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Exploring the factors that influence adequate yearly progress within elementary school settings

Shannon Marie Hennrich
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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EXPLORING THE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE ADEQUATE YEARLY
PROGRESS WITHIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SETTINGS

by

Shannon Marie Hennrich

Bachelor of Science in Education
La Salle University
1999

Master of Science in Education
Columbia Teachers College
2004

A dissertation proposal submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

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Pamela Campbell, Committee Chair

Susan P. Miller, Committee Member

Sherri Putney, Committee Member

LeAnn Putney, Graduate Faculty Representative

Ronald Smith, Ph. D., Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies
and Dean of the Graduate College

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ABSTRACT

Exploring the Factors that Influence Adequate Yearly Progress within Elementary School Settings

by

Shannon Marie Hennrich

Dr. Pamela Campbell, Committee Chair
Associate Professor Special Education
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

In the recent past, standards and access to resources for accountability and equity have been implemented nationally in schools. For example, the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) *Act of 2001*, was a federal mandate designed to raise the academic expectations and accountability of all learners. In addition, the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004* and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973* were created to protect the rights of all individuals with disabilities in programs that receive federal funds and ensure equal access to knowledge. Additionally, English language learners (ELL) must be included in the general education classroom and are required to take grade-level standardized tests and make adequate yearly progress. Simultaneously, Professional Educational Partnerships such as the Holmes Group/Partnership, National Network of Educational Renewal (NNER), and National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) are working to ensure equity for all students. Therefore, at the current time many individual federal mandates and individual organizations/partnerships are focused on working to ensure equity for all students. In this study, the current situation relating to NCLB and special populations was examined at the federal, state and local level. Student transiency was addressed at the state and

local level since this information is not reported on the national level.

A mixed methods approach was used to examine the factors that may contribute to a school achieving or not achieving Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Quantitative methods including descriptive statistics, multiple regression, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), hierarchical linear regression and zero order correlation were used. Extant data for all students in grades three, four and five for the 2009-2010 academic school year at two urban professional development schools (PDSs) and three comparable non-PDS schools, as well as results of criterion reference tests (grades 3-5) and the writing proficiency (grade 5) was used for the quantitative analyses. In addition, qualitative methods will be used to strengthen the study via focus groups and surveys.

Findings could provide policy makers with information as to factors that may or may not have contributed to the determination of whether a school achieves AYP. As a result, findings may contribute to more effective means to determine whether a school has or has not achieved AYP.

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There are many people that I would like to thank for helping me achieve my dream of pursuing my doctorate with the ultimate goal of becoming a college professor and working with preservice teachers. I did not know that my time at UNLV would be one of challenge, growth, and realization. I am grateful for the teachers that have made my experience at UNLV so rich, supported me in a way that let me shine, and provided a starting point for the career of my dreams.

During proposal I had the opportunity to participate in a most awe-inspiring dialogue with my doctoral committee. I was appreciative of the cohesive ideas. Each person brought with her a wealth of expertise, which resulted in a strong study of which I am very proud. It was there in that room, surrounded by professors that I admired and respected that it hit me just how much I had learned and grown. My educational path has challenged me on all levels: intellectually, mentally, emotionally, and physically. I am thankful for the role my doctoral committee has played in making this path negotiable.

My educational path has come full circle, with my kindergarten teacher there at the beginning and now again at the end of my formal education, and *my* doctoral advisor having sat on the committee of my undergraduate mentor. I am thankful for the connections in this small world.

I also want to thank all of my families, immediate, extended, and educational for believing in me. I know it has taken a village to get me here today. I would also like to thank my friends particularly Martin who has been invaluable. The support has helped me to achieve my dream.

I struggled in school and that is probably why I have such a passion for education. However, I did have perseverance, motivation, and a will to reach my dreams no matter how long it took because of a few teachers along the way (Sister Cheryl, Ms. Person, Sister Anne Claire, Mr. Casebeer, Mr. Halligan, and Dr. Yost) who made the grueling experience of school more bearable.

When I was eight, every night my mother read *Leo the Late Bloomer*, a story about a lion that was not quite ready to do all the things the other jungle animals could do. Leo lay dormant in my mind until I was a college junior. Dr. Yost sparked the memory of that late bloomer when she told me I had said something brilliant. I was a late bloomer! Thank you to my mother, Dr. Yost, and my father, who has been my loudest fan.

I recently became an aunt for the first time. This new life has reminded me of the responsibility I have, not only to her, but to all students. I will provide opportunities that ensure all of our students learn and reach for their dreams, whatever they may be. I will be their steward and champion, thanks in part to my brother, sister-in-law, and new niece.

I would like to thank all of the participants in my study, especially the individuals at the Professional Development School, who contributed their time and started the conversation, which still continues. My study is dedicated to you, the educators, who make a difference every day in the life of students, our future.

In closing, I would like to thank my undergraduate mentor Dr. Yost, my doctoral advisor and committee chair Dr. Campbell, and my early childhood teacher Cheryl Friberg, for mentoring me from start to finish, "...cause you always saw in me, All the best that I could be. It was you who set me free..." (*Music of the Heart*-Gloria Estefan).

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CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF STUDY

During the past 50 years, many initiatives have been designed to improve the education of our nation's students. These have included an increased emphasis on content areas, particularly mathematics and science following Sputnik in the 1950s. Efforts to hold schools accountable for "achieving educational results" (Yell, 2006, p. 180) also occurred at the federal level following the publication of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983 (NCEE, n.d.). The report criticized the nation's education system and stated that the educational system was "producing mediocre results and our students were falling further behind their foreign counterparts" (Yell, p. 177). The report called for

a commitment to the following: (a) placing education at the top of the nation's agenda, (b) strengthening high school graduation requirements, (c) adopting higher, measureable standards of academic performance, (d) increasing time devoted to learning, and (e) raising standards for teachers. (Yell, p. 177)

Another approach used to improve the education of the nation's students was the privatization of schools including school vouchers (NEA, n.d.). Partnerships among school districts and schools/colleges of education emerged and the implementation of higher standards and systems of accountability for students and teachers evolved. The two areas of interest for this study are the partnerships among school districts and schools/colleges of education and the implementation of higher standards and systems of accountability for students and teachers. Therefore the following section will address

accountability/standards mandates, professional educational partnerships and the current situation regarding NCLB and special populations at the federal, state and local level.

Historical Overview of Educational Accountability/Standards and Service Mandates

As a nation, providing access to knowledge for all children and youth has brought about federal mandates, standards, and tools for accountability. These are addressed subsequently with respect to federal legislation for all students and federal legislation for special populations.

Federal Legislation for All Students

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965. The provisions of the ESEA provides for financial assistance to local education agencies (LEAs) and schools with high numbers or high percentages of poor children to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards. Federal funds are currently allocated through four statutory formulas that are based primarily on census poverty estimates and the cost of education in each state (ESEA).

Another piece of legislation affecting all students is *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act of 2001. This piece of legislation is addressed in the following section.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. NCLB was designed to:

- ensure highly qualified teachers,
- mandate assessments (reading, math, writing, and science),
- implement research-based practices,
- put in place Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements (yearly by 2014),
- delegate Title 1 funding,
- link assessments to state standards,

- increase funding for parent involvement,
- provide options for free tutoring, “safe-harbor” (an AYP provision, please see section on definition of terms)
- instruct and upgrade focus on achievement (only reading, math, writing), and
- increase differentiated instruction (student grouping) and grading: common assessments and reporting (NCLB, 2001).

The nation’s schools receive a yearly designation according to adequate yearly progress: *Meeting*, *Exceeding* or *In Need of Improvement* (NCLB, 2001). If schools do not meet adequate yearly progress for two consecutive years they are categorized as *In Need of Improvement*. The school personnel, in conjunction with parents and experts, develop a 2-year improvement plan (Yell, 2006). In addition, the “school must offer the parents of students in the school the option of transferring to another public school within the district” (Yell, p. 197). Should the school fail for a third consecutive year it is still categorized *In Need of Improvement*, however additional supports such as supplemental educational services must be implemented (Yell). Once a school fails for a fourth consecutive year it is categorized as needing Corrective Action (Hess & Petrilli, 2007). Under this category, schools must incorporate staffing changes, curriculum reform, or extension of the school day and year. If a school fails to meet AYP for the fifth consecutive year the district must Restructure the School (Hess & Petrilli). Examples of restructuring could include “replacing the majority of the staff,” “hiring a management company to operate the school,” “turning it over to the state” or “adopting another serious remedy of the states choosing” (Hess & Petrilli, p. 43).

The purposes of both the ESEA and NCLB laws were to “(a) continue the federal government’s commitment to ensuring equal access to education for poor and disadvantaged students, (b) promote educational excellence for all of America’s students, and (c) hold schools accountable for the performance of their students” (Yell, 2006, p. 180). Some of the mandates also provide resources in respect to funding for materials and professional development. For example, Title III in NCLB provides funds to recruit and train teachers and “to implement professional development programs to prepare teachers and principals to use research-based instructional procedures and curricula to increase English language proficiency in students” (Yell, p. 185). In the next section, federal initiatives/legislation for students with disabilities are addressed.

Federal Legislation for Special Populations

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004.

The IDEA ensures that all students with disabilities ages birth to 21 receive the services they need. These services include early intervention, special education and related services (IDEA, 2004). In addition, the law specifies that all students with disabilities must participate in all assessments conducted by local school districts with needed support provided (IDEA). The IDEA has eight provisions to protect students and their parents: zero reject, identification and evaluation, free appropriate public education, least restrictive environment, procedural safeguards, technology-related assistance, personnel development, and parental participation (Yell, 2006). Another piece of legislation protecting individuals with disabilities is *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973* and is addressed in the following paragraph.

Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504). Section 504 is:

a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance. With respect to public school, Section 504 requires administrators, teachers, school psychologists, and other school personnel to identify students with disabilities and afford these students educational opportunities equal to those received by students without disabilities. This means that students with disabilities should be allowed to participate in the same academic and non academic activities as their nondisabled peers. (Yell, 2006, p. 120)

This includes related aids and services designed to meet the individual educational needs of students as adequately as the needs of students without disabilities (SECTION 504). School districts and schools are mandated to provide five areas for students with disabilities under SECTION 504. These include identification, evaluation, programming, placement and reevaluation (Yell, 2006). For the purpose of this study, details from two of the areas, identification and placement, will be included. The area of identification contains Zero Reject-Child Find, which requires that all students be included in public education, including individuals with disabilities and each state must seek out students that may be entitled to special education services. Included in placement is the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) requiring that students with disabilities be educated in the least restrictive environment for which they can “succeed with appropriate supports provided” (Friend & Bursuck, 2011, p. 12). The final piece of legislation affecting individuals with disabilities is the American with Disabilities Act.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. This law was instated in 1990. Although this civil rights legislation was not created solely for the benefit of individuals with disabilities, this law extended rights for individuals with disabilities. This law protects individuals with disabilities from discrimination, ensures accessibility and requires most employers to make reasonable accommodations (ADA, 1990). For example, a student with an intellectual disability may have a transition plan that includes both work and school placements. This law provides student accessibility, reasonable accommodations and protection from discrimination. The following section will address English language learners (ELL).

English language learners (ELL). According to a policy brief on English language learners (ELL) from the National Council of Teachers of English (2008), an ELL is “an active learner of the English language who may benefit from various types of language support programs. This term is used mainly in the U.S. to describe K–12 students” (JRSOPR, p. 2). English language learners are required to take the same on-grade-level standardized tests and be included in the determination of Adequate Yearly Progress. According to Yell (2006), Title III of NCLB purports to ensure that “children and youth who are English language learners become proficient in English and in the core academic subjects” (p. 185). It is up to individual states and local school districts to establish “goals for increasing the speaking, listening, reading and writing skills of children and youth who are English language learners” (Yell, p. 185). Research-based language instruction must be used to teach the previously mentioned skills and assess student’s ability toward English proficiency (Yell).

Students with disadvantage or low-income. Students with disadvantage or low-income are determined by measures such as the number of students receiving free and reduced-price lunch. Schools with large populations of students with disadvantage or low-income are deemed Title 1 schools and receive funds from the school district that have previously been allocated from the Federal government. The title ensures that all children have a "fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments" (ESEA, 1965, para. 2). Allocation of funds will be addressed in the section on current situation under special populations.

In the following section, the Accountability/Standards for Educators are addressed. Included are the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the *No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001*, the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) and Teacher Certification Requirements.

Accountability Standards for Educators and Related Governance

National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

NCATE, an organization committed to all students receiving an education from a caring, competent, and highly qualified teacher was founded in 1954. The NCATE assists in establishing high quality teacher preparation through the process of professional accreditation of school, colleges and departments of education. The performance-based system of accreditation "fosters competent classroom teachers and other educators who work to improve the education of all P-12 students" (NCATE, n.d., para. 2). When NCATE became its own independent accrediting body, it replaced the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) as the sole agency responsible

for accreditation in teacher education and realized the need for a strong, independent, quality assurance instrument comprised of all key stakeholders in education. Another area in which accountability/standards for educators are delineated is the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) of 2001, which is addressed in the following section.

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001. In addition to ensuring the proficiency of English language learners in Title III of NCLB, the title authorized funds to recruit and train educators to implement professional development programs to prepare teachers and principals to use research-based instructional procedures and curricula to increase English language proficiency in students. Professional development activities must be research-based and be of sufficient intensity that they meaningfully improve teachers' performance (Yell, 2006, p. 185).

NCLB also provides funding for training and professional development activities associated with the highly qualified teacher requirements. Certain standards must be followed for funds that are used by the state or local school district. First, the “professional development activities must be grounded in scientifically based research” (Yell, 2006, p. 210). Second, “activities must be linked to raising instructional quality” (Yell, p. 210). Third, “activities must be of high quality, sustained, and intense, and they must have a classroom focus” (Yell, p. 210). Therefore, funds may not be used for one-day or short-term workshops (Yell, 2006).

In addition, the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) of 2001 provides funding to states through Teacher Quality Grants. The grants can be used for:

- providing scientifically based professional development activities for new and experienced teachers,

- recruiting new teachers, including teachers certified through alternative channels,
- streamlining licensing requirements,
- providing teacher support programs, including mentoring programs,
- paying bonuses to retain teachers,
- and measuring the effects of professional development programs on student achievement (Yell, 2006, p. 211).

In the following section, accountability/standards for educators are addressed. The Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) and Teacher Certification requirements are discussed.

The Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC).

InTASC consists of state education agencies and national educational associations “dedicated to the reform of the preparation, licensing, and on-going professional development of teachers” (InTASC, n.d., para. 1). The Consortium’s work is based on the premise that an effective teacher has the ability to integrate content knowledge with the strengths and needs of students insuring that all students “learn and perform at high levels” (InTASC, para. 1).

Teacher Certification Requirements. Teacher certification requirements also serve as a means for holding teachers to professional standards. Requirements for teacher certification vary across the nation and are regulated by individual state law. However, many national accrediting bodies and professional organizations, such as InTASC and NCATE ask that beginning teacher candidates possess knowledge, skills and dispositions in order to assist all students in learning (Shippen, Crites, Houchins, Ramsey & Simon,

2005). On the other hand, federal mandates for teacher quality continue to change and as a result, challenges remain in this area. In the December 2010 “lame duck session” of Congress, legislation was passed “[clarifying] the definition of a ‘highly qualified teacher’ ” (US Congress, 2010, "New Anomalies"). It is clear that ensuring highly qualified teachers is complex given state and national requirements and the variety of teacher preparation programs offered by colleges of education. As a result, it may be essential to examine resources that might be available to assist schools in this endeavor. Therefore, the following section will address the Professional Educational Partnerships including: Holmes Group/Partnership, the National Network for Educational Renewal, and the National Association for Professional Development Schools.

Professional Educational Partnerships

Holmes Group/Partnership

The Holmes Partnership, “a consortium of 96 research universities with professional education programs” (n.d.^a, para. 2) was developed as a response to “three disturbing trends in the immediate Nation at Risk reform climate” (The Holmes Partnership, n.d.^a, para. 2). These trends were:

- elimination or plan to eliminate schools of education to strengthen other professional schools presumably more worthy;
- perception that education of teachers (by the same universities and many policy makers) was not worth housing in the nation’s best schools and could instead be “entrusted to colleges and universities of lesser rank, many of them unaccredited and impoverished” (The Holmes Partnership, n.d.^a, para. 4); and

- apart from some of the education schools themselves, no one else believed that educational schools had “lived up to their responsibilities, or that they had much potential for doing so in the future” (The Holmes Partnership, n.d.^a, para 5).

The Holmes Partnership was not concerned that these allegations were true but wanted to determine a way to “make ed schools matter in the profession” (The Holmes Partnership, n.d.^a, para. 6). The Holmes Partnership members saw two means to accomplish their goal: (a) Strengthen the connection of Colleges/Schools of Education to the rest of the university, in particular the colleges of arts and sciences, and (b) the relationship with allies and partners within the profession (e.g., teachers, specialists, administrators, and their representatives). In order to accomplish these means, the group strove to:

- change the way teachers are educated,
- help construct a true profession of teaching,
- cooperate with school people in inquiry that transforms schools, and
- restructure colleges of education (The Holmes Partnership, n.d.^a, para. 8).

Then in May of 1986, the group published *Tomorrow’s Teachers*. This publication provided their vision of good teaching, analyzed the barriers to attainment, and recommended needed action to address five goals. These five goals are as follows:

- make teaching intellectually sound,
- recognize differences in teachers’ knowledge, skill, and commitment,
- create relevant and intellectually defensible standards of entry into teaching,
- connect schools of education to the schools, and

- make schools better places for practicing teachers to work and learn (p. 4.)

Further, in 1990, the Holmes Group developed a set of principles to guide the design of a Professional Development School. These principles were published in the group's second book, *Tomorrow's Schools*. The principles are:

- teaching and learning for understanding,
- creating a learning community,
- teaching and learning for understanding for everybody's children,
- continuing learning by teachers, teacher educators, and administrators,
- [conducting] thoughtful, long-term inquiry into teaching and learning by school and university faculty working as partners,
- and inventing a different kind of organizational structure of the school—one that can initiate these profound changes and support them over time (p. 7).

Then in 1995, *Tomorrow's Schools of Education* was published (The Holmes Group). The book was comprised of the group's analysis of how higher education needed to change if Colleges/Schools of Education were to deliver on the promises made in the first two books. The following year brought about change for the Holmes Group.

In 1996, the Holmes Group formed The Holmes Partnership. The partnership joined with the American Association of Teacher Education (AECTE), the National Education Association (NEA), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA), and the National Staff Development Council (NSCD) to create

a new organization that would put into action a reform agenda for the education of professionals who work in the schools. The organization is committed to accomplishing the goals the Holmes Group announced in its three books, *Tomorrow's Teachers* (1986), *Tomorrow's Schools* (1990), and *Tomorrow's Schools of Education* (1995). The members of The Holmes Partnership were to be partnerships of universities, schools and other professional organizations. This Partnership adopted six principal goals. These goals are as follows:

- high quality professional preparation,
- simultaneous renewal,
- equity, diversity and cultural competence,
- scholarly inquiry and programs of research,
- school and institutions of higher education-based faculty development, and
- policy initiation (The Holmes Partnership, n.d.^b, para. 1).

Currently the president of the Holmes Partnership sees the work of the next generation of partnerships focused around five focused goals. These include:

- fiscal,
- program development,
- engaged scholarship,
- Holmes Scholars®,
- and impact (The Holmes Partnership, n.d.^c, para. 3).

In addition, the president of the Holmes group envisions that these goals will assist The Holmes Partnership® in leading the way in “providing a new vision for public education that is more inclusive and attentive to the needs of students and their families

as they struggle to adept to a rapidly changing global economic environment” (The Holmes Group, n.d.^c, para. 4). In the following section, the work of the National Network for Educational Renewal is addressed.

The National Network for Educational Renewal (NNER)

John Goodlad, a steward for educational renewal, had a vision that was supported by the Center for Educational Renewal (CER) and Institute for Educational Inquiry (IEI). The CER was founded by John Goodlad, Kenneth A. Sirotnik, and Roger Soder to “advance the simultaneous renewal of P-12 schools and the education of educators within the larger context of education in a democracy” (IEI, n.d.^a, para. 1). The Center is housed in the University of Washington’s College of Education. A network of school-university partnerships was created through the use of several grants. There is a commitment to the “implementation of the Agenda for Education in a Democracy and the ongoing process of self-evaluation, reflection and change” (IEI, n.d.^b, p.3), referred to as simultaneous renewal of educator preparation and schooling. The Institute for Educational Inquiry (IEI), an independent, non-profit organization located in Seattle, Washington was founded by John Goodlad to “build on and advance the work of the Center” (IEI, n.d.^a, para. 2). The IEI grew out of the work of the Center for Educational Renewal.

The institute examines major problems facing schools and universities--problems that frequently have “far-reaching implications for students, parents, educators, and American Democracy” (IEI, n.d.^b, p. 1). Leaders of IEI concluded, based on their studies in the 1980s to 1990s, that “our nation does not have the necessary infrastructure for renewing either schooling or democracy” (Goodlad, Soder & McDaniel, 2008, p. 21).

In 1985, the implementation of Goodlad's vision became known as the National Network for Educational Renewal (NNER). The center and institute staff initially determined the functioning of NNER until 1998, when the NNER became a self-governing entity. The NNER is focused on promoting and implementing the agenda for education in a democracy. A leadership program at the core of the Institute of Educational Inquiry's (IEI) strategy of implementation introduced educators to the agenda and these educators have trained new leaders in the settings of the NNER (Goodlad et al., p. 21).

According to Ann Foster, the executive director of the NNER, currently 21 partnerships exist in the United States and Canada. Included are multiple school districts in each partnership and in two cases multiple universities (personal communication, December 8, 2010). The overall intent "is to change our elementary and secondary schools from a reactive to a renewing mode and prepare teachers and administrators for their role of moral stewardship" (Goodlad et al., p. 21).

In 2000, the need for more inclusive education for all students led to the creation of the National Association of Professional Development Schools (NAPDS) (NAPDS, n.d.). The details involving the NAPDS are addressed in the following section.

National Association of Professional Development Schools (NAPDS)

The NAPDS grew from an initial group of 600 educators, in the year 2000 at a co-sponsored PDS National conference by the University of South Carolina, to over 800 in the year 2010 with representatives from practically every state. Individuals who attended spoke highly of the conference's ability to attract a "near-equal balance of university and

preK-12 educators and an exclusive focus on issues relevant to Professional Development Schools” (NAPDS, n.d., paragraph two).

At the National Conference in 2003 a dialogue was started regarding the feasibility of creating a professional association in which yearlong conversation would occur. The 75 individuals who participated in that dialogue agreed that such an association was needed. This conversation led to the creation of the NAPDS three years later in 2005. Membership has continued to grow to over 3,000 educators from 48 states and five foreign countries. These individuals have either attended the national conference or joined the association independent of the conference.

The association published its first position paper in 2008 titled *What it Means to be a Professional Development School*© to “share with the educational community the National Association for Professional Development Schools’ (NAPDS) articulation of the term ‘Professional Development School’ ” (NAPDS, "Foreword"). The purpose was to recognize a tendency for the term PDS to be used to describe various models of school-university partnership work that may or may not be best described as PDS. Therefore, the intent of the statement is to “assert the *essentials* or fundamental qualities, of a Professional Development School” (NAPDS, foreword). Included in that statement were the nine essentials of a professional development school designed to serve as guiding principles. The nine required essentials of a PDS are listed below:

1. A comprehensive mission that is broader in its outreach and scope than the mission of any partner and that furthers the education profession and its responsibility to advance equity within schools and, by potential extension, the broader community;

2. A school-university culture committed to the preparation of future educators that embraces their active engagement in the school community;
3. Ongoing and reciprocal professional development for all participants guided by need;
4. A shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice by all participants;
5. Engagement in and public sharing of the results of deliberate investigations of practice by respective participants;
6. An articulation agreement developed by the respective participants delineating the roles and responsibilities of all involved;
7. A structure that allows all participants a forum for ongoing governance, reflection, and collaboration;
8. Work by college/university faculty and P-12 faculty in formal roles across institutional settings; and
9. Dedicated and shared resources and formal rewards and recognition structures (NAPDS, p. 2-3).

In the following section, the current situation at the federal, state and local level is addressed. Areas highlighted effect all students (NCLB), and special populations: students with disabilities, English language learners (ELL) and disadvantaged or low-income students.

Current Federal, State, and Local Contexts Related to NCLB and Special Population

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001

The *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)* of 2001 takes into account the performance of all students but also specific subgroups in respect to accountability.

“Individual subgroups [include]: ethnic and racial groups, low-income students, students with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency” (Hess & Petrilli, 2007, p. 29). The passage of the federal NCLB Act brought with it many mandates. One mandate of great importance in this study is that of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The school as a whole receives an AYP designation of overall performance based on achievement and participation in the English language arts and math assessments, and on a third indicator (average daily attendance or graduation rate as appropriate). The AYP analysis provides data about the nine student groups that may comprise a school’s population.

“In Nevada, populations with at least 25 students are evaluated” (NDE, n.d.^a, para. 2). The student groups include: (a) the entire school population, (b) American Indian/Alaska Natives, (c) Asian/Pacific Islanders, (d) Hispanic/[Latinos], (e) Black/African Americans, (f) White/Caucasians, (g) students with an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), (h) students of limited English proficiency (LEP), and (i) students receiving free or reduced price lunches (FRL). Lack of success of any one-student group, in reaching the achievement target or other indicator may result in the school not making AYP for the year (NDE, n.d.^a, para. 3). Schools are designated as “‘exemplary,’ ‘continuing exemplary,’ ‘exemplary turnaround,’ or ‘high achieving,’ ‘adequate,’ ‘on watch list,’ and ‘in need of improvement’ ” (NDE, n.d.^b, para. 1). “Schools that do not demonstrate adequate yearly progress for two consecutive years are designated In Need of Improvement” (NDE, n.d.^b, para. 2).

The local school district is one of the largest districts in the United States and is located in a major metropolitan area in the southwest portion of the U. S. Over 300,000 students currently reside in the district. According to the district website, the NCLB law

is built on “four common-sense pillars: accountability for results; an emphasis on doing what works based on scientific research; expanded parental options; and expanded local control and flexibility” (CCSD, n.d., para. 2). In addition, it provides parents the opportunity to choose other schools or access free tutoring if “their child attends a school that needs improvement” (CCSD, n.d., para. 3). The information shared on the district website is cited from information on the U.S. Department of Education website. The information shared is not extensive and merely provides a rough overview. Therefore, the information given in the special populations section will be taken from the school accountability report.

Special Populations

Students with disabilities. Statewide assessments of all students must be reported and students with disabilities are included in AYP. They are included both as members of the entire school population and as a separate subgroup. The intent of Congress including “students with disabilities with all students and then as a subgroup was to ensure that schools would be held accountable for the achievement of students with disabilities” (Yell, 2006, p. 195). Therefore making schools and school districts focus their attention on student’s “instruction and educational progress” (Yell, p. 195). The state and local school district use the acronym IEP to describe this student population. It stands for students with disabilities (NDE, 2010; PPDS, 2010, p. 2). For the 2009-2010 school year, there were 45,529 students identified in the state and 30,898 identified in the district as having a learning disability. Another special population is English language learners (ELL).

English language learners. In order to ensure that English language learners (ELL) become “proficient in English and the core academic subjects” (Yell, 2006, p. 185) goals for increasing the “speaking, listening, reading and writing skills” (Yell, p. 185) of students who are English language learners must be established by states and local school districts. The language instruction must be research-based and assess ability by measuring toward English proficiency.

“The number of Nevada [Limited English Proficient] students-students whose first language is not English-grew by 682% from 1988-89 (5, 175) to 1999-2000 (40, 469)” (NDE, 2002, p. 13). “The majority of Nevada LEP students speak Spanish (87%) with 4% speaking Asian languages and 9% speaking a language other than Spanish or any of the Asian languages” (NDE, 2002, p. 13). Therefore, conversing with students with limited English proficiency and teaching academic subjects can not only be a challenge linguistically but also culturally.

Research involving the instruction of students with Limited English Proficiency suggests that using the native language of an individual initially assists in the student making the “transition more quickly to functional use of English and development of academic skill levels” (NDE, p. 13). “Of the 34,470 [students with limited English proficiency] enrolled in Nevada schools during the 1998-1999 school year, 5,808 were involved in instruction that incorporated the student’s native language while 28,404 were not. In required testing, [students’ with limited English proficiency] performances across the grades in reading and science were extremely low” (NDE, p. 13).

Students with limited English proficiency are included in AYP. They are included both as members of the entire school population and as a separate subgroup.

The state and local school district use the acronym LEP to describe this student population. It stands for limited English proficient (NDE, 2010; PPDS, 2010, p. 2). For the 2009-2010 school year there were 70,996 students identified in the state and 56,232 identified in the district as a second language learner or limited English proficient. An additional special population is students with disadvantage or low-income.

Students with disadvantage or low-income. Students with disadvantage or low-income are determined by measures such as the number of students receiving free and reduced-price lunch. Schools with large populations of students with disadvantage or low-income are deemed Title 1 schools and receive funds from the school district. These funds can be used for schoolwide programs, benefitting the entire school “population when more than 40% of the students are from low-income families and targeted assistance programs, which are specialized programs for children who are failing or are at risk of failing to meet the state’s academic standards” (Yell, 2006, p. 183). Students with disadvantage or low-income are included in AYP. They are included both as members of the entire school population and as a separate subgroup. The state and local school district use the acronym FRL to describe this student population. It stands for *free or reduced-price lunch* since this designation is the approach used to calculate students that are disadvantaged or low-income (NDE, 2010). For the 2009-2010 school year there were 182,784 students identified in the state and 135,083 identified in the district as disadvantaged or low-income. The final special population included in this study is students who are transient/mobile.

Students who are transient/mobile. Students who have been enrolled for a full academic year--considered Year In School (YIS) for school evaluations and Year in

District (YID) for district evaluations--are included in the calculation for proficiency (PAC) based on achievement performance. In contrast, test participation and Other Indicator performance do not include the YIS and YID filter in defining the eligible student population; all students, even those not enrolled for a full academic year, are included in Participation (PART) and Other Indicator achievement indicators (NDE, 2010, p. 12). To judge which students will be included in the PAC analysis, continuously enrolled is defined as any student who is considered to be enrolled at a particular school for a full academic year (FAY). He or she will be considered continuously enrolled if the student was enrolled in the particular school on or before the official count day of students, which occurs on the fourth first day of the school year, through the specified window, which occurs in mid-spring (NDE, 2010, p. 12). According to the 2009-2010 school district (CCSD) accountability reports, the transiency rate for the district was 32.5%. Individual school accountability reports include the transience rate for the district and the individual school.

Many challenges facing schools today include meeting the demands of mandates, especially in schools with a wide range of diverse needs such as high rates of poverty, student transience/mobility, individuals with disabilities and English language learners. Therefore, the proposed research subsequent to this section delineates the current problem and the methodology to be used. Research questions will be analyzed and results may inform future educational practice.

Statement of Problem

Despite the implementation of standards and access to resources, many schools serving diverse learners are failing to make adequate yearly progress (Dixt & Shulleeta,

2010; Spivey, 2010). Many of these schools have the support of numerous resources including college and university partnerships, school districts, funding from state and federal initiatives, and access to national and professional organizations. However, adequate yearly progress is still not being met by many schools. The literature outlines many reasons why this may be occurring, including inequalities for some of the nation's most diverse learners both in respect to implementation of required mandates and assessments used to measure student proficiency. The individuals that seem to be most affected are students with disabilities, English language learners, low-income or disadvantaged learners and students who are transient. These individuals are categorized in the determination of adequate yearly progress as special populations and the literature supports that these areas can affect a school in achieving adequate yearly progress.

Purpose of Study and Related Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to examine the factors that may contribute to a school making or not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The following research questions were developed to address this purpose:

1. Is there an academic difference between students who attend a professional development school (PDS) or non-professional development school (non-PDS) in terms of achieving AYP?
2. Is there an association between students' demographic data and AYP Status? (Needs Improvement, Meets and/or Exceeds)
3. Do student language, transiency, and prevalence of disability predict AYP status?

4. Do CRT and Writing Proficiency scores adequately discriminate AYP status (Needs Improvement, Meets, and/or Exceeds)?

Significance

To date, this will be the first study conducted using a Professional Development School in Needs Improvement (Year 4) with respect to Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Therefore, findings from this study may uncover reasons why a school may not be making AYP, and may lead to future decisions for positively affecting AYP outcomes that may include curricula, instruction, and incentives for students and schools. Additionally, this study will contribute to the existing literature base related to professional development schools (PDS) and non-professional development schools and making AYP particularly in respect to the four special populations: students with disabilities, English language learners, low-income or disadvantaged learners and students who are transient.

Limitations of the study

The major limitation to this study is use of a sample of convenience. The participants were teachers/administrators (2009-2010 academic school year) at two professional development schools (PDSs) and students at three comparable non-PDS schools. In addition, three past administrators at the PDS of focus and one academic manager from the district who has had extensive experience not only with the PDS of focus but non-PDS schools in the district. Check if same in other section. Extant data available for grades three through five for the 2009-2010 academic school year at the aforementioned schools was also used.

Definition of Terms

The following terms and definitions were used in this study. References are provided for each item when possible.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

Yearly benchmarks set toward achieving the goal of all students, including those with disabilities, to be achieving at grade level in reading and math by the end of the 2014 school year (Friend & Bursuck, 2011).

Child Find

Each state must seek out students who may be entitled to special education services.

English Language Learner (ELL)

As defined by the NCTE in a Policy Research Brief on ELL Learners “an active learner of the English language who may benefit from various types of language support programs. This term is used mainly in the U.S. to describe K–12 students” (NCTE, 2008). This student population may also be referred to as limited English proficient (LEP) (NDE, 2010). In addition, the percentage of English language learners only represents individuals at the pre-emergent and emergent level.

The Individual with Disabilities Education Improvement (IDEA) Act

Mandates that all students with disabilities ages birth to 21 receive the services needed including early intervention, special education and related services (IDEA).

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001

Mandates highly qualified teachers; assessments (reading, math, writing, and science) used for accountability purposes; implementation of research-based practices;

AYP requirements (yearly by 2014); delegation of Title 1 funding; assessments linked to state standards; funding for increased parent involvement; options: free tutoring, “safe-harbor”; instruction: upgraded focus on achievement (only reading, math, writing), increased differentiated instruction (student grouping) and grading: common assessments and reporting.

Safe Harbor

A provision of NCLB that states if a subgroup of students in a school falls short of AYP target, the school can still meet AYP if the percentage of students who score below the proficient level is decreased by 10% from the year before and there is an improvement for that subgroup on other indicators (Yell, 2006).

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504)

"A civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance. With respect to public school, Section 504 requires administrators, teachers, school psychologists, and other school personnel to identify students with disabilities and afford these students educational opportunities equal to those received by students without disabilities. This means that students with disabilities should be allowed to participate in the same academic and non academic activities as their nondisabled peers" (Yell, 2006, p. 120).

Title I of NCLB

“The purpose of this title is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach,

at a minimum, proficiency on challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments” (ESEA, 1965, para. 2).

Transiency

A word used by the local school district to describe and categorize student mobility. The words student transience and student mobility may also be used in this study to describe or identify student mobility. The term student mobility is more widely used in the literature to describe this population.

Watch

"The Watch List identifies schools, which are in their first year of not having demonstrated Adequate Yearly Progress. Beyond being classified as not demonstrating AYP, schools are designated as being on watch for the any of the three AYP content areas (1-ELA [English Language Arts], 2-mathematics, 3-other indicator) in which they did not meet the target goals. Schools can be placed on the Watch List for ELA or math because of a problem with participation or achievement or both, or schools can be placed on the Watch List for the other indicator by failing to meet the other indicator criteria" (NDE, 2007, p. 8)

Zero Reject

All students with disabilities, regardless of severity, are "entitled to a free appropriate public education” (Yell, 2006, p. 91).

Summary

Despite the implementation of standards and access to resources, a local Professional Development School serving diverse learners is in Need of Improvement (Year 4) with respect to Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). In this study, factors that may

have an affect on the school making AYP were examined. Areas to be examined included: language, transiency, mandates, services, resources and AYP assessments.

Chapter Two includes the Review of Literature. This review addresses the literature by summarizing the literature related to the four special populations of focus in this study: students with disabilities, English language learners, disadvantaged or low-income students and students who are transient/mobile.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a summary and an analysis of the existing professional literature related to the four special populations who were the focus in this study: students with disabilities, English language learners, disadvantaged or low-income students and students who are transient/mobile. Knowledge of this literature base is needed to understand the background knowledge pertaining to the subgroups who are the focus in this study. The literature review procedures used to locate experimental studies involving the four special populations are included in the beginning of the chapter. Then, the experimental studies related to the four special populations are summarized and analyzed. Finally, a summary and synthesis of the research on the four special populations is provided.

Literature Review Procedures

A systematic search through five computerized databases (i.e., Academic Search Premier, ERIC, PsycARTICLES, PsychINFO and Education: A Sage Collection) was conducted. The following descriptors were used: disability and adequate yearly progress, disability and AYP, English language learners and adequate yearly progress, limited English proficient and adequate yearly progress, English language learners and AYP, experimental studies AYP and Title 1, experimental studies adequate yearly progress and free and reduced lunch, experimental studies adequate yearly progress and FRL, experimental studies adequate yearly progress and disadvantaged and low income students, experimental studies and student mobility, elementary school student mobility, elementary student mobility, elementary student transience and elementary school student transience.

Next, a manual search of the latest issues of journals that emerged from the computerized search took place. Included in the manual journal search were *Exceptional Children* (Winter 2011), *Education in a Democracy: A Journal of the NNER* (Fall 2009-Fall 2010) and *School-University Partnerships: The Journal of the National Association for Professional Development Schools* (Fall 2004 to Fall 2010). The last step in the search process involved an ancestral search through the reference lists of the obtained articles.

Selection Criteria

Studies were included in this review if (a) the procedures and data-based results were published between 1985 and 2011, (b) the subjects were elementary or secondary students identified as one of the four special populations, (c) at least two subjects from at least one of the four special populations were included in the study, and (d) the study was focused on educational conditions in respect to one of the four special populations.

Review and Analysis of Studies

This review of the literature examines experimental studies that included students from at least one of the four special populations defined as subgroups in determining adequate yearly progress. These four populations are not only subgroups in determining adequate yearly progress but also strongly supported in the literature as factors that can affect a school in achieving adequate yearly progress.

Students with Disabilities

Eckes and Swando (2009) examined special education subgroups under NCLB. The researchers found that schools that failed to make AYP usually did so under the subgroup of individuals with disabilities because this subgroup is "expected to maintain the exact same proficiency levels as their general education peers" (2009, p. 2479). This is problematic since many students in special education often begin with lower than average test scores than general education students and "NCLB expects a level of uniform academic performance that fundamentally conflicts with the wide range of disabilities that students in special education subgroups may have" (Eckes & Swando, p. 2492).

Extant data from three state departments of education: California, Texas and Florida in 2005 were used for this study. Public school enrollment in these three states totaled 13.3 million students and of these, approximately 1.5 million students received special education services under IDEA. English and math proficiency level data in all elementary, middle and high schools in each of the three states were included. These states were selected because their size and diversity of students allowed for generalization to the nation as a whole.

Data analyses using cross-tabulations, independent-sample *t* tests, and logistic regression were the methods utilized to specifically analyze the performance of the student subgroup of students with disabilities. Eckes and Swando analyzed data from schools that failed to make AYP utilizing the current NCLB subgroup reporting methods, noting that in California, "schools with special education subgroups are much less likely to make AYP than schools without special education subgroups" (Eckes & Swando,

2009, p. 2486). The authors reached a similar conclusion once the Texas data had been analyzed. Data from the schools in Florida, however, indicated that schools containing special education subgroups were more likely than schools without special education subgroups to make AYP. Eckes and Swando noted, however, that this difference appeared to be a function of differing definition of special education subgroups in Florida—30 students per school in Florida versus 50 students in California and Texas. Upon further analysis of the data, they found that when the subgroup size was set at 50, as in California and Texas, "results...virtually disappear" (Eckes & Swando, p. 2489), resulting in a similar conclusion to that of California and Texas. The authors suggested "that only counting schools with large subgroups of special education students in AYP calculations can have a negative effect on overall school AYP" (Eckes & Swando, p. 2489). Therefore by setting the threshold higher, schools and special education programs may actually be harmed "leading to an increase in blaming and scapegoating of special education students for causing their schools to fail AYP" (Eckes & Swando, p. 2490). An additional conclusion from this study, supported by previous research, validated "the conceptual disconnect between NCLB's focus...school success above individual student success, and IDEA's focus on educational experiences of the individual student" (Eckes & Swando, p. 2491). Although the sample size included data from three very large and diverse states, the lack of uniformity in the definition of the special education subgroup (i.e., 30 versus 50 per school) made cross-state comparisons problematic. The data were in a format that allowed disaggregation, however, and therefore allowed the authors to compare the three states' data and justify their final conclusions. In the next study by

Drame (2010) presented an alternative approach to the current accountability framework of *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) of 2001.

Drame (2010) examined measuring academic growth in students with disabilities in charter schools. The study was conducted in four urban charter schools focusing on reading and math achievement. The researchers were posing an alternative approach to the current accountability framework of NCLB that uses a system of rewarding or sanctioning schools based on the percentage of students obtaining proficient scores on reading and math. The current system does not account for academic progress a student made from one year to the next, but instead uses one single measure. According to Drame (2010), many in the field are questioning the fairness of this occurrence. This one measure does not take into account whether a student made no progress, made significant progress, or "fell behind from a single score" (Drame, p. 383). Therefore, the use of a growth measure is designed to not only evaluate how a student performed in respect to state standards, but also show how much progress was made from one point to another.

Fifty-one students with disabilities and 360 students without disabilities were included in the analysis. The annual achievement scores used were from the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination-Criterion-Referenced Tests (WKCE). Reading and math data were analyzed from four charter schools consisting of fourth grade students who were being tested in the fall of 2004 and again in fifth grade for the fall of 2005. Descriptive data were used to determine how much growth occurred during the academic year. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used among groups for growth scores and paired sample t-tests were conducted to determine "whether or not within-

group differences in reading and math achievement over time were statistically significant" (Drame, p. 384).

Growth scores were computed by subtracting each student's fall 2004 scaled score from his/her fall 2005 score both for reading and math subtests. It was interesting to note that both students with and without disabilities experienced a reduction in achievement in reading and math (Drame, 2010). One-way ANOVAs were conducted on the growth scores for each student in the database. These analyses indicated that, "as a group, there were no significant differences between students with and without disabilities in the amount of growth in reading they experienced from 2004 to 2005" (Drame, p. 387). However, students with disabilities experienced significantly less growth in math compared to their peers without disabilities. In addition, tests of differences in two means were run using a repeated measure design with dependent samples. "These paired dependent samples *t* tests were conducted to determine whether or not an individual student experienced a significant change in his/her reading and math scale scores from 2004-2005" (Drame, p. 388). Results indicated that both students with and without disabilities differed significantly on "individually paired scores in reading and math from Fall 2004 to Fall 2005" (Drame, p. 388). Individual students with disabilities performed significantly better in reading and math. Individual students without disabilities performed significantly better in reading from Fall 2004 to Fall 2005; however, there was no significant change in math achievement for students without disabilities. The results of the paired sample *t* tests indicated that students with disabilities performed significantly better in both reading and math in 2005 than in 2004 (Drame).

Growth models could be an important addition to a school's accountability system in that they represent a method for depicting an individual student's growth more conclusively. Drame (2010) acknowledged the idea of using a growth model coupled with a standardized measure might be a more robust option. Drame noted that more complex growth models are needed to minimize measurement error; however, with this type of model, difficulty in analyzing, interpreting and communicating the results will be increased. Another challenge of Drame's work was missing data. Student mobility predominantly from low-income families may have contributed to the missing or incomplete data making the growth model suspect.

In summary, both of the previous studies addressed the need to reflect growth and appropriate assessment with respect to students with disabilities. It was in the spirit of NCLB that students with disabilities be included in accountability to ensure they were being counted and considered both in policy and practice. Despite much having been written on the special population (disability), related experimental studies found in the review of the literature were limited. This lack of experimental studies supported the need for additional experimental studies conducted on this population with respect to assessment and addressing adequate yearly progress. In the following section, another special population, English language learners, is addressed.

English Language Learners (ELL)

English language learners (ELL), also identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP), will be addressed in this section. Three studies will be included.

Abedi (2004) examined the *No Child Left Behind Act (2001)* as well as issues related to assessment and accountability with English language learners. Abedi

compared two methods of calculating AYP for LEP students, the conjunctive and compensatory methods. NCLB currently requires a "conjunctive model in which scores on all of the measures that are required for AYP must be above the criterion point or cut scores" (Abedi, p. 9). In contrast, the 1994 Improving America's Schools Act (IASA), a precursor to NCLB, allowed the use of a compensatory model for accountability, thereby allowing for "higher performance in one subject area [to] compensate for lower performance in another subject area" (Abedi, p. 9).

Abedi used data from large educational databases from two states with student enrollment totaling over one million students, including over 170,000 students with limited English proficiency. He also used data from two urban school districts with a total of more than 100,000 students including over 13,000 with limited English proficiency. Abedi applied both models, compensatory and conjunctive, and found they produced a large difference in outcomes based on the two models. The differences were largest in grade 4 data and smallest in grades 7 and 11. "However, the difference between outcomes based on the two models was large" (Abedi, p. 9). Abedi concluded, "It is quite clear that NCLB is more strict in terms of criteria to judge students performance. The issues...of compensatory versus conjunctive...are more pronounced for LEP students" (p. 9). Abedi concurs with the current literature base supporting the goals and true spirit of NCLB while acknowledging the difficulties of a "one size fits all" methodology and approach to accountability. He concluded with an "interactive school achievement model for LEP students" (p. 12), which consists of a broader approach to meeting AYP, including classification, instruction, and assessment (Abedi). While the issues related subgroup populations are complicated, Abedi urged "policymakers,

lawmakers, and decision makers...to make appropriate action to correct the inequities resulting from the NCLB in regard to the subgroups targeted ...particularly the LEP student subgroup" (Abedi, p. 13). An additional study in respect to the special population ELL is addressed in the following paragraph.

Geller and Werner (2006) examined the participation, achievement, and funding of Hispanic/Latino students in public schools in Minnesota. There were several purposes outlined for the study; however, the most pertinent to the current review of literature is "to learn about programmatic activities undertaken by schools to improve the retention and achievement of Latino students" (Geller & Werner, p. 6). The authors focused on school districts having individual school enrollments of Latino students at 10% of the total student enrollment or more. In 2004-2005, 36 Minnesota school districts (students assessed in third and fifth grades totaled approximately 7,000 with approximately 1,600 being defined as Hispanic) met the threshold of student enrollment. Data were gathered from the grade three and grade five Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) Math and Reading Proficiency 2004-2005. The Minnesota Basic Skills Test (BST) was also used in the study. The BST, a "pass/fail" test, serves as a gatekeeper for high school graduation. The authors also used high school graduation data from the Minnesota Department of Education. Geller and Werner analyzed student scores on the MCA both for Hispanic and non-Hispanic students in the threshold districts. The student scores were categorized as *percent proficient*. They then compared the Hispanic percent proficient with the non-Hispanic percent proficient using basic subtraction, and labeled this as the achievement gap (percentage point difference). The authors concluded that, "Latino students appear to start their school experience academically disadvantaged as

indicated by third grade test scores, where the achievement gap averages approximately 30 percentage points between Hispanic and non-Hispanic students" (Geller & Werner, p. 20). Furthermore "this achievement gap does not appear to decrease over time...in many districts it actually increases...further examination documents that as each year passes fewer and fewer Latino students are [even] taking these standardized tests" (Geller & Werner, p. 20). There were several limitations to this study. One limitation was that very small districts, although they met the 10% threshold of Latino students, did not have a total of students that was sufficient enough to meet Minnesota's requirements for releasing standardized test scores; therefore, they were not included in the study. Another limitation was the lack of an advanced description of the data analysis and advanced statistical methods used in the study. The authors also attempted to study grade progression, school retention and student mobility. The authors acknowledged that the data led them to have "confidence in the general trends...but somewhat less confidence in the precise percentages reported" (Geller & Werner, p. 21). Again this limitation of the study was due to the complexity of tracking individual students through ninth to 12th grades. In the next study, Haas and Huang (2010) further addressed the needs of the special population with respect to English language learners.

Haas and Huang (2010) conducted this study in response to a request from the Arizona Department of Education to inform "policies, programs, and resources to support the education of English language learners" (p. 1). The authors addressed how the number and percentage of ELL students varied by public school in Arizona and how the percentage of ELL students varied by school level, percentage of students eligible for free and reduced lunch, school type, and school location in Arizona.

All 1,878 Arizona schools, and 166,437 enrolled students who were English language learners were included in the analysis. "Since the entire population of Arizona schools and students were included in the analysis, no statistical tests were computed" (Haas & Huang, 2010, p. 2). Haas and Huang used three data sources: individual student data for 2007/2008 school year from the Arizona Department of Education that included identification as an ELL student and eligibility to receive free or reduced price lunch; school type data (traditional, alternative, and charter) for the 2008/2009 from Arizona Department of Education website; and U.S. Department of Education 2009 common core of data including school level, location, and urban centric designation.

Haas and Huang (2010) found six counties with the overall lowest student enrollment had schools with no ELL students or no schools with greater than 50% of ELL students. They further found

no schools having zero percent eligibility for free or reduced price lunch had concentrations of ELL students higher than 25%, while 64% of schools with more than 75% lunch eligibility had concentrations greater than 25% (some greater than 50%) [Furthermore,] 69% of ELL students attended schools with 113-853 ELL students [and 25% of ELL students attended schools having 31-113 ELL students] (Haas & Huang, p. 4).

In addition, Haas and Huang, found concentrations of ELL students were lower at higher school levels (middle and high school). Schools with higher percentages (higher than 50%) of ELL students decreased from elementary (11%) to middle school (one percent) and high school (one percent) (Haas & Huang, 2010).

They also found differences by type of school (traditional public, charter, and alternative public schools), with traditional public schools having more schools with a greater than 50% concentration of ELL students and charter schools having the lowest concentration (Haas & Huang, 2010). Differences were also found among urban, suburban, and rural schools with the highest concentration of ELL students in the urban schools. Ten percent of urban schools had concentrations of over 50%. In contrast, only 6% of rural schools and 2% of suburban schools had concentrations of over 50%.

A strength of the study was including data from all Arizona public schools and all enrolled students in these schools. There was also a very small amount of missing data (<1%). One of the limitations of the study is that it may have underidentified students with English fluency difficulties because only students identified as ELL students during the 2007/08 school year were considered. Students who were designated ELL in previous years or non-native English speakers who were never identified as ELL due to passing the state English language proficiency test were therefore not counted.

The authors also reported results by individual school characteristics. Furthermore, they did not group schools by "overlapping characteristics, such as school level and eligibility for free and reduced price lunch or school type and location" (Haas & Huang, 2010, p. 9).

In summary, Abedi (2004) acknowledged that NCLB has more stringent requirements with respect to meeting proficiency in the subgroup LEP. Geller and Werner (2006) reported that Latino students appear to begin their school experience at an academic disadvantage. Finally, Haas and Huang (2010) found that more second language learners were found in elementary schools than middle and high schools. These

three findings are not only important, but also need to be acknowledged in informing policies that affect not only this special population and, potentially, a greater population of students as a whole. In the next section, the special population of disadvantaged or low-income students is addressed.

Students with Disadvantage or Low-Income

Students with disadvantage or low-income are identified at the national, state and local level as free and reduced price lunch (FRL). This measure is a proxy often used in studies of schools and students to identify students with disadvantage or low-income. In this section three studies will be included.

Fisher, Frey and Lapp (2009) studied a school wide approach to content literacy instruction as an effective way to raise achievement in a low income, high needs school, as identified by a high percentage of students being eligible for free and reduced price lunch. The authors acknowledged that although content literacy instruction methods have been used to help students learn, there are few systematic analyses addressing the "ways in which failing schools change over time to meet the needs of their students" (Fisher et al., p. 386). This formative experiment "provided a unique opportunity to document and study a whole school change as teachers attempted to increase student achievement" (Fisher et al., p. 387) and attempted to meet state accountability standards and ensure their students' success. The study was conducted in one large high school with a very diverse student population of over 2,000 students. The student body consisted of 40% identified as homeless; 23% identified as having a disability; and "93% identified as Latino, African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, or Native Peoples" (Fisher et al., p.

387). The graduation rate in the year the study was begun (2002) was 67% and only 12% of the students scored proficient or higher on the state reading assessment.

The formative research design utilized both qualitative and quantitative methods to "focus on what it takes to achieve a pedagogical goal as well as the factors that inhibit or enhance the effectiveness of the intervention" (Fisher et al., 2009, p. 387). Assessment data focused on the schoolwide literacy intervention that had been established collaboratively with staff, administration and researchers at the start of the study. Data were gathered and documented during ongoing professional development sessions and extensive classroom observations over the two years of the study.

At the end of the first six months of the school wide intervention, reading proficiency that had been steady over the five previous years at only 12% of students meeting the proficiency standard, increased to 21% proficient.

Two years later, 47% of the students were proficient in reading and the school met state and federal accountability targets. After 2 1/2 years of implementation, 54% scored as proficient on the state assessment and the graduation rate had increased nearly 10% to a rate of 73% of [the student body] graduating from the school. (Fisher et al., 2009, p. 394)

The authors reported "the problem is not the development of a plan, but rather the implementation of the plan. [The plan] had to [be] modified to account for student behavioral concerns and the number of new teachers starting at the school each year" (Fisher et al., 2009, p. 395). While they noted that lack of support from the administrative team was a problem, there was still significant positive achievement gains in this very diverse and high need school as "a result of purposeful integration of content

literacy instruction" (Fisher et al., p. 395). Fisher et al. (2009) also reflected that the students' academic changes and gains were beyond those that are measured by state proficiency tests and that students "read more and better than ever before" (Fisher et al., p. 395).

There are limitations with respect to replication of this study because the intervention and implementation were developed to meet the specific needs of the teachers, students and administrative constraints of one specific school. Therefore, the variability of the school and community in which it exists should be considered prior to replication. Findings from this study may also provide hope and encouragement to teachers and administrators that significant improvement can be achieved even in a very high needs school with a chronic history of underperformance and poor student achievement. An additional study in respect to the special population disadvantaged or low-income students is addressed in the following paragraph.

McQuillan and Salomon-Fernandez (2008) studied the impact of state department of education intervention on three underperforming schools (as defined by NCLB) in Massachusetts. Each of the schools had very high numbers of low socio-economic students as evidenced by free and reduced lunch rates of between 50 and 75% of the student body. In addition, the number of students attending the school and speaking a first language other than English was very high. The three underperforming schools' percentages of ELL students ranged from 1/3 of students to more than 1/2 of all students. They were also very racially and ethnically diverse, with two of the schools having at least 50% of their students African-American and similar percentages of Hispanic/Latino students, with smaller percentages of Asian and White students. In one school,

University Middle School, 50% of the students were White and more than 1/3 spoke a first language other than English.

The purpose of the study was to contribute to the emerging body of knowledge on state-led intervention in low-performing schools by exploring two questions: How do teachers and administrators...perceive state intervention at their schools? And based on their perceptions, what might be done to make the intervention process more effective? (McQuillan & Salomon-Fernandez, 2008, p. 3)

In 2005, the authors began gathering information through qualitative field investigations in three public schools in Massachusetts, including two middle schools and a high school. These schools were selected for state department of education intervention because of “consistently low Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) scores” (McQuillan & Salomon-Fernandez, 2008, p. 3). Two of the schools were subsequently designated as underperforming. Initial data were elicited through 35 hours of interviews with teachers and administrators at the three schools, site observations at each school, and “analyses of varied documents” (McQuillan & Salomon-Fernandez, p. 6). In the fall of 2006, a survey was designed and sent to the 23 school principals of schools that had been deemed underperforming by the state department of education. Twenty-two principals returned the survey. “The overarching themes included elements key to intervention effectiveness, MCAS as a valid measure of achievement, financial and technical support effectiveness of state intervention” (McQuillan & Salomon-Fernandez, p. 7). Since the sample size was small, the researchers were limited in the statistical techniques they could apply to the data. However, they found that “state

intervention affected all schools in some similar ways” (McQuillan & Salomon-Fernandez, p. 8). In the final sections of the study, the authors documented and analyzed the similar ways in which schools were affected.

Overall, the three schools with state intervention welcomed the intervention and thought that it would benefit the underserved ESL students. Teachers did describe feeling unfairly treated, however, arguing that “the state ignored myriad factors that affected student learning but which were outside their control...was it fair to hold only them accountable?” (McQuillan & Salomon-Fernandez, 2008, p. 13). The number of students with special needs in these schools also represented an additional structural factor that was beyond teachers’ control; yet it greatly influenced student achievement and MCAS scores. Several teachers mentioned their large numbers of ELL students and a new Massachusetts law that eliminated bilingual education in the state. Some questioned the use of the single MCAS exam as “key to school evaluations” (McQuillan & Salomon-Fernandez, p. 15). Many teachers and principals felt demoralized, and during interviews, disclosed that “teachers internalize the underperforming label” (McQuillan & Salomon-Fernandez, p.16). Some findings from interviews and surveys suggested that there were broadly differing perceptions of the perceived outcomes of state intervention; some believed it had led to positive outcomes; some thought the intervention had little if any impact on their schools; and some viewed the intervention process as largely negative. Many of the findings from the interviews and surveys included specific items that were perceived as having limited or negative impact on schools and their staff. Furthermore, some teachers reported feeling disrespect for and mistrust of the state intervention teams. There were some perceived positive benefits to students; many staff

members believed that “MCAS has become the driving force behind the school curriculum which has narrowed accordingly as teachers and administrators focused on state standards and preparing students for the exam” (McQuillan & Salomon-Fernandez, p. 23). For some staff members this narrowing of the curriculum undermined their autonomy as teachers and ultimately student achievement. Others thought the MCAS driven curriculum represented a valuable direction that was helpful to assuring student achievement. Some teachers also believed that emphasis of MCCAS created a “wedge between teachers and student outcomes” (McQuillan & Salomon-Fernandez, p. 25). School staff members also thought that having their school designated as underperforming affected students in a disheartening way, affirming a negative view of low-income students of color. “Although students are intended beneficiaries of state intervention, the benefits...seem mixed. In some cases, intervention has led teachers to be more reflective about their work, to pay greater attention to lesson plans and to mobilize around school improvement plans” (McQuillan & Salomon-Fernandez, p. 27). Other teachers commented negatively and felt constrained and therefore devoted less time and attention to engaging interactive teaching methods with students; this was seen as detrimental to students’ ultimate achievement.

In their conclusions, the authors acknowledged the challenge of making a mandated state intervention process into truly helpful assistance, especially without additional funding and also expertise at the state department of education, which is lacking in many such departments. The limited staffing and expertise at state departments of education may require policy makers to give a major infusion of financial resources for these efforts if they are to be successful. The results also indicated that

most teachers and administrators know that their schools face very serious challenges and they generally welcomed outside assistance. It must be acknowledged that while state intervention can be energizing on one hand, it is emotionally challenging and the process should be made more inclusive by bringing teachers and administrators into the process in a more complete and respectful way. “States might also promote more productive relations with school personnel by explicitly identify the standards by which schools are judged” (McQuillan & Salomon-Fernandez, 2008, p. 30).

The authors concluded that future research on state intervention in low performing school needed to make student achievement a priority and pointed to the need for “longitudinal quantitative studies with a larger study population...to determine any correlation between being declared underperforming with increases in student performance” (McQuillan & Salomon-Fernandez, 2008, p. 30).

In review, Fisher et al. (2009) acknowledged that students made academic gains and that these academic changes and gains were beyond what was measured on the state proficiency tests. McQuillan and Salomon-Fernandez (2008) captured teachers' voices in their study and pointed out the effects that many of the mandates impose on schools. Therefore, mandates containing good intentions may not be aligned with what actually occurs in today's schools and many times unaligned with the original intent. In the next section, the special population of students who are transient and mobile is addressed.

Students who are Transient/Mobile

Student mobility, also referred to as student transience, is addressed in this section. Four studies on the topic of student mobility are included.

Heinlein and Shinn (2000) pointed out the critical importance of controlling for socioeconomic status (SES) in studies of mobility. Multiple definitions of mobility and school attainment exist; and, additionally, mobility is challenging to define and quantify. The most common factor specifying mobility in the literature is the number of moves made. However, even this reasonably straightforward variable has multiple definitions. For example, the “high mobility” group in this study has been defined “to include children with as many as 6 or more moves, or as few as 1 or more moves over varying time periods” (Heinlein & Shinn, p. 349). A distinction was made between residential mobility and school mobility since a change of address does not necessitate a change of school. Achievement tests, grades, and age-grade progress have been used to measure school achievement.

Heinlein and Shinn (2000) reviewed multiple studies involving the impact of mobility on children’s educational attainment. The findings were inconsistent.

Seven hundred and sixty-four sixth grade students enrolled in public elementary schools in one of the most mobile New York City (NYC) Community School Districts during the 1996-97 school year were included in the study. To be included in the study, students must have entered the NYC school system in their kindergarten year to allow for the total moves to be calculated accurately.

Heinlein and Shinn (2000) examined the relationship between school mobility and academic achievement in the sixth grade. Included in the examination were achievement on standardized tests and age-grade progress, with and without controls for third-grade achievement. All of the analyses controlled for gender and used an economic indicator. The number of admissions and discharges present in a student’s record determined school

mobility since kindergarten. The total numbers of moves, before Grade 3 and from Grades 4-6 were analyzed. The literature base and mobility distribution from the sample were used to determine mobility classifications.

Students who had moved a total of three or more times were considered highly mobile for the prediction of sixth-grade achievement. [Students] who had moved two or more times before the end of third grade or from fourth to sixth grade were considered highly mobile for predictions of third-grade achievement or sixth-grade achievement controlling for third-grade achievement. (Heinlein & Shinn, p. 352)

Heinlein and Shinn reported that mobility prior to Grade 3 mattered when previous achievement controls were not used. "Each move prior to Grade 3 was associated with a decrease of 2.4 percentile points in reading achievement...and a decrease of 1.4 percentile points in math achievement" (Heinlein & Shinn, p. 352). Moves made after third grade were unrelated to the outcome. According to Heinlein and Shinn, these conclusions are consistent with the majority of previous analyses where mobility is related to lower achievement when controls for prior achievement are not used; and in contrast, mobility was unrelated to changes in achievement when earlier achievement was controlled. Furthermore, a third variable, such as some characteristics of families, and/or "early mobility may be a more potent predictor of achievement than later mobility" (Heinlein & Shinn, p. 355). Heinlein and Shinn stated that the latter was more likely based on their final set of analyses. "Mobility prior to third grade was clearly predicative of all measures of achievement in sixth grade, whereas later mobility was not" (Heinlein & Shinn, p. 356). Reasons associated with the prevalence of early

mobility and student achievement could be attributed to the early years of elementary school are "a particularly critical period for attaining a foundation in basic skills" (Heinlein & Shinn, p. 356). Therefore, disruptions during this time might have lasting effects. In contrast, older students whose basic skills are already in place might cope with a move more readily. Also, because achievement is cumulative, "many of the skills that are assessed in sixth grade could have been acquired earlier, and would not be lost because of mobility" (Heinlein & Shinn, p. 356). Before firm conclusions are drawn, however, Heinlein and Shinn suggested replication of the study especially in relation to "the relative potency of early and late mobility" (Heinlein & Shinn, p. 356), due to limitations in the present work. Limitations to this study included a restriction of range and mobility, where mobility was much greater for kindergarten through third grade as compared to fourth through sixth grade, "where little mobility was evidenced" (Heinlein & Shinn, p. 356). The reason for this pattern could not be determined. In addition, it was not possible to track total mobility for students who had entered the school system after kindergarten, therefore these students were eliminated from the sample. Students who may have been more mobile might have led to a bias in the sample. Finally, the restricted range of socioeconomic status in the study might not have accounted for a greater "portion of variance in common with achievement and mobility" (Heinlein & Shinn, 2000, p. 356) than that of a more precise measure of socioeconomic status. The restricted range, however, allowed a relatively homogenous group to be examined because the majority of the students were recipients of free lunch. The findings from this study and the literature reviewed by Heinlein and Shinn support that "students who move frequently may be more vulnerable to school difficulties" (Heinlein & Shinn, 2000, p. 356). It was

also noted that implications of these findings might extend further than the school system and although "economic and social factors that lead to mobility may be beyond the control of the schools, school systems can work with other community groups to reduce disruptive moves" (Heinlein & Shinn, 2000, p. 356). In another study on mobility, Offenberg (2004) offers additional perspective on this topic.

Offenberg (2004) examined adequate yearly progress of schools from student achievement in highly mobile communities. The author stated that educational reforms "assume that the quality of the educational programs being offered by schools can be inferred from the achievements of the children who attend them" (Offenberg, 2004, p. 337). Offenberg followed a cohort of students for three years after the completion of first grade to examine the rates of school-to-school mobility and exit from schools.

Participants were first grade students in a cohort of 18,225 students in attendance at 172 of the district's regular-education elementary schools. Cases were excluded only because of missing data. Students were followed from June 1995 until June 1998. The use of grade point averages, usually the only academic achievement measures available for students in their early school careers, were computed from marks on report cards. Six schools and some students from other schools were excluded from analyses, when grade point average (GPA) was used because they did not have a complete set of marks in Reading, English, Math, Science and Social Studies. Therefore, 166 of the original 172 schools were included when grade point average was a variable.

A family of hierarchical models was used to explore how report card marks from first graders "predict the odds and character of within-district school-to-school transfers" (Offenberg, 2004, p. 337). In addition, the effects of two first grade school-community

variables were examined. These were a poverty index and a performance index on the mobility of students. Findings showed high mobility prevalent in most of the schools. In fact, combinations of student and school-community variables typically associated with "the need for improvement [was] present at schools with the highest mobility rates" (Offenberg, 2004, p. 337). Further,

a policy of inferring the success of school-based educational endeavors from school-level statistics can often be invalid in urban school districts due to student mobility, with the risk error likely to be the greatest at the schools where reform is most needed and No Child Left Behind sanctions are most likely (Offenberg, 2004, p. 337).

Offenberg (2004) stated that the approach to improving student achievement based on No Child Left Behind and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) was definitely school-centered. Further, he added that student achievement was influenced by a plethora of factors outside of the school. For example, research findings indicate that nutrition, family functioning and many other factors also influence student behavior and achievement; yet, these were not acknowledged. Offenberg stated that the "spirit of No Child Left Behind legislation and the policies underlying these efforts are based on the belief that equilibrium exists between the services a school provides and the attainment of its students" (p. 338). Offenberg looked historically at common characteristics of urban schools where "substantial levels of student mobility [arise] when students transfer among schools and exit from the system" (Offenberg, p. 338). Offenberg made the case that the link between the

programs offered by a school and its attendees' performance on criterion measures

is, at best, tenuous. It will show that ascribing student achievement to the operation of schools is often inappropriate, and implementation of reforms that ignore student mobility is poor educational policy. (p. 338)

In addition, the idea that mobility and exit rates could affect the "apparent performance of schools is not new, but is still not treated appropriately" (Offenberg, p. 338). In his review of literature, Offenberg examined many studies in which mobility was found to be a factor but not the sole reason affecting student achievement. Therefore, Offenberg examined whether student mobility

could jeopardize the attribution of education outcomes to schools. It focuses on discovering how prevalent school-to-school transfers and system exits were among Philadelphia public school students, whether the incidences of these events were influenced by students' early achievement, and whether they were moderated by the social class and the academic standing of students' first-grade schools (Offenberg, 2004, p. 340).

Additionally, the type of student mobility was explored. The type of student mobility included whether student's first move, if any, was during the 3 years following the completion of first grade and was a transfer to another school in the district or whether it was an exit from the school district.

Some of the trends and findings implied that "low achieving students who were in low-performing, high-poverty schools were more likely to move to another school than were other students" (Offenberg, 2004, p. 345); and that when a student with an average-GPA attended an average "[p]erformance Index school in an average index-of-poverty community, they were two times as likely to remain in [a comparable] school as transfer"

(Offenberg, p. 345). Therefore, if a first grade student attended a school with lower poverty or a higher performance, the odds "that an average student would transfer, [were decreased] whereas attending a higher poverty or lower performance school increased them" (Offenberg, 2004, p. 345). In addition, having an above-average GPA decreased the chance of a student transferring; if an above-average student attended a high-performance Index school, the odds of a student transferring were decreased even more.

A strength of the study was tracking a cohort of students for three years consisting of nearly all students in grade one. Students were chosen for each study component so that the "findings would be based on the largest student-pool possible, with cases excluded only because of missing data" (Offenberg, 2004, p. 340). Another study, Demie (2002) also examined student mobility and is addressed in the following paragraph.

Demie (2002) examined the effect of pupil mobility and educational achievement in an inner city Local Education Authority (LEA) in England. Demie analyzed 1999 data from three cohorts of students in one inner London LEA using British standardized assessments of academic performance at two primary school grade levels and one assessment at a secondary level. The sample included 2,403 students at the first assessment level (KS2), 1479 students at the second primary assessment level (KS3) and 1,225 students at the secondary assessment level (GCSE). Demographic data, including free lunch status, ethnicity, mobility data based on admission to the school, and levels of English language fluency were collected for each of the participants (Demie, 2002).

Additionally, detailed questionnaires were sent to all schools, both primary and secondary in the LEA being studied. These 67 questionnaires were sent to the head teacher at each school. Demie sought the head teachers' views on "the importance of

addressing pupil mobility problems in their school; mobile groups and housing and family situations contributing to pupil mobility; and strategies adopted or considered for the future to address mobility” (Demie, p. 199). Forty-eight questionnaires were returned, 42 from primary schools and six from the 10 secondary schools in the LEA (a response rate of 88% and 60% respectively.) Demie defined mobility for purposes of this study as “a child joining a school at a point other than at the start of the key stage” (Demie, 2002, p.199). This method took into account only inward mobility of students and did not include any outward mobility of students leaving a school. Previous studies indicated that inward mobility, rather than outward mobility provides the biggest challenge to academic performance. Demie (2002) found that an average of 21% of students were inwardly mobile according to her definition in the LEA’s primary schools and there were also 21% mobile students at the secondary school level. There was quite a large variation among primary schools studied and a there was a similar variation at the secondary schools studied. The mobility rate at some primary schools was as high as 54% and as low as 2% in other primary schools in the study. In the LEA’s, secondary schools the mobility varied from a high of 39% to a low of 2%.

Three other factors studied, including eligibility for free meals, levels of English proficiency and ethnicity appeared to be strongly related to mobility in both primary and secondary schools. Eighty-eight percent of the questionnaires were completed and returned to the researcher by head teachers in primary schools and 60% of those in secondary schools agreed that “pupil mobility was an issue for school management and development of strategies for raising standards in the school” (Demie, 2002, p. 202). From these responses, the author posited “it may be that mobility is more of an issue in

primary schools where the movement of a few children has a proportionately bigger effect than in secondary schools” (Demie, p. 202). Previous studies quoted by the author found this to be the case. The analysis of student performance on British standardized assessments at the three grade levels did find a “positive correlation between achievement and the length of time a pupil spent in the same school (Demie, p. 204). When the data were analyzed for the secondary schools, it was found that “pupils who had been in schools for the whole...period did markedly better than others who joined schools in later years” (Demie, p. 205). Demie reported, “by and large, mobility has a ‘negative effect’. However, it is important that these findings are interpreted with care” (Demie, p. 206). There were a small number of schools where this negative effect did not occur but because this negative effect occurred in a very few small schools, the author could not tell whether this difference was a result of the “social background of the mobile and stable pupils or from deliberate efforts on the part of these schools to address the mobility problem” (Demie, 2002, p. 206). Demie also referred to other studies that

have considered the possibility of compositional or contextual effects of other background factors with mobility...where mobility combines with one or more of these factors , especially economic disadvantage and low levels of language fluency, its effects may be particularly significant. (p. 210)

The findings of the empirical evidence of this study “suggest that when the three factors [free school meals, fluency in English and ethnic background] are taken into account with mobility, the negative effects on achievement of mobile versus non-mobile student groups is actually more pronounced” (Demie, p. 211). Data used to compare performance of the two groups, mobile and non-mobile suggested performance of mobile

students was well below that of the non-mobile group, in some cases as much as 50%. Findings validate those of previous studies that high mobility in the LEAs schools was strongly associated with many factors associated with “social deprivation” (p. 213) and high levels of student mobility have a negative effect on school performance measures. Demie concluded that the under-performance of mobile students, especially in schools that have many mobile students is a “cause for concern and obviously an issue that policymakers and schools need to address” (p. 213).

The conclusions of the study, especially as they might relate to U.S. schools, could be difficult to replicate due to the differing cultural and socio-political environment of England as compared with the U.S. as well as the structure of the educational system. Even within England, it is a study consisting only of one inner city London Local Education Authority. Therefore, the LEA used for the study may be significantly different than other urban, suburban or rural areas. The study design and data collected was cross-sectional, comparing the mobile and non-mobile students only at 11, 14, and 16 years of age. It is not possible to take a longitudinal look at a cohort of students from primary through secondary school in order to assess the differences in academic achievement that are related to mobility and other socio-economic and cultural factors. The author also acknowledged that the researchers were unable to study the interactions of mobility, ethnicity, social disadvantage and performance of the mobile and non-mobile groups within schools and the LEA. However, a strength of the study, was that it did combine both qualitative methods from the head teacher surveys that had a very high survey return rate, with quantitative analysis of achievement data for the two groups at the three assessment ages.

In summary, the previous three studies acknowledge that multiple factors, including mobility, may attribute to a school's supposed level of proficiency. Demie (2002) validated previous studies linking high mobility in the LEA schools and strong association with many factors in respect to “social deprivation” (Demie, p. 213). In addition, Demie (2002) acknowledged that high levels of student mobility have a negative effect on school performance measures. Heinlein and Shinn (2000) concurred with Demie that conclusions are consistent with the majority of previous analyses where mobility was related to lower achievement. However, they further noted that mobility was related to lower achievement when controls for prior achievement were not used and, in contrast, unrelated to changes in achievement when earlier achievement was controlled. Mobility was acknowledged as strong potential factor of underachievement of students but may not have been the sole contributing factor.

Review of Literature Summary

In the preceding review of the literature, empirical studies were examined regarding the four special populations: students with disabilities, English language learners, students with disadvantage or low-income and students who are transient/mobile. The individuals that make up these populations may be at a disadvantage with respect to student achievement. The need to reflect growth and administer appropriate assessments was addressed in the disability literature. In the section regarding English language learners, Geller and Werner (2006) reported that Latino students appear to begin their school experience at a disadvantage while Abedi (2004) acknowledged the more stringent requirements with respect to meeting proficiency in the subgroup LEP. Fisher et al. (2009) acknowledged that students made

academic changes and that these academic gains were beyond what was measured on the state proficient tests. To conclude, multiple factors, including mobility, may attribute to a school's supposed level of proficiency.

This Chapter has provided the Review of Literature with respect to the four special populations. In Chapter 3, the methodology used in this study is addressed.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to examine the factors that may contribute to a school making or not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The following research questions were developed to address this purpose:

Research Questions

1. Is there an academic difference between students who attend a professional development school (PDS) or non-professional development school (non-PDS) in terms of achieving AYP?
2. Is there an association between student's demographic data and AYP Status?
(*Needs Improvement, Meets, and/or Exceeds*)
3. Do student language, transiency, and prevalence of disability predict AYP status?
4. Do CRT scores and Writing Proficiency adequately discriminate AYP status
(*Needs Improvement, Meets, and/or Exceeds*)?

The purpose of this chapter is to present the methods and procedures for the study. The following five sections will be addressed in this chapter: design, setting, participants, procedures and summary.

Design

A mixed-methods approach was used for this study to answer the previous four questions most effectively. The following quantitative methods of multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), zero order correlation using polychoric (for ordered categorical data) and tetrachoric (for dichotomous data), discriminant function analysis (DFA), hierarchical linear regression, and zero order correlation were used to answer questions

one through four using extant student data (i.e., demographic, CRT scores grades 3-5, and Writing Proficiency scores grade 5). Qualitative methods were used to strengthen the study through the use of focus groups, interviews, and surveys to answer questions one through four. The use of componential analysis, data reduction, and display of the data provided depth and breadth to the study and provided the researcher with detailed accounts of the information collected “bringing meaning to raw inexpressive data” (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 157).

Setting

The setting was four urban elementary schools: two professional development schools (PDSs) and three non-PDS schools—*one Meeting, one Watch and three Needs Improvement* (Year 4) in a major metropolitan area in the southwest portion of the United States. The additional PDS and three non-PDS schools were comparable in terms of demographics (i.e., age, grade, ethnicity, transience/mobility, services: English language learner and disability and Title 1, plus or minus 5% of the PDS demographics). The location for this study was of particular interest based on the student diversity present in this setting and the amount of student transience. The PDS of focus for this study is a nine-month school, preK through grade 5 serving families in a zone determined by the District Board of Education. The PDS provides a unique educational environment for not only university students and faculty but also for students and teachers in the School District. Housed on a university campus in a major metropolitan area in the southwest portion of the United States, the PDS allows members of the partnership to participate jointly in teacher education and field-based research; engage in continuous joint

professional development; and through the use of shared resources, provide additional opportunities for student learning, as well as support for one another.

One additional PDS and three non-PDSs were included in this study. All five schools were within the same district.

Participants

Participants in this study included building principals of the non-PDS schools employed for the 2009-2010 school year and building principals/teachers employed for the 2009-2010 school year, including five years prior, focusing on the students in grade five academic experience (first through fifth grade) at the PDS.

Procedures

In the following sub-sections, the detailed account of procedures are addressed. These include setting selection, participant selection, data collection, data analyses and reliability of data analyses.

Setting Selection

The setting was five urban elementary schools two PDSs in Needs Improvement (Year 4) and three comparable non-PDS schools—*one Meeting, one Watch and three Needs Improvement* (Year 4) in a major metropolitan area in the southwest portion of the United States. Schools with comparable demographics to the professional development schools plus or minus 5% of PDS demographics were of priority for this study. Extant student data from all five schools were used to confirm eligibility with respect to grade level and comparable demographics plus or minus 5% of the primary PDS demographics of focus in this study. The sample size chosen for this study was also one of convenience.

Participant Selection

Participants for this study were selected from the PDS and non-PDS schools. They included building principals and teachers. They were asked to participate if employed for the 2009-2010 school year (non-PDS building principals) or employed for the 2009-2010 school year and/or five years prior (building principals/teachers at the PDS) focusing on the students in grade five academic experience (first through fifth grade).

Extant data (i.e., student demographics, CRT scores (3rd-5th grade) and Writing Proficiency scores (grade five) for all students in grade five for the 2009-2010 academic school year at two urban professional development schools (PDS) and three comparable non-PDS schools —*one Meeting, one Watch and three Needs Improvement* (Year 4) were used in this study. Student demographic data were used to confirm eligibility. Parent Permission and Student Assent forms were not necessary because the researcher used extant data that was coded for anonymity prior to researcher access and randomized upon researcher access. Building principals and teachers choosing to participate in the study were given copies (one to sign and one to keep) of the applicable consent forms: Informed Consent Form for Teachers/Audio/Video Permission (Appendix A) and Informed Consent Form for Administrators (Appendix B). All forms will be collected prior to data collection.

Data collection

A mixed methods approach was used to examine extant data and collect new data for this study. The following section provides information on the quantitative and qualitative approaches used to examine and collect data for this study.

Quantitative. Extant data for all students in grades three, four and five for the 2009-2010 academic school year at two urban professional development schools (PDS) and three comparable non-PDS schools—*one Meeting, one Watch and three Needs Improvement* (Year 4) were collected for this study. Demographic data was collected for all participants including:

- Grade
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Services
 - Disability
 - English language learner
 - Students qualifying for free/reduced lunch

Assessment scores for the Criterion Reference Test (CRT) were collected. In addition, Writing Proficiency (WP) assessments were collected.

Qualitative. Teacher focus group questions (Appendices C and D) and administrator survey (Appendix E) data were used for this study. Teachers at the PDS were asked questions regarding their experience teaching during the grade five 2009-2010 academic school year and/or the prior five years consisting of the grade five 2009-2010 first through fifth grade experience. When needed, follow up questions (Appendix D) were asked for clarification. The actual/potential follow-up questions were based on the results (e.g., if a teacher response is in need of clarification, a more detailed response was elicited by asking the following, "Tell me more about that and/or more about why

you feel this way"). Open-ended questions were used to gather additional detail or further elaboration. Closed-ended questions (Yes/No) may be used when needed.

Data Analyses

Both quantitative and qualitative data analyses methods were used. The following sections detail the processes to be used.

Quantitative

Descriptive statistics and Chi-square analysis of demographic data, multiple regression, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), hierarchical linear regression and zero order correlation were used to analyze quantitative data. Demographics (e.g., grade, gender, ethnicity) as mentioned in data collection were used for the descriptive statistics and Chi-square analysis.

The use of Chi-square, a nonparametric test, assisted in determining if what one observed in a distribution of frequencies was what one could expect to observe by chance (Salkind, 2007). In addition, the use of descriptive statistics made possible the description of the characteristics of the distribution of the demographic data collected. Below, details regarding the statistical procedures used to answer each question are given.

Question 1

Is there an academic difference between students who attend a professional development school (PDS) or non-professional development school (non-PDS) in terms of achieving AYP? To answer this question the data was submitted to a one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with type of school (PDS or non-PDS) serving as the independent variable and AYP (*Needs Improvement, Meets, or Exceeds*)

serving as the dependent variables. Each category of AYP was used as its own dependent variable as each one has its own range of scores (i.e., continua). Based on the CRT cut off values, a median split was conducted to separate students scores into each of the three categories of AYP. This retained a continuous scale and attempted to uncover any statistically and practically significant differences between a professional development school and non-professional development school in making AYP. The writing proficiency score was submitted to an individual one-way analysis of variance (separate analysis) instead of the MANOVA because writing proficiency data is only available for fifth graders.

Question 2

Is there an association between student's demographic data and AYP status?

(Needs Improvement, Meets, and/or Exceeds) To answer this question a zero order correlation was conducted using polychoric (for ordered categorical data) and tetrachoric (for dichotomous data) correlations rather than a Pearson's r . Polychoric and tetrachoric correlations mathematically transformed these categorical and dichotomous variables into an artificial continuous scale thereby facilitating interpretation of these coefficients of association. This literally imposed a continuous scale on something that is discrete/qualitative: tetrachoric and polychoric correlations are interpreted similarly to a Pearson's r .

Question 3

Do student language, transiency, and prevalence of disability predict AYP status? To answer this question, a stepwise regression analysis was performed. As a mathematical solution, stepwise is a flexible technique because the entry to or removal of

variables from the model is contingent on the partial and semipartial correlations rather than the order of entry. This makes it more versatile than backward elimination and forward selection.

Question 4

Do CRT scores and Writing Proficiency adequately discriminate AYP status (*Needs Improvement, Meets, and/or Exceeds*)? To answer this question, data was submitted to a discriminant function analysis (DFA). Reading, math, and writing proficiency AYP status (needs improvement, meets, or exceeds) were entered separately as dependent variables. For reading AYP status, math and writing proficiency score were entered as predictors. For math AYP status, reading and writing proficiency scores were entered as predictors. Finally, for writing proficiency AYP status, reading and math scores were entered as predictors. DFA results yield which predictors adequately discriminate (i.e., predict) group membership in the criterion/dependent variable (i.e., AYP status).

Qualitative

In this study, the use of focus groups, interviews, and survey data was used. While in the previous section procedures were directly related to research questions the approach used for qualitative analysis is different see Table 1. Analysis showed that some of the questions may have been answered or enriched by the qualitative process, through thick description and possibly suggest additional areas for further inquiry but themes may also emerge that were not directly related to the research questions.

The use of the analytic procedures described by Marshall and Rossman (2006) was used to analyze the data. These procedures fall into seven phases:

1. organizing the data,
2. immersing in the data,
3. generating categories and themes,
4. coding the data,
5. offering interpretations through analytic memos,
6. searching for alternative understandings, and
7. writing the report or other format for presenting the study.

Each phase results in data reduction and processes such as open- and closed-ended coding are used to bring the collected data into manageable chunks to prepare for interpretation where the “researcher brings meaning and insight to the words and acts of the participants in the study” (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 156). See Table 1 for a detailed account of the qualitative methods and analyses used.

Table 1

Qualitative Methods & Analysis

| Research Question | Kind of Data to be Collected | Process of Analysis | Literature | Time of Collection |
|--|--|---|--|---------------------------|
| Academic difference between students who attend a professional development school (PDS) or non-professional development school (non-PDS) in terms of achieving AYP | transcripts from focus groups administrator surveys video and audio tape recording | code marking utterances in transcripts and surveys (PDS/Non-PDS) notes in margin (i.e., reflections/additional remarks) put onto coded sheets sorting coded utterances reveal themes and assign to category: support, professional, climate, and challenges | Miles & Huberman, 1994 Marshall & Rossman, 2006 | ongoing |
| Is there an association between student's demographic data and AYP (Needs Improvement, Meeting and/or Exceeding) | transcripts from focus groups administrator surveys video and audio tape recording | code utterances (demographic data: grade, ethnicity, LEP, FRL, IEP, etc.) provide literature support | Miles & Huberman, 1994 Marshall & Rossman, 2006 | ongoing |
| Do student language and prevalence of disability predict AYP status | transcripts from focus groups administrator surveys video and audio tape recording | code utterances (student language, transience /mobility, and prevalence of disability) componential analysis | Miles & Huberman, 1994 Marshall & Rossman, 2006 Spradley, 1980 | ongoing |
| Is there an association between CRT scores and Writing Proficiency scores and AYP status (Needs Improvement, Watch, and/or Adequate) | transcripts from focus groups administrator surveys video and audio tape recording | code utterances (CRTs) analyze discourse (focus group transcript) provide literature support | Miles & Huberman, 1994 Marshall & Rossman, 2006 | ongoing |

Reliability of Data Analyses

Both quantitative and qualitative methods will be used to ensure the reliability of data analyses. The following sections detail the processes used.

Quantitative. In terms of internal consistency reliability coefficients the alpha coefficient range from .89 to .91 for Math and .91-.92 for Reading. The reliability of the Math instrument ranges from high to very high and the Reading instruments is high. Reliability, as an index of consistency of participant response to a given instrument shows that students if nothing else were responding consistently to the items and minimizing measurement error. The items were good at face value with respect to content validity. Reliability information was not available for the writing proficiency due to the format being an essay.

Qualitative. Trustworthiness is essential to the findings in an inquiry guided by naturalistic paradigms (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The four proposed constructs by Lincoln and Guba: Credibility, Transferability, Dependability, and Confirmability were used to improve the validity of qualitative analysis.

Credibility. Credibility is the believability that the research is credible (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Credibility can be established through prolonged time spent by researcher with participants and the use of multiple sources of data (interviews, observations, focus groups and documents) to form themes and conclusions. For this study, the researcher conducted multiple interview, survey and focus groups to ensure credibility.

Transferability. Transferability is the ability to apply the findings of the study to others in a similar situation with similar research questions. Marshall & Rossman note

that an approach to “enhance a study’s generalizability [is] triangulating multiple sources of data” (2006, p. 202). Triangulation brings together more than one source of data to support a single point (2006; Merriam & Associates, 2002). In this study interview and survey data were compared to establish the themes and compared these themes to the literature. It will be the responsibility of future researchers to make judgments regarding the transferability of the findings of this study.

Dependability. Dependability is where the researcher “attempts to account for changing conditions in the phenomenon chosen for the study and changes in the design created by an increasingly refined understanding of the setting” (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 203). A journal was kept to maintain an audit trail-documentation of critical incidents and observations and records reviewed (Miles & Huberman, 1994). These items will be available for review by experts, advisors, and/or colleagues upon request.

Confirmability. The construct addresses whether the findings can be confirmed by another (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and in doing so question whether logical inferences and interpretations of the researcher would make sense to someone else (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Confirmability was established through the methodology of the study described in detail and an audit trail that allowed external viewers to make judgments as to the findings of the study.

Summary

A mixed-methods approach was used to answer the four proposed questions most effectively. Information gathered during data collection will be used to report findings in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to examine the factors that may contribute to a school making or not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). A total of four research questions were answered in this study to address this purpose. This chapter is organized according to these questions. After a restatement of each question, the data analysis procedures that were used to answer the questions, as well as the results obtained, are reported. Sections detailing the quantitative and qualitative findings are included, as well as a summary of the findings for each research question. For each of the research questions with respect to the qualitative data, both teacher transcripts and administrator surveys were used for the PDS and administrator surveys for the Non-PDS. Ancillary findings will be addressed after research question Number Four. A summary of the quantitative and qualitative findings will be provided prior to the conclusion of the chapter.

Research Questions

Research Question 1: Is there an academic difference between students who attend a professional development school (PDS) or non-professional development school (non PDS) in terms of achieving AYP?

Quantitative. To answer this question quantitatively, descriptive statistics—in the form of frequencies—followed by three one-way multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA) and three separate one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted. The frequencies for reading in respect to the AYP categories of (*Needs Improvement, Meets* and *Exceeds*) were: 951 for the *Needs Improvement* category, 586

for *Meets* and 161 for *Exceeds*. The frequencies for math were: *Needs Improvement* = 814, *Meets AYP* = 685, and *Exceeds AYP* = 203. Fifth graders were the only students who took the writing proficiency. For the writing proficiency there were: 297 in the *Needs Improvement* category, 214 in the *Meets AYP*, and 14 *Exceeds AYP*.

Next, data were submitted to three one-way MANOVAs with school type membership (PDS and non-PDS) serving as the independent variable and *Needs Improvement*, *Meets*, and *Exceeds* serving as the dependent variables separately for reading and math scores. Reading and math were compared since writing proficiency scores were available for fifth grade only. The alpha level was reduced to .025 to evaluate the significance of univariate effects rather than the traditional .05 using the Bonferroni adjustment to obviate the inflation of familywise Type I error. The MANOVA results found that none of the multivariate analyses was statistically significant, all p values > .05. In spite of the lack of statistical significance, it is noteworthy that in the math *Needs Improvement* category, Non-PDS schools ($M = 243.90$, $SD = 44.20$) outperformed PDS schools ($M = 240.94$, $SD = 52.00$). Similarly, in the reading and math *Meets AYP* category, Non-PDS schools (reading: $M = 333.85$, $SD = 21.01$; math: $M = 332.32$, $SD = 19.20$) outperformed PDS schools (reading: $M = 331.77$, $SD = 18.48$; math: $M = 329.37$, $SD = 19.20$). The same trend held true for *Exceeds AYP* category; Non-PDS schools (reading: $M = 395.98$, $SD = 30.02$; math: $M = 410.80$, $SD = 42.47$) performed better than PDS schools (reading: $M = 381.25$, $SD = 21.85$; math: $M = 393.92$, $SD = 26.11$).

In the next set of analyses, writing proficiency AYP scores (*Needs Improvement*, *Meets*, and *Exceeds*) were separately submitted to one-way ANOVAs, with school type (PDS, Non-PDS) serving as the independent variable. In the first analysis comparing the

writing proficiency *Needs Improvement* AYP category, the school type main effect was statistically significant, $F_{(1,295)} = 4.86, p < .05, \eta^2 = .02$. The small effect was likely due to low power. Unlike reading and math AYP scores, PDS schools ($M = 9.25, SD = 1.58$) outperformed Non-PDS schools ($M = 8.75, SD = 2.02$) in writing proficiency *Needs Improvement*. In the second analysis comparing writing proficiency *Meets* AYP category, the school type main effect was also statistically significant, $F_{(1,212)} = 6.48, p < .05, \eta^2 = .03$. However, in this instance, Non-PDS schools ($M = 12.63, SD = 1.02$) outperformed PDS schools ($M = 12.24, SD = 0.84$). Finally, regarding the writing proficiency *Exceeds* AYP category, the analysis was not feasible because all cases belonged to Non-PDS schools, and hence, the comparison with PDS schools was not possible.

Qualitative. To answer this question qualitatively, transcriptions were created for the focus group and individual interviews. Each transcription was coded marking utterances that were made in respect to a professional development school (PDS) or non-professional development school (non-PDS). Many teachers in the professional development school of focus had experience both in PDS and non-PDS environments. Therefore, comments made by PDS teachers in respect to their teaching in a non-PDS were included on the non-PDS chart. In addition, administrator surveys were coded in the same format. A total of 11 teacher transcripts (PDS), seven administrator surveys (four PDS and three non-PDS), and one additional transcript from an academic manager in the local school district were included in the analyses.

After coding the transcripts and surveys, reflections and additional remarks were noted in the margin (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The coding, combined with additional

remarks and comments written in the margins of the transcripts or surveys, were rewritten onto coded sheets to allow for sorting of all coded utterances, remarks and comments. The following step was used to reveal patterns and themes found in the qualitative data. Analysis of transcripts, surveys, and video records were used in this process. Next, themes were assigned one of four different categories: support, professional, climate, and challenges. The coded transcripts and surveys were then used to complete Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2

PDS School

| Support | | Professionals | | Climate | | Challenges | |
|--|---|--------------------------|--|-----------------|--|---------------------|---|
| T A T A | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• whatever I would be looking for (administration)• where the administration allows educators to be educators | T A T A | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• think tank• read latest research• take classes | T T A | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• conversation<ul style="list-style-type: none">• in passing | A T A | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• decision making• maintain consistent staffing rational• staff moral• level of partnership with university despite reduced financial support |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• common set of goals and language• communication with stakeholders (district and university) | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• teamwork | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• family• respect• caring• community• teacher's willing to question-speak up | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• treated like professionals• partner up with university• allowed to teach intervention in your own style• feel like your voice is heard• administration takes into consideration thoughts and ideas• school-wide governance• common planning time with grade level – specialist can attend too | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• expertise• committed• competent• innovation• learner centered and environment for staff<ul style="list-style-type: none">• dedicated teachers• committees (time put in outside of school hours)• participate in groups that are studying things together• additional workload• student teachers interns (newest skills and research)(Bring new knowledge)• action research• teacher initiated staff development<ul style="list-style-type: none">• connection of professional development to classroom• attention to improving practice• discussion and reflection of practice• lifelong learners• collegial• collaborate• partnership with University | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• parent involvement• additional workload more teacher responsibilities• paper work• mandated curriculum• lack of child centered curriculum• address total need of child• time involved in mentoring teacher interns• student transience |
| T – Teacher Response A – Administrator Response T A – Teacher and Administrator Response | | | | | | | |

Table 3

Non-PDS School

| Support | Professionals | Climate | Challenges |
|---|---|--|---|
| <div data-bbox="298 435 329 472">A</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strategists are providing support with RTI; intervention; assessment • mentoring program for new teachers and new to grade level • teachers assisting other teachers when no substitutes are available <div data-bbox="298 751 329 833">T A</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • common planning time | <div data-bbox="705 435 737 472">A</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working relationship • defined common goals • overarching goals • data team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain data • help analyze data effectively & efficiently • provide focus to PLC when assignments include data analysis • work with partnerships-resources for students (i.e., clothing, food, and health services) <div data-bbox="705 857 737 938">T A</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teachers share ideas and intervention techniques • grade levels collaborating • common prep time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • grade level planning • consulting time • structured teacher planning time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allow teachers to work collaboratively to analyze data and plan for instruction • action research • professional learning communities (PLC) • collaborate • late arrival day for professional development once a month | <div data-bbox="1289 435 1320 472">A</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community • base teachers care about the students and success of our school • safe environment • teachers offering/suggesting changes to improve the student achievement and climate at school | <div data-bbox="1598 435 1629 472">A</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implementation of programs • turnover in staff including teachers, support staff, office personnel • each year concentrate on certain staff development training when new teacher on board • budget cut and reduced AP position back to classroom • keeping a positive environment • lack of substitutes • encouraging some teachers to set high goals for students • going to a 9-month school year • inability to rid school of minimal teachers |

T – Teacher Response
 A – Administrator Response
 T A – Teacher and Administrator Response

The analyses revealed that individuals at the PDS felt a great deal of support from the administration. Comments such as *feel like your voice is heard; administration takes into consideration thoughts and ideas; and treated like professionals* (Table 2) were just some of the comments made with respect to a supportive administration. The theme professional contained the most data with common utterances with respect to: *collaboration; commitment* on the part of the teacher's, staff, and administration; and *collegial* with respect to practice and interactions with teacher's, staff, and administration. In addition, the transcripts revealed that the teachers were committed to *improving practice*, were *lifelong learners*, and incorporated research methods such as *action research* in their classrooms. The third theme was climate. The most common utterances for this category were *community* and *respect*. The final category for PDS was challenges. The data with the most common utterance for this category was *time involved in mentoring teacher interns and mandated curriculum*.

The analysis of the non-PDS revealed similar information in the professional category with respect to *collaboration, professional development, and action research*. The data for the support category included *common planning time, mentoring for new teachers new to grade level, strategist-providing support with RTI, intervention, and assessment, and teachers assisting other teachers when no substitutes were available*. The category of climate included *community, [teachers] care about students and success of our school, and teachers offering/suggesting changes to improve the student achievement and climate at school*.

The data with respect to the categories of support and climate for the non-PDS were less detailed than the PDS. For example, the PDS data included more utterances in

the categories of support and climate. The categories of challenge and professional for both the PDS and non-PDS included the most utterances.

A limitation of the data contained in the PDS table (Table 2) was that it was based from one professional development school. The second professional development school did not participate in the survey. However, three past administrators of the PDS participated in the administrator survey and therefore contributed to the data collected. Eleven teacher transcripts and five administrator surveys were used for analyses of the PDS and 3 administrator surveys from the non-PDS, since focus groups were not conducted at the non-PDS schools. A limitation of the data contained in the non-PDS table was that almost all utterances from the support and climate categories came from one non-PDS survey. The areas of challenges and professionals were more easily distributed. These limitations should be taken into consideration before replication.

As seen in Tables 2 and 3, the information from the teachers was complementary to the administrator comments regarding all four themes. The theme that contained the most contrast was the theme *challenges*. For the PDS, utterances such as *moral* and *level of partnership with university despite reduced financial support* were shared by administrators while both teachers and administrators concurred that *additional work load/more teacher responsibilities, lack of child centered curriculum, students who are transient* and *mentoring teacher interns* were prevalent. One administrator commented, *PDS time and responsibility of already full plates of the teaching staff but financial compensation does not accompany the added responsibility* and another administrator commented that *staff and interns [have a] first hand opportunity to observe best practices which hinged on the school improvement priorities* and that *most became*

leaders even in the first year of hire. Teachers commented on the positives of teacher interns but also that *[they could be] utilized a little more effectively.* For example, *assigned to specific groups [to] work with all year.* Therefore providing more one-on-one time with a teacher but also *reduce class size down.*

For the non-PDS, utterances were also made with respect to budget cuts and *keeping a positive environment,* however in contrast to the PDS, *turnover in staff including teachers, support staff, [and] office personnel* and the need to *each year concentrate on certain staff development training when [a] new teacher [was brought] on board* was not present at the PDS. Teachers at the PDS however, are not as transient. In fact, since the 2006-2007 academic school year teacher retention has been greater than 75%. There is also a commitment to have *leadership evolve within this stellar community* and a *culture of continual learning [is] established and supported.* For example, the current administrator was a specialist in the school, then an assistant principal and this year assumed the role of school administrator. The PDS allows individuals to develop their craft in the supportive environment of a professional development school and *increase [the] level of knowledge and background practice to improve student achievement* as noted by another participant. In addition, another participant noted a *change from closed classroom doors to more what we can do together than individually to improve teaching and learning.*

To culminate, a participant shared that a non-PDS principal wanted to find a PDS teacher to hire because they felt that *people that come out of the PDS are so much more ready to jump in and ready to go.* The participant continued that *for a non-PDS principal*

to call the PDS principal [based on] what [they] have observed [about PDS teachers] was really telling.

Summary. In the analysis comparing the writing proficiency *Needs Improvement* AYP category, the school type main effect was statistically significant. Further, the writing proficiency in the *Needs Improvement* AYP category, PDS schools outperformed Non-PDS schools in writing proficiency *Needs Improvement*. In the second analysis comparing writing proficiency *Meets* AYP category, the school type main effect was also statistically significant. However, Non-PDS schools outperformed PDS schools. In regards to the writing proficiency *Exceeds* AYP category, the analysis was not feasible because all cases belonged to Non-PDS schools, and therefore, the comparison with PDS schools was not possible.

The qualitative analyses revealed that individuals at the PDS felt a great deal of support from the administration. The theme professional contained the most data with common utterances. In addition, transcripts revealed the commitment of teachers to their profession. In addition, community and respect were the most common utterance for school climate. For the last category, time involved mentoring teacher interns and mandated curriculum were challenges prevalent at the PDS.

In comparison, the non-PDS contained similar utterances with respect to the category of professional. The support and climate categories were less extensive at the non-PDS schools. The categories of challenge and professional for both the PDS and non-PDS contained the most utterances. Limitations of the data both for the PDS and non-PDS were addressed.

Research Question 2: Is there an association between student’s demographic data and AYP status (Needs Improvement, Meeting and/or Exceeding)?

Quantitative. In terms of the second research question, overall several notable and significant associations were found between student’s demographic information and AYP status. To answer this question quantitatively, zero-order correlations were conducted for selected demographic variables (e.g., gender, grade, ethnicity, LEP, FRL, IEP, math, reading, and writing proficiency scores). Table 4 provides the correlation matrix in response to Research Question 2, using polychoric, tetrachoric, and polyserial correlations.

Table 4

Point Biserial, Polychoric, and Tetrachoric Correlation Matrix of Selected Demographic Variables with AYP Reading, Math, and Writing Proficiency Scores

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
|--------------|----|------|-----|------|------------------|--------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| 1. FRL | -- | -.06 | .08 | -.06 | -.10 | ^c | -.02 | -.19 | .22 ^a | .02 | -.04 | -.02 | .05 | .09 | -.41 ^b |
| 2. IEP | -- | -- | .13 | -.25 | -.03 | ^c | .41 ^b | -.06 | .01 | .18 ^a | -.12 | -.08 | .49 ^b | .21 | ^c |
| 3. Gender | -- | -- | -- | -.16 | -.09 | ^c | .09 | -.19 | .05 | -.04 | -.05 | .01 | .24 ^b | .20 | -.06 |
| 4. Ethnicity | -- | -- | -- | -- | .61 ^b | ^c | -.14 | .08 | .16 ^a | -.14 | -.25 | .11 | -.19 ^b | .02 | -.30 ^a |
| 5. LEP | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | ^c | .12 | .30 ^a | .22 ^b | .05 | -.06 | .24 ^b | .04 | -.07 | ^c |
| 6. Grade | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | ^c | ^c | ^c | .47 ^b | ^c | ^c | .53 ^b | ^c | ^c | ^c |
| 7. RNI | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | ^c | ^c | .35 ^b | ^c | ^c | .52 ^b | ^c | ^c |
| 8. RM | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | ^c | ^c | -.06 | ^c | ^c | -.12 | ^c |
| 9. RE | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | ^c | ^c | .26 ^a | ^c | ^c | .45 ^b |
| 10. MNI | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | ^c | ^c | .26 ^b | ^c | ^c |
| 11. MM | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | ^c | ^c | .01 | ^c |
| 12. ME | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | ^c | ^c | .41 ^b |
| 13. WPNI | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | ^c | ^c |
| 14. WPM | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | ^c |
| 15. WPE | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |

^a $p < .05$ ^b $p < .01$ (2-tailed) ^c Correlations are only computed for the same AYP category (e.g., reading, math, and writing NI) but not across AYP categories (e.g., reading M with reading NI) due to the need to categorize each score (e.g., reading, math, and writing) according to AYP status.

Key: FRL = Free and Reduced Lunch; IEP = Individualized Education Plan; LEP = Limited English Proficient; RNI = Reading Needs Improvement; RM = Reading Meets; RE = Reading Exceeds; MNI = Math Needs Improvement; MM = Math Meets; ME = Math Exceeds; WPNI = Writing Proficiency Needs Improvement; WPM = Writing Proficiency Meets; WPE = Writing Proficiency Exceeds.

The *Needs Improvement* category for reading, writing and math, IEP status (yes or no) is correlated positively and strongly with reading *Needs Improvement* and positively and strongly with writing *Needs Improvement* and positively, but weakly, with math *Needs Improvement*. Therefore, students without IEPs have a greater advantage in terms of reading *Needs Improvement* score than students who have an IEP. More specifically, students with IEPs have lower scores, than those without, even though they are all in the

same category of *Needs Improvement*. This interpretation is based on the IEP coding scheme (0 = yes, 1 = no).

In terms of gender the only significant correlation is between gender and writing *Needs Improvement*. The coding scheme for this variable—1=male and 2=female—suggests that females tended to outperform males in writing.

In terms of ethnicity, the only significant correlation is between ethnicity and writing *Needs Improvement*. The correlation is weak and negative. The negative correlation is favoring white students over minorities. This means that minorities are at a disadvantage in relation to white students. LEP has no statistically significant correlations with any of the outcome variables in terms of the *Needs Improvement* AYP category. This lack of statistically significant correlation is consistent even when compared across reading, math, and writing for *Needs Improvement* or when comparing across other non-parametric correlations, such as Kendall's tau b. Therefore, at the *Needs Improvement* category, the results are consistent.

In terms of the *Meets* AYP category, for all three: reading, writing and math, the only significant correlation between the demographics and the outcome was LEP and reading *Meets* AYP. The correlation was positive and moderate. The prevalence of LEP was coded with a 0 and non-prevalence with a 1. Therefore, students whose primary language is English have an advantage over those whose primary language is not English with respect to English language learners. Finally, although not part of the research question, it is interesting to note that ethnicity and IEP are negatively, albeit weakly correlated.

In respect to *Exceeds Expectations*, there are no statistically significant correlations. However, when the correlations were reanalyzed using pairwise deletion of cases with missing data—as opposed to listwise—due to the small number of cases per variable, a weak and negative correlation was found between FRL status and reading *Exceeds Expectations*. This means that those individuals who are receiving free and reduced price lunch are at a disadvantage when compared to those individuals who are not identified as free and reduced price lunch. Also positive but weak correlations exist between LEP status and reading *Exceeds* expectations as well as math *Exceeds* expectations. As such, individuals who are more proficient in English have higher scores in reading and math than those who are not as proficient.

Grade level has some correlation with reading and math in respect to *Exceeds AYP*. A moderate and positive correlation occurs between grade and reading *Exceeds AYP* as well as math *Exceeds AYP*, favoring students in higher grades. Therefore, students in fourth and fifth grade were scoring higher than students in third grade, although it is important to note that this is by no means a causal link; it is purely correlational in nature.

Qualitative. To answer this question qualitatively, transcriptions previously created for the focus group and individual interviews to answer question number one were once again coded marking utterances that were made with respect to any information shared within the transcript that related to demographic data (e.g., grade, ethnicity, LEP, FRL, IEP). In addition, the administrator surveys were also coded using the same process.

Student demographics, especially with respect to the designation of IEP, FRL, and LEP were present in the majority of the transcripts and surveys. Transcriptions and surveys included utterances such as:

- *background starved-children from needier backgrounds don't come with some of those experiences (build in that background [provide experiences] I think you have a better opportunity to make AYP and some of the needier schools have found a way to do that)*
- *NCLB Act of 2001 made us look at people we didn't necessarily look at before you know kids and that's a good thing but the detriment of it is how many kids you need to get over*
- *missed AYP in past by two IEP students*
- *[reading levels present from] prekindergarten level to fully bilingual [and] reading at a third grade level*
- *students [with limited English proficiency] fall within that wide of range-Since I've been teaching look at where the child is now-teach reading through guiding reading model-each child reading at their own level yet*
- *yearly testing was put into place to determine whether or not our school was successful in all subgroups to meet annual yearly progress*
- *come from a family where you're poor...and if it's generational you learn to live for the day, for the moment, you don't learn to plan ahead cause you don't know if there is going to be any future. You raise yourself. Your parents are working one [maybe] two minimum wage jobs, if they are lucky enough to do that now...because [economic] times are so different.*

- *I just see such a loss for so many of the kids and we have to pick some of that up at school and so I'll have people say to me so you think we've got to feed them and gotta make sure that there teeth don't hurt and we've got to make sure that they this and that and I say yeah have you ever tried to go through the day without eating and you can't even concentrate? Can you? I've been in meetings with you people when you're like I'm so hungry I've got to get out of here how long is this going to be? Now imagine that it is lunch time on Friday and you eat your lunch and you know you won't get to eat again until Monday morning at breakfast do you really care what 2+2 is?*

Many of the utterances were supported in the literature with respect to the student demographic data used (i.e., ethnicity, FRL, IEP, etc.) in this study. Geller and Werner (2006) reported that Latino students appear to begin their school experience at an academic disadvantage. In addition, Demie (2002) addressed "social deprivation". Finally, Abedi (2004) acknowledged that NCLB has more stringent requirements in respect to meeting proficiency in the subgroup LEP. In addition to the experimental studies reviewed in this study, authors such as Darling-Hammond (2010) know the, all too often, inequalities that are present in today's education system. Hammond stated, "Five factors create the major building blocks of unequal and inadequate educational outcomes in the United States" (p. 30). These factors are shared in this section to support the previous quotes:

- The high level of poverty and the low levels of social supports for low-income children's health and welfare, including their early learning;

- The unequal allocation of schools resources, which is made politically easier by the increasing resegregation of schools;
- Inadequate systems for providing high-quality teachers and teaching to all children in all communities;
- Rationing of high-quality curriculum through tracking and interschool disparities; and Factory-model school designs that have created dysfunctional learning environments for students and unsupportive settings for strong teaching.

(p. 30)

Summary. Overall, several notable and significant associations were revealed between student's demographic information and AYP status. Students with IEPs have lower scores than those without even though they are all in the same category of *Needs Improvement*. The only significant correlation with respect to gender is between gender and writing *Needs Improvement*. In terms of ethnicity, the only significant correlation is between ethnicity and writing *Needs Improvement*. The correlation is weak and negative meaning that minorities are at a disadvantage in relation to white students. LEP has no statistically significant correlations with any of the outcome variables in terms of the *Needs Improvement* AYP category. For all three markers: reading, writing and math, with respect to the *Meets* AYP category, the only significant correlation between the demographics and the outcome was LEP and reading *Meets* AYP. Therefore, students whose primary language is English have an advantage over those whose primary language is not English with respect to English language learners. No statistically significant correlations were found with respect to *Exceeds Expectations*, however, when the correlations were reanalyzed using pairwise a weak and negative correlation between

FRL status and reading *Exceeds Expectations* occurred. Therefore, individuals who are receiving free and reduced price lunch are at a disadvantage when compared to those individuals who are not identified as free and reduced price lunch. Positive but weak correlations exist between LEP status and reading *Exceeds* expectations as well as math *Exceeds* expectations. Therefore, individuals who are more proficient in English have higher scores in reading and math than those who are not as proficient. There is a moderate and positive correlation between grade and reading *Exceeds* AYP as well as math *Exceeds* AYP, favoring students in higher grades.

Student demographics, with respect to qualitative analysis, especially in regard to the designation of IEP, FRL, and LEP were present in the majority of the transcripts and surveys. These three special populations are frequently supported in the literature (Geller & Werner, 2006; Demie, 2002; Abedi, 2004; Hammond, 2010). Furthermore, the individuals that make up these populations may be at a disadvantage with respect to student achievement.

Research Question 3: Do student language, transiency, and prevalence of disability predict AYP status?

Quantitative. A series of stepwise regression analyses were conducted to ascertain whether language and disability indicators (LEP and IEP, respectively) were good predictors of AYP status, using math, reading, and writing AYP category scores (*Needs Improvement*, *Meets*, and *Exceeds*) separately as criteria, and LEP and IEP as predictors. In the first analysis, the reading *Needs Improvement* AYP score was regressed on LEP and IEP. The solution found that both LEP and IEP (all $ps < .0005$) contributed to the prediction of reading *Needs Improvement*, $F_{(2,962)} = 97.75$, $p < .0005$, $R^2 = .17$.

In terms of reading *Meets* AYP, only LEP is a significant predictor ($p < .0005$), $F_{(1,594)} = 45.46$, $p < .0005$, $R^2 = .07$. The results for reading *Exceeds* AYP score show a similar trend inasmuch as only LEP is a significant predictor ($p < .01$), $F_{(1,170)} = 7.43$, $p < .01$, $R^2 = .04$. Only for the *Needs Improvement* category do both LEP and IEP status matter.

For math *Needs Improvement* only IEP status is a significant predictor ($p < .0005$), $F_{(1,826)} = 45.49$, $p < .0005$, $R^2 = .05$. However, for math *Meets* AYP only LEP is a significant predictor ($p < .0005$), $F_{(1,689)} = 38.39$, $p < .0005$, $R^2 = .05$. Finally, only LEP ($p < .01$) significantly predicts math *Exceeds* AYP score, $F_{(1,206)} = 7.04$, $p < .01$, $R^2 = .02$. The low explained variance might be attributed to students needing to make larger gains between the needs improvement and meets category. Nevertheless, considering the fact that LEP and IEP are dichotomous as opposed to continuous variables, these results are encouraging.

For the writing proficiency *Needs Improvement* both IEP and LEP are significant predictors (all $ps < .0005$), $F_{(2,297)} = 58.04$, $p < .0005$, $R^2 = .28$. The effect size for this relationship is more robust than those of earlier models. For the writing proficiency *Meets* AYP category, only LEP significantly predicts it ($p < .05$), $F_{(1,214)} = 5.67$, $p < .05$, $R^2 = .03$, indicating a significant decrement in explained variance vis-à-vis the math needs improvement category. At *Meets* and *Exceeds*, suddenly huge variances are removed in terms of predictive power of the predictors. Finally, for the writing proficiency *Exceeds* the analysis failed because only 14 cases exist in the writing proficiency *Exceeds*, and thus, none of the variables were significant predictors of the writing proficiency *Exceeds*.

category. Refer to Table 5 for the standardized and unstandardized regression coefficients and their 95% confidence interval (CI).

Table 5

Significant Standardized and Unstandardized Regression Coefficients and CI_{95%}

| Criterion | β | b^a | CI _{95%} ^b | t |
|---------------------|--------------|------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Reading | | | | |
| NI | 51.43(19.69) | .367(.197) | 43.34,59.53(13.92,25.46) | 12.47 (6.69) |
| M | 13.90 | .267 | 9.85,17.95 | 6.74 |
| E | 23.52 | .205 | 6.49,40.54 | 2.73 |
| Math | | | | |
| NI | 29.93 | .228 | 21.22,38.64 | 6.75 |
| M | 9.97 | .230 | 6.81,13.13 | 6.20 |
| E | 16.47 | .182 | 4.23,28.72 | 2.65 |
| Writing Proficiency | | | | |
| NI | .40(2.77) | .104(.517) | .026,2.24(.03,.76) | 10.50 (2.10) |
| M | .50 | .161 | 11.73,12.50 | 2.38 |
| E ^c | | | | |

Note. All coefficients are significant at the $p < .05$ level of significance. The coefficients outside of the parentheses correspond to IEP. The information in parentheses corresponds to LEP.

Key: NI = Needs Improvement; M = Meets; E = Exceeds

^a Unstandardized regression coefficient

^b 95% confidence interval for the unstandardized regression coefficient

^c This analysis was not conducted because there were only 14 cases available for analysis

Qualitative. To answer this question qualitatively, the analysis procedure of componential analysis (Spradley, 1980) was used with respect to student language,

transiency/mobility, and prevalence of disability. An X was used to signify whether a transcript or survey included data with respect to the aforementioned areas see Table 6.

Table 6

Componential analysis of student language, transiency/mobility, and prevalence of disability

| Teacher | E | E | E | I | I | I | I | I | I | S | S | S | S | A | A | A | A | A | A | O |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Student language | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | | X |
| Transiency/ Mobility | | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | X | X | X | X | X | | X |
| Prevalence of disability | | X | | | | | X | X | | X | X | X | | | X | X | X | X | | X |

Key: E = Elementary; I = Intermediate; S = Specialist; A = Administrator; O = Other

Utterances with respect to each area: student language, transiency/mobility, and prevalence of disability were compiled. Utterances are listed below with respect to the area for which they were associated.

Student language:

- *background starved*
- *concentrating on vocabulary*
- *about 17 different languages spoken here*
- *progression of English*
- *develop language skills through discussion then use manipulatives, realia and background building, experiential types of experiences to build vocabulary so these students are able to really compete with their English only peers*

- *ELL comes with a certain set of variables that affect how they learn (amount of English they come with determines where they fall in that progression)*
- *learning a second language is so difficult and the language on the test is so different from what they experience a lot of times during the school day and at home [they] don't have the academic vocabulary...really at risk [to] meet needs of LEP students especially for the test*

Transiency/mobility:

- *I guess those students that are more transient if your coming in and out you have no continuity and so there may be gaps that exist*
- *kids are transient and they move from one school to the next*
- *have so much transiency-thinking of transience aspects of NCLB-supposed to be No Child Left Behind-all left behind subgroups-test counts more-3rd, 4th, and 5th [grades] you count*
- *concerning transience rate at our school*
- *large transiency rate-not [the] same students on last day of school*

Prevalence of disability:

- *students with greatest deficiencies receive the most assistance*
- *instead of pulling the kids out the teacher comes or the aide comes in*
- *inclusion of the number of students [in] special education that can be included in the regular education classroom*
- *good that in NCLB kids in special education are counted*

All three areas language, transiency, and prevalence of disability were among frequent utterances in the transcripts and surveys. However, transiency and language were more frequently mentioned than disability.

Summary. In terms of predicting AYP status, LEP and IEP status only matter for the *Needs Improvement* category. For math *Needs Improvement*, only IEP status, is a significant predictor. For Math *Meets* AYP, only LEP is a significant predictor. Only LEP significantly predicts math *Exceeds* AYP score and with respect to the writing proficiency *Needs Improvement*, both IEP and LEP are significant predictors. However, for the writing proficiency *Meets* AYP category, only LEP significantly predicts it, indicating a significant decrement in explained variance vis-à-vis the math needs improvement category. At *Meets* and *Exceeds*, suddenly huge variances are removed in terms of predictive power of the predictors. Finally, for the writing proficiency *Exceeds*, the analysis failed because only 14 cases exist in the writing proficiency *Exceeds*, and thus, none of the variables were significant predictors of the writing proficiency *Exceeds*.

All three areas language, transiency, and prevalence of disability were among frequent utterances in the transcripts and surveys. However, transiency and language were more frequently mentioned than disability. Many utterances in the transcripts related to a lack of background knowledge and experience in relation to student language. Transiency/mobility was one of the first utterances repeatedly shared in the transcripts regarding the PDS. Utterances with respect to prevalence of disability predominantly revolved around the inclusion of students with disabilities in the regular classroom. Specialists, administrators, and the academic manager at the district seemed to have a more systemic view of the school while classroom teachers tended to focus more on their

individual grade. However, as addressed in implications, teachers in the focus group became more aware of the school as a whole during the focus group conversation with participants ranging from elementary to intermediate and commented that *vertically the school is aligned more than we thought* before attending the focus group.

Research Question 4: Do CRT scores and Writing Proficiency adequately discriminate AYP status (Needs Improvement, Meets, and/or Adequate)?

Quantitative. To shed light on the question of whether CRT and writing proficiency scores were adequate predictors of AYP group membership (*Needs Improvement, Meets, Exceeds*) data were submitted to three Discriminant Function Analyses (DFAs). For all three DFAs, the critical z-score cutoff for these analyses is 1.96; the calculated z-score for this sample, 7.98, exceeded the critical value, indicating that all three DFAs demonstrated valid results. In addition, loadings less than .50 were not interpreted because they did not explain sufficient variability. See Table 7 for factor loadings for each DFA.

Table 7

Discriminant Function Analyses (DFAs) Standardized Canonical and Structure Matrix Coefficients

| AYP Groups | SMC ^a | SCC ^b |
|---------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Reading | | |
| WP | .40 | .71* |
| M | .77* | .93* |
| Math | | |
| R | .96* | .81* |
| WP | .72* | .31 |
| Writing Proficiency | | |
| R | .94* | .69* |
| M | .82* | .43 |

Note. Indented variables served as the discriminators (i.e., independent variables) in the respective analysis.

Key: R= Reading; M = Math; WP = Writing Proficiency

^a Structure Matrix Coefficients (SMC) express overlapping variance while taking into account other variables.

^b Standardized Canonical Coefficients (SCC) express unique variance while controlling for other variables.

* Loadings $\geq .50$ are significant.

In the first analysis, the math and writing scores served as independent variables whereas the three reading AYP categories served as dependent variables. The two discriminant functions combined statistically significantly discriminated the three reading AYP categories, $\chi^2(4, N = 531) = 257.06, p < .0005, \lambda = .614$, and accounted for

approximately 39% of the variance of between-group variability. The second discriminant function did not reach statistical significance, $p = .23$.

Discriminant function 1 discriminates membership between *Needs Improvement* and *Meets* and *Exceeds* AYP together. The degree of accuracy of the classification results indicated that overall 68% of the participants were correctly classified, as compared to 33% that would be classified correctly by chance alone ($p < .0005$). The percentages of accurately classified participants in the three reading AYP categories were: 77.5% for *Needs Improvement*, 51.4% for *Meets*, and 61.9% for *Exceeds*. A jack-knifed classification resulted in 68% accuracy, indicating that the classification results were valid. Therefore, math and writing proficiency scores were adequate predictors of reading AYP category membership. Predictor loadings into the discriminant functions demonstrate that the best predictor for discriminating between the reading *Needs Improvement* and *Meets* and *Exceeds* combined (Discriminant Function 1) was math score.

In the second analysis, the reading and writing scores served as independent variables whereas the three math AYP categories served as dependent variables. The two discriminant functions combined statistically significantly discriminated the three math AYP categories, $\chi^2 (4, N = 531) = 274.85, p < .0005, \lambda = .594$, and accounted for approximately 41% of the variance of between-group variability. The second discriminant function did not reach statistical significance, $p = .32$.

As in the reading DFA, Discriminant function 1 discriminates membership between *Needs Improvement* and *Meets* and *Exceeds* AYP together. The degree of accuracy of the classification results indicated that overall 60% of the participants were

correctly classified, as compared to 33% that would be classified correctly by chance alone ($p < .0005$). The percentages of accurately classified participants in the three math AYP categories were: 66.5% for *Needs Improvement*, 42.6% for *Meets*, and 71.0% for *Exceeds*. A jack-knifed classification resulted in 60% accuracy, indicating that the classification results were valid. Therefore, reading and writing proficiency scores were adequate predictors of math AYP category membership.

Predictor loadings into the discriminant functions demonstrate that the best predictor for discriminating between the math *Needs Improvement* and *Math* and *Exceeds* combined (Discriminant Function 1) was reading score.

In the final analysis, the math and reading scores served as independent variables whereas the three writing proficiency AYP categories served as dependent variables. The two discriminant functions combined statistically, significantly discriminated the three writing AYP categories, $\chi^2(4, N = 531) = 209.96, p < .0005, \lambda = .672$, and accounted for approximately 33% of the variance of between-group variability. The second discriminant function did not reach statistical significance, $p > .05$.

As in the two previous DFAs, Discriminant function 1 discriminates membership between *Needs Improvement* and *Meets* and *Exceeds* AYP together. The degree of accuracy of the classification results indicated that overall 64% of the participants were correctly classified, as compared to 33% that would be classified correctly by chance alone ($p < .0005$). The percentages of accurately classified participants in the three writing AYP categories were: 71.7% for *Needs Improvement*, 50.5% for *Meets*, and 80.0% for *Exceeds*. A jack-knifed classification resulted in 63% accuracy, indicating that the classification results were valid. Therefore, math and reading scores were adequate

predictors of writing proficiency AYP category membership. Predictor loadings into the discriminant functions demonstrate that the best predictor for discriminating between the writing *NI* and *M* and *E* combined (Discriminant Function 1) was reading score.

Qualitative. To answer this question quantitatively, the transcripts and surveys were again coded for utterances with respect to the CRTs. In addition, discourse from a focus group was analyzed with respect not only to utterances about CRT but also with respect to constructing ideas together see Table 8 (Appendix K). The utterances were compiled with respect to the CRTs. These included:

- *taking away from teaching time*
- *they are sick on testing*
- *my god the accountability is killing us*
- *teachers and students are burnt out*
- *all about the testing, AYP, and not about [what we] know- it's not right*
- *that testing fatigue let alone when do you have time to teach curriculum when you're doing all this testing?*
- *lose five or six weeks of curriculum I think [per school year]*
- *not really authentic except for the writing test-I mean sort of but it's not the greatest*
- *not really authentic-they don't show everybody's ability level*
- *I think a lot of our kids are behind and the test is showing that a lot of our kids are behind for whatever reason sometimes it's English-I don't think it is fair that after a year of being in this country you should know English as well as the kid*

next to you [who is a native English speaker] and be able to pass [reach proficiency]

Many of these utterances are supported in the review of literature including Offenberger's (2004) statement that the approach used to improve student achievement based on the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is definitely school-centered. Fisher et al. (2009) acknowledged that students of disadvantage or low-income made academic gains and that these academic changes and gains were beyond what was measured on the state proficiency tests. In addition, McQuillan and Salomon-Fernandez (2008) captured teacher's voices in their study and pointed out the importance of the affects many of the mandates put on schools. The intention may be good but the result is many times not in line with the original intent. These sources strongly support the aforementioned utterances from transcripts and surveys.

Next, analysis of the discourse was conducted between focus group participants with respect to constructing ideas together Table 8 (Appendix F). The discourse was broken down by participant and labeled (i.e., P1, P2, etc.). The focus group question being addressed was as follows: On a scale of one to five, one being low, and five being high, how accurately do you believe the current assessments [used to determine AYP] measure your students abilities? Is measuring your student's ability level? During coding, places within the text of the transcript were noted in the table where focus group participants changed their future utterances based on the conversation under the heading Constructing Ideas. In addition, the video recording was analyzed with respect to non-verbal behavior Table 8 (Appendix F) of the participants during the discourse. The non-

verbal communication was noted in the table when it occurred, not necessarily meaning that the participant speaking was also doing the non-verbal behavior. For example, next to participant two (P2) the text reads: *shakes head*. Therefore, one of the five participants shook his/her head when this utterance was made.

The focus group participants engaged in the following practices: listening, responding, and constructing ideas. The ideas were constructed based on the knowledge gained when additional participants participated. An analysis of the transcript in Table 8 (Appendix F) shows the non-verbal behavior that occurred during each utterance by one or more of the five participants. The analysis of constructing ideas showed what could be understood by observing/participating in a group discussion. For example, in cell three participant two said, *when they take the test you either see pass or fail does that tell you really what they are capable of or their abilities...it doesn't tell you anything*. To this comment, participant three commented, *that is it pretty much the way you thought it would go [with respect to sorting kids](cell five)*. Participant two responded *as far as their ability to do on a test but not for their [actual] ability levels* (cell six). Participant two seemed to be searching for the words to make his/her point with respect to their statement when participant three offered the word *potential* and participant two concurred (cell seven). The conversation continued and participant three was still defending the test (cell 18) stating *yeah that's not the tests fault*. Participant two addressed the content validity of the test *a lot of the questions that they ask in the practice booklets about seed sowing and...agricultural questions and I grew up here in the desert and...I don't have the background knowledge, the schema to understand the passage as well as someone who grew up around that would if they asked questions about the casinos or what we're*

surrounded by then we'd understand or be motivated to read the passage or understand it better (cell 20). The input presented by participant two actually influenced the response of participant three *compelling that's a compelling argument* (cell 21) and participant two changed his/her response to the focus group question stating *I was going to go with a four but because of participant three's compelling argument, I'm going to drop it to a three.*

Ancillary Findings. An unintended finding from this study, first brought to the attention of the researcher during a qualitative interview, was found in the data output for Research Question Two. The finding was that females scored higher on writing proficiency measures than males. The coding scheme for this variable—1=male and 2=female—suggests that females tended to outperform males in writing.

Summary. In the first analysis, math and writing proficiency scores were adequate predictors of reading AYP category membership. Predictor loadings into the discriminant functions demonstrate that the best predictor for discriminating between the reading *Needs Improvement* and *Meets* and *Exceeds* combined was math score.

In the second analysis, the second discriminant function did not reach statistical significance. Then as in the reading DFA, Discriminant function 1 discriminates membership between *Needs Improvement* and *Meets* and *Exceeds* AYP together. Therefore, reading and writing proficiency scores were adequate predictors of math AYP category membership. Predictor loadings into the discriminant functions demonstrate that the best predictor for discriminating between the math *Needs Improvement* and *Meets* and *Exceeds* combined was reading score.

As in the two previous DFAs, Discriminant function 1 discriminates membership between *Needs Improvement* and *Meets* and *Exceeds* AYP together. In addition, math

and reading scores were adequate predictors of writing proficiency AYP category membership. Predictor loadings into the discriminant functions demonstrate that the best predictor for discriminating between the writing *Needs Improvement* and *Meets* and *Exceeds* combined was reading score.

A variety of utterances were found in the transcripts and surveys with respect to the CRTs. The most common type of utterance was in regard to time for testing both in respect to time lost preparing for testing and the actual tests themselves (i.e., *they [the students] are sick on testing*). Many of these utterances were supported in the review of literature (Offenberg, 2004; Fisher et al., 2009; McQuillan & Salomon-Fernandez, 2008).

Next, the analysis of constructing ideas showed what could be understood by observing/participating in a group discussion. One participant changed his response to the focus group question based on a compelling argument from another focus group participant. In addition, the use of non-verbal communication was noted in the table. Types of non-verbal responses ranged from a nodding of the head, furrowed brow, and resting chin in hand while resting on the table). During the interview, non-verbal cues were noticed, however, more in-depth analysis connected to the utterances revealed the disapproval of many focus group participants.

Finally, an unintended finding from this study was found in the data output for Research Question Two. The finding was that females scored higher on writing proficiency measures than males.

Summary of Findings

In the analysis comparing the writing proficiency *Needs Improvement* AYP category, with respect to Research Question 1, the school type main effect was

statistically significant. Further, the writing proficiency in the *Needs Improvement* AYP category, PDS schools outperformed Non-PDS schools in writing proficiency *Needs Improvement*. In the second analysis comparing writing proficiency *Meets* AYP category, the school type main effect was also statistically significant. However, Non-PDS schools outperformed PDS schools. With regard to the writing proficiency *Exceeds* AYP category, the analysis was not feasible because all cases belonged to Non-PDS schools, and therefore, the comparison with PDS schools was not possible.

The qualitative analyses revealed that individuals at the PDS felt a great deal of support from the administration. The theme *professional* contained the most data with common utterances. In addition, transcripts revealed the commitment of teachers to their profession. In addition, community and respect were the most common utterance for school climate. For the last category, time involved mentoring teacher interns and mandated curriculum were challenges prevalent at the PDS.

In comparison, the non-PDS contained similar utterances with respect to the category of professional. The support and climate categories were less extensive at the non-PDS schools. The categories of challenge and professional for both the PDS and non-PDS contained the most utterances. Limitations of the data both for the PDS and non-PDS were addressed.

Overall, there are several notable and significant associations with respect to Research Question 2, between student's demographic information and AYP status. Students with IEPs have lower scores than those without even though they are all in the same category of *Needs Improvement*. The only significant correlation with respect to gender is between gender and writing *Needs Improvement*. In terms of ethnicity, the only

significant correlation is between ethnicity and writing *Needs Improvement*. The correlation is weak and negative meaning that minorities are at a disadvantage in relation to white students. LEP has no statistically significant correlations with any of the outcome variables in terms of the *Needs Improvement* AYP category. For all three markers: reading, writing and math, with respect to the *Meets* AYP category, the only significant correlation between the demographics and the outcome was LEP and reading *Meets* AYP. Therefore, students whose primary language is English have an advantage over those whose primary language is not English with respect to English language learners. No statistically significant correlations were found with respect to *Exceeds Expectations*, however when the correlations were reanalyzed using pairwise a weak and negative correlation between FRL status and reading *Exceeds Expectations* occurred. Therefore, individuals who are receiving free and reduced price lunch are at a disadvantage when compared to those individuals who are not identified as free and reduced price lunch. Positive but weak correlations exist between LEP status and reading *Exceeds* expectations as well as math *Exceeds* expectations. Therefore, individuals who are more proficient in English have higher scores in reading and math than those who are not as proficient. Moderate and positive correlation was revealed between grade and reading *Exceeds* AYP as well as math *Exceeds* AYP, favoring students in higher grades.

Student demographics, with respect to qualitative analysis, especially in regard to the designation of IEP, FRL, and LEP were present in the majority of the transcripts and surveys. These three special populations are frequently supported in the literature (Geller & Werner, 2006; Demie, 2002; Abedi, 2004; Hammond, 2010). Furthermore, the

individuals that make up these populations may be at a disadvantage with respect to student achievement.

In terms of predicting AYP status with respect to Research Question 3, LEP and IEP status only matter for the *Needs Improvement* category. For math *Needs Improvement*, only IEP status, is a significant predictor. For Math *Meets* AYP, only LEP is a significant predictor. Only LEP significantly predicts math *Exceeds* AYP score and with respect to the writing proficiency *Needs Improvement*, both IEP and LEP are significant predictors. However, for the writing proficiency *Meets* AYP category, only LEP significantly predicts it, indicating a significant decrement in explained variance vis-à-vis the math needs improvement category. At *Meets* and *Exceeds*, suddenly huge variances are removed in terms of predictive power of the predictors. Finally, for the writing proficiency *Exceeds*, the analysis failed because only 14 cases exist in the writing proficiency *Exceeds*, and thus, none of the variables were significant predictors of the writing proficiency *Exceeds*.

All three areas language, transiency, and prevalence of disability were among frequent utterances in the transcripts and surveys. However, transiency and language were more frequently mentioned than disability. Many utterances in the transcripts related to a lack of background knowledge and experience in relation to student language. Transiency/mobility was one of the first utterances repeatedly shared in the transcripts regarding the PDS. Utterances with respect to prevalence of disability predominantly revolved around the inclusion of students with disabilities in the regular classroom.

In the first analysis, with respect to Research Question 4, math and writing proficiency scores were adequate predictors of reading AYP category membership.

Predictor loadings into the discriminant functions demonstrate that the best predictor for discriminating between the reading *Needs Improvement* and *Meets* and *Exceeds* combined was math score.

In the second analysis, the second discriminant function did not reach statistical significance. Then as in the reading DFA, Discriminant function 1 discriminates membership between *Needs Improvement* and *Meets* and *Exceeds* AYP together. Therefore, reading and writing proficiency scores were adequate predictors of math AYP category membership. Predictor loadings into the discriminant functions demonstrate that the best predictor for discriminating between the math *Needs Improvement* and *Meets* and *Exceeds* combined was reading score.

As in the two previous DFAs, Discriminant function 1 discriminates membership between *Needs Improvement* and *Meets* and *Exceeds* AYP together. In addition, math and reading scores were adequate predictors of writing proficiency AYP category membership. Predictor loadings into the discriminant functions demonstrate that the best predictor for discriminating between the writing *Needs Improvement* and *Meets* and *Exceeds* combined was reading score.

A variety of utterances were found in the transcripts and surveys with respect to the CRTs. The most common type of utterance was in regard to time for testing both in respect to time lost preparing for testing and the actual tests themselves (i.e., *they [the students] are sick on testing*). Many of these utterances were supported in the review of literature (Offenberg, 2004; Fisher et al., 2009; McQuillan & Salomon-Fernandez, 2008).

Next, the analysis of constructing ideas showed what could be understood by observing/participating in a group discussion. One participant changed his response to

the focus group question based on a compelling argument from another focus group participant. In addition the use of non-verbal communication was noted in the table. Types of non-verbal responses ranged from a nodding of the head, furrowed brow, and resting chin in hand while resting on the table). During the interview, non-verbal cues were noticed, however, more in-depth analysis connected to the utterances revealed the disapproval of many focus group participants.

Finally, an unintended finding from this study was found in the data output for Research Question Two. The finding was that females scored higher on writing proficiency measures than males.

Results with respect to both quantitative and qualitative methods have been provided in this chapter. In Chapter 5, research findings are summarized and discussed further. Finally practical implications and suggestions for future research are provided.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

“If you could lead through testing, the US would lead the world in all education categories. When are people going to understand you don’t fatten your lambs by weighing them?” (Kozol, 1997).

This is the first study conducted using a Professional Development School in Needs Improvement (Year 4) with respect to Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Therefore, findings from this study may uncover reasons why a school may not be making AYP and may lead to future decisions for positively affecting AYP outcomes that may include curricula, instruction, and incentives for students and schools. Additionally, findings from this study will contribute to the existing literature base related to professional development schools (PDS) and non-professional development schools and their making AYP particularly with respect to the four special populations: students with disabilities, English language learners, low-income or disadvantaged learners and students who are transient.

Despite the implementation of standards and access to resources, many schools serving diverse learners are failing to make adequate yearly progress (Dixt & Shulleeta, 2010; Spivey, 2010). Many of these schools have the support of numerous resources including college and university partnerships, school districts, funding from state and federal initiatives, and access to national and professional organizations. However, adequate yearly progress is still not being met by many schools. The literature supports many reasons why this may be occurring including inequalities for some of the nation's most diverse learners, both in respect to implementation of required mandates and assessments used to measure student proficiency. The individuals who seem to be most

affected are students with disabilities, English language learners, low-income or disadvantaged learners and students who are transient. These individuals are categorized in the determination of adequate yearly progress as special populations and the research finding support the fact that these areas can affect a school in achieving adequate yearly progress.

The purpose of this study was to examine the factors that may contribute to a school making or not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Four Research Questions were used to examine potential factors contributing to school success with respect to making or not making AYP.

Findings related to each research question in this study are discussed in the following section of this chapter. Then, conclusions are drawn from the findings and shared. Finally practical implications of the study are described and recommendations for future research are provided.

Findings

Research Question 1

In response to Research Question 1, whether there were academic differences between students who attend a professional development school (PDS) or non-professional development school (non-PDS) in terms of achieving AYP were examined. Academic differences were found with respect to the AYP categories of *Needs Improvement* and *Meets* AYP and writing proficiency. For the writing proficiency, in the *Needs Improvement* AYP category, PDS schools outperformed Non-PDS schools in writing proficiency *Needs Improvement*. The school type main effect for this analysis was statistically significant. In comparing writing proficiency *Meets* AYP category, the

school type main effect was also statistically significant. However, Non-PDS schools outperformed PDS schools. With regard to the writing proficiency *Exceeds AYP* category, the analysis was not feasible because all cases belonged to Non-PDS schools, and therefore, the comparison with PDS schools was not possible. The qualitative analyses revealed that individuals at the PDS felt a great deal of support from the administration. Comments such as *feel like your voice is heard; administration takes into consideration thoughts and ideas; and treated like professionals* (Appendix H) were just some of the comments made with respect to a supportive administration. The theme *professional* contained the most data with common utterances with respect to: *collaboration; commitment* on the part of the teacher's, staff, and administration; and *collegial* with respect to practice and interactions with teacher's, staff, and administration. In addition, the transcripts revealed that the teachers were committed to *improving practice*, were *lifelong learners*, and incorporated research methods such as *action research* in their classrooms. The nine essentials of a PDS (NAPDS, 2008) support these practices and may be a reason why more utterances related to these categories were noted from the transcripts and surveys from the PDS. The next theme, *climate* also has a connection to the nine essentials (NAPDS, 2008). The most common utterances for this category were *community* and *respect*. The final category for PDS was *challenges*. The data with the most common utterance for this category were *time involved in mentoring teacher interns* and *mandated curriculum*.

The analysis of the non-PDS revealed similar information in the professional category with respect to *collaboration, professional development, and action research*. The data for the support category included *common planning time, mentoring for new*

teachers new to grade level, strategist-providing support with RTI, intervention, and assessment, and teachers assisting other teachers when no substitutes were available.

The category of *climate* included *community, [teachers] care about students and success of our school, and teachers offering/suggesting changes to improve the student achievement and climate at school.*

The data with respect to the categories of *support* and *climate* for the non-PDS were less detailed than the PDS. For example, the PDS data included more utterances in the categories of *support* and *climate*. The categories of *challenge* and *professional* for both the PDS and non-PDS included the most utterances.

It is noteworthy to mention that the administrators at all four schools included in the study are instituting initiatives to support teachers and students. Some of these include meetings with parents and students that are close to passing the CRTs prior to the test, implementing intervention time daily to support students in areas that are in need of review, creating a parent center, teaching English classes to parents, and having specialists assist with teams with respect to data to make informed decisions. Practices by the administrators such as the aforementioned are aligned with the practices addressed with respect to effective school leadership (Darling-Hammond, Meyerson, LaPointe, & Orr, 2010).

A limitation of the data contained in the PDS table (see Table 2) was that it was derived from one professional development school. The administrator at the second professional development school did not participate in the survey. In addition, 16 transcripts were used for analyses for the PDS and 3 surveys from the non-PDS, since focus groups were not conducted at the non-PDS schools. A limitation of the data

contained in the non-PDS table was that almost all utterances from the support and climate categories came from one non-PDS survey. The areas of *challenges* and *professional* were more easily distributed. These limitations should be taken into consideration before replication.

Research Question 2

In response to Research Question 2, whether there was an association between student's demographic data and AYP Status (*Needs Improvement*, *Meets*, and/or *Exceeds*) was explored. There were several notable and significant associations between student's demographic information and AYP status. Students with IEPs had lower scores than those without, even though they were all in the same category of *Needs Improvement*. The only significant correlation with respect to gender was between gender and writing *Needs Improvement*. In terms of ethnicity, the only significant correlation was between ethnicity and writing *Needs Improvement*. The correlation is weak and negative meaning that minorities are at a disadvantage in relation to white students. LEP had no statistically significant correlations with any of the outcome variables in terms of the *Needs Improvement* AYP category. For all three markers: reading, writing and math, with respect to the *Meets* AYP category, the only significant correlation between the demographics and the outcome was LEP and reading *Meets* AYP. Therefore, students whose primary language is English have an advantage over those whose primary language is not English with respect to English language learners. There were no statistically significant correlations with respect to *Exceeds Expectations*, however when the correlations were reanalyzed using pairwise a weak and negative correlation between FRL status (low-income and disadvantaged students) and reading *Exceeds Expectations*

occurred. Therefore, individuals who are receiving free and reduced price lunch (low-income and disadvantaged) are at a disadvantage when compared to those individuals who are not identified as free and reduced price lunch. There were also positive but weak correlations between LEP status and reading *Exceeds* expectations as well as math *Exceeds* expectations. Therefore, individuals who are more proficient in English have higher scores in reading and math than those who are not as proficient. In addition, there was a moderate and positive correlation between grade and reading *Exceeds* AYP as well as math *Exceeds* AYP, favoring students in higher grades. This might be attributed to the fact that students in younger grades might not have the same base knowledge as they might in older grades to apply when taking the test (CRT and/or writing proficiency). It is noteworthy that the district has four categories of cutoff scores that are used in the calculation of AYP (*Emergent/Developing*, *Approaches Standard*, *Meets Standard*, and *Exceeds Standard*). The *Emergent/Developing* and *Approaches Standard* cut scores are equivalent to the *Needs Improvement* category. Therefore, students may make significant growth and might show that growth with respect to possibly moving from *Emergent/Developing* to *Approaches Standard*; however if *Meets Standard* is not met, it does not contribute to their school's achieving AYP. Student demographics, with respect to qualitative analysis, especially in regard to the designation of IEP, FRL, and LEP were present in the majority of the transcripts and surveys. These three special populations are frequently supported in the literature with respect to achievement. Abedi (2004) acknowledged that NCLB has more stringent requirements in respect to meeting proficiency in the subgroup LEP and Geller and Werner (2006) reported that Latino students appear to begin their school experience at an academic disadvantage. Fisher et

al. (2009) acknowledged that students made academic gains and that these academic changes and gains were beyond what was measured on the state proficiency tests. Demie (2002) addressed the factor of "social deprivation" (p. 213) and acknowledged that high levels of student mobility have a negative effect on school performance measures.

Research Question 3

To address Research Question 3, whether student language, transiency, and/or prevalence of disability predict AYP status was examined. In terms of predicting AYP status, LEP and IEP status are significant for the *Needs Improvement* category. However, for math *Needs Improvement*, only IEP status, was a significant predictor. In contrast, for math *Meets* AYP, LEP was the only significant predictor. Furthermore, LEP was the only significant predictor with respect to math *Exceeds* AYP score. Both IEP and LEP were significant predictors with respect to the writing proficiency *Needs Improvement* category. However, for the writing proficiency *Meets* AYP category, only LEP was a significant predictor, indicating a significant decrement in explained variance compared with the math needs improvement category. At *Meets* and *Exceeds*, suddenly huge variances are removed in terms of predictive power of the predictors. In terms of the writing proficiency *Exceeds*, the analysis failed because only 14 cases existed in the writing proficiency *Exceeds*, and thus, none of the variables were significant predictors of the writing proficiency *Exceeds*.

All three areas language, transiency, and prevalence of disability were among frequent utterances in the transcripts and surveys. However, transiency and language were more frequently mentioned than disability. Many utterances in the transcripts related to a lack of background knowledge and experience in relation to student language.

Transiency/mobility was one of the first utterances repeatedly shared in the transcripts regarding the PDS. Utterances with respect to prevalence of disability predominantly revolved around the inclusion of students with disabilities in the regular classroom.

Research Question 4

To answer Research Question 4, whether CRT and Writing Proficiency scores adequately discriminate AYP status (*Needs Improvement*, *Meets*, and/or *Exceeds*) was examined.

Math and writing proficiency scores were adequate predictors of reading AYP category membership. It was found that the best predictor for discriminating between the reading *Needs Improvement* and *Meets* and *Exceeds* combined was math score.

Furthermore, reading and writing proficiency scores were adequate predictors of math AYP category membership. The best predictor for discriminating between the math *Needs Improvement* and *Meets* and *Exceeds* combined was reading score. In addition, math and reading scores were adequate predictors of writing proficiency AYP category membership. The best predictor for discriminating between the writing *Needs Improvement* and *Meets* and *Exceeds* combined was reading score.

A variety of utterances were found in the transcripts and surveys with respect to the CRTs. The most common type of utterance was in regard to time for testing both in respect to time lost preparing for testing and the actual tests themselves (i.e., *they [the students] are sick on testing*). Many of these utterances were supported in the review of literature (Offenberg, 2004; Fisher et al., 2009; McQuillan & Salomon-Fernandez, 2008).

Next, the analysis of constructing ideas showed what could be understood by observing/participating in a group discussion. One participant changed his response to

the focus group question based on a compelling argument from another focus group participant. In addition, the use of non-verbal communication was noted in the table. Types of non-verbal responses ranged from a nodding of the head, furrowed brow, and resting chin in hand while resting on the table). During the interviews, non-verbal cues were noticed; however, more in-depth analysis connected to the utterances revealed the disapproval of many focus group participants regarding the discourse taking place with respect to mandated assessments (see Appendix F). The focus group allowed individuals the opportunity to partake in a group discussion revolving around a set of focus group questions (see Appendix C). Participants noted that they rarely had opportunities to have these kinds of discussions during the school day due to demands on their time--a factor that was noted by the PDS administrator as well. Furthermore, many of the participants chose to stay long after the time allotted for the planned focus group. Participants commented also on the value of the experience, as they were able to perceive the cohesiveness of the school beyond their own grade level. In contrast, the structure of the administrator survey did not allow for these sorts of interactions (see Appendix E).

Conclusions

The conclusions that can be drawn from the findings in the study are supported in the literature with respect to students from the special populations: learning disabilities, ELL, FRL, and transiency/mobility. In both the quantitative and qualitative analyses, students who are second language learners and low-income or disadvantaged are at a disadvantage with respect to achieving proficiency. Students with disabilities are also at a disadvantage compared to their peers who do not have a disability as was demonstrated in the quantitative findings. However, although disability can be a factor in a school not

achieving AYP, its prevalence is not as present as the category of English language learners as evidenced by both the quantitative and qualitative analyses. The prevalence of transiency/student mobility was also highly present but exclusively in the qualitative analysis since the quantitative data for this category was not readily available.

Despite best intentions, the interim test scores could not be obtained. It was the intention to include interim assessments to explore the impact of additional measures on the findings.

As indicated in a recent correspondence from the district superintendent with educators, the process of moving towards a growth model is being explored. Should it be implemented, the growth model would be a component of a school achieving AYP.

Practical Implications

Practical implications from this study might provide more specific guidance for policy makers and schools regarding assessment and ensuring equity and access for all students. Furthermore, findings may contribute to more effective means to determine whether a school has or has not achieved AYP.

One implication was a teacher's desire to *go into other teachers classrooms a little bit more to see what other people are doing and learn from them*. Darling-Hammond (2010) supports this practice through

lesson study [a] popular approach, which involves teachers in jointly crafting a lesson, observing while a colleague teaches it, then studying student responses and learning evidence to refine the lesson further. When engaged in lesson study, groups of teachers observe one another's classrooms and work together to refine

individual lessons, expediting the spread of best practices throughout the school (Darling-Hammond, p. 200).

Another implication was the occurrence of *so much testing* according to one teacher. *Not only do [I] not have [the] time to teach but [I] don't have time [to] apply what [has been] assessed [and] use [the] results of testing to inform practice.* In addition, teachers commented that *students don't want to put in time [to learn and] say [they] already learned it (due to [the] time limitations and [the fact that] testing content is covered not taught in depth.* Furthermore, *the [current] system perpetuates this occurrence.* Therefore, tests need to be less frequent and more effective while taking into account teacher knowledge of their students in the overall measure of a student's ability.

A final implication was with respect to reading score. Reading score proved to be a versatile indicator of both math and writing proficiency with respect to AYP status. For example, looking at a student's reading score correctly categorized students based on the *Need Improvement, Meet, or Exceeds* marker. The ability to categorize students based on reading score might inform future practice. The following section includes suggestions for further research.

Further Research

Suggestions for Further Research include:

1. A more comprehensive study comparing a Professional Development School to a Professional Development School;
2. The development of a database of school district teachers with regard to specific expertise for in-house and district-wide professional development opportunities;

3. Training for administrators in extracting and focusing data results that inform teacher practice in a timely manner;
4. Articulation among administrators, their predecessors and successors to increase sustainability of policies, initiatives, and practice;
5. Initiatives related to decreasing student transience in the early grades (e.g., greater parent involvement through parent centers, language classes for parents, and parent education;
6. Student female performance on assessments in contrast to male performance; and
7. System accountability.

A more comprehensive study comparing a Professional Development School to a comparable Professional Development School is being suggested to see if the results are similar to the current study.

Developing a comprehensive database of school district teachers with regard to specific expertise for in-house and district-wide professional development opportunities might provide easy access for all schools to individuals of expertise in a variety of disciplines and compensate for their preparation time and effort including time beyond the school day.

Training for administrators in extracting and focusing data results that inform teacher practice in a timely manner. Many administrators are overwhelmed by the amount of data collected. Therefore, training in extracting and focusing data results might assist in the effective use of data already collected while providing information to inform teacher practice.

Articulation among administrators, their predecessors, and successors to increase sustainability of policies, initiatives, and practice might be supported through the use of effective school leadership practices. According to Darling-Hammond, Meyerson, LaPointe, & Orr (2010) the following effective leadership practices:

facilitating student learning, guiding curriculum and instruction, building a professional learning-community, fostering teachers' professional development, evaluating and providing feedback to teachers, using data to manage school improvement, working with parents on students' needs, working with teaching staff to solve problems, helping faculty develop goals for their practice and professional learning, and working with teachers to change teaching methods where students are not succeeding (p. 115).

Initiatives related to decreasing student transience in the early grades such as greater parent involvement through parent centers, language classes for parents, and parent education might decrease the amount of transience in the early grades. Schools should be a welcoming place for parents, especially since many parents might have a negative connotation towards school based on past experiences and/or could have limited time in school settings. However, this does not mean that they cannot contribute to their child's education and success in school.

Another suggestion for further research is student female performance on assessments in contrast to male performance. Based on an unintended finding: females scored higher on writing proficiency measures than males. Ream (2005) notes a possible connection to a term *confianza confianza*. Ream (2005) hypothesizes that "Mexican Americans learn less in school than non-Latino Whites, in part because they have less

access to peer social capital due to the fact that they are more mobile during their school careers" (p. 204). In addition, Ream questions whether some forms of social capital can be converted in the school setting into academic achievement than others. The largest ethnic population at the PDS of focus is Latino; therefore, a future study might focus on the occurrence of *confianza* *confianza* with respect to student performance, particularly male performance. Ream (2005) shared that there is emergent research suggesting that "minority students fortify social ties in ways that differ for their mainstream counterparts, and these differences can influence the accumulation and transmission of import resources embedded within social networks" (p. 205). For example, close-knit and trusting peer interactions termed by some anthropologists and cultural psychologists as *confianza en confianza*, which is roughly translated into "trusting mutual trust" which is a construct learned "through intimate and often family-based social interaction among U.S. Latinos functioning as a "vehicle for self-reference, social esteem, and cultural meaning-making" (p. 205). Ream (2005) also identifies a more extensive literature that shows when students whose friends "like school, get good grades, and are interested in school or attend class regularly are more likely to encounter educational success" (p. 205). Furthermore, Ream (2005) notes that school orientation and its social construction may also differ across groups of students where in one instance educational advancement is encouraged and in another "catalyzing school disengagement among disaffected youth sharing anti-school attitudes" (p. 205).

In conclusion, system accountability could be an area of further research. The district superintendant addressed the need for teacher evaluation in a recent correspondence with educators stating that the process of moving towards a growth

model is being explored. Should it be implemented, the growth model would be a component of a school achieving AYP. It is worth noting that Darling-Hammond (2010) also supports the need of teacher evaluation along with system/school accountability. Furthermore, Darling-Hammond (2010) supports the need for two-way accountability. "Although the child and the school are accountable to the state for test performance, the state is not accountable to the child or school for providing adequate educational resources" (p. 301). In addition

test-based accountability schemes have some times undermined education for the most vulnerable students, by narrowing curriculum and creating incentives to exclude low-achieving students in order to boost scores...although tests can provide some of the information needed for an accountability system, they are not the system itself. Genuine accountability should heighten the probability of good practices occurring for all students, reduce the probability of harmful practice, and ensure that there are self-corrective mechanisms in the system—feedback, assessments, and incentives—that support continual improvement (p. 301).

In this chapter, findings related to each research question in this study were discussed. Then, conclusions from the findings were drawn and shared. Finally practical implications from the study were described and recommendations for future research were provided. Two participants spoke of the need to provide for the future when teaching student's *let's get them smart you know right let them be productive members of society let's teach them how to be good citizens* and you are *taking care of the next generation to get them prepared for life*. These responses and the words of John Goodlad

serve as a reminder to educators and policy makers as to our moral responsibility when assessing students.

There are no data to suggest common attention to the personal and social attributes most people expect schools to develop in the young: dependability, honesty, compassion, fairness, good work habits, ability to work independently with others, creativity, civic-mindedness, and other traits of the well-educated individual. The current call across the nation is for raising test scores, not wise graduates of our educational system. We will pay a high price for this neglect. (Goodlad, Soder, & McDaniel, 2008, p. 11)

APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT FOR TEACHERS/AUDIO/VIDEO



INFORMED CONSENT FOR TEACHERS/AUDIO/VIDEO

PERMISSION

Department of Special Education

TITLE OF STUDY: ASSESSMENT: ENSURING EQUITY & ACCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS

INVESTIGATOR(S): Dr. Pamela Campbell, Principal Investigator and Shannon Hennrich, Student Researcher

CONTACT PHONE NUMBER(S): Dr. Pamela Campbell 702-895-1107 and Shannon Hennrich 503-913-4082

Purpose of the Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to investigate the possible reasons why a local Elementary Professional Development School (PDS) is in Need of Improvement (Year 4) in respect to AYP. This school has the support of the local university, Title 1 funding, access to professional organizations and resources.

Purpose of Audio/Visual Recording

In order to accurately document responses shared during the teacher focus group, the student researcher will videotape all of the teacher focus groups. The video camera will be placed to tape the focus group as a whole.

Participants

You are being asked to participate in the study because you fit this criteria: You are a teacher who has taught students in grade five at a Professional Development School, 2009-2010 academic year, at some point during their schooling (1st-5th grade).

Procedures

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to do the following: participate in a focus group and follow-up interview questions if needed.

Benefits of Participation

There may not be direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. However, Results could have a positive affect on future students in PDSs and/or non PDSs based on findings uncovered through the research. The findings may uncover reasons why a school may or may not be making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). In addition, these findings may lead to future decisions for positively affecting (AYP) outcomes that may include: curricula, instruction, incentives, etc. to benefit future students.

Risks of Participation

There are risks involved in all research studies. Minimal anticipated risks are associated with this study. You may feel uncomfortable when answering some of the open-ended questions associated with the use of focus group questions (e.g., What roles of stewardship do you assume in the school setting aside from in-class teaching?). However, questions have been designed to minimize any discomfort.

Cost /Compensation

There will not be financial cost for you to participate in this study. The study will take 45 min to an hour for the focus group and a maximum of 30 minutes for follow-up questions if needed for a total of one hour and fifteen minutes of your time. You will be compensated for your time when participating in a focus group of two or more people at a rate of twenty-one dollars per hour for full participation or a portion for partial participation.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns about the study, you may contact Shannon Hennrich student researcher at **503-913-4082**. For questions regarding the rights of research subjects, any complaints or comments regarding the manner in which the study is being conducted you may contact **the UNLV Office of Research Integrity – Human Subjects at 702-895-2794 or toll free at 877-895-2794 or via email at IRB@unlv.edu**.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study or in any part of this study. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice to your relations with the university. You are encouraged to ask questions about this study at the beginning or any time during the research study.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in the focus group setting. However, all information gathered in this study will be kept completely confidential. No reference will be made in written or oral materials that could link you to this study. All records will be stored in a locked facility at UNLV for three years after completion of the study. After the storage time the information gathered will be shredded and destroyed.

Participant Consent:

I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study. I am at least 18 years of age. A copy of this form has been given to me.

Signature of Participant

Date

Participant Name (Please Print)

I have read the above information and agree that I can be audio or video taped for the purpose of this study. I am at least 18 years of age. A copy of this form has been given to me.

Signature of Participant

Date

Participant Name (Please Print)

Participant Note: Please do not sign this document if the Approval Stamp is missing or is expired.

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT FOR ADMINISTRATORS



INFORMED CONSENT FOR ADMINISTRATORS

Department of Special Education

TITLE OF STUDY: ASSESSMENT: ENSURING EQUITY & ACCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS

INVESTIGATOR(S): Dr. Pamela Campbell, Principal Investigator and Shannon Hennrich, Student Researcher

CONTACT PHONE NUMBER(S): Dr. Pamela Campbell 702-895-1107 and Shannon Hennrich 503-913-4082

Purpose of the Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to investigate the possible reasons why a local Elementary Professional Development School (PDS) is in Need of Improvement (Year 4) in respect to AYP. This school has the support of the local university, Title 1 funding, access to professional organizations and resources.

Participants

You are being asked to participate in the study because you fit this criteria: You are an administrator who has been an administrator for students in grade five, 2009-2010 academic year, at some point in their schooling (PreK-5).

Procedures

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to do the following: participate in an administrator survey.

Benefits of Participation

There may not be direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. However, Results could have a positive affect on future students in PDSs and/or non PDSs based on findings uncovered through the research. The findings may uncover reasons why a school may or may not be making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). In addition, these findings may lead to future decisions for positively affecting (AYP) outcomes that may include: curricula, instruction, incentives, etc. to benefit future students and schools.

Risks of Participation

There are risks involved in all research studies. Minimal anticipated risks are associated with this study. You may feel uncomfortable when answering some of the open-ended questions associated with the survey (e.g., What factors have contributed to Your School's successes and remaining challenges?). However, questions have been designed to minimize any discomfort.

Cost /Compensation

There will not be financial cost to you to participate in this study. The survey will take 45 minutes to an hour to complete for a total of one hour of your time. You will not be compensated for your time.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns about the study, you may contact Shannon Hennrich student researcher at **503-913-4082**. For questions regarding the rights of research subjects, any complaints or comments regarding the manner in which the study is being conducted you may contact **the UNLV Office of Research Integrity – Human Subjects at 702-895-2794 or toll free at 877-895-2794 or via email at IRB@unlv.edu**.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study or in any part of this study. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice to your relations with the university. You are encouraged to ask questions about this study at the beginning or any time during the research study.

Confidentiality

All information gathered in this study will be kept completely confidential. No reference will be made in written or oral materials that could link you to this study. All records will be stored in a locked facility at UNLV for three years after completion of the study. After the storage time the information gathered will be shredded and destroyed.

Participant Consent:

I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study. I am at least 18 years of age. A copy of this form has been given to me.

Signature of Participant

Date

Participant Name (Please Print)

Participant Note: Please do not sign this document if the Approval Stamp is missing or is expired.

APPENDIX C
TEACHER FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Focus Group Participant # _____

Grade Level(s) _____

Teacher Focus Group Questions Part 1

1. How many years have you been in education?

| | | |
|---------------|-----------|---------------|
| Teacher | PDS _____ | Non-PDS _____ |
| Administrator | PDS _____ | Non-PDS _____ |
| Specialist | PDS _____ | Non-PDS _____ |
| Other | PDS _____ | Non-PDS _____ |

2. What are the key components of a professional development school?

3. Do you have responsibilities beyond classroom teaching?

4. Do you believe there are benefits associated in teaching at a Professional Development School (PDS)?
5. Do you believe there are challenges associated with teaching at a professional development school?
6. Do you have impressions regarding the students you have been teaching over the past five years?

Teacher Focus Group Questions Part 2

1. Did you start teaching at the Professional Development School prior to No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (2001)? If yes, please describe your teaching practices before and after NCLB. If not, please describe your current teaching practices.
2. Has your life as an educator changed since the inception of NCLB? If yes please describe
3. Please describe students' academic and social performance before and after the inception of NCLB.
4. Do you feel supported in assisting students in helping the school achieve AYP? Please describe.
5. In your experience, is there a group of students are you most concerned about in achieving AYP? Which students are you least concerned about?
6. Intermediate: On a scale of 1-5 (one being low and five high), how accurately do you believe the standardized assessments used measure your student's ability level? On a scale of 1-5, how accurately do you believe your in class assessments measure your student's ability level?
7. In addition to mandated assessments, how do you assess your students (e.g., Curriculum Based Measurement (CBM), anecdotal notes, informal assessments, etc.)?
8. Did you start teaching at the Professional Development School prior to Response to Intervention (RTI) (Year)? If yes, please describe your teaching practices before and after RTI. If not, please describe your current teaching practices.
9. Talk about the culture of the Professional Development School
10. Does the word stewardship mean anything to you?

11. Describe policies, activities and/or initiatives that have been implemented during your time at the Professional Development School?
 - a. Have there been successes? Have there been challenges?
 - b. What factors have contributed to your school's successes and remaining challenges?
12. Describe any educational issues your principal and/or administrator may have been dealing with during your time at the professional development?
13. Are there any additional comments you would like to make that were not addressed in the previous focus questions?

APPENDIX D

TEACHER FOCUS GROUP FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Follow-up Interview Questions Used for Clarification

1. Tell me more about that
2. Tell me more about why you feel that way

Open-ended questions will be used to gather more detail or further elaboration.

Closed ended questions (Yes/No) may be used when needed.

APPENDIX E
ADMINISTRATOR SURVEY
Administrator Survey

Years at Your School:

| <u>Role/s</u> | <u>Dates</u> |
|---------------|--------------|
|---------------|--------------|

Interactions with your predecessor (for each role, if applicable):

Interactions with your successor (for each role, if applicable):

Overarching Goal/s for Your School during your tenure as principal and/or administrator:

Policies/Activities/Initiatives implemented during your tenure:

Addresses AYP:

Federal Mandates:

___ Y ___ N

Describe:

NV Mandates:

___ Y ___ N

Describe:

CCSD Mandates:

___ Y ___ N

Describe:

Yours:

___ Y ___ N

Describe:

Other/s:

___ Y ___ N

Describe:

Successes:

Challenges:

Describe any factors that have hindered your success and any remaining challenges?

Describe any factors that have contributed to success and any remaining challenges?

Describe what you are doing to move your school towards AYP?

Comments/Additional thoughts:

If additional space is needed please use the back of this sheet, additional paper or feel free to type in your responses electronically.

APPENDIX F

CONSTRUCTING IDEAS TOGETHER

Table 8

Constructing Ideas Together

| Participant and Utterance | Non-Verbal | Constructing Ideas |
|---------------------------|---|--------------------|
| P1: one | chuckles shakes head | |

| Participant and Utterance | Non-Verbal | Constructing Ideas |
|---|------------|--------------------|
| P4: mmm hmmm | | |
| P2: or this kid has this going on and this kid moved from kinder to fifth it doesn't you know | | |
| P4: I'd say like a three in a way because and maybe even a four it shows I don't think most of these tests are too difficult I think they show if my kid is at grade level I mean they seem fair enough to me they are not really authentic accept for the writing test I mean sort of but it's not the greatest | | |
| P3: because of the multiple choice yeah | | |
| P4: but its they are not really authentic they don't show everybody's ability level but I think they are fair enough I think a lot of our kids are behind and the test is showing that a lot of our kids are behind for whatever reason sometimes it's English I don't think that it is fair that after a year of being in this country you should know English as well as the kid next to you I don't think they should be able to pass it | | |
| P3: yeah that's not the tests fault | | |

| Participant and Utterance | Non-Verbal | Constructing Ideas |
|---|--|--------------------|
| P4: but at grade level doing what they should be doing yeah I think to me it shows | | |
| P2: I think the other reason why to is um the tests are not like regionally based or anything so a lot of the questions that they ask in the practice booklets about seed sowing and like agricultural questions and I grew up here in the desert and I'm like what is you know I don't have the background knowledge the schema to understand the passage as well as someone who grew up around that would if they asked questions about the casinos or what we're surrounded by then we'd understand or be motivated to read the passage or understand it better you know | | |
| P3: compelling that's a compelling argument | furrow of brow, small smile | X |
| P4: what do you think what number? | | X |
| P3: I was going to go with a four but because of P2s compelling argument I'm going to drop it to three | chuckles, laughs, arms crossed, smirk, nodding head and smiling, laughs, another laugh | X |
| P4: alright | | |
| P2: it's culturally biased and there is no way to make it not culturally biased to make a test not culturally biased | | |
| P3: if you wrote it on the moon | smirk, furrow of brow, laugh, nodding of head, sigh | |
| P2: it is not going to matter | | |

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VITA
Graduate College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Shannon Marie Hennrich

Degrees:

Bachelor of Science, Education, 1999
La Salle University, Philadelphia

Master of Science, Education, 2004
Columbia Teachers College, New York

Dissertation Title: Assessment: Ensuring Equity & Access for All Students

Dissertation Examination Committee:

Chairperson, Dr. Pamela Campbell, Ph. D.
Committee Member, Dr. Susan Miller, Ph. D.
Committee Member, Dr. Sherri Strawser, Ph. D.
Graduate Faculty Representative, Dr. LeAnn Putney, Ph. D.