and all identities would be kept anonymous.

DeMarrais and Lapan (2004:25) state that the researcher does not always know what makes people vulnerable and how they or the research itself can bring harm to others. Doing research on the governing body members and their aspirations can have a significant impact on the school and the individual. The school is vulnerable, because there are certain legal obligations that the school must adhere to; so are the governing body members. They have to perform certain functions and protect certain human rights. The research did not attempt to find fault at schools, but rather to get a clear understanding of what the governing body members’ aspirations are in terms of the functions set out in the Schools Act.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter provides a full analysis of the methodology, research paradigm and the research design. Different literary works were consulted and I gave an indication of how I conducted the research. The chapter also outlines the methods used for data collection and how the participants were protected.

Not only the design of the research is important, but also the actual gathering of data. The data, analysis and presentation must be linked to the research question. The data must be accurate, valid and reliable. There are various tools that can be used to ensure the validity and reliability of the entire research.

The research plays an important role because of the various ethical issues that must be taken into consideration. The researcher must ensure that the participants are protected at all times and that participants share their experiences with the researcher. The researcher must also ensure that the data collected is accurate and in line with the research question.
Chapter 5
Presentation of the Research Findings

5.1 Introduction

This study focused on two separate case studies. The purpose of the case studies was to determine the aspirations and the legal obligations of the governing bodies. The case studies were conducted in such a way that answers were gained to the research question and the sub-questions. The two schools are special needs schools, as this research focuses on special needs schools. The types of disability that the special needs schools accommodate do not influence the research; the research focuses on special needs school in general.

It is important to note that each school is regarded as an entity in its own right and was not compared with other schools in any way. Each school accommodates different disabilities and has different representatives on the governing body. To ensure that the confidentiality of the schools and of the participants is protected, each school is referred to as School A and School B. Reference to participants is made under the same pseudonym. Schools as well as participants are named in the order in which they were visited and interviewed. The principal of each school is referred to as the principal of school A or B.

5.2 Biographical information

Table 5.2.1 Biographical information of School A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>School A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of school</td>
<td>Primary and secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of enrolled learners</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary disability</td>
<td>Epilepsy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of primary disability</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other disabilities</td>
<td>Specific learning disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of other disabilities</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal’s experience in years</td>
<td>14 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governing body members.</td>
<td>12 members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.2.2 Biographical information of School B.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>School B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of school</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of enrolled learners</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary disability</td>
<td>Hearing impaired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of primary disability</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other disabilities</td>
<td>Partially sighted, physically disabled, behavioural disorders, learning disabilities (ADHD), mild to moderate intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities and epilepsy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of other disabilities</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal’s experience in years</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governing body members</td>
<td>16 members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The governing body members of a special needs school have extra representatives on their governing body. As stated earlier, these extra members provide an expert opinion on certain matters pertaining to the school. The Schools Act, Sec. 24 (2) gives the MEC the right to determine the number of governing body members that should serve on each committee. The MEC determines that the special needs schools can have the following number of governing body members in each category:

- 1 Representative from the Institute
- 1 Representative from the Dutch Reformed Church
- 1 Representative from the Reformed Church
- 1 Representative from the Dutch Reformed Church of Africa (Metcalf, 1997)

There is specific reference to the sponsoring body of the school. One representative of each of the sponsoring bodies may serve on the governing body of a special needs school. Both the schools used in this research are members of the Transoranje Institute. The Transoranje Institute’s main aim is to help special needs schools to recover their operating costs. The Institute recognises the fact that special education is expensive education and therefore intends to help these schools financially. At the time of the current research the Institute is a sponsoring body for five different special

80
needs schools that cater for different disabilities and races (Transoranje Instituut vir Buitengewone Onderwys, 2011).

In 1998 the Transoranje Institute applied for four extra governing body members on each of the schools’ governing bodies. The MEC approved these requests; therefore each of the schools sponsored by the Transoranje Institute may have four additional members on their governing body. The members are the following:

- the representative from the Transoranje Institute
- the representative from the Dutch Reformed Church.
- the representative from the Reformed Church
- the representative from the Dutch Reformed Church of Africa.

5.3 Data analysis

5.3.1 Methodology

For the purpose of this research I made use of two different case studies. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with three governing body members of each school. The principal of each school formed part of the members that were interviewed because the principal plays an integral part in both the governing body and the school management team. The interviews were conducted individually. One of the members represented the additional member that the Transoranje Institute assigned to the school. This specific participant does not have a child enrolled at the school; he has been appointed by the Transoranje Institute to represent the Institute on the governing body.

A copy of the interview questions has been attached as Annexure A. The interview questions started with background information on the participant, his or her experience and qualifications. Secondly the interview questions determined the aspirations of the participant. Participants were asked to elaborate on their aspirations for each of the functions as set out in the Schools Act.

To ensure validity of the study I made use of triangulation. Cohen et al. (2005:112) are of the opinion that triangulation is the use of two or more methods of data
collection in the study. In this regard semi-structured interviews as well as document analysis were used. The document analysis consisted of the policy documents that the school has, e.g. admission policy, language policy, code of conduct, etc. These documents were drafted by the governing body members, thus there should be correlation between what the documents state and the aspirations that each governing body member has. Each school provided me with a copy (hard copy or electronic one) of its policy documents, which consisted of the language policy, admission policy, religion policy, etc. The policy documents provided an idea of what the school was aiming at and I could use the policy documents for triangulation and to determine whether or not the participants’ aspirations correlated with the policy document.

Some of the documents were not available when the study was conducted, as these documents were being revised; therefore I never saw these documents. Clear reference is made to the policy documents that were not available at each school. Each document was studied carefully and summarised to get a clear understanding of what the document contains.

The summary according to Cohen et al. (2005:149) identifies the following:

- Key factors
- Key issues
- Key concepts
- Key areas of investigation

The summary assists with identifying the issues addressed by the governing body and what its collective aspirations for the school are.

5.3.2 Results of the policy analysis

School A

School A presented a file that contains the various policy documents of the school. At first glance the file looked well organised and neat. Each head of department has his or her file containing the various policy documents; governing body members have
easy access to the policies. All policies and documents are available in Afrikaans only.

School B
School B presented me with an electronic copy of some of the school’s policy documents, four months after initially asking for the documents. The other policy documents were copied and handed to me two weeks after the first copies were emailed to me. The policies are available only in Afrikaans, except for the religious policy that is available in both English and Afrikaans.

I analysed the various policy documents of each school; as stated earlier, the policy documents provided an indication of what the school was aiming at and I used the policy document to see whether or not the participants’ aspirations correlated with the policy documents that were drafted by the governing body members. I discuss each document for the respective school before moving onto the next policy document.

5.3.2.1 Vision and mission statement

School A
The vision of the school has been set out clearly. The school’s vision is to be a leading school for learners who suffer from epilepsy and/or learning disabilities. The vision is clear and straightforward and supports the type of school.

The mission of the school is also comprehensive and promotes the best interest of the child. The mission of the school is to:

- create a safe environment;
- accept learners unconditionally;
- develop learners’ full potential;
- provide effective education and take learners’ needs into consideration;
- equip learners spiritually and emotionally to fulfil their roles in society;
teach learners skills, knowledge and values to be able to cope in society;

- teach learners to respect themselves and others.

School B

School B’s mission and vision statements have been set out in what they call a “ontwikkelingsplan” (A developmental plan) This plan spans a period of three years and gives clear indications of what the school wants to achieve in the three years set out in this plan. The time frame is 2008 to 2011. The developmental plan was drafted by analysing the goals set by the management of the school.

The plan includes the management style abbreviated by SWOT:

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Opportunities
- Threats

This style is used to draft the vision statement of the school. It assists in ensuring that there is visible development in the school. Thus the school wants to develop in such a way that one can observe the development as it evolves.

The document refers to certain aspect that will be managed to ensure that the school develops. It also gives a clear indication of these aspects and how they should be managed to ensure that the school develops satisfactorily. The relevant aspects are the following:

- Mission of the school
- Internal profile of the school
- External environment of the school
- Long-term goals
- Short-term goals
- Vision of the school (2008-2011)
The school’s mission statement is concise and states that the mission of the school is based on religious principles, the current law system and regulations. The school’s most important asset is the potential of people. Except for this mission statement the document refers to other core aspects that form part of the mission statement. These are the following:

- Discipline
- Norms and standards
- Specialised support and knowledge
- Loyalty
- Human relationships
- Creativity
- Service delivery
- Quality education and coaching
- A-political stance
- Code of conduct
- Mutual respect

In addition to the above mentioned terms there are specific references to the learner, the staff member and the parents. The document specifically makes references to these role players and what the mission is in terms of them. The mission revolving around learners is based on quality education, safety and respect. The mission revolving around the staff members is based on professionalism and job satisfaction. The mission revolving around the parents is based on affordability and peace of mind.

Furthermore the document makes reference to the strengths of the school. There are 21 strengths that are mentioned in the document. The strengths relate to staff members, their professional relationship, abilities and interests and what the school offers the learners in terms of opportunities relating to sport, academics and culture. The document also makes reference to weaknesses. There are 16 weaknesses that have been mentioned in the document. The weaknesses include the lack of parental involvement, payment of school fees, fundraising and the participation of learners, discipline and the maintenance of facilities, academic performance, school uniforms and advertising the school.
The next section refers to the external environment. The external environment presents certain opportunities that have been set out clearly in the document. The opportunities include learners with special education needs, changes in the education system, the economy, technology and cooperation with other bodies. There are also various threats that have been identified. The threats include unmotivated people, mismanagement of time and certain economic factors, such as poverty, single parents, value systems and norms. It is interesting that under threats there is a specific reference to staff members. The threats mentioned under staff members relate to the possibility that certain post will be taken away by the Department of Education. Thus a threat to the school can be summarised as the possibility of posts not being subsidised by the Department. It seems that educators become negative due to the uncertainty of their jobs.

The document further refers to the short-term and medium- to long-term goals. The long-term goals include upgrading of certain facilities, the increase of learners to 400 and learner discipline. The short term goals also include learner discipline as well as staff member discipline. Under the section for staff member discipline there are a few specific references to problems that are commonly experienced. Staff members’ discipline must improve in terms of coming late, absenteeism, smoking in classes and leaving early. Furthermore the short term goals include the academic achievements of learners, appearance and learner behaviour. Another section specifically for staff members follows. This section makes reference to the qualifications, work allocation and job satisfaction experienced by staff members.

The short-term goals continue with the maintenance and repair of other assets like rugby fields, paving certain areas and improving safety in certain contexts. Fundraising activities must be improved and annual goals must be met. The school also considers it necessary to improve communication systems and marketing.

The very last section of this document gives a clear indication of what the school’s vision statement is. The vision is to provide quality education in line with the era that we live in to learners with special education needs. The education is provided from a religious perspective and assists the learners in achieving the best possible outcomes.
The mission and vision statements are both concise and strengthen the type of school while taking the best interest of the child into consideration.

5.3.2.2 Constitution

School A

School A has a constitution specifically drafted for the school in 1998. Specific reference is made to the 1996 Schools Act and the provision for the democratic election of a governing body. The constitution acknowledges the Schools Act (1996) and the fact that the governing body stands in a position of trust towards the school. It also acknowledges that the governing body will govern and take the rights of learners, parents and educators as well as other legal provisions into consideration.

This constitution is binding to all governing body members and any other person or institution that stands in a relationship with the school. It is also stated that all other activities, status, compositions, duties and functions of the governing body that have not been taken up in this constitution must be in line with the appropriate legal provisions.

The objectives of the governing body are to:

- control and manage the school legally and cost-effectively within its ability and in accordance with any applicable legal provisions and conditions;
- uphold the best interest of the school. Any threat to the process of education must be eliminated;
- provide education of the highest quality;
- meet all duties towards learners, parents, educators and colleagues;
- Protect the rights of all learners, parents, educators and colleagues.

The next section of School A’s constitution sets out the functions, powers and duties of the governing body. Governing body members should conduct all functions as specified in the Schools Act. These functions should be performed as effectively as possible and to the highest degree of good faith. The conduct of the governing body members should always be legal and they should never allow the Head of Department
to take away functions that have not been completed in good faith. All governing body members should always be abreast of legal provisions.

The constitution states that the school is accountable for the actions of the governing body members in the performance of their duties as governing body members. A section on the officials of the governing body makes specific reference to the following

- Chairman
- Vice-chairman
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Deputy secretary

These officials should be elected at the first governing body meeting. The officials should fulfil their duties according to legal provisions.

There should be specifically elected committees to perform functions specified in the Schools Act (1996). The constitution makes specific reference to the committees that have to be elected. Each committee’s members must be elected annually and the number of committee members is to be decided by the governing body. When a committee is elected the nature of the functions of the committee and the expertise or experience of the members must be taken into consideration. These factors will help to determine which members should serve on which committee. These committees include the following:

- Executive Committee. The Executive Committee consists of the chairman, vice chairman, secretary, treasurer and the principal. Any other members must be elected by the governing body from time to time. Meetings are held as scheduled by the members, but at least one meeting must be held monthly. The Executive Committee has the power to conduct/fulfil/complete any assignment of the governing body and functions or power delegated to the committee by the governing body.
• Financial Committee. This committee consists of the chairman or vice-chairman, treasurer and the principal. Any other members with the necessary expertise may be elected by the governing to serve on the committee.
• Any other committee as needed.

The last sections in the constitution state that the governing body should lay down rules or determine policies in respect of the following:
• Procedures for the appointment of any staff members at school (within the governing body’s jurisdiction)
• Guidelines for the financial records
• Procedures for budgeting
• Fundraising
• Principles for the admission of any person to do business or to sell products on school premises
• The way in which parents, learners, educators and other staff members are encouraged to render voluntary services at school
• Principles and procedures for developing the school’s mission statement
• Principles and procedures for developing a code of conduct
• Principles and procedures for developing school rules
• Principles and procedures for the development of codes for rights in all sectors of the school
• Principles and procedures for solving disputes
• Principles and procedures for formulating the admission policy, language policy and religious policy
• A basic code of conduct for the governing body
• Principles for determining school hours
• Principles and rules for extra-curricular activities
• The way in which staff members and the principal can be supported in their professional function
**School B**

The Constitution for School B is dated 2006; thus this document was last revised in 2006. The document makes specific reference to the Schools Act, (1996) and states that the governing body is elected according to rules and regulations set out in the Schools Act. Furthermore the document acknowledges that the governing body stands in a position of trust towards the school and that the governing body will take the rights of learners, parents, educators and any other role-player into consideration. The school’s constitution was drafted in the wake of the legal requirements that a governing body should operate in accordance with a constitution.

The document gives a short description of the name of the governing body and the functioning of this organ. It clearly states that all governing body members are bound by the constitution and any legal requirements that are associated with certain functions performed by the governing body or its members. Subsequently the document provides the key terms used in the document as well as the meaning of the words used in this document.

The next section sets out the purpose and target of the governing body of this specific school. The purpose and target of the governing body include duties of management and governance that have been delegated to them. These duties should be performed within the boundaries of the law. The best interest of the school should be protected and development of the school should be a primary goal. The educator’s interests as well as the rights of all learners, parents, educators and employees of the school should be protected at all times. The last point under this section states that all funds and resources should be managed and applied according to specific intended measures.

The next section stipulates the duties of the governing body. The governing body is required to perform all duties as stipulated in the constitution. The governing body members should protect the best interest of parents, learners, educators and other employees of the school. All governing body members should be knowledgeable about the law and are free to join certain associations that strive to uphold the fundamental rights in the education system.
The next section deals with the liability of the governing body members. It makes specific reference to contracts, the conducting of legal functions and the liability of the governing body members in respects of the different areas that they might be involved in. If a governing body member wants to enter into a contract or perform certain legal functions he/she must first get written permission from the governing body.

The document sets out a list of officials that should serve on the governing body. These officials include the following:

- Chairman
- Vice-chairman
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Deputy secretary
- Any other official that the governing body sees fit or needs.

These officials are required to perform all functions and adhere to legal requirements. This section also sets out who should chair the meetings if the chairman is absent and allows the governing body to elect a new chairman when necessary.

The governing body should have meetings as often as required, but at least once every term. Extra meetings that the chairman schedules should be at reasonable times, venues and dates. The secretary should inform the other members of the governing body of the meeting at least ten working days before the meeting. A quorum is half of the governing body members that can vote plus one member. Each member has one vote; in certain situations the chairman can cast the determining vote. The meetings must be held according to the agenda, except if two thirds of the members present decide otherwise.

The next section sets out the different committees that the governing body can establish. The committees include the following:

- Executive committee. It consists of the chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, treasurer, principal and other members as appointed by the governing body.
The chairman, vice-chairman and secretary act in the same capacity. Dates of meetings are determined by the governing body. Additional meetings can be scheduled when deemed necessary. This committee performs functions that are assigned by the governing body or delegated to it. It reports on all its activities agreed to in the meetings.

- **Financial committee**
  
The Financial Committee consists of the chairman, vice-chairman, treasurer, principal and other members as appointed by the governing body. The additional members on this committee have expertise in certain areas concerning finances. Only a member of the Executive Committee can act as chairman of the financial committee. The goal of this committee is to give advice on financial matters, to design procedures for the financial administration of the school, to appoint an accountant and auditor and to develop strategies to enhance the school’s income.

Three to four members are assigned to sign cheques, tender procedures, deal with contracts and to handle cash.

- **Any other committee deemed necessary.**

- **An ad-hoc committee may be established when the governing body deems it necessary.**

The number of members on each committee and the specific tasks that they need to perform are determined by the governing body. Each committee has certain legal requirements that it needs to adhere to.

There is also a specific section on the amendment of the constitution. The procedures on how the meetings should be scheduled, how many members must agree to the amendment and the officials that need to approve the amendments have been set out in detail. Another section sets out procedures for resolving disputes. Certain procedures need to be followed when a dispute is to be resolved.

The last section of this document stipulates that the governing body can determine policy and rules. Specific reference is made to procedures within the governing body’s jurisdiction, principles for financial records, budgeting, fundraising,
maintenance of assets, cost-effective management, development of the mission statement, compilation of school rules, admission policy, times of a normal school day, extra-mural curriculum, duties of committees and the minutes of meetings. These policies and rules all relate to the functions mentioned in the Schools Act.

5.3.2.3 Financial policy

School A

According to the date that appears on the financial policy, the policy was revised in 2002. The policy starts with an explanation of all the terms used in the policy and the purpose of the policy is neatly set out.

The first section of the policy stipulates the financial year’s end and refers to a number of laws and regulations regarding the school. It clearly stipulates that all regulations should be in line with legal provisions.

The second section deals with the budgeting process. The budget must be drafted annually and a specific time period, two weeks before the end of the third term, is specified. There are certain guidelines on how to draft the budget and which official school form is to be used by staff members. The approval process of the budget as well as other guidelines on how the budget should be managed are also set out and explained in detail.

The third section deals with the actual day-to-day management of the budget, the management of cash flow and signing cheques. The policy makes specific reference to the management of all cash and cash payments.

The last section deals with fraud. A specific procedure must be followed when someone has committed fraud. There are certain actions that have to be taken when fraud is reported; some of the processes include the following:

- An audit by the school’s auditor
- An investigation
- Report to the GDO
• Internal actions

School B
The entire financial policy consists of four pages. There is no date that indicates when last this policy was revised. This document starts with a list of accounting books. There is no explanation that indicates whether these books should be used in a certain manner or why the various books are mentioned.

The second point in this document sets out various accounting records that must be kept. These include the following

- Numbered computerised receipts of all money received. The details must be visible on the receipt.
- Handwritten receipts must be numbered and duplicated. These receipts may only be used when the principal gives permission.
- The receipts for donations must also be in duplicate.
- Deposit slips for all bank deposits.
- Monthly invoices for all collected school fees.
- Reconciliation of outstanding debtors and creditors.
- Supporting material for all payments.
- Numbered cheques and proof of electronic payments.
- Bank statements, reconciled
- Records of salaries.

The next point plainly states monthly reports. Under this heading there is a single sentence that states that all the monthly financial reports must be made available to the financial committee and to the governing body.

The next section provides a relatively comprehensive overview of how expenditure should be managed. There are certain procedures when the expenditure exceeds the amount of R5 000 and other procedures when the expenditure has not been budgeted for. The principal must sign cheques or give permission for all electronic payments. The management of petty cash is also set out in great detail.
Subsequently there is a section on the management of received school fees. The receiver should check the money and the money should be paid in on the same day. A computerised receipt must be issued. The money should be kept in a safe place at school. Deposits and other income form the next section. This section is concise and states that thorough control should be maintained in the event of any deposit.

The last sections respectively deal with the management of income and payments of trust funds, school fees, bad debt and assets. There are guidelines on how each of these aspects should be managed. The sections are sorted and to the point, pointing out only what is necessary.

The financial policy is vague and not user-friendly. To get a full understanding of what is meant and what each heading stands for takes careful consideration and careful thought. I find it difficult to read and fully understand this financial policy.

5.3.2.4 Religious policy

School A
The school’s religious policy stipulates that the school has a Christian culture and that the Bible is seen as the basis of religion. Christian values form the basis of the school’s curriculum. The school does not promote discrimination against other religions. The principal holds the right to invite any person to observe assembly.

Provision has been made for learners of different religions. According to the policy parents can ask permission for their children not to attend assembly on the basis that they are of a different religion. All learners who do not attend assembly are supervised elsewhere by educators who volunteer. If there are no educators who volunteer the principal will arrange for suitable supervision.

School B
This specific policy is available in both English and Afrikaans. The policy starts off with a clear statement of the goal of the policy. It is very concise and states that religion instruction is conducted on a voluntary basis. The policy further recognises that there are certain provisions in both the Constitution and the Schools Act on
religious practice. The specific religious practice at this school is conducted on a Christian basis but it remains free and voluntary.

The policy briefly states certain stipulations concerning the specific religious policy. These stipulations set out how the policy should be implemented and that the policy is coherent with the guidelines of the Transoranje Institute, which is the school’s sponsoring body.

Furthermore the document sets out a general code of conduct that specifically refers to non-discrimination on grounds of religion. The document also stipulates that if any denomination wants to make contact with the learners it should provide its own staff members. The document closes with a stipulation that this policy may only be altered with a two third majority vote of the governing body. The specific document that I analysed was signed and drafted in 2002.

5.3.2.5 Admission policy

School A

Like all other policy documents of School A, this document starts with an explanation of all terms used in the document. This policy is also based on the legal provisions stipulated in the Schools Act (1996) and human rights stipulated in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996). The policy refers directly to discrimination, stating that the admission policy was drafted in such a way that it does not discriminate against any learner.

The policy then stipulates which learners can apply for admission: learners who suffer from epilepsy, learners with learning difficulties and learners that suffer from neurological attacks. There is a certain procedure that needs to be followed when applying for admission. Parents or legal guardians should make an appointment with the school for the assessment of the learner. The parents or legal guardians should ensure that the school receives all medical reports before the day of assessment. If the application form is not filled in correctly or if any information is not accurate the application will be rejected.
Furthermore the policy clearly states that the principal has the right to admit a learner to the school if he is convinced that the learner meets all requirements and that the facilities are adequate. The policy also specifies that the principal must be convinced that the school can provide in the learner’s educational needs. The governing body can also supply documents that will assist the principal in his decision to admit a learner.

The policy supplies a list of criteria that need to be taken into consideration in the admission of learners. The criteria include the following:

- Academic potential of the learner
- Benefits that the learner will draw from the school’s therapeutic services and education system.
- The learner’s ability to receive educational instruction in Afrikaans or English.
- The admission of one learner not to the detriment of another learner already in the school.
- All learners’ admission is based on a probation period in which the principal will assess the benefit that the learners derive from the school’s educational programme.

The policy ends with a list of special requirements for the admission of learners:

- The school must have space, facilities and other resources to accommodate the learner.
- The learner’s choice of subjects must be in line with the subjects presented by the school.
- There are certain specific age groups for certain grades.
- The learner’s parents undertake, in writing, that the learner will adhere to the code of conduct of the school and that they will take any necessary steps to ensure that the learner adheres to the code of conduct.
- Parents should sign a contract for school fees, residence, etc.

It should be noted that the school cannot refuse admission to the learner if the parents refuse to sign the school’s code of conduct (Sec. 5(3) (b)). However, this document states only that parents should undertake that their child will adhere to the code of
conduct. There is no evidence that the learner will be refused admission if the parents do not adhere to these requirements as set out in the admission policy.

School B
This document opens with a short description of the background to the policy. It is one of the few documents that seem complete and drafted using certain standards and regulations. It is obvious that much time and consideration went into this specific document. The background tells a story of power that has been delegated to governing bodies by the Schools Act. The power delegated to governing bodies places a major responsibility on the shoulders of the governing body members. The power referred to is the ability to determine the character and identity of the school by drafting certain policy documents. The document clearly states that the school has the final say in admitting learners and learners will be referred to an admission committee before being granted admission by the governing body.

General requirements for admission to the school are stipulated in this document. It is stated in bold letters that the parents or guardians of the learner should take note of the following criteria before the learner is considered for admission:

- The learner will only be enrolled if the governing body is of the opinion that it will be beneficial to the learner to be enrolled at the school.
- The learner will only be considered if the learner complies with the age restrictions as set out in the Schools Act.
- The learner’s language of instruction must correspond with the school’s language policy. The school is an Afrikaans medium school; therefore instruction and learning will be conducted in Afrikaans.
- Parents and learners should recognise the school’s Christian character, the code of conduct and the school’s values and norms.
- When applying, the applicant should present certain documents to the principal. These documents include a birth certificate, academic records, immunisation records and reports from doctors and therapists.
- The learner will not be enrolled if the maximum number of learners has been exceeded in that specific grade.
• Preference will be given to hearing-impaired children and other admissions are subject to accommodation and skilled staff availability.
• No learner that has been expelled from another school will be considered for admission to the school.

The third last section stipulates certain primary and secondary criteria for learners that apply for admission to the school. It opens with narrative background to the specific section. The narrative states that the admission policy does not discriminate against any learner on any grounds. The Department of Education assigns each new candidate an LSEN-number; this number is requested only after the formal evaluation has been completed. The decisions are made on a multi-disciplinary basis and meetings are scheduled with parents. The final decision lies with the parents that need to make an informed choice. A recommendation is made and handed over to the governing body. If the parents are not satisfied with the decision they can appeal.

The primary criteria for the screening and selection of a learner include the following:
• The learners will not succeed in a mainstream school.
• The problems that the learner experiences in a mainstream school must be related to hearing-impairment or a language problem. This specific criterion makes a quick reference to the fact that the school should accept all learners that struggle in mainstream schools.
• This school primarily caters for the hearing-impaired but will help other learners to the best of its ability and resources.
• There are certain criteria that relate to the age of the learner and the grade the learner is admitted to.
• The school will not enrol any learner that will be able to excel in a mainstream school, thus adhering to inclusive education.
• The previous school must provide evidence that the learner cannot excel in the specific school before the learner will be considered for admission to this school.
• Learners that excel in this school will be referred to a mainstream school.

The secondary criteria for the screening and selection of a learner include the following:
• A complete evaluation of the learner is done before the learner is considered for admission to this school.
• A learner that has experienced some form of hearing loss that has resulted in a language problem will also be considered for admission.
• Parents are made aware of the fact that this school does not use sign language but communicates orally. If the learner cannot cope with this he/she will be referred to a signing school.
• If there is any possibility that the learner might adapt in a mainstream school, the learner will be referred to a mainstream school.

The next section deals with learners that do not have a hearing impairment but are being considered for admission. When a learner has been labelled as an LSEN learner and another school does not have space, this school will consider admission. However, sufficient proof must be submitted that the preferred school is full and that the learner has not been expelled due to misbehaviour. The second criterion under this section states that if a learner lives in the area and the parents do not have sufficient funds to take the learner to a school for the learner’s specific disability the school will try to accommodate the learner as far as possible. The third and last criterion under this section states that there are other circumstances under which an LSEN learner will be considered for admission to the school.

The second last section sets out the specific procedures for applying for admission to this school. The procedures have been numbered and follow a certain sequence. The procedures are the following:
• A possible admission is done telephonically.
• A meeting is scheduled with the candidate on a Tuesday or a Thursday. The Heads of Department and vice-principal will be informed about the evaluation.
• The learners will then be evaluated.
• After the evaluation a meeting will be scheduled with the Heads of Department for the discussion of possible admission.
• After the above mentioned steps the process is handed to the principal and admission committee for further approval.
• If the admission is granted, the parents will be informed and documentation will be finalised. A list of the required documents is set out in the section as well.

• After the entire process the other administrative issues are sorted out.

The last section of the document gives a detailed analysis of where the learner is placed and under which conditions the learner will be moved to a different class or phase.

5.3.2.6 Language policy

School A
The policy starts with a list of explanations of all terms used in the policy. The policy was drafted using the Schools Act (1996) and an unofficial document, Law on School Education in Gauteng. This policy is set out in such a way that it is in line with other legal provisions. It was drafted in such a way that it does not promote discrimination.

The school is a double medium school, thus the medium of instruction is Afrikaans and English. The school is managed in Afrikaans and all correspondence with English learners and their parents is conducted in their home language.

The school has a third language, Sepedi, which is promoted. This is done so that the school can offer an indigenous language. In these classes learners are encouraged to communicate in Sepedi. The implementation of the third language is to ensure that learners understand and realise the use of multilingualism.

School B
Reference to the language policy is made in the admission policy. The admission policy clearly states that the school is an Afrikaans medium school. Except for the reference in the admission policy the document was not available for analysis in School B. None of the governing body members is informed about what the language policy states. Some state that the school is a single medium school and others that it is a double medium school. The incoherent remarks of the governing body members might be an indication why this specific document was not available.
5.3.2.7 Code of conduct for governing body members

School A
The code starts with an explanation of all the terms used in the code. Each member of the governing body is required to sign a copy of the Code of Conduct for governing body members. By signing the document the members agree to adhere to the document stipulations and if any of the provisions is not met, they agree to punishment or sanctioning as described in the code.

The second section states that governing body members agree to keep the best interest of the school at heart and to conduct their work/tasks accordingly. This section specifically refers to learners, staff, the school, parents and the governing body, thus any action that puts any of the aforementioned stakeholders in a bad light is punishable.

The code makes provision for the attendance of and preparation for meetings and all related tasks. It clearly states that all governing body members are required to attend the meetings and complete tasks during or when applicable, before meetings.

The next section deals with financial matters. Governing body members should be honest and ensure that money is applied only when budgeted for. The members are to keep all confidential matters confidential.

The code also refers to the governing body’s role concerning educators and their educational obligations. No governing body member may interfere with the duties of the educator.

The last section deals with misconduct, and procedures and punishment for misconduct. Governing body members would be guilty of misconduct if they do not adhere to the code of conduct or if they perform acts that are against the constitution. There is a specific procedure that needs to be followed when a governing body member might be guilty of misconduct.
Lastly the code sets out various forms of punishment for misconduct and the possibility of expulsion from the governing body.

5.3.2.8 Code of conduct for staff members

School A
The code provides clear guidelines for a dress code for both men and women. Once again the code gives an explanation of the various terms as used in the code. Each staff member must sign a copy of this document and agree to adhere to the rules and regulations as stipulated in this code.

The first section provides a list of general duties. The best interest of the school should be protected. As the school is built on Christian values, all educators should act accordingly. Learners’, parents’ and all other people’s religion should be respected. The educator’s actions should not put the school, learners, staff members, parents or any other committee in a bad light. Educators should attend all relevant meetings.

The next section deals with the responsibilities of educators. Educators should attend meetings where applicable. They should be prepared at all times and should refrain from actions that would be detrimental to the educational process.

The next section indicates how financial matters should be dealt with by educators. Specific reference is made to how educators should handle cash and what the specific responsibilities of the educators are. Educators should ensure that all confidential information remains confidential.

Conduct towards other staff members is specified, with specific reference to gossiping. Educators are also required to adhere to all the documents and rules and regulations of the school.

The next section deals with conduct towards learners. This section mainly revolves around the type of relationship that the educator may have with the learner. The section also touches on the relationship between parents and educators, among staff
members, staff members and their own profession and staff members and the community. The code clearly states how an educator should build relationships with the above-mentioned stakeholders.

The next section deals with disciplinary procedure. No specific procedures have been set out. It is stated in brackets that these procedures should still be determined. The code states that all educators should be aware of the fact that disciplinary procedures must be conducted in a professional manner. The code does not specify the procedures at all.

Lastly the code has an addendum that deals with the working hours of all staff members, the bell and register, leave and smoking. There are no disciplinary procedures for misconduct. The last page of this code supplies various headings, but no explanation of these headings is provided.

5.3.2.9 Code of conduct for learners

School A
The code of conduct for learners acknowledges the guidance of the Schools Act (1996) in drafting the code of conduct for learners and the involvement of parents, educators and learners. This code states the vision and mission of the school and the rights of all learners according to the Constitution (1996).

All the school rules are set out in an addendum to the code of conduct. The addendum clearly explains the dress code for boys and girls. The next section of the addendum deals with absenteeism of learners and states that learners must submit a medical certificate when absent for a test/examination. There are certain rules when learners arrive late and when they have appointments during the day. All injuries must be reported to the school nurse and she/he is to contact parents if necessary. The rest of the addendum deals with prohibited materials and objects.

The code refers to corrective actions or punishment procedures. The code states that all procedures are in accordance with the Schools Act and the Constitution and that certain principles will be taken into consideration, e.g. dignity, respect, individual
rights, etc. An addendum follows that sets out difference categories of offence. Each
offence, the action to be taken for such an offence and procedures to be followed are
mentioned. Although the addendum refers to a disciplinary hearing, no specific
procedures are outlined. The procedure for other offences that are regarded as less
serious is described in vague terms.

5.3.3 Unavailable policies

School A
The school has drafted the following policies, but at the time of the research these
policies were being revised and were not available for analysis.

- Medication
- School policy
- Excursions, camps and tours
- Attendance policy
- Transport of day-learners
- Extra curricular activities
- Residence

School B
After numerous visits and e-mails to the school, the governing body members and
school failed to present the following policies. I never saw any of the following
policies, although there has been reference to these policies by participants; the
references made by the various participants were not coherent:

- Code of conduct for governing body members
- Code of conduct for staff members
- Code of conduct for learners
- Language policy
5.4 Data collection

5.4.1 Interview responses

As stated earlier, the interviews with each individual were conducted privately. Except for one interview that was conducted in English, the other interviews were conducted in Afrikaans. The language depended on the participants and their preferences. Most of the participants asked in which language the interview would be conducted and were given the opportunity to select their preferred language. For the purpose of this study I quoted the participants in Afrikaans to ensure that the essence of the quote is not lost and a verbatim statement. To make the document accessible and understandable to all I have added the quote’s English translation.

5.4.1.1 Training provided to the governing body members by the Head of the Department.

The training that the Head of Department provides should assist the governing body members in understanding and knowing their roles. They should also be aware of the functions that they are required to perform. This will ensure that the governing body members act within their legal boundaries.

School A

Participant A1

Participant A1 was very dismissive when I asked him whether or not the Head of Department provided any training for newly elected governing body members. He admitted that he was aware of the training, but he was not interested at all. He openly said that the time and venue did not suit him:

... hulle skeduleer die goed op naweke of op tye wat n mens nie pas nie. (They schedule these things over weekends or on times that don’t suit us.)

This participant was not wholly opposed to the idea and mentioned that if the Head of Department adhered to certain criteria, then he might consider attending the training sessions. He mentioned the following criteria:

- “… dit in my omgewing kom doen…” (Training should be provided in my area.)
“… hulle moet eers asesseer watter tipe opleiding ek benodig.” (Assess which kind of training I need.)

The overall reaction towards training provided by the Head of Department was negative and dismissive. The participant felt that the Head of Department could not offer him anything.

**Participant A2**
This participant remarked that there was a seminar at the end of August, but that was the only occasion that resembled something like training provided by the Head of Department.

**School B**
**Participant BP**
The principal believes that there are several sessions available. Some of the training sessions that the department provides are the following

- Policy planning
- Finances
- Law
- Contracts
- Staffing

**Participant B1**
This participant was aware of the training provided by the Head of Department. When she was previously elected on the governing body she attended the training but felt that it was not informative enough:

... which, to me, was not as informative ....

Apparently the school’s principal provided the necessary training to the governing body members.

**Participant B2**
This participant did not attend any training, even when he was involved in a mainstream school.
5.4.1.2 Main functions of the governing body

School A
Participant A1
According to A1 the main functions of a governing body are:
- Beleid (Policy)
- Strategiese beplanning (Strategic planning)
- Finansiële bestuur (Financial management)
- Bestuur en beheer van ’n skool (Managing and governing the school)

Participant A2
According to A2 the main functions of a governing body are:
- Saam met die hoof die skool bestuur (Manage the school with the principal)
- Finansiële bestuur (Financial management)
- Dissipline ( Discipline)

School B
Participant BP
According to BP the main functions of a governing body are:
- Governance
- Policy
- Planning
- Collaboration with SMT
- To set up relationships and trust

Participant B1
According to B1 the main functions of a governing body are:
- Governance of the school
- Financial matters
- Maintenance
- Purchasing equipment and the like
- Professional management
- Having a say when it comes to the appointment of staff members
- Curriculum and co-curricular matters

**Participant B2**
According to B2 the main functions of a governing body are:

- *Sterk die hand van die bestuurspan* (Strengthen the hands of the management team);
- *... om die bestuurspan emosioneel en professioneel sterk te hou* (Support the management team emotionally and professionally);
- *Finanansies van die skool bestuur.*” (Finance of the school — management)
- *SBL moet die korps se spontane vennoot wees* (SGB must be a spontaneous partner to the corps)

**5.4.1.3 Aspirations for the recommendation of the appointment of educators**

**School A**
**Participant AP**
According to the principal of School A there are various groups of staff members that fall into the category of educators. The various therapists that the school uses for the assessment of learners are considered educators and not non-educator staff: *Terapeute word gereken as lede van die onderwyskorps* (Therapists are considered to be part of educators). The various educator staff members that the school makes use of include occupational therapists, speech therapists, remedial educators and nurses. The school used to have a neurologist, but due to changing circumstances the school does not make use of the neurological services anymore. The therapists are used to guide the schools in such a way that it can provide quality education.

The principal says that the governing body includes all the characteristics that it wants in a person when they advertise for a post at school: *Wanneer ons poste adverteer dan stel ons ‘n dit baie duidelijk wat ons verwag van die persoon* (When we advertise a post, we advertise in such a way that it clearly states what we expect of the person).
The principal looks at the following characteristics when recommending an educator (specifically for teaching):

- *Ons soek hier iemand wat in ons tipe onderwys gaan aanpas* (We are looking for someone that will adapt to this type of education). The principal wants to find a person that will fit in and adapt to the circumstances surrounding special needs education.

- The principal mentioned that sometimes the school would prefer a person of a certain gender, but they are not allowed to add gender to the equation: “…*jy kan nie in ’n advertensie sê jy soek ’n man of ’n vrou nie.* (You are not allowed to specify that you are looking for a woman.). The principal added that his experience guides him and he is able to see whether or not the educator will be able to adapt and fit in.

- …*meeste van die tyd kom ons gou-gou agter of ’n ou in die onderwys gaan aanpas en of hy nie gaan aanpas nie* (Most of the time one quickly realises who would adapt to this type of education and who wouldn’t). The principal added that there are only a few people that have some degree of special needs qualification. The school provides in-service training to those educators that they appoint at the school.

- *Kwalifikasies gaan nie vir my die deurslaggewende rol speel nie. Die mens speel vir ons ’n baie belangrike rol* (Qualifications are not the decisive factor. To us the type of individual is crucial.). The principal feels that the person’s personality is more important than qualifications only when appointing a staff member.

**Participant A1**

A1 has listed a few criteria that he uses when recommending educator staff members. The entire list of criteria revolves around the *manspesifikasie en posbeskrywing* (man-specification and job description). He clearly emphasises that each job has a certain description and there are a few qualities that the applicant must have before he/she would be recommended.

He makes reference to gender, but states that he is not a sexist.

*…*as dit kom by kleintjies sal ek eerder neig om te sê vrouens moet die tipe van opleiding doen* (When it comes to youngsters, I would suggest that women do this
(This statement can loosely be described as discrimination on grounds of gender. The participant also states that the entire process should be procedurally correct: *prosedurieel korrek optree met jou hele kwessie van advertensie* (Act procedurally correctly with the entire matter of advertising). It becomes clear that the participant will adhere to the basic guidelines for advertising, but has certain preferences when it comes to recommending educator staff. Finally he concludes by saying: *wie is die beste ou vir die job?* (Who is the best candidate for the job?). For this participant the entire matter revolves around who will be able to do the job and perform the tasks effectively.

**Participant A2**

This participant was not sure how the process works and pointed out that there is a specific committee that performs this task. She also commented that she is not part of this specific committee. It appears as if this participant is not fully aware of most of the governing body functions and what each function entails.

**School B**

**Participant BP**

BP also listed the criteria that he looks at when recommending staff members. The criteria include the following:

- *Kennis en kundigheid* (Knowledge and competency)
- *Mensvaardighede* (People skills)
- *Aspirasies om verder te studeer* (Aspirations for further study)
- *bereid sou wees om by hierdie professionele verenigings in te skakel* (Prepared to join certain professional associations)
- *sterk fokus op die buitemuurse-aktiwiteite* (Strong focus on extra-mural activities)

This participant would settle for someone who does not necessarily have any special needs qualifications because the school is willing to provide in-service training.
Participant B1
This participant looked at basic criteria that include the needs of the post, all aspects that are important and a specific type of personality. She would not limit herself to recommending someone with special needs qualifications and stated ... you need to first get into a school before you are really prepared for LSEN teaching. She thus believes that with or without formal special needs training the educator will have to experience special needs before he or she really adapts.

Participant B2
This participant spoke with great enthusiasm about the recommendation of staff and could mention a few important aspects. In short these aspects are the following

- Professionaliteit (Professionalism)
- ... kwalifikasies (Qualifications)

Except for these two aspects the participant usually compiles a list of criteria before the interview.

5.4.1.4 Aspirations for financial management

School A
Participant AP
The participant made a sweeping statement that his aspirations for the financial management of the school are to ensure its survival; Om die skool op sy voete te hou (Make sure the school survives.). Throughout the interview AP said that the subsidies that the Department gives are not sufficient for their specific needs. There are about nine educators at the school that are employed by the governing body. Thus the salaries of these educators are budgeted for.

The school is dependent on fundraising activities due to socio-economic factors that influence the payment of school fees. The school is part of the Transoranje Institute and the Institute gives a small subsidy to the school as well.
Participant A1

A1 answered the question on financial management by directly referring to the budget. He firstly referred to the budget and secondly to asset management:

- \textit{... haalbare begroting op te stel.} (Draft a feasible budget)
- \textit{... vanuit n batebestuur oogpunt} (From an asset management viewpoint)

The next point that A1 made was how the finances should be managed. He referred to the member who should approve the signing of cheques, how much income the school generates and the expenses that the school has and lastly to keeping records. Thus this participant had a comprehensive idea of exactly how the finances should be managed and who should be responsible. He did not mention any specific person that needs to take responsibility but clearly stated that such a person should be appointed. He was adamant in his views towards the drafting of a budget and to what extent the budget must make sense to all parties involved:

\textit{Soos om daai begroting op te stel dat hy vir jou sin maak} (Drafting a budget so that it makes sense to you);
\textit{... waste geld kry jy in en hoe wend jy dit aan} (The source of the money you raise and how you spend it).

This participant is of the opinion that provision should be made for depreciation of the school buses. He states that the governing body has started a fund that they use to save money so that they can replace the school bus after it has fully depreciated:

\textit{Ons het byvoorbeeld begin met wat ons noem n voorsorgfonds, waar jy fisies gelde in jou begroting inwerk en so aan, waar jy vir depresiasie voorsien} (For example, we have started something that we call a prevention fund, into which you deposit money that will provide for depreciation. The biggest problem that the school suffers financially is the delay in subsidies provided by the Department of Education. The school receives a percentage of the subsidy and the rest remains outstanding: \textit{... hulle het net 50\% daarvan(subsidie) gegee} (They only gave us 50\% of the subsidy).
Participant A2

This participant reacted negatively to the question because she feels that she has no power over the school’s finances. She feels that her attempts to improve the school’s finances are useless and a waste of time. The principal refuses to support her in any decisions, even when she follows the right procedures. She struggled with collectable debt, which was at a critical stage:

... ek het kwotasies gekry van ander plekke om invorderings te doen. Ek is gebrie. (I went out and got quotations from other companies that collect debt. I was stopped.)

The biggest problem that this school experiences, according to A2, is bad debt. Parents do not pay the school or hostel fees. This causes a problem because the school struggles to meet its expenses and to keep the hostels up and running. She commented on the fact that the school bus is in terrible condition and there is no provision whatsoever for its replacement: …hierdie bussie wat vervang moet word ... daar is nog nooit iets daaraan gedoen nie (This bus that must be replaced, there has never been any attempt to do anything about this matter). She feels that to ensure that parents pay their school fees there should be certain steps that the school can implement: ... stappe teen ouers geïmplementeer (Steps implemented against parents). She is also of the opinion that parents should pay a deposit when enrolling their children at the school or when the child resides in the hostel:

... as jou kind in die koshuis inkom, moet hy ten minste die eerste drie maande se geld as n deposito betaal (If your child enters the hostel you must pay at least the first three months’ fees as a deposit.)

Furthermore this participant suggested that parents who do not pay should be enrolled in a debt counselling programme to ensure that they pay their school fees. When she brought this suggestion to the floor the principal immediately refused the concept: ... skuld-invordering by die skool kan implementeer vir die ouers dan gaan ons mos ons geld kry. (If we implement debt counselling at school for parents then we will be able to collect our money.).

She also remarks that there is never money available for any necessities, but the budget is not applied as stipulated in the documents. Daar is nie geld daarvoor (noodsaaklikhede) nie, maar as ek sien hoe gaan hulle tekere in die begroting. (There isn’t any money for these things (necessities), but when I see how they spend the budget ...).
She concluded by saying that as treasurer she is not satisfied with the way in which the budget is managed and there have been numerous rumours that the financial policy will be revised, but up to now these plans have only been rumours.

In general it seems as if this participant is not really familiar with the legal provisions in the Schools Act and that she has not studied or even seen the different policy documents. She answered most of her questions by starting with the phrase, *Ek dink* .... (I think ....).

**School B**  
**Participant BP**

Participant BP started his answer with a very self-assured statement: *Finansiële beleid is ongelooftlik belangrik* (Financial policy is unbelievably important). He made it clear that the budget should be applied correctly and according to specifications. The school should ensure that they have a proper budget and are aware of all income and expenditure. Throughout the interview he referred to policy and the importance to link the budget to policy. He mentioned that this school has a specific budgeting process that he follows meticulously. He briefly mentioned the various steps in the budgeting process:

- Official staff meeting
- Pro forma budget requisition forms handed to staff members
- Research on pricing and all possible expenditure
- Forms to be handed in to the head of finance
- Estimation of all possible income
- Current tendency of all payable income
- Projections of possible increase in tariff structure
- Allocating specific amounts to different accounts
- Several concept budgets

Participant BP made it clear that it is the principal’s responsibility to ensure that all staff members are aware of the budgeting process and know how the school’s finances work.
The participant made it clear that there are a few differences that make a special needs school’s budget much more complex than that of a mainstream school. The reasons for this state of affairs included the following aspects:

- Learning-specific aids – hearing aids, enlarged copies, etc.
- Specialised staff – therapists
- Smaller classes
- Logistical issues – therapists in hostels

These are some necessary extras that special needs schools need to include in its budget.

**Participant B1**

Participant B1 was vague regarding the entire issue of financial management and only mentioned that there should be policy. Within the policy document there should be guidance on the management of finances and procedures that need to be followed. She also mentioned that you have to start at a certain point and work your way up from there; if any discrepancies arise then you should handle them correctly: *If there are any discrepancies they should be managed correctly and then of course with the integrity of the person who is busy performing the management tasks.*

**Participant B2**

Participant B2 said, *dat ‘n geouditeerde staat van ons skool n wins moet toon. Dis mos common sense.* (That an audited statement of the school will indicate a profit. This is common sense). Secondly he said that the financial management should be transparent and that parents should approve the budget. The school should link the budget to financial policy and the policy should bear the school’s vision in mind. This participant felt very strongly about the transparency of the budget and of the financial policy. He made it very clear that nothing should be done unethically: *Finansiële bestuur by ‘n skool gaan vir my om deursigtheid en dit is meer as my aspirasie, dis n feit.* (Financial management at a school is about transparency; this is more than just an aspiration; it is a fact).
5.4.1.5 Aspirations for the admission policy

School A
Participant AP
The participant stated that learners will only be admitted if they can benefit from the school’s programmes: *Met die toelatingvoorwaarde dat die kind moet baat uit ons onderrig* (With the admission provision that the child will benefit from our education).

Participant A1
The participant was unhappy about the fact that there are learners with other problems that are admitted to the school. He was fully aware of the fact that the learners must undergo certain tests to ensure that they will benefit from this type of school, but he felt that due to inclusive education the number of learners has dropped. This has resulted in the school losing learners and being forced to take in learners with problems such as ADHD: *... begin om hierdie hiperaktiewe kinders in te neem. Jy moet hierdie kind hou tussen sy maatjies wat dieselfde probleme het* (Started to take in hyperactive children. You have to keep a child amongst its peers with the same problems).

The participant seems to lack in-depth knowledge of the admission policy and focused more on what kind of behavioural problems the child will show. However, he was overly concerned that the school should not discriminate on racial grounds.

Participant A2
Once again this participant showed a lack of knowledge and insight concerning the legal provisions of the governing body. She only mentioned that before learners are admitted they should pay a deposit. If the learner does not pay the deposit then the school should refuse admission. This is an interesting remark as she also remarked that the school is situated in a lower socio-economic area and most parents are fairly poor;

*Die ouers moet ‘n deposito betaal voordat die kind toegelaat word* (The parents should pay a deposit before the child is admitted).
School B
Participant BP
The participant started by stating that they are busy fighting against the Department’s tendency to place learners in special need schools due to their behavioural problems: *Jou toelatingsbeleid in ‘n skool soos hierdie gaan dus fokus op die primêre gestremdheid en of ons plek het* (The admission policy in a school like this focuses on the primary disability and whether or not we have space). The participant stated that the school will not discriminate unfairly against any learner, but it has to take the fact that this is a special needs school into consideration. Therefore this school caters for specific disabilities and will admit learners with that specific disability. The school can accommodate only certain disabilities due to its resources that are limited to these disabilities specified earlier: *Besondere skool soos Skool B behoort nie gestremdhede in te neem waarvoor ons nie primêr opgelei en nie toegerus is om te hanteer nie.* (A special school like School B should not take learners in with disabilities that we are not trained for or that we do not have resources for).

This school is in alliance with the Department of Education; they have formed a committee called the District Admission Team. This team of experts has regular meetings and discusses the admission of learners.

The school has a specific admission team that focuses on the admission of learners. This team consists of the heads of department — support services — and various therapists. After testing the learners to see if they will benefit from the school’s programme they are referred to the evaluation team; from there the decisions will be made whether or not the learners will benefit from the school’s programmes.

Participant B1
B1 is of the opinion that when you look at a learner for admission you should take hostel placement into consideration. If the child complies with all the admission requirements the school should ensure that the child can be accommodated in the hostel as well. She made it clear that the policy should never discriminate unfairly in any manner: *Hostel placement you need to look at as well. So you would look at what is in the best interest of the child, not discriminating against the child, but acting in the best interest of the child.*
Participant B2
This participant has a specific problem with the admission policy. He feels that there are ethical matters that he does not agree with. He believes that if a school includes a proficiency phase and does not adhere to its primary disability policy there is nothing left of the admission policy: Dit is hoekom ek ‘n probleem het met die toelatingbeleid; ons het ook ‘n vaardigheid fase (That’s why I have a problem with the admission policy; we also have a proficiency phase). He clearly states that the admission policy is there for a specific reason and if the school does not adhere to this policy it becomes useless and a waste of time and energy. The problem that he refers to in this situation is the fact that some of the learners that are included in the proficiency phase are not disabled but only misbehaved. Therefore you disadvantage the learners with disabilities that are in this school for a specific reason: In ‘n klas het jy agt vaardigheid outjies en vier gestremde skatjies; hiermee het ek n beginsel probleem. Ek dink nie ons dien die waarheid nie (In a class you have eight proficiency phase learners and four hearing-impaired darlings; I have a principle issue with this. I don’t think we are serving the truth). Furthermore he is of the opinion that the proficiency phase is a result of inclusive education that draws learners to mainstream schools and away from special needs schools.

He believes that a learner should be enrolled at this school if the parents are satisfied with the following and if the child fits into these categories:

- Gehoorgestremd (Hearing-impaired)
- Etos van die skool weerspieël (Ethos of the school is reflected)
- Taal en dissipline (Language and discipline)
- Die gesag van die Here ons God erken (Acknowledges the authority of God)

5.4.1.6 Aspirations for the language policy

School A
Participant AP
This participant was silent about the language policy and kept on referring to the admission policy of the school.
**Participant A1**

This participant suggested that the school take the needs of the community into consideration and draft the language policy accordingly: ‘n Mens moet kyk na die meerderheid se taalbehoeftes en as dit Afrikaans is, is ons Afrikaans en as dit Engels is dan is ons Engels (You have to look at the majority’s language needs and if it’s Afrikaans then we are Afrikaans, if it’s English then we’re English). He simply believes that the system should work like this because it will place less strain on the number of educators. He concludes by saying that it all depends on the demographics.

**Participant A2**

A2 is of the opinion that the school is already a double medium school and it should stay that way: *Ek dink nie ons kan dit regtig verander nie* (I don’t think we can really change this).

**School B**

**Participant BP**

Participant BP is satisfied that School B is an Afrikaans medium school. However, he does not have a problem with the idea of having a few English classes but the Department must allocate more posts to the school to ensure that they can accommodate English classes: *Ons het nie n probleem om sulke outjies te help nie, maar gee ons dan net poste* (We don’t have a problem with helping these learners, but just give us posts).

He adds that they try to accommodate the Afrikaans-speaking learners before they accommodate English-speaking and other learners. This is not done to discriminate but due to the limitation of resources in the form of educators: *Ons poog om altyd eers die Afrikaanssprekende kinders op te neem voor ons na die ander outjies kyk* (We always try to admit Afrikaans-speaking learners first before we look at the other learners).

**Participant B1**

This participant wants the language policy to be changed from Afrikaans medium to a double medium so that the school can accommodate English learners as well. She is
also of the opinion that there is a massive demand for a school for English-speaking hearing-impaired learners. She admits that there is a resource problem in the sense of limited educator staff: *If you don’t have enough educators available to be able to split your classes then it is very difficult to address both languages.* The school tries to accommodate English learners to a certain extent.

**Participant B2**
Participant B2 is of the opinion that a language policy should never be a deterrent that the school uses to exclude certain learners because of their language preferences: *So ‘n taalbeleid moet asseblief net nooit n afskrikmiddel wees nie* (A language policy should never be a deterrent). This participant is focused on the needs of the child and strives after protecting the best interest of the child at all times.

**5.4.1.7 Aspirations for the mission and vision statement**

**School A**

**Participant AP**
This participant said: *Ons wil een van die leidende skole in die land wees* (We want to be one of the leading schools in the country)

**Participant A1**
This participant stated that his aspirations for the school’s mission and vision statement are the following: *Om net voortreflike diens te gee aan die kinders en om ‘n veilige omgewing te skep* (Just to provide excellent service to the children and to create a safe environment). Lastly he added that the mission and vision statement of the school is about survival.

**Participant A2**
A2 was not sure what the school’s mission or vision statement said, but she felt that the school focuses on surviving: *Ek het dalk geen idee wat die visie en missie van die skool is nie, maar ek kry die idee op hierdie stadium dis meer oor oorlevering* (I might not have an idea what the vision and mission of the school are, but I get the idea that at this stage, it is about survival). In general this participant is not cognisant about what any of the documents say and she is cautious to express her own aspirations.
School B

Participant BP
This participant stated that the mission and the vision of the school can never be finalised. The mission and vision should change as technology and the needs of the child change: ‘n Missie en ‘n visie is nooit finaal geskryf nie. ‘n Missie en ‘n visie is n dinamiese ding (A mission and a vision are never final. A mission and a vision are dynamic).

Participant B1
This participant believes that the entire mission and vision statement should revolve around the school’s admission policy, language policy and growth: Looking at your admission policy, your language policy and to determine whether your vision and mission in that sense are going to grow. However, she is of the opinion that the growth should be positive and made manifest in every area of the school: …you want the school to grow, you want the facilities to grow, you want the maintenance to grow and it should be positive growth.

Participant B2
This participant believes that mission and vision statements are only there to make things (the school) look better. They serve as a marketing tool. He is also of the opinion that the vision and vision should be looked at once the new governing members have been elected, other than that only the top management team has to bear it in mind at all times: … die top bestuur ouens hou dit deurentyd in gedagte (The top management bear it in mind at all times.).

5.4.1.8 Aspirations for the religious policy

School A

Participant AP
The religious policy should be drafted in such a way that it does not force any learner to attend the religion observances. This school has a Christian character and operates accordingly. This participant states that the religion observances should be free and voluntary: Die vryheid van godsdiensbeoefening is daar (religion observance is free and voluntary).
Participant A1

Once again this participant is of the opinion that the religious policy should be drafted to accommodate the majority of learners attending the school, although the school should keep its identity: "Jy moet jou identiteit nog behou en ek voel weereens jy moet kyk na die gemiddelde behoeftes in jou omgewing" (You have to retain your identity and again I feel that you should take the average needs of the community into consideration).

This school is based on Christian values and he feels that if a learner does not want to attend assembly then he/she should remain outside: "Jy kan buite gaan staan as jy nie wil luister nie" (You can stand outside if you do not want to listen). This participant does not refer to any other arrangement made by the school to accommodate learners that do not want to attend the religion observances.

Participant A2

The participant does not have any sound knowledge of what the policy states or what the policy should look like: "As ek die storie reg hoor dan is hulle nog baie godsdienstig" (If I understand the discourse correctly then they are still extremely religious).

School B

Participant BP

This participant has a strong sense of religion and mentions that the school was founded by the 3 Sister Churches and focuses on Christianity. He is also of the opinion that there will be no discrimination against any religion even though the school has a Christian culture: "Gereformeerde Christelike karakter, omdat hy deur die drie-susterkerke daargestel is, ‘n skool wat op die Christelike geloof gefokus is" (Reformed Christian character, because it was founded by the three sister churches, a school that focuses on the Christian religion).

Participant B1

Participant B1 states that the school must accommodate all religions. The school has a Christian culture and this links with the dominant culture of the governing body as well: "Accommodate as far as possible all the needs of different religious groups; to
ensure that the governing body’s dominant culture and what they stand for are also protected.

Participant B2
B2 feels very strongly about the fact that a religious policy should not be a tool that a school uses to be exclusive: Dit moenie ‘n instrument word waarmee jy eksklusiewiteit handhaaf nie (It shouldn’t be a tool used to keep the school exclusive).

5.4.1.9 Aspirations for the code of conduct for learners

School A
Participant AP
Participant AP is of the opinion that a code of conduct for learners should be adapted as circumstances and needs change: Jy moet maar tussentydse aanpassings maak as gevolg van veranderende omstandighede en behoeftes wat ‘n mens raaksien en wat nie aangespreek word nie (You have to constantly adapt due to changing circumstances and needs that you take note of and that haven’t been addressed). He is also of the opinion that the code should focus on positive aspects and not necessarily on negative aspects. The learners should be rewarded for cooperation; the school makes use of a point-system: Ons beloon die kind vir goeie samewerking (We reward the child for cooperation). However, the entire system should be realistic in the sense that the learners have certain abilities and the system should take this fact into consideration. The system should not be developed to expect more from the child than what the child is capable of. The idea of the system is to ensure that the child knows that there are certain types of behaviour that are acceptable and certain types that are not: Jy moet realisties wees, maar die kind moet ook leer ten spyte van sy probleem is sekere gedrag aanvaarbaar en ander gedrag is onaanvaarbaar (You have to be realistic, but the child has to learn despite his or her problem that certain behaviour is acceptable and certain behaviour is not.)

Participant A1
This participant is very conservative in his perspective on the code of conduct. He is fully aware of the fact that corporal punishment is not allowed but he still thinks that it is the best solution for behavioural problems: Ek is nog van die ou skool; jy slaan ‘n
seun op sy agterwêreld as hy nie luister nie (I am old school; you give a boy a hiding). However, he believes that the rules should be clear, understandable and procedurally correct.

**Participant A2**
She is aware of the point-system that has been implemented at the school and she thinks that it might be a good solution. She also believes that if the school focuses on positive aspects the learners may be more susceptible to motivation as they are sick and tired of hearing how difficult and impossible their behaviour is: *In daardie spesifieke omgewing waar daar so baie negatiewe dinge gebeur, dink ek nie hulle is gewoond daaraan om beloon te word nie* (In that specific environment where there are so many negative aspects, I don’t think they are used to being rewarded).

**School B**
**Participant BP**
BP strongly believes that the code of conduct should be based on the Constitution and the Schools Act. This will ensure that the learners’ behaviour is reasonable and acceptable: *Ons het hom geskoei op the Skolewet se gedragkode en ons het gekyk na die menseregtemanifes in die Konstitusie. Die spesifieke gedeelte fokus op wat is billike en aanvaarbare gedrag vir leerders* (We based it on the Schools Act’s code of conduct and we looked at the Bill of rights in the Constitution, the so called human rights. This specific section focuses on what is reasonable and acceptable in terms of learner behaviour). He added that *discipline should never be punitive, but corrective*. He is extremely cautious about the way in which the code of conduct is written and specifically mentions a few points that should be addressed in the code of conduct. These points include the following:

- *A-, B- of C-kategorie oortredings en dat dit strafbaar is met sekere sanksies* (Category A, B or C infringements and these should be punishable by certain sanctions).
- *Dit moet eerder opheffend opvoedkundig wees as om te straf* (It should rather be educative than punitive).
- *Dit moet nooit n kind se selfbeeld in gedrang bring voor n klompie ander nie* (It should never harm a child’s self-esteem in the presence of others).
• Die balans om dit ook menswaardig te bestuur is belangrik (Keeping a balance and managing it within the boundaries of human dignity is important).

Furthermore this participant is of the opinion that discipline is a process. He states when disciplining disabled learners one should bear the following in mind:

- Have patience
- Use simplified language
- Use the social worker’s input and therapist’s to provide additional assistance
- Have knowledge of the child
- Learners should understand that certain behaviour leads to specific punishment

**Participant B1**

This participant also mentioned a few aspects that she considers important when it comes to the code of conduct for learners. These aspects include the following:

- If they have a certain negative action or they do not do homework specific action will be taken.
- What is always very problematic is that the parents do not always understand and they do not acknowledge that action can be taken against their child.
- Develop the code of conduct in such a way that it educates children because this is part of the education system.
- I need to take responsibility for my actions.

These aspects all point to the idea that the code of conduct should focus on the child and that the child should understand why he or she is being punished.

**Participant B2**

Participant B2 is of the opinion that the code of conduct should be signed by all learners and should have the same status as any other legal document: ’n Ondertekende dokument van elke kind, met binne die skool iets van regsgeldigheid (A signed document that is binding within the school). He is also of the opinion that in
direct contrast to the language and religious policy this should be a tool because learners should know and understand that there are certain rules and regulations: *Dit is ’n instrument omdat hulle kinders is en ek n volwassene* (It’s a tool, because they are children and I am an adult). The document should be transparent and available at all times. Lastly he is of the opinion that all parents should sign the document and without it the school cannot be managed properly: *Jy kan nie n skool bedryf sonder dit nie, vergeet daarvan* (You cannot run a school without it, forget about it).

5.4.1.10 **Aspirations for the extra-mural activities curriculum**

The governing body members of both schools have decided against an extra-mural curriculum. There are various reasons why the governing bodies have decided not to include an extra-mural curriculum. Some of these reasons include the following:

- They want to focus on the primary subjects and learners should master their schoolwork first.
- Parents do not have money for travelling costs.

5.4.1.11 **Aspirations for the purchasing of textbooks**

**School A**

**Participant AP**

This participant is of the opinion that there are good and bad quality textbooks available. Educators in the school edit work and copy it for the learners: *Onderwysers reduseer inhoud en die belangrikste aspekte word uitgesoek en vir die kinders gegee* (Educators edit and take the most important aspects and supply them to the learners).

**Participant A1**

This participant is of the opinion that the Department of Education should make the study material available and supply the school with the necessary textbooks: *Die Onderwysdepartement, volgens my, moet die inhoud voorsien* (The Department of Education, according to me, should supply the content). He is of the opinion that the school’s budget should make provision for textbooks, digital recorders and reading laboratories: *Die handboeke as sodanig gee die skool en die leermateriaa kom uit die*
begroting. Hier is baie spesiale onderwysmedia soos leesbandjies en leeslaboratoriums (The textbooks are provided by the school and the learning material is budgeted for. We have special teaching media such as reading-recorders and reading laboratories).

Participant A2
A1 is of the opinion that parents should pay for textbooks but her aspirations would be that the school make provision in the budget for textbooks. Thus parents will not have to pay additional money for textbooks: Dit sou gaaf gewees het as ons dalk ook geld in die begroting gehad het om daarvan te subsidieer (It would have been nice if we could have money in the budget to subsidise some of it). She believes that it would be better for the learners to have textbooks as they discard the copied notes.

School B
Participant BP
This participant believes that the ideal would be for the Department of Education to supply the textbooks: Die ideaal sou wees dat die Departement van Onderwys so ver as moontlik die leermateriaal voorsien, dis die ideaal.” (The ideal would be that the Department of Education supply the learning material as far as possible, which is the ideal). The school receives a small subsidy but it is not nearly enough to cover the total textbook expenses: Maar in skole soos ons s’n word ons voorsien van ’n subsidie en met hierdie subsidie moet ons letterlik alles doen (But in a school like ours we receive a subsidy, but we have to do literally everything with the subsidy). The school makes limited provision in the budget for textbooks.

Participant B1
According to this participant there is a big problem when it comes to textbooks. The first problem that they experience is that the schools suffer financially; therefore it becomes more difficult to purchase textbooks: Especially the financial predicaments that schools find themselves in, there should be easier ways to purchase textbooks. The second problem that she identified is that there is such a variety of available textbooks that educators do not know what to choose: You need specific guidelines and there shouldn’t be such a wide variety. The last issue that she addresses is the fact that there are not any guidelines or recommendations for which textbooks to buy.
If a teacher wants to make use of a different textbook then he/she must provide good reasons why the available textbook should not be used. This is a secondary problem of the vast variety of textbooks.

**Participant B2**

Participant B2 is of the opinion that the school must supply textbooks because if teachers have to wait for learners to buy the textbooks then it undermines the teacher’s professionalism: *As die kantoor dit beskikbaar stel, ek is weer by my punt, want wat promoveer dit? Jou professionaliteit* (If the office makes it available, I return to my statement, what does it promote? Your professionalism). It can both save time and allow teachers to feel more prepared. Thus the school must make provision in the budget for textbooks and supply these books as soon as possible: *As ek handboeke aan skoolgeld kon koppel, was ek nog altyd n voorstaander daarvan* (I have always been an advocate for buying textbooks with school fees).

### 5.4.1.12 Defining quality education

The participants were asked to supply their own definition of quality education and to indicate what the concept means to them.

**School A**

**Participant AP**

*Dat elke kind akademies sy maksimum potensiaal bereik* (That each child will reach his/her maximum academic potential).

**Participant A1**

*Die leerder moet n begrip hê van die inhoud van die werk. Hy moet verstaan* (The learner must comprehend the content of the work. He must understand).

**Participant A2**

*Die leerders moet individuele aandag kry, leer om onafhanklik te werk en om verantwoordelik te wees binne ‘n stabiele en ontspanne omgewing* (The learners must get individual attention; learn how to be independent and to be responsible within a stable and relaxed environment).
School B
Participant BP
Kwaliteit onderrig is om in elke individuele kind se persoonlike behoeftes maksimaal te kan voorsien. Ek moet, om dit te kan reg kry, my middele in plek hê en ek moet die regte personeel in plek hê (Quality education means to provide maximally in every individual child’s personal needs. To achieve this I must have the means and I have to get educated staff members).

Participant B1
I have to do everything and enrich myself in every way to make sure that I am doing everything in the best interest of the child; I have to motivate and encourage them.

Participant B2
Om die geremdheid van die kind in ag te neem deur middel van evaluering, optimale akademiese vaardighede vir die kind te laat bekom met die oog op ‘n volwaardige staanplek in die lewe (To take the child’s shortcomings into account by means of evaluation, optimal academic expertise and with the goal to achieve success in life).

5.4.1.13 Inclusive Education

Most of the participants felt that the reason why special needs schools have to open their doors to learners with other disabilities – other than their primary disability – is because of numbers. These schools face the possibility that they might have to close if they do not enrol the required number of learners. In an attempt to establish the reason for this I refer to inclusive education. The main question revolves around why the schools struggle to get learners and whether or not inclusive education plays any role in this development.

Schools A
Participant AP
Baie van hulle verdwyn ook maar in die massa. Dit begin kop uitsteek dat die kinders nie noodwendig na ons toe verwys word nie, maar dat hulle in die gewone skole aangaan. (A lot of them disappear in the masses. A new tendency is that they are not necessarily referred to us but that they remain in mainstream schools).
participant is convinced that inclusive education is directly responsible for the
decrease in the number of learners that enrol at special needs schools.

**Participant A1**

This specific participant was not quite sure what inclusive education means and stated
that he feels it is wrong to force disabled learners into mainstream schools. He gave
the following two specific reasons for his remarks:

- *Hulle is stadiger en het spesiale aandag nodig* (They are slower and need
  specialised help).
- *Die gestremde kind sal altyd deur die ander kinders afgeknou of gespot word*
  (The disabled learner will always be bullied or teased by the other learners)

This participant had an ethical problem with inclusive education and the effect that it
has on disabled children.

**School B**

**Participant BP**

This school acts as a resource centre. The learners are accommodated at the school
and after a while they are re-tested. If the tests show that the child has improved
he/she will have the option to go back to mainstream schools. This participant is
proud of the fact that the school has the same curriculum as any other mainstream
school, but states that the number of subjects is limited because of limited educators.
He does not have a problem with inclusive education; neither does he blame it for the
decrease in numbers. However, he feels that the school had to open its doors to other
disabilities after the reclassification of disabilities: *... mediese navorsing het bewys
ADD en ADHD onderdruk die leerproses. Toe gebeur dit dat ’n skool soos Skool A
ook hierdie groot getal gestremdes moet toelaat* (Medical research has proved that
ADD and ADHD suppress the learning process. Schools like School A have to admit
the vast number of these disabled learners).
5.5 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter is to analyse and interpret the data collected through interviews and document analysis. The first section deals with document analysis that has been used for triangulation. Various documents were not available at the time of the study. The reasons are that the documents were being revised, the documents might not exist or the document might be outdated and would pose some kind of threat to the school. Nevertheless, the participants either agreed about most facts or they contradicted one another.

The interviews were conducted to get a clear understanding of what the individual members’ aspirations were in terms of the various governing body functions. Most of the participants had a sound knowledge of what the legal requirements of a governing body are, but some were not knowledgeable regarding the various legal requirements. Some of the participants were even unclear on what the school’s specific policies stated. There is a much contradiction in certain areas.

The next chapter provides a conclusion to and recommendations for this research. Each governing body function will be mentioned and a clear indication will be given of the aspirations of the governing body members and how the governing body members’ aspirations correlate with the provisions on governance in the Schools Act.
Chapter 6
Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to answer the main research question as well as the sub-question as mentioned in Chapter 1. Furthermore this chapter aims to provide an overview of the findings of this research. Two special needs schools were used and various governing body members of these schools were interviewed. The interviews were specifically aimed at the individual governing body’s aspirations in terms of the functions set out in the Schools Act. Document analysis was used for triangulation and to determine to what extent the governing body members’ aspirations correlate with the various policy documents (language policy, admission policy, religious policy, etc.) of the school.

The governing body of a school must perform certain functions; these functions are stipulated in Schools Act, Sec. 20. There are additional functions that the governing body can apply for and these functions are stipulated in Schools Act, Sec. 21. Both schools used in this study have Sec. 21 status. Thus they have to perform both Sec. 20 and Sec. 21 functions. The questions asked in the semi-structured interviews all related directly to the functions set out in Schools Act.

I have tried to generate accurate data by asking various follow-up questions and ensuring that my understanding was correct and accurate. According to the findings most of the governing members that have been interviewed, did not know what their legal obligations were and what was expected of them as governing body members. However, some of the members were aware of some of the legal requirements and what the school’s policies stipulated. The findings of the study cannot be generalised, but they represent an idea of what governing body members aspire to in terms of the shortcomings that are experienced. In Chapter 5 I came to the conclusion that the governing body members do not have trust in the Head of Department’s ability to provide effective and useful training.
The last section of this chapter provides recommendations for further studies and the conclusion drawn.

6.2 Research questions

This research commenced with two questions, one main question and one sub-question. The two questions were the following:

- What are the aspirations of the newly elected governing body of schools for learners with special education needs?
- How do the aspirations of the governing body members of LSEN schools correlate with the provisions on governance in the Schools Act?

In an attempt to answer these questions I firstly stated what the Schools Act stipulates and secondly what the participants’ aspirations for the various governing body functions were. I thus combined the two questions to ensure that a thorough understanding of the legal requirements and the aspirations of the governing body members is gained.

According to the Gauteng Department of Education (1997: 6-7) the only way that the governing body members will eliminate confusion regarding their functions and the principal’s functions is if they know their functions. A major part of the confusion that governing body members experience is caused by the fact that they are not fully aware of what their functions are. It is expected of the governing body members to be aware of and fully briefed about their functions. I refer to table 4.3.1; this table depicts the experience and qualifications of each of the governing body members that were interviewed. The governing body members were selected to ensure that they have adequate qualifications as well as a number of years of experience on serving in governing bodies.
Table 4.3.1 Exposition of participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>AP</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>14 years</td>
<td>Honour’s degree in Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>A1</td>
<td>SGB</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>9 years</td>
<td>Mechanical Engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>SGB</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Matriculation Certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>BP</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>BA (Ed) B.Ed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>B1</td>
<td>SGB</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>12 years</td>
<td>B.Ed (Hons) HOD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>B2</td>
<td>SGB</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12 years</td>
<td>PhD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As stated earlier, it is expected of the governing body members to act in the best interest of the school [stand in position of trust towards the school.] (Schools Act, Sec 16 (2)). Thus it is a reasonable expectation that the governing body members should do everything in their power to protect the best interest of the school. However, most of the schools’ policies have not been revised in nine year’s time and the policy documents do not comply with basic legal requirements as stipulated in the Schools Act (Schools Act). Furthermore the governing body members are dismissive and ignorant of the training provided by the Head of Department. They believe that there is nothing that the Head of Department can teach them. Their experience and qualifications indicate that they have served on a governing body for quite some time and should aspire to promote the best interest of the school.

6.2.1 Training provided to the governing body members by the Head of Department

Schools Act, Sec. 19 (b) provides introductory training to newly elected governing bodies to enable them to perform their functions.
Schools Act, Sec. 19(c) provides continuing training to governing bodies to promote the effective performance of their functions or to enable them to assume additional functions.

In general the participants were negative about the idea of training provided by the Head of Department. They mentioned that the Head of Department either did not provide any training or the training was scheduled in such a way that they could not
They were also of the opinion that the Head of Department should assess the governing body members and establish what their needs are before attempting to train the various members. They also felt that the staff responsible for the training should be highly skilled.

I have come to the conclusion that the reason why some governing body members are unaware of their legal responsibility, in terms of the functions that the governing body must perform, is due to a lack of training provided by the Head of Department. However, the Head of Department is not the only one to blame. Each governing body member is required to know his or her legal obligations (*State v. De Blom*).

In general the governing body members had a clear idea what their functions were, although they were more confident with the functions of the specific committees that they serve on. It seems as if they do not have any broader interest than that of the committee that they serve on. They lack an in-depth understanding of the various governing body functions. Two of the participants were convinced that one of the functions of the governing body is professional management. The participants were dismissive and negative about the training provided in general, but at times their answers to some of the questions were unconstitutional and they were vague on some legal requirements.

### 6.2.2 Recommendation for the appointment of educators and non-educator staff

The literature mentions that when an educator is recommended for appointment then the governing body should ensure that the educator has sufficient knowledge and experience to address the diverse needs of the disabled learners (Rault-Smith, 2010). The governing body must have a clear idea what they are looking for in the applicants. The governing body members that I interviewed stated that they do not concentrate on special needs training but rather on the personality and abilities of the educator. They mentioned that they provide in-service training, which will assist in the lack of special needs knowledge.
Each governing body member mentioned specific characteristics that they look for when recommending educators. These characteristics include personality and whether or not they will fit into the school and their type of education. Apart from that they also mentioned subject knowledge and extra-curricular interests. The ideas that the governing body members have regarding this matter are coherent with the post requirements that Colditz (2006) mentions.

- Curriculum requirements
- Extra-curricular requirements.

Sec. 9 (4) of Constitution states that no person may unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against any person on various grounds. Two of the participants referred specifically to gender in their answers, but stated that they do not discriminate in any way. They were of the opinion that educators of certain genders should be appointed in certain posts. The mere fact that gender was on their list of preferences leaves questions as to whether or not this factor plays a role when governing body members recommend educators.

### 6.2.3 Financial management

*Schools Act, Sec. 34 (2) declares The State must, on an annual basis, provide sufficient information to public schools regarding the funding ... to prepare their budgets for the next financial year.* The schools seem to struggle to get the information from the State and to get the actual subsidy that they are entitled to for a specific financial year. This makes the process of preparing the school’s budget extremely difficult. A special needs school has more expenses than a mainstream school, as the special needs school must employ therapists and they have the need for extra learning material in the form of digital recorders and other learner specific instructional media. The participants have certain expectations of the State and often these expectations are not met. This makes the entire learning process suffer due to the lack of funds for the necessary learning material.

The biggest aspiration that most of the participants have is to ensure that the school survives financially. This seems to be a constant battle due to the lack of funds; both
the State and the parents do not fulfil their commitments towards the school. The
parents approve the budget, but they do not pay the school fees. This has a direct
impact on the quality of education that can be provided. Another aspiration is for a
feasible budget. Without the necessary information the governing body cannot set a
feasible budget. The participants made it clear that there is a major difference
between the financial management of a mainstream school and the financial
management of a special needs school. The difference is the fact that special needs
educations is more expensive due to the extra learning material and instructional
media that the learners require. One of the participants expressed the need to take
learners out of the school or refuse admission if parents do not pay their school fees.
This, however, is not legal as the learner still has the right to basic education
(Constitution, Sec. 29 (1) (a)), even if their parents cannot pay the school fees.
Colditz (2005:7) states that a learner may not be deprived of his or her participation in
the school’s programmes if the parents do not pay the school fees. There are certain
legal steps that the school can take to ensure that parents pay school fees.

It should also be noted that the school’s finances cannot be solely managed by the
principal of the school (Joubert & Prinsloo, 2009:99). However, the governing body
members will only become aware of this when they familiarise themselves with the
functions of the governing body members. It is clear that School A’s principal still
has the power of decision-making. One of the participants complained about her
power that has been limited by the principal’s final say in all decisions.

There was a minor discrepancy at School A in terms of the financial policy. The
treasurer of the governing body clearly stated that no provision had been made for the
replacement of the school bus. The chairperson on the other hand made it clear that
the school has started to make provisions to replace the school bus after it has
depreciated. These aspirations were not coherent and left questions as to why the
treasurer was not aware of these provisions, although the chairman was fully aware of
them. School A’s financial policy was last revised in 2002.

School B’s financial policy had no specific date to indicate when the policy was
drafted or revised. I experienced difficulty in reading and understanding the policy as
there were various lists of documents and procedures that were not explained or that were listed with no specific reference as to why the lists were made.

I concluded that if the State and parents fulfilled their commitments in terms of paying fees and subsidies then the financial management of the school would be much easier. It appears as if the governing body members have reached a stage where they concentrate on the income that the school generates to such an extent that they do not have any other aspirations concerning financial management. In the end this is what will ensure the survival of the school. The financial management should be a team effort and all members should be fully aware of provisions, because they are collectively responsible for the school’s finances. The financial policy should be revised more regularly to ensure that the participants’ aspirations correlate with the financial policy.

6.2.4 Admission policy

Some of the participants were unhappy about the fact that learners with different disabilities were admitted to the school. Their aspiration specifically revolved around the fact that the school caters for a specific disability and that the school does not have the resources to accommodate other disabilities. At this stage the participant felt no direct pressure from the Department of Education in admitting learners that have different disabilities; they refer to their admission policy and the assessment that learners need to undergo before being admitted into the school.

There is a major difference in the admission policy of a mainstream school and a special needs school. The special needs school has certain tests that the learners must undergo to determine whether or not they will benefit from the school’s programme or not, whereas a mainstream school is not permitted to administer any tests that are related to the admission of a learner (Schools Act, Sec. 5 (2)). These assessment tests are not administered to exclude certain learners, but rather to ensure that the learners that are admitted to the school will directly benefit from the programme that the school has in place. Both schools’ admission policies refer to the assessments that must be undertaken before a learner is admitted into the school, the criterion that needs to be taken into consideration when a learners is admitted; for example, the
language of instruction that the learner requires is stipulated in the admission policy and during the interviews the participants also stated what these requirements are. One of the participants was of the opinion that the school should charge a deposit before the learner is enrolled; the deposit will be deducted from the school fees. The governing body member is of the opinion that parents do not pay school fees; therefore they should be charged a deposit before the learner can be enrolled into the school. Sec. 5 (3)(a) of Schools Act states that a learner may not be refused admission to a public school on the ground that his/her parent cannot or has not paid the school fees.

School A’s admission policy lists special requirements for the admission of a learner to the school. One of the requirements is that parents should sign the code of conduct. It is not clear whether or not the learner will be refused admission if the parents do not sign the code of conduct. However, the policy only states that the parents are required to sign this document.

6.2.5 Language policy

School A is a double medium-school, thus the school’s medium of instruction is English and Afrikaans. The participants were open to the idea of the school being a double-medium school. They agreed to the three ways in which a school can ensure that it promotes multilingualism as stated by Joubert and Prinsloo (2009:82). These are the following:

- More than one language of instruction;
- Additional languages as subjects;
- Special immersion or other language programmes for learning additional languages.

However, the school’s language policy refers to a third language, Sepedi. The participants did not mention a third language. They were convinced that the school has only two languages that it promotes. In this instance the participants’ aspirations were not coherent with the school’s language policy.
School B on the other hand is a single-medium school. Their medium of instruction is Afrikaans. This information could not be verified using the school’s language policy, because the language policy was not available. All the participants agreed that the school is a single-medium school. Their aspirations were to change the school to a double-medium school, although at this stage it was really difficult due to limited resources. To a certain extent the school is double-medium as some of the lower grades are apparently taught in Afrikaans and English.

6.2.6 Mission and Vision statement

Both schools had a clear mission and vision statement. The vision and mission communicate what the school wants to achieve. The mission and vision statement were not revised when either of the new governing bodies were elected. However, the principal of School B felt that the mission of the school will never be finalised, due to changing circumstances. Another participant at School B felt that the mission and vision statements were there for appearances only. He believes that the mission and vision will only be looked at once the new governing body members are elected. He was of the opinion that the top management of the school works with these statements on a daily basis. This would explain why the principal felt so strongly about the mission and vision statement; the principal is part of the top management. The aspirations of the governing bodies are in line with the statement made by Colditz (2005) ...expresses it s unique character, ethos, world and life philosophy and sovereignty within its own ranks.

6.2.7 Religious policy

The following official addition to the religious policy is relevant:
Schools Act, Sec. 57. If the owner of the private property referred to in Section 56 is a religious organisation, such owner may require that the agreement contemplated in Section 14 must recognise, in an appropriate manner consistent with this Act, the distinctive religious character of the school.

Both the schools have a Christian character; this complies with Sec. 57 (Schools Act), as the owner of the school properties is the Transoranje Institute and the schools have
co-sponsoring bodies in the form of the 3 sister churches. The foundation of the Institute as well as the churches is Christianity. The aspirations of the governing body members are not to discriminate against any other religion, but they support Christianity and the schools were founded on this specific religion. All the participants agreed that they will not refuse admission to a learner on religious grounds, but the learners should be aware of the fact that these schools are Christian in outlook.

These schools were given permission by the MEC to operate as public schools on private property (Metcalfe, 1998). Therefore the governing body has the right to maintain their Christian character.

6.2.8 Code of conduct of learners

In special needs schools discipline is a lengthy process and learners should be addressed in different ways. The learners must be taught over a period of time that behaviour is acceptable or sometimes unacceptable. The literature specifically refers to fairness and equality (Schools Act, Sec. 8(2)). The participants focused on the fact that the abilities and potential of the learners should be taken into consideration when it comes to punishment for specific behaviour. The learners must be approached in a positive rather than in a negative way. The punishment as one participant stated, should never be punitive but corrective. Learners’ abilities and potentials are taken into consideration; therefore one can conclude that the punishment is fair and equitable. Each school has a different code of conduct that includes specific punishments for certain behaviour. The codes of conduct underscore the positive aspects rather than the negative ones.

One of the participants did refer to corporal punishment, which is not allowed according to Schools Act, Sec. 10. This statement was followed by a remark that indicated that the participant was well aware of the fact that corporal punishment in schools is not allowed. It appears that the participant is aware of the prohibition of corporal punishment, but he was not quite sure why it has been prohibited. This indicates a lack of insight into the Schools Act or a problem with the school’s code of conduct.
Joubert and Prinsloo (2009:119-123) mention a list of the content of a code of conduct of a school:

- Preamble
- Rules of conduct
- Punishment
- Disciplinary procedures
- Disciplinary investigations and hearings
- Appeal process

School A’s does not supply a clear indication of any of the afore-mentioned aspects that should be evident in a school’s code of conduct for learners. Thus this document does not comply with the basic requirements of a code of conduct. School B did not provide this document at all, therefore I cannot state whether or not the document complies with legal requirements.

### 6.2.9 Extra-mural activities/curriculum

Neither of the schools has any extra-mural curriculum in the sense of additional subjects. White Paper 6 (2001) specifically states that learners who experience disabilities should be offered extended opportunities. The governing body members felt that the learners should rather concentrate on the subjects that they do have.

As far as sport is concerned, both schools offer a variety of sports. The aspirations in terms of sport are that learners need to get rid of their built up energy and frustration on the sports fields.

### 6.2.10 Purchasing of textbooks

The two special needs schools offer the same curriculum as any other mainstream school. They have to make use of the same textbooks that mainstream schools use. The types of disability that the schools cater for do not require any specialised textbooks. However, after the amendment of the Schools Act as mentioned by Colditz (2006:9-10) the school must incorporate their textbook fees into the school
fees. This results in a bigger financial predicament for the various schools, due to the lack of payment of school fees by parents and the apparent delay in payment of subsidies by the Department. To a certain extent both schools incorporate the textbook fees into the budget, but there are certain grades that need to pay additional fees for textbooks.

Another aspiration that the governing body members have is that the Department of Education should supply textbooks, which will in return lessen the financial burden that the schools have to shoulder.

6.2.11 Quality education

The literature refers to quality education as a desired output. Schuster et al. (1994:384) mention efficiency, effectiveness, participation, leadership and responsiveness to the environment. The governing body members must all cooperate and function as a whole; they must have the same aspirations. Thus the first step to ensuring quality education is that the governing body members should have the same aspirations. In this research it has become evident that in some areas the governing body members are divided and in other areas they stand together. However, I do not think that it is possible for all the governing body members to agree on all matters. The members have different expectations and different goals. This does not mean that a school will never be able to provide quality education.

From the definitions of quality education that the governing body members provided I compiled a list of terms that are similar. This list includes the terms/ideas that the governing body members share. It is the first step to having the same aspirations for governing body members. The list includes the following:

- Maximum academic potential should be developed
- Individual needs are taken into consideration
- Best interest of the child is considered
6.2.12 Inclusive Education

In general the governing body members had little knowledge about inclusive education. They felt that inclusive education was a negative concept as it reduced the number of learners that were enrolled in special needs schools. They thought that the entire concept was negative and offered disabled learners a worse alternative. Seeing that the special needs schools used in this research also used the mainstream curriculum, the disabled learners could benefit just as much in these special needs schools than they can benefit from a mainstream school. In fact, they felt mainstream schools posed a threat to the learners is the sense of being left out and being different from the rest.

One of the schools acts as a resource centre for mainstream school but still felt that the parents had to make an informed decision whether or not to enrol their child into a mainstream school. However, the participants of this specific school tend to keep the child in the special needs school due to the limited resources that most mainstream schools have in assisting disabled learners.

I conclude that inclusive education is still a foreign concept that the governing body members do not really understand. They have their own ideas about the concept and choose to remain ignorant about the real implication and meaning.

6.2.13 Role of the principal on the governing body

Schools Act, Sec. 24 (1) (j) explicitly states that the principal is a member of the governing body in his or her official capacity. De Groof et al. (1998:107) state that the governing body was established to limit the principal’s role of primary decision maker and to make the parents and the community responsible and accountable to the school. Yet it appears that in one of the schools the principal is still the primary decision maker. The principal determines which ideas should be accepted and which ideas should be discarded. The school’s governing body members were not quite sure what was expected of them as governing body members. This could explain why the principal was still the primary decision maker. De Groof et al. (1998:107) are of the opinion that the primary decision-making power of the principal was taken away by
the establishment of governing bodies. Thus there are some discrepancies between what the literature says and the aspirations and knowledge of the governing body members. As stated earlier, the governing body members will only realise what the difference between their functions and those of the principal is when they become knowledgeable about their functions (Gauteng Department of Education, 1997: 6-7)

Both principals felt that they have a good relationship with the governing body members and that they do not try to manipulate the governing body to performing certain functions according to the principals’ preference. However, the governing body members felt that the principal made the decisions on behalf of the others, thus there were some discrepancies between the aspirations of the principals and the governing body members in terms of the extent to which the principals participate in the decision-making process.

6.3 Recommendations for Further Study

The following issues arose from this study; these issues were not researched as they do not form part of the research or are not linked to the research questions:

- The election of the governing body member; the process as a whole, including the nomination of the members.
- The role that the principal plays in the decision-making of the governing body.
- The Head of Department’s actual role in providing training to the governing body members on an ongoing basis; the needs that the governing body members have in the sense of training requirements.

6.4 Governing Body Membership

As stated earlier, there are more governing body members on a governing body of a special needs school than on that of a mainstream school (Schools Act, Sec. 24). The additional governing body members provide expertise. These two schools are unique, because they have permission from the MEC to have four additional members on the governing body. These extra members are collectively members of the sponsoring body, Transoranje Institute, and the co-sponsoring bodies, the 3 churches.
6.5 Conclusion

With this study I tried to gain understanding and deeper insight into the aspirations that governing body members have. There are certain functions that a governing body must perform. However, to some extent the governing body members were not fully aware of their functions and to what extent they should perform these functions. They were not fully briefed or knowledgeable about the legal requirements of the governing body. The fact that they lacked knowledge about the functions of the governing body was reflected in both schools’ policy documents. There were a few discrepancies between the aspirations of the governing body members and the policy documents that were analysed. A few questions were raised as to why the governing bodies had not studied the statutes to determine what their functions are. If the governing body members have been serving on the governing body for such a long time and they have high qualifications why is it that their aspirations are not in line with the legal requirements or expectations of governing body members? The collective answer to these questions is that the governing body members were ignorant and felt that they were knowledgeable enough not to attend any of the Head of Department’s training sessions.

In general the governing bodies are enthusiastic about the task ahead of them and want to do their best to change the schools for the better. I believe that the enthusiasm of the governing body can be enhanced if they know exactly what is expected of them and what is expected from the principal. The purpose of this research was not to find fault or to criticise the governing body members but to determine what their aspirations are and to what extent these aspirations correlate with the legal requirements in the Schools Act.
References


Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE) 2000. Index for Inclusion. Bristol: CSIE.


Metcalf, M.E. 1998. *Interview with Ms Metcalfe and Mr E Williams of the Gauteng Education Department at 8:00 at the MEC Offices on Tuesday, 31 March 1998*. Unpublished document.


State v De Blom. 1977 (3) SA 513 (A)


ANNEXURE A
Governing body interview schedule

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE
(INDIVIDUAL)

Interviews

School A/B
1. How many years have you served on the School Governing Body?
2. How were you introduced to the concept of governing bodies and school governance?
3. What kind of training did the department offer when you were first elected to the governing body?
4. What qualifications do you possess that assist in a special needs school?
5. According to your knowledge, what are the main functions and responsibility of the school governing body?
6. When you were first elected on the governing body, what were you aspirations for:
   6.1 The recommendation for the appointment of educators? (Are there enough skilled educators for LSEN schools?) Elaborate.
   6.2 Non-educator staff?
   6.3 Financial management?
   6.4 Admission policy?
   6.5 Language policy?
   6.6 Mission and vision statement?
   6.7 Religious policy?
   6.8 Code of conduct for learners?
   6.9 Extra-mural activities?
   6.10 Purchasing textbooks? (Especially for the specific disability catered for)
   6.11 Quality education?
7. Having been on the governing body for x amount of years, what are your aspirations for:
   7.1 The recommendation for the appointment of educators? (Are there enough skilled educators for LSEN schools?) Elaborate.
   7.2 Non-educator staff?
   7.3 Financial management?
7.4 Admission policy?
7.5 Language policy?
7.6 Mission and vision statement?
7.7 Religious policy?
7.8 Code of conduct for learners?
7.9 Extra-mural activities?
7.10 Purchasing textbooks? (Especially for the specific disability catered for)
7.11 Quality education?
ANNEXURE B
Principal interview schedule

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE
(PRINCIPAL)

School: A/B

1. How many years have you been principal of the school?
2. What qualifications do you have?
3. How do you use the knowledge that you gained from your studies to improve the way that you govern the school?
4. How many learners are there in this school?
5. Which type of disabilities does this school provide for?
6. Are there other learners with other types of disability in this school? If yes, please specify.
7. How do you provide for the learners with different disabilities? (In the sense of ensuring that they receive quality education with specific reference to policies, e.g. language policy, admission, resources, etc.)
8. How does the admission policy of the school assist the school in ensuring that only learners with a certain disability are allowed in the school?
9. To what extent do you participate in the decision-making process of the governing body?
10. When a new governing body has been elected, how enthusiastic are the members?
11. Comment on the enthusiasm and attitudes of the governing body members after about a year.
12. As principal and member of the governing body what are your aspirations for:
   12.1 Recommendation of staff (Availability of skilled educators)
   12.2 Non-educator staff (Criteria for non-educator staff)
   12.3 Financial management (Grants from the Department, etc.)
   12.4 Admission policy
   12.5 Language policy
   12.6 Mission and vision statement
   12.7 Religious policy
12.8 Code of conduct for learners
12.9 Extra-mural activities
12.10 Purchasing textbooks (Especially for the specific disability catered for)
12.11 Quality education
ANNEXURE C
Letter of GDE approving study

UMnyango WezeMfundo
Department of Education

Lofapha la Thuto
Departement van Onderwys

Enquiries: Nomvula Ubisi (011)3550488

Date: 11 March 2010
Name of Researcher: Wessels Janine
Address of Researcher: 
Telephone Number: 
Fax Number: N/A
Research Topic: A Correlation of the Aspirations of Newly Elected School Governing Bodies of Schools for Learners with Special Education Needs and their Legal Obligations
Number and type of schools: 2 LSEN Schools
District's/HO: Tshwane South

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school's and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

Permission has been granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met, and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted:

1. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
2. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.
3. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.

Office of the Chief Director: Information and Knowledge Management
Room 501, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2000 P.O.Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000
Tel: (011) 355-0808 Fax: (011) 355-0754
4. A letter / document that outlines the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.

5. The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.

6. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researchers may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.

7. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year.

8. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.

9. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.

10. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.

11. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.

12. On completion of the study the researcher must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and one Ring bound copy of the final, approved research report. The researcher would also provide the said manager with an electronic copy of the research abstract/summary and/or annotation.

13. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.

14. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards

[Signature]

Martha Mashego

ACTING DIRECTOR: KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT & RESEARCH

The contents of this letter has been read and understood by the researcher.

Signature of Researcher: [Signature]

Date: 2010/04/15
ANNEXURE D
Permission from participants

Dear Sir / Ma’am

Re Research for M.Ed. study at the University of Pretoria
I, Janine Wessels, am currently busy with a Master’s degree at the University of Pretoria.

My research topic is
Aspirations and legal obligations of newly elected school governing bodies of schools for learners with special education needs

The purpose of my study is to examine the aspirations that newly elected governing body members have in schools for learners with special education needs, as well as to determine whether governing body members have common goals. The research will determine if the governing body’s aspirations correlate with the functions of school governing bodies stipulated in the South African Schools Act.

I intend to conduct individual interviews with governing body members. The individual interviews will be scheduled with each member, according to the member’s availability.

I also intend to analyse the school’s policy documents to ensure that the governing body members’ aspirations correlate with the policy documents. The policy documents include the admission policy, religious policy, language policy, etc. Each participant will be asked a few follow-up questions to ensure that I understood him or her correctly. The research data and the names of participants will be kept confidential. Participation is voluntary and any participant may withdraw from the research at any time. There will not be any negative consequences if a participant decides to withdraw and the data will then be destroyed. The University of Pretoria, my supervisor Prof. H.J. Joubert and I, Janine Wessels, have access to the data; no other person will have access to the data gathered for this research.
I ask your consent for voluntary participation in this research.
Please complete the letter of consent before _________________________ and return it by mail, e-mail or in person.
You are welcome to contact me if you have any further questions.

Letter of consent for governing body members

I _______________________, declare that I voluntarily take part in the research project titled:

Aspirations and legal obligations of newly elected school governing bodies of schools for learners with special education needs by Janine Wessels at the University of Pretoria.

The following conditions are applicable:

- The name of the school as well as the names of the governing body members will be kept anonymous.
- I give my consent to participate voluntarily in the research project.
- I have the right to withdraw from the research project at any stage.
- I will receive a copy of the transcript for approval before the data is interpreted.

Name in print  Signature  Date
ANNEXURE E
Confirmation that dissertation was edited.

University of Pretoria
Pretoria 0002 Republic of South Africa
http://www.up.ac.za

Faculty of Education
University of Pretoria
Groenkloof Campus
PRETORIA 0002
South Africa

2011-09-20

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that the thesis titled ASPIRATIONS AND LEGAL OBLIGATIONS OF NEWLY ELECTED GOVERNING BODIES OF SCHOOLS FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS by Janine Wessels was edited for grammar errors by me, Prof. MJ Kühn.

Yours faithfully

[Signature]

Prof. MJ Kühn

DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE, MATHEMATICS AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

tinus.kuhn@up.ac.za

Cellular no. 082 303 5415
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

This document must be signed and submitted with every essay, report, project, assignment, dissertation and/or thesis.

Full names of student: Janine Wessels

Student number: 274176874

Declaration

1. I understand what plagiarism is and am aware of the University’s policy in this regard.

2. I declare that this... dissertation is my own original work. Where other people's work has been used (either from a printed source, Internet or any other source), this has been properly acknowledged and referenced in accordance with departmental requirements.

3. I have not used work previously produced by another student or any other person to hand in as my own.

4. I have not allowed, and will not allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work.

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT: [Signature]

SIGNATURE OF SUPERVISOR: [Signature]
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

CLEARANCE NUMBER: EM 10/06/01

DEGREE AND PROJECT
MED
Aspirations and legal obligations of newly elected governing bodies of schools for learners with special education needs

INVESTIGATOR(S)
Janine Wessels

DEPARTMENT
Education Management and Policy Studies

DATE CONSIDERED
30 August 2011

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE
APPROVED

Please note:
For Masters applications, ethical clearance is valid for 2 years
For PhD applications, ethical clearance is valid for 3 years.

CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS COMMITTEE
Prof L Ebersohn

DATE
30 August 2011

CC
Jeannie Beukes
Prof H.J. Joubert

This ethical clearance certificate is issued subject to the following conditions:

1. A signed personal declaration of responsibility
2. If the research question changes significantly so as to alter the nature of the study, a new application for ethical clearance must be submitted
3. It remains the students' responsibility to ensure that all the necessary forms for informed consent are kept for future queries.

Please quote the clearance number in all enquiries.