10-17-2019

An evaluation of the efficacy of implementing citizenship-readiness standards in the elementary social studies curriculum: A case study of a school district in New Jersey

Dezoray Moore
Rowan University

AN EVALATION OF THE EFFICACY OF IMPLEMENTING CITZENSHIP-READINESS STANDARDS IN THE ELEMENTARY SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM: A CASE STUDY OF A SCHOOL DISTRICT IN NEW JERSEY

by

Dezoray Moore

A Dissertation

Submitted to the
Department of Educational Leadership
College of Education
In partial fulfillment of the requirement
For the degree of
Doctor of Education
at
Rowan University
February 25, 2019

Dissertation Chair: Hector Rios, Ph.D.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation study to my family. Your desire for me to pursue this venture is greatly appreciated. Thank you all for your continued support and having the conviction and belief of my educational pursuit coming to fruition.

Acknowledgments

It is with great honor and appreciation to thank and recognize Dr. Hector Rios for his confidence in me and encouraging my efforts with this endeavor. This could have not been done without his assistance, guidance, and expertise. I would like to thank and Dr. Martha Viator and Dr. Raymond Foley for serving on my research committee and providing valuable insights. It has been a long journey and the destination is very rewarding. I again thank the professors for undertaking this study and I will definitely take their advice they provided me to use in my future professional endeavors.

I would like to thank my friends and colleagues for motivating and supporting me with my ambition to pursue my educational advancement.

Abstract

Dezoray Moore
AN EVALATION OF THE EFFICACY OF IMPLEMENTING CITZENSHIP-
READINESS STANDARDS IN THE ELEMENTARY SOCIAL STUDIES
CURRICULUM: A CASE STUDY OF A SCHOOL DISTRICT IN NEW JERSEY
2018-2019
Hector Rios, Ph.D.
Doctor of Education

This study examined how elementary schools prepared students to become lifelong learners as it relates to meeting citizenship readiness initiatives. Traditionally, schools use standardized assessments aligned with college- and career-readiness standards to measure student achievement in the reading, writing, and mathematics curricula. This study sought to examine alternative assessments aligned with citizenship-readiness standards to measure student achievement in the elementary social studies curriculum. A qualitative case study using five elementary school principals to obtain their perceptions of the elementary social studies curriculum was highlighted. An extensive analysis of common themes emerged concluding the need for educators to provide students with real-world, authentic learning opportunities that are measured by performance-based, project-based, and portfolio-based assessments as alternatives to standardized assessments. Implications and recommendations for preparing elementary students for citizenship readiness within a social studies context were discussed in depth.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents (Continued)

Table of Contents (Continued)

Table of Contents (Continued)

List of Figures

List of Tables

Chapter 1

Introduction

Schools are preparing students for college and career readiness;
are they preparing students for citizenship readiness?

Background of the Problem

For years, there has been a major trend for schools to greatly focus their attention

on reading, mathematics, and science to better prepare students for taking standardized

tests (Phelps, 1998, 2005). Many of these tests claim to assess students' readiness for

college and careers in the 21st century (Conley, 2010). Although there is a great

emphasis to prepare students to become successful in educational institutions and in the

workplace, it is crucial that they are also prepared to become productive, responsible, and

educated in their society (Hirsch, 2009). Therefore, schools should not only be charged

with preparing students for college and careers but also active and productive citizenship,

as well (Herctog, 2012; Resor, 2019).

The Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) along with

more than two dozen major education organizations formed a coalition and made

recommendations for college, career, and citizenship readiness (ASCD, n.d.). In its

consensus statement to Congress, the coalition recommended the following:

> College, career, and citizenship readiness is not limited to proficiency in reading
> and math, but includes all disciplines and the comprehensive knowledge and skills
> required of students after high school graduation. We believe each student must
> receive equal access to a credible and comprehensive education that includes
> instruction in reading, math, science, arts, history, civics, government, economics,
> foreign languages, geography, health education, and physical education (par. 1).

> Each of these disciplines is crucial to a student's learning in its own right, and
> none should be considered more important than another. Indeed, the

1

interrelationship also depends on a student's physical and mental well-being. Finally, training in critical and creative thinking, communication, and collaboration is necessary for students to succeed in the increasingly global marketplace and in our own complex and ever-changing society (par. 4).

The Partnership for 21st Century Learning (P21, n.d.) highlights:

Readiness for the 21st century must include college, career, AND citizenship. Each one is equally important to ensuring and shaping a child's successful future. We need to support our kids as they learn how to succeed, lead and thrive in the 21st century. Our children need high quality education that inspires them and prepares them for real-life challenges of today's world (p. 3).

The National Council for the Social Studies states (NCSS, 2013a):

In the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for social studies state standards, the call for students to become more prepared for the challenges of college and career is united with a third critical element: Preparation for civic life, advocates of citizenship education cross the political spectrum, but they are bound by a common belief that our democratic republic will not sustain unless students are aware of their changing cultural and physical environments; know the past; read, write, and think deeply; and act in ways that promote the common good…(p. 5).

Larger context. For the past several years, the United States continues to drop in ranking globally in reading, mathematics, and science (OECD, 2013). The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) first implemented the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2000, in which it tracks trends every three years in national performance and assess college- and career-readiness of 15-year-old students from several countries around the world (OECD, 2012). The survey was implemented in 43 countries in the 1st assessment in 2000, in 41 countries in the 2nd assessment in 2003, in 57 countries in the 3rd assessment in 2006, 62 countries in the 4th

assessment in 2009 and 65 countries in the 5th assessment in 2012. Tests are typically administered to between 4,500 and 10,000 students in each country (OECD, 2013).

PISA assesses how far students near the end of compulsory education have acquired some of the knowledge and skills that are essential for full participation in society. In all cycles, the domains of reading, mathematical and scientific literacy are covered not merely in terms of mastery of the school curriculum, but in terms of important knowledge and skills needed in adult life (OECD, 2013). Finland, Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, China are consistent high-performers on the PISA. According to the latest results, Shanghai, China debuted as the highest scoring participant globally in 2009 and continued its ranking status in 2012 in all three categories (reading, mathematics, and science). The OECD's rankings have U.S. students in 24th place in reading literacy, 36th place in mathematics, and 28th place in science among OECD member and partner countries.

Former Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, expressed his concerns regarding the PISA results: "Unfortunately, the 2009 PISA results show American students are poorly prepared to compete in today's knowledge economy" (USDOE, 2010b). He also mentioned "the United States has fallen from 1st place to 9th place in the proportion of young people with college degrees (USDOE, 2012). President Obama envisioned a national goal of regaining 1st place by 2020 (USDOE, 2012).

To combat this mediocre performance, the United States Department of Education (USDOE) in its Blueprint for Reform (2010a) has specified the great need for schools meeting college- and career-readiness standards in the reauthorization of the Elementary & Secondary Education Act (ESEA). It emphasizes that schools must put in place

3

comprehensive plans to ensure that students are well prepared to enter higher education and the workforce after their postsecondary schooling. Also, students must acquire the necessary skill sets to compete globally. Each state department of education has taken on the challenge of preparing its students with college- and career-readiness goals. Many states have come to recognize the great need for focusing on students' readiness after postsecondary education (NGA, 2012).

Local context. The New Jersey Department of Education's (NJDOE) College and Career Readiness Taskforce report (NJDOE, 2011) states, "While New Jersey boasts one of the nation's highest graduation rate, a distressingly high percentage of those who do graduate are unprepared for success" (p.3). In the report, it addresses major concerns relating to college and career readiness of New Jersey students.

In New Jersey, social studies is the only core subject in which students are not evaluated on the state's standardized assessment. Therefore, there is no formal standardized data to measure students' performance. There is a popular belief that a great amount of teachers are limiting the amount of instructional time for social studies to increase more time to the tested subjects—reading, writing, mathematics, and science (Heafner & Groce, 2007; Little et al, 2007). Due to the recent drop of American students' performance on high-stakes tests, there has been a heightened shift of focus to address the declining outcomes in the tested subjects. "In recent years, as schools confront countless other mandates, the civic mission of U.S. education has slipped in priority" (P21, 2014).

Approach to change. As schools focus on reading, mathematics, and science to prepare students for college and career readiness, the social studies discipline can be a

4

great start to ready students for becoming productive citizens into adulthood (Heafner & Groce, 2007; Little et al, 2007).

This study seeks to examine citizenship readiness in the elementary social studies curriculum. The social studies curriculum will be the focus for readying students for active and productive citizenship.   It is important that this research study is conducted to investigate the limited research on the extent to which New Jersey educators are implementing the social studies curriculum with fidelity by implementing citizenship-readiness standards and explain the perceptions of decreased instructional time.

Statement of the Problem

In the field of education, much consideration is given to college and career readiness and limited attention to citizenship readiness. Due to funding and standardized testing in the major academic disciplines, the social studies discipline has a lesser role in students' learning (Fitchett & Heafner, 2010). The diminished attention to social studies education began with the standards and testing movement reported by (McGuire, 2007).

According to a report by the Center on Education Policy (CED), it highlighted since the enactment of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) that 44 percent of the school districts surveyed have reduced time for social studies (McMurren, 2007). The percentage increased to 51 percent in districts with "failing schools" (McMurren, 2007). Consequently, students are not sufficiently learning important social studies skills and concepts the curriculum has to offer (NCSS, 2009).

The USDOE and many state departments of education do not require a standardized assessment in social studies (Grant & VanSledright, 2014).   Although there is a greater focus on the high-priority tested disciplines, great consideration to the social

5

studies curriculum is needed as well. According to the National Council of Social

Studies (NCSS), most states do not have a standardized process for evaluating students'

skills and knowledge for social studies (2009). The federal government only requires all

states to assess every student in reading and mathematics (USDOE, 2010a). Starting with

the 2007-2008 school year, states were required for the first time to have in place science

assessments to be administered at least once during grades 3-5, grades 6-9; and grades

10-12 (USDOE, 2010a). In New Jersey, students are required to take a standardized

assessment for science in fourth and eighth grades and biology in the 10-12 grade band

(NJDOE, 2012a). Also, social studies is the only core subject in New Jersey which

students are not evaluated on the state's standardized assessment (NJDOE, 2012a).

Therefore there is no formal, standardized data to measure students' performance.

Through the adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), states have

the option to provide end-year courses in social studies (NJDOE, 2012b). To date, New

Jersey has not provided any end-year course requirements for social studies (NJDOE,

2012b). Other tested subjects, such as, English language arts, mathematics, and science

are assessed the state standardized assessment—Partnership for Assessment of Readiness

for College and Careers (PARCC, 2015). For the purpose of this study, citizenship-

readiness will be used as the basis to assess student achievement in the elementary social

studies curriculum.

Although NAEP provides rigorous data for assessing students in civics,

economics, geography, and history, it is limited to only national results (assessing select

states) as there is no formal data results for all of the states (Grissmer, Flanagan, Kawata,

& Williamson, 2000). Many educational experts express that there is no need for

6

additional standardized assessments as they hold the belief of students are already being over tested (Fitchett, P. G. & Heafner 2010). This viewpoint falls short as there is a great need for all students to be assessed on student performance in all of the disciplines. Although many researchers have purported the negative effects of standardized assessments, their findings are based only on limited studies directly related to traditional paper and pencil assessments. Alternative assessments such as performance-based assessments and assessment portfolios could be used as a means to replace the traditional standardized assessments (Archibald & Newman, 1988).

Social studies teachers are charged with the task of ensuring that young scholars are provided with the skills, knowledge, and dispositions they will need in school, work, community, and life (Malone & Pederson, 2009). Most social studies educators agree that the present state of the elementary social studies curriculum is inherently inadequate (Wade, 2002). By rethinking approaches to the social studies curriculum, teachers can begin to implement motivating, challenging, and thought-provoking social studies curricula, which in turn will provide teachers with a better means of instructing and assessing students. This will provide students with a thorough and rigorous social studies curriculum which in turn lead to productive learning experiences.

Purpose of the Study

As stated by Krathwohl & Smith (2005), "dissertation proposals provide a justification for pursuing the proposed inquiry" (p. 22). Evaluating the efficacy of the elementary social studies curriculum by using the school's mission and curriculum implementation to measure student achievement through citizenship-readiness standards is the dissertation proposal sought for further exploration. Most people associate student achievement

7

through the means of standardized assessment (Gronlund, 1998; Phelps, 2005; Waugh & Gronlund, 2013). However, for the purpose of this study, student achievement will be measured through alternative assessments that integrate citizenship-readiness standards in the social studies curriculum. College, career, and citizenship readiness are highly associated at the secondary level. This study will examine citizenship readiness at the elementary level.

This study seeks to examine the efficacy of the social studies curriculum at five elementary schools in a school district located in New Jersey. Many educators concentrate their efforts on implementing college- and career-readiness standards at the secondary level particularly high schools and then focusing their attention at the middle school level (Dougherty, 2013; Perez, 2014). More has to be done with ensuring that students, at all grade levels, are engaged with citizenship-readiness opportunities. To prepare our students with the most comprehensive education and to be globally competitive, there is a need to introduce college-, career-, and citizenship-readiness standards at the most fundamental level—the elementary level (Achieve, College Summit, NAESP & NASSP, 2013).

Greater attention at the elementary schools is paramount. So often educators take for granted what young scholars can do. However, elementary students rise to the occasion every time once educators introduce key skills and concepts to them. This sentiment is reflected through the changes of the New Jersey's curriculum standards being aligned with the Common Core State Standards (NGA CCSSO, 2010). Students are expected to master more rigorous standards at earlier grade levels.

8

While most state departments of education use reading, writing, mathematics, and science as the basis for determining if students are adequately prepared for college and career after postsecondary education, this research study seeks to examine the use of social studies as the basis for determining if students are adequately prepared for citizenship.

The purpose of this research study is to examine the relationship of the school's mission and curriculum implementation to student achievement. By doing so, this study will determine the extent to which the schools are implementing citizenship-readiness standards in the social studies curriculum with fidelity. Although there has been extensive research on curriculum implementation (Beyer & Apple, 1998; Fullan & Promfret, 1977; Huntley, 2009), little research has addressed the problem inherent in qualitative research of the relationship of the school's mission and curriculum implementation in the field of social studies. Until we see how these patterns occur in the educational environment, we cannot know whether they influence student achievement. It is important that this research study takes place to eradicate the gaps in the existing field of knowledge relating to citizenship readiness.

Research Questions

This research inquiry seeks to answer the question to what extent is there a relationship between the school's mission and curriculum implementation to student achievement. Four sub-questions will be used. (1) Are the elementary schools communicating citizenship readiness in their mission? This question will explore the schools' mission—***Purpose*** (strategic thinking). (2) Are the elementary schools featuring citizenship-readiness standards in the social studies curriculum? This question will

9

explore the schools' planning and preparation routines—***Process*** (strategic planning). (3) Are the elementary schools implementing citizenship-readiness standards in the social studies curriculum? This question will explore the schools' instructional methods—***Practices*** (strategic teaching). (4) Are the elementary school students on target for citizenship? This question will explore the schools' student achievement outcomes—***Product*** (systematic results). The elementary school administrators' perceptions of the social studies curriculum will be highlighted as questions will be posed in a qualitative interview protocol.

<u>Essential Question</u>

- To what extent is there a relationship between the school's mission and social studies curriculum implementation to student achievement?

<u>Sub-questions</u>

- Are the elementary schools communicating citizenship readiness in their mission? (**Purpose**—strategic thinking)
- Are the elementary schools featuring citizenship-readiness standards in their social studies curriculum? (**Process**—strategic planning)
- Are the elementary schools implementing citizenship-readiness standards in their social studies curriculum? (**Practice**—strategic teaching)
- Are the elementary schools' students on target for citizenship? (**Product**—systematic results)

Overview of Research Methods

The design of the research question determines the approach used for a research study (Creswell, 2007). A case study will be the qualitative research design used for this study. This design was selected to acquire an in-depth understanding of the elementary school principals' perceived perceptions of the elementary social studies curriculum. A purposeful sampling of five elementary school principals will be conducted and each principal will be interviewed using an open-ended questionnaire. A cross-sectional

10

document collection using mission statements, learning standards, curriculum guides, textbooks, and class schedules will be analyzed. A qualitative codebook will be kept to collect and analyze the data. The qualitative data will be employed to establish "patterns and themes" (Creswell, 2007, p. 51).

Significance of the Study

Although there is a great emphasis to prepare students to become successful in educational institutions and in the workplace, it is crucial that they are, also, prepared to be productive, responsible, and educated in their society (Hirsch, 2009). Therefore, schools should be charged with preparing students not only for college and career readiness, but also citizenship readiness (Herctog, 2012; Resor, 2019). The Partnership for 21st Century Learning (2015) recognizes that "all learners need educational experiences in school and beyond, from cradle to career, to build knowledge and skills for success in a globally and digitally interconnected world" (p. 9). As schools focus on reading, writing, mathematics, and science to prepare students for college and career readiness, the social studies discipline can be a great start for preparing young scholars for citizenship readiness.

Ultimately, this research study will make an important contribution of new knowledge to the currently established body of work. In the field of education, curriculum implementation has a great dominance in research inquiry. It is also increasingly affecting curriculum and instructional policies (Brickell & Paul, 2005). These educational policies have demonstrated great importance associated with classroom instruction and practices (Fullan & Promfret, 1977). This study will extend the current knowledge of curriculum implementation. The new knowledge will result in

11

expanding inquiry which will benefit the field of education by having a basis of determining if the relationship of the school's mission and curriculum implementation in the field of social studies will influence student achievement. By doing so, educators can make significant decisions informing policy and practice which will ultimately result in citizenship readiness.

Definition of Key Terms

The literature is expansive in what is college and career readiness. Being college and career ready means that students will leave high schools with the knowledge and skills they need—whether they choose college, trade school, or a highly skilled job in the 21st century workplace (Burris & Garrity, 2012). There are many educational consortiums that use the rhetoric of college and career readiness. Achieve, ACT, Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSS), National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), U. S. Department of Education (USDOE) are among the notable ones. For the purpose of this study; college, career, and citizenship readiness will be defined as follows:

College readiness. "To be college ready means being prepared to enter and succeed in any postsecondary education or training experience, including study at two- and four-year institutions leading to a postsecondary credential (i.e., a certificate, license, associates or bachelor's degree) without the need for remedial coursework" (NJDOE, 2012b).

Career readiness. "To be career ready means that a high school graduate possesses not only the academic skills that employees need to be successful, but also both

12

the technical skills, (i.e., those that are necessary for a specific job function), and 21st Century employability skills, (i.e., interpersonal skills, creativity and innovation, work ethics and personal responsibility, global and social awareness, etc.) that are necessary for a successful career" (NJDOE, 2012b).

Citizenship readiness. "Citizenship today means more than understanding the roles of government and voting in elections. It means making sense of local, national, and global events, trends and information, and acting safely, responsibly and ethically in online forums. Citizenship requires a wide range of knowledge, 21st century skills and experiences for effective and productive participation in the democratic process, community life, education and workplaces" (P21, 2014).

Limitations & Delimitations

I must gain approval by the human-subjects review board before I begin my research study. Completion of training on human subjects should provide clearance to this requirement. I am aware that I must treat all participants in a professional and ethical manner and secure all confidential records relating to their responses and experiences. Because I am the sole researcher, I must overcome any biases relating to my preconceived perceptions.

This study is limited to a small population size, as five elementary school principals in a New Jersey school district will be used to explore their perceived perceptions of citizenship readiness in their school environments. Since I will be using a small sample size, I must make use of transferability; credibility, dependability; and confirmability as a means of ensuring test measures during the qualitative phase.

13

It is recognized that curriculum, instruction, and assessment has a symbiotic relationship with one another. This research will have a keen emphasis on curriculum and discuss its relationship with instruction and assessment on a minimal level.

14

Chapter 2

Literary Review

There is little empirical research that discusses how schools prepare young students to become lifelong learners as it relates to them meeting citizenship-readiness standards. First, this research study will discuss how elementary schools communicate their mission in the context of educational purposes. Each principal will discuss the significance of citizenship readiness in his or her school's mission statement. Next, this research study will illuminate curriculum implementation in the context of school practices. Each principal will discuss his or her school's practices as it relates to implementing citizenship readiness standards in the social studies curriculum. Finally, student achievement will be examined in the context of product. Each principal will discuss students achieving citizenship-readiness standards.

School Mission

Philosophy helps answer what are the school's purposes, aims, goals, and objectives. John Dewey (1916) contends that "philosophy may…be defined as the general theory of education…" and that "the business of philosophy is to provide [the framework] for the aims and methods" of schools (pp. 383-384).

The expectation for education is common for many stakeholders and that is improving the process of education, increasing student achievement, developing better and productive citizens, and advancing society (Ornstein & Behar-Horestein, 1999). Dewey (1916) suggests that schools not only want "to make [good] citizens and workers" but also they ultimately want "to make human beings who will live to the fullest" (pp.

15

383-384). The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2014) suggests "educational leaders should integrate citizenship into school and district's mission statements" (p. 19).

Educational purposes. The Innovation Lab Network (INL) in partnership with the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO, 2013) asserts that, "[c]itizenship readiness, or preparing America's youth to be contributing members of the large society, is a fundamental mission of public schools" (p. 12). School and colleges are calling on employers, educational policy makers and the like to develop 21st century skills, such as teamwork, problem-solving, and self-management that are seen as valuable for success in the workplace, citizenship, and family life (Hilton, 2015).

Ken Kay (2009), founding president of the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21), states that the "advocacy organization made up of almost 40 education, policy, and business organizations, [have collaborated for over 15] years identifying and validating the essential skills that all students need to succeed as citizens and workers in the 21st century" (p. 43). All students need a rigorous education to thrive in a complex, connected, and constantly changing world. However, rigor must be redefined for the 21st century. Mastery of core academic subjects is a necessary, but no longer sufficient. Equally important are competencies in the 21st century skills—these skills include—critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration, creativity, financial and health literacy, and global awareness (Kay, 2009).

The idea of hands-on learning linking with academics is not a new one as evident of John Dewey's life work of advocating for education through experience at the turn of the last century. Unfortunately, not many schools are offering a school-wide approach to the integrated model and experiential learning; they typically resort to limiting instruction

16

to textbooks, worksheets, and lectures. Yet, students who engage in experiences that

connect school learning juxtapose to the real world are more likely to stay in school and

enrich chances they will be college, career, and citizenship ready (Rogers-Chapman &

Darling-Hammond, 2013).
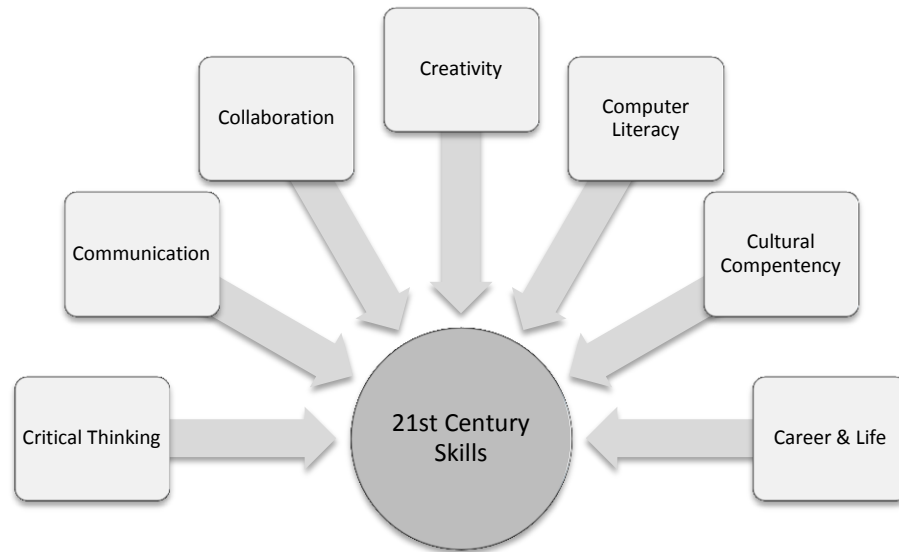
Figure 1. 21st Century Skills.

It is a good habit for schools to offer quality citizenship experiences to students by

promoting partnerships with their communities and the CCSSO (2013) expounds:

> As students are preparing for college and career, schools can provide positive
> experiences that develop understandings about the responsibility to care for one
> another, to contribute to the community, to behave ethically, and to use the
> knowledge and capacities they are developing to do good. Civic learning or
> literacy is essential if students are to develop capacity to reflect on and respond to
> challenges in the world around them (p. 12.).

The Partnership for 21st Century Learning Skills (2014) advocates the following for

citizenship readiness:

17

Citizenship today means more than understanding the roles of government and voting in elections. It means making sense of local, national, and global events, trends and information, and acting safely, responsibly and ethically in online forums. Citizenship requires a wide range of knowledge, 21st century skills and experiences for effective and productive participation in the democratic process, community life, education and workplaces (p. 5).

In its College and Career Readiness Taskforce report (NJDOE, 2012b), the New Jersey Department of Education states:

The core goal of New Jersey's education system is to ensure that all children, regardless of background or economic circumstances, graduate from high school ready for success in life (p.3).

Schools must act now--deliberately and purposely--to prepare young scholars for citizenship readiness so they are prepared to effectively participate in school, work, community, and life. (P21, 2014)

Curriculum Implementation

Curriculum implementation, along with the school mission and student achievement, is one of the core elements of this research study. A comprehensive discussion on curriculum, building on its foundational progression of curriculum theory, curriculum context, curriculum dissonance, curriculum implementation, curriculum reform, and curriculum leadership then onto a discussion on its conclusive processes of the elementary social studies curriculum will ensue.

Curriculum theory. Curriculum theory is a form of practical–theoretical reason that came into the fold in the United States in the 1920s (Pinar, 2004; Walker & Soltis, 2004). Students understanding the subject, in which, they are studying is an underpinning of curriculum theory (Pinar, 2004). Furthermore, it entails the interdisciplinary study of the educational experience. Curriculum theory is a "complex field of scholarly inquiry

18

within the broad field of education that endeavors to understand curriculum across the school subjects and academic disciplines (Pinar, 2004, p. 21).

Curriculum context. The meaning of curriculum is to run the course in the Latin infinitive form, or, in the gerund form, the running of the course (Pinar, 2004). The Partnership for 21st Century Learning (2009) suggests the following for curriculum and learning:

> 21st Century Curriculum and Instruction teaches and embeds 21st century skills in the context of core subjects and 21st century interdisciplinary themes, focusing on providing opportunities for applying 21st century skills across content areas and for competency-based approach to learning. Such an approach to pedagogy and instruction enables innovative learning methods that integrate the use of supportive technologies, inquiry-and problem-based approaches, and higher-order thinking skills and it encourages the integration of community resources beyond school walls.

Curriculum focus on "the what" and "the how" of teaching children. In 1918, Franklin Bobbitt wrote *The Curriculum.* It was the first book written on curriculum and set the tone and established the nature of the field of curriculum (Molnar & Zahorik, 1977). Decades later, Ralph W. Tyler (1969) developed the model of curriculum planning by identifying four fundamental questions concerning curriculum and instruction: (1) What educational purposes should the school seek to attain? (2) What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain the purposes? (3) How can these educational experiences be effectively organized? (4) How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained? This research study will discuss how elementary schools communicate their mission in the context of education purposes and then move on to examine if the social studies curriculum establishes instructional practices to meet the prescribed educational purposes.

19

A 21st century skills curriculum need to be adopted by schools to meet the needs of the 21st century learner along with employing methods of instruction that integrate innovative research-proven teaching strategies, modern learning technologies, and real-world resources and content (P21, 2009, Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). Tyler (1969) recognized the importance of developing curricula that were practical and useful, yet responsive to the needs of both individual students and society. The progressive movement between the 1890s and the 1920s played an important role for advocating for curriculum for accomplishing societal goals (Posner, 2004). John Dewey, Francis Parker, William Heard Kilpatrick, Margaret Schurz, and Elizabeth Peabody were key architects of the progressive movement (Posner, 2004). Ida B. Wells, Booker T. Washington, and W.E.B. DuBois were notable African Americans leaders in the movement (Posner, 2004).

The movement's intent had an experiential focus; it emphasized learning by doing and promoting education for social responsibility and democracy (Posner, 2004). The progressives worked hard to reform and modernized schools at the local level. Dewey's notable publications on progressive education included *My Pedagogic Creed* (1897), *The School and Society* (1899), *The Child and the Curriculum* (1902), *Democracy and Education* (1916), and *Experience and Education* (1938). Democracy and social reform was a major theme discussed in Dewey's (1899, 1916) writings on education. Dewey (1897, 1902, & 1938), commonly known as the "father of the progressive education movement," believed that students thrive in an environment where they are allowed to experience and interact with the curriculum, and all students should have the opportunity to take part in their own learning.

20

Curriculum dissonance. During their foundational years, young scholars will need to navigate educational, personal, and civic decisions in order to accomplish 21st century skills instrumental for being prepared for the real world (P21, 2006). Although educational stakeholders set out to put in place curricula to meet this lofty goal, often times there are barriers that impede the intentions. At times, there can be great inconsistency to a curriculum and typically, there is little consistency with the official curriculum (written curriculum), operational curriculum (taught curriculum), and tested curriculum (district benchmarks and standardized assessments).

The intended (official) curriculum. A curriculum is a written document which delineates what teachers should teach students; this is known as the official, intended curriculum in the field of education (Klein, 1991). It is explicit and crafted carefully to deliberately plan, teach, and evaluate at any level of the curriculum decision process. It is crucial that schools and districts spearhead continuous efforts to ensure that 21st century skills are strategically integrated in curriculum and educational programs if they are truly committed to citizenship readiness (Craig, 2012).

Table 1

21st Century Skills in Context

Ways of Thinking	Ways of Interacting with Others	Ways of Utilizing Tools for Learning and Working	Ways of Living in the World
Critical Thinking	Communication	Communications	Citizenship
Problem-Solving	Collaboration	Technology	Career
Creativity		Information	Life
Decision-Making		Media	Personal

21

Table 1 (continued)

	Responsibility
Learning	Social
	Responsibility

The official curriculum details the scope and sequence charts, syllabi, curriculum guides, course outlines, standards, and lists of objectives (Posner, 2004). "Its purpose is to give teachers a basis for planning lessons and evaluating students and administrators a basis for supervising teachers and holding them accountable for their practices and results" (Posner, 2004, p. 12).

The attained (operational) curriculum. The operational curriculum consists of what is actually taught by the teacher (Posner, 2004). At times, the operational curriculum may differ from the intended curriculum. When this takes place, there are several reasons given that rationalizes why the intended curriculum is not implemented. Often times, teachers implement curriculum initiatives based on their knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes (Posner, 2004).

No matter how much educators implement what a detailed curriculum prescribes, other factors may materialize preventing intentions (Walker and Soltis, 2004). The hidden curriculum, or educational practices that may or may not support the planned curriculum, stifles the implementation of the intended curriculum (Bradley, 2004). Also, the hidden curriculum can be part of the school rules that all students know but were never explicitly taught (Ylimaki, 2011).

22

As postulated in most school curricula, through their mission statements, the aims of the school is to educate the whole child by developing them academically, socially, and emotionally (Stemler & Bebell, 2012; Wiggins & McTighe, 2007). However, there are many desirable things students could learn, more than schools have time to teach them (Ornstein & Behar-Horenstein, 1999). Many schools are faced with the demands of educating the whole child by meeting their needs but realize that some curricula have to be sacrificed at the expense of others due to lack of time, personnel, and funding to implement them all (Ornstein & Behar-Horenstein, 1999). In recent years, as schools confront countless other federal, state, and district mandates, the civic mission of U. S. education has slipped in priority lessening the reality of citizenship readiness expectations being accomplished for young scholars (P21, 2014).

Fidelity of curriculum implementation. The process of moving from the planned curriculum to instruction is called curriculum implementation; in its general sense, curriculum implementation merely means putting the curriculum to work (Beauchamp, 1961; Bradley, 2004). Teaching refers to the learning activities, inside and outside of the classroom environment, that are specifically designed to meet the goals or outcomes of the planned curriculum (Bradley, 2004). Citizenship readiness is one of the most critical outcomes of the teaching and learning process and it is necessary to implement 21st century skills in curriculum and instruction development (P21, 2009). Teachers use the curriculum as a resource in concert with developing their instructional strategies in the classroom. The classroom teacher is the person responsible for implementing the curriculum (Crawford, 2012). A popular affirmation in the field of education is "we inspect what we expect." This rings true because in order for the

23

intended curriculum to be implemented, principals must not monitor it from the office. The only way for principals to know if the intended curriculum is being implemented is for them to go to the classroom and observe (Crawford, 2012).

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21) recommends schools use its five distinct Implementations Guides, which are key support systems represented in the 21st Century Skills Framework—curriculum and instruction, assessment, standards, professional development, and learning environment—to take an aligned, comprehensive approach to meet the challenges educators may have for implementing 21st century skills to produce more capable, successful 21st century students and citizens. (P21, 2009).

The expectation for today's school administrators is for them to take full advantage of a variety of methods to increase student achievement—improved curricula is one such measure (Tallerico, 2012). School leaders must be able to provide genuine supervision and monitor practices to ensure that curriculum implementation in the field of social studies is done with fidelity in order for students to meet citizenship-readiness standards. Curriculum implementation is assessed by determining the degree to which teaching practice meets the criteria of the developers, termed the degree of "fidelity" (Fullan & Promfret, 1977, p. 340).

Fidelity of implementation. For the purpose of this study, fidelity is defined by the description used by Fullan & Promfret (1977) in *Research on Curriculum Implementation*:

> Implementation studies tend to display one of two main orientations. "In the predominant orientation the main intent is to determine the degree of implementation of an innovation in terms of the extent to which actual use of the innovation corresponds to intended or planned use. This is sometimes referred to as the fidelity of implementation. The other main orientation found in some

24

studies is directed to analyzing the complexities of the change process vis-à-vis how innovation become developed/changed etc. during the process of implementation (p. 340).

There is growing consensus among policymakers, elected officials, business professionals, K–12 and postsecondary educators, philanthropists, parents, students and the public that American high schools are not successfully preparing all students for success in the 21st century. Even if every student in the country satisfied traditional metrics, they still would remain woefully under-prepared for success beyond high school (P21, 2006).

When schools implement the foundation of the 7 Cs with fidelity—critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, computer literacy, cultural competency, and college and life—and combine the necessary support systems; such as—standards, curriculum, assessments, instructions, professional developments, and learning environments—students are more engaged in the learning process and graduate better prepared to thrive in school, career, community, and life (Soule & Warrick, 2015). Asking challenging questions and considering varied perspectives are two essential elements unique to citizenship readiness and schools can achieve these goals by focusing on three practices (1) teaching students how to ask questions, (2) exposing students to multiple perspectives, and (3) rooting instruction in local contents (Westeimer, 2017). Given elementary students responsibility through student agency, students make choices about and take responsibility for their own learning goals and progress (Bellanca, 2016). Implementing best practices relating to 21st century learning skills is paramount for young scholars being ready for citizenship.

25

Reading
Writing
Arithmetic

+

Critical Thinking
Communication
Collaboration
Creativity
Computer Literacy
Cultural Compentency
College & Life

=

21st Century Learning
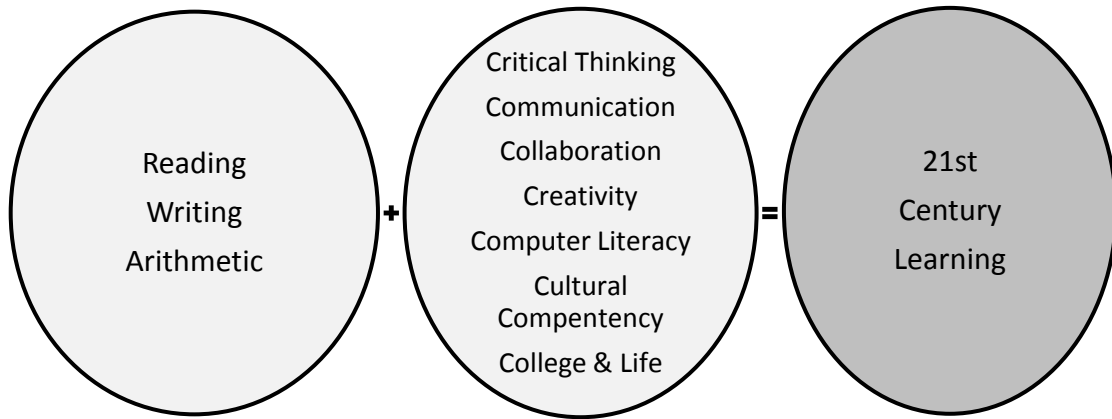
Figure 2. 3Rs + 7Cs = 21st Century Learning.

***Barriers to curriculum implementation*.** "Educational change fails many more

times than it succeeds. One of the main reasons is that implementation—or the process

of achieving something new into practice—has been neglected" (Fullan, 1992).

According to Beauchamp (1961) "[b]arriers to curriculum implementation are related to

the degree to which teachers are committed to the curriculum that has been planned" (p.

135). There is a widespread consensus that the nation's education system is failing to

adequately prepare all students with the essential 21st century knowledge and skills

necessary to succeed in school, career, life and citizenship (P21, 2010).

Fritzer (2002) argues that there are impediments to implementing the social

studies curriculum with fidelity and it may be due to lack of knowledge or interest on the

teacher's part; time constraints of the tested subjects—language arts, math, and science.

He further believes that the social studies curriculum should be implemented with fidelity

in order for every child to have the opportunity to develop his or her knowledge of the

nation and the world, in history, geography, government, and basic economic concepts.

Chapin & Messick (1999) argue reasons why to teach social studies because it is about

26

"people" and the social studies dominate any other areas of curriculum regarding human relations, which are designed to help understand individuals personally or as well as others—from individual families and nearby neighbors to those who live halfway around the world."

Tony Wagner (2008a) posed the following questions as he sought to find if the "best" schools in the United States are preparing students for 21st-century careers and citizenship: (1) In the new global economy, with many jobs being either automated or "off-shored," what skills will students need to build successful careers? (2) What skills will they need to be good citizens? (3) Are these two education goals in conflict?" To further examine these questions, he conducted research beginning with conversations with several hundred business, nonprofit, philanthropic, and educational leaders. He then set out to learn whether United States schools were teaching and testing the skills that matter most. Wagner purported that he observed classrooms in some of the nation's most highly regarded suburban schools to find out whether our "'best" instructional practices were, in fact, good enough for our children's future. Wagner (2008b) shares his findings by stating:

> Rigor for the 21st Century, across the United States, I see schools that are succeeding at making adequate yearly progress but failing our students. Increasingly, there is only one curriculum: test prep" of the hundreds of classes that I've observed in recent years, fewer than 1 in 20 were engaged in instruction designed to teach students to think instead of merely drilling for the test (p. 24).

Wagner (2010) suggests excellent instruction must first be redefined to teach and test what students need by working with colleagues to ensure that all students master the skills they need to succeed as lifelong learners, workers, and citizens. "We know rather

27

definitely then, that when principals pay attention to particular innovations, there will be a greater degree of implementation in the classrooms of the school" (Fullan, 1992, p. 83).

Curriculum reform. Improving schools require stakeholders to look to curriculum reform and redefine "rigor" to encompass not just mastery of core academic subjects, but also mastery of 21st century skills and content (P21, 2006). Especially today since our nation's students are no longer outperforming globally. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2006) asserts the following:

> The nature of *education* is changing internationally. The United States no longer can claim that its educational results are unparalleled. Students around the world significantly outperform even the top American students on comparative assessments that measure competence in 21st century skills (p. 23).

> The nature of *competition* is changing internationally. The United States no longer can claim that innovation and creativity set Americans apart. Innovators around the world rival Americans in developing breakthroughs that fuel economic competitiveness (p. 23).

> The nature of the *workforce, jobs and skill demands* is changing internationally. The United States no longer can claim that the American workforce is uniquely qualified. Workers around the world compete head-to-head with Americans (p. 23).

The ultimate goals for advocates of elementary and secondary school reform and advocates of 21st century skills are the same: to prepare students to succeed and prosper in life, in school and on the job, and keep America competitive internationally. To meet these goals, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2006) believes that schools; district and state advocates of elementary, middle, and high school reform and 21st century skills must work together and leverage one another's ideas and resources.

Curriculum leadership. Typically, the role of the curriculum leader is assigned to a qualified person by an administrator in the school system's personnel department (Bradley, 2004). The most common titles are curriculum director, curriculum specialist,

28

curriculum coordinator, curriculum facilitator, or assistant superintendent for curriculum.

Bradley (2004) further describes who is a curriculum leader:

> The term *curriculum leader* is harder to define than other educational leadership
> position such as superintendent or principal. In fact, it is not always defined by
> one's position. There are times when superintendents, principals, central office
> administrators, or teachers may be thrust into the role of curriculum leader.
> Curriculum leadership is often a role within a broader administrative position, as
> opposed to a positon unto itself (p. 1).

In essence, all stakeholders are responsible for and play a pivotal role in school curricula.
The success of elementary, middle, and high school citizenship-readiness reform depends
upon the collective leadership of numerous entities, from government to education
institutions to advocacy organizations (P21, 2006).

The curriculum leader must be deliberate in his or her actions. The curriculum
leader must be decisive and forceful to ensure that the curriculum program is focused on
the pursuit of what ought to be, not in maintaining the status quo (Bradley, 2004). The
curriculum leader must be the educational specialist, in which, he or she continues to
participate in professional development and keep abreast with the latest content trends
and issues. A non-authoritarian leadership style pertaining to curriculum that promotes
deliberate actions for establishing, maintaining, and, at times when necessary, revising
curriculum is paramount. As a policy maker, as a state leader, as a district or school
administrator, it is important these key stakeholders are planning for the future and
building citizenship-readiness strategies that will solidify the success of young scholars in
order for them to eventually be prepared to meet the challenges, not only in school and
work, but in life (P21, 2009). Ylimaki (2011) states the prerequisites of a curriculum
leader:

29

> Curriculum leaders need to have an ability to "read" and reread sociocultural and political influences and discourses and determine the elements of good sense and opportunities to make their schools and communities better places to work and live as well as to read the potential unjust effects of these broader influences. Further, curriculum leaders must have a strong understanding of curriculum theory, including rational technical models, critical theories, and postmodern theories in order to recognize "new" rational, technical curriculum models or old wine in new bottles. In other words, curriculum leaders must take a critical perspective on curriculum theories as they are shaped by broader social cultural and political influences (p. 20).

Policy makers, states, districts, schools, and citizenship advocates can use the Partnership for 21st Century Framework as a powerful tool for establishing effective citizenship-readiness programs for preparing young scholars for college, career, community, and life (P21, 2014). The educational leaders—teachers as well as administrators—at the building level must make sure comprehensive citizenship-readiness curricula are planned, taught, and eventually evaluated for effectiveness.

Student Achievement

Under the No Child Left Behind Act, (NCLB), enacted in 2002, standardized testing came to dominate the nation's schools and classrooms. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), enacted in 2015, which reauthorized NCLB, only provides opportunities to slightly reduce the number of tests and particularly their high-stakes uses (Neill, 2016a). As a result, administrators and teachers feel enormous pressure to ensure elementary students demonstrate mastery on standardized test due to politicians making test results the most important indicator of school and student performance. Furthermore, schools are forced to mainly focus on curriculum with an emphasis on the tested subjects often compelling teachers to mainly concentrate on teaching to the test. Education

30

increasingly resembles test prep as classroom instructions mirror the multiple-choice/short-answer format (Neill, 2016a).

Standardized tests fail to assess deeper knowledge and understanding, critical thinking, creativity, or the ability to apply knowledge to real-world problems and skills students need to succeed in their adult lives. It is recognized that young scholars will need the deeper knowledge and understanding, critical thinking, creativity, and the ability to apply knowledge to real-world problems to succeed in their adult lives. However, standardized tests fail to adequately assess those skills. Relying on these types of tests are adversely impacting elementary students' learning, student engagement, eroding school quality, and ultimately weaken communities and the nation. As a result of the aforementioned negative effects of standardized tests, educational leaders should be compelled to limit them and provide more opportunities for alternative assessments (Neill, 2016a).

Real-world learning juxtaposed with performance assessments is an excellent metric for measuring citizenship readiness and they provide more information for teaching than standardized assessments (Neill, 2016b). That is why there is a growing trend across the nation of parents, educators, students and their allies mounting strong campaigns to reduce standardized testing, end high-stakes test uses, and replace tests with teacher-controlled performance assessments (Bellanca, 2016).

Types of assessments. There is a paradigm shift in the field of education as it relates to how students should be assessed. Today's assessments are summative, competitive, and/or punitive. Costa and Kellick (2016) points this out by asking three questions to stakeholders:

31

- Do you remember cramming for a mid-term or final exam? Or studying for a unit quiz? (**Assessments were summative**.)
- Do you remember how congratulatory your teachers or parents were when you scored high on your exams? And your friends cheered you—"You aced the test!" (**Assessments were competitive** and only felt good if you were at the top.)
- Do you remember losing points for minor infractions? "If you are tardy for class one more time, you'll lose 10 points." Or, "If you don't pass this course you won't get into college." (**Assessments were punitive.**) (par. 3)

These two notable educational specialists propose that schools move from a deficiency and punitive model of assessment to an asset-based and growth model. This can be done by employing alternatives to assessments—such as—performance activities, real-world projects, oral presentations, interviews, surveys, technology-based assignments, experiments, cumulative portfolios, etc. These types of assessments highly motivate students to learn and are excellent examples to assess young scholars' development of 21sst century skills.

   Alternative assessments. Traditionally, formative evaluations entail paper and pencil or pencil and bubble sheet types of assessments. There are a variety of alternatives to this practice. To assess students' construction of knowledge, educators can have students design portfolios which can help them develop a personalized understanding of the social studies curriculum's learning objectives (Ornstein & Behar-Horenstein, 1999). Engaging elementary students in learning environments that provides opportunities to observe specific learning tasks creates first-hand learning experiences for them. Young scholars can learn much about the practical application of curriculum learning objectives by interviewing, for example, war veterans, civil rights activists, business leaders, legislators, among others. Active learning experiences can play a major role in assessing how students perform.

32

These alternatives to standardized assessments are frequently called performance-based or "authentic" assessments because they engage students in "real-world" tasks, rather than multiple-choice tests, and evaluate them according to criteria that are important for actual performance in a field of work (Wiggins, 1989a, 1989b). Such assessments include oral presentations, debates, and exhibitions, along with collections of students' written products, videotapes of performances and other learning occasions, constructions and models, and their solutions to problems, experiments, or results of scientific and other inquires (Archibald & Newman, 1988). They also include teacher observations and inventories of individual student's work and behavior, as well as of cooperative group work (NAEYC, 1988).

Performance-based Assessments	Project-based Assessments	Portfolio-based Assessments
• Oral Presentations • Technology Presentations • Creative Writing • Service Learning • Student Internships	• Dioramas • Models • Exhibits • Presentation Boards • DBQ Projects	• Sample Work Folders • Technology Portfolios • Reflection Journals • Capstone Projects

Figure 3. Triad Lists of Alternative Assessment Examples.

Much of the rationale for these alterative assessments is based on growing evidence that traditional norm-referenced, multiple-choice tests fail to measure complex cognitive and performance abilities (Ornstein & Behar-Horenstein, 1999). Furthermore, when used for decision making, they encourage instruction that tends to emphasize

decontextualized, rote-oriented tasks imposing low cognitive demands, rather than

meaningful learning (Ornstein & Behar-Horenstein, 1999). It is imperative that students'

learning is balanced and performance is considerably measured by using authentic

assessments, real-world tasks that are creative, engaging, and rigorous (Ferrero, 2006).

Traditional Learning	21st Century Learning
• Standardize Tests • Basic Skills • Ability Grouping • Essay/Research Papers • Subject-matter Disciplines • Chronology/History • Breadth • Academic Mastery • Eurocentricsm • Canonical Curriculum • Top-down Curriculum • Required Content	• Authentic Assessments • Hgher-order Thinking • Heterogeneous Grouping • Hands-on Projects • Interdisciplinary Integration • Thematic Integration • Depth • Cultivation of Individual Talents • Multi-culturalism • Inclusive Curriculum • Teacher Autonomy/Creativity • Student Interest

Figure 4. Comparison of Traditional Learning and 21st Century Learning.

The Role of the Leader and the Social Studies Curriculum

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2008) advocates the integration of 21st

century skills into P-12 education so young scholars can advance their learning in core

academic subjects. Young scholars will benefit from an interdisciplinary curriculum as it

provides opportunities for them to explore connections between the disciplines and their

everyday experiences (Schramm, 2002). Reaching beyond the boundaries of disciplinary

studies does not mean that there is absolutely no value to the traditional approach to

curriculum, which is based on the premise that all intended student learning occurs at the

34

level of discipline-based content. All 21st century skills can and should be taught in the context of core academic subjects. (P21, 2009)

Social studies curriculum implementation at the elementary level. A strategic strategy for teaching cross-curricular connections between the disciplines is building on the knowledge gained through work in the disciplines (Schramm, 2002).   Social studies is a broad field that is becoming increasingly integrated with other content areas (Chapin & Messick, 1999). After forging alliances with key national organizations that represent the core academic subjects including English, mathematics, science and social studies (civics/government, geography, economics, history), the Partnership of 21st Century Skills (P21), in collaboration with the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS), has developed a 21st Century Skills framework to illustrate the intersection between 21st century skills and social studies. The map enables educators, administrators and policymakers to gain concrete examples of how 21st century skills can be integrated into the social studies curriculum while supporting teaching and preparing young scholars to become effective and productive citizens in the 21st century (P21, 2008).

In addition to teaching young scholars about human relations, the social studies curriculum plays an important role in preparing them to become active citizens. Students need to know their rights and their responsibilities as American citizens (Chapin & Messick, 1999). Young scholars will have to make guided choices within the context of their democratic society about what kind of community and world they wish to live. Educators must encourage their decision about the quality of life in their community, in their nation, in the world (Chapin & Messick, 1999). It is crucial to maintain a moral, fair, and involved society. There are grave consequences when this does not take place

35

such as the recent and past circumstances relating to the mortgage crisis, water crisis, drug crisis, environment crisis, failing infrastructures, economic disparities, skyrocketed price inflations, quality of life infringements, race riots, police brutality, and assaults on police (See Appendix A). Teaching age appropriate civic and civil lessons relating to morality, justice, and advocacy promotes citizenship readiness (Resor, 2019).
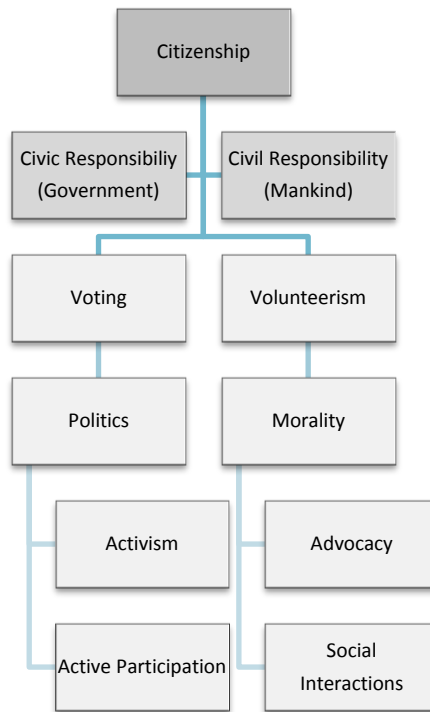
Figure 5. Comparison of Civic and Civil Responsibilities.

The Council of Chief State School Officers (2013) purports:

> Schools are places where qualities of citizenship can and should be promoted with the support of community. As students are preparing for college and career, schools can provide positive experiences that develop understandings about the responsibilities to care for one another, to contribute to the community, to behave ethically, and to use the knowledge and capacities they are developing to do good. Civic learning or literacy is essential if students are to develop capacity to reflect on and respond to challenges in the world around them (p.12).

36

Yielding to NCLB policies and testing pressures, teachers often put the social studies curriculum aside to spend more instructional time for test preparation or remediation for the tested curricula (Heafner & Fitchett, 2012). According to national data, in most states, ELA, math, and science are tested in grades three through five and social studies is not. Among the core content areas, ELA and math clearly are the priorities of elementary curriculum as social studies compete for the remaining instructional time. Teachers are making tough instructional decisions which marginalize social studies time in order to meet the demands of a restrictive curriculum (Heafner & Fitchett, 2012).

There has been debate on the definition or content of social studies. Some prefer the term social studies or social science. There are some whom prefer to separate the field of study and name it social science/history or social studies/history. In 1992, the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) adopted the following formal definition of the social studies:

> Social studies is the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence. Within the school program, social studies provides coordinated, systematic study during upon such discipline as anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, religion, and sociology, as well as appropriate content from the humanities, mathematics, and natural sciences. The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world (p. vii).

The National Council for Social Studies' Curriculum Themes/Standards are: (1) Culture (anthropology) (2) Time, continuity, and change (history) (3) People, places, and environment (geography) (4) Individual development and identity (psychology) (5)

37

Individual, groups, and institutions (sociology) (6) Power, authority, and governance (political science) (7) Production, distribution, and consumption (economics) (8) Science, technology, and society (9) Global connections (10) Civic ideals, and practice.

In 1980, Project SPAN (Social Studies: Priorities, Practices, and Needs), funded by the National Science Foundation found the following social studies curriculum pattern in most U.S. schools: (1) Grades K/1 (Self, family, school); (2) Grade 2 (Neighborhoods); (3) Grade 3 (Communities); (4) Grade 4 (State history, geographic regions); (5) Grade 5 (U.S. history, culture, and geography); (6) Grade 6 (World cultures, history, and geography); (7) Grade 7 (World cultures, history, and geography); (8) Grade 8 (U.S. history); (9) Grade 9 (Civics); (10) Grade 10 (World history); (11) Grade 11 (US. History); and (12) Grade 12 (American government/problems of democracy).

Combining student sources and integrating skills and content are the hallmarks of the newer approach to unit teaching known as interdisciplinary thematic units (Chapin & Messick, 1999). A theme organizes learning around common ideas. Interdisciplinary thematic units typically try to combine science, reading/language arts, and literature with social studies content that has a general theme. Music, art, and other areas may be added to the thematic unit. These subjects are interwoven centering on a common theme instead of being taught as separate subjects at different times of the day. This approach goes also by a variety of other names: integrated curriculum, interdisciplinary curriculum, thematic instruction, multidisciplinary teaching, and integrated studies (Chapin & Messick, 1999).

The development of citizenship readiness skills leading to the progression of elementary students understanding principles of a democratic society can be contributed

38

to implementing emotional intelligence connected to the social studies curriculum (Mindes, 2015). As elementary students move on to the secondary grades and beyond, they begin to develop more complex understandings of cultural differences, historic trends and current events (Mindes, 2015).

   Citizenship readiness at the elementary level. The literature is expansive in what is college- and career- readiness. Being college and career ready means that students will leave high schools with the knowledge and skills they need—whether they choose college, trade school, or a highly skilled job in the 21st century workplace (Burris & Garrity, 2012). College and career readiness is highly associated at the secondary level. Today, there is a keen emphasis of college- and career-readiness at our nation's high schools. Educators must create exceptional high school instructional programs focusing on a core set of knowledge and skills and then ensuring all students have the opportunity to master them and are able to appropriately transfer the knowledge and skills in school, work, community, and life (Conley, 2010). All students—including elementary students— need to be provided with college- and career-readiness opportunities where they can demonstrate mastery of knowledge and skills learned in an environment rich with real-world experiences (Conley, 2010).

   It is well recognized the importance of preparing students for college- and career readiness; however, equal emphasis must be akin to citizenship readiness. It is well recognized the importance of providing secondary students with 21st century knowledge and skills to prepare them for college, career, community, and citizenship; however, elementary students must be afforded the same opportunities. It is well recognized the importance of integrating college-, career-, and citizenship readiness standards in the

39

tested curriculum (i.e., reading, writing, math, and science); however, college-, career-, and citizenship readiness standards must be assessed in the social studies curriculum.

Burns & Garrity (2012) stress that "although college and career may seem far off in the distance when considering an elementary-aged student, we know if we wait until high school, it is too late" (p. 8). It is paramount that educators continuously implement critical thinking skills, problem solving strategies, content competencies, and other college-, career-, and citizenship-readiness standards throughout elementary students' schooling (P21, n.d.).

Attaining 21st century knowledge and skills is an important new metric for assessing elementary students' success in school, work, community, and life. The time to begin preparing children for the challenges and demands of the future is when they are young (P21, 2017). Children in the early years are curious and excited learners. It is the responsibility of policymakers, states, districts, administrators, teachers, and parents to create quality learning experiences and environments that tap into that natural curiosity and excitement. This includes not only supporting emerging skills in reading, math, science, and social studies, but also most importantly, the 21st century skills of critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, technology literacy, and social-emotional development (P21, 2017).

Young scholars need to begin to develop the early foundational skills that will help them reason, think creatively, analyze data, and work collaboratively in the future. Citizenship readiness is as vital to our nation's future as college and career readiness--and it must be purposely cultivated (P21, 2014). Using the qualitative approach,

40

implementing citizenship readiness standards in the elementary social studies curriculum

will be explored in this research study.

Chapter 3

Methods

The design of the research question determines the approach used for a research study (Creswell, 2007). A case study will be the qualitative research design used for this study. This design was selected to acquire an in-depth understanding of the elementary school principals' perceived perceptions of the implementation of citizenship-readiness standards in the social studies curriculum. A purposeful sampling of five elementary school principals will be conducted and each principal will be interviewed using an open-ended questionnaire. A cross-sectional document collection using mission statements, learning standards, curriculum guides, textbooks, and class schedules will be analyzed. A qualitative codebook will be kept to collect and analyze the data. Statistical data will be coded and analyzed using data software. The qualitative data will be employed to establish "patterns and themes" (Creswell, 2007, p. 51).

Research Design

The philosophical worldview will determine the research design used for this research study. Since the personal philosophical worldview is pragmatism, a qualitative research design will be employed. A qualitative research design is sought as it provides the best approach to the research inquiry. This research design will explore a case study of in-depth interviews which will provide rich insight to the research inquiry. A pre-determined, open-ended questionnaire and multiple forms of data drawing including statistical and text analysis will be used (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

A purposeful sampling of the sample group—five principals—based on typical response and maximum variation will be used for interviews. A cross-sectional

42

document collection (mission statements, learning standards, curriculum guides, textbooks, and classroom schedules) from five New Jersey elementary schools in a local school district will be analyzed.

Conceptual Framework

The philosophical worldview that is held is pragmatism. It is one that uses a premise that supports "consequences of actions, problem-centered, pluralistic, and real-world practice oriented (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011, p. 40). This paradigm invokes the researcher to be more flexible in the research process by providing multiple perspectives to the research process as it relates to the research design and research method. The term "pragmatism," (which is often associated with the progressives' school of philosophy) means in its simplest form that humans should adopt those ideas, values, and institutions that best work in a particular social situation (Schramm, 2002, p.11). The curriculum implementation theory (CIT) will be the leading theory used to frame the research inquiry. The conceptual framework will be structured primarily around the curriculum theory (CT), integrated curriculum model (ICM), theories of action (TOA): espoused theory and theory-in-use theories, and organizational communication theory (OCT).

Theories related to curriculum implementation will guide this research study. Structured-oriented theory is concerned chiefly with the task of identifying the elements of the curriculum and how they relate to each other (Glatthorn, Whitehead & Boschee, 2011). This theory normally has a descriptive and explanatory function as they describe what theories are. Value-oriented theory raises educators' awareness of the value issues represented by underlying hidden and planned curricula (Glatthorn et al., 2011). The

43

content-oriented theory is concerned primarily with the selection and organization of the curriculum content and tends to be prescriptive in nature to determine what the curriculum should contain (Glatthorn et al., 2011). Process-oriented theories mainly describe how curriculum is developed or suggest how it should be developed, so theories are descriptive or prescriptive (Glatthorn et al., 2011).

Theories of action—espoused theory and theory-in-use—indicate that people have "mental maps with regard to how to act in situations" (Argyris & Schon, 1974; p.30). This involves the way they plan, implement, and review their actions. Furthermore, they assert that it is these maps that guide people's actions rather than the theories they explicitly espouse. Espoused theory can be seen as the words a person uses to convey what one does, or what one would like others to think he or she does. Theory-in-use is the theory that actually governs a person's actions (pp. 6-7). As applied to this research study, this theory holds that a school's mission will influence curriculum implementation because mission statements are used as a proposal to affirm what the school's core values and purposes are in the educational environment. Since each school values education and seek to provide the best educational experiences for students as it relates to preparing students for citizenship readiness, this objective should emerge throughout curriculum implementation.

This study will focus on the curriculum implementation theory (Fullan & Promfret, 1977; Glatthorn et al., 2011) with an emphasis on constructivism (Bruner, 1966, 1971; Dewey, 1916, 1929, 1938; Freire, 1970; Rousseau, 1955) then venture towards progressive education (Dewey, 1902, 1938). Constructivists such as Dewey (1916), Bruner (1966), Freire (1970), Piaget (1977), Rousseau (1955), and Vygotsky

44

(1978) believe that the learner actively constructs his or her own understandings of reality through interaction with objects, events, and people in the environment and reflect on these interactions.

Participants

The descriptive analysis of demographics includes the sample size, age range, gender, and characteristics of the participants. The research study consists of a sample size of five (5) elementary school principals with an age range of 39 to 55 years old at the time of the research study. Three of the participants are females and two are males. Four of the participants are African American and one is Caucasian. The study group's years of experience as building-level principals ranged from three (3) to 10 years. Each principal worked in one of the elementary schools in the participating Pre-K-12 school district. Four out of the five elementary school principals only worked at the elementary level. One elementary school principal had previous secondary experience working as a middle school principal in the same participating school district. All of the principals had prior teaching experiences. Three out of the five principals taught in the participating school district and two out of the five principals taught in other public school districts.

Table 2

Research Participants' Demographic Data

Participants	Age	Gender	Race	Years of Experience
Principal #1	39	M	White	3
Principal #2	55	F	Black	3

45

Table 2 (continued)

Principal #3	44	M	Black	7
Principal #4	48	F	Black	7
Principal #5	47	F	Black	10

Data Collection

   Interviews. Interviews will be administered to a purposive sample of principals. Five elementary schools in a New Jersey school district will be the unit of analysis with a sample of elementary school principals. In-depth interviews will take place to acquire their perceived perceptions of citizenship readiness in the social studies curriculum. An original interview protocol will be developed. A qualitative codebook will be kept to collect the data from the interviews. Coded data themes will be analyzed then interpreted using the qualitative results.

   Documents. The elementary schools will be the unit of analysis with a sample of specified documents. A content analysis of mission statements and social studies curriculum documents (content standards, curriculum guides, pacing charts, textbooks, class schedules, and supplemental materials) will be conducted. A qualitative codebook will be used to collect the numerical data from the documents.

Data Analysis

   A qualitative codebook will be kept to collect and analyze the numerical data. Models, figures and tables will be used to represent the data. The data will be interpreted using content analysis.

46

Purpose, process, practice, and product will be the main concepts to explore and an investigation of the relationship between the school's mission (purpose) and curriculum implementation (practice) to student achievement (product) will be analyzed.

The school's mission statement will be examined using an emergent analytic coding scale designed by Stemler and Bebell (1999) to identify which thematic category it employs: (1) foster cognitive development, (2) foster social development, (3) foster emotional development, (4) foster civic development, (5) foster physical development, (6) foster vocational preparation, (7) integrate into local community, (8) integrate into global community, (9) integrate into spiritual community, (10) provide safe and nurturing environment, and (11) provide challenging environment (Stemler et. al., 2011).

Curriculum implementation is the process that will be examined to determine its degree of fidelity (Fullan & Promfret, 1977). Inquiry on the intended curriculum and implemented curriculum will be analyzed. The schools' curriculum documents—content standards, curriculum guides, pacing charts, textbooks, and class schedules will be analyzed in comparison to the national and state curriculum standards from the National Council of the Social Studies (NCSS), Common Core State Standards (CCSS), and New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS) in this phase to compare the relationship of the mission statement and curriculum implementation. Finally, the product—student achievement (as it relates to students meeting citizenship readiness standards)—will be evaluated. Using national and state citizenship readiness standards from various educational publications—Partnership for 21st Century Learning (P21), Common Core State Standards (CCSS), New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS), and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers

47

(PARCC), and National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) will be the framework for determining the extent to which New Jersey educators are implementing the social studies curriculum with fidelity.

Scope of the Study

Having a sound time line is a significant part of the research study proposal that provides an assurance that the project will get done (Krathwohl & Smith, 2005). Twelve months is the projected timeline to conduct this research study. It will involve securing committee members, submitting the proposal, getting IRB approval, distributing introduction letters of the research study to gatekeepers and participants, conducting research for the qualitative phase, interpreting the research finding, providing implications and conclusion, and presenting the dissertation defense.

Research Questions

As previously discussed, this research inquiry seeks to answer the question to what extent is there a relationship between the school's mission and curriculum implementation to student achievement. The design of the research question determines the approach used for a research study (Creswell, J. W., 2007). Four qualitative sub-questions will be used during the first phase: (1) Are the elementary schools communicating citizenship readiness in their mission? This question will explore the schools' mission—***Purpose*** (strategic thinking). (2) Are the elementary schools featuring citizenship-readiness standards in the social studies curriculum? This question will explore the schools' planning and preparation routines—***Process*** (strategic planning). (3) Are the elementary schools implementing citizenship-readiness standards in the social studies curriculum? This question will explore the schools' instructional methods—

48

Practices (strategic teaching). (4) Are the elementary school students on target for

citizenship? This question will explore the schools' student achievement outcomes—

Product (systematic results). The elementary school principals' perceptions of the social

studies curriculum will be highlighted as questions will be posed in a qualitative

interview protocol.

<u>Essential Question</u>

- To what extent is there a relationship between the school's mission and social
studies curriculum implementation to student achievement?
To what extent is there a relationship between the school's mission (**mission
statement**—independent variable) and social studies curriculum
implementation (**social studies practices**—dependent variable) to student
achievement (**on target for citizenship**—results)?

<u>Sub-questions</u>

- Are the elementary schools communicating citizenship readiness in their
mission? (**Purpose**—strategic thinking)
- Are the elementary schools feature citizenship-readiness standards in their
social studies curriculum? (**Process**—strategic planning)
- Are the elementary schools implementing citizenship-readiness standard in the
social studies curriculums? (**Practice**—strategic teaching)
- Are the elementary school students on target for citizenship?
(**Product**—systematic results)

Summary

Using the qualitative approach to discover the research phenomenon gave way to

the research findings. After analyzing the data, the emerging patterns and themes will be

discussed next in detail.

Chapter 4

Findings

The purpose of this research study was to examine the elementary school principals' perceptions and experiences relating to implementing 21st century learning standards in the social studies curriculum. It further explored: (a) whether the elementary schools were *communicating* citizenship readiness in their school mission; (b) whether the elementary schools were *featuring* citizenship-readiness standards in the social studies curriculum; (c) whether the elementary schools were *implementing* citizenship-readiness standards in the social studies curriculum; and (d) whether the elementary school students were *on target* for citizenship.

The research findings were based around the transcribed interviews of the elementary school principals and the artifacts analogous to mission statements, learning standards, curriculum guides, textbooks, lesson plans and classroom schedules. First, an individual, in-depth interview was conducted with each elementary school principal. Next, educational artifacts were collected and a document review was performed. The data sets were analyzed, in which, patterns were inducted thus giving way to emerging themes. Finally, follow-up questions were posed to the elementary school principals during a group interview.   In this chapter, the data analysis will be presented illuminating the demographic analysis, presentation of findings, themes, and concluding with the summary.

Presentation of Findings

This research study sought to analyze the qualitative data for patterns and themes. This was done after reaching data saturation and no new information ensued. During the

50

first phase of data analysis, the researcher sought to answer the leading research question by analyzing the participant's responses from the in-depth interviews. Analyzing select educational documents was conducted to answer the sub-questions during the second phase of data analysis. After analyzing all the data from the interviews and document review, a commonality of four overarching themes emerged: (a) communicating the school's mission, (b) real-world learning, (c) competing curricula, and (d) preference of alternative assessments.
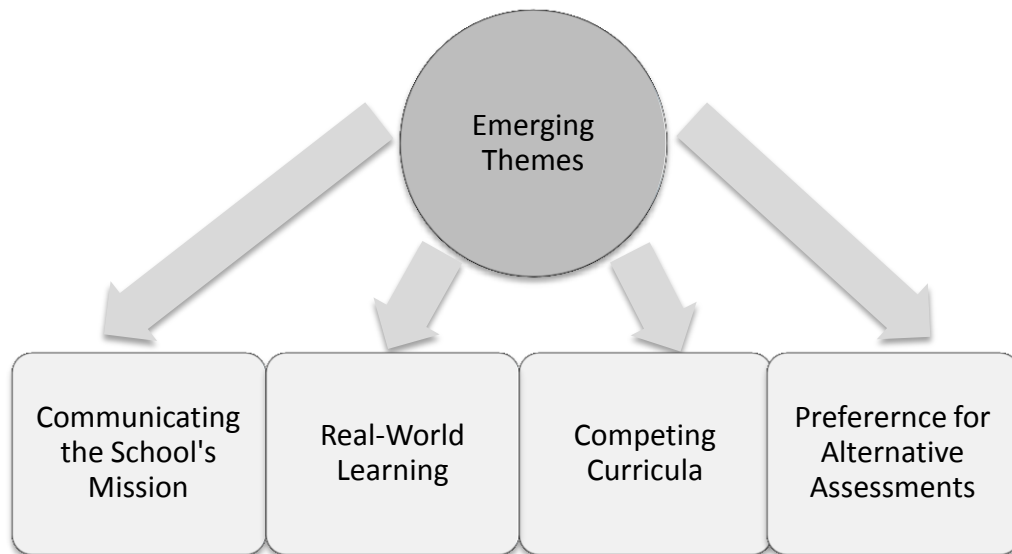
Figure 6. Emerging Themes.

The theme "communicating the school's mission" relates to how a school purports its purposes, goals, and values. It distinguishes the kind of learning to be achieved.

51

The "real-world learning" theme centers on students using 21st century leaning skills. These skills are used to give students authentic, engaging, and real-world learning experiences.

The "competing curricula" theme highlights how educators focus on preparing students for standardized assessments and as a result entails how non-tested subjects give way to the tested subjects.   More instructional time is dedicated to the tested subjects such as reading, writing, mathematics, and science than the non-tested subjects, such as social studies, which received diminished instructional time.

The "preference of alternative assessments" draws attention to how the demands of standardized assessments engendered the desire for the use of alterative assessments to assess students' skills, knowledge, and acquisitions. Alternative assessments which encompass performance assessments like projects, presentations, and portfolios were preferred to high stakes standardized assessments which encompass the traditional pencil and paper tests.

Theme 1: Communicating the School's Mission

The participants in this study clearly espoused their schools' mission and were able to discuss the vision, goals, and expectations for their enrolled students. Serving and educating all students, holistic development, positive learning environment, and life-long learning were the consistent emerging patterns in the elementary school principals' mission statements.

While exploring whether the elementary school principals were communicating citizenship readiness in their schools' missions, separate interviews were conducted and each participant was asked the following question: What is your school's mission? After

analyzing their responses, the following categories emerged: *Serving and Educating All Students, Holistic Development, Life-Long Learning, and Positive Learning Environment.*

Serving and engaging all students. There was a commonality amongst the five elementary school principals consistently promulgating "all students" while reciting their school's mission. In an effort to promote inclusivity and diversity, they felt it was important to provide the best education and services to all students regardless of their race, gender, or economic status including students who have learning, behavioral, and physical disabilities.

Respondent #1 said "serve all students." Respondents #1 and #5 said "ensure all students." Respondents #2 and #5 said "educate all students." Respondent #3 said "develop students." Respondent #4 said "prepare students." Respondent #5 said "engage all students." These responses were eventually categorized as *Serving and Educating All Students*. As a follow up question during the group interview, the following question was asked: Why is it important to make "serve and educate all students" be a part of your school's mission? The elementary school principals were very keen on referencing "all students" and they all agreed that they wanted to make sure their school's mission was inclusive and expressed diversity for all students.

Holistic development. Providing students a thorough and efficient education that is well-rounded tend to be the main focus of the elementary school principals' school mission. They had a keen desire to make it their mission to develop students holistically which included students' intellectual, social, and emotional development. The category *Holistic Development* transpired after patterns of "intellectual development", "social development", and "emotional development" were coded.

53

Four out of the five respondents made references to "intellectual development." Respondent #1 gleaned the desire to ensure "each child grows intellectually." Respondent #2 said "all students will learn and become critical and analytical thinkers." Respondent #3 stated "develop students intellectually." While reciting the school's mission, respondent #4 shared the need for students "to make sure that they have the competencies and the confidence to go out and be productive." Respondent #5 voiced the need for students to have "essential academic skills" which in turn promote "successful academic outcomes."

Two out of the five respondents made references to "social development." Respondent #1, expressed the desire to ensure each "child grows socially." Respondent #3, also, purported in his school mission to "develop students socially."

Two out of the five respondents made references to "emotional development." In addition to the aforementioned responses highlighted in the school's mission, respondent #1 included the desire to ensure each "child grows emotionally." Respondent #3, also, wanted to make his school's mission to "develop students emotionally."

By reviewing the elementary school principals' coded responses of what they articulated while reciting their school's mission, the researcher was able to surmise the importance of the principals articulating the rhetoric of developing the whole child intellectually, socially, and emotionally as a key part of their school's mission.

Life-long learning. References to life-long learning reverberated throughout the school missions that the elementary school principals communicated during the individual interviews. Mastering the knowledge, skills, and competencies so young scholars can be college, career, and citizenship ready was emphasized. And, as an end

goal for students, the elementary school principals purported in their school missions that they wanted their students to be able to compete, be productive and successful in the local and global community. The *Life-Long Learning* category ensued when "college ready", "career ready", and "citizenship ready" were mentioned during the elementary school principals' interviews.

Two out of the five respondents made references to "college and career readiness." In his school's mission, Respondent #1 declared "our students will be college and career ready." Respondent #4 said students should be able to "present themselves as leaders… into college or beyond in their careers." Four out of the five respondents made references to "citizenship readiness" as they recited their school's mission. Two out of the five respondents explicitly made references to "citizenship readiness." Two other respondents inexplicitly made references to "citizenship readiness" by using the vernacular of "local and global community" or "local and global society." Respondent #3 said his school's mission is to develop students "…so they can be productive citizens." Respondent #4 said her school's mission is for students to "be productive and successful citizens…in the local, state, and global society."

Three out of the five respondents made references to the "local community." Respondent #1 postulated "…our students will be…competing in and contributing to local and global communities." Part of Respondent #5's mission is to provide all students with the skills "…to be viable competitors in [the] global society..." Three out of the five respondents made references to the global community. Respondent #1 said "…Our students will be…competing in and contributing to local and global

55

communities." Respondent #4 discussed one of the aspects of her school's mission is for the students to become "…viable competitors in [the] global society..."

Positive learning environment. Research states that a student's learning environment should be one that is conducive to learning. In order for this to occur, it must be a positive learning environment that is accepting, safeguarding, caring, nurturing, and supporting. The elementary school principals surmised the need for their students to attend schools that are conducive for learning and equipped with educational resources that support learning. The final category relating to this theme, Communicating the School's Mission, was *Positive Learning Environment*. The patterns that transpired were "safe environment," "nurturing environment," and "conducive environment."

Two out of the five respondents made references to "safe environment." Respondent #1 said his school will serve all students "…in a safe and nurturing learning environment..." Respondent #5 said, "...Our vision at our school is to establish an educational environment that's safe, nurturing, and conducive to learning..." Two out of the five respondents made references to providing a "nurturing environment."

It is important to note, in addition to student achievement, the goal to establish a productive school environment was one that Respondents #1 and #5 felt were very important as they stated their school's mission and articulated the importance of establishing a safe, nurturing, an conducive learning environment to optimize student success.

Theme 2: Real-World Learning (21st Century Learning Skills)

The implementation of 21st century skills in classroom instructions is the basis of providing students with real-world learning experiences. In addition to teaching students

56

skills and concepts associated with their major academic subjects: reading, writing, math, science, and social studies, the elementary school principals suggested students should have the skills associated with student learning, student preparedness, student autonomy, and student socialization. The data was further analyzed after the second interview question was asked: What are some skill sets you believe students should have in their educational experience? The *Real-World Learning* theme emerged after ten common responses yielded four categories: s*tudent learning skills* (critical thinking skills, learning skills, and computer skills); *student preparedness skills* (organizational skills, time management skills, and planning skills); *student autonomy skills* (independence skills, leadership skills, and risk-taking skills); and *student socialization* skills (cooperative learning skills).

Student learning skills. During the individual interviews, the critical thinking skills were the dominant student learning skills the elementary school principals expressed students should have in their educational experiences. The principals discussed the importance of students having 21st century skills relating to critical thinking and problem solving.

Four out of the five respondents directly made references to "critical thinking skills." Respondent #2 said, "They need to be able to think critically..." Respondent #3 said, "I think that schools should develop students', not only, intellectual abilities but so that they could be critical thinkers. But, also so that they could be competent, reasonable, social adults..." Respondent #4 said, "As an educator, I obviously believe that the academic abilities are important and those are going to be the ones that we focus on generally in a school setting." Respondent #5 stated:

57

Problem solving, often times the content doesn't drill deep enough into world-problem solving. So, whether it it's from managing a bank book or a check book, bills, or schedule, or modern-day world problems, we try to engage our students in our social studies or science in what's called project, problem solving, project-based, problem solving assignments, so that they attempt to find a solution to a problem that exists out there in the world.

All of the respondents espoused the great need for young scholars acquiring "critical thinking skills" as a valuable skill set for students to use in their educational experience. In addition to using "critical thinking skills," Respondent #5 illuminated the great need for students to also have the competencies to garner world-problem solving skills.

Four out of the five respondents made references to the importance of students acquiring "computer skills." Respondent #2 highlighted the need for students to have access to the internet:

"Well certainly, they need computer literacy skills. They need to be able to use the internet to find information, to research information. Not just to go on Facebook, but to really use the internet to be able to find answers to questions."

Respondent #3 had a similar viewpoint and stressed the need for students to be able to apply computer technology in a substantive manner:

"…we hope that students have the opportunity to engage in technology in meaningful ways not just through the use of internet-based software that help with instruction but also like the application of it with PowerPoint presentations and things like that."

Respondent #4 said,

"We started the process, but we definitely have more work to do in developing classrooms that are able to access the technology available for 21st century skills."

Respondent #5 said,

"I would like to have more of a technology footprint. Twenty-first century learners are millennials and those learners learn with technology…Everything we do now

58

involves your base knowledge in computing, computer software, computing book coding."

The elementary school principals shared the same sentiment of the importance of students using computer literacy skills on a regular basis, and more importantly using computer technology in meaningful ways.

Student socialization skills. Students working productively in a collaborative manner was high on the elementary school principals' list of skills they wished the students to have. They wanted students to be provided with opportunities to work through problems together academically and socially. Being receptive to one another and learning how to resolve conflicts in an appropriate manner was key.

Four out of the five respondents made references to "cooperative learning skills.' Respondent #1 said a skill set students should have in their educational experience is, "…being able to work together in a cooperative fashion—being able to work with others in terms of their learning experience." Respondent #3 said, "I think schools should develop students…so that they could be...social adults, so that they can know how to interact in the world around themselves and so that they could also engage into the world in positive ways." As for students having an open mind and being accepting of others, Respondent #4 said, "We need our students to be receptive." Respondent #5 said, "So, it's cooperative. It's collaborative. And, we try to increase the communicative part, so that students—when they go out in the real world, these are the skills that are needed. So, the cooperative learning piece in our school is major."

Respondents #3 mentioned "communication skills." Respondent #3 said "…students need opportunities to present, speak, and…argue and debate ideas and concepts."

Student preparedness skills. Goal setting and time management reverberated during the elementary school principals' interviews. The elementary school principals made direct references to students needing organizational skills, time management skills, and planning skills. These skills were eventually classified as student preparedness skills.

Three out of the five respondents made references to students needing to learn "planning skills." Respondent #1 said students should be able to "plan wisely, plan effectively." Respondent #2 said courses are needed for "setting [personal] goals." And, Respondents #5 expressed "managing schedules" as a skill set the students should have.

Two out of the five respondents made references to "learning skills." Respondent #1 said, "They also need to be able to [identify] ways they can learn methods of learning." Respondent #3 indicated "students need opportunities to develop ideas."

One out of the five respondents made references to "organizational skills." Respondent #1 said students need the skills to be able to, "...organize self, belongings, thoughts, and their writing."

Respondent #1 exclusively mentioned time management as one of the "major skill sets that will be very important for students" to have in their educational experience.

Student autonomy skills. The elementary school principals wanted to empower students to have ownership in their learning, have the desire to be self-driven learners, and to acquire independent, risk-taking, and leadership skills. These aforementioned skills were categorized and eventually classified as student autonomy skills.

Two out of the five respondents made references to "independence skills." "Working independently" is a skill set Respondent #1 said students should have as they

60

"tackle learning on their own." Respondent #3 indicated the need for students having the skill set to independently "construct their own ideas."

Two out of the five respondents made references to "leadership skills." As a form of leadership opportunities, Respondent #2 said some students are involved in "student council." Respondent #4 said, "Prepare students to be leaders; demonstrate leadership skills as students; demonstrate leadership skills as citizens; leadership opportunity; and developing their leadership." She goes on to say:

> "If we say we want students to be leaders, we have to make sure that we are giving them the opportunity to know how to express themselves and be able to express themselves…[W]e started this year is our leadership link series which is just for myself and the assistant principal to make connections with the students. It is developing their leadership while simultaneously forging relationships with them to help them dig a little bit deeper in their characteristic to see who they are and how they can present themselves as leaders as superstars and also in middle school, high school, and onward into college or beyond in their careers."

There was only one outlier relating to the *Real-World Learning* theme. It was the risk-taking skill set as one elementary school principal was the only respondent who discussed the importance of students needing this skill in their educational experience. Respondent #4 purported, "We need [students] to be confident. We need them to be willing to take chances. We need them to be trendsetters."

The *Real-World Learning* theme, also, emerged in the third interview question: What are some resources you use in your classroom/school/department to prepare students for real life experiences? *Implementing Technology in Classroom Instruction* (computers), *A Commitment of All Stakeholders* (partnerships), and *Mentoring Programs* (peer mediation) transpired.

Implementing technology in classroom instruction. The elementary school principals concluded that students utilizing technology was paramount for students'

learning. More specifically, they provided examples of students applying their technology skills to produce videos, create PowerPoint presentations, engage in coding activities, and use computer software.

Two out of the five respondents made references to "computers." Respondent #2 said, "Well we use computers, obviously computers; Chromebooks; i-Pads, and also we give them opportunities to present—to produce presentation skills." Respondent #3 said "Internet-based technology" and "PowerPoint presentations" are some resources students use in his school to prepare students for real life experiences.

A commitment of all stakeholders. The elementary school principals shared building community partnerships were instrumental with connecting students to the real world. Whether local community members such as police officers, firemen, city council, and township library representatives presented information to students in the school environments or the schools took students to venture out in the community to see them, they thought it was worthwhile to have the community members associating with the students.

Two out of five respondents made references to "partnerships." Respondent #1 said, 'We are in the midst of trying to connect with different outside agencies and organizations to partner with them. We have events that coordinate our families in providing connections with outside people and careers." Respondent #2 divulged:

> Well in my school, I know every year most of the classes do some type of project on the community and being a good citizen in the community. And those projects, the kids really get in to it around the community. They take pictures with the firemen. People work in the post office and things of that nature. So that aspect of it, th students really get into it… We try to do a field trip of New Jersey…We use the voting machines. So, a little bit in November, we are voting.

Mentoring programs. The elementary school principals thought students would benefit from having positive, supported adults serve as role models in the school environment. The *Mentoring Programs* category was categorized from the "peer mediation" coded pattern.

Two out of the five respondents made references to it. Respondent #1 said, "Mentoring partnerships." Respondent #4 said, "Restorative action to conflict; structured mediation sessions."

Next, the respondents provided feedback to the 4th interview question: What resources would you like to obtain access to in order for your students to use 21st century skills in your classroom/school/department? The *Real-World Learning* theme emerged when this question was posed to the respondents yielding three categories: "*acquiring 21st century technology resources,*" "*engaging in technology professional development,*" and "*providing 21st century learning opportunities*" (computer skills, communication skills, creativity skills).

Acquiring 21st century technology. The elementary school principals overwhelmingly made references to needing to acquire adequate and updated technology resources. The need to provide additional technological devises for each student to accomplish a one-to-one technology goal was mentioned.

Five out of the five respondents made references to "increase technology." Respondent #1 stated he would like to, "increase the availability of technology; increase the different ways to use technology; and provide access to technology." Respondent #2 stated she would like to "increase [the] number of computers and Chromebooks." Respondent #3 would like the "integration of technology across the curriculum."

63

Respondent #4 sated she would like to obtain an increase in "technology, Chromebooks, teachers implementing technology; such as, Google Classroom." Respondent #5 stated "I would like to have more of a technology footprint…So, definitely increasing my technology footprint an having a one to one ratio for students in every class, to not only use at school, but as well as at home with academic learning."

Engaging in technological professional development. It is without a doubt that the elementary school principals felt it was crucial for young scholars to have frequent access to technology as evident with their overwhelming responses they shared of having a need to increase technology use for students. However, what is important to divulge here is that technological professional development for teachers, also, is very important as discussed by Respondent #4.

One out of the five respondents made references to 'professional development." Respondent #4 addressed the need for providing the necessary training for teachers so they can use technology and other 21st century resources at an optimal level. She explained, "It is really making sure teachers understand how to implement those resources and then push instructions further than the standard curriculum materials…."

Providing 21st century learning opportunities. The elementary school principals made a direct connection to 21st century learning skills while giving their responses during the interviews. These skills will be highlighted in this section using the categories in the P21's framework.

The common thread of providing resources for "computer skills," "communication skills," and "creativity skills" gave way to the *providing 21st century learning opportunities* category. Respondent #3 said, "Students need opportunities to

64

present (technology), opportunities to speak (argue and debate), and opportunities to construct (projects)."

After posing question #6: *What are some areas in the social studies curriculum you feel are impactful?,* the *Real-World Learning* theme emerged. It brought about two categories: *integral part for preparing citizens* (citizenship) and *cultural responsiveness* (culture).

Integral part for preparing citizens. While reciting their school missions, most of the elementary school principals shared the need for students to be productive citizens in the local and global communities. The elementary school principals espoused that they wanted to develop students so they can become productive citizens by providing them with the skill sets and resources so they can be college, career, and citizenship ready upon completing their schooling.

Respondent #2 said "citizenship is impactful" and go on to say, "Well in my school, I know every year most of the classes do some type of project [relating] to being a good citizen in the community." Respondent #3 said social studies is impactful for preparing students to "be productive citizens" and further illuminated the idea:

> Well I think, in my opinion, as a former social studies teacher, I think to hold all of social studies is important like knowing your history, understanding the importance of people and their historical value in the context of moving our nation and our world forward. Thinking about social studies and social justice issues, and how things been resolved and even when they challenge the nation's ethos and beliefs of how the world should function. So, in my opinion, I think that while social studies is neglected, it is one of the most important contents that we should probably touch on for students in order to ensure that we have a chance at them becoming productive citizens, and engaging [them] in our political systems, now, [while having] a historical perspective to draw from.

Cultural responsiveness. Respecting cultural differences, working collaboratively with, and helping and supporting populations different from their own are

65

skills young scholars must obtain as they come in contact with students and other people

with different backgrounds in their school and broader society. The elementary school

principals expressed this sentiment.

Respondent #1 said:

…I know within our district with each of our elementary schools there is always a
focus on certain activities; this is Black History month. And, for a community
that we are servicing to have that connection to culture and to history that isn't
always shared or isn't always focused on [like] in other areas or in other
districts…It is definitely impactful for our local community. However, it is not
necessarily something focused on in our social studies curriculum but outside area
something our teachers are bringing in to supplement a curriculum, so currently it
isn't a major piece of what we supposed to be learning but it is important enough
that it does definitely have an impact on our students. I, also, believe that there is
some focus on civics government, American history and it certainly is helpful for
our students, but as I mentioned in the previous question, we certainly need to
delve deeper into that.

"Respondent #3 mentioned students knowing various "people and their cultural

values" will be relevant for students.

The *Real-World Learning* theme continued to emerge as the data was analyzed

from question #12: How do you view implementing alternative assessments in the social

studies discipline? The category that emerged was *best instructional practices* (real life

experiences).

Best instructional practices. More student involvement and allowing students to

demonstrate learning were some of the benefits of alternative assessments described by

the elementary school principals. Evidence-based instructional practices are associated

with alternative assessments because they usually involve real-world learning. These

real-world experiences mostly engage students in 21st century learning skills.

66

All of the respondents made references to providing "real life experiences" as a means of implementing best instructional practices and an alternative to assessing students. Respondent #1 said:

> I do believe project-based learning is the way to move forward with this especially with our younger grades—first, second, and third. And with project-based learning, those assessments—being project-based—instead of paper, pencil or computerized test will give you a much better feel of what students are able to know and what they are able to learn and accomplish than being able to do a standardized test. And, hopefully, [it is] also more beneficial for the students, as well. [There are] also a number of different ways you could assess students, especially as you get into your older grades. You could do other assessments such as performance-based assessments. For instance, maybe a student is making a speech about a particular topic or debating topics. And, maybe they are doing research-based projects off of whether it is something about history or U.S. government and presenting those projects and putting together a video presentation as oppose to paper, pencil assessment. And, there are a number of different ways I think we can certainly assess what students are able to accomplish in social studies, that will definitely be just as beneficial if not more beneficial than a standardized test would.

Respondent #2 said:

> Alternative assessments probably [will] be good…Projects are another way for students to show what they have learned. So, I'll be willing to do alternative assessments for social studies.

Respondent #3 said:

> I think alternative assessments should be the crux of how students are assessed. I'm not sure if we should be testing in multiple choice and I guess rote memory types of [assessments] to recall information. It really should be the integration of broad themes. Students need to be able to talk about them and present on them, debate them, discuss them, and create projects and presentations that capture their essence. Not necessary do you remember all of the specific people and all of the specific dates, even though they're important too [in order to] get a historical perspective. I, also, think we need to teach our kids the big ideas of social studies.

To promote realistic learning, Respondent #4 discussed the benefits of using alternative assessments in the social studies discipline as opposed to standardized assessment:

> I'm 100 percent in favor of the administration of alternative assessments…for social studies because of the nature of the content. I think if we want our students

67

to be broad thinkers, critical thinkers, and to elevate and synthesize information in a way that makes sense for them, then we want to be careful not to have assessments that are [only] going to require them to give a right or wrong answer. We want to make sure they can support their thoughts and that they are able to communicate their thoughts well, even if they are divergent to possibly common thinking. Now, that's outside of [students providing] just factual information…when we are talking about [assessing students] in the context of social studies.

As a means to providing real-world experiences and applying what they know in the real world, Respondent #5 said:

I think alternative assessments provide an opportunity for you to measure a student's learning in a creative way whether it is paper/pencil, take-home test, whether it is a project, whether it is oratorical. I think alternative assessments tests in all subject areas offer a litany of opportunities to assess in different latitudes of learning. So, alternative assessments…allows the students to demonstrate whether they're articulating an oratorical, whether it's written, whether it's project-based; it always provide opportunities to assess in different ways to see what students have measure what they have learned.

Theme 3: Competing Curricula

There were a vast amount of categories that emerged from the competing curricula theme. The data was exhausted and analyzed resulting in 20 categories: *social studies implications, more cultural inclusiveness needed, competing curricula, knowing content matter, integral part for preparing citizens, cultural responsiveness, creating a viable curriculum, needs greater alignment, scope and sequence, intended implication, actual implication, competing for time, limited professional development, competing professional development, effect on instructional implementation, low priority, emphasis on other subjects.*

The responses to the fifth question: *How do you view the social studies curriculum?* generated three categories—*social studies implications* (positive viewpoint,

neutral viewpoint, and negative viewpoint), *more cultural inclusiveness needed* (cultural responsiveness and cross-curricular study) *cross-curricular studies* (integration).

Social studies implications. The need for young scholars to know social studies content matter is important and the elementary school principals shared that American history, civics, geography, and economics were a part of students' learning experience. Most of them shared the importance of students needing to know the knowledge, skills, and competencies of civics because it plays an integral part for shaping and preparing students to become productive citizens

Three out of the five respondents made references to "positive viewpoint." Respondent #1 said social studies is "helpful for our students." As it relates to the subject matter, Respondent #2 said learning about "citizenship" and the "community" is impactful to students. And, Respondent #3 continued this sentiment by saying social studies is "important; an integral part of creating citizens; and it is our biggest bang."

The elementary school principals did state the social studies curriculum could be impactful if the necessary changes were implemented The "neutral viewpoint" code emerged resulting in three out of the five respondents providing responses alluding to the need for change to the social curriculum. Respondent #1 said "it can be important." Respondent #2 said "unsure if it is okay." Respondent #3 said "it could be impactful."

All of the elementary school principals provided an overall impression of social studies being a low priority subject matter and shared negative connotations relating to the social studies curriculum. These negative viewpoints were largely due to the social studies discipline not being a tested subject matter. The elementary school principals did point out that the standardized testing movement greatly impacted the social studies

69

curriculum being implemented with fidelity, furthermore, having great implications on

student learning.

Table 3

Principals' Negative Viewpoints of the Social Studies Curriculum

Principal #1	Principal #2	Principal #3	Principal #4	Principal #5
"it isn't a curriculum"	"low on the scale"	"neglected"	"outdated"	"needs improvement"
"need to delve deeper into it"	"improvement is needed"	"gets pushed to the side"	"no important areas"	"needs to be current"
"very compart-mentalized"	"not enough grades	"we sacrifice social studies	"isolated in implementation"	"antiquated"
"marginalized" "needs to	"push to the bottom"	"not sure traditional social studies is effective"	"it can become a lost content"	be more inclusive"
"it's an afterthought"	"nonchalant"	"taught in isolation"	"negative attitude about social studies"	"no social studies"
"difficult for lessons to have an impact"		"not prepared for the honest truth"		"not having a good depth of social studies"
				"students are at a dis-advantage"

More cultural inclusiveness needed. The need for the social studies discipline to encompass more cultural inclusiveness and cultural responsiveness was illuminated during this research study. Respecting cultural differences, working collaboratively with, and helping and supporting populations different from their own are skills young scholars must obtain as they come in contact with students and other people with different backgrounds in their school and broader society.

Four out of the five respondents made references to "cultural responsiveness" that emerged from the *Real World Learning* theme. With the current issues that are taking place in society, Respondent #1 stated the social studies curriculum "needs a better connection with racial issues." He also pointed out the need for the curriculum to focus on the "connection to culture and Black History." Respondent #3 shared, in order for students to learn about "social justice issues", it is important to integrate it in the social studies curriculum. He continued the dialogue by stressing that the social studies curriculum must be one that "teaches how people really live" and, by doing so, he adds "I am not sure the nation is prepared for the honest truth." Respondent #5 explained the social studies curriculum could be impactful if it is one that is inclusive to all cultures:

> I think it could be impactful if it included all ethnic groups, that it taught not just American history but [for example] African-American history, Indian history, Asian history. I think it needs to be more inclusive. If it was more inclusive and wasn't just American history's interpretation…and it included everyone, all ethnicities, it would be more impactful because everyone would see [himself or herself] in their history books. Often times the social studies books are only focused on American history and it is not inclusive. It is definitely not as truthful as it should be as it relates to history, our history in terms of what actually happened…It needs to be more inclusive of all ethnic backgrounds in telling our story because it takes all of us that are here. That makes a melting pot. And often times, it is more exclusionary than inclusive. So, if we were able to make those kinds of changes, it would be impactful.

71

Cross-curricular studies. Most of the elementary school principals did state that they integrated social studies in English language arts in an effort to increase exposure of social studies content matter for students. This is a common practice of interdisciplinary studies.

Four out of the five respondents made references to "cross-curricular study." Respondent #1 said some of his teachers in his school attended professional development relating to "integrating social studies in language arts, reading, and writing" as opposed to it being a separate subject matter. Respondent #3 said, "One of our initiatives last year was to integrate social studies into our core contents, especially language arts. That's only because we needed to put it into our curriculum in meaningful ways." He continued by claiming it is a challenge trying to "figure out how to fully integrate it" due to the limited amount of instructional time in a day. Respondent #4 said, "We have worked on incorporating social studies into literacy so that we are maximizing the time in getting both content areas in." Respondent #5 expressed the necessity of the school district implementing a horizontal and vertical alignment of cross-curricular "thematic units."

There was consensus amongst the elementary school principals' perception of the social studies curriculum. They overwhelmingly expressed the curriculum as one that is "neglected", "marginalize", "outdated", "pushed to the side", "compartmentalized", and "needs improvement."

What are some areas to the social studies curriculum you feel are impactful? This was question #6 of the interview giving way to the category: *"knowing content matter"* (social studies).

72

Knowing the content matter. Only a couple of the elementary school principals made direct ties to the relevancy of students knowing the interconnectedness of the relationships of the various social studies disciplines. They also shared the importance of the students knowing the social studies content matter is relevant in their everyday lives.

Two out of the five respondents made references to "knowing the content matter." Respondent #1 expressed a great need for students to be able to understand the interconnections of "history, civics, government, American history, European history, and Black history." Respondent #3 said, "Knowing your history."

> Well, I think, in my opinion, as a former social studies teacher, I think to hold all of social studies is important like knowing your history, understanding the importance of people and their historical values in the context of moving our nation and our world forward. Thinking about social studies and social justice issues, and how things been resolved and even when they challenge the nation's ethos and beliefs of how the world should function.

Proceeding to question #7: What are some areas in the social studies curriculum you feel needs improvement? The *Competing Curricula* theme emerged after transcribing the data detailing four categories—*creating a viable curriculum* (revisions needed), *creating an engaging curriculum* (student interest), *greater alignment needed* (curriculum alignment), and *scope and sequence* (additional content matter).

Creating a Viable Curriculum. As previously stated by the respondents' negative viewpoints relating to the current state of the social studies curriculum, all of the elementary school principals made references to the social studies curriculum needing improvements.

Having a viable social studies curriculum that provides students with engaging, rich, and well-rounded learning experiences is one that was espoused by the elementary school principals. They all acknowledged that the current curriculum does need revisions

73

specifically to it needing to be updated, strategic, consistent, and more profound content and for it to have better alignment within grade levels and content matter. Some of the principals said they would like the students to engage in additional content matter they normally do not get exposed to such as current events, financial literacy, and social justice issues.

Creating an engaging curriculum. In addition to *creating a viable curriculum,* it must be *engaging*. A need for the social studies curriculum to be revised so that it can be intriguing and appealing to students was discussed by the elementary school principals.

Two out of the five respondents made references to "student interests." Respondent #3 said the social studies curriculum must be "meaningful" and further explained, "It can't be just something that we do but more of something that is more alive and we need to bring our curriculum to life..." Respondent #5 said changes to the social studies curriculum would be "impactful."

Greater alignment needed. As a means to improve the social studies curriculum, the elementary school principals illuminated the need for it to be aligned by content and grade level. Updating the curriculum was recommended to meet these recommendations.

Three out of the five respondents made references to "curriculum alignment." Respondent #1 said "it tends to be compartmentalized" and "students don't understand the relationships to one another." Respondent #3 said the social studies content need to "flow from grade to grade" and "flow from content to content." Respondent #5 further added cohesiveness to the other two elementary school principals' aforementioned

74

statements by espousing that the content matter "needs to be aligned across thematic units."

Scope and sequence. Current events, financial literacy, and social justice were the "additional content matter" the elementary school principals wanted included in the social studies curriculum. These suggestions have direct connections to real-world learning.

Three out of the five respondents discussed specific content matter needing to be included in the social studies curriculum as a suggestion for improving it. Respondent #1 said it needs to have a "better connection to current issues" in society. Respondent #2 recommended "for the elementary students [to have] an aspect of financial literacy or economics" highlighting "banking and savings." Respondent #3 proposed adding "social justice issues" to the curriculum.

The data was further analyzed after the eighth interview question was posed: How often do you teach/assign/prescribe social studies lessons? The *Competing Curricula* theme emerged yielding three categories: *intended implementation* (goal), *actual implementation* (minutes, daily, weekly, semester), *competing for time* (limited time).

Intended implementation. Each school has a set amount of time allotted for social studies. However, the implementation schedules did vary from school to school.

All of the elementary school principals outlined their instructional time allotments for social studies. Respondent #1 said he scheduled social studies for "40 minutes a day every day for a half a year." Respondent #2 said it is taught for "two marking periods a year." Respondent #3 exclaimed scheduling it "at a minimum, two days a week." Respondent #4 shared "due to scheduling conflicts, possibly three times a week."

75

Respondent #5 said she allots for it "daily in our departmentalized grades (3-5)" and "half a semester in our elementary grades (K-2)."

Actual implementation. Social studies is a major discipline in most elementary schools across the nation. It is intended that social studies curriculum will be implemented with fidelity through engaging instructional practices. Although the elementary school principals intended to meet their goal to have social students implemented on a daily basis, it was reported that it did not occur due to them scheduling more instructional time to the testing disciplines such as reading, writing, math, and science.

Two out of the five respondents made direct references to the intended goal for implementing the social studies curriculum. Respondent #3 said "it should have been on a daily basis." Respondent #4 said "my goal is daily; the goal is definitely five days a week."

Competing for time. In most states, social studies content is not tested on standardized tests. An emphasis on the disciplines that are tested on standardized assessments dominates classroom instructional time. More instructional time is dedicated to those disciplines and, in some cases, some instructional time is taken away from social studies to add more minutes to the testing disciplines.

Three out of the five respondents made references of "limited time" being an impediment of prescribing social studies on a daily basis. Respondent #2 said "Because we have to increase time with math and language arts, we got to a point that we were only doing social studies for like only two days a week." Respondent #3 said "We tried to make sure that it should have been a part of it on a regular basis, on a daily basis.

76

However, I think our challenge is that we also were anchored in our old curriculum which means that teachers were still trying to find structured time to do it." Respondent #4 said "My goal is daily, but due to scheduling conflicts with regards to some district parameters it's possibly three (3) times a week. But the goal is definitely five (5) days a week."

How often do you engage in professional development opportunities relating to the social studies curriculum? After asking interview question #9 and analyzing the elementary school principals' responses, the *Competing Curricula* theme emerged with two categories—*limited professional development* (social studies professional development) *and competing professional development* (other content professional development).

Limited professional development. There was a consensus that the elementary school principals participated in professional development opportunities for social studies on a minimum basis. All of the elementary school principals shared they have not engaged in any professional development opportunities relating to social studies nor 21st century learning pertaining to citizenship readiness and their teaching staff had very limited training or no exposure at all.

Four out of the five respondents made references to participating in "social studies professional development." Respondent #1 said he "[has] not participated in professional development opportunities within the past two years." Respondent #3 said he "probably never" participates in social studies professional development. Respondent #4 said "the professional development that we do as a school is not content specific…we don't specifically do social studies." Respondents # 5 said "not very often."

77

Competing professional development. In addition to the limited amount of instructional time that is dedicated to social studies, the elementary school principals shared they spend a limited amount of time on professional development for social studies as well. They tend to focus on the testing disciplines for their personal and staff professional development

Two out of five respondents made references to "other content professional development." Respondent #4 said "we don't specifically do social studies nor do we specifically do science and when we do math and ELA, we infuse those into the professional development." Respondent #5 said, "I find that I am focused on finding, attending, or participating in professional development opportunities that support our reading and writing, and comprehension, or…English language arts literacy, mathematics as well as science being [those are] the for tested areas.

In your view, how has standardized testing impacted the implementation of the social studies curriculum? Interview question #10 resulted in the emerging of the Competing Curricula theme yielding four themes—*low priority subject* (highly impacted), *focus on standardized testing subjects* (social studies not tested), *emphasis on other subjects* (major academic subjects), and *effect on instructional implementation/effects of limited instruction* (reduced time).

Low priority subject. The elementary school principals provided an overall impression of social studies as being a low priority subject matter. One that is marginalized, neglected, sacrificed, pushed to the side, pushed to the bottom, an afterthought, low on the scale, and not impactful as described by the building administrators.

78

Four out of the five respondents made references to standardizing testing 'highly impacting" the implementation of the social studies curriculum. Respondent #1 articulated:

> So, the very frustrating part about standardized testing specific with social studies is because social studies is not tested. You often tend to see social studies marginalized and so it is easy for social studies to become an afterthought as opposed to an important part of the curriculum. Often, you will have teachers that are just trying to find ways to tie it in their literacy block just to say they have done it as oppose to a methodical, cross-curricular activity for instance or a cross-curricular lesson. So, with that being said, it makes it very difficult for the social studies lesson to have an impact in and of itself and again you now taken in a marginalized subject.

Respondent #2 expressed:

> Well, it greatly impacted it because we really pushed social studies to the bottom because we had to spend so much time with language arts and math and then test prep. Social studies was greatly decreased.

Respondent #3 said:

> I think it did tremendously. I think once standardized testing came up and the emphases became on reading, writing, and math, and science there wasn't much space for social studies to be taught even though my caveat is I'm not sure if the traditional models of teaching social studies [are] effective anyway because it was taught in isolation. So, we were teaching it in isolation, trying to teach all that rote memory things so students can take tests. I don't think that was as productive as if we could figure out how to fully integrate it. But, I think it was ultimately sacrificed because it wasn't a testing subject.

Respondent #5 said:

> "…I think our students are at a disadvantage. So, it could have a great impact if we address the curriculum need in social studies… "

Respondent #4 had a different viewpoint than the other elementary school principals as she surmised:

> Unless, you are a leader who really understands the importance of social studies, it can become the lost content. I know as a former teacher, my principal would become very angry with me because he would continuously tell m none of this is going to be on the test and I don't want you to spend time on it. I think he

79

exemplifies the attitude that a lot of educational lawmakers and leadership have about social studies. Personally, in my personal view, I don't think standardized testing have impacted it much because I really try to make sure that we keep it as a core part of our curriculum in school as best as we can without the [curriculum] updates."

Focus on standardized testing subjects. Because high-stakes testing has implications for districts, schools, administrators, teachers, and students; the elementary school principals opted to greatly focus their attention on subjects that involves standardized testing. They offer more time, resources, and professional development relating to these subjects.

Four out of the five respondents made references to "social studies not being a tested subject." Respondent #3 said, "it is not a testing area; it is not a testing subject." Respondent #4 said "it is not a tested content" and further explained when she was a teacher and what her former principal said to her as "none of this is going to be on the test." Respondent #5 said "It is not, as much, paid attention to like…our testing subjects and it should be."

Emphasis on other subjects. It was evident by the elementary school principals' responses that the social studies discipline was competing with the other subjects as it relates to the amount of instructional time that took place in the classroom. They further exclaimed that instructional time, for these subjects, was mainly spent on test preparation.

Three out of the five respondents made references of them putting the majority of their emphasis on the other "major academic subjects." Respondent #2 said "we spend so much time with language arts and math and then test prep" and, also, highlighted the "increased [instructional] time for language arts, math, and science." Respondent #3 said "once standardized testing came up…the emphasis became on reading, writing, math, and

science" and does admit he "focus more heavily on language arts literacy and math." Respondent #5 said "...I find that I am focused [on]...reading, writing …mathematics, as well as, science being the tested areas."

Effects of limited instruction. According to the elementary school principals, there was a common trend of them creating classroom schedules representing more instructional time in disciplines relating to the tested subjects. Since elementary social studies is an ideal discipline to incorporate citizenship-readiness learning activities, the implementation of citizenship readiness standards were greatly reduced because there were limited instructional time dedicated to the discipline.

Three out of the five respondents made references to "reduced instructional time" in social studies. Respondent #2 said "social studies was greatly decreased" in instructional time. Respondent #3 discussed "the challenge to find time" to schedule social studies on a regular basis because there are "certain number of minutes" in a day to fit in all the required subject matters. Respondent #4 said there are "scheduling conflicts" that limits social studies being implemented on a daily basis. She, also, personally reflected on the time when she was a former classroom teacher and shared that her principal discouraged her "to spend time" on social studies content matter because he only wanted her to focus on the content matter that was going to be on the standardize test.

Theme 4: Preference of Alternative Assessments

Aiming to utilize the holistic approach methodology to assessing students engenders alternative assessments. The elementary school principals were asked: What is your stance on a state-wide standardized assessment for the social studies discipline?

Eight categories evolved—*strong opposition, for it with conditions, difficult to assess content, alternative to standardized assessments, high preference of alternative assessments, benefits of alternative assessments, best instructional practice,* and *high student engagement.*

The last theme emerged from the last two interview questions. Question #11 was presented to the elementary school principals: What is your stance on a state-wide standardized assessment for the social studies discipline resulting in three categories: *strong opposition* (standardized testing and over tested), d*ifficult to assess content* (subjective content matter), *slight approval* (with conditions).

Strong opposition to standardized assessments. The elementary school principals had a strong opposition to having a state-wide standardized assessment for social studies. There was a consensus of them feeling the students were already tested enough and adding one more standardized test would not be prudent.

All of the respondents made references to "standardize testing." Respondent #1 said "students are definitely tested enough as it is" and shared it is "not a benefit if just adding one more test." Respondent #2 said, "Honestly, I would not vote for any more standardized testing." Respondent #3 said, "I don't think we should test in social studies."

Slight approval. Some of the elementary school principals shared they only agree to having a standardized assessment for social studies with certain conditions. These conditions involved thorough planning and consistency.

Three out of five respondents made references of having some "conditions" with accepting a state standardized test for social studies. Respondent #1 said "frustrating

82

social studies is not tested", "some type of it would be helpful", and it "can help from social studies being marginalized."

Respondent #4 said

> That's difficult…I'm not adverse to standardize testing to some degree." There needs to be some measure of how well students are grasping content. The formulation of the test, the structure of the test, [and] the content of the test, it all has to be very well planned out in order for the test to be meaningful in regards to social studies.

Respondent #5 said

> I am only for it if it is going to be inclusive of telling history or social studies…if we know what the standards are and…every single child, no matter [what state they live in] has the exposure to the same types of history. So, if we could align it according to the standards and thematically explore the same units, I'm for it. As it is, I am not.

Difficult to assess content. The elementary school principals further questioned the need for a state assessment for social studies because they felt the subject matter was too subjective. Furthermore, they shared what content to assess would, also, be difficult to determine.

Three out of five respondents made references to the social studies curriculum having "subjective content matter." As it relates to the social studies content that would be tested on a state standardized assessment, Respondent #3 said, 'I am not sure if we are prepared to deal with the honest truth of social studies." He further explained, "If we teach it through the perspective of how people really live, I'm not sure our nation is really prepared for that. Respondent #4 said it will be "difficult" for the state to assess social studies content matter and alluded that what students should know on a standardized social studies test is subjective. Respondent #5 said "I am not sure how [the state

department of education would] consistently assess what students… have been exposed to and have learned…"

The last interview question posed to the elementary school principals was question #12: How do you view implementing alternative assessments in the social studies discipline? Under this theme, Alternative Assessment Preference, four categories emerged—*high preference* (implementations), *alternative to standardized assessments* (different/another option), *beneficial* (alternative assessments), *high student engagement* (performance-based assessments).

High preference. All of the elementary school principals said they prefer alternative assessments for social students rather than adding another standardized assessment. In this way, students can use 21st century skills to demonstrate their mastery of skills and concepts.

All the elementary school principals made references to favoring the "implementation" of alternative assessments in the social studies curriculum. Respondent #1 said he was "definitely" for it. Respondent #2 said she was "willing to do alternative assessments for social studies" because they will "probably be good." Respondent #3 said they "should be the crux of how students are assessed." Respondent #4 said "I'm 100 percent in favor of the administration of alternative assessments." Respondent #5 said alternative assessments "allow students to demonstrate learning."

Alternative to standardized assessments. Instead of using traditional standardized assessments as a means to assessing student learning, the elementary school principals discussed using alternative assessments. These types of assessments were performance-based assessments such as projects, presentations, and student portfolios.

84

Three out of the five respondents made direct references to using alternative assessments as a means to using a "different approach" to assess students' learning. Respondent #1 said alternative assessments provide a "number of different ways… to assess students." Respondent #2 said they are "[other ways] for students to show what they learned." Respondent #5 said they "offer a litany of opportunities to assess in different [ways]" thus providing different "latitudes of learning."

Beneficial. Highlighting the benefits of alternative assessments to standardized assessments was shared by the elementary school principals. They shared the benefits for the students and teachers.

Three out of the five respondents made references to the benefits of "alternative assessments." Respondent #1 said alternative assessments are "more beneficial than a standardized test" to assess students' learning and accomplishments in order to better service the needs of 21st century learners. Respondent #2 said students and teachers can spend time on "authentic work" and "authentic lessons." Respondent #5 said alternative assessments measure student learning in a "creative way."

High Student Engagement. Providing students the opportunity to be creative were highlighted by the elementary school principals. In some form or fashion, all of the respondents mentioned the need to engage in class projects and technology activities.

All of the elementary school principals made references to using "performance-based assessments" as a means of engaging students in authentic learning. Respondent #1 said "I do believe project-based learning is the way to move forward" and provided examples of students making speeches, debating topics, conducting research-based projects, and presenting a video presentation. Respondent #2 pointed out students

engaging in community projects; going on field trips; and using voting machines. Respondent #3 illuminated students constructing projects, creating technology presentations, giving speeches, performing in debates, and providing creative writing publications as forms of performance-based assessments. Respondent #4 said "putting students in the position to speak and demonstrate 21st century skills." Respondent #5 described examples of performance-based assessments as technology presentations, coding, student projects, oratorical activities, articulating opportunities, and written opportunities."

Summary

Ultimately, this research study seeks to explore the relationship between the schools' purposes and curriculum implementation to student achievement. The results will be highlighted through discussion, implications, and future research.

Chapter 5

Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations

The purpose of this research study was to examine the elementary school principals' perceptions and experiences relating to implementing citizenship readiness standards in the social studies curriculum. This qualitative case study was conducted by analyzing individual, in-depth interviews with five elementary school principals, a focus group interview, and educational documents. The study focused on the essential research question: (a) To what extent is there a relationship between the school's mission and curriculum implementation to student achievement and the guiding questions: (b) Are the elementary schools **communicating citizenship readiness** in their mission *(purpose—strategic thinking)*?; (c) Are the elementary schools **featuring citizenship-readiness** standards in their social studies curriculum *(process—strategic planning)*?; (d) Are the elementary schools **implementing citizenship-readiness** standard in the social studies curriculum *(practice—strategic teaching)*?; and (e) Are the elementary school students **on target for citizenship** *(product—systematic results)*? This study focused on the essential research question and subsequent guiding research questions. The research questions were answered by the themes that emerged from the interview data that were reported in Chapter 4.

This chapter will highlight the review, analysis, and discussion of the research study's findings. First a discussion of the guiding questions will be discussed then end with the findings of the overarching research question. Next, the implications of the findings for elementary school principals and other stakeholders will be discussed in this chapter concluding with recommendations for future research.

87

The first research guiding question that was answered was: Are the elementary schools **communicating citizenship readiness** in their mission *(purpose—strategic thinking)*? It is expected that any school nationwide will have a school mission statement that broadcasts its purpose for schooling. The participants in this study clearly espoused their schools' mission and were able to discuss the vision, goals, and expectations for their enrolled students. Providing students a thorough and efficient education that is well-rounded tend to be the main focus of the elementary school principals' school mission. They had a keen desire to make it their mission to develop students holistically which included students' intellectual, social, and emotional development. Also, whether directly or indirectly, each elementary school principal disclosed in his or her school's mission statement a need for preparing students to become productive citizens in their communities.

The second guiding research question that was answered was: Are the elementary schools **featuring citizenship-readiness** standards in their social studies curriculum *(process—strategic planning)*? Citizenship-readiness learning standards were analyzed in the school's mission statements, social studies curriculum guides, textbooks, and lesson plans. The classroom schedules were analyzed for time allotment. At the time of this research study, the curriculum department was undergoing updates to all of the district's curricula. Two social studies New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS), which promotes productive citizens in the local, national, and global communities, were identified as it relates to preparing elementary students for citizenship: SOC.6.1.4: U.S. History and SOC.6.3.4: Active Citizenship in the 21st Century. As teachers were

88

planning their social studies lessons, they looked to the two aforementioned learning standards.

There was a consensus amongst the elementary school principals stating the social studies curriculum was outdated and major revisions needed to be made. Scheduled times for social studies varied as some elementary school principals scheduled the course two to three times a week while others opted to schedule the course for one marking period only.

The third guiding research question that was answered was: Are the elementary schools **implementing citizenship-readiness** standards in the social studies curriculum *(practice—strategic teaching)*? As illuminated in the various elementary schools' mission statements, one focus of the schools' missions is to prepare students for productive citizenship by means of preparing students with 21st century life skills. Most of the teachings of citizenship-readiness skills were hampered by teachers due to the limited time allotted to the subject matter.

The forth guiding research question that was answered was: Are the elementary school students **on target for citizenship** *(product—systematic results)*? As previously mentioned, many of the elementary students were not acquiring comprehensive citizenship-readiness opportunities. With the elementary school principals and teachers having a keen focus to be strategic, intentional, deliberate, and specific while they are thinking about, planning for, and/or teaching substantive 21st century life skills that are engaging and authentic and provided with appropriate instructional time in the elementary social studies classes, students will be well on their way for productive citizenship in their local, state, national, and global communities.

89

Finally, after a comprehensive review of the answers to the aforementioned guiding research questions, the leading research question that was essential to this research study was answered. This overarching research question asked: To what extent is there a relationship between the school's mission and curriculum implementation to student achievement? This research question was answered with a careful analysis of emerging themes and a cross-sectional document collection from the social studies curriculum of mission statements, learning standards, curriculum guides, textbooks, and classroom schedules. There were very limited alignment of the elementary schools' mission to the actual implementation of citizenship-readiness standards and 21st century learning activities in classroom instruction. This was directly associated to what the elementary school principals espoused that the social students curriculum and text books were outdated and the social studies instructional time was greatly diminished to the tested subject matters such as reading, writing, mathematics, and science. As a result, the elementary students did not garner many substantive, rich experiences associated with life skills that would put them on pathways to citizenship readiness.

Discussion

If citizenship readiness is communicated in a school's mission and/or outlined in educational documents, then it is paramount that the intended goals are actually implemented. Scheduling adequate time for students to engage in thorough and efficient citizenship-readiness learning opportunities is essential to student achievement.

When students have mastered citizenship skills and concepts, they are prepared to conduct themselves appropriately in society. They will be equipped to handle the challenges they will face as they engage in on a regular basis in their communities,

90

country, and the world. This is paramount for students because these engagements are continuously changing and expanding. That is why it is important for young scholars to be introduced to citizenship readiness skills early on in their educational careers in order for them to gain a keen awareness of the connections of life skills in a real-world context. Young scholars will then be better prepared to eventually graduate into a world to meet the demands of their professional, personal, and public lives (P21, n.d). By doing so, students will begin to develop a deep understanding of their roles in their local, national, and global communities and hopefully make appropriate choices and decisions that will promote positive results for themselves and others.

The main purpose for educating young scholars cannot be one that only allows for educational professionals and policymakers to concentrate their attention on preparing students for college and careers (NCSS, 2013b). It is crucial that they are also preparing young scholars for life. Providing young scholars with essential life skills which promote citizenship readiness must be another essential purpose for schooling. This way, all stakeholders will know what their roles are for preparing students for pathways to citizenship.

Citizenship-readiness skills along with 21st century skills strengthen what students need to have in order to successfully function on local, state, national, and global platforms. Students will need to know how to appropriately respond to increasingly challenging issues on each level. When students are successfully equipped with these skill sets, they can contribute to an innovative and creativity-driven economy, a more globally-connected world, technology and information overflow, and an expanded civic life (P21, 2007). When students acquire 21st century learning skills in childhood and use

91

them appropriately into adulthood, then we have a promising future—Citizenship Readiness!!!

Implications

The following recommendations stemmed from the research findings. Five goals for enhancing the practice of implementing citizenship-readiness standards in the elementary schools are provided for teachers, supervisors, building and central administrators, and policy makers: (1) communicate citizenship readiness in school mission statements, (2) provide the necessary planning and preparations for citizenship readiness, (3) integrate citizenship readiness into classroom instructions and implement it with fidelity, (4) provide alternatives to standardized assessments, and (5) continuously monitor the implementation process of citizenship readiness in classroom instructions.

Goal #1: Explicitly communicate citizenship readiness in mission statements. If the end goal is for students to become productive citizens, then it should be intentionally referenced and defined in the school's vision and mission statements. This is important because mission statements are blueprints that guide what educational professionals do to educate students in the learning environment. Vision statements outlines what the educational professionals want students to become in the future.

Are the elementary schools **communicating** citizenship readiness in their mission *(purpose—strategic thinking)*? The *communicating school's mission* theme was directly associated to this guiding question. Early on, in this research study, the elementary school principals individually revealed their schools' mission. Many categories resulted and were thoroughly analyzed. All of the elementary school principals directly or indirectly made statements relating to preparing students for productive citizenship in

92

their school missions. Only two out of the five elementary school principals directly referenced "citizenship readiness" in their schools' mission.

Communicating a school mission is a way for students, parents, and the educational and local communities to understand the intendent purpose of schooling. Establishing "citizenship readiness" in a school mission let all stakeholders know that it will be a learning goal for students in the educational environment.

Goal #2: Adequately plan and prepare citizenship-readiness activities. That is ones that are based on high-quality learning standards that are supported in available educational documents and frameworks. Comprehensive citizenship-readiness standards must be clearly highlighted. Educational professional can find these citizenship-readiness standards in comprehensive frameworks, such as, from the Partnership for 21st Century Learning's (P21) Framework for 21st Century Learning, National Council for the Social Studies College, Career, and Civic Life's (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards, and the Future Ready Schools' Frameworks. Utilizing these valuable, comprehensive frameworks will be beneficial to educators for planning and preparation purposes.

Are the elementary schools **featuring** citizenship-readiness standards in their social studies curriculum *(process—strategic planning*? This guiding question was in search for citizenship-readiness standards stated in educational documents comprising of curriculum guides, lesson plans, assessments, and text books. The *real-world learning* theme was connected to this guiding question.

The educational documents were collected and analyzed. The curriculum guides and text books were the same for each elementary school as they were district-wide board

93

adopted educational materials. The classroom lesson plans and assessments were individualized in each school and mainly left up to the teachers' discretion for implementing citizenship-readiness standards. It is noted, in general, that citizenship-readiness standards were limited in scope in the educational documents provided by the elementary school principals. Although the state department of education requires school districts to implement citizenship-readiness standards in instructional lessons, the educational documents that were analyzed (i.e., curriculum guides, lesson plans, benchmark assessments, and text books) were infrequent and/or indirectly referenced.

If students are to be properly prepared for the 21st century, then educators must purposefully provide students with 21st century learning opportunities relating to citizenship readiness. This includes educators using dedicated materials that guide them on the use of citizenship-readiness learning standards and objectives that are highlighted in curriculum guides and textbooks. And if they are limited, then educators can look to the previously mentioned robust citizenship-readiness frameworks as a guidance: Partnership for 21st Century Learning's (P21) Framework for 21st Century Learning, National Council for the Social Studies College, Career, and Civic Life's (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards, and the Future Ready Schools' Frameworks.

Goal #3: Implement with fidelity citizenship-readiness standards. This involves teachers to make sure students are provided with rich, engaging, and substantive citizenship-readiness instructional practices that are supported in a viable social studies curriculum.

94

Are the elementary schools **implementing** citizenship-readiness standards in the social studies curriculum *(practice—strategic teaching)*? This guiding question steered this research study in the direction of teacher practice and *competing curricula* was the emerging theme that was directly interconnected to this research question.

There was a consensus amongst the elementary school principals purporting two revelations: most teachers do not teach social studies instructions on a regular basis and classroom instructional time was significantly reduced. Since the building administrators reported most of the teaching of citizenship-readiness skills relating to civic literacy takes place during the scheduled social studies classroom period, students were gaining basic instructions during a limited amount of time for this content area.

Civic literacy content matter gets greatly omitted as a result of reduced instructional time in the elementary social studies classes. In order for students to receive adequate amount of time relating to students using citizenship-readiness skills in the classroom, students must be afforded regular opportunities to engage in these life skills. Social studies teaching schedules with a sufficient amount of instructional minutes on a regular basis must be deliberately assigned by educational leaders and intentionally followed by classroom teachers.

Goal #4: Provide alternatives to standardized assessments. Very few states measure students' mastery of knowledge, skills, and competencies in social studies using standardized assessments methods. And, others do not have a standardized assessment for the discipline at all. Some may find students are over tested and prefer to take a different approach to measure students' learning outcomes. Educational professionals

95

employing alternative assessments such as performance-based, project-based, and/or portfolio-based assessments can be an enriching experience for students.

Are the elementary school students **on target** for citizenship *(product—systematic results)*? The *alternative assessment preference* theme flourished as this guiding question was asked during the individual interviews.

The elementary school principals agreed that alternative assessments will serve young scholars best as it relates to measuring their learning. They highly favored this type of assessment to standardized assessments. And, instructional practices that promote real-life learning experiences were the ones they felt were advantageous to the elementary students.

Since there are no standardized assessments for social studies content matter in the state of New Jersey, there are no formal, systematic measures concerning student achievement. The school district, also, did not have formal benchmark assessments for the social studies discipline at the elementary level. Summative assessments generally pertained to chapter tests and/or end-of-marking period thematic projects.

As previously mentioned, the elementary school principals postulated strong opposition to standardized tests and conveyed project-based, performance-based types of assessments as an alternative to measure student learning. They discussed the benefits of alternative assessments as engaging and motivating to spark students' interest of real-world learning.

By administering alternative assessments, the elementary school principals can be furnished with authentic student achievement learning outcomes for civic literacy. These types of assessments are great approaches for measuring citizenship readiness.

96

Goal #5: Remain steadfast with monitoring the implementation of citizenship-readiness standards in classroom instructions. Educational leaders monitoring and supervising teachers on a regular basis ensure students are provided with rich citizenship-readiness experiences that they will need for engaging in the world around themselves.

The researcher advocates that all of the aforementioned goals are met to ensure students are provided with successful learning outcomes leading to pathways of productive citizenship. When these recommendations are applied, students will be enriched with engaging, real-world learning opportunities. What do these citizenship-readiness and 21st century learning opportunities look like? They are ones that are productive and infuse critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, computer literacy, cultural competency, and college and life skills; they are ones that are engaging, enlightening, motivating, and inspiring; and they are ones that are problem-based, project-based, and performance-based. Providing students with real-world learning opportunities which promote 21st century learning and citizenship readiness includes a wide range of activities the students can undertake.

One activity for students to engage in is to have them develop a tourism passport highlighting a state's sites, history, geography, economy, and culture by planning a tour showing the local sites, creating maps, budgeting for sight-seeing tours, highlighting local businesses and products produced, and discussing neighborhoods, cultures, government officials, dignitaries, and famous people. Another activity students can accomplish is to produce a song, movie, or play centering on social studies content. Since today's students are digital natives and they are continuously engaging in technology forums,

97

while promoting digital citizenship, students can create an app, develop a video game, produce iMovies, establish a blog, build a website, participate in digital conferencing, and conduct technology presentations. Educators must be cognizant that all of these activities can be performed at the elementary level with strategic planning of age-appropriate content. These types of activities promote 21st century learning leading to citizenship readiness. A full list of these types of social studies activities are highlighted in Appendix B.

Recommendations for Future Research

This research study sought to answer the essential research question: *To what extent is there a relationship between the school's mission and curriculum implementation to student achievement*? After the data was saturated, four themes emerged: *communicating school's mission, real-world learning, competing curricula, and alternative assessment preference*. These themes anchored this research study in explaining the study's phenomenon.

There are two recommendations for further research. The first one prescribes researchers to delve deeper into the inquiry of the phenomenon of the extent to which educators are providing citizenship-readiness standards with fidelity at the elementary level by extensively exploring the active engagement levels of students directly in their learning environments. The next potential contribution to the field of research is for researchers to analyze the educational professionals' degree of knowledge of citizenship-readiness and their extent of professional development opportunities.

98

Limitations

  It is recognized that originally the interview questions were asked and the elementary school principals' responses were recorded and analyzed regarding each specific question; however, some responses may have been answered when another question was asked. So, as the data was analyzed, all responses were used in forming the themes, independently of the question asked.

  The elementary school principals were the focus of this research study. To strengthen this study, it is recommended to include other educational personnel such as secondary school principals, including personnel from the middle and high schools; teachers; curriculum supervisors; and central administrators, including superintendents. These educational professionals definitely have valuable, reflective insights and would have contributed worthwhile and profound viewpoints.

  The social studies curriculum was the only discipline that was the main focus of this research study. The analyses of the data only pertained to examining the elementary school principals' perceptions and experiences relating to implementing 21st century learning standards in the social studies curriculum. It is recognized that this research could have concluded more comprehensive results by including other content disciplines, such as, reading, writing, mathematics, and science to determine the implementation levels of 21st century learning standards.

  The Common Core State Standards Initiative (Common Core) focuses heavily on college- and career-readiness standards. This research study elucidated the findings of citizenship readiness and did not elaborate in detail the relationship of it to college and career readiness.

99

References

Achieve, College Summit, National Association of Secondary School Principals & National Association of Elementary School Principals (2013). Implementing the Common Core State Standards: The role of the elementary school leader. Author.

Archbald, D. A., & Newman, F. M. (1988). *Beyond standardized testing: Assessing authentic academic achievement in the secondary school.* Reston, VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals.

Argyris, C., & Schon, D. A. (1974). *Theory in practice: Increasing professional Effectiveness.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

ASCD (n.d.). College, Career, and Citizenship Readiness Education Policy Briefing. Retrieved from http://www.ascd.org/public-policy/well-rounded-education.aspx

Beauchamp, G. A. (1961). *Curriculum Theory*. Wilmette, Illinois: Kagg Press.

Bellanca, J. (2016, March 24). When teachers lack agency. [Blog post]. Retrieved from http://www.p21.org/news-events/p21blog/1897-when-teachers-lack-agency

Beyer, L. E., & Apple, M. W. (eds.) (1998). *The curriculum: Problems, politics, and possibilities* (2nd ed.). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Bobbitt, F. (1918). *The Curriculum*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Bradley, L. H. (2004). *Curriculum leadership. Beyond boilerplate standards.* Lanham, Maryland: ScarecrowEducation.

Brickell, H. M., & Paul, R. H. (2005). *Curriculum and assessment policy: 20 questions for board members*. Lanham, MD: ScarecrowEducation.

Brunner, J. (1966). *Toward a theory of instruction.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Burris C. C., Garitty, D. T. (2012). *Opening the common core: How to bring all students to college and career readiness*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Chapin, J. R., & Messick, R. G. (1999). *Elelementary social studies: A practical guide* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Longman.

Conley, D. T. (2010). *College and career readiness: Helping all students succeed beyond high school*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Costa, A. L., & Kellick, B (2016, December 6). Assessing what matters. [Blog post]. Retrieved from http://www.p21.org/news-events/p21blog/2100-assessing-what-matters

Council of Chief State School Officers (2013). Knowledge, skills, and dispositions: The innovation lab network state framework for college, career, and citizenship readiness, and implications for state policy. Website. Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED542708.pdf

Craig, J. (2012). *Six steps for implementing 21st century skills.* Ornondaga-Cortland-Madison.

Crawford, J. (2012). *Aligning your curriculum to the common core state standards*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dewey, J. (1897). *My pedagogic creed*. New York, NY: E.L.Kellogg & Co.

Dewey, J. (1899). *The School and Society*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press

Dewey, J. (1902). *The child and the curriculum*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and education: An introduction to the philosophy of education*. Norwood, MA: Norwood Press.

Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. New York, NY: Kappa Delta Pi.

Dougherty, C (2013). College and career readiness: The importance of early learning. *ACT Research & Policy*, February 2013.

Ferrero, D. J. (2006). Having it all. *Educational Leadership.* 63(8) 8-15.

Fitchett, P. and Heafner T. (2010). A national perspective on the effects of high-stakes testing and standardization on elementary social studies marginalization. *Theory and Research in Social* Education 38(1) 114-130.

Freire, P. (1970). Pedagogy of the oppressed. New York, NY: Continuum.

Fritzer, P. (2002). *Social studies content: For elementary and middle school teachers*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

101

Fullan, M. (1992). *Successful school improvement: The implementation perspective and beyond*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Fullan, M., & Promfret, A. (1977). Research on curriculum and instruction implementation. *Review of Educational Research*, 47(2) 335-397.

Glatthorn, A. A., Boschee, F. A., Whitehead, B. M., & Boschee, B. F. (2011).*Curriculum Leadership: Strategies for Development and Implementation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Grant, S. G., & VanSledright, B. A. (2014). *Elementary Social Studies: Constructing a Powerful Approach to Teaching and Learning*. New York: Routledge.

Grissmer, D., Flanagan, A., Kawata, J., & Williamson, S. (2000). *Improving student achievement*: *What state NAEP test scores tell us*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

Gronlund, N. E. (1998). *Assessment of student achievement*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Heafner, T. L., & Fitchett, P. G. (2012). Tipping the scales: National trends of declining social studies instructional time in elementary. *Journal of Social Studies*, 36 (2), 190-215.

Heafner, T., & Groce, E. (2007). Advocating for social studies: Documenting the decline and doing something about it. *Social Education,* 71(5) 255-260.

Herczog, M. (2012). What citizenship means for the 21st century. [Blog Post]. Retrieved from http://www.p21.org/component/taxonomy/term/summary/51/243?start=55

Hilton, M. (2015). Preparing students for life and work. *Issues in Science and Technology*, 31(4).

Hirsch, E.D. (2009). *The making of Americans: Democracy and our schools.* New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press.

Kay, K. (2009). Middle schools preparing young people for 21st century life and work. *Middle School Journal*, 40(5) 41-45.

Klein, M. F. (ed.) (1991). *The politics of curriculum decision-making: Issues in centralizing the curriculum*. Albany, New York: State University of New York.

Krathwohl, D. R., & Smith, N. L. (2005). *How to prepare a dissertation proposal: Suggestions for students in education and the social and behavioral sciences.* Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

102

Little, C.A., Feng, A. X., Van Tassel-Baska, J., Rogers, K. B., and Avery, L. D. (2007) A study of curriculum effectiveness in social studies. *Gifted Child Quarterly,* 51, 272-285.

Malone, V., & Pederson, V. (2009). Designing assignments in the social studies to meet curriculum standards and prepare students for adult roles. *A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*. 81(6) 257-262.

McGuire, M. E. (2007). What happened to social studies? The disappearing curriculum. *The Phi Delta Kappan*, 88(8) 620-624.

McMurrer, J (2007). NCLB year 5: Choices, changes, and challenges: Curriculum and instruction in the NCLB era. *Center on Education Policy.*

McMurrer, J. (2008). NCLB year 5: Instructional time in elementary schools: A closer look at changes for specific subjects. *Center on Education Policy*.

Mindes, G. (2015). Pushing up the social studies from early childhood education to the world. *Young Children.* 70(3) 10-14.

Molnar, A., & Zahorik, J. A. (1977). *Curriculum theory*. Washington, DC: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (January, 1988). NAEYC position statement on development appropriate practice in the primary grades, serving 5 through 8 years-old. *Young Children,* 47(1) 64-84.

National Council for the Social Studies (1994). Task Force of the National Council for the Social Studies. *Expectations of excellence: Curriculum standards for social studies*. Bulletin 89(3). Washington: Author

National Council for the Social Studies (2009). Powerful and purposeful teaching and learning in elementary school social studies. (Position Statement). Retrieved from http.//www.socialstudies.org/positions/powerful/.

National Council for the Social Studies (2010). National curriculum standards for social studies: A framework for teaching, learning, and assessment. Silver Springs, Maryland: Author.

National Council for the Social Studies (2013a) College, career & civic life (C3) framework for social studies state standards: Guidance for enhancing the rigor of K-12 civics, economics, geography, and history. Silver Springs, Maryland: Author.

National Council for the Social Studies (2013b). Revitalizing civic learning in our schools: A position statement of the national council for the social studies. Silver Springs, Maryland: Author.

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (2012). *States to focus on the implementation of the common core state standards.* Author August 6, 2012.

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers (2010). Common Core State Standards. Washington, DC: Author.

Neill, M. (2016a, December 12). Time to end testing overkill. [Blog Post]. Retrieved from http://www.p21.org/news-events/p21blog/2102-time-to-end-testing-overkill

Neill, M. (2016b, December 13). A proposal for a model assessment system. [Blog Post]. Retrieved from http://www.p21.org/news-events/p21blog/2103-a-proposal-for-a-model-assessment-system

New Jersey Department of Education (2011). *Education transformation task force initial report.* Trenton, NJ.: Author. Retrieved from https://www.state.nj.us/education/news/2011/1007taskA1.pdf

New Jersey Department of Education (2012a). Assessment: Statewide Assessment Schedule. Trenton, NJ: Author. http://www.state.nj.us/education/

New Jersey Department of Education (2012b). *Final report of the New Jersey Department of Education College and Career Readiness Task Force.* Trenton, NJ: Author. Retrieved from http://www.state.nj.us/education/genfo/readiness.pdf

New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS, 2014): Social Studies. Retrieved from https://www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/2014/ss/

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2012), "PISA: Programme for International Student Assessment", OECD Education Statistics (database). DOI: 10.1787/data-00365-en

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2013), "PISA: Programme for International Student Assessment", OECD Education Statistics (database). DOI: 10.1787/data-00365-en

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2015), "PISA: Programme for International Student Assessment", OECD Education Statistics (database). DOI: 10.1787/data-00365-en

Ornstein, A., & Behar-Horenstein, L. (1999). *Contemporary issues in curriculum.* Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

104

Partnership for 21st Century Learning (n.d.). *What is 21st century learning and citizenship all about?: Education for a changing world-A parent's guide for 21st century learning and citizenship. Retrieved from* http://www.p21.org/

Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2006). *Results that matter: 21st century skills and high school reform.* Retrieved from http://www.p21.org/ http://www.p21.org/storage/documents/RTM2006.pdf

Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2007). *Framework for 21st century learning*. Tucson, AZ. Author.

Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2008). *Social studies 21st century skills map*. Tucson, AZ. Author.

Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2009). *Curriculum and instruction: 21st century skills implementation guide*. Tucson, AZ. Author.

Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2014). *Reimagining citizenship for the 21st century: A call to action for policymakers and educators.* Tucson, AZ. Author.

Partnership for 21st Century Learning (2015). *P2 Framework Definitions.* Tucson, AZ. Author.

Partnership for 21st Century Learning (2016). *Framework for 21st century learning*. Tucson, AZ. Author.

Partnership for 21st Century Learning (2017). *21st century learning for early childhood guide.* Tucson, AZ. Author.

Partnership for Assessment of Readiness of College & Career (PARCC, 2015). College & career ready: Determinations and performance-level descriptions.

Perez, J. (2014). College and career readiness in the elementary school setting. Hot Chalk Education Network. Posted July 30, 2014

Phelps, R. P. (1998). The demand for standardized student testing. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 17(3) 5-23.

Phelps, R. P. (2005). *Defending Standardized Testing*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Pinar, W. F. (2004). *What is curriculum theory?* Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Posner, G. J. (2004). *Analyzing the curriculum*. Boston, McGraw-Hill.

Resor, C. (2019, January 20). Civic behavior and civil behavior: What's the difference? [Blog post]. Retrieved from https://connected.socialstudies.org/blogs/cynthia-resor/2019/01/20/civic-behavior-and-civil-behavior-whats-the-differ

Rogers-Chapman, M. F., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2013). *Preparing 21st century citizens: The role of work-based learning in linked learning*. Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education-Knowledge Brief.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques (1979). *Emile: Or on education*. Trans. Allan Bloom. New York: Basic Books.

Schramm, S. L. (2002). *Transforming the curriculum: Thinking outside the box*. Lanham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield Education.

Soule, H., & Warrick, T. (2015). Defining 21st century readiness for all students: What we know and how to get there. *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, 9(2), 178-186.

Stemler, S. E., Bebell, D. (April, 1999). An empirical approach to understanding and analyzing the mission statements of selected educational institutions. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the New England Educational Research Organization: Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Stemler, S. E., Bebell, D., & Sonnabend, L. (2011). Using school mission statements for reflection and research. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 47(2) 383-420.

Stemler, S. E., Bebell, D. (2012). *The school mission statement: Values, goals, and identities in American education*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Tallerico, M. (2012). *Leading curriculum improvement: Fundamentals for school principals.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education.

Tyler, R. W. (2013). Basic principles of curriculum and instruction. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

United States Department of Education (2002). *No child left behind act*. Washington, DC: Author.

United States Department of Education (2010a). *A blueprint for reform: The reauthorizing of the elementary and secondary education act.* Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/blueprint.

United States Depart of Education (2010b). *Secretary arne duncan's remarks at OECD's release of the program for international student assessment (PISA) 2009 results.* December 7, 2010 http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/secretary-arne-duncans-remarks...Author ed.gov.

United States Department of Education (2012). *The threat of educational stagnation and complacency: Remarks of U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan at the release of the 2012 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)* December 3, 2013 http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/threat-educational-stagnation-and-complacency...Author ed.gov.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society*: *The development of higher psychological processes.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Wade, R. (2002). Beyond expanding horizons: New curriculum directions for elementary social studies. *The Elementary School Journal*, 103 (2) 115-130.

Wagner, T. (2008a). Even our "best" schools are failing to prepare students for 21sst-century careers and citizenship. *Educational Leadership*.

Wagner, T. (2008b). Rigor redefined. *Educational Leadership*, 66(2), 20-25.

Wagner, T. (2010). The Global Achievement Gap. Why Even Our Best Schools Don´t Teach the New Survival Skills Our Children Need – and What We Can Do About It. New York: Basic Books.

Walker, D. F. & Soltis, J. F. (2004). *Curriculum aims (3rd Ed.).* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Waugh, C. K, & Gronlund, N. E. (2013) *Assessment of student achievement* (10th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Westeimer, J. (2017). What kind of citizens do we need? *Educational Leadership*, 77(3), 12-18.

Wiggins, G. (1989a). Teaching to the (authentic) test. *Educational Leadership,* 46(7), 41-47.

Wiggins, G. (1989b). A true test: Toward more authentic and equitable assessment. *The Phi Delta Kappan*, 70(9), 703-713.

Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by Design (2nd Ed.).* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).

Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. (2007). *Schooling by design: Mission, action, and achievement.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).

Ylimaki, R. M. (2011). *Critical curriculum leadership: A framework for progressive education*. New York: Routledge.

Civil and Civic Responsibilities Implications

Mortgage Crisis	• Widespread Foreclosures
Water Crisis	• Flint Michigan
Drug Crisis	• Crack Cocaine Epidemic • Herion and Opiod Epidemics
Environment Crisis	• Fracking, Offshore Drilling, Global Warming, Pollution, Brush Fires, Droughts, Mud Slides, Sink Holes, Extreme Storms
Failing Infrastructures	• Roads, Bridges, Buildings
Economic Disparities	• Minimum Wage Gap • Gender Wage Gap
Skyrocketed Price Inflactions	• Life-Saving Medications • Medical Procedures • Child Care, Tuition, Housing (Gentrification)
Quality of Life Infringement	• Safety and Security is being infringed upon • Hacking (Computers, Cameras, Data-bases, Voting Machines)
Race Riots	• White Nationalism • Black Lives Matter • Immigrants
Police Brutality Assault on Police	• Culture Breakdown • Blue Lives Matter • Empathy, De-escalation Techniques

Appendix B

21st Century Learning Activities

Current events	Problem-based Learning	Political cartoons	Document-based questions (DBQ)	Produce a radio ad	Create a blog, website
Skype with a CEO	Create an iMovie	Design a community	Create a local newspaper, magazine	Design a blueprint then construct a tiny house	Create an app
Produce a song, movie, or play	Create a poster	Create a slideshow	Present an oral presentation	Create a TV jingle	Conduct a technology presentation
Write an editorial to a local newspaper	Write a book review to a publisher, magazine	Write a restaurant review, product review	Write a children's book	Write a marketing proposal	Weather reporter
Participate in service learning	Digital citizenship	Participate in a geography scavenger hunt	Role play	Participate in mock trials	Attend content-relevant field trips
Participate in community events, meetings	Maintain student portfolios	Demonstrate a dramatic performance	Participate in content exhibits and fairs	Participate in structured debates	Collaborate on group projects
Produce an enactment	Construct dioramas, models,	Design artistic displays and demonstrations	Give an interview	Participate in capstone projects	Participate in thematic units and culminating activities

110

Student internships	Create a blog	Presentation boards	Student work folders	Develop a video game	Participate in a virtual fieldtrip
Plan cross-country and abroad trips using flight schedules, road maps, passports, cost analysis, and budgets	Develop a museum tour (design pamphlet, highlight historical and geographical information)	Write a proposal to local, state, and federal government officials	Develop a tourism passport highlighting the state's sites, history, geography, economy, and culture	Critically analyze information (advertisements, editorials, fake news, opinion writing, public statements, contracts, etc.)	Create a business (business plan, create project, marketing strategy, product, cost analysis, budget, staffing)

Appendix C

Concept Map

| Purpose | + | Process | = | Product |

↓ ↓ ↓

| Strategic Thinking | Strategic Practice | Systematic Results |

↓ ↓ ↓

| Mission | + | Curriculum | = | Student Achievement |

↓ ↓ ↓

| What are the school's goals? | What are the school's practices? | Are students meeting citizenship-readiness? |

↓ ↓ ↓

| Mission Statement (Unit of Measurement) | + | Curriculum Implementation (Unit of Measurement) | = | Performance-Based Assessments; Portfolios (Unit of Measurement) |

↓ ↓ ↓

| Cognitive Development Social Development Emotional Development Civic Development Vocational Preparation Integrate into Local Community Integrate into Global Community Integrate into Spiritual Community Safe and Nurturing Environment Challenging Environment | Content Standards Curriculum Guides Pacing Charts Textbooks Lesson Plans Class Schedules Instructional Time Supplementary Materials Digital Resources Best Practices | (Assessment of 21st Century Learning) Critical Thinking Communication Creativity Collaboration Computer Technology Cultural Responsiveness College & Life |

112

Interview Protocol

Rowan University

TITLE OF STUDY: An Evaluation of the Efficacy of Implementing Citizenship-Readiness Standards in the Elementary Social Studies Curriculum: A Case Study of a School District in New Jersey

Interview Protocol:

1. What is your school's mission?

2. What are some skill sets you believe students should have in their educational experience?

3. What are some resources you use in your classroom/school/department to prepare students for real life experiences?

4. What resources would you like to obtain access to in order for your students to use 21st century skills in your classroom/school/department?

5. How do you view the social studies curriculum?

6. What are some areas in the social studies curriculum you feel are impactful?

113

7. What are some areas in the social studies curriculum you feel needs improvement?

8. How often do your teach/assign/prescribe social studies lessons?

9. How often do you engage in professional development opportunities relating to the social studies curriculum?

10. In your view, how has standardized testing impacted the implementation of the social studies curriculum?

11. What is your stance on a state-wide standardized assessment for the social studies discipline?

12. How do you view implementing alternative assessments in the social studies discipline?

CONSENT TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH STUDY

TITLE OF STUDY: An Evaluation of the Efficacy of Implementing Citizenship-Readiness Standards in the Elementary Social Studies Curriculum: A Case Study of a School District in New Jersey

Principal Investigator: Hector Rios, Ph.D.

This consent form is part of an informed consent process for a research study and it will provide information that will help you to decide whether you wish to volunteer for this study. It will help you to understand what the study is about and what will happen in the course of the study.

If you have questions at any time during the research study, you should feel free to ask them and should expect to be given answers that you completely understand.

After all of your questions have been answered, if you still wish to take part in the study, you will be asked to sign this informed consent form.

Dr. Hector Rios or another member of the study team will also be asked to sign this informed consent. You will be given a copy of the signed consent form to keep.

You are not giving up any of your legal rights by volunteering for this research study or by signing this consent form.

Why is this study being done?

The purpose of this research study is to investigate the relationship between the school's mission statement (purpose), curriculum implementation (process) to student achievement (product). This study will be part of a dissertation.

Why have you been asked to take part in this study?

Because you are a principal, you are invited to participate in this research study and will be asked to provide your perceived perceptions of the elementary social studies curriculum as it relates to meeting citizenship-readiness standards.

Who may take part in this study? And who may not?

Elementary school principals will be invited to take part of this research study.

How many subjects will be enrolled in the study?

Five participants will take part in this research study.

How long will my participation in this study take?

Each participant will be asked to participate in a one-on-one interview which is expected to last for approximately a half hour.

Where will the study take place?

You will be asked to provide a location to meet, of your choosing, in which the interview will be conducted. The arrangement of the location will be an agreed upon process.

What will you be asked to do if you take part in this research study?

You will be asked to answer 12 questions outlined in an interview protocol.

What are the risks and/or discomforts you might experience if you take part in this study?

Incidents of risks and/or discomforts are very rare and some may result in, but not limited to, potential loss of personal time during the duration of the interview session and anxiety in responses of personal reflection.

Are there any benefits for you if you choose to take part in this research study?

It is possible that you might receive no direct personal benefit from taking part in this research study. However, your participation may add knowledge to the body of research and help us explain the research study's phenomenon.

What are your alternatives if you don't want to take part in this study?

Your alternative is not to take part in this research study.

117

How will you know if new information is learned that may affect whether you are willing to stay in this research study?

During the course of the research study, you will be updated about any new information that may affect whether you are willing to continue taking part in the study. If new information is learned that may affect you, you will be contacted.

Will there be any cost to you to take part in this study?

There are no costs to you for participating in this research study.

Will you be paid to take part in this study?

You will not be paid for your participation in this research study.

How will information about you be kept private or confidential?

All efforts will be made to keep your personal information in your research record confidential, but total confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Your personal information may be given out, if required by law. Presentations and publications to the public and at scientific conferences and meetings will not use your name and other personal information.

The information in this research study will only be used for research purposes and in ways that will not reveal who you are. Any personal information that could identify you (e.g. your name, work site, etc.) will be removed or changed before any files are shared in any way, including with other researchers, or before results are made public.

What will happen if you are injured during this study?

118

The potential risk of injury during this study in minimal. However, if at any time during your participation and conduct in the research study you have been or are injured, you should communicate those injuries to the research staff present at the time of injury and to the Principal Investigator, whose name and contact information is on this consent form.

What will happen if you do not wish to take part in the study or if you later decide not to stay in the study?

Participation in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or you may change your mind at any time.

If you do not want to enter the study or decide to stop participating, your relationship with the study staff will not change, and you may do so without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

You may also withdraw your consent for the use of data already collected about you, but you must do this in writing to:

>Hector Rios, Ph.D.
>
>Rowan University
>
>201 Mullica Hill Road
>
>Glassboro, NJ 08028

If you decide to withdraw from the research study for any reason, you may be asked to participate in one meeting with the Principal Investigator.

Who can you call if you have any questions?

If you have any questions about taking part in this research study or if you feel you may have suffered a research related injury, you can call the study doctor:

> Hector Rios, Ph.D.
>
> Educational Services and Leadership
>
> (856) 256-4500 x3808

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you can call:

> Office of Research
>
> (856) 256-5150 – Glassboro/CMSRU

What are your rights if you decide to take part in this research study?

You have the right to ask questions about any part of the research study at any time. You should not sign this form unless you have had a chance to ask questions and have been given answers to all of your questions.

<div align="center">

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE

</div>

I have read this entire form, or it has been read to me, and I believe that I understand what has been discussed. All of my questions about this form or this research study have been answered.

Subject Name:_____

المنارة للاستشارات

www.manaraa.com

Subject Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator/Individual Obtaining Consent:

To the best of my ability, I have explained and discussed the full contents of the study including all of the information contained in this consent form. All questions of the research subject and those of his/her parent or legal guardian have been accurately answered.

Investigator/Person Obtaining Consent: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

121