AN ANALYSIS OF AN URBAN MIDDLE SCHOOL'S STRATEGIES TO COMPLY
WITH THE ACCOUNTABILITY PROVISIONS OF NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

by

Carol L. Staten

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor in Education

in the

Educational Leadership

Program

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

June, 2009

An Analysis of an Urban Middle School's Strategies to Comply with the Accountability

Provisions of No Child Left Behind

Carol L. Staten

I hereby release this dissertation to the public. I understand that this dissertation will be made available from the OhioLINK ETD Center and the Maag Library Circulation Desk for public access. I also authorize the University or other individuals to make copies of this dissertation as needed for scholarly research.

Signature:

_____
Carol L. Staten, Student   Date

Approvals:

_____
Charles Vergon, Dissertation Advisor   Date

_____
Paul Carr, Committee Member   Date

_____
Philip Ginnetti, Committee Member   Date

_____
Marcia Matanin, Committee Member   Date

_____
Peter J. Kasvinsky, Dean of School of Graduate Studies & Research   Date

Abstract

The No Child Left Behind Act had a positive agenda-setting function on this urban middle school, forcing it to re-examine the strategies it was employing to improve student achievement. Changes or adjustments, in some part attributable to NCLB, were found in the manner in which teachers were assigned, professional development implemented, data utilized, and parent involvement focused. Staff perceived several of these changes as potentially important in theory to improving student achievement, although they saw substantial barriers, no discernable improvement in achievement was realized across the years studied.

At the same time, the study found that NCLB had some negative consequences for the school. These included consequences such as: narrowing the curriculum due to the law's math and reading emphasis; reducing the availability of Title funds as a result of mandatory set asides and student choice; failing to recognized that HQT, while important, is not the only teacher quality that matters in advancing student performance; and hindering some on-going relationships between the school and families and among staff. Finally, the study questions as they applied to the fairness of NCLB to urban schools since their diversity multiplies the number of AYP targets that must be met, and heightens the difficulty of avoiding school improvement status and the sanctions that accompany it.

The study employed a case study methodology. The triangulated and analyzed data included federal and state laws, state and local archival records and transcribed key-informant interviews of more than a dozen central office personnel and teachers of the urban middle school engaged in implementing the NCLB in this case study.

Acknowledgements

There are no words to express the appreciation of Dr. Charles Vergon for his guidance and patience through the process. He continuously offered support, educational expertise and advice throughout the years it took to complete this study.

I also extend sincere gratitude to the other members of my dissertation committee, Dr. Paul Carr, Dr. Marcia Matanin, and Dr. Philip Ginnetti because of their patience in remaining on my committee throughout this long process.

My greatest appreciation goes out to my family who supported me throughout this process. But, there is a special appreciation to my husband, Raymond, who supported, encouraged, and kept me on target throughout this study, particularly through the all day typing sessions. To my children William, CaRai and Christopher, who kept the noise down when I had to study and did not disturb me when I had to type.

I want to thank my parents, Reverend Edmond H. and Constance Southerland who have supported me throughout all my educational endeavors, picked up and dropped off my children and attended their activities when I couldn't because I was in class or researching. I also want to thank my siblings, Lenore and Fred who kept the humor coming during the most stressful day.

Finally, I want to thank a host of family, friends and co-workers who watched over my children, took and picked them up at events and continuously said, "You can do this". And, a big thanks to the staff of the schools where I was an administrator who put up with the mood swings during this lengthy process.

Without all of the aforementioned people, I could not have finished this study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER

Chapter 1

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)* was touted as the remedy for the education gap between economically disadvantaged children and their counterparts when it was adopted in 1965. But, 40 years later the gap continued to persist. *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* spelled out the most recent reauthorization of ESEA intended to spur greater progress and solve this problem.

NCLB was enacted in 2001, focusing on increasing the accountability of states and local school districts receiving ESEA funds. NCLB not only built on the provisions of the *Improving America's School Act* (IASA) of 1994 but it added new mandates and tougher sanctions for schools that failed to increase student achievement each year. This study is intended to further our understanding of how NCLB is being implemented in an urban middle school and some of its consequences with respect to: 1) strategies employed to improve student achievement, 2) staff perceptions of the likely impact on improving student performance, and 3) trends in actual achievement.

Chronological Description of ESEA

Since 1965, Title I of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)* has been the basis for federal guidelines associated with the distribution of funds to increase the academic achievement of economically disadvantaged students. The funding has been a mainstay in providing extra revenue for school districts to provide services that were geared toward these students so that their lack of academic success could be remedied. The positive effect that this act was intended to achieve has only been realized on a limited scale during selected periods of time in conjunction with particular programs

initiated for specific populations (e.g. Doyle & Cooper, 1988; Ganson, 2000; Kosters & Mast, 1981; OECD, 1981).

Initially, ESEA's accountability plan consisted of a three-tiered (or pyramid) reporting scheme, whereby the local education association (LEA) annually reported to the state education association (SEA) and the SEA reported to the Office of Education (OE) (McLaughlin, 1975). Since the inception of *ESEA there has been an ongoing debate as to the adequacy of the accountability reports that the states and local school districts are required to submit to the federal government. McLaughlin (1975) found, in the early years of the program, the states' reports resembled "educational travel brochures", with extensive anecdotes and little objective data to support claims of "success" (p. 23). (*see Appendix A for complete acronyms list)

Between 1968 and 1978, Congress amended the original legislation four times to make the accountability guidelines more stringent regarding the expenditures of the ESEA-Title I funds (Doyle & Cooper, 1988; Peterson, Rabe & Wong, 1988). For instance, one of the first steps toward ensuring increased accountability was a requirement that reports on successful projects and effective methods for implementing Title I had to be produced and sent to the United States Office of Education (USOE).

In 1976, Congress also added several supplemental provisions to the original legislation. According to Vanecko, Ames & Archambault (1980), Odden (1991) and Doyle & Cooper (1998), these provisions included stipulations such as the following:

(1) **General Aid** states that Title I funds can not be used to meet the general needs of the student body at large, however pressing those needs are (Section 101 of Title1).

(2) **Maintenance-of-Effort** requires that funding from state and local sources not decrease from the preceding year (Section 143 (c) (2) of Title 1).

(3) **Comparability** requires that the level of services in Title I schools are comparable to the average level in non-Title I schools before the addition of Title I funds (Section 141 (a) (3) (c) of Title 1).

(4) **Supplement-not-Supplant** states that children in Title I programs must receive the same level of state and local funds they would have received if Title I did not exist (Section 141 (a) (3) (B) of Title 1).

(5) **Excess Cost** stipulates that Title I funds can pay only for the excess costs of Title I programs and projects (Section 141 (a) (1) of Title 1).

(6) **Program Evaluation** ensures that the effects of Title I programs are first assessed and the results are used by the districts to determine how their program might be improved (Section 141 (a) (6) (7) of Title 1).

(7) **Parent Involvement** guarantees that the parent has participation in a consistent, organized, and meaningful way in the consultation, planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs and activities to increase student achievement (Section 141 (a) (14) of Title 1).

Also, during the 1970s, "pull-out" programs to service economically disadvantaged students became prevalent because they satisfied the program auditor's need to assure that the students served were those students who were eligible for Title I services. While the programs were easy to monitor, they later came under scrutiny because of the lack of alignment with the general curriculum, the amount of time the students were out of the regular classroom, and the stigma of the child labeled "dumb" by peers (Doyle & Cooper,

1988; OECD, 1981). Because of such criticisms, Congress, in 1978, passed amendments that allowed schools with 75 percent or more children from low-income families to use Title I funds to implement "school wide programs" (Kosters & Mast 2003). Koster & Mast (2003) also reported that while the Reagan administration deleted the school wide provision in 1981, it was restored in 1983.

The 1983 publication of "A Nation At Risk" issued by the National Commission on Excellence in Education raised questions regarding American education, including the effectiveness of ESEA, triggering a wave of reform activity. By the end of 1986, Fuhrman (1988) reports that each state addressed at least three of the following areas of education reform:

(1) teacher certification and training

(2) teacher compensation and career structure

(3) governance and finance

(4) school attendance calendar and class size

(5) graduation standards

(6) curriculum and testing.

When progress was not immediate, Congress responded to calls for reform. In 1994, it passed the Goals 2000 legislation of IASA, which, among other measures, reduced the threshold for eligibility for a school wide Title I program from 75 percent of children from low-income families to schools comprised of 50 percent of such students. Goals 2000 not only reauthorized the use of school wide programs, but also added the following elements:

1. State governments are required to adopt content requirements-standards for public school curriculum.

2. Curriculum requirements demand not simply student exposure to politically determined content, but also "demonstrated competency" over those subject matters as the prerequisite price for student promotion and graduation.

3. Reforms are to include all elements of schooling, from curriculum content and teacher certificates, to students' assessment and textbook publishing (Arons, 1997, pg. 64-65).

In 2001, Congress took a major step to propel further educational reform. The *No Child Left Behind Act* was passed as a reauthorization of the ESEA. This reauthorization focused on the use of state testing to prove the effectiveness of the programs initiated using ESEA funds. It also added that (a) states must set academic performance goals for schools and that the goals must be met within twelve years, (b) criteria for "adequate yearly progress" must be established, (c) yearly math and reading tests are required for grade three through eight to monitor progress, (d) tests results must be reported by race, ethnicity, income, English proficiency, and disability status, (e) and parents whose children attend consistently failing schools must be given the opportunity to remove their child to a better performing school and/or receive supplemental services could be provided at their current school (Public Law 107-110).

For the forty-years since ESEA was first enacted, evaluators have only been able to show ESEA limited effectiveness in closing the achievement gap between the economically disadvantaged and other students (Kosters & Mast, 2003; McLaughlin, 1975; OECD, 1981; Vanecko, Ames & Archambault, 1980; West & Peterson, 2003).

NCLB's accountability provisions are intended to produce further educational reforms and more tangible positive outcomes for all children, leaving no group behind. Research has just begun to scrutinize NCLB's impact. This study was intended to further our understanding of how NCLB is being implemented and some of its consequences.

Research Questions

1. How have the strategies employed by an urban middle school to promote student achievement been affected by the accountability provisions of NCLB?

2. What strategies adopted in conjunction with No Child Left Behind do school officials perceive to be potentially effective in helping improve student achievement?

3. Will higher level of academic achievement actually be realized in the aftermath of NCLB?

Purpose of the Study

The passage of ESEA-NCLB has caused states, local school districts, and Title I schools to implement major revisions in their strategies to improving school achievement. For instance, NCLB dictates that: (1) all academic programs funded by Title I must be scientifically based research, (2) parents must be afforded expanded opportunities for "school choice", (3) district and building reports cards must be published and disaggregated by specific subgroups, (4) students must be assessed academically from grades three through twelve, (5) adequate yearly progress must be used to demonstrate improvement for targeted students, (6) staff development must be focused and sustained over a length of time, and (7) districts enjoy expanded flexibility and local control in combining funding for Title I, Title II, and Title IV (Protherone, Shellard, and Turner, 2003; U. S. Department of Education, 2003).

These revisions to ESEA seek yet again to enhance the effectiveness of ESEA in improving the academic achievement of economically disadvantaged students. The purpose of the study is to examine changes in an urban middle school's strategies to promote student achievement that occurred after the enactment of NCLB.

Significance of the Study

After the enactment of NCLB, there were numerous works published about it. Koster & Mast (2003) reported on the accountability provisions of NCLB. They reported that NCLB presented the sanctions of failing schools more explicitly. The goals had to be achieved in twelve years in math and reading for students in the third to eighth grade. In addition, a school's results have to be reported by each school with subgroups of race, ethnicity, income, English proficiency and disability.

There were numerous opinion articles written about NCLB. Some articles not only supported the accountability provisions, but also the mandates and sanctions (Brown, 2002; Izumi and Evers, 2004; Goodman, 2004; Sanders, 2000; Paige, 2004; Kane and Staiger, 2003; Hickok, 2002. There were also articles that criticized the severity of the sanctions of NCLB and the probability of NCLB not being successful in closing the achievement gap (Sunderman, 2005; Haycock, 2004; Meir, 2004; Karp, 2004; Popham, 2004; Mathis, 2003; Moe, 2003; Hanushek and Raymond, 2003).

Meier and Woods (2004) presented various essays from authors that discussed the counterproductive and destructive effects of NCLB in different districts. They focused on the use of a single test to determine a school's success. They also emphasized that the use of a single test would disproportionately label schools with poor children as ones in need of improvement. The Alliance for Excellent Education (2003) narrowed the focus to the

middle school by reporting on some of the challenges middle schools are experiencing in complying with NCLB.

There has been a limited number of what might be characterized as "early implementation studies". These however have tended to involve macro 50- state surveys (Center on Education Policy (CEP), 2003; Center of Education Policy, 2004). CEP found that the states reported challenges in implementing the NCLB provisions because of the short deadlines and the frustration with the requirements for students with disabilities and English language learners. CEP surveys of some school district officials revealed similar findings about the challenges of implementing NCLB. Other researchers reported on the political agendas associated with the accountability provisions of the act (Brown, 2002; Peterson & West, 2003). All of the aforementioned reports and studies covered various aspects of NCLB, but none, provided a detailed case study of NCLB's effect on an urban middle school's strategies to improve student achievement.   This dissertation research adds to the literature by comparing the strategies used by Urban Middle School during the two school years prior to the passage of NCLB (1998-2000) with these strategies employed after the adoption of NCLB (2002-2004), the "early implementation" period.

The case study provides information for urban districts struggling to comply with the NCLB mandates about strategies that one middle school implemented to comply with the various accountability provisions of NCLB. Specifically, the study examines changes in strategies with respect to: 1) staff selection and assignment; 2) staff professional development; 3) curricular program selection and implementation; 4) student assessment practices; and 5) parent involvement in their children's education. (see Appendix B for conceptual model)

The purpose of this dissertation study is significant because there have been few local implementation studies. The majority of the studies consisted of evaluating data generated from a few interviews of Congressional and U. S. Department of Education officials, surveys of representatives of the 50 states education agencies, and a national selection of school districts. While at least one of the CEP studies inquired about changes in strategies to promote student achievement, state officials were the respondents and offered only a few generalized strategies. Furthermore, previous studies did not include participant observation with interviews of front line implementers and archival data to illuminate the realities of policy implementation. Finally, this is a particularly important study because there was little or no research on how an urban middle school with a large (89%) minority economically disadvantaged student population implemented strategies that would affect student achievement, the very populations that NCLB reforms were enacted to benefit.

Definitions of Terms

1. *A Nation at Risk* - a report authored by the National Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEE) in 1983 describing America's academic achievements as compared to the world at that time.

2. Accountability - record keeping and reporting provisions that are designed to ensure fund and program accountability.

3. Accountability Plan - a state's plan based on ESEA-NCLB guidelines explaining how a state will implement the mandates of NCLB.

4. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) - a measure of yearly progress toward achieving state academic standards. "Adequate Yearly Progress" is the minimum level of improvement that states, school districts, and schools must achieve each year.

5. Building Report Card - annual report that gives the school's results on statewide assessment tests disaggregated for subgroups according to guidelines provided by NCLB.

6. Cumulative effects - responses districts and schools have made to the array of federal and state targeted categorical programs and related mandates that affect them.

7. District Report Card - is a report of the school district's academic standing in relation to the criteria set by the individual state that reflects ESEA requirements. The report card is accessible to the general public and must be provided to the school district's community.

8. Economically disadvantaged - children from low-income families generally determined by family income in relation to national poverty guidelines.

9. Education Consolidation and Improvement Act of 1981- is the name given to ESEA reauthorization by President Reagan that reduced number of categorical programs administered by United States Department of Education.

10. Education Management Information System (EMIS) - the state of Ohio's internet system that links the state and local school districts demographic and assessment information.

11. Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 - the principal federal law affecting K-12 education.

12. Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994 - legislation establishing a new federal partnership through a system of grants to states and local communities to reform the nation's education system with emphasis on standards.

13. Highly qualified teacher (HQT) - a teacher that satisfies a list of minimum requirements related to content knowledge and teaching skills as prescribed by NCLB.

14. Local Professional Development Committee (LPDC) - the purpose of the committee is to review the coursework and other professional development activities proposed and completed by educators within the district to determine if the requirements for renewal of certificates or licenses have been met.

15. No Child Left Behind of 2001- is the name given to the ESEA reauthorization in 2001. It is designed to improve student achievement and change the culture of America's schools.

16. Pullouts - a remedial education approach by which students are pulled out of regular classes for special instruction or tutoring.

17. Student Achievement - students mastering the materials in the state's academic standards.

18. School wide - Title I schools that have a disproportional concentration of children from low- income families that use ESEA funding to improve the academic achievement in such schools for the student body as a whole.

Delimitations

1. The case study covers a five-year period including two years prior to the adoption of NCLB ad two years after its passage.

2. The research involves the experience of only one middle school in one urban

   school district in a Midwestern state.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In 2001, Congress took a major step to propel further educational reform. The *No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act* was passed as a reauthorization of the ESEA. This reauthorization focused on the use of state testing to prove the effectiveness of the programs that the states initiated using SEA funds. It also added that (a) states must set goals for schools and that the goals must be met within twelve years, (b) criteria for "adequate yearly progress" must be established, (c) yearly math and reading tests are required for grade three through eight to monitor progress, (d) tests results must be reported by race, ethnicity, income, English proficiency, and disability status, (e) and parents whose children attend consistently failing schools must be given the opportunity to remove their child to a better performing school and/or receive supplemental services could be provided at their current school (Public Law 107-110).

At the inception of this study in 2004, little had been published about NCLB except for works about its mandates, provisions and implementation. These works fell into three categories, tending to focus on one of the following: (1) the purpose of the mandates and provisions associated with NCLB; (2) the opinions of the supporters and the critics of NCLB; and (3) and a few early implementation studies focusing on state responses and perceived impacts. The literature associated with each of these categories is reviewed next.

Purpose of NCLB

NCLB was enacted in 2001 as a reauthorization of ESEA that would focus on accountability of states who were given ESEA funds. NCLB added to the provisions of

the *Improving America's School Act (IASA)* of 1994 by including additional mandates and tougher sanctions for states, districts, and schools that did not increase student achievement each year.

NCLB created specific guidelines and set 2014 as the year that all students would be 100% proficient (Brown, 2002; Kosters and Mast, 2003; Guide to ESEA Formula Grants, 2002). NCLB not only expanded on IASA but it made states accountable in developing school wide programs for all students in Title I school, not just students who were considered economically disadvantaged. Secretary of Education Paige (2004) emphasized in an interview that the schools are held accountable for the achievement of all students, not just the average student. Hickock (2002), in *Implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act*, stated that NCLB provides for real performance accountability in the Title I program by requiring statewide accountability systems covering all public schools and students. The changes in accountability also give the public an opportunity to scrutinize the effectiveness of their public school system through annual reports that list a school's standing, the number of highly qualified teachers it may have, the average yearly progress of its student population and the status of the various subgroups within the school district and the individual school buildings (Brown, 2002; Goodman, 2004).

Thernstrom and Thernstrom (2003) in *No Excuse: Closing the Racial Gap in Learning* agreed with this and further stated that standards, testing, and the accountability areas in NCLB are long overdue and a much needed reform. Goertz (2001) in *Standards Reform in the States* reported that successful accountability systems encourage schools and districts to have curriculum and teaching that is aligned with state standards, analyze

testing data, make use of it in teaching practices, and make sure students are continuing to make progress year after year.

<div align="center">Supporters and Critics</div>

<div align="center">Supporters</div>

The supporters of NCLB felt that it is the greatest piece of legislature enacted by the federal government since the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)* of 1965. In fact, it was written by Brown (2002) of the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, that NCLB provides the clearest map for school improvement there has been at virtually any level of government. The supporters also stated that the federal government has played with the states long enough after the enactment of IASA in 1994. IASA gave the states until 2001 to develop content and performance standards in reading and math, afford parents meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children, develop multiple-measure assessment systems, develop adequate yearly progress criteria and identify schools in need of improvement. NCLB took the provisions of IASA, expanded on them, and dramatically changed the timelines given for compliance by the states. NCLB created guidelines that are more specific and set a 12-year span of 2014 as the year that all students will be 100% proficient (Brown, 2002; Kosters and Mast, 2003). The supporters stated that NCLB has given IASA provisions more stringent consequences that states cannot ignore.

The focus on accountability has states developing schoolwide programs for all students in a Title I school, not just the ones who are considered economically disadvantaged. Paige (2004) emphasized in an interview that the schools are held accountable for the achievement of all students, not just the average student. Izumi and

Evers (2004) wrote that even under a less-than-optimal accountability system, the situation is often much better than when no accountability system existed.

Brown (2002) further elaborated that if all students are responsible for the same state standards then, no matter where they attend school within the state, they will be able to learn the standards. She also stated that if the standards are taught by teachers who demonstrate a high level of competency, their students will be academically successful. In order for teachers to have a high level of competency, NCLB mandates that teachers receive professional development. Sanders (2000) confirmed that professional development is necessary for teachers and must be continuous and not a one shot deal.

Not only do the supporters believe in the professional development of teachers, but they emphasized that they agreed with NCLB that the strategies that teachers use should have a scientifically based success record and that the strategies should have a history of being successful before being implemented within a Title I school.

The supporters felt that students should be able to achieve a certain percentage of average yearly progress each year if the school district or building is following the guidelines of NCLB (Goodman, 2004; Brown, 2002; Paige, 2004). They stated that reporting student achievement by subgroups would prove if the school district were closing the achievement gap between the economically disadvantaged and their counterparts. In fact, Kane and Staiger (2003) reported that despite the difficulties in achieving them, racial subgroup rules might be worthwhile, if they are effective in forcing schools to focus on the academic achievement of minority youth.

The reporting by subgroups would give parents an opportunity to see what is being taught in the school that their child attends and gives leverage to the public school choice

provision that had been added to the provisions of NCLB. According to Hickok (2002), the parent choice provision increases the choices that are available to parents and students attending low-performing schools. Civil rights advocates believe that the NCLB transfer policy will help bridge the divide between racially and economically segregated schools and allow large numbers of low-income and minority students to attend integrated schools with higher achievement levels (Sunderman, Kim, Orfield, 2005). Even though the supporters presented a picture of the need for NCLB to make the public school system accountable, the critics present some concerns about the provisions associated with the accountability.

<div align="center">Critics</div>

The major concern from critics has been that *No Child Left Behind* is a way to privatize public education. The implementation of sanctions for schools that do not achieve the average yearly progress (AYP) increment outlined by their state plans has raised concern and skepticism as to the reasons behind *No Child Left Behind*. Senator Jim Jeffords (2004) stated that the law was a back-door maneuver that will let the private sector take over public education. The critics felt that the sanctions of school choice, restructuring, and vouchers to private schools or supplemental services will destroy public education due to the flight of parents who feel that these options are a cure all. The use of school choice not only takes money from the schools that have a large number of students who are economically disadvantaged and below average academically to schools who may be struggling themselves to meet AYP, but, it also gives parents who have students who are successful an avenue to move their students to another school. This would be detrimental to the school that they are transferring from because the school

would be losing student numbers, as well as, some bright students who could have helped the building make AYP. Sunderman, Kim & Orfield (2005) also noted that if choice is simply transferring students from one poorly performing school to another similar school, there is little chance for NCLB to expand the quality of schooling option for disadvantaged families.

Another sanction that critics feel will be very detrimental to public schools is the one of restructuring. The sanction of restructuring a school after the fifth year of not reaching AYP means that teachers who were not effective in one school now are moved to another school. The movement of ineffective teachers only moves the problem to another site, instead of, providing professional development for that teacher so he/she would be more effective.

Not only are the critics concerned about the sanctions, but there is a concern that NCLB relies too heavily on a student's performance on high stakes tests. If the test has flaws then the results will contain flaws also. Karp (2004), in *Rethinking Schools*, reports that in October, 2003 the Educational Testing Service reported that gaps in student achievement mirrors inequalities in the 14 contributing factors associated with aspects of school, early life and home circumstances that research has linked to achievement. Yet, none of these measures of inequality was acknowledged in computing AYP charts used to label schools as unsuccessful and impose penalties.

Haycock (2002), in *Opportunities and Accountability to Leave No Child Left Behind in the Middle Grades,* wrote that she was optimistic that the law would be implemented as it was intended. She stressed that even if it was implemented correctly, the goal of getting all students to be proficient learners in 12 years is unrealistic. She further

elaborated that it would be more realistic to have low income and minority students

perform at the basic achievement level by 2014, instead of the two thirds currently

performing below the basic level.

Critics also felt that the students would be taught to the tests, instead of being truly

educated. Popham (2004), one of the nation's foremost authorities on testing, confirms in

American Failing Schools, that students are being short changed regarding the

curriculum. The students are not learning the full range of what they should be learning

because a high stakes test triggers cuts in important, but untested curricular and content.

In fact, Meir (2004), in *NCLB and Democracy*, wrote that by relying on standardized

tests as the only measure of school quality, NCLB usurps the right of local communities

to define the attributes of a sound education. She continued that the very definition of an

educated person has been changed by NCLB to only include students who score high on

standardized math and reading tests. Karp (2004) adds that relying overly on testing

diverts the attention and resources from more promising school improvement strategies

like smaller class size, creative curriculum reform and collaborative professional

development.

NCLB also expects states to further develop academic standards on which all school

districts must base their testing. The problem with this is that some states have so many

standards that teachers are left to guess as to what standards will be on the test for that

year. There has also been criticism as to who develops the tests because the standards that

the students have to achieve may not reflect urban or rural populations or the economic

background of the students taking the test (Kohn, 2000).

There is also a concern about the definition of proficiency. Each state has developed their own levels and definition of what they consider proficient. Kane and Staiger (2003) reported that more schools would fail under the minimum proficiency rate under NCLB because the minimum proficiency rate will be much higher than the minimum used in that state in the past. Since NCLB stated that, they must develop increments of progress that will end with all students classified as 100% by the school year of 2013-2014. Some states have developed equal increments and other states have the first nine years with smaller increments with plans to catch up the last three years before the timeline. This has caused critics to question the equality of the accountability provisions within the law.

The AYP provision mentioned previously not only applies to the school district, but also, the schools within the school district. Another major concern is the AYP provision because even if your school was reported to be effective under criteria established by their respective state education agency for federal NCLB purposes your subgroups could still have you classified as in need of school improvement. The subgroups currently listed under NCLB are economically disadvantaged, African-American, Hispanic, Multi-Racial, White, Limited English proficient, Students with Disabilities, Asian/Pacific Islander, and American Indian/Native Alaskan. If a school has a particular number of these students as determined by the state, they will have to list their scores separately. After the students take the state required test, these students scores must reflect the AYP increment established by the state to determine if they have made AYP progress. If the students in the subgroups do not make AYP, a building could be placed in need of improvement for those particular groups.

Critics also emphasize that larger schools and particularly ones with multiple subgroups have more chances to be labeled as failing than schools since the failure of any one subgroup to achieve AYP means the school will be classified "in need of improvement". Kane and Staiger (2003), in *Unintended Consequences of Racial Subgroup Rules*, reported that subgroup rules will result in fewer resources and more sanctions targeted on diverse schools simply because of their diversity. Popham (2004) projected that states will have to go up at least 5 to 6 percent annually in order to achieve AYP targets, which will label as failing a majority of the schools already struggling Mathis (2003), in *No Child Left Behind: Costs and Benefits*, reported that there is no body of accepted scientific knowledge that says that all students and subgroups can reach meaningful high standards at the required AYP pace, given the level of funding and the lack of social economic and family assets of many of our children.

Another concern of the critics is that the failure of the schools is put on the teacher's shoulders. The law emphasized the need for teachers to be "highly qualified" (HQ) by taking a state test and earning a number of college credits in particular content areas if they are 7th to 12th grade teachers.

The Alliance of Excellent Education (2003) voiced a concern that with seventh and eighth grade teachers "highly qualified" (HQ) status linked to secondary teachers that middle school teachers of those grades would have the same stringent requirements as high schools. They believe that with middle school teachers often teaching multiple subjects and the NCLB "HQT" standards requiring them to be certified in each of those areas it will be a challenge for schools of high poverty and rural areas to recruit and retain qualified teachers. Therefore, they suggested that colleges and universities offer programs

that will specifically offer this academic background and not allow middle school certification as an "add on". They also recommended that districts provide professional development for veteran and middle school teachers so that they can be HQ and provide federal tax credits, college scholarships, and loan-forgiveness programs to HQ teachers who commit to teaching in high-poverty areas.

The school districts had to send out letters to parents naming teachers who may not be highly qualified and giving the parents the option of removing their child from that particular teacher's classroom. Moe (2003), in *Politics, Control and the Future of School Accountability*, reported that there is no concrete evidence that a teacher's certification promotes student achievement, but it does limit the pool of potential hires, without any guaranteed pay off in productivity. Critics have emphasized that teachers have strong union contracts that provide for job security. In fact, Moe (2003) stated that schools inherit people whose values and expectations are shaped by security and the lack of emphasis on performance. Further, when schools are reconstituted, the ineffective employees are disbanded and moved to another school where they continue to be unproductive and receive their usual salaries.

NCLB tries to combat the problem with ineffective employees by mandating that ten percent of professional development money be used to train staff in areas of concern. This provision is given not only to the school district, but also to the schools within the school district. The major change is that the professional development must not be a one shot deal or a one day workshop. The professional development must be over a period of time and continuous. The professional development must reflect the school district or

buildings comprehensive continuous improvement plans that each must develop. The critic's position is that professional development does not ensure implementation by staff.

Scientifically based research programs are now the only programs that school districts and schools are allowed to implement using Title I funds. The critics report that the use of particular programs, approved by the government, curtails the freedom of the school district, the school itself, and the teacher in developing programs that would be the most beneficial for their students. Goodman et al (2004), in *Saving Our Schools*, believes that in order to solve the problem of teaching children to read by defining what is and is not "scientific" research is illustrated in a district that told teachers to stop sustained silent reading because the federal government said there was no research to support it.

NCLB requires that the district and building report card generate systematic performance information at the local level, as well as, a year-by-year measurement of achievement gains of the students in the school and district. It also requires that this information is made available in different racial and income categories. The critics are concerned that the report cards only report the actual achievement scores and do not take into account the influence that economics, mobility, family background, etc. plays in a student's academic success or lack of. For instance, Hanushek and Raymond (2003) reported in *Lessons about the Design of State Accountability,* that as mobility increases, differences in student background, preparation and abilities overtime will contribute to difference in aggregate performances.

The critics state that the way results are currently being reported will lead parents to believe that the schools that may be struggling to be effective are not doing anything to help their child. This could cause a flight to other districts or schools within a district,

whether they are public or private, thereby, putting the current district in an economical bind as funding moves with the child.

The supporters and critics present valid arguments for their respective positions. In spite of their differences with respect to various provisions, supporters and critics generally felt that NCLB was a necessary piece of legislature to further advance ESEA.

The first two categories of studies provided descriptive accounts and analysis of the potential benefits and detriments of NCLB from 2002-2004. Next, literature that discusses the implementation of NCLB by states and districts was reviewed.

Early Implementation Studies

One of the first studies was by Linn, Baker, & Betebenner (2002) from the Center for the Study of Education who analyzed the AYP provisions of the 50 states. They reported that one of the challenges the states faced in implementing NCLB was the starting points for the "average yearly progress" (AYP) objectives because each state had a different starting point and the AYP mandate did not make allowances for these variances. Therefore, the states felt that providing relevant information to the parents, staff, community, etc. would be a challenge.

Another organization that studied the challenges in implementing NCLB was the Center on Education Policy (CEP), a national independent organization that advocates for public education and for public schools that are more effective. CEP has annually reported on the progress of NCLB in states and districts since a year after its enactment.

CEP (2003a) first reported on the implementation progress of NCLB in 2003. CEP reviewed 51 State Consolidated Applications July 30 and September 10, 2002. They conducted telephone interviews with education officials in 48 states and the District of

Columbia asking 33 multi-part questions about state assessment and accountability practices. CEP also had in-depth interviews with personnel from two states and three school districts about specific provisions of NCLB. Finally, staff in fifteen school districts were surveyed regarding their implementation of NCLB provisions and mandates and their responses were added to the study. CEP reported that the states did attempt to implement the different provisions that were mandated by NCLB. The states reported that the challenges to effective implementation tended to attribute in substantial measure to the government's delay in releasing final regulations and guidance regarding the implementation of some of the mandates found in NCLB.

CEP also reported out that the states felt that the biggest challenge they faced was the average yearly progress (AYP) mandate. State officials reported it was hard coming up with a suitable plan because states that may have more rigorous standards, assessments, and definitions of proficiency may be unintentionally penalized because they have further to go to reach 100% proficiency.

CEP (2003a) found that the states that had numerous rural or small districts faced unique challenges in offering school choice because there was a lack of other buildings to which students could elect to move to even when given that option.

CEP also found that the states had made little progress in gathering data for highly qualified teachers (HQT) and paraprofessionals, as well as, in determining what programs were scientifically based researched (SBR) programs. The reason the states gave for the slow use of SBR programs was they were waiting on the government to provide more guidance as to what they wanted. They also felt that there would not be a lot of programs or approaches that would meet the government's criteria.

In October, 2003b, CEP published their second case study about NCLB concentrating on implementation activities from October, 2003 to January, 2004. Interviews were conducted with three members of Congress and nine principal officials in the United Stated Education Department who were involved in the administration of the Act. To get state information, CEP reviewed and analyzed state plans, sent state education agency officials a sixty question survey, and monitored the state websites. Information from the districts was gathered by means of an eighty-eight question survey sent to Title I administrators and other federal program administrators in 402 urban, suburban and rural districts. Survey responses were received from 274 districts, which is a 68% response rate.

This CEP implementation study showed that forty-two states agreed that having an accountability system based on content and performance standards would positively affect student achievement. In fact, 33 out of 47 state officials believed that student achievement would increase. CEP also found that very large districts accounted for a disproportionate share of the schools identified as "in need of improvement".

In urban districts schools, "in need of improvement" increased from 40% to 50%, as opposed to suburban schools where the proportion of school designated as "in need of improvement" increased from 15% to 23%. The states also reported that districts with a higher percentage of poor or minority students were less likely to report all teachers were highly qualified. When asked what were the greatest challenges, states reported that the logistics and costs of implementing the choice and supplemental service provisions. In fact, 24 of the 40 responding states reported that fiscal problems were adversely affecting their own ability to carry out the law. Finally, the states objected to NCLB's reliance on a

single assessment of student progress. They believed that one test to measure performance would only increase sanctions and over identify schools as failing. This study also incorporated a 33 school district case study into their results.

CEP published their third annual report about NCLB in 2005. As in previous years, CEP surveyed state departments of education about the effects of NCLB in the fall of 2004. At that time, 49 states responded to a detailed survey. Case studies from 36 nationally representative school districts were also prepared and analyzed. The school districts were selected due to their diversity in geography and size and to include a proportion of urban, suburban and rural districts that roughly parallels the nations. The researchers also included 15 site visits to the districts and 16 case studies of individual schools in the districts. The data from the districts was gathered by surveying the districts twice, once in the summer of 2003-04 and again in the fall of 2004-05.

The data showed that 73% of the states and 72% of the districts surveyed reported that student achievement had improved, although the response failed to provide information about subgroup scores. Even though this was seen as positive, CEP cautions that high stakes testing can cause early spikes in scores that do not continue over time. Again, CEP found that schools "in need of improvement" were concentrated in very large school districts and in urban areas. They also reported that the larger and more diverse the subgroup population the more apt that the school would be identified as in failing AYP.

The districts indicated that they did change strategies to increase student achievement. To boost scores, 100% of the districts reported that they used data to help develop instruction in the classroom. The districts also reported that 99% aligned their curriculum with the state standards and provided extra or intensive instruction to low achieving

students by increasing instructional time for mathematics and reading. Local officials also reported that their greatest challenge was administering the tests to special education and English limited language (ELL) students because they are not functioning at the grade level of the test and ELL students do not have an available test in their language.

Districts also reported having a problem with providing highly qualified teachers in special education, middle school, and rural areas. Finally, districts cited as a major problem is that federal funding for NCLB was reduced in 2002-2003 from the previous year so the amounts the states are receiving is not sufficient to carry out all aspects of NCLB (CEP, 2003).

Besides, the aforementioned studies, there were other studies that concentrated on particular aspects of NCLB. For instance, Plucker and et al (2005) reported that after examining the progress of the 50 states in implementing NCLB provisions from 2003-2004, they found that as of March 5, 2004 all of the states were on track to meeting 50 percent of the 40 major legal provisions of NCLB. Cronin and et al (2005) reported that after studying student achievement and student growth during school years, 2001-2002 and 2003-2004, in more than 200 school districts, they found that there was improvement in math and reading scores for third through eight grade students, but student growth scores, particularly those for ethnic groups, had decreased since NCLB had been implemented.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY: A CASE STUDY OF NCLB AND AN URBAN MIDDLE

SCHOOL

This research presents an evaluative case study design that attempts to triangulate

federal and state policy documents, state and local archival records, and key-informant

interviews in order to provide a holistic and contextualized portrait of the implementation

of strategies in response to several accountability provisions of NCLB in an Urban

Middle School.

According to Burns (1990), a case study answers the how, what and why questions

that may be asked about an event for which the researcher has little control over, or when

the research is being carried out in a real-life context. Yin (1984) concurs, stating, " In

general, case studies are the preferred strategies when "how" or "why" questions are

being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on

a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context (p 13).

The use of the case study allows the researcher to reveal the multiplicity of factors,

which have interacted to produce the unique character of the entity that is the subject of

study (Bassey, 1999). It can provide a description of a real-life context in which an

intervention has occurred, as in the case of NCLB, and explore the state, district, and

building strategies that were implemented.

According to Yin (2004), case study research enables researchers to investigate

important topics not easily covered by other methods. Donmoyer (1990) supports this by

arguing that case studies can take us to places where most of us would not have an

opportunity to go. Therefore, the use of a case study that triangulates federal and state

policy documents, state and local archival records and interviews from key-informants provides a real-life context to analyze strategies and their perceived effectiveness and potential effects on student achievement. This approach not only incorporates the perspectives of teachers and administrators involved in implementing the strategies, but, significantly, offers a participant-observer perspective from the researcher who served as the administrator in the urban middle school under study.

As a participant-observer, the researcher can offer in-depth insight and perspective related to the strategies at the building level because of her involvement the development and in the implementation of the strategies, something that outsiders would not normally have available to them. As Yin (1984) notes, "Participant-observation is the ability to perceive reality from the viewpoint of someone "inside" the case study rather than external to it" (pg 92). The researcher coupled her personal engagement in the phenomenon being studied with the interviewing of key-informants throughout the district, because, as Haigh (2001) points out, participation-observation requires a total involvement in the activities of the research situation. In fact, Cohen, Manion, & Morrison (2000) report that the participant-as-observer approach tends to allow for a more holistic view to be constructed based on the unique knowledge of the environment.

The participant-observer in this case study is the researcher, who was the building principal from 2000 to 2004. The researcher was named principal the year before NCLB was enacted. Therefore, the researcher was involved in the implementation of the mandates that are under study after NCLB was enacted in 2001. The researcher's position provides the case study with specific implementation information pertaining to the different NCLB mandates in the urban middle school under study.
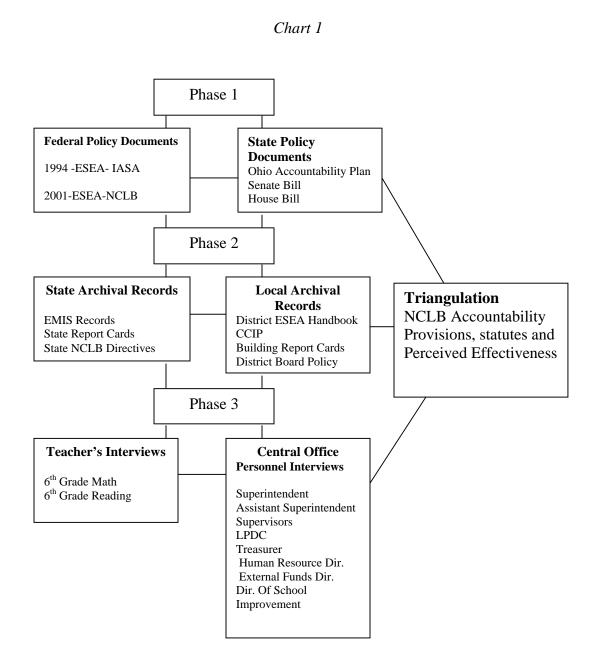
Another integral part of the case study are interviews of district and building level key-informants who worked directly to support the implementation of NCLB mandates. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) stated, "Interviews can be employed in conjunction with participant observation, document analyses or other techniques. In all of these situations, the interview is used to gather descriptive data in the subject's own words so that the researcher can develop insights on how subjects interpret some piece of the world (pg. 135). Englehart (1972) agrees that interviews make possible the collection of data in-depth. He writes that the questions should not only be relevant, but the initial questions should be supplemented by secondary or probing questions. He also encourages the interviews to be tape recorded so that the interviewer can give the interviewee full attention. He further explains that this will also eliminate bias because there is a complete recording of what is said, thus reducing the conscious or unconscious selection by the interviewer of what is said.

This study compares the strategies used by the school to promote student achievement from 1998-2000 with those used after NCLB's adoption, specifically in the years 2002-2004 by triangulating data from three primary sources. (see Chart 1) In Phase 1- federal and state policy documents were reviewed. In Phase 2- state and local archival records, reports and databases that pertain to the school district and building were analyzed. In Phase 3- interviews with key-informants at the building and district level were conducted. Each source and the types and methods of collection are described more fully below.

A clear and authoritative account of selected provisions of the NCLB Act was imperative to the undertaking of this study. Thus, data collection began with a review of federal statutes and United States Department of Education regulations and Title I

guidelines and manuals as well as analyses of the ESEA and NCLB provisions found in

academic literature.

Analysis

Chart 1

```
                        ┌─────────────────────────┐
                        │        Phase 1          │
                        └─────────────────────────┘

┌──────────────────────────┐    ┌──────────────────────────┐
│ Federal Policy Documents │    │ State Policy             │
│                          │    │ Documents                │
│ 1994 -ESEA- IASA         │    │ Ohio Accountability Plan │
│                          │    │ Senate Bill              │
│ 2001-ESEA-NCLB           │    │ House Bill               │
└──────────────────────────┘    └──────────────────────────┘

                        ┌─────────────────────────┐
                        │        Phase 2          │
                        └─────────────────────────┘

┌──────────────────────────┐    ┌──────────────────────────┐   ┌────────────────────────────┐
│ State Archival Records   │    │    Local Archival        │   │ Triangulation              │
│                          │    │      Records             │   │ NCLB Accountability        │
│ EMIS Records             │    │ District ESEA Handbook   │   │ Provisions, statutes and   │
│ State Report Cards       │    │ CCIP                     │   │ Perceived Effectiveness    │
│ State NCLB Directives    │    │ Building Report Cards    │   │                            │
│                          │    │ District Board Policy    │   │                            │
└──────────────────────────┘    └──────────────────────────┘   └────────────────────────────┘

                        ┌─────────────────────────┐
                        │        Phase 3          │
                        └─────────────────────────┘

┌──────────────────────────┐    ┌──────────────────────────┐
│ Teacher's Interviews     │    │    Central Office        │
│                          │    │ Personnel Interviews     │
│ 6th Grade Math           │    │                          │
│ 6th Grade Reading        │    │ Superintendent           │
│                          │    │ Assistant Superintendent │
│                          │    │ Supervisors              │
│                          │    │ LPDC                     │
│                          │    │ Treasurer                │
│                          │    │  Human Resource Dir.     │
│                          │    │  External Funds Dir.     │
│                          │    │ Dir. Of School           │
│                          │    │ Improvement              │
└──────────────────────────┘    └──────────────────────────┘
```

Phase 1

Federal and state policy documents

NCLB sought to impose new requirements on states, and states on local school districts. Consequently, state policy documents, as well as federal laws, were an important source for this study. Specifically, state statues, regulations and guidance, including the Ohio Accountability Plan issued by the Ohio Department of Education, were compiled for review and analysis.

The review of Federal policy documents began with a comparative analysis of several reauthorizations of ESEA that preceded NCLB. Since policy making to address the performance of economically disadvantaged children has been incremental over the past forty years, particular attention was placed on *Improving America's Schools Act* (1994) which immediately preceded adoption of NCLB, as well as NCLB. Sections of the NCLB Act intended to promote student achievement and district accountability were the focus of special attention. These included teacher qualifications, professional development, school-wide programs, academic assessment and parent involvement. Each was examined and changes were noted and analyzed.

Phase 2

State and local archival records, reports and databases

After the federal documents were analyzed, they were compared with state and local policies to see if they complied with NCLB. Statistical data about the district and school, including information regarding student demographics, teaching staff, access and participation in curricular programs, student conduct, and performance on state proficiency tests were retrieved from the state Educational Management Information System (EMIS), State and Local Report cards, and building and district record systems and databases. EMIS data was accessed from the Ohio Department of Education. Data

unavailable from that source were accessed using district or building level databases or record systems.

Building and district strategies for improving student achievement were extracted from building ESEA and NCLB Proposals, District-ESEA Handbooks, Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plans (CCIP), Annual Reports, and Board Policy Manuals, as well as from Building Level Action Plans. In order to obtain the policies, proposals, and reports that were used in this section, the superintendent of the district signed a letter of consent approving accessibility to the files for purposes of dissertation studies. The following sources cooperated in providing the information:

(1) Local Professional Development Committee

(2) Instruction Department

(3) Human Resources Department

(4) Superintendent's Office

(5) Office of External Funds

(6) Treasurer's Department

Then once assembled, the local school district policies, CCIP, and building action plans were aligned with the state federal policies previously reviewed. District policy, and district and building strategies were categorized according to the five NCLB accountability provisions that were the focus of this study.

These data were labeled and organized by year for review and analysis.

Phase 3

Interviews with key building personnel and district level officials

The interviews were semi-structured, taped with the permission of the interviewee, and transcribed for analysis (see Appendix C for interview questions). The transcription was shared with the interviewee to confirm its accuracy before the analysis commenced. One to three interviews, lasting 45 to 60 minutes each, were conducted with the individuals depending on their role and the extensiveness of their knowledge of the district and the building level improvement plans and strategies. Interviews were conducted with 13 employees including nine district and building administrators and four teachers of the middle school.

The key-informant interviews included the individuals who held the following district level positions between 1998-2004: Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Director of External Funding, Math Supervisor, Literacy Supervisor, Director of School Improvement, Treasurer, Director of Human Resources, LPDC Coordinator. Building level interviews were conducted with four teachers responsible for teaching sixth grade math and reading. Interviews were conducted in settings agreeable to the interviewee, and that afforded privacy to avoid interruption. The interviewees, their role and years of experience in the district were set out in Table 1 along with the pseudonyms used for the interviewees in this study.

Table 1: Interviewees Data

Name	District Position	Number of years experience
Andre Sampson	School Improvement Director	36 ½ years
Julia Davidson	Human Resource Director	36 years
Thomas Porter	Superintendent	32 ½ years
Sylvia Smith	Assistant Superintendent	31 years

Denise Foyer	Treasurer	28 years
Wanda Harris	Math Supervisor	26 years
Lori Jackson	LPDC Coordinator	26 years
Jaimie Jones	Sixth Grade Reading Teacher	21 years
Aundrea Thompson	Sixth Grade Reading Teacher	21 years
Dorothy Houser	Literacy Supervisor	21 years
Cassandra Hall	External Funds Director	19 ½ years
Cass Holmes	Sixth Grade Math Teacher	13 years
Maxine Lowe	Sixth Grade Math Teacher	11 years

(see Appendix D for interviewees' complete profiles)

The interviews were designed to investigate the experience of the administrators and teachers who proposed and/or implemented the strategies of the school district and the middle school from 1998-2004. The interviews were used to corroborate archival data and records that confirm strategies employed before and after NCLB. The interviews also shed light on the perceived effectiveness of various strategies in promoting improvement in student achievement and why staff believed the strategy proved effective or promising.

As a participant-observer, the researcher conducted the interviews. The math and reading teachers who were still assigned to the building in which the researcher was employed as the principal were given the choice of being interviewed by an independent, trained interviewer. None of the teachers elected this option. All interviewees completed a university-approved informed consent form prior to being interviewed, and was guaranteed confidentiality in the reporting of findings, although participants understood quotations would be ascribed occupants of certain roles (see

Appendix E). The interview process and protocols were approved by the Youngstown

State University Human Subjects Review Committee (see Appendix F).

Data Analysis

Data-collection and analysis generally proceeded in the sequence described above and

illustrated in Chart 1. This allowed each source of data to inform the collection and

interpretations of the data that was subsequently collected. Yin (1994) states that the

major strength of case study data- collection is the opportunity to use many different

sources of data to compare. The use of data sheets facilitated the identification of

common themes. According to Wiersma (1991), triangulation is qualitative cross-

validation. It assesses the sufficiency of the data according to the convergence of the

multiple data sources and the multiple data-collection procedures that are used. Further,

he states that it also determines whether or not there is corroboration between the data.

A comparative method of analysis and interpretation was employed, allowing for the

verification of both data and perceptions on an on-going basis as well as the summative

triangulation of data from (Phase 1) historical federal and state policy documents, (Phase

2) current state and local plans, reports, and databases, and from (Phase 3) key-informant

interviews.

In Phase 1 the NCLB provisions that were under study (highly qualified teacher,

professional development, school wide programs, academic assessments, and parent

involvement) were compared to the 1994 IASA provisions. The changes between the two

ESEA reauthorizations were highlighted and listed. After the changes were highlighted,

the state policies and practices were compared to the NCLB provisions to see if they

complied.

In Phase 2, the state policies were compared to the Urban School District's (USD) policies, practices and plans to see if they complied with NCLB mandates. They were analyzed to single out similarities between the federal, state, and USD. After the similarities were analyzed, the USD plans and reports were compared to the Urban Middle School's (UMS) strategies to see if they reflected the NCLB mandates. Once the NCLB provisions were compared to the UMS strategies, Phases 1 and 2 were compared to the interviewees' responses in Phase 3.

In Phase 3, the key-informant interviewees' responses were first listed and similarities with the archival data in Phases 1 and 2 were matched and analyzed for common phrases and wording. The common phrases and wording were listed and used to develop the themes in Chapter 4.

Jick (1983) writes that the effectiveness of triangulation rests on the premise that the weaknesses in each single method will be compensated by counter-balancing strengths of another. Such triangulation enhances the validity of the portrait developed.

Validity

According to Merriam (1998), an investigator can use six basic strategies to enhance internal validity in a qualitative study. One of these strategies is triangulation. The validity of this case study is supported by the triangulation of the (1) federal and state policy documents, (2) state and local archival documents and reports and databases, and (3) interviews with key-building personnel and district level officials. To increase validity, the key-informants were selected based on their positions in the school district and the direct involvement they had in the school improvement initiatives and

implementation of NCLB. They were described in Table 1 by their pseudonyms, district positions or assignments, and their years of experience in the district.

The use of data sheets to analyze and compare the three phases of data helped to develop common themes found in each source. Cano (2006) feels that this also ensures that the researcher did not invent the interpretation of the data but that the interpretation is a product of conscious analysis. The triangulation of federal, state, and local policies and the content interviews of key informants contributed to the rigor of the analysis and thus the validity of the study.

Reliability

Reliability refers to the extent to which research findings can be replicated. Yin (1994) states that reliability is based on the premise that if a later investigator followed the same procedures, as described by an earlier investigator, and conducted the same case study over again, the later investigator should arrive at similar findings and conclusions. The interviews were transcribed, shared with the interviewee, and revised by the researcher if warranted. The transcripts will be kept with the actual tapes for a period of three years. The information from the interviews was analyzed using data-sheets in order to provide evidence of consistency of the interview- method used. Yin (1994) recommends that to increase reliability a formal, presentable, database be developed so that other investigators can review the evidence and not be limited to the written reports. Therefore, each source of data was categorized, compared, and analyzed according to the areas under investigation and by the source from which it was obtained, whether federal and state policies, local reports, or key-informant interviews. This provided a formal database so that other researchers can review the evidence.

Since the purpose of the research is to establish changes in strategies to promote student achievement associated with certain NCLB provisions, the cross-referencing of the state, local, and building archival data, records, policies and the key-informant interviews presents a more in-depth analysis. Therefore, a case study methodology was selected to present a holistic study, instead of a more limited linear perspective.

Chapter 4

NCLB, THE DISTRICT, AND URBAN MIDDLE SCHOOL STRATEGIES

No Child Left Behind of 2001 (NCLB) reauthorized many provisions of the

Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) and introduced several new

mandates for school districts to comply with in order to be eligible to receive federal Title

I funds. This chapter explains five NCLB provisions designed to promote student

achievement; identifies changes in district policies or practices to comply with these

provisions; and analyze strategies employed by the middle school. Archival records and

interviews are used to confirm and illustrate system and middle school responses and

strategies associated with these NCLB mandates. In essence, this chapter will present

information that will explain how NCLB may have attributed to Urban Middle School's

(UMS) strategies by causing the current strategy already in place to be expanded,

adopting a new strategy to comply with NCLB mandates or helping to sustain strategies

that are already in place. Before beginning this analysis however, it is important to

introduce Urban Middle School, which is the focus of this case study and the school

district and community in which it is situated.

The Case: Urban Middle School

The case study concerns Urban Middle School (UMS) in Urban School District in a

middle-sized city in the Midwest. This is a profile of the city, Urban School District and

Urban Middle School, and how the Urban Middle School evolved during the school

strategy years, 1998-2004. Data are also included beyond the years of the case study to

present a current picture of the school as NCLB policies and continues to evolve.

The City

According to the United States Census Bureau (2000), the Urban City had a population of 82,026 in 2000, with an estimated population of 73,818 by the year 2007. The continuous decline in the city population can be attributed to the lack of jobs since the last major steel mill closed its doors in 1979. According to Bruno (1999), who researched the closure of the Urban City's steel mills, the city lost an estimated 40,000 manufacturing jobs, 400 satellite business, $414 million in personal income, and from 33 to 75 percent of the school tax revenues over a little more than a decade. Since the closing of the mills, businesses have moved into the city and the surrounding areas, but they are not on the same scale as the mills and iron plants that were abundant in the city during the 1970's and provided a modest income for most residents.

The change in population and the lack of employment has caused a change in the median income of the families in the city. According to the Census Bureau (2002), the median income in 2002 was $24,201, but the average per capita income for the city was $13,293. This compares with an average per capita income of $21,003 for the state and $21,592 for the nation in the same year. In 2000, at least 25% of the population lived below the poverty line. Poverty especially plagued the young with 37.3% of children under the age of 18 living in poverty. In fact, it was reported in 2007 that Urban City had the lowest median income of United States cities with more than 65,000 residents (Christe, 2007).

Urban School District

Due to the declining population in Urban City, the Urban School District has also experienced a decline in enrollment. In 1998 there were 11,521 students enrolled in the Urban School District. At the end of the study period in 2004, there were 9,177 or a

reduction of 20%. In 2007, the enrollment was down to 7, 215 students, a decrease of 37.3% percent in less than a decade.

The decrease in enrollment greatly influenced the number of schools and configurations of the district's buildings. In 1998, the district reported 20 schools. In 2003-2004, there were 22 school buildings in operation due to two gender schools and an early college program opening, but by the 2007-2008 school year, the school district was operating only 16 school buildings.

The district did receive positive news in 2000 when it was approved by the State Schools Facilities Commission to receive $193 million dollars to rebuild and renovate the functioning school buildings in the district. Since the money was approved in 2000, the decrease in enrollment caused the Commission, which oversees the construction, to rescind the construction of some buildings because the student enrollment decreased tremendously since the construction was initially approved.

The district not only faced a decrease in enrollment from families moving out of the city for economic reasons but it also received competition from charter schools that have opened in Urban City. The first charter schools opened in 1998. Since then, charter school enrollment has increased from 1,000 in 1999 to 1,653 in 2003. By the 2008 school year, the District lost 2,743 students to charter schools, 773 students to open enrollment, and 360 students to vouchers schools.

Urban Middle School

Urban Middle School showed some enrollment decline during the years of the study. The biggest decline was during the 1999-2000 school year when 289 public housing units were demolished to make way for a $20 million dollar redevelopment project to build

federal subsidized single-family dwellings (Pennrose Properties, 2008). The displaced

north side families moved to other areas resulting in a decrease in the student population

at Urban Middle School from 491 in the 1998-1999 school year to 448 for the 1999-2000

school year. Urban Middle School enrollment did rebound to 478 during the 2003-2004

school year as residents returned to occupy the new federal housing units (Building

Report Card, 2003-2004).

In 2004, the student enrollment was approximately 478 fifth through eighth grade

students. The student population was 242 female and 236 male with the following ethnic

breakdown: 82.1% African-American, 2.9% Multi-Racial, 10.6% Caucasian, 5.1%

Hispanic. Of these students approximately 17.2% received special education services and

5.6% received individual classes because they were classified as academically "gifted"

(Teachers' Schedules, 2003-2004). The school served students living in poverty with

over 94% being classified as economically disadvantaged in the 2003-2004 school year

(Building Report Cards, 2004).

Walking into the main hall of Urban Middle School its mission and vision are posted

on the wall. "The Mission of Urban Middle School, a school where all of their students

are stars, is to provide the opportunity for all children to reach their full potential

academically and socially in today's society." "The Vision is to have student centered

instruction that reflects the multi-cultural make-up of the building and that will encourage

an urban/suburban connection."

During the six years of the study, the facility was a fully functioning school building

with 33 classrooms, a band room, choir room, technology lab, gymnasium, cooking

room, sewing room, and a full service cafeteria. During this period, the internet and cable

systems were upgraded to accommodate the new classroom-based computer reading program and a computer lab offering expanded math intervention programs (Requisition, 2004). At this time, Urban Middle School was the only middle school in the district that offered technology education to fifth, sixth, and eighth graders, as well as Spanish to sixth, seventh, and eighth graders (Building Schedule, 2002-2003).

There were forty-nine total staff members that served the student population on a daily basis. The staff consisted of forty teachers, two administrators (principal and assistant principal), a guidance counselor, secretary, attendance officer, nurse, educational support assistant, teacher assistant and family readiness coordinator. The school also had specialists in physical education, health, instrumental music (brass and string), vocal music, work and family living, art, technology education, gifted intervention, and library science. The staff was 82% female and 12% male. The ethnic composition was 77.6% Caucasian, 20% African-American, and 2.4% Pacific Islander. According to the school's building report card (2004), all of the teachers and administrators had Bachelor degrees and approximately 55.6% had Masters degrees. The average years of teaching experience was thirteen years. The staff was fairly stable over the six years covered by this study, with fewer than 10% turn over (Urban Middle School Annual Report, 2004).

The classes at Urban Middle School were departmentalized so that one teacher was teaching a particular subject throughout the school year. In 1998, all classes were forty-three minutes long. This changed for the 2002-2003 school year, when the fifth and sixth grade classes were changed to sixty-one minute blocks. In addition, beginning with the 2003-2004 school year, Urban Middle School practiced "looping" where the fifth grade teachers taught the same students in the sixth grade, and the seventh grade teachers taught

the same students in the eighth grade. Looping is an educational scheduling practice that supports the idea that an opportunity to develop a longer relationship between student and teacher may result in better instruction and improved academic success for students.

The "gifted" students had their own academic schedule with their classes separate from regular and honor students. This was instituted so that an accelerated curriculum could be followed daily, based on the areas in which the students were considered "gifted". All of their other classes were with the general school population.

The Cognitive Disabled (CD) and Severe Learning Disabled (SLD) classes were departmentalized to capitalize on the content area strengths of the teachers. There were also three CD inclusion teachers who worked with grades 5 through 8. There were two self-contained classes, one provided services for fifth and sixth grade Low Functioning Cognitive Disabled (LFCD) students and the other provided services for seventh and eighth grade Multi-Disabled (MD) students. The teacher and pupil ratio was twenty-three to one with a class size maximum of twenty-five for 5th and 6th grade classes and twenty-eight for 7th and 8th grade in regular education classes. If a class was paid by Federal Title I funds or was a class for the "gifted", there was a twenty student maximum.

Not only was the size of the classes monitored to increase the chances of academic success, but the school operated with general fund allocations and ESEA-Title I funding. The total expenditure for students in the school system in 2004 was approximately $11,302. The district's annual budget was $101,157,398 with Title I funds totaling $7,122,278 in the most recent year (District Budget 2004). Urban Middle School received $305,642 of Title I monies to be used for building-wide initiatives in 2003 (USD External Funding Report, 2003).

Even though Urban Middle School scored below the state required average academically, it was above the state required average of 93% attendance for eight years beginning with school year 2000-2001. It was evident that the students did attend school daily; in fact, from 2003 to 2008 their attendance average was above 94%. The problem was not attendance, but the behavior and performance of the students when they attended the school.

The Urban Middle School was fortunate that they could use Title I funds to staff an in-school suspension program so that students who was suspended could serve their suspension in school completing their daily assignments. According to the Districtwide Disciplinary Reports (2002-2004), the in-school suspension placements were 1,890 as compared to the out-of-school suspensions placements totaling 1,105, representing a rate of 1.2 out of school suspensions and 2.1 in school suspensions per 100 enrolled students. Gross insubordination and school disruption were the most prevalent forms of misconduct leading to suspensions.

A major challenge confronting Urban Middle School was a school choice option available to parents because of the school's low performance on state tests. After NCLB, Urban Middle School's families beginning in the 2002-2003 school year had an option to choose another school to attend for the next school year (UMS Report Card, 2002-2003). Furthermore, the state added a voucher program in 2005 that targeted schools in academic emergency and academic watch, the lowest two performance levels in the state rating system, providing families with vouchers up to $5,000 that could be used for tuition at private schools. Urban Middle School had families taking advantage of this voucher option. Four years after the study period, the Urban Middle School, in its fifth

year failing to make "Average Yearly Progress (AYP)", may have to be restructured or closed down and students moved to other schools after the 2008-2009 school year.

Urban Middle School overcame family flight from the urban city, as well as, displaced families moving to another area of the city, but could not conquer the academic performance levels set forth by the state. The school came close in 2002-2003 by moving up a level in the state classification system, but they could not sustain progress in 2003-2004, because even though they moved up the ten points that were needed from 2001-2002 to 2002-2003, they could not improve the three points needed in 2003-2004 to get out of NCLB imposed school improvement.

No Child Left Behind Accountability Provisions

The *No Child Left Behind* provisions designed to promote student achievement and corresponding school district policies and practices and building strategies are examined in the following order:

- Highly Qualified Teacher- [NCLB Section 1119]

- Professional Development for Teachers- [NCLB Section 1119 (a) (2) (B) and 1114 (a) (4) & 1114 (b) (1) (D)]

- School wide Programs- [NCLB Section 1114]

- Academic Assessment – [NCLB Section 1111 (b)(3)]

- Parent Involvement- [NCLB Section 1118 and Section 1116]

For each section the NCLB provision is presented, after which the Urban School District's policies and practices and Urban Middle School's strategies are described in that order. Changes in policies, practices and strategies associated with each of the

NCLB accountability provisions were documented through both archival records and interviews with building and district level officials.

Highly Qualified Teacher

NCLB Provisions

As part of the reauthorization of ESEA known as *Improving America's School Act (IASA)* of 1994, the term "highly qualified" professional staff was introduced as one of the components for a Title I school [Section 1114 (b) (1) (C)]. Under NCLB, the term "highly qualified" teacher (HQT) took on greater specificity and importance. HQT is a legal mandate requiring districts to ensure that any teacher associated with a Title 1 school satisfy certain professional standards [Section 1119 (a) (1)]. Not only must the state submit a plan to ensure staff in such schools are highly qualified, but they must establish measurable objectives for each local educational agency (LEA) to ensure that by school year 2005-2006 all teachers are highly qualified [Section 1119 (a) (2)]. The state educational agency (SEA) must also ensure that if all teachers are not HQT by that school year the district increases the number who are each year until the goal is reached [Section 1119 (a) (2) (A)]. The SEA must also ensure that there will be an annual increase in the percentage of teachers who participate in high-quality professional development to guarantee that teachers will become highly qualified, successful classroom teachers [Section 1119 (a) (2) (B)]. If there are teachers who are not highly qualified, NCLB mandates that the LEA submit a plan to the state educational agency as to what they will do to make all of their teaching staff highly qualified [Section 1119 (a) (3)].

Urban School District Policy and Practices

NCLB did initiate a change in strategy by the district with its provision to make all teachers "highly qualified".

In 2002, Urban School District began using the SEA generated HQT Rubric to determine if a teacher was highly qualified in the academic subject(s) that they are assigned to teach. This rubric became the tool that the Local Professional Development Committee (LPDC) used to determine if a teacher is highly qualified. The rubric gives the teacher a chance to become highly qualified by satisfying one of several standards. These include: 1) having a Master's Degree in Education, Curriculum/Instruction, or Reading; 2) possessing an 8-Year Professional Certificate in the teaching assignment, a Permanent Certificate in the teaching assignment, or National Board Certification in the teaching assignment; or 3) satisfying 90 Clock hours of professional development, with 45 hours having to be in teaching skills pedagogy or the Ohio academic content standards. The HQT rubric, once completed by the teacher, is turned in to the principal who fills out the Principal Recording Sheet for Teachers and sends it to the LPDC representative. The LPDC representative then who signs off in the form and turns it over to the Data Department to enter into the state Education Management Information System (EMIS) verifying to the state the percentage of HQT teachers in the District.

Under district policy revisions associated with NCLB, all teachers were required to file their Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) with the LPDC by November 15, 2003 and attend staff development that was provided during early dismissal or professional days on the school calendar. If the teacher was still not HQT at the end of the school year, then the teacher could enroll in a course at a college, and with prior

permission from the Superintendent be reimbursed [Negotiated Agreement, Section 8.061 (B) (1) and (2)].

In Urban School District, NCLB 's attempts to improve staff qualifications found a stumbling block in the seniority clause in the teacher's contract. According to the contract, a teacher was placed in a position by the teacher's certification area and seniority in the district. This did not change after NCLB was enacted. In fact, most interviewees felt that the criteria for placing teachers in positions was strictly by seniority, even though the teacher may not be "highly qualified" (HQ) according to NCLB definition.

The majority of the interviewees felt that the seniority clause in the master agreement dictates what teacher gets what position. Lori Jackson, LPDC coordinator, and Sylvia Smith, Assistant Superintendent, both felt that it is important that teachers be highly qualified. Jaimie Jones, sixth grade reading teacher, complained, "Teachers get trained to do particular positions, which would make them highly qualified, and the next year they are removed from that position due to seniority." Some interviewees agreed that this practice is not in the best interest of the students. Lori Jackson, Local Professional Development Committee (LPDC) coordinator, goes further when she says, "The teacher's contract needs to be looked at so that if you bid you have to be HQT to get the position."

Urban School District always faced challenges when it came to instituting changes in the district, particularly over involving personnel. The NCLB mandate of staff qualifications was no different. Historically, certifications and licensures and seniority were always used to determine what a teacher's assignment would be in the building

Before NCLB, the district had more flexibility in assigning teachers with elementary K-8 certifications in middle schools, because an elementary teacher could be assigned to teach any open position within a middle school. After NCLB, the K-8 certification became a stumbling block for teachers with general elementary education certificates who were assigned to teach seventh and eighth grade classes, because they were not considered "highly qualified (HQ) in content areas as required by NCLB standards. In order to compensate for this problem, administrators used certifications and seniority to move teachers to positions within their buildings that would make them "HQ". These in-building shifts caused movement between the buildings and throughout the district because the assignments that the teachers were moved from had to be posted and bid on and the teacher with most seniority and correct certification was given the position.

Because of the lack of adequate numbers of subject matter qualified teachers, however, eventually you had teachers who possessed a K-8 certification teaching seventh and eighth grade, who according to "HQ" standards, were not highly qualified. Yet there was nothing that could be done by the district because contractually these staff had to be placed in a position whether they had "HQT" status or not.

In an effort to further comply with HQT, the district changed how it posted job openings that occurred after the beginning of the school year. Before NCLB, the job postings began in June and current teachers could bid on open positions throughout the school year. This caused continuous movement throughout the year and training for particular positions, such as Reading Specialists, etc, was not possible. In 2002-2003, the postings were changed so that they would be posted in July and August and only new

positions would be posted for bidding during the school year (Teaching Vacancies Postings, 1998-2004).

Teaching vacancies were always listed as school, grade level and subject area. After NCLB was passed, the district attempted to post positions and put "must be highly qualified" in a particular subject area, according to NCLB guidelines, in order for a teacher to be eligible to bid on that job. The union protested and the job postings were redone and sent out to teaching staff again. The teacher's union stance was that the postings were to only list building, subject and grade level, anything else listed would be a violation of the master agreement. Lori Jackson, LPDC coordinator, remembers, "The supervisors posted those jobs as "highly qualified" and there was a big union issue because they weren't permitted to do that."

Some openings that were posted did list particular training, like Read 180, that the district felt was necessary to be successful in that position. According to the teachers' master agreement, seniority had to be looked at before training; therefore, teachers with training for the position may lose the position if a teacher with seniority needed to be placed. Jaimie Jones, sixth grade reading teacher, remarks, "Unfortunately they don't look at training, they don't look at suitability. It's just strictly on seniority."

Even though the interviewees felt that seniority tended to take precedence over the qualifications of the teacher, they believed that the qualifications of the teacher are important. According to Maxine Lowe, sixth grade math teacher, "A teacher should be competent in their particular area." Denise Foyer, Treasurer, felt that "it is very important to have qualified teachers in order for the district to move forward." Aundrea Thompson, sixth grade reading teacher, concurred, "Teachers should be highly knowledgeable of

what they teach." There was a consensus among the interviewees that it is important that teachers be highly qualified in the subject matter they teacher if students are to improve their performance.

Professional Development

NCLB Provisions

Professional development has been an integral part of the *Elementary and Secondary Act* since the 1994 *Improving America's School Act (IASA)* reauthorization. NCLB continued this emphasis on staff development, specifying that each school receiving funds under Title I for any fiscal year shall devote sufficient resources to effectively carry out professional development as a component of school wide programs [Section 1114 (a) (4) and (b) (1) (D)].

Professional development has always been supported in ESEA. NCLB placed guidelines that were more stringent on professional development by adding that the professional development must be continuous and not a one-shot-deal in which a teacher goes to a workshop for a day or less with no

Urban School District Policies and Practices

This NCLB provision prompted Urban School District to change its professional development on early dismissal days to be continuous and more focused toward areas that would benefit how teachers provide instruction in the classroom.

In fact, Lori Jackson, LPDC coordinator, reported that "the district changed their professional development so that it became a continuing process over four sessions, instead of disconnected sessions of an hour and a half." Denise Foyer, Treasurer,

observed, "The best staff development is embedded, if it goes on continuously on a daily basis and is the result of mentoring each other in the teaching environment."

Cassandra Hall, External Funds Director, remembered, "Before NCLB you could do whatever you wanted to do [in terms of professional development]. There were no standards. After NCLB, it was much more stringent … the district or building has to make sure the standards for highly qualified professional development are being used."

To further support the professional development initiative in the schools, after NCLB schools were required to develop a Professional Development Plan and submit it to the Instruction Department, and report monthly the status of the implementation of professional development activities. This expectation was introduced as the district implemented NCLB.

Urban Middle School Strategies

Urban Middle School not only implemented professional development in the school before NCLB, but it already had an ongoing embedded, high-quality, professional development program that supported the state's academic achievement standards through the Middle School Initiative (MSI). MSI was a district initiated program designed to link all of the middle and junior high schools in using best practices that had been proven to be effective in other school districts that struggled academically. Its focus was to offer in-services and workshops in best practices with the MSI coordinator offering her assistance throughout the school year.

In 2003, Urban Middle School phased out MSI and became a member of the High Schools That Works middle school program known as Making Middle Grades Work (MMGW). This is a national program that offers support and professional development in

order to increase the academic success of the students attending buildings that are involved in their programs (MMGW- Memorandum of Understanding, 2003).

Starting with the 2002-2003 school year, Urban Middle School and its staff had to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) guaranteeing their cooperation to implement best practices suggestions that the national organization had verified to be successful. The MOU put a different spin on staff cooperation because before this there was no written commitment between the administrators, teacher's union and superintendent to work together to help students academically. This MOU required all of these stakeholders to sign it and make a commitment of shared leadership and cooperation. It was still a struggle to get teachers on board with the ideas of MMGW, but the MOU did provide a level of agreement and commitment that the previous Middle School Initiative had lacked.

Under MMGW a consultant, who was a specialist in sentence structure and writing, was brought into the middle school to provide embedded professional development on constructive writing. The staff was also allowed to attend different workshops and in-services that MMGW provided in math, science, and literacy. A school team went to the conferences that were held across the country, thereby, creating the MMGW Team whose responsibility was to bring the information back, present and implement it with the rest of the staff (Building Conference Requisitions, 2003). All of the in-services and workshops that the staff attended had to reflect the needs of the building and had to be incorporated in the building's Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) and the Staff Professional Development Plan for the school year.

MMGW provided more classroom services for teachers by providing professional development but also an array of professional development for reading and mathematics teachers, as well as workshops for the other academic areas. The middle school utilized the district's reading consultant who worked with the teachers in their classrooms in developing more effective lesson plans. In addition, the middle school had professors from the local university provide embedded professional development in integrated science that encouraged interactive lessons with students.

The use of embedded professional development was not only encouraged by the Urban School District, but the professional development that Urban Middle School implemented had to be sustained consistently within the guidelines of NCLB governing "HQ" professional development.

School wide Programs

Federal Provisions

As part of NCLB's school wide programs requirement, in order to implement any programs, methods, and strategies, NCLB stresses that a comprehensive needs assessment has to be given to all students in the school [Section 1114 (b) (1) (A).

NCLB not only requires programs to have strategies that strengthen the core academic program, but they must also increase the amount of learning time. For example, before and after school intervention or summer programs must meet the educational needs of historically underserved children and be part of a school's comprehensive continuous improvement plan (CCIP) [Section 1114 (b) (1) (B) (ii) and (b) (2) (A)].

Urban School District Policies and Practices

The NCLB provisions for school wide programs expanded what was already in place in the USD.

The Urban School District used the Stanford Achievement Test from 1998-2004 to assess 3rd, 5th, and 7th graders in the fall and spring. These two scores were compared in order to determine if the student had improved during the course of the school year. Each year in the spring, students in grades 4, 6, 8, and 9 were given the State Proficiency Test (SPT) in five academic areas (Writing, Reading, Math, Social Studies, and Science) at their particular grade levels. The Urban School District staff item analyzed the results, presented them to the individual school buildings, and implemented academic intervention programs accordingly in advance of NCLB (School Improvement Department, 2001).

In 2003, the Director of School Improvement instructed schools to use the SAT and SPT assessment tools to find out which students needed intervention programs and to institute intervention programs throughout the school day in the buildings.

After this, the interviewees saw a change in how intervention programs were selected. Some interviewees saw more data- driven decisions as to what programs would be implemented, instead of implementing a program because someone "liked it'. Andre Sampson, Director of School Improvement, reiterated "Now, before any kind of implementation there is a clear cut understanding of what's out there, what the data shows whether or not this program is worth it." Cassandra Hall, External Funds Director, stated, "We took a look at data. We have item analysis and all of those tools to help us narrow the focus to help students." Julia Davidson, Human Resource Director, thinks

that "the data and input from the teachers to make decisions makes a big difference on how smoothly things flow."

Some of the interviewees felt that teacher input gave staff ownership to the programs. According to Cass Holmes, sixth grade math teacher, "Programs with teacher input make teachers more willing to try them and use them." She felt that "they (teachers) are happier teaching something that they were not forced to do."

What was different in terms of intervention programming after NCLB was Urban School District and Urban Middle School followed the "scientifically research based" guidelines of NCLB to select strategies, methods and programs. In order to implement a new program in the school, a proposal had to be written and sent to a central office committee explaining the need based on test scores and the school's CIP. The proposal had to list the program's costs and past successes in other districts. NCLB stipulates that Title I funds are only to be used to support "scientifically research based programs." The McKenzie Group (2003) reports that scientific research must support programs that "involve the application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to education activities and programs (p. 54).

Urban Middle School

There was not only an increase in before and after school programs in the Urban School District, but after NCLB the Superintendent directed that the curriculum reflect what was taught during the day instead of having a separate intervention program curriculum as before.

Urban Middle School Strategies

The Urban Middle School already had an "extended "day program, but in 2003 it was enhanced by combining Title I funds with funds from four other community agencies to institute the UMS Afterschool Alliance (UMSAA). The UMSAA and Urban Middle School adjusted the after school curriculum to concentrate on math and reading intervention, physical activities, social skills development, technology and supper in the middle of a three hour program (YAA Schedule, February, 2003).

The change in the design of the programs can be attributed to the input of teachers and administrators, and data that provided information to support the adoption of various programs. Thomas Porter, Superintendent, believes, "Accountability at the building level was ramped up."

The USD and UMS both implemented academic intervention programs in 1998 based on recommendations by administrators in the individual school buildings. After NCLB, the programs were selected more knowingly based on need, CCIP objectives and/or school assessment results, and required the development of a building plan and its approval by a central office staff.

In retrospect, the interviewees felt that the implementation of new programs after NCLB was more beneficial because teachers and administrators at the building level recommended them, instead of complying with a central office directive. The interviewees felt that another big influence in programming decisions was based on the use of the district assessment tools to generate the data needed. Maxine Lowe, sixth grade math teacher noted, "We're looking at different students and assessing them as individual groups and we weren't doing this before. And the results are also used to help inform our teaching."

Academic Assessments

The state had in place a student assessment program for nearly a decade before the time of the NCLB's adoption. This section consequently reports on the NCLB provisions that directly affected changes in the state and school district's prior assessment policies and practices. Therefore, NCLB provisions only helped to sustain what the state already had in place.

Federal Provisions

NCLB requires that the student assessments involve multiple, up-to-date measures of student academic achievement, including measures that assess higher order thinking skills and understanding [Section 1111 (b) (3) (C) (vi)]. NCLB mandates that the assessments shall measure the proficiency of students at a minimum in mathematics and reading or language arts and must be administered at least once during the following grade spans: (aa) grades 3 through 5; (bb) grades 6 through 9; and (cc) grades 10 through 12, and by 2007-2008, in science. [Section 1111 (b) (3) (C) (v) (I). NCLB expects all students that fall under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) will be tested with any accommodations necessary to provide for their highest achievement [Section 1111 (b) (3) (C) (ix) (II)], although the proportion of students who could be given alternative assessments is capped at one percent of the district's enrollment. NCLB also provides guidelines for students who have limited English proficiency to take the test with accommodations. The law allows for the assessment test to be given in the language of the student [Section 1111 (b) (3) (C) (x)].

According to NCLB, the results of the assessment must be readily available to parents, teachers and principals in an understandable and uniform format in a language

that parents can understand. The results must be in an interpretive, descriptive and diagnostic format and composed in such a way that itemized analyses would be possible [Section 1111 (b) (3) (C) (xii)]. NCLB mandated that the information the states received from the yearly assessments must not only measure the achievement of all children, but the results must be incorporated into a longitudinal data system [Section 1111 (b) (3) (C) (i)].

Urban School District Policies and Practices

Urban School District policy also recognizes that all tests provide only a limited source of information; therefore individual student and group testing data will be used in conjunction with all other information known about the student in making educational decisions (File:IL).

In 1998, one of the tests the district always used as an assessment tool was the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT). Routinely, the test was given, the results were reported out to staff and parents, and then results filed. Maxine Lowe, sixth grade math teacher, stated, I have never used that (SAT) to make instructional decisions, so I'm not sure about the value of having that particular test."

In 1996, another test that the district and middle school began giving was the State Proficiency Test (SPT). The results were reported out on a building report card, given out to parents, and discussed in meetings with staff, but there was no written district or building expectation that instructional decisions would be based on the results.

Since the implementation of state testing in 1996, the district administered the state test in the 4th grade, 6th grade, and 9th grade in writing, reading, mathematics, social studies, and science.

In 2004, the use of data increased with the introduction of an internet assessment tool, Scantron. Urban School District and Urban Middle School became more conscientious in using data from assessment tests to make instructional decisions. Urban School District introduced the Scantron Assessment program to the schools as a tool to gather information that would show exactly where the students were academically. Cassandra Hall, External Funds Director, reported, "It allows you to drill down to the individual student to where he/she is with the standards." Sylvia Smith, Assistant Superintendent concurred, "The use of Scantron data, and seeing where the kids are, gives teachers an opportunity to teach, assess, reteach, assess, reteach; connect to the kids, and make it relevant to the kids." Wanda Harris, Math Supervisor, supports this when she said, "Testing for more than a grade will definitely make a difference in school achievement."

The interviewees felt that the use of assessment results became more focused after NCLB was introduced. This was evident not only in the use of Scantron, but in the item-analysis of the State Proficiency Test results at the district and building level, which was instituted in 2003.

The results of the SPT were analyzed based on individual questions. The questions are analyzed based on how many questions were answered correctly, how many were answered incorrect or not at all, and what state standard they represented. Andre Sampson, Director of School Improvement, interjected, "We've done an item analysis in the district where we actually look at the kind of questions the kids are missing."

The use of data generated from assessments is one of the strategies that the majority of the interviewees felt were the most valuable in improving student achievement. Cass Holmes, sixth grade math teacher, believed, "It can be used to break down material."

Maxine Lowe, sixth grade math teacher, felt that, "assessments that show us where the students are cause us to change our teaching so that we teach towards a standards based curriculum, which will help student achievement." Julia Davidson, Human Resource Director, observed, "We have become smarter in how we look and interpret data so that we know what is going to be the best for the children." Thomas Porter, Superintendent, noted, "If assessments were done in an orderly way … the data will be able to influence instruction right away." Therefore, one of the major strategies that Urban School District and Urban Middle School implemented was using the assessment data to develop instructional strategies to help students. The district utilized the results by meeting with administrators to explain the results so that they could be used in the buildings to develop instructional strategies, and be sent to parents and explained in meetings with parent and community groups.

The district created the Continuous Improvement Department in the 2001-2002 school year. The focus of the department was to itemize and analyze test results so that interventions could be developed to help students who scored low on the state assessments. In 1996, the district became a member of the Area Cooperative Computerized Educational Service (ACCESS) in order to link efficient video, voice and data communications with the Ohio Education Management Information System (EMIS). EMIS is the state system that maintains and reports on state assessments, as well as, an array of other child accounting and organizational characteristics and operations.

Prior to NCLB, Urban Middle School participated in the 6th and 8th grade state testing, and IDEA eligible students were reviewed individually as to their ability to participate in the state testing. If it was determined that their academic level did not fit the state

guidelines, they participated in alternative assessments (Board of Education Policy

File:IL). The Alternate Assessment Policy was adopted in 2001, which stated that for any

student with disabilities who does not take one or more parts of the proficiency test, the

school district would offer an alternate assessment.

   The Urban School District already had in place a program to help English as a Second

Language (ESL) students before NCLB. ESL students and families had access to an

interpreter for meetings and any time a standardized or state test was given in the district.

Urban Middle School Strategies

   In 2002-2003, the state report cards disaggregated the assessment results by gender,

major racial and ethnic group, English proficiency status, as well as, disability and

disadvantaged status. The Urban Middle School presented this information to staff and,

based on staff analysis, interventions were developed and implemented for the students

who needed the extra assistance to pass the next test. The interventions were reflected in

the building level Continuous Improvement Plan "CIP" (Urban Middle School CIP 2001-

2006).

   The Urban Middle School not only used Scantron and the State Proficiency Tests to

assess and develop instructional strategies, but classroom designed assessments were also

used for this purpose, as evidence by the data notebooks that teachers turned in

periodically containing copies of their assessments throughout the grading period. The

notebooks were critiqued by the principal to see if the assessments mirrored the state tests

and the standards were being taught (Teacher Data Notebooks, 2004).

   The use of assessment results to direct instructional decisions became the major

strategy to improve student achievement in the post NCLB adoption period. As Sylvia

Smith, Assistant Superintendent, stated, "It is not rocket science, you have to know where the kid is and then you have to teach, reteach, and reteach."

Not only was the use of the data from assessments important, there had to be a joint effort between the school and the parents to develop a plan that would make the student successful. In order to accomplish this, parent involvement had to be an equal part of the plan.

<div align="center">*Parent Involvement*</div>

Federal Provisions

To help support the parents in working with the school district, NCLB encouraged the development of a district wide advisory council and partnerships between the school, parents, and community-based organizations and businesses to develop plans to improve student achievement. NCLB encouraged more informational meetings with parents at different times, including home conferences with teachers and educators, in addition to the parent and teacher conferences that are held annually in the building [Section 1118 (e) (10) (12) & (13)]. NCLB stipulated that any school that is in need of improvement for failing to make annual yearly progress for two consecutive years must send notices to parents. The notices must inform parents as to why the school was identified and what support the local and state agencies will provide to increase the school's academic status, as well as, how parents can get involved [Section 1116 (a) (1) (B-D)]. NCLB reaffirmed that parents were to be included in developing a parent involvement policy and parent compacts that would give equal responsibility to the school, staff, and parents in raising student achievement [Section 1118 (a) (2) (F) and (d) (1)]. Under NCLB, not only are those provisions to be maintained, but, parent notifications about the provisions must be

placed in an understandable and uniform format in a language that the parents can understand [Section 1118 (b) (1) & (f)].

Urban School District Polices and Practices

NCLB helped to sustain the policies that the district had in place.

Before NCLB, Urban School District had in place a Parent Advisory Council that met with the superintendent each month. At the meetings the parents brought concerns to be discussed with the superintendent. Parent involvement was always a part of the district's initiatives. Cassandra Hall, External Funds Director, stated, "As it was with ESEA before NCLB, there's always parent involvement, when you had to have some type of parent involvement, parent compacts, parent meetings to discuss Title I."

In 1998, parents were given the opportunity at parent meetings to vocalize their concerns about what their child was being taught. According to Thomas Porter, Superintendent, "There was a desire for the district to have the parents take a firsthand look, not a second look, but a firsthand look at just what it is the district was trying to do in its capacity to work with children." The interviewees also discussed the parent meetings that were offered during this time. The Cassandra Hall, External Funds Director, reports that the instruction department set up the meetings and presented information to the parents about what was being taught in the schools and how they could support this at home.

The agendas for such meetings changed in 2003, becoming more focused as to what a parent could do to make their child academically successful. Thomas Porter, Superintendent, stated, " Parent involvement really ramped up because at that point in time we had family nights, Make It, Take It (Toolkit) training where parents were

actually asked to implement some things." Andre Sampson, Director of School

Improvement, added, "The agendas were changed in a way, so they fit the needs of the

people in the group. "There are meetings for parents that, according to Sylvia Smith,

Assistant Superintendent, "discuss systems and teach the parents about how to impact

policy and the overall process in the district due processes that we do."

Some interviewees also reported meetings for parents of students with disabilities.

These meetings are held by the special education department to provide information

about the laws, regulations and the rights enjoyed by students with disabilities. Sylvia

Smith, Assistant Superintendent, stated, "We have our parent's empowerment, which is

for special education parents. They come to the luncheon and meet speakers that provide

support for kids with special challenges."

Maxine Lowe, sixth grade math teacher remembered, "I do know that there are

programs that are directly related to outreaching to the parents." In fact, parents became

more active on all district committees, instead of just the book selection committees.

Cassandra Hall, External Funds Director, reported, "After NCLB, we have parents on all

of our different boards, our "CIC" board, different groups, and even in the CCIP, there's

parent involvement. There's just so much more because of No Child Left Behind saying

that the parent must know x, y, and z." The CIC, Curriculum Instruction Committee, is a

committee of teachers, administrators, parents, and community members that participate

in decision-making regarding curriculum development, implementation of program,

evaluation of the program, and textbook and curriculum (Master Agreement, 2003-2006).

The district greatly increased efforts to reach out to parents. Cassandra Hall, External

Funds Director, stated, "We do take parent involvement seriously. And it has increased

greatly since 2000." Sylvia Smith, Assistant Superintendent, believed that "they have to be involved in staff development." Dorothy Houser, Literacy Supervisor, stated, "We have to include them (parents) in all of our decision making in all of our committees." Julia Davidson, Human Resource Director, explained, "When we did our continuous improvement plans, all of the schools were advised to include survey and inputs from parents and community members in doing the CCIP."

The Urban School District sends out information about the district's academic status, reports out at parent and teacher meetings, holds their annual Title I parent meeting, and conducted community meetings to report current events and action plans of the district and individual schools that may be in school improvement (File: IGBE-E, 2001). The increase in modes of communication to parents since NCLB was also evident to the interviewees. The district always sent out newsletters, invitations to Title I meetings, and held meetings to share information. After NCLB, Maxine Lowe, sixth grade math teacher, reports, "I also know that we have put out many publications for grades, I believe K-12. I know certainly grades K-8." Thomas Porter, Superintendent, reflected, "There was a real concerted effort to make sure that if something changed in the curriculum that parents were informed, that the district and schools made an effort to explain to them in parent sensitive language."

Urban Middle School Strategies

At Urban Middle School, parent involvement was minimal in 1998. UMS scheduled parent conferences, student concerts, and performances, orientation meetings and open houses were the only times that parents were present in the building.

Urban Middle School began in 2000-2001 to hold parent meetings and activities at different times of the day throughout the year. For example: Parent meetings were held monthly and the starting times varied from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Student performances or special events held periodically began anywhere from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Informational meetings were held to discuss current state standards, high school curriculum changes. The Multi-Disciplinary Student Achievement Team (MDSAT) meetings were instituted in 2002 to promote collaboration between the community liaison, parents, staff and students in order to develop academic action plans for students who are struggling.

In 2000, the middle school began reaching out to parents. Audrea Thompson, sixth grade reading teacher, reported, "Our principal has really reached out and tried. The principal has really implemented various programs that would have included support of the parents to promote our kids to succeed in the building."

The parents were placed on different committees in the building, particularly, the Continuous Improvement Committee (CIP). The school felt that if the parents did not know what was going on in the building they would not have any ownership; therefore, they would not support our initiatives. The Urban Middle School meetings not only had parents but also students who were given an equal opportunity to add their input. Cass Holmes, sixth grade math teacher, reiterated, "We try to put everybody on our committees."

The parents were also an important part of the Making Middle Grades Work committee. They were invited to come to meetings and a set number of parents, as well

as, student participants were asked to serve on this committee. Cass Holmes, sixth grade math teacher, stated, "I've seen more parents now then I've ever seen."

The student handbook had a response page that was created by the assistant principal that gave the parent an opportunity to voice what they felt the Urban Middle School needed to do, as well as, offer any assistance in the building. The parents who stated that they would work with the Urban Middle School were put on a list called the Parent Group. The Urban Middle School began a Parent Group to tell other parents what was going on in the building. A newsletter was also mailed to parents and given to students. Maxine Lowe, sixth grade math teacher, remembered, "All the teachers were required to write a letter, like a little newsletter that we had to send to the parents. We had to inform them of the grading policies. What we were going to teach."

Urban Middle School principal found that the parents felt intimidated when they came to the school for parent conferences or to discuss their child's academics or behaviors. As a result, the school created the Parent and Family Community Center in 2004. This center was located on the first floor and was decorated in a way that promoted parent and family-oriented activities. The center was coordinated by the Family Readiness Coordinator and the Multidisciplinary Student Achievement Team (MDSAT) leader in the building. The Urban Middle School found that since the center is in a central location, on the first floor, and someone always walks the parent/s down so that they are not going in the room alone, that the meetings take on a more congenial atmosphere. Cass Holmes, sixth grade math teacher, stated, "We've had family involvement to get the parents up here, meet with the teachers before there's a serious problem."

Urban Middle School also began in 2004 having family nights in the fall and spring. The family nights were an activity night where the staff, students, parents, and their family came together to get acquainted. There are booths that have community agency information, and games for students and parents, including line dancing, movie, food, arts and crafts, and games for the students and parents. The parents or guardians have to come and stay with the students and participate in at least one activity. This has been the most successful parent involvement initiative with an average participation of approximately 160 people. Cass Holmes, sixth grade math teacher, stated, "I think the family nights help more than the conferences. At conference night, it is just you there, and most of it is negative. Family night you can sit and talk about all kinds of different things and parents see teachers at a different level."

There was a big increase in the community atmosphere that our school provided for not only the parents, but the community as a whole. As Maxine Lowe, sixth grade math teacher, stated, "There are numerous things that go on here at the building, in which, the parents are invited in and we get a lot of parents that do come here in this building."

The school district already had a Hispanic interpreter on call who would translate conversations for parents those parents whose primary language was other than English. After 2002 however, the External Funds Director instructed Urban School District personnel to send out informational letters to families with the English version on one side and the Hispanic version on the other side (External Funds Department Memo, 2002).

The only concern from some interviewees was the attendance of parents at the special education meetings. Dorothy Houser, Literacy Specialist, reported that "we have special education outreach to our parents and, sad to say, we have a very low turnout at those meetings." Audrea Thompson, middle school teacher, agreed, "I just don't think our parents really are supportive, not in high numbers in Special Ed."

Urban School District and Urban Middle School offered numerous opportunities for parent involvement. Urban School District and Urban Middle School present different venues for parents to be involved in the development of programs and the education of their child. The variety and timing of initiatives increased after NCLB, [now it is up to the parents to be involved.]

NCLB has enacted various provisions for districts to follow, in order to, continue to receive Title I funds. The provisions not only come with mandates, but they come with punitive actions if the state or local education agency does not apply.

Student Achievement

The research demonstrated that during the three years of the study after NCLB's adoption, Urban Middle School only moved up one performance level on the state report card and that was during the 2002-2003 school year. This movement was based on the state's performance index score, which is a weighted computational formula that determines if the overall school's student population has increased their total proficient scores at least ten points over a period of three school years, with at least a three point increase in the third year.

Table 2: Percentage of Urban Middle School Sixth Graders Attaining Proficiency in Selected Subjects, 1998-2004

School Year	School Rating	Performance Index	Writing	Reading	Math	Science	Soc. Stud.
1998-1999	No Rating	None	47.5	2.5	5.0	5.0	32.5
1999-2000	No Rating	None	64.5	28.4	20.4	23.7	40.2
2000-2001	No Rating	40.6	No Report Card				
2001-2002	No Rating	42.1	40.7	8.1	3.5	4.7	17.4
2002-2003	Academic Watch	52.5	60.4	21.1	10.4	20.2	29.2
2003-2004	Academic Emergency	54.2	57.5	28.0	13.2	14.0	24.5

(State Building Report Cards, 1998-2004)

There was no individual sub-group performance data provided on the Urban Middle

School's state report card until the 2003-2004 school year. There was just an overall

building rating for 2001-2002 and 2002-2003. According to the 2003-2004 report card,

the following percentages reflect the sixth grade students by subgroup who were

proficient in math, writing, and reading. The state standard that the students had to

achieve was 75% to be considered proficient.

Table 3: Proportion of Urban Middle school Sixth Graders attaining Proficiency in Selected Subjects by Sub-groups, 2003-2004

Subgroups	Reading	Writing	Mathematics
African- American	25.6%	56.4%	20.8%
Non-disabled	32.5%	61.0%	21.2%
Students with Disabilities	10.5%	26.5%	10.5%
Economically Disadvantaged	23.6%	51.7%	14.8%

(State Building Report Card, 2003-2004)

This caused the staff to worry about their abilities to teach, as well as, their jobs; the students to worry about passing a test; and the parents to worry whether their child should stay at Urban Middle School or take advantage of the school choice options. These types of worries can and did affect students and adults mentally.

In conclusion, the research showed that NCLB did have some influence on the provisions reported in this study. NCLB set criteria to use to prove if a teacher was "highly qualified" in the area that they were teaching; mandated that Title I funds could not be used on professional development unless your professional development plan was on-going throughout the year and was based on needs assessment data; school-wide programs could only be implemented if they were proven to be "scientifically based" and had prior academic success; academic assessments results were to be broken down by sub-groups and the information reported to the public. As far as, NCLB's affect on parent involvement, the USD and UMS already had in place programs that encouraged "parent involvement". NCLB may have helped to focus them more.

NCLB may not have initiated programs, but they may have expanded or sustained strategies, practices and policies that were already in place. The school district and the middle school have demonstrated that they have implemented different strategies, practices, and policies to comply with the different provisions in NCLB.

In Chapter 5, we will explore the themes that presented themselves through the interviewees' responses, archival data, and literature.

Chapter 5

MAJOR THEMES FROM ANALYSIS

Introduction

From the archival data and interviewee responses several themes emerged regarding

Urban Middle School's experience in implementing accountability provisions of NCLB.

These themes will be explored in this chapter.

1. NCLB encourages data driven instructions.

2. NCLB causes students to receive a narrowed curriculum.

3. NCLB promotes inequality in education through school choice.

NCLB encourages data driven instructions.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) not only stresses the importance of annual assessment

testing, but it also added how Congress expected the states to use the results of the

testing. NCLB mandates that the assessment results shall be reported by test item be

reported to the local educational agencies (LEA) so that all members of the school

community (parents, teacher, principals, and administrators) can interpret and address the

specific needs of the students.

Guskey (2007) co-director at the Center for Advanced Study of Assessment writes

that a formative classroom assessment offers educators a valuable tool to improve student

learning, but the true benefit is educators focus attention on what students and teachers do

with the assessment results. This correlates with NCLB's position that not only are the

annual assessments of value, but that what NCLB calls "dynamic assessments", need to

be conducted frequently by teachers and the information used to tailor and shape

instruction to the needs of the children in the class.

There was one district, in particular, in the state where Urban Middle School is located that used data-driven decision making before NCLB. It was a large urban district that linked up with the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN) in 1999 to receive services to organize their student assessment data (3Dknow.csn.org,2008). It began developing short-cycle assessments and later found that data-driven decision making drives change at all levels of their school district.

In 2005, the state itself became involved in a Data Driven Decision for Academic Achievement (D3A2) project. The State Department of Education (2006) reported that D3A2 is a long term initiative "focused on developing the capacity of educators while improving instruction and student achievement" (p. 1).

Four districts were selected to participate in the pilot with eight more districts added as the pilot program progressed. The districts had to provide three school years (2003-2004, 2004-2005, and 2005-2006) of student assessment and demographic information. This information was loaded into a D3A2 statewide data warehouse. The four districts were the first to test and provide feedback to developers as they utilized the system to analyze student results and needs. Eight other districts were added later to help test newly designed data validation and loading routines, as well as to provide feedback on the ease of using the system. Other school districts were encouraged to participate by loading their detailed item analysis data and test results for the same school years.

In 2005, D3A2 moved from pilot status to statewide implementation through a Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Grant Program. According to the State Department of Education (2006), D3A2 not only helps educators analyze data but it points them to

resources, such as lesson plans and classroom assessments designed to address academic needs identified by the data.

Even though Urban School District became a member of D3A2 in 2005, three years earlier it began to analyze the test items on the state assessment tests. The district also emphasized the importance of short-cycled assessment and instructed the district schools to use a data notebook at the building level to monitor and evaluate student progress.

At Urban Middle School, the notebooks contained all of the assessments (quizzes, tests, projects, etc.) that the teachers used throughout the year, the actual results, an analysis of the results, and what instructional decisions were based on the results. The notebooks were checked every nine weeks by administration (UMS Data Notebooks, 2004-2008).

The interviewees, both teachers and administrators, believe that these types of data-driven decision initiatives that use assessment results to develop classroom instructional strategies may offer particular promise in improving student achievement. The interviewees not only emphasized the use of the state test results in this process, but cited the district's internet assessment program, Scantron, that tests students two times a year as a valuable tool, along with teacher-developed classroom assessments. Sylvia Smith, UD Assistant Superintendent, noted, "I think the biggest strategy would be using the Scantron data, seeing where the kid is, and then teaching and re-teaching and constantly assessing what is working for teachers." Andre Sampson, Director of School Improvement, remarked, " Well, after that, of course, that is when we introduced Scantron, which gave you a clearer look earlier in the year with the short assessment piece as to the needs of your students."

Guskey (2003), co-director of Center for the Advanced Study of Assessment, confirms that assessments can be a vital component in our efforts to improve education, as long as we do not use them to only rank schools. He feels that if we just use them for ranking purposes we will miss their more powerful benefits. He states, "We must focus instead on helping teachers change the way they use assessment results, improve the quality of their classroom assessments, and align their assessments with valued learning goals and state or district assessments" (p. 2). Maxine Lowe, sixth grade math teacher, "We have to look at the assessments that we're administering in the classroom and let that inform us as to how we should be teaching." Marzano (2006) in *Classroom Assessment & Grading that Work* reports, "one of the strongest findings from the research is that the frequency of assessments is related to student academic achievement" (p. 9). He further states that research supports that formative classroom assessment is one of the most powerful tools a classroom teacher might use. Andre Sampson, UD Director of School Improvement made the point this way:

But, again, if you assess and you don't do anything with the information

that you get from the assessment, it means that the kids just took a test.

But, if you assess and you evaluate the assessment and you diagnose

the needs of your students and then you instruct, then you have done

something to better your scores.

Maxine Lowe, sixth grade math teacher, confirmed, "We have to look at the assessments that we're administering in the classroom and let that inform us as to how we should be teaching." Howell, Fox, and Morehead (1993) in *Curriculum Based Evaluations: Teaching and Decision Making* writes that educators interested in making

decisions about student programs should be able to see that the more frequently you test/observe, the more often they can make data-based decisions. Hearne (2008), consultant in the areas of standards based reform, confirms that the assessment revolution is taking place in the use of assessment data to drive decision making. She believes, "The difference is that "data" take on a richer meaning when that 'data' is actual student work instead of numbers representing a normative version of student work" (p. 2).

Julia Davidson, UD Human Resource Director, stated:

The only thing I can see is with all of the changes, and I cannot earmark anything specific, but, I believe we began to become smarter in how we interpret the kind of data that we would get because it was all coming at us and we didn't know what to take, what to do with it, but I think we, as educators, and I would say for our district, began to really look at data and certain data to tell us what was going to be best for the children.

Maxine Lowe, sixth grade math teacher, confirmed:

The fact that we have the emphasis on looking at the data, where before, when you think about, we really didn't look at the data that much going back over the last eight years. Therefore, that is one of the things that we have to do, look at that data and use the data.

Dietel, Herman, and Knuth (1991) of the North Central Regional Education Laboratory (NCREL) report that one characteristic of a good assessment is it provides information that gives an accurate estimate of student performance and enables teachers or other decision makers to make appropriate decisions. They also report that a second important characteristic is its consistency or reliability. Wanda Harris, UD Math

Supervisor, agreed, "We're still coming into this world (using data), but the word "test"
now means an instrument to help the teacher and the children to learn better." She goes
further by stating, "Well, I think definitely the thought of testing for more than a grade
will definitely make a difference in student achievement."

Guskey (2003), co-director of Center for the Advanced Study of Assessment, notes
that assessments must be followed by high-quality, corrective instruction designed to
remedy whatever learning errors the assessment identified. Thomas Porter, UD
Superintendent, gave an example of this when he stated:

> The assessments were given and they were aligned with the standards. In
>
> her words, when the assessment measures were given, teachers could say
>
> that based upon the measure, I know that there are six students in here who
>
> aren't getting it at all when it comes to numbering and things along that line.
>
> So now I know I need to develop specific strategies for those six students in math.

Howell, Fox, Morehead (1993) in *Curriculum Based Reform: Teaching and
Decisionmaking* remark, "The best data decisions will be made from systems that include
frequent curriculum-based monitoring because they will produce data that are sensitive to
learning." Andre Sampson, UD Director of School Improvement, confirmed this same
point:

> You have to provide them with the best type of assessments that we can,
>
> so that we're not waiting for a March date, or now a May date to find out
>
> how we're going to do on our achievement test.

Jaimie Jones, sixth grade reading teacher, believes that the district is doing just that. She stated, "I think then we began to take the results of those tests and makes some decisions about what was going to happen next."

The interviewees believed that the use of data on a regular basis to drive instruction causes teachers to drill down to see where the students are. Cassandra Hall, UD External Funds Director, reported, "Well, I think Scantron would definitely have an improvement in student achievement because it allows you to drill down to the individual student to see where they are with the standards."

Thomas Porter, UD Superintendent, went even further, "The way to task and analyze data. Break it down in such a way that you can use running records and temporary grouping that actually identify where kids are efficient and deficient and explore those things."

Maxine Lowe, sixth grade math teacher, agreed, "We're looking at different students and assessing them as individual groups and we weren't always doing that." Cass Holmes, sixth grade math teacher, concurred that "the breaking down of the material" will have an effect on student achievement.

The interviewees believed that, if they continue to use assessments to generate data that they can analyze to develop instructional strategies, student achievement scores might increase. The interviewees mentioned that they use the state test, an internet assessment, as well as, classroom assessments to gather data. McTigue (2008), educational consultant and co-author of *Understanding by Design* discusses this in an interview with Judith Richardson in *Principal Leadership:*

Summative assessment data from state accountability tests provide important

information about student achievement and educators need to systematically look at the results of state tests and address the revealed areas of weakness in student achievement. However, I would like to inject a note of caution here. State accountability tests do not give a full picture of student learning---that is, there are usually some important educational goals that aren't easily assessed in a large scale, standardized way. This is why we need local assessments and departmental assessments to supplement and compliment the external tests (p. 33).

In other words, in order for the use of assessments to be a valid tool in developing instructional strategies, there must be more than one type of assessment used and at different intervals, which according to the interviewees, has occurred in Urban School District and Urban Middle School.

NCLB causes students to receive a narrowed curriculum.

NCLB influenced curriculum at UMS and USD in several ways. One way was to promote and emphasize programming in literacy and math. The majority of the interviewees believed that this could lead to improved academic achievement in these areas.

This emphasis on mathematics and literacy may in part be attributed to the NCLB mandate that by the 2005-2006 school year states had to develop assessments that measured the achievement of their students against state academic standards in grades 3 through 8, with mathematics and reading or language arts as the minimum subjects. Many states already had in place assessment programs for mathematics and literacy before NCLB was adopted, including the state in which Urban School District was

situated. NCLB's introduction of AYP and additional consequences for low performing

schools served to increase the emphasis on these subject areas.

Lori Jackson, LPDC coordinator, confirmed, "The county and local university have

facilitated two reading and math grants that will really increase student achievement by

the things those teaches are learning."

NCLB's priority on assessments in math and reading may have encouraged state and

local agencies to place a curriculum emphasis on these subject areas and not on others.

This may have caused local agencies to increase classroom time on mathematics,

language arts and writing, resulting in a decrease in classroom time on science and social

studies. Julia Davidson, UD Human Resource Director, reported that the major changes

during the 2002-2004 time period involved literacy, "I would say literacy. The literacy

collaborative, increased reading/writing, having the literacy blocks." Thomas Porter, UD

Superintendent, also remembered, "The district began looking at literacy as an overall

umbrella. There was a model and we began categorizing the other literacy models under

that model to support specific areas where the students were identified weak."

In fact, according to the Center on Education Policy's (CEP) report of March 2005,

school districts that were surveyed did increase instructional time in reading and math as

a strategy to improve scores on state testing. CEP (2005) found that the percentage of

districts requiring schools to devote a particular amount of time varied, but they found

that the poorer the district, the more likely it was to mandate that a specific amount of

time be allotted for math and reading, According to CEP (2005), "the poorer students

may be getting a more limited curriculum which focuses on reading and math" (p. 20).

Several districts in the CEP Report contended that "NCLB's focus on reading and math

would take time and energy away from other important subjects, as well as from gifted and talented programs or from extracurricular activities like performing arts" (p. 22).

Sunderman et al. (2004), in their study for the Civil Rights Project of Harvard University, reported, "teachers are shifting their attention from teaching subjects that are not tested to increasing the amount of time they spend teaching subjects that are tested" (p. 34).

Urban School District also increased class time for mathematics and language arts by encouraging the implementation of block scheduling for sixth graders in all subject areas, but particularly in mathematics and language arts. At Urban Middle School during the 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 school years, the sixth grade schedule was composed of 70 minute blocks in all subjects (language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies), but by the 2004-2005 school year the blocks were only for mathematics and language arts. Social studies and science were reduced to only 43-minute long class periods because of staff cuts (Teacher's schedules, 2003-2004).

Another strategy at Urban Middle School was a districtwide initiative known as the Middle School Initiative (MSI). The MSI centered on improving state test scores by implementing various best practices, particularly "Writing Across the Curriculum" (WAC). This strategy emphasized the importance of writing in all subject areas every day, but especially in language arts and math.

Urban Middle School developed a plan implementing WAC. Progress had to be reported out in monthly middle school meetings and a consultant visited the school monthly to make sure WAC assignments were completed and posted in classrooms (Urban Middle School Professional Development Plan, 2003).

When asked, *What was the biggest program change in the district in 2002-2004?* the interviewees talked about the increase in literacy programs throughout the district. Thomas Porter, UD Superintendent, named the umbrella literacy-based program as one of the most prominent changes. He stated that the program "contained those major components that the research said were necessary to effectively teach literacy and reading in a way that would advance students at a more rapid rate." Denise Foyer, UD Treasurer stated, "I think the literacy programs were the most significant." Jaimie Jones, sixth grade reading teacher, confirmed, "the literacy block" was a big change during this time." Julia Davidson, UD Human Resource Director, stated, "I would say literacy. The literacy collaborative, increase reading, writing, having the literacy blocks." Even though WAC was to be implemented across all academic subject areas, the focus was on the utilization of writing in the mathematics classes to improve the writing skills of students so that they would do better on extended math questions on the state assessment test.

The concentration on WAC as a strategy caused a large amount of time to be dedicated to writing in the classrooms instead of focusing on the actual academic standards for that subject area. This may have created a narrowed curriculum, one focused on WAC, instead of accelerating content learning in the academic subject itself. Sheperd & Doughtery (1989) in their study on *The Effects of High Stakes Testing on Instruction* reported that some test experts believe that high stakes testing might lead to a narrowed instructional focus on the test at the expense of other important materials.

NCLB also emphasized that schools that Title I schools were to include reform strategies, such as an extended school year, before and after school programs, as well as summer school programs, in order to accelerate improvement on state assessment tests.

Because the subjects that were being tested were mathematics and reading, the district concentrated on those subjects for intervention as well. Dorothy Houser, UD Literacy Supervisor, stated that "the school district became very particular about the programs that were chosen in the after school programs and the intervention programs."

In 2002-2003, there was an increase in reform strategies at Urban Middle School that reflected the NCLB extended learning opportunity mandate (Professional Development Outline, 2002-2003).Students were selected to participate in interventions based on the results of reading and mathematics assessments that they were given by their regular classroom teacher. The school concentrated on mathematics and language arts because those were the subjects that were to be analyzed for NCLB average yearly progress (AYP) status, since AYP had rapidly became the measure of the school's success.

The language arts and mathematics interventions were implemented before school, after school, and during the lunch periods to increase instructional time for students who were below proficient. The 2002-2003 interventions were more of a homework assistance program for math in grades 5th through 8th. There was a language arts program for 6th graders that one teacher held after school that concentrated on accelerating students who were behind in language arts. Maxine Lowe, sixth grade math teacher, remembered, "We have the intervention program, that's here at the building level and that's been an on-going thing here at Urban Middle School." Cass Holmes, sixth grade math teacher, agreed, "Tutoring, we have before and after school, and lunch time tutoring."

In February 2003, Urban Middle School began a three hour extended day program that incorporated a homework center where students who signed up to participate had to attend day school Monday through Thursday, in order to participate in afterschool

activities. The focus of the homework centers were all subject areas (UMS Afterschool Alliance schedule).

In the summer of 2003, Urban Middle School ran a summer school for students whom scored below proficient on the state assessment test in mathematics and language arts. The summer school program focused on the standards for those particular subjects. Again, the school concentrated on math and language arts because those were the testing areas of the state assessment test.

The focusing of instruction during intervention programs continued into the 2003-2004 school year, when the intervention programs before school, afterschool, at lunch time, and the extended day program, all used a set curriculum that had proven to be successful with students who were below level. Thomas Porter, UD Superintendent agreed,

> One of the things the district did was institute, … individual learning
>
> plans and student after school programming where the teachers, [of]
>
> students during the day compared with those teachers who were teaching
>
> in the evening and were actually developing an actual plan of intervention.

In 2003-2004, the district became a member of the Making Middle Grades Work (MMGW) network. This network added support to the schools to improve scores on state assessments in all areas. The strongest focus began with math, writing and reading best practice strategies that the MMGW network encouraged member schools to implement (MMGW workshops schedule, 2003-2004).

The focus on these two subjects, in both regular classroom instruction and a variety of intervention programs, caused a narrowing of the overall curriculum in the school.

Teachers who taught language arts and mathematics increased interventions to bring students up to level because of their importance on the state assessment test during this period. The other subjects were taught during the regular class day with any interventions focusing on improving the report card grades (Tutoring Budget Reports, 2002-2004). Karp (2004) in *Rethinking Schools*, writes that the overreliance on testing may divert attention from other promising school improvement strategies. Houston (2008), executive director of the American Association of School Administrators, reports that to offset the time needed to measure the results of instruction many schools have neglected subjects not covered by tests. Therefore, the curriculum has narrowed. Sunderman & her associates (2004) reported that teachers they interviewed believed that "both sanctions and the AYP requirements cause them to ignore important aspects of the curriculum" (p. 33).

The narrowed curriculum that is developing because of NCLB does a disservice to any school's curriculum. A narrowed curriculum does not provide the knowledge base that a child needs to be successful because it focuses only on the subjects that will be tested. It also focuses on the particular standards associated with the subject tested. A study by Baker and Foote (2006) referred to standardization as "the bland diet of teaching and learning that is inferred on the test" (p. 120). Urban School District and Urban Middle School increased the language arts and mathematics curriculum drastically, implementing numerous interventions for mathematics, reading, and writing. The MSI consultant believed that WAC would increase scores in other subjects, but if writing rather than the content of particular subject was emphasized, there may be a negative impact on a student's knowledge base and performance in that subject, whether on a classroom

assignment or a state assessment test. Therefore, focusing on one or two subject areas causes students to receive a narrowed curriculum, even as it may enhance student achievement in selected subjects. NCLB's emphasis on mathematics and reading assessments and the consequences for failing AYP contributed substantially to this process.

NCLB promotes inequality in education through school choice.

No Child Left Behind has had an influence on school choice of public schools in cities including in Urban School Districts. NCLB provides that if a child is in a school classified by its state as "in need of improvement" for one year, the school must offer the child supplemental services. If in "in need of improvement" for two consecutive years, then the child must be offered "public school choice". Public school choice gives the child the option of attending another school that, according to state criteria, is not "in need of improvement".

The district is required to offer this choice to students who are the most academically challenged and who fit the economic status that placed their school under Title I jurisdiction initially. To facilitate the exercise of such choice transfers, NCLB mandates that the school district set aside 20% of their Title I funds for "public school choice" transportation, as well as, supplemental educational services for any child that does not elect "public school choice".

Cassandra Hall, Urban District UD External Funds Director, explained:

You have to set aside a total of 20% for public school choice and SES (Supplemental Educational Services), there's an amount set aside for discretionary, there's an amount set aside for non-publics. All of those

are taken off the top. Therefore, the schools were receiving less than they would

normally receive if we didn't have public school choice with the busing and

transportation and all of that or giving the money to the SES provider.

Thomas Porter, UD Superintendent, agreed that "there are requirements that actually

require that a percent of Title I money actually be moved from [the general Title I

allocation] and used specifically for specific kids who need additional assistance."

Andre Sampson, UD Director of School Improvement, reported:

What Leave No Child Behind did was it required you, if you were a school

in school improvement, to set aside funds. And when that happened, you

had to be more cautious and more advised as to where your resources had

to go, whether it was staff development, professional development, how

specific needs were being met.

Therefore, each year the district and schools that receive Title I funds cannot use some

of their Title I money that has been targeted to assist in developing programs or hiring

staff to increase academic success of students, because it has to set aside 20% in case it

has to be used for transportation or supplemental services. These amounts were not set

aside before the passage of NCLB. Below is a chart that reflects the amount that was set

aside after NCLB for the 2002-2004 fiscal years by Urban School District.

The money set aside is in the millions, representing 21% of "Title I funds, which

caused a lower cash flow in the district and the individual "Title I" buildings that serve

the largest population of Title I targeted students. This not only caused a reduction in the

programs that may be offered in a school that is struggling academically, but it affects

staffing because staff that may have been paid out of Title I funds may have to be let go

or paid out of general funds. This causes an added burden on the general fund reducing other programs designed to benefit children.

Table 4: Required Expenditures of Title I Funds 2002-2004

Fiscal Year	Fiscal Year Title I Allocation	Maximum Required Expenditures for School Choice Options	Maximum Per-Child Expenditure For Supplemental Educational Services
2002	$7,998,507	$1,599,701	$1,355.45
2003	$8,514,126	$1,702,825	$1,694.35
2004	$8,142,405	$1,628,481	$1,960.61

(Source: Overview ESEA Title I LEA Allocations-FY-2002, 2003, 2004)

The 20% set aside for school choice transportation and supplemental services is just one way a school loses funds. Students who elect to choose a different school cause the transferring school to lose state membership aid because the child has left the school. The district not only loses the state funding for that child, but its Title I funds may also be reduced because these funds are based on the percentage of children from low-income families in the school.

This push for school choice, which was reflected in NCLB, is nothing new. Cookson (1994) in *School Choice: The Struggle for the Soul of American Education*, remarks that the school choice movement is a loose confederation of individuals and groups with little in common accept a deep contempt for public education as we know it. The school choice movement was brought to the forefront under President Ronald Reagan's administration when his Secretary of Education tried to introduce a voucher system designed to give low-income families $600 per year so they could have school choice. "In 1992, President

George Bush introduced the "G.I. Bill Opportunity Scholarship for Children." He defended the bill by comparing in to the G. I Bill for Veterans "in that the money families would receive from the government would not flow directly to the schools themselves" (Cookson, 1994, p. 7). No Child Left Behind takes this legislative proposal further by linking the public school option to the school's accountability system, earmarking funds for transportation, and requiring all Title I schools in school improvement, corrective action, and restructuring status, to offer public school choice (Center of Education Policy, 2003). The choice provisions in the NCLB final regulations allow no flexibility in denying students transfers, causing critics to fear that private school vouchers could become the next step, if better performing schools do not have the space for transfers from lower performing schools, or if all schools in the district fail to satisfy state performance standards.

The critics had a reason to be fearful of such a move associated with NCLB. The state in which the Urban School District is located began implementing school choice in 1989 when it passed a Senate Bill, which gave students the right to transfer not only to schools within their district, but also schools in adjacent participating districts (Amended Senate Bill 140). In 1997, the state passed a charter school bill that permitted urban districts to establish new charter schools (House Bill 215). The state amended that bill in 2003 by giving the state department of education greater oversight over charter sponsors; allowing private, non-profit education organizations to authorize charter schools; and increasing the number of districts where charters can be formed (Amended House Bill 364). The state also enacted the "Education Choice Scholarship (EdChoice) program for autistic students in 2003, and expanded it in 2005 to provide school vouchers to students who

were enrolled in low-performing public schools and permit their use at private schools (Forster, 2008). These legislative actions, in conjunction with the provisions in NCLB, gave parents additional options to choose from, resulting in more students and funds leaving the already under performing schools.

To add further pressure to public schools, the "EdChoice" program did not stipulate that the students had to attend the low- performing public school for any length of time before becoming eligible to participate in the "EdChoice "voucher program. It stated that any child is eligible if they live in a local public school area that was designated as "chronically underperforming." Consequently, students who already attended private schools, but would otherwise have attended Urban Middle School, could qualify under the state voucher program. The first year of the implementation caused problems for Urban Middle School. Children who had never attended the Urban Middle School disenrolled from private schools, registered to attend the Urban Middle School, attended anywhere from one to ten days, and then applied for an "EDChoice" voucher. Under the state guidelines, there was no stipulation as to how long the child had to attend the public school to qualify for a voucher good at any private school. This not only caused increased admittance paperwork for the school, but it increased the loss of funds because if the child was awarded a voucher, it was used to attend a private school, and the resources available to public education correspondingly shrunk.

School choice was implemented to give parents a choice in what school their child would attend if the school they were assigned by the district were not academically successful. However, it has been contented by many, that the public school choice provisions in NCLB, as well as those existent at the state level, represent a political move

to privatize public education. By offering school choice, it will not only reduce the population in public schools, but it will also move funds to the private schools in which they enroll. The reduction in funding will cause more public schools to go into school improvement status, thereby, continuing a downward spiral of the public school system. Karp (2008) editor of *Rethinking Schools,* observes:

> These sanctions are a formula for chaos, not school improvement. Some would require large sums of money that NCLB does not provide. Others are hopelessly vague and others are a license to sell off public schools to private management firms. But none of these strategies has any record of success when it comes to addressing problems of educational inequality and academic achievement gap that trigger their imposition. (p.2)

The school choice option not only has its critics, it also has its supporters. The supporters of the NCLB public choice provisions claim that the public schools will not get any better unless they have competition. They feel that there should be a competitive market between public schools and private schools. Myron Lieberman (1993) in *Public Education: An Autopsy* lists five characteristics of what he says are essential to the existence of a competitive market:

1. New suppliers must be able to enter the market to meet increased demand.
2. Capital and labor must flow into and out of production in response to changes in demand.
3. Inefficient producers must become efficient or go out of business.
4. Buyers or sellers must have accurate information about the service.

5. No buyer and no seller must control enough of the market to set prices or quantities. (p. 300)

He states that not one of these conditions exist under public school choice.

The Center on Education Policy (CEP) (2002-2003) reports findings that the districts they studied reported that the "NCLB requirements for school choice and supplemental services (tutoring) have been very time-consuming for some districts to implement and have been little used by parents, to date" (p. 3). Cassandra Hall, Director of External Funds, reaffirmed this when she reflected about the effect of choice in Urban City:

> The different mandates that you do. For example, public school choice,
> if you don't have two [well performing] buildings then they say bring
> in trailers [to increase capacity of one school], but, you don't have the
> money to bring in trailers. Contacting schools in the surrounding areas
> to take your children who are the lowest economically and the lowest
> academically, and then to receive all of those letters saying, no. There
> were just a lot things, that for supplemental services, they [providers]
> tutoring do not have to have the same credentials that we do, in order
> to provide tutoring services, but we have to monitor what they do and
> that's also taking the funding that we need.

Some critics of school choice feel that it blocks the implementation of true reform. Merrifield (2001) in *The School Choice Wars* says, "The fallacy (school choice) also reduces the political pressure for systematic reform. The most quality-conscious consumers are usually the most politically influential citizens. If a reasonable substitute is within their means, they leave, and their departure weakens the political pressure for

reform" (p. 69). Shanker and Rosenberg (1994) in *Private School Choice: An Ineffective Path to Education Reform* go even further, stating that the risks involved in providing public and private education is substantial, and they are not balanced by any evidence of beneficial benefit. In fact, they report national studies have shown that if we want American children to meet world-class education standards, then shifting tax dollars to send them to private and parochial schools will not help.

The proponents of school choice believe that it is a reform; that if parents can choose the school their children go to, they will select better schools. Merrifield (2001) reports in *The School Choice Wars* that transfers to better schools are seen as "rescues" even though the transfers usually only helped slightly. Goldhaber & Eide (2002) report, in *What Do We Know about the Impact of School Choice Reforms on Disadvantaged Students,* that those who oppose choice do not believe that it would produce better outcomes overall, "but would result instead in greater disparities between educational winners and losers" (p.170).

The reduction of funds in public schools because of school choice leaves the exited school scrambling to continue to provide education to the students who remain. But, with the absence of funds, that becomes harder and harder to do. This causes more schools to fall into school improvement, causing the public to further scrutinize their failure and parents to utilize their school choice options. Therefore, the public schools are continuously in crisis. Sylvia Smith, UD Assistant Superintendent, observed:

> The biggest piece around here is moving from the crisis to the proactive
> mode. There is so much that goes on that you just constantly end up
> running back into the crisis and at some point in time we've got to let the

crisis burn and try to be proactive to move kids forward.

The public school continuously in crisis encourages the privatization of education because parents choose to move students to other schools to get their child out of crisis. This movement to private education by parents will ensure that the poor will receive an even poorer education because of lack of funds. For example, Urban School District reported that they had loss over $29 million dollars in funds during the 2008 fiscal year because of a loss of pupils to charter schools, open enrollment and voucher schools (Gwin, 2009). This represents approximately 25% of the district's annual operating budget.

If the lack of funds becomes extensive and the public schools cease to effectively exist, then what will happen to the students whose parents cannot continue to pay the difference between the value of the voucher and the cost of the private school? What will happen to those students who do not fit academically and/or behaviorally into their private school's plans, and are asked to leave? The school that the child may return to is now, due to a lack of programs and staff, struggling even more to be academically successful. This turn of events would bring us full circle back to the unequal educational opportunities that were challenged in Brown vs. the Board of Education in 1954 with two separate systems of education, one offering meager education to urban poor and another offering a more substantial education to those able to attend private-state assisted schools.

Chapter 6

FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

In this chapter we briefly summarize the problem, the research questions and

methods of the study before turning to a discussion of findings and recommendations for

school leaders. The chapter concludes with suggestions for further research.

Statement of the Problem

Since 1965, Title I of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)* has been

the basis for federal guidelines associated with the distribution of funds to increase the

academic achievement of economically disadvantaged students. The funding has been a

mainstay in providing extra revenue for school districts to provide types of services that

are geared toward these students, so that their lack of academic success could be

remedied. The positive effect that this Act was intended to bring about has only been

realized on a limited scale (e.g. Doyle & Cooper, 1988; Ganson, 2000; Kosters & Mast,

1981; OECD, 1981). Between 1968 and 1978, Congress amended the original legislation

four times to make the accountability guidelines more stringent regarding the

expenditures of the ESEA- Title I funds (Doyle & Cooper, 1988; Peterson, Rabe &

Wong, 1988). The publication of "A Nation At Risk" issued by the National Commission

on Excellence in Education raised questions regarding American education, including the

effectiveness of ESEA, triggering a wave of reform activity. When progress was not

immediate, Congress responded to calls for reform. In 1994, it passed the Goals 2000

legislation, which, among other measures, reduced the threshold for eligibility for a

school wide Title I program from 75 percent of children from low-income families to schools comprised of 50 percent of such students.

In 2001, Congress took a major step to propel further educational reform. *The No Child Left Behind Act* was passed as a reauthorization of the ESEA. This reauthorization focused on the use of state testing to prove the effectiveness of the programs initiated using ESEA funds. It also added language requiring states to (a) set academic goals for schools and that the goals must be met within twelve years, (b) establish criteria for "adequate yearly progress", (c) administer math and reading tests annually for grade three through eight, (d) report tests results by student race, ethnicity, income, English proficiency, and disability status, (e) afford parents whose children attend consistently failing schools the opportunity to remove their child to a better performing school and/or receive supplemental services provided at their current school (Public Law 107-110).

For the forty-years since ESEA was first enacted, evaluators have only been able to document ESEA's limited effectiveness in closing the achievement gap between the economically disadvantaged and other students (Kosters & Mast, 2003; McLaughlin, 1975; OECD, 1981; Vanecko, Ames & Archambault, 1980; West & Peterson, 2003). NCLB's accountability provisions were intended to produce further educational reforms and more tangible positive outcomes for all children, leaving no group behind. Research has just begun to scrutinize NCLB's impact. This study was intended to further our understanding of how NCLB is being implemented and some of its consequences for a middle school in a high poverty urban district.

Research Questions

The research questions examined in this study included:

1. How have the strategies employed by an urban middle school to provide student achievement been affected by the accountability provisions of NCLB?

2. What strategies adopted in conjunction with *No Child Left Behind* do school officials perceive to be potentially effective in helping improve student achievement?

3. Will higher level of academic achievement actually be realized in the aftermath of NCLB?

Findings

With respect to each of the provisions of NCLB designed to enhance local practices and promote student achievement findings are summarized.

Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT)

Before NCLB, Urban School District (USD) assigned teachers to positions by certification or licensure for particular grade level subject and/or their seniority status according to the teachers' master agreement.

After NCLB enacted the HQT provisions, the school district utilized the state-prescribed HQT rubric to determine how many teachers in the district were HQT and where they should be assigned. Urban School District changed its job postings from throughout the school year to only in the month of July and August to reduce the mobility of teachers throughout the school year and thereby sustain HQT placements that might otherwise have been disturbed by seniority-based bumping rights found in the teachers' contract.

When the USD attempted to post teaching openings listing HQT specifications, it was grievance by the teacher's union and the jobs were reposted without the HQT

specifications. Even if a teacher was given specialized training to do a particular job, a teacher with seniority had to be placed in a position first. Therefore, the intended HQT goal has never been fully realized in Urban School District.

Professional Development

Before NCLB, the district had professional development initiatives in place. There was professional development provided by the district four times a year on topics selected by the instruction department. Principals also submitted annual professional development plans for their building. The district had set up embedded professional development for the schools in language arts and math so that the professional development was brought into the teacher's classrooms so that teachers could be trained in the location where they would implement the training and be provided support in doing so.

After NCLB, the district program of professional development was based on responses from a needs survey completed by teachers. Principals still had to submit an annual building professional development plan, but the plan had to reflect the survey results and the building's CIP objectives. The professional development also had to be continuous throughout the year, instead of a one-shot-deal. Reports on the implementation of the professional development plan also had to be forwarded to the superintendent's office throughout the year.

Schoolwide programs

Before NCLB, the Title I program and service models that were implemented in the district were selected by central office personnel because they saw it somewhere or heard about it, not explicitly based on systematic assessments or scientifically based research.

The Urban School District had extended day programs in place to service students who may have been below grade level academically in reading and math.

The Urban Middle School also had extended day programs that focused on data from their assessments, and implemented a three hour after school program that provided not only academics but physical activities, social skills development and technology based on a needs assessment survey that the CIP team gave to staff, parents, and students.

After NCLB, the decisions regarding school wide programs were based on comprehensive needs assessments, state test results, CIP objectives and building need surveys. The needs assessments caused the district to implement more extended day program than they already had in place and change the academic programs so that they extended what was taught during the day classes.

Academic Assessment

Before NCLB, the USD participated in state testing; implemented the Stanford Achievement Test for grades, 5 and 7; and analyzed the results to determine what each building should focus on to help their students to achieve academically.

After NCLB, the district intensified the use of results of various tests to develop instructional strategies. The data were analyzed and teachers were instructed to develop strategies to help students who were below proficient in their classes. In 2004, the district began to utilize Scantron, an internet assessment program, twice a year to determine what students needed intervention in math and language arts. The use of assessment tools to generate data to help focus classroom instruction was one of the strategies that interviewees felt may positively affect student achievement.

Parent Involvement

Before NCLB, USD and UMS already had in place parent involvement programs and strategies. There were monthly parent meetings, parents on different decision making teams, parents on building student assistance teams, parent activities where they learned what the school district was providing for their child, and parent liaisons that worked in the schools.

UMS already had in place activities where parents and staff could develop trusting relationships so they could work together to benefit the child. For example, Family Night, MDSAT meetings, parent input on policy and activities in the building. The UMS had an "open door" policy that encouraged parents to drop in and see what was happening in the school or visit their child's classroom. District and building level officials sited these non-NCLB, locally initiated measures to promote a trusting climate, as potentially important to improving student achievement.

After NCLB, the USD parent meetings became more focused on what the district was doing academically, and provided parents with specific ideas and lessons that they could do at home to help their children advance academically.

Implications of NCLB and Recommendation for School Leaders

In this section, we review some of the positive and negative implications of NCLB and offer some recommendations to school leaders how negative implications might be overcome or lessened.

NCLB has been the subject of debate since its enactment in 2001. The accountability provisions of the law have caused supporter and critics to debate the effects the law has on student achievement. This section will discuss the implications surrounding the following topics accountability provisions, data-driven decisions making, school choice,

highly-qualified teachers, and parent involvement, as well as, give recommendations to educational leaders.

1. *Accountability provisions: AYP helped set school's agendas but may not be fair measure of school effectiveness*

Discussion

The accountability measures of NCLB required that in states receiving Title I funds, a statewide accountability system must be in place that covers all of the public schools and students. Previous accountability reports reflected the school district's student population by gender and ethnicity only (UMS building report cards, 1998-2000). The changes in accountability also gave the public an opportunity to scrutinize the effectiveness of their public school system through annual reports that list a school's standing, the number of highly qualified teachers it may have, the average yearly progress of its student population, and the status of the various subgroups within the school district and the individual school buildings (Brown, 2002; Goodman et al, 2004). Goodman et al (2004) in *Saving Our Schools* reported that NCLB requires each state to develop an accountability system to ensure that every American student is proficient on all state academic standards for reading, language arts, mathematics and science.

This brought to the forefront that schools with large minority and economically disadvantaged populations were not closing the achievement gap causing them to take a more constructive look a programs and how they affected the different subgroups academically. The reporting subgroup results also highlighted the very different demands AYP placed on urban schools that have a large minority or economically disadvantaged population as contrasted to schools in other districts that serve a more homogeneous

population. The diverse schools have more AYP targets to achieve, and thus more chances to be labeled as failing.

Wood (2004) stated that the more a school tries to serve groups that are defined by racial and income status, the greater the likelihood average yearly progress (AYP) would not be made. Kane and Staiger (2003) reported that subgroup rules will result in fewer resources and more sanctions targeted on diverse schools simply because of their diversity. Popham's (2004) projected that states will have to go up at least 5 to 6 percent annually in order to achieve AYP targets, which will label a majority of the schools already struggling as "failing". Mathis (2003) reported that there is no body of accepted scientific knowledge that says that all students and subgroups can reach meaningful high standards at the required AYP pace, given the level of funding and the lack of social economic and family assets of many of our children. Therefore, the accountability provision of reporting out subgroups results could help schools to see what they need to do, but it could also be detrimental to the survival of the school because the results are based arguably unfairly on the school's effectiveness instead of, the characteristics of the children it serves.

Recommendations for school leaders

Some states have implemented "value added analysis" as a component for calculating the results of state "high stakes tests". According to Battelle for Kids (2006), value added measures a student's progress between two points in time; does not relate to a student's family background; and compares a student's performance to their own prior performance. Battelle found that by measuring students' academic achievement and progress, schools and districts would have a more robust, comprehensive picture of their

effectiveness in raising student achievement. Darling-Hammond (2004) also suggested that the reporting of academic testing results should include "value-added" measures showing how individual students improve over time, rather than school averages that are influenced by changes in who is assessed (p. 23). It may be to a state's advantage to embrace "value added". *(see Appendix G for a list of recommendations)

Another lesson learned is to use the "high stakes tests" to gather data about students before they enter the middle school. This can be done by asking feeder school/s to forward the results of their tests to the receiving school. Besides the state "high stakes tests", utilize any standardized tests or teacher made assessment tools to generate information in advance of the next school year. This will not only give the school "needs assessment data" to select intervention strategies, but it will give the school an opportunity to match next year's children needs with a staff member that may be able to help them the most.

2. *Data driven decisions enhance instruction but may narrow the curriculum.*
Discussion

The use of data driven decisions is noted in NCLB as the use of "needs assessments" to develop instructional strategies. The majority of the interviewees' identified the use of data driven decisions as the strategy they felt would have the greatest impact on student achievement. They felt that the use of student data from state tests, district initiated standardized tests, and Scantron, an internet assessment program given twice a year, will help to create effective instructional strategies.

They believed that the use of data caused teachers to focus more on the areas in which the child needed to be more successful, instead of trying to cover everything in the

curriculum. They felt that the data from the different assessments helped to pinpoint the state standards and the type of questions that the students needed to work on to be successful on state "high stakes" tests.

There is a concern that students will be taught to the tests instead of being truly educated. Popham (2004) confirms that students are being shortchanged regarding the curriculum. The students are not learning the full range of what they should be learning because a high stakes test triggers cuts in important, but untested curricular content. In fact, Meir (2004) wrote that by relying on standardized tests as the only measure of school quality, NCLB usurps the right of local communities to define the attributes of a sound education. She continued that the very definition of an educated person has been changed by NCLB to only include students who score high on standardized math and reading tests. Karp (2004) added that relying overly on testing diverts the attention and resources from more promising school improvement strategies like smaller class size, creative curriculum, reform and collaborative professional development. Reese (2005) wrote "the law is a boondoggle for testing corporations that waste money better spent on tutors, better teachers, and school materials" (p. 329).

NCLB also expects states to develop academic standards and all school districts to conform their curriculum accordingly. The problem with this is that some states have so many standards that teachers are left to guess as to what standards will be on the test for that year. There has also been criticism as to who develops the tests because the standards that the students have to achieve may not reflect urban or rural populations or the economic background of the students taking the test (Kohn, 2000).

Recommendations for school leaders

Use the data generated carefully. Look at the data and cipher what information can be used for students who may be academically challenged. Trust teachers to develop intervention strategies to improve student achievement; and not simply use the latest intervention that someone saw somewhere. Do not allow testing to redefine what it means to be educated or narrow the curriculum in ways inconsistent with professional judgment about what students should be expected to learn.

3. F*lexibility of funds provide resources but set asides limit resources.*

Discussion

NCLB believes that giving the school districts an option of moving Title II, IV, and V funds to support Title I will help to carry out the mandates of NCLB. NCLB also believes that the flexibility of funds will help to finance any strategies that a Title I school implements to increase student achievement. The problem with this perspective of flexibility is NCLB also includes mandatory set asides that hamper the exercise of district discretion. The UMS found themselves losing a portion of their Title I funds after they were in their second year of "in need of improvement". Since NCLB required UMS set aside 20% of their funds to pay for transportation for school choice options and supplemental services, 10% for professional development for staff, and 1% for parent involvement strategies, these provisions introduce rigidity and limited strategies that UMS put in place or intended to implement. This caused some revisions or reductions in strategies that UMS may put in place or intended to implement.

The loss of the building level discretion in terms of Title I funds was only compounded by the loss of students in the USD due to school choice, open enrollment, and charter schools. This would have an adverse impact on the UMS because some

academically successful student may have taken advantage of these options. Some

believe that school choice options give parents control over their child's education and

will pressure public schools to step up their initiatives. Sunderman, Kim, Orfield (2005)

contents, in *NCLB Meets School Realities,* noted school choice often results in parents

simply transferring students from one poorly performing school to another similar school,

realizing little chance for NCLB to expand the quality of schooling option for

disadvantaged families. They also found that the NCLB transfer policy not only failed to

create better schooling options for parents, but it also imposed administrative and

financial burdens on urban districts. Ridenour, Lasley & Bainbridge (2001) voiced a

concern that education may become fragmented and weakened because of school choice.

They report that if education becomes a public good based on a market-based public

policy like school choice, then there will be winners and losers. Education cannot afford

to have children as winners and losers.

Recommendations for School Leaders

Promote the positives of the school through correspondence throughout the year to

your school community, but particularly at the end of the school year and again in the fall

of the next school year. The objective is to try to keep students from transferring to other

schools or get students to return. In order to do this, the school has to be visible by

performing community projects, holding community nights where the programs and the

academic success of the school is showcased, no matter how small the academic success

may be. It is important that the school be shown as a positive force in the neighborhood

particularly in urban communities.

4. *HQT promoted teacher growth but other teacher qualities matter too.*

Discussion

    The provision for highly qualified teacher (HQT) did force teachers to go for more

advanced training in the subject areas they were teaching. There were teachers who went

for further training who had not attended courses or any training since they graduated

with their Bachelor of Science in Education (District Report Cards, 2002-2004).

    The HQT provision also caused middle school administrators to look at certification

or licensure areas rather than simply considering a license to teach at a particular grade

level. USD found that teachers have strong union contracts that provide for job security,

sometimes frustrating fidelity to provisions of NCLB.

    Center on Education Policy (CEP) (2003) also found that rural districts and districts

with a high concentration of poor children had a hard time attracting highly qualified

teachers (HQT). They found that the problem for the rural districts was distance, isolation

or cultural factors while urban districts found that highly qualified teachers moved out of

schools that may have had a high concentration of poor students who they felt would not

score well on high stakes tests, leaving the most challenged teaching to those with the

least experience.

    Another factor that may influence student achievement is expectations that the

teachers had on the approximately 89% economically disadvantaged student population.

McKenzie and Scheurich (2004) studies showed different equity traps a teacher finds

himself or herself believing when a minority impoverished child is not successful may

play an important role. Two of these equity traps could have affected the academic

success of the children at UMS. They are deficit views and the paralogical belief and

behaviors of teachers. For instance, teachers may associate a lack of a minority student's

academic success with the deficits of their parents and the community they live in. The teacher believes that the cause of the student's lack of achievement is because of their economic situation, not any preconceived notion of the teacher. But, Scheurich showed that the teacher's paralogical beliefs and behaviors, blaming the students for their lack of achievement, was prevalent. The teachers tried to justify their beliefs by explaining that if they had a negative attitude toward the students it was based on the students' behavior not their beliefs. Steele (1997) found that when stereotypical threats are operative, they lower the confidence of vulnerable students and negatively affect their performance on standardized tests (p. 26). Therefore, students who are stereotyped will do poorly on tests because they have been stereotyped to do poorly.

Recommendations for school leaders

To increase the HQT representation in classrooms, departmentalize the grade level teaching staff in the middle school setting. In the case of special education teachers and elementary certified seventh and eighth grade teachers, this gives them an opportunity to concentrate on one subject at a time in which to become highly qualified in instead of all of the academic areas simultaneously. It also gives them a chance to learn current information about the subject, which may help to change the strategies that they are using in the classroom to improve student achievement.

Also, in order to combat some of the bias that teacher's may bring to the classroom, institute weekly meetings to go over specific academic and social strategies that are proven to work with students of poverty (Prince, 2004; Payne, Devol and Smith, 2001).

5. *School relationships and school culture can't be legislated.*

Discussion

NCLB believes that schools should build a positive school culture by building a relationship with all members of its school community. This was one of the non-academic factors that the interviewees felt had some potential influence on student achievement at UMS.

UMS found that the relationship between the schools and families helped to implement strategies successfully because the relationship represented an element of trust that the school was attempting to education their child. Therefore, the families encouraged their children to attend school and complete academic assignments that were given.

NCLB's school-parent compact gives parents and schools a chance to outline on paper what each facet promises to do to make the child academically successful. But, in essence that is just on paper, it is the schools job to develop working relationships within the school community to develop positive relationships and trust something that legislation simply cannot effectively mandate.

Implementers in USD and UMS confirmed that UMS had a positive school culture. The parents, students, and staff believed that there was a positive relationship established between them. This was verified through the participation that UMS had on "family nights". Family night was an evening activity that promoted building school and family relationships in a relaxed atmosphere through activities, food, and community agency information. The families of staff and students relaxed and talked about everything but school business.

Positive school relationships are also built on trust. UMS had an open door policy where parents or guardians could come without prior notice to check on their child's

academics or behaviors in their classrooms. The school trusted that the parents would respect the teacher and the classroom and the parents trusted that the school was providing a proper education for their child everyday and not when the parents were "invited ".

UMS found that positive school relationships take time to build. When the NCLB provision of school choice resulted in a loss of enrollment, it caused some staff to be reassigned. This change in staff sometimes created a break in a relationship between the school and the parent since it was the teacher contact in the school that the parents trusted the most.

Positive relationships within the school imperative to school effectiveness can also be negatively affected by NCLB. For instance, NCLB's accountability provisions placed undue stress on sixth grade teachers at UMS who felt the brunt of the responsibility for the "in need of improvement" status of the school because, when NCLB was first enacted the only grade level in the UMS that determined AYP status was sixth grade scores. This placed the failure of the schools on the sixth grade teacher's shoulders alone. This does not help to maintain a positive and collaborative school culture.

This type of responsibility can cause the positive school culture to be a challenge because teachers who were not responsible for the tests may blame the sixth grade teachers for the UMS being designated as "in need of improvement" status. The school relationships that were built may become disjointed because sixth grade teachers may transfer to another school rather than stay under the pressure.

Recommendations for school leaders

First, leaders need to implement programs that promote trust with teachers, and then develop programs and practices that promote trust between all staff, not just teachers. Once there is some level of trust in the staff then include students and parents. The reason for this sequence is that if there is not a level of trust in the building, there can not be a level of trust with people outside of the building. Another reason is that in order to implement strategies, all members of the school community must take ownership by developing them and believing in them (Blankstein, 2004). Empowering parents and students dispels the myth that the staff is on a higher level and that they have all the solutions to the academic problems.

This section attempted to present the positive and negative implications of NCLB. They were presented to clarify that NCLB had good intentions, but other outcomes came to the forefront after it was implemented by the USD and UMS. There is room to change NCLB and hopefully on the next reauthorization the changes will be made. As far as, the lessons for leaders section, it was an attempt to give educational leaders some ideas that were used in the USD and UMS to work through some of the negative implications, and offer plausible strategies for doing so in their districts. Below are some recommendations for further research.

<center>Recommendations for further research</center>

1. Federal laws like NCLB, while designed to bring about change at the classroom level, are channeled through the states to local school districts, and then on to the school buildings. What is the optimal role and set of strategies for district level or central office staff to utilize to promote the implementation of NCLB or realize its policy goals at the building level?

2. While student academic proficiency is the measure of success for the purpose of NCLB, school climate or culture has been identified in the research as an important component of effective schools. Therefore, a study on how NCLB affects school culture and how school culture affects the implementation and outcomes of NCLB is encouraged.

3. The effectiveness of a federal policy such as NCLB can best be judged over an extended period of time, since change is a process rather than an event. Consequently, research that employs longitudinal designs and extends over a greater period of time should be encouraged as the implementation of NCLB matures.

Conclusion

The No Child Left Behind Act had a positive agenda-setting function on this urban middle school, forcing it to re-examine the strategies it was employing to improve student achievement. Changes or adjustments, in some part attributable to NCLB, were found in the manner in which teachers were assigned, professional development implemented, data utilized, and parent involvement focused. Staff perceived several of these changes as potentially important in theory to improving student achievement, although they saw substantial barriers to realizing some of these benefits in practice. And, at least in the years studied, no discernable improvement in achievement was realized.

At the same time, the study found that NCLB had some negative consequences for the school. These included consequences such as: narrowing the curriculum due to the law's math and reading emphasis; reducing the availability of Title funds as a result of mandatory set asides and student choice; failing to recognized that HQT, while important,

is not the only teacher quality that matters in advancing student performance; and hindering some on-going relationships between the school, families and among staff. Finally, the study raises questions as to the fairness of NCLB to urban schools, since their diversity multiplies the number of AYP targets that must be met, and heightens the difficulty of avoiding school improvement status and the sanctions that accompany it.

In retrospect, UMS found itself and its staff striving, at times heroically, to advance student achievement, only to have its heightened focus and organizational energy diverted to defusing the immediate negative effects associated with NCLB's sanctions. This contest for organizational attention, set in motion by NCLB, ironically may have caused positive strategies that take time to prove their effectiveness to be overtaken by more immediate negative consequences, thereby, contributing to more children in this poor urban middle school being left behind.

References

Abrams, L. M., Pedulla, J. J. & Madaus, G. F. (2003). Views from the classroom

Teachers' opinions of statewide testing programs. *Theory Into Practice*, 42(1), 18-27.

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) (2003).

Collective Bargaining Agreement between AFSCME Local No. 1143-A. Urban

Middle School.

Anagnostopoulos, D. (2003). The new accountability, student failure, and teachers' work

in urban high schools. *Educational Policy,* 17 (3) 291-316.

Archives: Section 1119 Professional Development. Retrieved December 28, 2003 from

http://www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA/sec1119.html

Arons, S. (1997) *Short route to chaos: Conscience, community and the*

reconstitution of American schooling. Amherst: University of Massachusetts.

Baker, M. & Foote. M. (2006). Interrelationship and the impact of standards-based

Reform. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 42 (1),* 90-123.

Barth, R. S. (1984). Sandboxes and honeybees. Education Week, May 1, 1984. Retrieved

December 21, 2008 from http://www.smalschoolsproject.org/PDF/culture.pdf.

Bassey, M. (1999). *Case study research in educational settings: Doing qualitative*

Research in educational settings. Florence, KY: The Falmer Press, Taylor & Francis,

Inc.

Battelle for Kids (2006). *A toolkit for school leaders: Understanding and using value-*

added analysis. Columbus: Battelle for Kids.

Blankenstein, A. (2004). *Failure is not an option*. Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press

Boehner, J. & Gregg, J. (2002). *Title I Resources of Reform: New hope for America's*

most disadvantaged public schools: A congressional analyses. Washington, D. C.:

U. S. Government Printing Office.

Bogdan, R. C. & Biklen, S. K. (1982). *Qualitative research for education: An introduc-tion to theory and methods.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.

Borman, G. D. (2002). Systematic supports for improving at-risk schools. Title I: the

evolution and effectiveness of compensatory education. In S. Stringfield & D. Land

(Eds) (2002). *Educating at-risk students* (pp.231-268). Chicago: The University

of Chicago Press.

Brewer, M. B. & Collins, B. E. (Eds) (1981). *Scientific inquiry and the social sciences.*

San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Brown, C. G. (2002). *Opportunities and accountability to leave no child behind in the*

middle grades. The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation.

Bullard, P. & Taylor, B. O. (1994). Keepers of the Dream: The triumph of effective

schools: How accountable educators and parents are revitalizing learning for our

children. Chicago, Illinois: Allyn and Bacon.

Burns, R. B. (1990). *Introduction to research methods in education.* Melbourne, Victoria:

Longman Cheshire.

Cano, V. (2006). Reliability & validity in qualitative research. Retrieved March 26, 2006

From http://www.qmu.ac.uk/psych/Rtrek/study_notes/web/sn5.htm.

Center On Education Policy (2004). From the capital to the classroom: Year 2 of the no

child left behind act. Retrieved December 5, 2004 from http:// www.ctredpol.org/

Pubs/nclby2/cepnclby2full.pdf.

Center for Teaching Profession (2004). *Teacher education and licensure standards.*

Administrative code-Chapter 3301-24. Columbus: Ohio Department of Education.

Chubb, J. E. (Ed). (2005) *Within our reach: How America can educate every child.*

Lanham, Maryland:Rowmand and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2000). *Research methods in education (5th Ed).*

London: Routledge Falmer.

Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia (2004). Youngstown. Retrieved February 6, 2005

from http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/us/A0853160.htm.

Comer, J. P. (2004). *Leave no child behind: Preparing today's youth for tomorrow's*

world. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press.

Consortium for School Networking. *Data-driven decision making from CoSN.* Retrieved

November 25, 2008 from http://www.3d2know.org/index.cfm.

Constantino, S. M. (2003). *Engaging all families: Creating a positive school culture by*

putting research into practice. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing

Group, Inc.

Cookson, P. W. (1994) *School choice: The struggle for the soul of American education.*

Durham, North Carolina: Yale University press.

Council of Chief State School Officers (2001). Teacher education and licensure

Standards. Retrieved December 27. 2005 from http://www.ccsso.org/Publications/

Download cfm?Filename=finalrep.pdf.

Cronin, J., Kingsbury, G. G., McCall, M. S., Bowe, B. (2005). The Impact of the No

Child Left Behind Act on Student Achievement and Growth. Retrieved from

http://nwea.org/assets/research/national/NCLBImpact_2005_Brief.pdf.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2008) *No child left behind and high school reform.* Retrieved

March 15, 2009 from http://www.qualityednow.org/state/egresource/conference2005/ Session6-HSReform.pdf.

Data-driven decisions for academic achievement. Retrieved November 24, 2008 from http://www.d3a2.org/overview.

Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds) (1998). *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (2003). *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications

Dietel, R. J., Herman, J. L., & Knuth, R. A. (1991). *What does research say about assessment?* North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL), Retrieved December 28, 2008 from http://www.finchpark.com/courses/assess/research.htm.

Discipline Occurrences (Building) Microstrategy web (2004). Retrieved February 12, 2005 from http://ilrc.ode.state.oh.us/Micorstrategy/(jfh25d45iniuyjyramjutezf) /asp/Main.aspx.

Donmoyer, R. (1990). Generalizability and the single-case study. In E. W. Eisner & A. Peskin (Eds.), *Qualitative inquiry in education: The Continuing Debate* (pp. 175 197). New York, NY: Teacher College Press.

Doyle, D. P., & Cooper, B. S. (Eds.) (1998). *Federal aid to the disadvantaged: What future for Chapter 1?*. Philadelphia, PA: The Falmer Press, Taylor & Francis, Inc.

Education Commission of the States (2008). *No child left behind brief: Data driven decisionmaking.* Retrieved November 24, 2008 from http://www.ecs.org/ Clearinghouse/35/52/3552.pdf.

Educational Testing Service (2005). Ohio Praxis Test Requirement. Retrieved December

27, 2005 from http://www.ets.org/portal/site/ets/

Elmore, R. F. (1988). The problem of Quality in Chapter 1. In D. P. Doyle & B. S.

Cooper (Eds*), Federal aid to the disadvantaged: What future for Chapter 1?*

(pp. 167-180). Philadelphia: The Falmer Press, Taylor & Francis, Inc.

Englehart, M. (1972). *Methods of educational research*. Chicago, IL: Rand McNally

and co.

Evers, W. M. & Walberg, H. J. (2002). *School accountability*. Stanford: Hoover

Institution Press.

Expenditure Flow Model (2004). Retrieved February 13, 2005 from http://www.ode.state

Oh.us/school_finance/simulation_fiscal_analysis/EFM_04.xls

Fiore, D. J. (2001). *Creating connections for better schools: How leaders enhance school

Culture.* Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Forster, G. (2008) *Promising start: An empirical analysis of how edchoice vouchers

affect ohio public schools*. Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice report August

20, 2008.

Fuhrman, S. (1988). Increased state capacity and aid. In D. P. Doyle & B. S. Cooper

(Eds.) (1998). *Federal aid to the disadvantaged: What future for Chapter 1?*

Philadelphia: The Falmer Press, Taylor & Francis, Inc.

Fuhrman, S. (Ed) (2001). *From the capitol to the classroom. Standards based reform in

the states.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Fullan, M. (1994). *Changing forces: Probing the depths of educational reform*. New

York, NY: Falmer Publishing.

Fusarelli, L. D. (2004). The potential impact of the no child left behind act on equity and

diversity in American education. *Educational Policy,* 18 (l), 71-94.

Ganson, H. C. (2000) *Title I program: Stronger accountability needed for performance of disadvantaged students (GAO/HEHS-00-89).* Washington, D. C.: U. S. General Accounting Office.

George Washington University (1995). *An idea book 1994 Federal education legislation: Forming new partnerships for educating all students to high standards.* Retrieved on December 31, 2005 from http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/pubs/ideabook/partnerships/

Goetz, J. P. & LeCompte, M. D. (1984) *Ethnography and qualitative design in educational research.* Orlando: Academic Press, Inc.

Goertz, M. E. (2001). Standards-based accountability: Horse trade or horse whip? In S. Fuhrman (Ed.) (2001). *From the capitol to the classroom: Standards based reform in the states* (pp. 39-59). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Goertz, M. E., Floden, R. E., & O'Day, J. (1996) *The bumpy road to education reform. Policy Brief.* Retrieved February 6, 2005 from http://www.cpre.org/images/stories/ cpre_pdfs/rb20.pdf.

Goldhaber, D. D. & Eide, E. R. (2002). *What do we know (and need to know) about the impact of school choice reforms on disadvantaged students.* Harvard Educational Review, 72(2), 157-173.

Goodman, K. (2004). *Saving our schools: The case for public education. Saying no to no child left behind.* Berkley, California: RDR Books.

Goodman, K.; Shannon, P; Goodman, Y; Rapoport, R. (2004) *Saving our schools: The case for public education: Saying no to "no child left behind".* Berkley: RDR Books.

Gray, L. (2002) *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001: Public Law 107-110 reauthorization*

of the ESEA of 1964: An analysis. Washington, DC: National Alliance of Black

School Educators.

Gregory, G. H. & Chapman, C. M. (2002) Differentiated instructional strategies: One size

fits all. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

Gulek, Cengiz (2003). Preparing for high stakes testing. *Theory Into Practice, 42(1)*, 42-

50.

Guskey, T. R. (2008). The rest of the story: the power of formative classroom assessment

depends on how you use the results. *Educational Leadership, 65(4),* 28-35.

Gwin, H. (2007) *Fuel for charter school debate report: Youngstown is No. 3 for*

enrollment. Retrieved December 17, 2008 from http://www4.vindy.com/content/

local_regional/296791697510429.php

Haigh, M. (2001). Aspects of case study research. Retrieved March 27, 2008 from

http://www.education.duckland.ac.nz/uoa/fms/default/education/docs/word/research/

fed_paper/issue8/ACE_Paper_7_issue_8.doc.

Haycock, K. (2001). Closing the achievement gap. Educational Leadership, 58)6), 1-5.

Retrieved December 21, 2008 from http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_

Leadership/Mar01/vol58/num06/Closing_the_Achievement_Gap.aspx.

Hanushek, R. & Raymond, M. E. (2003). Lessons about the design of state

Accountability. In P. E. Peterson & M. R. West (Eds) (2003). No *child left behind?*

The politics and practice of school accountability (127-151). Washington, D. C.:

Center On Education Policy.

Heid, C. (1991). The dilemma of chapter 1 program improvement. *Educational*

Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 13 (4), 394-398.

Hess, F. M. (2003). Refining or Retreating? High stakes accountability in the states. In

    P. E. Peterson & M. R. West (Eds) (2003). *No child left behind? The politics and*

    practice of school accountability (pp. 55-79). Washington, D. C.: Center on

    Education Policy.

Hickock, E. W. (2002) *Implementation of the no child left behind act.* Washington, D. C.:

    U. S. Government Printing Office.

Hoepfl, M. C.(1997) Choosing qualitative research: A primer for technology education

    researchers. Retrieved May3,2005 from http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JTE/v9n1/

    hoepfl.html.

Holland (1999) Reauthorizing the elementary and secondary act of 1965: A new

    approach for a new century- allegiance to the children. Retrieved July 12, 2004

    from http://www.freerepublic.com/forum/a376fe1807581.htm

Houston, P. D. (2007). The seven deadly sins of no child left behind. *Phi Delta Kappa*

    International, 88(10), 744-748. Retrieved November 28, 2008 from http://www.

    Pdkintl.org/Kappan/k-v88/k0706hou.htm1993).

Howell, K. W., Fox, S. L. and Morehead, K. W. (1993) *Curriculum based evaluations:*

    Teaching and decision making. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks Cole Publishing Company.

Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged, 34CFR Part 200, RIN

    1810-AA92. Retrieved from http:www.ed.gov/legislation/Fedregister/finrule/

    2002-3/070502a.html.

Jeffrey, J. R. (1978). *A study of the origins and implementation of the elementary*

    and secondary education act of 1965. Columbus: Ohio State University Press.

Jennings, J. (2002). Stricter federal demands, bigger state role: What to expect from the

no child left behind act. Retrieved on December 5, 2004 http://www.ctredpol.org/ standardsbasededucationreform/stricterfedraldemandsbiggerstaterolejune2002.pdf.

Jick, T. D. (1983). Mixing qualitative and quantitative research methods: Triangulation in action. In J. VanMaanen (Ed), *Qualitative methodology (pp. 135-148).* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

Joftustelal, S., Skinner, R., May, E., Prietsman, S., & Cowan, K. T. (McKenzie Group) (2002) *School administrators guide to ESEA formula grants: How to get and manage Federal K-12 education funds.* Washington, D. C.: Thompson Publishing Group Inc.

Johnson, L. S. (1988). Survey on ECIA chapter 1 evaluation regulations (Technical Report No. 293). Los Angeles: Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST).

Kane, T. J. & Staiger, D. O. (2003). In P. E. Peterson & M. R. West (Eds.) (2003). *No child left behind? The politics and practice of school accountability* (pp. 152-176). Washington, D. C.: Center of Education Policy.

Karp, S. (2001). Bush plan fails schools. *Rethinking Schools, 16(3),* 1-6. Retrieved April 1, 2008 from http://rethinkingschools.org/archive/15-03/Bush153.shtml.

Kelley, E. A. (1980). *Improving school climate: Leadership techniques for principals.* Reston Virginia: The National Association of Secondary School Principals.

Key, J. P. (1997).*Module R14: Qualitative research*. Retrieved on May 3, 2005 from http://www.okstate.edu/ag/agedcm4h/academic/aged5980a/5980/newpage21.

Kinded, L. W., Bagin, D., Gallagher, D. R. (1990) *The school and community relations.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc.

Kirst, M. & Kelley, C. (1995). Collaboration to improve education and children's ser-

vices: Politics and policy making. In Rigsby, L. C., Reynolds, M. C., Wang, M. C.

(Eds.) (1995). *School-community connections: Exploring issues for research and*

Practice. San Franscisco, California: Jossey-Bass, Inc. Publishers.

Kirst, M. W. (1988) The federal role and Chapter 1: Re-thinking some basic assumptions.

In D. P. Doyle & B. S. Cooper (Eds), *Federal aid to the disadvantage: What future*

for Chapter 1? (pp.97-115).

Knapp, M. S. & Associates (1995). *Teaching for meaning in high-poverty classrooms*.

New York: Teachers College Press.

Kohn, A. (2000). Standardized Testing and Its Victim. Retrieved May 25, 2009 from

www.alfiekohn.org/teaching/edweek/staiv.htm.

Kosters, M. H. & Mast, B. D. (2003). *Closing the education achievement gap: Is title I*

working? Washington, D. C.: American Enterprise Institute Press.

Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing.*

Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Langan, D. & Malico, M. (2003, January 8). *President Bush celebrates one-year*

anniversary of no child left behind act. Retrieved January 19, 2003 from

http://nochildleftbehind.gov/media/news/010803.html.

Learning Points Associates (2004). *Understanding the no child left behind act of 2001*.

Retrieved July 17, 2003 from http://www.ncrel.org/quality/qkey61.htm.

Lecker, W. (2005). *No child left behind act: The promise and challenges of the "no child*

left behind act". Retrieved November 28, 2008 from http://www.schoolfunding.info/

federal/NCLB/nclb_brief.php3.

Lieberman, M. (1993). *Public education: An autopsy*. Cambridge, Massachusetts:

Harvard University Press.

Linn, R. L., Baker, E. L., & Betebenner, D. (2002). *Accountability systems: Implications of requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Technical Report No. 567).* Los Angeles: Center for CRESST.

Madsen, D. (1983). *Successful dissertations and thesis.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers.

Marshall, C. & Rossman, G. B. (1989). *Designing qualitative research.* Newbury Park: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Marshall, S. S. (1988) Selecting students and services for chapter 1. In D. P. Doyle & B. S. Cooper (Eds*). Federal aid to the disadvantaged: What future for chapter 1?* (pp. 119-145). Philadelphia: The Falmer Press, Taylor & Francis, Inc.

Marzano, R. J. (2006). *Classroom assessment & grading that works.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervisions and Curriculum Design.

Mathis, W. J. (2003) No child left behind: Costs and benefits, *Phi Delta Kappan, 84 (9)* 679-686. Retrieved August 22, 2004 from http://www.pdkintl.org/Kappan/K0305 mat.htm

McKenzie, Jamie (2003, January 3). *Gambling with the children.* Received February 21, from 2004 from http://nochildleft.com/2003/jan03.html.

McLaughlin, M. W. (1975). *Evaluation and reform: The elementary and secondary education act of 1965/Title I.* Cambridge: Ballinger.

McKenzie, K. B. & Scheurich, J. J. (2004). Equity traps: A useful construct for preparing Principals to lead schools that are successful with racially diverse students. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 40,(5) (December, 2004),* 601-632.

McTique, J. (2008). *Understanding by design*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Super-
vision and curriculum development.

Meier, D. (2002). *In schools we trust: Creating communities of learning in an era of
testing and standardization.* Boston, Massachusetts: Beacon Press

Meier, D. & Wood, G. (Eds.) (2004*). Many children left behind: How the no child
left behind act is damaging our children and our schools.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Meloy, J. M. (2002). *Writing the qualitative dissertation: Understanding by doing*.
Mahwah: Laurence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Merriam, S. B. (1988). *Case study research in education: A qualitative approach*. San
Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc.

Merrified, J. (2001). *The school choice wars*. Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press.

Metz, M. H. (1978). *Classrooms and corridors: The crisis of authority in desegregated
secondary schools.* Berkley: University of California Press.

Microstrategy Web (2004). *Mobility Rate (building).* Retrieved February 13, 2005 from
http://ilrc.ode.state.oh.us/Microstrategy/(vegvifj30qftjj55kvtzqn55)/asp/Main.aspx

Moe, t. M. (2001). *A primer of America's school*. Stanford, California: Hoover
Institution Press.

Moe, T. M. (2003). Politics, control and the future of school accountability. In P. E.
Peterson & M. R. West (2003). *No child left behind? The politics and practice of
school accountability* (pp.80-106). Washington, D. C.: Center of Education Policy.

Morken, H. & Formicola, J. (1999). *The politics of school choice.* Lanham, Maryland:
Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Murphy, J. T. (1988). Title I of ESEA: The politics of implementing federal education

reform. Cited in Peterson, P. E., Rabe, B. G. & Wong, K. K. In D. P. Doyle & B. S. Cooper, (Eds.) *Federal aid to the disadvantaged: What future for Chapter 1?* (pp 33-59). Philadelphia: The Falmer Press, Taylor & Francis Inc.

NCLB District Requirements. Retrieved January 2, 2004 from http://www.ode.state oh.us/esea/superintendent/docs/NCLB_District_Requirements.asp?pfv…

Null, J. W. (2003). Education and knowledge, not "standards and accountability": A critique of reform rhetoric through the ideas of Dewey, Bagley and Schwab. Educa-tional Studies: *A Journal of the American Educational Studies Association, 34(4),* 397-423.

Odden, A. R. (Eds.) (1991). *Education policy implementation*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Ohio Education Association's (OEA) *ESEA information center for teachers*. Retrieved December 27, 2005 from http://www.easa.ohea.org/sreasearch/teachers/

Ohio Department of Education. *Building gender report from 1998-2008.* Retrieved December 17, 2008 from http://ilrc.ode.state.oh.us/Downloards.asp.

Ohio Department of Education. *Building reports cards from 1998-2008,* Retrieved December 17, 2008 from http://www.ode.state.oh.us/reportcardfiles/2007.

Ohio Department of Education. *Building revenue per students from 1998-2007.* Retrieved December 21, 2008 from http://www.ibo.state.oh.us/122ga/ohbudget/97_opbudget/ edu.pdf.

Ohio Department of Education. *USD enrollment from 1998-2008*. Retrieved December 17, 2008 from http://www.ode.state.oh.us/reportcard/archives/RC_IRN.ASP?irn. 045161.

Ohio Department of Education (2004). *UMS Middle School: 2003-2004 School report card.* Columbus: Ohio Department of Education.

Ohio General Assembly (2001). Senate Amended Substitute Bill 1. Columbus: Ohio Senate.

Ohio General Assembly (2004). Senate Amended Substitute Bill 2. Columbus: Ohio Senate.

Ohio General Assembly (2001). House Amended Substitute Bill 3. Columbus: Ohio Senate.

Ohio House Bill 205. Retrieved December 28, 2003 from http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.dfm?ID=125_HB_205.

Ohio's New Education Law: Senate Bill 1. Retrieved December 28, 2003 from http://www.cdfohio.org/advocacy/SB1/SB1_Summary.htm.

Ohio Senate Bill 3. Retrieved December 28,2003 from http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=125_SB_3.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (1981). *Review of national policies for education. United States: Federal policies for education for the disadvantaged.* Paris: Organisation For Economic Co-Operation and Development.

Paige, R. (2002). *Key policy letters signed by the education secretary or deputy secretary.*Retrieved July 12, 2004 from http://www.edgov/policy/elsec/guid/scletter/020724.html.

Paige, R., Stroup, S., & Andrade, J. R. *Meeting the highly qualified teacher's challenges: The secondary's annual report on teacher quality.* Retrieved December 27, 2005 from

http://www.title2org/ADATitleIIReport2002.pdf.

Payne, R. K., Devol, P. & Smith, T. D. (2001). *Bridges out of poverty: Strategies for professionals and community*. Highland, TX: Aha! Process, Inc.

Pennrose Properties (2008). *Arlington Heights*. Retrieved from http://pennrose.com/ portfolio/arlingtonHeights.shtml.

Peterson, P. E., Rabe, B. G., & Wong, K. K. (1988). When federalism works. In D. P. Doyle & B. S. Cooper (Eds), *Federal aid to the disadvantage: What future for Chapter 1?* (pp.33-60). Philadelphia: The Falmer Press, Taylor & Francis Inc.

Peterson, P. E. & West, M. R. (Eds) 2003. *No child left behind? The politics and practice of school accountability*. Washington, D. C.: Center on Education Policy.

Pinkerton, E., Kober, N., Scott, E., & Buell, B. (2003) *Learning from case studies of the no child left behind act*. Washington, D.C.: Center of Education Policy.

Plucker, J. A., Spradlin, T. E., Cline, K. P., & Wolf, K. M. (2005). No child left behind: Spring 2005 implementation update. *Education Policy Brief, 3(6).*

Popham, W. J. (2004). *America's failing schools: How parents and teachers can cope with no child left behind*. New York: Routledge Falmer.

Powers, J. M. (2003). An analysis of performance-based accountability: Factors shaping school importance in two urban school districts. *Educational Policy*, 17 (5), 558-585.

Prentice Hall Documents Library. *Goals 2000: Improving America's school's act (1994).* Retrieved July 31, 2003 from http://cwx.prenhall.com/bookbind/pubbooks/burns4/ Medialib/docs/goals2000.htm.

Prince, C. D. (2004). *Changing policies to close the achievement gap: A guide for school*

system leaders. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc.

Protherone, N., Shellard, E., & Turner, J. (2003). *A practical guide to school improvement: Meeting the challenge of NCLB*. Arlington: Educational Research Service.

Puma, M. J. & Drury, P. W. (2000) Exploring new directions: Title I in the year 2000. Washington, D. C. : The National School Boards Association.

Ravitch, D. & Vinovskis, M. A. (Eds) (1995). *Learning from the past*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.

Reese, W. J. (2005). *America's public schools from the common school to "no child left behind.* Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.

Reeves, C. (2003). *Implementing the no child left behind act: Implications for rural schools and districts.* Retrieved July 17, 2004 from http://www.ncrel.org/policy/ curve/resource.htm#pubs,

Rich, D. E. & Van Galen, J. (1966). *Caring in an unjust world: Negotiating borders and barriers in schools.* Albany, New York: State University of New York Press.

Ridenour, C. S., Thomas. J. L., & Bainbridge, W. L. (2001). The impact of emerging market-based public policy on urban schools and a democratic society. *Education and Urban Society, 34, (1) (November, 2001),* 66-83.

Rigsby, L. C., Reynolds, M. C. & Wang, M. C. (1995). *School-community connections: Exploring issues for research and practice.* San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Rogers, D. (1968). *110 Livingston Street: Politics and bureaucracy in the New York City school system.* New York City: Random House.

Rubin, H. (2002). *Collaborative leadership: Developing effective partnerships in communities and schools.* Thousand Oaks, California: Corwin Press, Inc.

Rudalevige, A. (2003). No child left behind: Forging a congressional compromise. In P. E. Peterson & M. R. West (Eds), *No child left behind? The politics and practice of school accountability (pp23-54).* Washington D. C.: The Brookings Institution Press.

Sanders, M. G. (Ed) (2000). *School students placed at risk: Research, policy and practice in the education of poor and minority adolescents.* Mahwah: Laurence Erlbaum Associates.

Saphier J. & King, M. (1985). *Good seeds grow in strong culture*. Educational Leadership (42)(6), 67-74.

Schools Funding Matters (2008). *The faces of school funding*. Retrieved December 21, 2008 from http://www.schoolfundingmatters.org/content/faces.aspx.

Schugurensky, D. (ED). *History of education: Selected moments of the 20th century: Goals 2000: Educate America act.* Retrieved December 31, 2005 from http://www.fcis.oise.Utoronto.cal~Daniel_schugur…assignment/1994goals2000.html.

Sewell, M. (2005). *The use of qualitative interviews in evaluation*. Retrieved May 3, 2005 from http://ag.arizona.edu/fcs/cyfernet/cyfar/Intervu5.htm.

Shanker, A. & Rosenberg, B. (1994) Private school choice: An ineffective path to educational reform. In Hakin, S., Seidenstat, P., Bowman, G. W. (Eds.) (1994). *Privatizing education and educational choices: Concepts, plans and experiences* (pp. 59-73). Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers.

Shepherd, L & Daugherty, K. (1991). *The effects of high stakes testing on instruction.*

Chicago, Illinois: Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association and the National Council on Measurement in Education.

Sherman, R. R. & Webb, R. B. (Eds.) (1988). *Qualitative research in education: Focus and methods.* Philadelphia: The Falmer Press, Taylor & Francis, Inc.

Seidman, I. E. (1991). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Skrla, L. & Scheurich, J. J. (2001) Displacing deficit thinking in school district relation-ships. *Education and Urban Society, 33(3),* 235-259.

Smith, M. (1988). Selecting students and services for Chapter 1. In D. P. Doyle & B. S. Cooper (Eds.), *Federal aid to the disadvantage: What future for Chapter 1?* (pp119-145). Philadelphia: Falmer Press, Taylor and Francis, Inc.

Spillane, J. P., Diamond, J. B., Burch, P., Hallett, T., Jita, L. & Zoltners, J. (2002). Managing in the middle: School leaders and the enactment of accountability policy. *Educational Policy*, 16 (5), pp. 731-762.

Steele, C. (1997). A threat in the air: How stereotypes shape intellectual identity and Performance. In Noguera, P. A., Racial politics and the elusive quest. *Education and Urban Society, 34 (5), (November, 2001),* pp. 18-41.

Strike, K. A. (1982). *Educational policy and the just society.* Chicago, Illinois: University of Illinois Press.

Stringfield, S. & Land, D. (Eds) (2002). *Educating at-risk students*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Stump, Jennifer (2001). *Bill Analysis: Am. Sub.SB1 (Amended Substitute Senate Bill 1* Columbus: Ohio Legislature Service Commission.

Sunderman, G. L., Tracey, C. A., Kim, J. & Orfield, G. (2004). *Listening to teachers: classroom realities and no child left behind.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard Education Publishing Group.

Sunderman, G. L., Kim, J. S., Orfield, G. (2005). *NCLB meets school realities: Lessons from the field.* Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.

Swope, K. & Miner, B. (2000) Falling our kids: Why the testing craze won't fix our Schools. *Rethinking Schools, LTD*. Retrieved November 28, 2008 from http://www. Rethinkingschools.org/publications/failingkids/foktoc.pdf.

Tellis, W. (1997). Introduction to case study. Retrieved May 3, 2005 from http://www. Nova.edu/ssss/QR/QRS-2/tellis1.html.

Talley, R., Short, R. J. (2000). *Education and health care advocacy: Perspective on goals 2000: IASA, IDA and healthy people 2000.* Digest. Retrieved July 31, 2005 from http://www.ericfacility/net/ericdigests/ed390023.html.

The D3A2 Discourse: A periodic publication of the Ohio data driven decisions for academic achievement project (2007). Retrieved November 24, 2008 from http://www.d3a2.org/uploads/docs/D3A2%20Discourse%20April%202007.pdf.

The Public Education Network. *School-parent compact. Action guide for parent and community leaders.* Retrieved November 28, 2008 from http://www.ncpie.org/nclb action/SchoolParent_Compact.pdf.

Thernstrom, A. C. & Thernstrom, S. (2003). *No excuses: Closing the racial gap in L earning.* New York: Simon Schuster.

Title I of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, Public Law 103-227. Retrieved December 31, 2005 from http://www.amar.colostate.edu/~hillger/laws/goals-

2000.html.

Tyack, D. (1995). Reinventing schooling. In Ravitch, D., & Vinovskis, M. A. (Eds.),
Learning from the past (pp. 191-216). Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.

U. S. Census Bureau (2000). *Profile of general demographic characteristics: 2000*.
Washington, D. C.: U. S. Census Bureau.

U. S. Department of Education (1992). *National assessment of chapter 1 program:
The interim report.* Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office.

U. S. Department of Education (1998). *Goals 2000: Reforming education to improve
student achievement.* Retrieved on July 20, 2003 from http://www.ericfacility/net
ericdigests/ed390023.html.

U. S. Department of Education (2002). *No child left behind: A desktop reference.*
Washington, D. C.: U.S. Department of Education.

U. S. Department of Education (2002). *General provisions*. Retrieved January 26, 2003
from http://www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA02/pg18.html.

U. S. Department of Education (2002) *Title I- Improving the academic achievement of
the disadvantaged.* Retrieved January 19, 2003 from http://www.ed.gov/legislation/
ESEA02/pg1.html.

U. S. Department of Education (2003) *No child left behind: A toolkit for teachers.*
Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Education.

U. S. Department of Education (2003). *No child left behind-glossary of terms.* Retrieved
January 26, 2003 from http://www.nclb.gov/start/glossary/index.html.

U. S. Department of Education (2003). *Public Law 107-110: Improving the academic
achievement of the disadvantaged.* Retrieved on January 19, 2003 from http:// www.

ed.gov/legislation/ESEA02/pg1.html.

U. S. Department of Education (2003). *Section 1119 Professional Development*. Retrieved from December 28, 2003 http://www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA/sec1119. html.

U. S. Department of Education (2003). *State of Ohio consolidate application accountability workbook.* Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of Education.

U. S. Department of Education (2004). *Code of Federal Regulations (Title 34, Volume 1*, Parts 1 to 299) Retrieved on January 3, 2004 from http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/ cgi-bin/get-cfr.cgi?Title=34&PAR=200&Section=1.

U. S. Department of Education (2004). *New no child left behind flexibility: Highly qualified teachers fact sheet.* Retrieved on December 27, 2005 from http://www.ed. Gov/nclb/methods/teachers/hqtflexibility.pdf.

U. S. Department of Education (2005). *Part A-teacher and principal training and recruiting fund.* Retrieved on December 27, 2005 from http://www.ed.gov/policy/ elsec/leg.esea02/pg20.html.

U.S. Department of Education (2008). *Using data to influence classroom decisions.* Retrieved November 24, 2008 from http://www.ed.gov/teachers/nclbguide/ datadriven.pdf.

Urban Middle School (UMS) Board Policy Notebook (1972)

UMS Building Conference Requisitions (2002-2004)

UMS Building Continuous Improvement Plan (2000-2006)

UMS Building Report Cards (1998-2004). Ohio Department of Education. Columbus: Ohio Department of Education

UMS Building Report Card Analysis (2002-2004)

UMS Building Title I Budget (2001-2003)

UMS Department Meeting Agendas (2001-2004)

UMS Master Schedule (1998-2004)

UMS Memorandum of Understanding (2002)

UMS Monthly Professional Development Feedback form (2001)

UMS Professional Development Plan (2002-2004)

UMS Professional Meeting Plan (2002-2004)

UMS Title I Budget (2001)

UMS Title I Budget (2003)

Urban School District (USD) (1998-2004). *Certificated Job Postings*. USD: Department
Of Human Resources.

USD (2000). *Continuous Improvement Plan*. USD: Board of Education

USD (2003) Consolidated Application Revision 1. USD: Department of External
Funding.

USD (1996) *Strategic Plan*. USD: Board of Education

USD (1993-2006). *Teacher's Negotiated Master's Agreement*. USD: USD Education
Association.

USD Local Professional Development Committee (LPDC) (1998). *LPDC Notebook*:
USD:LPDC.

Uzzell, L. A. (2005). *No child left behind: The dangers of centralized education policy.*
Policy Analysis. Retrieved November 28, 2008 from http://wwww.cato.org/pub_
Display.php?pub_id=3769.

Vanecko, J. J., Ames, N. L., Archambault, F. X., Jr. (1980) *Who benefits from federal education dollars? The development of ESEA Title I allocation policy.* Cambridge: Abt Associates Inc.

Vinovskis, M. A. (1995). *Education, society and economic opportunity: A historical perspective on persistent issues.* Chelsea: Yale University Press.

Waxman, H. C., Walker de Felix, J., Anderson, J. E., Baptiste, H. P. (1992). *Students at-risk in at- risk schools: Improving environments for learning.* Newbury Park: Corwin Press, Inc.

Wenning, R.J. & Herdman, P. A., & Smith, N. (2002). *No child left behind: Who is Included in new federal accountability requirements?* Washington, D. C.: Thomas B. Fordham Foundation.

Wiersma, W. (1991). *Research methods in education: An introduction.* Needham Heights, MA: Allyn Bacon.

Wohlstetter, P., Malloy, C. L., Chau, D., Polhemus, J. L. (2003). Improving schools through networks: A new approach to urban school reform. *Educational Policy*,17(4), 399-430.

Wolcott, H. F. (1973). *The man in the principal's office: An ethnography*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.

Wong, K. (2005). *Title I as a reform strategy in urban schools*. Retrieved September 18, 2005 from http://www.ericdigests.org/2004-4/title.htm.

Yin, R. K. (1994). *Case study research:* Design and method: Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Yin, R. K. (2004). *Case study methods:* Revised draft January 20, 2004 (Cosmos

Corporation. To appear in *Complementary methods for research in education (3rd Ed).* Washington, D. C. American Educational Research Association.

Zavadsky, H. (2006). How NCLB drives success in urban schools. *Educational Leadership, 64 (3),* 69-73.

Appendix A

Acronyms List

Acronyms List

Name	*Acronym*
Area Cooperative Computerized Educational Service	ACCESS
Average Yearly Progress	AYP
Center on Education Policy	CEP
Cognitive Disabled	CD
Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan	CCIP
Consortium for School Networking	CoSN
Continuous Improvement Plan	CIP
Curriculum Instruction Committee	CIC
Data Driven Decision for Academic Achievement	D3A2
Education Management Information System	EMIS
Elementary and Secondary Act	ESEA
English as a Second Language	ESL
Highly Qualified	HQ
Highly Qualified Teacher	HQT
Improving America's School Act	IASA
Local Education Association	LEA
Local Professional Development Committee	LPDC
Low-Functioning Cognitive Disabled	LFCD
Making Middle Grades Work	MMGW
Memorandum of Understanding	MOU
Middle School Initiative	MSI

Multi-Disabled	MD
Multi-Disciplinary Student Achievement Team	MDSAT
National Commission on Excellence in Education	NCEE
No Child Left Behind	NCLB
Office of Education	OE
Scientifically Based Research	SBR
Severe Learning Disabled	SLD
Stanford Achievement Test	SAT
State Education Association	SEA
State Proficiency Test	SPT
United States Office of Education	USOE
Urban Middle School	UMS
Urban Middle School Afterschool Alliance	UMSA
Urban School District	USD
Writing Across the Curriculum	WAC

Appendix B

Conceptual Model

Conceptual Model

Problem	Treatment	Reform Efforts	Student Outcomes
Poor achievement of economically advantaged	1998-2000 ESEA ECIA Goals 2000: Educate America Act	Pull outs School wide Small classes Extended days Teacher Education Professional Development Parent Involvement Research Based Incentives	District Report Cards Building Report Cards Annual Reports- Title I Notebooks Standardized Tests State Proficiency Tests
	2002-2004 ESEA-No Child Left Behind	Highly Qualified Teacher Para-professional requirements Professional Development- 10% of funds Parent Involvement-1% of funds Research Based Programming Short term assessments	State Accountability Plans Local School Districts Continuous Improvement Plans Building Continuous Improvement Plans Building Action Plans State Proficiency Tests State Achievement Tests

Data Research Diagram

Research Area	Data	Source of Data
Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT)	1998-2000 Teacher Education Professional Development	Staff Postings Certification/State Licensure Exam Interviews
	2002-2004 HQT Criteria specified Paraprofessional requirements	HQT Rubric Paraprofessional Rubric

Research Area	Data	Data Source
Professional Development	1998-2000 Short Term workshops	Department Chairs Interviewed Supervisors and Director of

| | Lack of Funding
Not Research Based | Curriculum
Continuous Improvement Plans
& |
| | 2002-2004
Long Term Objective Based
Workshops
10% of Title I funds allocated
Research Based | Building Professional
Development Plans
District Professional Plans |

Research Area	Data	Source of Data
Program Implementation	1998-2000 Pull-out programs School wide programs Teacher oriented Parent Advisory Councils Incentives	Title I Note Books Interviews of teachers, administrators, and supervisors
	2002-2004 Research Based Student oriented No incentives Math, Reading, and Science assessment tests 21st Century Grants	Program proposals Program implementation Program Staffing

Research Area	Data	Source of Data
Parent Involvement	1998-2000 ESEA provision requirements Parent Advisory Councils	Title I Annual Reports District Parent Laision District Parent Meeting Reports District Parent Newsletters
	2002-2004 1% mandated out of Title I funds Parent Focused Parent Programs	

Research Area	Data	Source of Data
Student Achievement	1998-2000 Regular Education Scores only Special Education student scores exempted	State Proficiency Test Scores Building Report Card District Report Card &
	2001-2004	Average Yearly Progress

	Regular Education Students Scores disaggregated Only 1% of Special Education Students exempted	NCLB Revised District Report Card NCLB Revised Building Report Card Ohio Proficiency Scores Ohio Achievement Test Scores

Appendix C

Interview Questions

Interview Questions

Background- I'm going to ask you some questions about your role and background.

- How many years of experience do you have working in a public education setting?

- How long have you been employed in YCS?

- Between 1998 and the present, what positions have you held with YCS. (Please indicate the dates associated with each position, if more than one).

At the beginning:

I am going to ask you some general questions about No Child Left Behind, better known as NCLB.

From your experience and perspective,

1. What is your feeling about NCLB generally?

2. How would you describe the process by which NCLB was introduced at the district level? Building level?
   How effective was this process in getting staff to embrace the changes that NCLB called on the building to make?

3. Do you think NCLB overall has had any effect on student academic achievement at the school? Whether positive or negative? Why do you think that?

4. What factors, other than ones related to NCLB, do you perceive have made a difference in levels of student achievement at Hayes over the past 5 years?

5. Do you have a reasonably clear sense about changes in strategies or practices to promote student achievement that have been instituted in the school district and/or Hayes Middle School over the past eight years- including since the adoption of NCLB in 2002?

Strategies to Promote Educational Reform is YCS and at HMS.

Next, I'd like to ask you a series of questions about policies, programs and practices that have been utilized in YCS/ at Hayes over the past decade to promote improved student Achievement. I'm particularly interested in policies, programs and procedures associated with two different periods of time:

Period I-   School Years Spanning 1998-99 and 1999-2000.

Period II-   School Years Spanning 2002-2003 and 2003-2004.

1. *Making Subject Matter Assignments to Staff*

    a. Who assigned teachers to teaching assignments in 1998-2000?

    b. Who made such assignments in 2002-2004?

    c. What criteria was used in making teaching assignments for the school years 1998-1999 and 1999-2000?

    d. What criteria was used in making teaching assignments for the school years 2002-2003 and 2003-2004?

    e. Were there any changes in the criteria used to make teaching assignments in the most recent past as compared to the earlier period? Explain.

f. If there were any changes in criteria, how important, if at all, do you consider them to the district/school's efforts to improve student academic achievement? Please briefly explain.

2. *What Program or Services Implemented to Promote Improved Achievement*

The district and building has adopted various programs or services designed to promote student achievement over the last decade as reflected in the district and building continuous improvement plan and Title I proposals for instance.

a. What were the three most prominent programs or services designed to promote student achievement that were implemented in the period of 1998-2000?

What additional programs or services, if any, were adopted in the 2002-2004 time period?

b. Who and on what basis were decisions about programs and services made in 1998-2000 time period?

c. Who and on what basis were decisions about new programs or services made in 2002-2004 time period?

d. If there were any changes in the basis on which decisions were made, do you think the changes lead to any better decisions in terms of a positive impact on student achievement or not? Could you provide an example?

3. *Staff Professional Development*

Professional development can be one way to promote organizational improvement and enhanced teaching and learning. Changes in professional development can lead to changes in student outcomes.

a. How would you describe professional development opportunities and what most characterized them in terms of purpose, focus and method of delivery in 1998-2000?

b. What changes if any, did you observe in staff development in the 2002-2004 time period as compared to 1998-2000?

c. How important, if at all, do you consider the changes in staff development in promoting improvement student achievement? (Can you explain why you think this?)

4. *Student Assessment*

Student assessment policies and practices have been a part of reform measures for some time. This includes policies pertaining to who should be assessed, how frequently and using what instruments, as well as how results are to be utilized.

a. What were the primary means used in YSC/HMS to assess student academic achievement in math and reading in 1998-2000?

b. What were the primary means relied on in 2002-2004?

c. What changes, if any, were introduced in the 2002-2004 time period in terms of the students, types of assessments, frequency or utilization of results?

d. Which if any of these changes do you think will contribute to improved student achievement? Which are unlikely to result in improvement in student academic achievement? Explain.

5. *Parent Involvement and Decisions Making*

It is widely suggested that parental involvement in their child's education is highly desirable for a variety of reasons.

    a. In what ways did the district or school concertedly attempt to involve parents in their child's education and decisions making about their child's education in the 1998-2000 time period? In determining means of improving school programs and student achievement?

    b. In what additional concerted ways, if any, were parents involved in their children's education or decision-making regarding it in the period 2002-2004? In making decisions about school improvement and student achievement?

    c. If any additional methods were used in the more recent period, how important do you consider them in improving student academic achievement? Which were most important? Why do you think this?

6. *Allocation and Utilization of Title I Resources*

    a. What process, guidelines and criteria were utilized to allocate Title I resources among buildings in 1998-2000?

    b. Where any different processes, guidelines or criteria utilized to allocate resources among buildings in 2002-2004?

    c. Who was involved in determining how monies allocated to a building were utilized in that building in 1998-2000?

d. Was there any change in who was involved or the nature of their involvement in the period 2002-2004? Describe the change you observed. Explain whether you consider it significant or not in improving student achievement.

Finally,

Imagine for a minute that you were in charge of improving student academic achievement at the building level in conjunction with implementing NCLB? What might you have done differently to promote more meaningful changes in strategies used to promote student academic achievement?

Appendix D

Interviewees' Profiles

Interviewee' Profiles

Name	Race	Number of years experience	Last Position Title	Date Interviewed	Taped and Transcribed	Revision Date (if applies)
(Cass Holmes)	Caucasian	13 years	Sixth Grade Math teacher	8/30/06	yes	9/8/06
(Lori Jackson)	Caucasian	26 years	LPDC Coordinator	9/19/06	yes	10/17/06
(Maxine Lowe)	African-American	11 years	Sixth Grade Math Teacher	9/28/06	yes	2/15/07
(Wanda Harris)	Caucasian	26 years	Math Supervisor	1/23/06	yes	2/13/07
(Andre Sampson)	Caucasian	36 ½ years	School Improvement Director	11/1/06	yes	No Revisions
(Julia Davidson)	African-American	36 years	Human Resource Director	11/1/06	yes	No Revisions
(Thomas Porter)	African-American	32 ½ years	Superintendent	11/5/06	yes	2/12/07
(Aundrea Thompson)	African-American	21 years	Sixth Grade Reading Teacher	12/7/06	yes	No Revisions
(Dorothy Houser)	Caucasian	21 years	Literacy Supervisor	12/13/06	yes	2/7/07
(Cassandra Hall)	African-American	19 ½ years	External Funds Director	12/15/06	yes	2/27/07
(Denise Foyer)	Caucasian	28 years	Treasurer	12/15/06	yes	No Revisions
(Sylvia Smith)	African-American	31 years	Superintendent (Assistant Superintendent during time frame of study)	3/27/07	yes	No Revisions
(Jaimie Jones)	Caucasian	21 years	Sixth Grade Reading Teacher	6/4/07	yes	No Revisions

Appendix E

Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent

This informed consent form is being presented to interviewees in relation to the research for a doctoral dissertation about the effects of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) on an urban middle school's strategies to improve student achievement.

The passage of NCLB has called on states, local school districts, and Title I schools to implement major revisions in their approaches to improving school achievement.

The purpose of the study is to examine some of the changes in an urban middle school's strategies to promote student achievement at the school.

The study will use key-informant, standardized interviews of administrators and teachers who have been involved with the strategies used to improve student achievement at Hayes Middle School from 1998-2004.

The 1 to 1 ½ hour interview will be recorded and the responses to the structured questions transcribed. After the interview is transcribed, it will be presented to the interviewee for clarity, corrected, if necessary, and a final copy signed by the interviewee to substantiate validity.

The benefits of the interviewee's participation will be to help the public at large.

The interviewee will not be named within the dissertation, but there will be a general description of the interviewee's position/s or assignments and experience in the district or building and an explanation as to why they were chosen.

The interviewee's participation is voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty and the interviewee may discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

If there are any questions about the rights as a participant, contact Dr. Charles Vergon of Youngtown State University at 330-941-1574 or the Youngstown State University Subjects Committee office at 330-742-2377.

After reading the explanation of the research, confidentiality provisions, and the explanation of voluntary participation, if you agree to be interviewed, please sign and date below.

You will be asked to provide this signed form to the researcher or individual interviewing you.

Interviewee: Please print name_____

Please sign_____

Date of Signature_____

Appendix F

Human Research Committee Approval

Youngstown
STATE UNIVERSITY

One University Plaza, Youngstown, Ohio 44555
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Office of the Dean
330.941.3091
Fax 330.941.1580
graduateschool@cc.ysu.edu

August 10, 2005

Dr. Chuck Vergon, Principal Investigator
Ms. Carol L. Staten, Co-investigator
Department of Educational Administration, Research, and Foundations
UNIVERSITY

RE: HSRC PROTOCOL NUMBER: 05-2006
        PROTOCOL TITLE: The Affects of the Accountability Provisions of the No
                           Child Left Behind Act on an Urban Middle School's
                           Strategies to Improve Student Achievement

Dear Dr. Vergon and Ms. Staten:

The Human Subjects Research Committee of Youngstown State University has reviewed the
aforementioned protocol, and has approved it with the following conditions:

    (1)   the Investigator should include the contact information for the Office of Grants
          and Sponsored programs on the Consent Form;

    (2)   the Investigator should identify the qualifications of the independent interviewer;

    (3)   the Investigator should provide a start and end date for the project;

    (4)   the Investigator should separate the approval signature from the transcript to
          enhance confidentiality. It was suggested a second signature line could be placed
          at the bottom of the Informed Consent Form for this purpose.

Please submit the aforementioned materials, where applicable, to Cheryl Coy, Secretary, Office
of Grants and Sponsored Programs, 357 Tod Hall, **before** initiating your project.

Any changes in your research activity should be promptly reported to the Human Subjects
Research Committee and may not be initiated without HSRC approval except where necessary to
eliminate hazard to human subjects. Any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects
should also be promptly reported to the Human Subjects Research Committee. Best wishes in the
conduct of your study.

Sincerely,

Peter J. Kasvinsky
Dean, School of Graduate Studies
Research Compliance Officer

c: Dr. Robert Beebe, Chair
        Department of Educational Administration, Research, and Foundations

www.ysu.edu YSU

Appendix G

Recommendations for School Leaders

Recommendations for School Leaders

1. *AYP helped set school's agendas but may not be a fair measure of school effectiveness.*

    Recommendations:

    a. Battle for Kids (2006) defines "Value added" as a tool that measures a student's progress between two points of time; does not relate to a student's family background; and compares a student's performance to their own prior performance.

        1) This would be a more comprehensive picture of a school's effectiveness in raising student achievement.

        2) It may be to a state's advantage to embrace "value added".

    b. Use state "high stakes tests" to gather data about students before they enter the middle grades.

        1) This can be done by asking the feeder school/s to forward their test results to the receiving school.

        2) Besides this data, use any standardized tests or teacher may assessment tool to generate information in advance so that student can be matched with the teacher that may help them the most.

2. *Data driven decisions enhance instruction but may narrow the curriculum.*

    Recommendations

    a. Use the data generated carefully.

    b. Look at the data and cipher what information can be used for students who may be academically challenged.

    c. Trust teachers to develop interventions strategies.

    d. Do not allow testing to redefine what it means to be educated or narrow the curriculum.

3. *Flexibility of funds contributes to school choice.*

    Recommendations

    a. Your objective is to promote the school so that students will not transfer to other

    schools or get students to return.

       1) Promote the positives of the school through correspondence throughout your school community.

       2) Keep the school visible by holding community nights, performing community projects and showcase the academic success of the school.

       3) Do things that show the school is a positive force in the community.

4. *HQT promoted teacher growth but other teacher qualities matter too.*

    Recommendations

    a. Departmentalize the grade level teaching staff so that if they have to get further   training they are only concentrating on one academic area to become HQT in.

    b. Have weekly meetings to go over specific academic and social strategies that are proven to work with students of poverty.

5. *School relationships and school culture can't be legislated.*

    Recommendations

a. Implement programs that promote trust with teachers.

b. Develop programs and practices that promote trust between all staff, not just teachers.

c. Empower parents and students to help make decisions in the building to dispel the myth that the staff is on a higher level then they are and they have all of the solutions