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Assessing and evaluating students' perception of cooperative learning teams at South Main Street School

Andrea Atkins
Rowan University

ASSESSING AND EVALUATING STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING TEAMS AT SOUTH MAIN STREET SCHOOL

By
Andrea Atkins

A Thesis

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Abstract

Atkins, Andrea P.

Assessing and Evaluating Students' Perception of Cooperative Learning Teams At South Main Street School
School Administration
Rowan University
Advisor: Kathleen S. Sernak, Ed. D.

The intern conducted an action research project to evaluate the perceptions of fourth graders relative to working in cooperative learning teams in their reading classes. The target population were 38 fourth graders from South Main Street School who are presently involved in Success For All, a cooperative learning program. The intern wanted to determine whether the target students perceived the cooperative learning experience as being positive or negative, and whether this perception impacted on their learning. The intern utilized the survey as the major instrument for data collection. The students were interviewed as well. The intern utilized mean scores to determine the significance of the data.

The intern concluded that the students have a positive perception of cooperative learning. Their positive attitude indicates that they believe cooperative learning is beneficial to their learning.

Mini-Abstract

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Assessing and Evaluating Students' Perception of Cooperative Learning Teams At South Main Street School

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The intern assessed the perceptions of fourth graders relative to working in cooperative learning teams. The intern wanted to know whether the target student students had a positive or negative perception of cooperative learning, and what impact if any did this perception have on their learning.

The study's findings concluded that the students have a positive attitude towards cooperative learning.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

In cooperative learning students work together as a team to learn concepts. Their work is not completed until all members of the team have learned the materials or concepts being presented. While this positive interdependence is an essential component of cooperative learning, the intern was interested in assessing how the students actually felt about cooperative learning as an instructional method.

According to the research, each participant on a cooperative learning team has an equal opportunity for success because they contribute to the team by doing their best at their individual academic performances, and they are aided by their teammates to ensure they understand the concepts. This instructional concept is counter to what occurs in a competitive classroom, where students individually to compete with each other for the best grades, rather that work cooperatively to make ensure that everyone succeeds. The intern wanted to learn how those students on cooperative learning teams felt about the principles of cooperative learning. Do they buy into the cooperative learning concepts as the researchers do? Or do they perceive them as roadblocks to their individual learning?

The intern studied the impact of cooperative learning at the internship setting. The intern assessed the perceptions of students on the cooperative learning teams as they related to reading. Additionally, the intern wanted to discover whether the students on

these teams perceived cooperative learning as beneficial to their academic success; or whether they viewed it as being an impediment to their learning.

There are volumes of research studies that highlights the positive outcomes associated with cooperative learning. They included higher academic achievement, the acquisition of pro-social skills, and improved behavior to name a few. These concepts are the desired results of any instructional technique. But has anyone ever considered how the students felt as they are forced to work in teacher selected cooperative learning teams? Do the students have a positive or negative attitude regarding their team, teammates, and the cooperative learning experience in general? Do the students believe that their learning styles are attended to?

The intern assessed these perceptions as they related to how the students perceived their team/ teammates, their own learning styles and their reading grades and whether they believed cooperative learning had a bearing on them?

The target students were part of cooperative learning teams at the intern ship setting. However; they had been exposed to a learning environment that was teacher directed and competitive also. Thus, they had the distinction of experiencing both instructional methods.

City of Pleasantville

Pleasantville is a small diverse urban community located in southeastern New Jersey. It is just five miles from Atlantic City and prides itself as being the "gateway" to the casino city. Additionally, Pleasantville is 60 miles from Philadelphia. Pleasantville was incorporated as a borough in 1888 (Arlan, 1989, p.1). The earliest inhabitants of

Pleasantville were the Lenni-Lenape Indians. Prior to being incorporated, Pleasantville was known by several other names including Adamstown and Laketown.

During the early days of Pleasantville, most of the residents were farmers or oyster harvesters. Farming remained a thriving industry as late as the 1960's. Pleasantville enjoyed a measure of economic growth in the service industry by providing manpower to the hotel businesses of Atlantic City. As a result of its prosperity, the population of Pleasantville began to increase. According to the 1970 census, there were 14,007 residents of the city. The current population is estimated at 16,900. This is directly related to the influx of casino workers to the communities surrounding Atlantic City. Pleasantville's labor force is 9,043 with 1,008 people unemployed, thus the unemployment rate of 11.1% is the third highest in Atlantic County (New Jersey Department of Labor, 2000).

Pleasantville has a Mayor-Council form of government. The current mayor of Pleasantville is Ralph Peterson who was elected in 1992. He is the first African American to hold this office. He is presently serving his third term. Mayor Peterson joined the Pleasantville Police force in 1958 and rose through the ranks to become Chief of Police. He served 10 years in that position prior to becoming mayor (Arlan, 1989, p. 290).

Sometime prior to the advent of casinos, Pleasantville began an economic downslide until ultimately, it applied to the state to become an Urban Enterprise Zone.

The Urban Enterprise Zone Authority was established in 1983 for a duration period of 20 years. It was established under N.J.S.A. 52.27H-60et sef. The intent of the original legislation was to affect only 10 urban areas in the state. However, the legislation was amended in 1994 to include more urban areas, and Pleasantville was among that group of cities. The authority usually designates at least 30% of an area as an UEZ. The entire city of Pleasantville is designated as an UEZ community. New Jersey has established 27 such urban enterprise zones in economically disadvantaged cities. The state approved Pleasantville's application and granted its request to be designated as an Urban Enterprise Zone in 1994. The state based it's decision on the city's need for economic development, high unemployment rates, the number of families receiving welfare and finally, the potential benefits shown by the application. An UEZ is given incentives by the state to somehow level the economic playing field for these blighted areas to help them turn their communities around. The major thrust of the UEZ plan is to draw thriving businesses to the city to bolster its economy. The businesses that are willing to relocate to an urban area receive many incentives such as purchasing items without paying sales tax, subsidized unemployment insurance costs, corporation tax credit and other perks. Pleasantville appears to be reaping the benefits of being an UEZ city. Mayor Ralph Peterson declares that "Pleasantville is a city on the move." The downtown area has been refurbished, and several new businesses have relocated to the city. There has even been an increase in the development of single family homes.

Not only is Pleasantville declared as an UEZ community because of its economic state, but it is also declared as an Abbott District because it's students do not get an education that is on par with wealthier districts. This scenario is typical of what occurs in

urban areas with a declining economy. When the tax base is low and a city has few ratables, it impacts the quality of the education that the students of that district receives. Pleasantville is one such district.

In 1997, the Supreme Court of New Jersey rendered a decision in the Abbott IV case. This decision ordered the state to immediately establish parity between each special needs district and the spending done in wealthy districts. As a result of that decision, the state appropriated $246 million dollars in education aid to 26 of the 28 special needs district.

Pleasantville Public Schools

The first public school in Pleasantville was called Smith's Landing School. It was built on Park Avenue in 1870. As other schools were built to accommodate the city's growth, the school's name was changed to Public School#2 Park Avenue (Arlan, 1989, p. 150).

Pleasantville is one of 28 "special needs" school districts. They are also referred to as Abbott Districts. They're designated by the state of New Jersey as being in need of extra school funds because the majority of the students in that district are poor and living in impoverished conditions and this effects the type of education they receive. To be qualified as an Abbott district, according to the New Jersey Department of Education, districts must be urban, have a lowered socioeconomic status, and assigned to the lowest categories on the Department of Education's DFG scale. Additionally, there must be evidence of substantive failure of thorough and efficient education, failure to achieve as measured by standardized tests, a large number of disadvantaged students who need "an education beyond the norm", a large minority population and finally, excessive taxes for

municipal services (School Finance and Records, Rowan University, 1999). This was determined as a result of the decisions made in the NJ Supreme Court case: Abbott v Burke in 1981. Abbott is the case that started years of litigation regarding school funding in New Jersey. The case was filed on behalf of several Camden school children of whom Raymond Abbott was the first name on the list. The suit was filed against Fred Burke, who was then the Commissioner of Education in New Jersey and others. The suit alleged that the Public School Education Act, Chapter 212, actually caused an increase in the disparity between the education received in poor and wealthier districts. This of course, is not the first court case in New Jersey alleging unfairness in school funding. Robinson v Cahill was a predecessor to this case, however, Abbott has had the most resounding impact on the way things are done not only in Pleasantville, but in other Abbott districts too. There has been several versions of this case since the original decision was rendered. In an attempt to properly fund schools, the latest version to date, called Abbott V is the version that has the greatest impact on the current budget in the Pleasantville School District.

Pleasantville is a Pre K–12 district that has one high school, grades 9-12, one alternative school, one middle school, grades 5–8, and four elementary schools, grades PreK-4. Pleasantville has an enrollment of approximately 4,000 students (New Jersey Municipal Data Book, p. 402).

The student transiency rate is quite high, at 32.3%, it is more than twice the state average. Pleasantville received more than 80% of its 2000-2001 school budget from the state, 13% of its funding is from the local tax base, 3% from federal sources and 4% from other sources. During the 2000-2001 school year, Pleasantville will spend $10,012 to

educate each of its students (New Jersey State Report Card, 2000). This amount is higher than the state average.

Dr. Andrew Carrington is the current Superintendent of Schools in Pleasantville. He is serving the second year of a five year contract. Dr. Carrington has outlined a "Vision of Excellence" initiative that he expects will move the district forward in the coming years.

The district employs approximately15 principals and assistant principals. Just this year, the district added six supervisors to that roster of administrators to aid in pushing the district's curriculum forward. The district has 402 certified staff members that include teachers, guidance counselors and school nurses. The faculty-student ratio is 11.4 to 1. Approximately 20% of the staff have advanced degrees beyond a Bachelors. As of the 1989–1999 school year, the average teacher salary in Pleasantville was $37,378 which is below the state average. Pleasantville is also the home to two charter schools with applications for three more in the works. The Pleasantville school system boasts of having more than 300 computers in the district. That is more than any school or college in Atlantic County. The district was able to lease purchase the computers after the state approved their lease purchase agreement.

The new Pleasantville High School and Middle School complex opened in September of 1998. These schools cost $44 million dollars to build. They are the largest investments the district has made to date (Atlantic City Press, 1998). They share a sprawling 40 acre campus on Mill Road. The Board of Education had been discussed building these schools for over ten years. In March of 1995, voters finally approved a

referendum for $38.5 million dollars for these facilities. Since Pleasantville is a special needs district, 70% of the cost for this project was reimbursed to the district by the state.

In May of 1996, the Board of Education purchased the site for the school, a former dump for the sum of $1.8 million dollars. Construction began one year later. It took just over a year to complete the buildings. Temporary certificates of occupancy were issued in August 1998, just in time for the beginning of the school year. The amenities include an Olympic sized pool, athletic stadium, and a community theater.

Pleasantville is a receiving district for high school students from the nearby community of Absecon. Until the mid 1960's Pleasantville High school was the sending district for several other off shore communities including Greater Egg Harbor Regional and Northfield. As these communities expanded, they built their own schools and this started a steady decline in enrollment at the high school. Increasingly, even now, most Absecon students are electing to forgo Pleasantville High School and attend private or charter schools instead. There were only 149 members of the graduating class of 2000. However, student enrollment at the elementary level continues to increase. Even the advent of charter schools has had no negative impact on enrollment in the elementary schools.

Even with the high amount of money spent per student, Pleasantville's standardized test scores continue to be dismal and disheartening. Part of the state's plan to get Pleasantville students on parity with other districts is the institution of a Whole School Reform Model (WSR) in each of the schools in the district. This is a result of the New Jersey Supreme Court's decision in Abbott V in 1998. All Abbott School Districts must adopt a Whole School Reform model. According to the NJ Department of

Education, "whole school reform is a remedial measure that can create the opportunity to achieve a thorough and efficient education." Thus WSR is a comprehensive approach to education that fundamentally alters the way in which decisions about education are made in Abbott Districts. There are several WSR models available, but the presumptive model that the state is pushing is Success For All (SFA). Success For All is a nationally proven program that addresses the reading deficits of low income, at-risk school children (New Jersey Department Of Education). SFA has a reading component, a math component, a world lab component, a Kinder Roots component and a Curiosity Corner component for preschoolers. The four elementary schools implemented the SFA reading program during the 1998-1999 school year at the cost of $68,000 per school. The SFA MathWings program was implemented the following year. The cost for implementation of that program was approximately $62,000 per school. The cost for maintaining each program is about $40,000 per year. Each school must also budget an additional $40,000 per year for travel expenses incurred by the consultants and trainers for their three implementation site visits per year (South Main Street School Presumptive Budget 1999-2000).

Pleasantville prides itself on being in full compliance of the Abbott Regulations. Some reconfiguration of the staff has taken place to make the SFA program work. Facilitators have been hired to oversee the reading and math programs respectively. The school day has been extended for students. In addition to regular classroom teachers, tutors, or teachers who just remediate those students in need of extra help have been hired. The district has secured superior off site facilities to house the new PreK3 preschool program. Each school has a family support team in place to encourage parents

to become involved in their children's education. Parent training workshops are provided twice each month.

As per the Abbott Regulations, the School Management Team (SMT) is empowered at each school site to share in making key decisions regarding the school's programs. The School Management Team plans and implements ways to increase the school's effectiveness. This concept of representative teams is intended to increase the involvement and contributions of more people in the planning of improving the schools programs and practices. The logic of the team approach to school management is that programs are more likely to be successful when the people who must ultimately implement them have planned them. It is therefore, the purpose of the SMT to ensure participation of staff, parents, and the community in school-level decision making and to develop a culture of cooperation, accountability and commitment. Thus, the SMT is a collaborative planning team that coordinates the development, implementation and evaluation of the school's Quality Assurance Annual Report (QAAR). Additional duties of the SMT include selecting faculty, developing curriculum and instruction, and preparing the school's budget to name a few. The SMT consists of the Principal, guidance counselor, math and reading facilitators, two parents or community members, and three teachers, one representing the Early Learning unit (Pre K– K), Roots unit(1–2), and Wings unit (3-4), respectively. When the SMT meets, there are usually two monitors from the state called the School Review and Improvement Team (SRI) present to offer assistance.

The School Management Team is also entrusted with the responsibility of formulating the site based budgets for their respective buildings. Each team must build a

"zero-based budget" that takes into consideration all the mandates of the Abbott Regulations. The NJ Department of Education is obligated to facilitate the implementation process of WSR model by providing resources to help review budgets, coordinate necessary support and assist in the transition from a centralized budget to a site based one. Pleasantville's budget process is different from a non-Abbott district in that Pleasantville has the option of creating a budget that is driven by the needs of the students and the programs that need to be in place to effectively implement the Whole School Reform model and the Abbott mandates, rather than a dollar amount.

The Pleasantville School district basically receives four types of funding: Parity level funding, this money is for the rigorous standards the students must strive for. In this case it is to assure that all of the necessary elements are in place to help the students meet the Core Curriculum Content Standards. DEPA: Demonstrably Affective Program Aid , this funding is allocated based on the number of poor students enrolled in school. ECPA: Early Childhood Program Aid , this money is given to assure that everything is in place for the kindergarten and preschool programs that the district must implement under Abbott V. And finally, Title 1 funding, this money is to be used for after school tutoring and parenting workshops that must be in place in Abbott Districts. This too is based on the number of low income students (School Finance and Records, Rowan University 1999)

Because New Jersey is a state that has always relied so heavily on local property taxes to fund education, school funding issues are a never ending problem in the state. Even though the 1970's lawsuit, Robinson v Cahill contended that urban students received an inferior education because of the way that the state funds education, thirty

years later the same battled is being waged. Pleasantville is on board, using every opportunity to help its students show major academic improvements. The elementary schools use the Success For All Model, the Middle School uses Co-NECT and as of this school year, Pleasantville High School began using block scheduling. All of the elementary schools in Pleasantville have the distinction of being first cohort schools. This means these schools successfully implemented their Whole School Reform model early on rather than waiting for the state to impose deadlines.

South Main Street School

South Main is a Pre-K through 4 school located on South Main Street. It was built in 1970 to replace the old Park Avenue School. In 1990, an addition was added to house kindergarten and Pre-K students. Currently there are about 537 students enrolled. Of these students, 79% receive free or reduced lunch. And 7% are classified as in need of special education (South Main Street School Success For All Implementation Report #3). Sadly, more than 10% of the students will have transferred in or out of the school by June 2001. The majority of the students are black and Hispanic. Mrs. Rosemay Clarke is the Principal of South Main. She has been in the district for 20 years, the last four as principal of South Main. Daniel Smith is the Assistant Principal at South Main. There are 53 certified staff members on board including teachers, nurses, guidance counselors, social workers, a librarian, technology specialist and speech pathologist. South Main's budget for the 2000–2001 school year is $3,558,203. This includes staff salaries and benefits, as well as instructional items. South Main implemented the Success For All reading program in 1998 and has experienced some measure of success each year since implementation of the program, as measured by the eight week assessment tests.

According to Geraldine Brooks, SFA facilitator at South Main, "after analyzing the results of the eight week assessments, it is apparent that the reading ability of our students has improved. This demonstrates the success of our reading program". The SFA MathWings program was implemented during the 1999–2000 school year. It also appears to be promising. The Primary MathWings program aligns well with the Elementary School Proficiency Assessment (ESPA) and the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards. Consequently, the first and second graders performed well on the unit assessments. The Intermediate MathWings programs covers all the standards as well, however, the pacing and sequencing of this program must be tweaked to allow for all areas of the program to be covered in a timely manner. Thus, the third and fourth graders did not fare as well on their assessments as they could have.

This year, the Curiosity Corner Program was implemented for the Pre-K students. The SFA World Lab program is slated for implementation during the 2001-2002 school year. The fourth graders were still not proficient in all areas of the Elementary School Proficiency Assessment, however, South Main was the only school in the district to have shown an improvement in test scores this year (School Management Team Report, 2000). In Language Arts Literacy, 12% of those taking the ESPA were proficient. In Mathematics, 17% were proficient and 2% advanced proficient. In Science, 41% of the fourth graders were proficient and 4% were advanced proficient (New Jersey Statewide Testing System, 2000). While these scores are not near what they should be, they are steadily improving each year under the SFA programs.

South Main's students have 5 hours and 30 minutes of instructional time each day. Students read for 90 minutes each day without interruption and have 90 minutes of

math daily as well. They are grouped in teacher selected cooperative learning teams for each subject. They are grouped for reading based on ability, not grade. According to the Success For All Foundation, this allows everyone to experience success. They change classes for reading. The students are heterogeneously grouped for math and it is taught by the homeroom teacher.

The students have an extended day if they enroll in the After School Academy. This academy is funded through Abbott monies to offer the children more opportunities to experience success by participating in extra curricular activities. Additional programs includes the KEYS (latch key program), drama club and Lightspan, a home-based technology program and the Salem Tutorial, a partnership program with Salem United Methodist Church. This partnership with Salem is the core of South Main's parent and community participation. This program was designed by the collaborative efforts of the school's principal and the church's pastor. The church members were actively seeking to become involved in community service and the school was seeking adult listeners for the Volunteer Listener Program who would listen to students read, in support of the SFA reading mode. The Salem Tutorial meets the needs of the church and the school. South Main received recognition from the state as well as a three thousand dollar grant for this outstanding collaborative project.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to present a review of the literature on cooperative learning relative to the types, methodologies and techniques used. Extensive research has shown that cooperative learning boosts academic achievement. Many studies have been replicated under similar and varied conditions, and to a large degree, the results have been the same: that cooperative learning boosts academic achievement, that it aids in problem solving, that students sustain more of what is learned, that their self esteem is affected in a positive way, and that they relate well to others. Thus the intern will highlight some of the various forms of cooperative learning techniques used to bring about these positive outcomes.

Additionally, the intern wanted to compare those components of cooperative learning to what actually occured at the internship setting. The intern assessed the perceptions of students in cooperative learning teams to discover how they felt about their own academic achievement and whether they believed that working in cooperative learning teams aided in their academic achievement or whether it inhibited it.

Cooperative Learning

One of the major challenges facing students in urban schools is low academic achievement. These students are faced with many obstacles that inhibit their success in school. In 1997, all urban elementary schools in New Jersey were mandated by the state

to implement a Whole School Reform model to combat this tide of low achievement (New Jersey Department Of Education, 1998). After reviewing many research based educational programs, the state of New Jersey decided that a whole school reform would be the most effective approach to achieve this goal.

The contention of the New Jersey Department of Education is that whole school reform must completely replace those existing practices that have been proven to be ineffective over the years (New Jersey Department of Education). Inherently, what whole school reform does is to incorporate the best of proven, research-based educational practices and concentrate them into one component program.

One such Whole School Reform model is Success For All. Success For All is a school wide program for grades Prek-5 that strives to ensure that every child who takes part in the program will be on grade level in reading, writing and math by third grade and will remain at grade level throughout the rest of their school experience (Office of Educational Research, 1992). Cooperative Learning is the method Success For All uses to accomplish its goals.

Cooperative Learning is an instructional method in which students are working together for a common purpose in mixed ability learning teams (Success For All Foundation, 1999). Johnson, Johnson & Holubec (1993) offer a more succinct definition of cooperative learning. It is a research based instructional strategy that meets all of the following conditions: small heterogeneous groups; other students as a major resource; teacher acts as a consultant; positive interdependence between group members; individual accountability and all members know the material. All participants are evaluated by

comparison to a preset criterion, that purpose could be academic or social in nature. Whatever the desired outcome is, it can be achieved by the group working as a team.

Basically, cooperative learning can be divided into two distinct structures; positive goal interdependence and positive resource interdependence. The former is based on the idea that an individual team member can achieve his own personal goal only if the other individuals on the team achieve their goals as well. The latter form is structured so that team members are forced to depend on each other. The team's resources are divided so that each team member has only a portion of the resources they need to complete a task. Thus, they are mutually dependent on each other. The distinction here is that individuals benefit only from obtaining these resources, not from the success of other team members. According to Aronson (1978) this form of cooperative learning has no effect on academic achievement.

The cooperative learning team is usually small, consisting of 2-6 students. The team strives towards a sense of dependence on one another. This is accomplished by setting goals and creating an atmosphere of everyone belonging to the team. Each team member is not only responsible for their own learning, but also for their team members' learning as well. Thus, the teacher serves as a facilitator of learning to maximize the learning of each team member.

Prior to placing students in a cooperative learning environment, the teacher must prepare students to work together (Adams & Hamm, 1996, p. 6). In establishing cooperative learning teams, teachers cannot simply put students together and expect them to function as a team. Creating a functional cooperative learning environment must be a deliberate effort on the part of the teacher. Team building activities such as those outlined

in Success For All's Getting Along Together should be utilized to promote the building of pro-social skills. If team building activities are neglected, then students will fail to establish those interpersonal cooperative skills that enhance cohesiveness among members.

Inherent in the philosophy of cooperative learning is the fact that the team members should be socialized in such a way as to view each other as equal contributing members whose input is valued and whose contributions aid in the success of the team. If true cooperation among team members is to occur, then teachers must make the difference. They must provide the time for students to grapple with problems, try out strategies, discuss, experiment, explore and evaluate (Adams & Hamm, 1996, p. 9). In traditional classrooms, peer talk is viewed as "insignificant noise," relegated to few and infrequent periods of the school day (Goodlad, 1983, p. 66). Thus, student discussion is a key component in the success of a cooperative learning program.

"No single instructional method can be used in all subject areas and for all purposes equally well...however, there are different methods based on cooperative heterogeneous teams for almost all instructional circumstances." (Slavin, 1991, p.3)

The amount of research on cooperative learning is quite extensive and somewhat overwhelming. However, out of these bodies of research have emerged many types of cooperative and collaborative learning styles. Although they are somewhat varied in their scope, the general consensus is that cooperative learning boosts academic achievement when compared to individualistic and competitive learning.

Educators were concerned about the profound negative effects of competitive and individualistic learning strategies used in the nations classrooms on a daily basis. This

concern guided the development of research on cooperative learning. The intern will present a glimpse of the different types of cooperative learning techniques.

The bulk of the cooperative learning strategies used in schools today was developed at Johns Hopkins University by Robert Slavin and his associates. Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD) is a cooperative learning technique developed by Slavin (1978). Four or five students are grouped in teams. The teams consist of a mixture of high achieving and low achieving students. Teams are also racial and gender balanced. The team members receive their tasks and are instructed to study the concepts. Team members have the option of studying as a whole team, studying as partners or using a study method of their choice. Their task is not complete until all team members have comprehended the material or concept to be learned. After a practice period, the students are assessed individually. The component that makes this method so popular is the individual improvement score system which gives every student the opportunity to contribute points to the team. The team earning the highest amount of points are celebrated and rewarded with some type of token such as a certificate.

Slavin (1980) modified Aronson's Jigsaw and termed it Jigsaw II. Slavin incorporated the Jigsaw method with his Student Team Learning method. This cooperative learning structure is designed to increase team members' knowledge and ownership of a topic by making each member an expert on one part of the topic. This information and understanding is then shared with the entire team (Success For All Foundation, 1999). In this version, students are grouped as in the Team Assisted Individualization method. The variation is that students study a particular part of a topic with their own team. They then go to other teams and confer with the corresponding

person on that team. Consequently, when all is done, the new expert teaches his teammates all that was learned. The purpose of this concept is to bring a variety of perspectives and depth to the lesson. Team Assisted Individualization (TAI), (Slavin, Leavey, & Madden, 1992), this cooperative learning technique was developed specifically for math instruction as part of Johns Hopkins' Student Team Learning. This cooperative learning concept combines team learning and individualized instruction. Four or five students are grouped heterogeneously. They are placed on a team based on the results of an assessment test. Students work through various tasks at their own pace. When a student believes they have mastered the material, they take a test. They then select a partner to check their work. If the student passes the assessment with 80% or better, he takes a final test that is scored by a monitor. This cooperative learning strategy differs from others in that it allows the student to proceed in their learning at their own pace. This is an ideal method to use when students need varied levels of instruction. It is set up in such a way as to free the teacher to allow them to work with individuals or small groups.

Teams-Games-Tournament (TGT) is another celebrated cooperative learning method. DeVries & Slavin (1978) utilized the basic format as Student Teams-Achievement Divisions, however, students are grouped in teams of three. Students achieve success by employing an academic games concept. They vie in academic tournaments with team members of the same caliber. Team members earn points based on their play and then get to rotate to another table. This format is such that all members are able to make a contribution to the success of their team. The team's achievements are recognized by the awarding of certificates and other tokens. Madden, Slavin & Stevens

(1986), collaborated to formulate Cooperative Integrated Reading & Composition (CIRC). The philosophy behind CIRC is to incorporate the latest research findings on reading and writing into everyday practice. CIRC is sited as being the ideal vehicle to infuse cooperative learning into reading and writing programs.

Some cooperative learning concepts that were developed at other sites include The Learning Together method of cooperative learning developed by Johnson & Johnson (1975). In the Learning Together Method, four or five students are grouped heterogeneously to work on tasks together. They submit a single copy of their work. Cohesiveness is boosted by positive teacher feedback addressing how well the group worked as a team. The team is also given the opportunity to evaluate how well they worked as a team and what they can do to make improvements. Aronson (1978) developed a well received cooperative learning technique that he termed Jigsaw. Jigsaw is a multifunctional, diverse structure of cooperative learning that can be used for a variety of purposes. However, it is used primarily for the acquisition and presentation of new material. Jigsaw was originally developed as an attempt to bridge the gap between children from different ethnic groups. The results make it clear that its function is not limited to multiracial situations (Aronson & Patnoe, 1997, p. 14). Students are grouped together in six member teams. The team receives their task which is broken down into component parts. Each team member is responsible for mastering a component and sharing their expertise with the entire team. The structure of this cooperative learning method forces students to be interdependent.

Sharan & Sharan (1976) contributed to cooperative learning by developing Group Investigations. In this form of cooperative learning, students work in small groups using

inquiry, discussion and planning. The structure of Group Investigations is designed to emphasize higher-order thinking skills such as analysis (US Department of Education, 1992). Students are allowed to select their own team. Teams work by selecting their task as a class, they then separate themselves to complete their individual part to add to the teams work. The entire team makes a presentation of the assignment. The students are evaluated based on the quality of their work as a team.

Johnson & Johnson (1979) widened the cooperative learning structures by introducing Academic Controversy. They believe that cooperative elements alone do not ensure maximal productivity. There has to be both cooperation and conflict. Thus, controversy is characterized by both positive goal and resource interdependence as well as by conflict (Sharan, 194, p. 68).

Kagan (1985) developed a structural approach to cooperative learning. He conceptualized a sequence of behaviors that can be developed in the classroom to structure classroom interactions (Aronson, 1991, p. 18). Kagan has outlined a number of ways to structure each cooperative learning task and the accompanying goals, as well as the resources to aid the facilitator in developing positive interdependence.

Finally, Cohen (1986) and her colleagues at Stanford University developed an approach to cooperative learning that emphasized the use of discovery oriented projects. This method, called Complex Learning has been particularly successful in helping bilingual students. Students are involved in a wide range of roles. The teacher affirms their success by pointing out all the positive things the students are good at that helps the team succeed (Slavin, 1995, p. 11).

All cooperative learning techniques are not the same. While each cooperative learning method is distinct in its concept, the commonality among them all is that students learn to work together to achieve a desired goal. In order for students to benefit from a true cooperative learning experience, five basic elements must transpire (Johnson, Johnson & Holubec, 1990). These elements are: positive interdependence, face to face promotive interaction, individual accountability, social skills and group process. Johnson and colleagues contend that without these elements in place, no cooperation among team members is evolving. What you have, according to Johnson is simply individuals working in teams.

The intern was curious to discover what these components would look like if one were observing a cooperative setting. If a teacher desired to utilize cooperative learning as an instructional method, they must contemplate all of the necessary occurrences that facilitates student learning. The teacher should be mindful of how the students are assigned to cooperative learning teams. Whatever system they use to form the cooperative groups, the smaller the group, the better. The next task the teacher might undertake is facilitating as each student selects a role on their team. This is done to help each team member function in a productive manner. This is the stage where the positive interdependence begins to take shape because all members are drawn to a common goal. An example of a team role could be the go-getter. It is the go-getter's job to gather all the equipment and materials the team needs to complete their task. On the other hand, the recorder is in charge of the team's record keeping. The encourager is responsible for urging the team on through discussion, conflict and ultimately task completion. In essence, the encourager keeps peace and keeps the team on task.

By now, the teacher has determined what instructional objectives will be covered. She explains them to the teams. Inherent in that explanation are any cooperative learning concepts, practices and skills that aids the students in learning together and functioning as a team. They could be as simple as what a team member is to do while waiting for other members to complete their portion of the task or how the team is to rehearse the team's answers to assure maximum learning for all members.

Positive interdependence is the bonding element in cooperative learning that conveys to each team member that the team cannot be successful unless everyone participates. The contribution of each team member is necessary and expected. Team members develop an awareness of their connectedness and common goal. Activities should be structured in such a way that team members need each other to accomplish their common tasks. Promotive interaction occurs when team members are discussing, problem solving and encouraging each other. Team members are genuine in their desire to promote the learning of a teammate before their own. The team is practicing Group Accountability when they as a whole work towards the attainment of its goals. Team members are afforded the opportunity to take part in the learning of the concepts presented. They can thereby examine their role carefully and understand how they are an integral part of the team. The students use the learning together time to strengthen individual learning. Team members not only accept responsibility for their own learning, but they assume responsibility for their teammates learning as well. Finally, the attainment of the social skills necessary to function cooperatively will only be achieved when the teacher or facilitator provide instructions in proactive social skills. These skills can be in the area of communication, conflict resolution, tolerance, logical reasoning and

decision making. Team members must have mutual respect for each other. This respect must transcend racial, ethnic, and gender roles. Team members should develop a genuine affinity for one another.

The evidence of having social skills in place is the enhanced cooperation among members of the team and the heightened interpersonal skills among individual members. The team gets the opportunity to evaluate how well they work as a team and what steps they took to get to that point via Group Process. Team members discuss with each other how helpful or unhelpful they were in realizing individual goals and team goals. Out of this discussion process, the team should be able to articulate what their next goal is and how they plan to achieve it. When students are able to elaborate about their effectiveness as a team, they can then decide how to proceed in achieving their next step towards strengthening the team.

Although cooperation among individuals is the goal in cooperative learning, each cooperative learning technique employs different strategies to achieve that outcome. For example, Student Teams-Achievement Divisions, Teams-Games-Tournament and Team Assisted Individualization are highly structured, with well defined tasks and rewards. Conversely, in Group Investigations and Learning Together, students have more autonomy and the rewards are less specific. Jigsaw and Jigsaw II are used for digesting Social Studies. Team Assisted Individualization was designed specifically for math instruction. Student Teams-Achievement Divisions, Teams-Games-Tournament and Jigsaw fosters a sense of friendly competition between students to encourage cooperation (Slavin, 1983, p. 29).

In answer to the query, "what makes cooperative learning so effective?", the intern discovered that students who take part in cooperative learning teams are motivated to cooperate because they know that others are depending on them. Students learn more by participating in active instruction. Weak students are propelled and encouraged to go on. Strong students are able to expand their knowledge by teaching what they understand to others (Felder & Brent, 1994, p.3). In a cooperative setting, students are motivated towards success, aided by their teammates. This nurturing structure provides the opportunity for students to share information, learn new material, construct their own knowledge, and to develop the social skills that will be necessary in many real world situations.

According to Johnson and Johnson, cooperative learning experiences promote more positive attitudes towards the instructional experience when compared to individualistic and competitive learning situations. The research data indicates overwhelmingly that students learn more when they work cooperatively. Slavin (1987), offers two theories regarding why cooperative learning is so successful. The motivational theory suggests that team members are apt to work together because of the incentives such as goals and rewards. The stronger the desire of team members to succeed, the more likely they will cooperate with and help each other. Students therefore encourage one another's learning, reinforce one another's academic efforts, and express norms favoring academic achievement (Slavin, 1995, p.16). Conversely, the cognitive theory supposes that the interaction among team members aid in the mastery of concepts. When students are able to elaborate and explain concepts to others, it helps them to retain what is learned. (Slavin 1995, p.18), says that students will learn from one another

because in their discussions of the content, cognitive conflicts will arise, inadequate reasoning will be exposed, and higher-quality understandings will emerge.

Johnson & Johnson (1989) offer valuable advice to anyone contemplating the use of cooperative learning. They believe that if the potential of cooperative learning is to be realized, students must have the prerequisite interpersonal and small-group skills and be motivated to use them. These skills should be taught just as systematically as mathematics, social studies, or any academic subject. Doing so requires that teachers communicate to students the need for social skills, define and model these skills, and have the students practice them over and over again. Teachers also process how effectively students perform the skills, and ensure that students persevere until the skills are fully integrated into their everyday behaviors and repertoires. Until they do so, they will not only increase student achievement but they will also increase students future employability, career success, quality of relationships and psychological health (Johnson & Johnson, 1989, p.32-33).

As successful as cooperative learning has proven to be, it is not without its detractors. There are critics who've expressed concern regarding those students who do not do their share of the team's task and those high achieving students who are hindered in their pursuit of academic excellence. These naysayers also contend that cooperative learning strategies do not promote higher-order thinking skills.

Chapter 3

Design of the Study

The intern conducted an action research project at the internship setting. The intern focused the study on the students' perception of their cooperative learning teams. The students are grouped cooperatively for reading and math, however, the focus of this study was reading only.

The Target Students

Students in the Success For All Reading Wings program were organized into groups of four or five teacher selected teams. The team members were responsible for making sure that they and their teammates had learned whatever strategies the teacher had presented. The teammates worked together in a variety of ways, ranging from partner reading, to group study, to sharing as a peer responsible to the group. The teams earned points based on the performance of their members, and earned certificates or recognition if their team scores exceeded a high criterion of excellence.

The cooperative learning structure utilized at the internship setting is goal dependence. While the research has shown that this particular structure boosts academic achievement, the intern decided to investigate whether students perceived it's benefits. After observing the target students over a period of time in their cooperative learning teams, the intern concluded that not all students were content to be a part of this type of instructional method on a regular basis. The intern began to ask colleagues if they had experienced similar observations. Overwhelmingly, they had and felt helpless to aid these students without compromising the integrity of the Success For All program. The

intern then decided to assess the students' perceptions of their cooperative learning teams and see whether they believed these cooperative teams aided in their learning or impeded their success as measured by their first and second quarter report card grades. If the needs of these students were not being met as part of these teams, then instruction could be modified in a way that attended to their learning styles more effectively. Thus, these findings could be presented to the Success For All Point Trainer so that modifications could possibly be made in the reading program at the internship setting without disturbing the essence of the Success For All program.

The intern selected a target population for the study. The target population were fourth grade students at the internship setting. All of the students were in a homogeneously grouped reading class. There were 38 students who participated in the study, 21 boys and 17 girls. These students were from three reading classes. These three classes were selected based on their teacher's willingness to have them participate in the study. Additionally, they were selected because they were currently involved in cooperative learning teams in reading and math and have been so for the past three and two years respectively. These students also had the experience of being taught in a traditional classroom setting, where the teacher instructed the whole class at one time and they were the conduits of information rather than the students. The students worked individually most of the time and independent of each other. Their success in the classroom depended on them only. Therefore, having been exposed to both instructional methods they were able make a judgement about which instructional method they preferred.

Data Collection Method

After researching several data collection techniques, the intern decided that a survey was the best method to collect the data needed for the study because it could be completed quickly by the target population. The intern studied a variety of survey types and was aided by colleagues in putting together a survey that solicited relevant, reliable and valid information. The intern desired to affect the student's attitudes through the survey. The intern then developed a Likert survey with a 3-point rating scale. The responses were: always, sometimes and seldom respectively. Conversely, each response was assigned a value of 3, 2, or 1, respectively for scoring purposes. The survey questionnaire contained 16 declarative statements that the students responded to in writing. The final statements being opened ended so as to gather rich data that may not be otherwise be revealed in the statements. The responses were categorized into three clusters: the students' perception of their cooperative team/teammates, the students' perception of their learning style, and the students' perception of their academic achievement.

Additionally, the intern developed a self survey to estimate the self esteem of the students regarding their contribution to their teams. Finally, the target population was asked to describe their learning style. Before a student can determine whether cooperative learning aides or hinders their learning, they must first answer the question, "how do I learn best?" In order to answer that question, they must have some awareness of their learning style. Since students are forced to work in groups, the intern wondered if student learning styles was a consideration at the inception of cooperative learning.

The format of the reading survey was important because of the ages of the target population. The data collection instrument was designed so that the students could complete the survey in twenty minutes tops. Although only a single page, the survey was clear, organized and user friendly.

Prior to distributing the surveys to the students, the intern met with the teachers of the target population to discuss how the survey was to be administered. The survey was administered to the students while they were in their reading classes. Prior to administration of the survey, the students were instructed on how to complete the questionnaire. The teachers explained to the students that the school was interested in seeing how their reading teams worked together. The students were also told that the data gathered from the survey would be used to improve their reading program. The teachers read scripted instructions prepared by the intern. During discussion with the teachers of the target population, it was determined that there was no real need for the students to be anonymous. Therefore, the students wrote their names on the survey so that it would be easy to access their report cards and even their cumulative folders to access grades prior to cooperative learning if needed. The students were given twenty minutes to complete the survey. When all the questionnaires were completed, each student received a treat for participating in the study.

The completed surveys were collected by the intern. The intern collaborated with colleagues to make sure that the data that was collected was valid and reliable. Thus, the intern observed the target population in their cooperative reading teams on several occasions. This was done to add depth to the data garnered from the surveys.

Chapter 4

Presentation of the Research Findings

Data Analysis

The intern collected and analyzed 38 reading surveys from three 4th grade reading classes at the internship setting. The intern also analyzed six dichotomous questions that were given to the students to estimate the level of self esteem that each team member had relative to their contribution to their team. The final body of data examined by the intern was information regarding the target students' perception of their own learning style. The intern's rational for this was that schools have an obligation to provide a variety of experiences for maximal student learning. Inherent in that obligation is the necessity to address learning styles. According to research, when teachers endeavor to form cooperative groups, they should be aware that some students learn best when working by themselves. The intern wondered whether this group's learning style was attended to in a cooperative learning environment. Ideally, there are some students who function better working with a partner, others fare well in a group setting, whether it be cooperative learning or otherwise. But there are actually some students who learn better working alone, than with others.

Finally, the intern confirmed the first and second quarter report card grades of each of the target students. The intern began to systematically sort through the data.

The intern utilized the triangulation process to cross reference data. A matrix had been developed by the intern and colleagues to aid in analyzing the data. This matrix

was formatted so that all responses could be viewed at the same time. Each survey response was plotted on a vertical axis. Initially, each survey was scored by hand. The score for each response was then plotted on the matrix. Once the scores for all responses had been tabulated, the intern began to plot the data according to clusters. The clusters of data fell into three categories: the students' perceptions of their team/teammates; the students' perception of their own learning and the students' perceptions of their reading grades. The open-ended questions were codified and analyzed separately from the rest of the survey questions. In the process of this analysis, information began to surface that may have influenced the survey responses, but had not been considered by the intern such as attendance, motivation, overall attitude about school/teachers, parental support, etc.

The intern had ideas about what themes would be evident from the data. The intern began look for relationships between the three clusters and report card grades, specifically those students that showed a preference for working independently. The intern then considered that there might be gender related differences that could be evidenced in the data. The intern wanted to see if those who expressed a desire to work by themselves had lower grades than those expressing a preference for working cooperatively. If that were the case then, there are serious implications for retrofitting the Success For All program to allow for more independent work if these students believed they could achieve more by working by themselves. The data did not show a correlation between those students who preferred to work alone and report grades.

Based on the data that was analyzed to date, a possible recommendation to the Success For All Point Trainer and Reading Facilitator would be suggestions on how to improve the delivery of instruction to the students and other ways of addressing individual student needs within the reading program.

After all of the data was analyzed. The intern discovered that most of the students in the target group expressed a preference for working with a cooperative learning team. Even those students who did not fare well in their reading class stated that they preferred to work in a group. Overwhelmingly, these same students believed that their teammates did not have an effect on their reading grade.

The intern examined each of the reading survey questions separately and scored them individually. The intern employed the use of mean scores to interpret this data. A mean score was established for each survey question. The survey questions were then categorized into clusters according to types.

The cluster of questions that addressed the students' perception of their own learning and achievement averaged a mean score of 2.11 an a 3 point Likert scale. This score indicated that most of the target students preferred to work with a cooperative learning team for reading rather than work alone. This data also showed that the students believed that they had the advantage of being helped by their teammates. Working with the team did not cause these students to work any harder than they would if they were working alone, according to the data. These students indicated that they sometimes liked to compete with others as well as share their ideas with their teams.

Next, the intern began to interpret the data relative to the cluster of questions that dealt with the students' perception of their grades. The mean score for this cluster was the lowest at 1.85 on a three point Likert scale. This data was somewhat conflicting. Several students responded that they received a good grade in reading, when clearly they did not receive a good reading grade. They also felt pretty sure they would have received a better reading grade if they worked alone. This is counter to how they answered in the

first cluster of questions. The intern will address these discrepancies later. This research supported the notion that students felt responsible for their own work. They also accepted responsibility for contributing to their teams. This important concept is essential in successful cooperative learning teams. The target students indicated that their teams had somewhat of an effect on their grade, this supported the cooperation idea they must all sink or swim together.

Finally, the intern began to interpret the data that was accumulated from the survey relative to the students' perception of their team teammates. This cluster of questions had a mean average of 2.13 on a three point scale. The highest score from this cluster of questions was related to working with the team. Thirty-seven of the students expressed positive feelings for their teammates. They enjoyed working with their teams. They did not hold the team responsible for their reading grades. On a whole, students believed that their teams worked well together. However, according the responses received on the open ended interview question, several students felt that their team played too much. They also indicated that their team argued too much. The intern will further investigate this phenomenon to determine whether there was genuine hostility or whether it was natural conflict that emerges when there are different perspectives at play.

Each of the 38 target students were briefly interviewed to answer the two open ended questions. The two questions were: what is the best thing about your team, and what is the worst thing about your team? Nearly half of those interviewed (47%), indicated that their team helped them to understand the work better. Forty-five percent of the students stated that they worked well with their teams, that they got along with and

showed respect for each other. Sixty-six percent of the students felt comfortable working with their team.

When interviewed, several students appeared to be sold on the idea that their teams helped them to earn points. This belief follows with Slavin's group rewards concept. In their teams, the students had the chance to help their team receive teamwork points. These points are tallied at the end of the week. The team then received a certificate to determine if their cooperation and working together throughout the week rated them as a Super, Great, or Good team.

At the beginning of the school year, and throughout, students practice "getting along together". The students have the opportunity to work on team building skills. They learn the necessary behaviors to help the team work better. Also as part of the Getting Along Together component of the Success For All Program, students learn the interpersonal skills, conflict resolution and social skills that foster respect for each team member and the contributions they bring to the team. This appears to have happened as indicated by the way the target students responded to the interview questions. This goal interdependence according to Johnson and Johnson (1984) is especially beneficial to those students that perhaps would be shunned or stigmatized because of gender, race, economic status or some other perceived shortcoming. When asked to respond regarding the worst thing about their team, the highest responses were that the team played/argued too much. A few students responded that their team did not work together. When the data was examined by gender, the majority of the responses regarding teams that played too much were from girls. The intern believes that this could be attributed to the role that gender plays in our society, or perhaps the way that girls were socialized. If the teams

were in fact playing too much, then perhaps a team member could have been assigned the job of keeping the team on task. When the intern pondered further, the contention that the team played too much, the intern decided that the arguing was consistent with what was encouraged in the reading classroom during the Think-Pair-Share time. The cooperative learning teams were told to challenge their teammate's answers and cause them to justify and support their reasons for answering as they did. Of course this challenge could spark healthy debate and dialog that can lead to higher order thinking and processing, enhanced communication, and boost their self esteem as problem solvers. Consequently, arguing was also consistent with natural conflict that occurs regularly in our society. Johnson and Johnson (1984) emphasized in their cooperative model, the importance of teaching cognitive skills such as cooperative controversy whereby students learn to argue intellectually with one another. None of the students appeared to focus too much on this concept. The intern believes that when conflict occurs, it is an opportune time for the students to employ the conflict resolution strategies they have been learning. With the teacher's help, students can see that interpersonal conflicts are bound to arise, not only in school but in life too, and that they posses the skills to navigate them successfully.

Knowing how children are at this age, the intern found it interesting that no one complained about being teased. Only one student felt that he was left out by his team, and only one student responded that his teammates were grouchy. It is evident that all members do not bring the same contributions to the success of the team. Yet, whatever their level of participation is, it appears to be acceptable to the team.

The intern found it very interesting that when the data was examined by grades. The 17 students who received high reading grades (A, B) had no complaints about the slower students. On a whole, this group did not perceive themselves as being held back by slower students. Opponents of cooperative learning believe that the stronger students, especially those that are gifted would not realize their full potential if they were forced to function in a group with students who are not on par with them academically or intellectually. This group did not appear to be disturbed about others not pulling their weight. More importantly, nearly all of them perceived that they made some contribution to the success of the team. The interesting aspect to this is that the contribution needed not be academic. Students contributed in a variety of ways such as recorder, peacemaker, go-getter, etc. Even for the of brighter students, cooperative learning has benefits and advantages over working alone.

The intern expected that students would object to working in a group. Also, the intern believed that most students would prefer to work alone. Finally, the intern fully expected most of the students to respond that they would learn more if they were given the opportunity to work by themselves. To that end, the intern deemed it necessary to ascertain the learning styles of the target students. The intern subscribes to the notion that no instructional program can address the needs of every student. Thus it was crucial to make sure the opportunity was present within the Success For All program to optimize the learning experience of each student regardless of what their learning styles are.

Students were asked to rate their learning style as being visual, auditory or kinesthetic. The intern believes that because students have diverse learning styles that are evident early in their academic life, educators must have an awareness of these styles.

Learning styles hold powerful implications for how services are delivered to the learner. No instructional method can afford to disregard how students learn. This knowledge, will determine to a great degree whether or not students experience success within the confines of a particular instructional mode. Of the target students, 34% rated themselves as visual learners, 39% rated themselves as auditory learners and 26% rated themselves as kinesthetic learners. Particular attention was paid to learning styles and the students' determination of their reading grade. Regardless of the learning style, 98% of the students responded that they received a good grade in reading. The students' perception of a good grade indicated they believed they were successful in reading . Thus, the intern concluded that the students believed that their learning styles were attended to.

The intern discovered that the target students actually liked working in cooperative groups. The reason for this could have been that since the students were actively engaged in the learning process, and there were no real constraints placed on their communication with one another, they perceived cooperative learning as fun. Perhaps that is why a few students responded that their teams played too much.

It also meant that the implementation process for the Success For All Reading Wings was followed through as prescribed at the internship setting. It spoke to the commitment of the teachers to operate within the confines of the highly structured program. The high structure and the scripts of the program alone made it somewhat unpopular. However, it appears that no one had intentionally compromised the integrity of the program.

Many districts implement program after program, only to abandon them without data in place to determine whether the program actually met their needs or those charged

with following the program through to the letter, often do not. Thus it can't be determined whether the program was successful or not.

In terms of delivering service to the learner, the target students had acquired and continue to utilize some of the interpersonal skills that are necessary to function in life. Since the students were actively engaged in the learning process, they were spending sufficient time on task. Spending time on task is crucial to the success of any educational program. This component of the program also spoke to the learning styles of the students. Because the students were involved in meta-cognitive type activities, the intern believed that all of the learning styles were addressed to some degree. This appears to be evident, because no student expressed a sense of being constrained relative to their academic achievement. Because the students felt that they belonged to the group and were respected by their peers, they were in turn motivated to do their part in aiding the accomplishments of their team. Sixty-six percent of the students responded that they felt comfortable working with their team. This positive interaction appears to be the key to the triumph of the reading teams. Some of the cooperative learning goals as outlined by Johnson and Johnson (1984) such as positive interdependence relative to accomplishing tasks as a team and individual accountability were clearly evident in the way the students worked cooperatively. If this essential component were not in place, the intern doubts the students would have had such positive attitudes towards team learning. The Getting Along Together component of the Success For All program can be credited for this. This was the part of the program that exposed the students to teambuilding activities. These skills were taught by the students' home base teacher. The practices learned through Getting Along Together were carried over into the reading classes. The students

developed and maintained the strategies necessary to function as a group. Children are not born knowing how to work cooperatively. These techniques must be taught, modeled and reinforced regularly.

The intern set out to evaluate the perceptions of students who work in cooperative learning teams at the internship setting. The intern wanted to find out if the target students perceived cooperative learning as a benefit to their learning or whether they perceived it as an impediment to their learning.

After carefully examining the data, the intern can reasonably conclude that the target students prefer to work in cooperative learning teams rather than competitive or traditional classrooms. The students' attitude relative to cooperative learning were compared based on learning styles, gender and grades. The intern discovered that through cooperative learning teams at the internship setting, students were being prepared for the demands of the work place in such areas as problem solving, tolerance, respect, interpersonal skills and working collaboratively.

Additionally, cooperative learning at the internship setting served as a vehicle to aid the students in getting the cognitive, psychomotor and social skills they need to boost their academic achievement. Not every student was experiencing the high achievement that the research on cooperative learning boosts about, but the ground work is in place to make it happen.

Chapter 5

Conclusions, Implications, and Further Study

The intern desired to study the impact of cooperative learning at the internship setting, as it related to the target students' perception of their learning. The intern wanted to discover whether the students in cooperative learning teams perceived cooperative learning techniques as being a benefit to their academic success or an impediment to their success in the classroom.

When examined closely, the data from the study suggests that students enjoyed working in cooperative learning teams. Also, the analysis of the data implied that the students felt good about their academic achievement. The students perceived cooperative learning as a benefit and an enhancement to their understanding of the concepts rather than a hindrance to their learning. More importantly, the data suggests that the students believed they learned more from working with their teams than they would have learned working alone. Slavin (1995), states that in cooperative learning, students will learn from one another because in their discussion of the content, cognitive conflicts will arise, inadequate reasoning will be exposed, and higher quality understandings will emerge.

Additionally, the intern believes that the students appear to have embraced cooperative learning whether they made the best grades or not. What is profound though, is that implicit from the research data is the fact that the target students view themselves as being successful. They appear to have a sense of positive expectation toward school. This intern believes in the power of perceptions. If these students perceived themselves

as being successful then, ideally, they will approach school from that perspective. This is a good thing. Even those students who earned reading grades of "C" or "D" experienced their own level of success.

The intern was mindful that the target students were minority students, some from blighted conditions. Yet, through the Success For All program, they have a chance to rise above their circumstances. The students were gaining enough strategies from the program to benefit them in all walks of life. It was apparent that the students believed that their success or failure emanated from them. They did not hold anyone else responsible for their learning. The data was not conclusive regarding what motivated the students to have the perception of success. Are these perceptions outcomes that are inherent within the program, or are they brought about because teachers have high expectations for all students?

Generally, students determined that their individual learning needs were met within the structure of the Success For All program. This aspect was paramount because it meant that the Success For All program would have to have been retrofitted to accommodate the needs and learning styles of those learners.

Educational institutions make constant decisions about instructional programs. They sometimes modify these programs to meet the needs of its students. Success For All is no exception. Assessing the perceptions of how the target students felt about working in cooperative teams provided enough data to the internship setting about the implementation of the Success For All program. The results indicate that the reading program , as outlined has produced growth in the reading achievements and the social skills of the students. The growth in reading scores can be substantiated by the results of

the eight-week assessment tests. This information can be submitted to the Success For All trainers.

One factor that was not evident from the study is what compelled the students to work together cooperatively. Can this be attributed to one particular component of the program? Perhaps the students were motivated to work cooperatively because they were not in a competitive situation with one another. Was there an allegiance or bond formed within the group? (Slavin 1995, p. 3) states that the stronger the desire of the team members to succeed, the more likely they will cooperate with and help each other. Students therefore encourage one another's learning, reinforce one another's academic effort and express norms favoring academic achievement.

Implications For Further Study

Although all the data collected from the eight week assessments indicate that the target students are attaining academic gains, the intern wondered if the gains are going to be sustained under a different learning environment. The internship setting is an urban school with mostly minority students. Additionally, there is a high degree of transition among the student population. Many of the target students have not been in the Success For All Reading Wings program since its implementation. Does the fact that some students move so often have any impact on the results achieved in the program? Having said that, the intern wondered whether the reading achievements gained under Success For All will be sustained when the students leave the internship setting and enters another reading program? The intern believes it behooves the internship setting and the district to conduct some type of exiting research with the schools receiving the transferred student.

Having some data in place regarding the success of the students in their new reading program lends validity to the results attained within the Success For All program. If the academic and social gains made within the confines of the program are legitimate, then the Success For All program has been as genuine success. If the gains are not sustained in the new setting, then the results attained become questionable.

Organizational Change

The organization has changed because it now has data in place showing that the target students have made improvements in their reading scores over the last three years.

As a result of the Getting Along Together component of the program, the students appear to be making better choices and their ability to problem solve and resolve conflict has improved. This is indicated by the lowered suspension rate, the increase in attendance, a reduction in tardiness, and the high number of students who were "caught being good".

Although many teachers and staff members found the Success For All program to be too scripted and confining, they have been committed and tenacious in their efforts to follow the program through as outlined. The organization has data in place to aid it in utilizing the Success For All program to its advantage. For example, the Success For All program has been modified to assure that it is aligned with the Core Curriculum Content standards. This is absolutely essential since the internship setting is in New Jersey.

The Success For all implementation site checks have been so outstanding during each visit, that the internship setting has been recommended as a visitation school. This distinction means that when a school is considering adopting the Success For All

program, they can visit the internship setting to see what the program actually looks like in the classroom.

The organization has also expanded into the community. Teachers from the internship setting have trained community volunteers in Success For All strategies to enable them to help students strengthen their reading skills. It has even won an award for this endeavor.

The intern acknowledges that even though the purpose at the onset of this study was confirmed, more conclusive and valid findings could have been reached had the surveys been distributed more randomly, or a larger sampling group were used. This makes the study results somewhat limited in its scope because the population with in the internship setting were not varied enough. There are many cooperative learning methods in use in classrooms around the country, however, the method utilized at the internship setting is positive goal interdependence. Perhaps different results would have been attained using one of the other cooperative learning techniques.

Finally, the students at the internship setting as well as the school district as a whole has been experiencing declining levels of proficiency on standardized tests for a number of years. Success For All has apparently shown promising results towards getting the students back on track, academically and socially. The ultimate goal at the internship setting is for the fourth graders to pass the Elementary School Proficiency Assessment (ESPA). This has not happened to date, nor is it expected to happen this year, however, the program is still in its infancy stage at the intern ship setting. If students continue to make progress under the program, this goal will be attained. It is

still imperative that the dictates of the program are followed at the internship setting, and hopefully the students will continue to experience success.

The Internship Experience

As a result of undergoing internship training, the intern has had the opportunity to employ some of the leadership strategies that have been shared in class. Having to put theory into practice from a leadership perspective has been an eye-opening experience. The intern has gained valuable insight on the importance of interpersonal skills. Having the ability to relate to staff is the bedrock to making schools run effectively. The intern understands the need to foster a climate of teamwork and collaboration among staff and colleagues.

The intern has never doubted her ability as a leader. She has always believed that whatever she does, she will do a commendable job. However, as the intern reflected on her experiences as an intern, she understands how important it is to have strong interpersonal skills. Ability alone doesn't make one a great leader. The intern believes that learning how to interact with different personalities will be a great determiner of her success as a leader.

The intern has developed a keener awareness of the benefits of empowering staff through teamwork and collaboration. For insistence, the intern believes that she can perform most tasks quickly and efficiently herself. However, by delegating some tasks to others, she empowers someone else and hopefully has secured a collaborator and supporter. This facilitative leadership is what the intern desires to embrace as a school leader.

Finally, the intern recognizes that there is a lot of stress associated with being in a leadership position. The stress of the culture and change and the need to affect it can be overwhelming. The intern has learned the importance of embracing change and remaining focused during the interim.

Final Reflections

While cooperative learning may not be the answer for every problem that arises in America's classrooms, it certainly has shown powerful results especially when compared to competitive and individualistic learning. The underlying premise in cooperative learning is that it everyone on the cooperative learning team is successful due to the actions of the entire team. Everyone on the team "sinks or swims" together. This phenomenon totally contradicts the underlying notion of individualistic learning. The intern believes that competition between students is not always negative. However, according to experts, the severity and over dependence on it by certain educators has been shown to be detrimental to some students. Inherent in that philosophy is that some students will win, but most will lose. As a nation, can we afford to operate institutions of learning in this manner?

The traditional classroom structure is such that it encourages students to work independently, relying on their own abilities to achieve success or good grades. Some students are placed in competitive constraints such as grades, recognition, and the like. Countless research studies have shown that these methods can be detrimental to the student's self esteem in the long run. Conversely, these methods operate counter to those strategies that students will need to be able to function in the work place, teamwork!

When examining cooperative learning as a big picture, it is evident that the foundation of the social skills that enables workers to work collaboratively in the work place are being are being laid at the internship setting.

According to researchers, the social components, task, and norm must be well established in order for cooperative learning to be truly effective. Evidence of these components are the core of cooperative learning, and the positive outcomes experienced by researchers can be attributed to those components being well established and in place. These components are what separates cooperative learning from simply working in teams. Many of these components are evident within the Success For All program.

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Appendix A

Report Card Grades

Race	Number	Percentage
Black	28	74%
White	1	2%
Hispanic	9	24%

Gender	Number	Percent
Male	21	55%
Female	17	45%

Grades	A	B	C	D
Girls	3	5	5	5
Boys	1	8	10	1
Total	4	13	15	6

Learning Style	Number	Percent
Visual	13	34
Auditory	15	39
Kinesthetic	10	26

Appendix B

Cooperative Learning Reading Survey

Cooperative Learning Reading Survey

1. I learn best when I work by myself.
Always Sometimes Never

2. I learn best when I work with others.
Always Sometimes Never

3. I enjoy working with my team.
Always Sometimes Never

4. My team works well together.
Always Sometimes Never

5. I help my teammates learn.
Always Sometimes Never

6. My team gets the work done on time.
Always Sometimes Never

7. When I work with my team, I work harder than my teammates.
Always Sometimes Never

8. I get good grades in reading.
Always Sometimes Never

9. My reading grades are not good.
Always Sometimes Never

10. My team has some effect on my report card grades.
Always Sometimes Never

11. I believe my grades would be higher if I worked by myself.
Always Sometimes Never

12. My grades are lower because of my team.
Always Sometimes Never

13. My partners help me understand the work better.
Always Sometimes Never

14. My team has no effect on my reading grade.
Always Sometimes Never

15. In school, I like to compete with other students.
Always Sometimes Never

16. In class, I like to share my ideas with others.
Always Sometimes Never

17. The best thing about my reading team is:

_____

18. The worst thing about my team is:

_____

Appendix C

Self Survey
My Learning Style

Cooperative Learning
Self Survey

I am a boy _____ girl _____

I feel good about the work I do on my team.
Yes _____ No _____

I get along with the members of my team.
Yes _____ No _____

I feel uncomfortable working with my team.
Yes _____ No _____

I can tell that my teammates have respect for me.
Yes _____ No _____

I do my part of the work on the team.
Yes _____ No _____

My Learning Style

_____ I learn best by seeing. I like reading, watching the teacher, and looking at things around the classroom.

_____ I learn best by hearing. I like to listen to my teacher's voice. I like to listen to my teammates talk.

_____ I learn best by doing. I like moving and touching things as I work. I like exploring with my hands.

Appendix D

Cluster and Mean Scores

Clusters / Mean Scores

Students Perception of Their Team/Teammates
Questions #3,4,6,13,14

Question	Mean Scores
3	2.47
4	2.28
5	1.94
13	2.29
14	1.68
15	2.05

Students Perception of Their Learning Styles
Questions #1,2,5,7,15,16

Question	Mean Score
1	2.26
2	2.47
6	2.26
7	1.82
16	2.05
17	2.26

Student's Perception of Their Reading Grades
Questions #8,9,10,11,12

Questions	Mean Scores
8	2.26
9	1.74
10	1.82
11	2.18
12	1.29

Appendix E

Cluster Averages

Cluster Averages from Interview Questions

Question	Total	Mean Score
1	70	1.84
2	92	2.42
3	94	2.47
4	87	2.28
5	86	2.26
6	74	1.74
7	69	1.82
8	86	2.26
9	66	1.74
10	69	1.82
11	83	2.18
12	49	1.29
13	87	2.29
14	64	1.68
15	78	2.05
16	86	2.26

Appendix F

Data From Interview Questions

Data From Interview Questions

What I Like Best About My Team

Work Together / Get along	14
Teammates Help Me Learn	17
Teammates Nice /Respectful	3
Get The Job Done	1
Earn Points	2

The Worst Thing About My Team

Argue	2
Lack of Help From Teammates	3
Teammates Mad /Grouchy	2
Lack of participation	2
Don't Get Along or Work Together	11
Talk / Play too Much	6
Teammates Make Fun	1

Appendix G

Abbott Regulations

State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PO BOX 500
TRENTON NJ 08625-0500

CHRISTINE TODD WHITMAN
Governor

LEO KLAGHOLZ
Commissioner

July 17, 1998

TO: Superintendents
Abbott School Districts

FROM: Leo Klagholz
Commissioner

SUBJECT: Abbott Regulations

In its May 1998 decision, the Supreme Court accepted the Department of Education's plan for reforming various aspects of education for students in your districts. The Court required the Commissioner of Education to develop regulations to guide that process stating, "We, therefore, direct the Commissioner to promulgate regulations and guidelines that will codify the education reforms incorporated in the Court's remedial measures." Language in the FY99 State Appropriations Act further authorizes the enactment of such regulations.

Over the past six weeks, we have met individually with your group, the Education Law Center, a subcommittee of the State Board of Education, and numerous other organizations representing urban and state educational interests to solicit input as we developed the required regulations. Because the regulations are an important first step toward successful implementation of the required reforms, which will be implemented over the next five years, we believe that it was worth the initial investment of time needed to obtain advice concerning their development. We appreciate the comments and suggestions that you and others provided.

A copy of the final adopted version of the regulations is attached. The regulations are effective immediately and expire June 30, 1999. Their broad purpose is to guide a sweeping reform of education in which the program, staffing, operations and financing of each individual school will be rebuilt from the "ground up" using research-proven programs and strategies. We anticipate making modifications in the rules next year based on our experiences of the coming year.

The specific language of the regulations has the force of law, and there can be no other legally valid representations of their contents. However, I would like to provide you with the following overview of their major aspects.

Required Programs

The regulations require you to implement the programs that were found to be effective in raising student achievement levels by the Department of Education's study of last

year, and that were accepted on that basis by the Supreme Court. Specifically, the regulations require implementation of: 1) an approved Whole-School Reform program in each elementary school; 2) an approved Whole-School Reform program or required supplemental programs in each middle and secondary school; 3) full-day kindergarten for all eligible five-year-olds in the community; and 4) half-day preschool for all eligible three- and four-year-olds in the community.

The rules establish the essential elements that all Whole-School Reform programs must incorporate (see section 3.1(e), (f) and (g) on pages 9-11). They also require the development of five-year plans for renovation and/or construction of facilities to support implementation of these programs.

Timetables

The regulations establish timetables for planning and implementation that are consistent with those ordered by the Court, or accepted by the Court at the department's recommendation:

- Elementary Whole-School Reform will be implemented over a five-year period in three cohorts of schools, each of which will be initiated in 1998-99, 1999-2000, and 2000-01 respectively and completed in a three-year timeframe.

- Full-Day Kindergarten Programs must be implemented by September 1998 unless approval is obtained to delay full implementation until September 1999, at which time full-day kindergarten programs for all five-year-olds must fully be implemented.

- Preschool Programs must fully be implemented by September 1999. Plans for such implementation are due to the Department of Education no later than November 2, 1998.

- Required Secondary Supplemental Programs must fully be implemented by the 2000-01 school year; plans are due by December 1, 1998.

- Facilities Plans are due to the department no later than January 15, 1999.

School-Level Reform

As proposed by the department and accepted by the Court, the regulations emphasize the improvement of education in *individual schools*. Toward this end, they require the establishment in each school of a School Management Team, one of the essential, research-

These school management teams, comprised of teachers, parents, and other community members, will work with the school principal to: 1) oversee implementation of the Whole-School Reform program selected by the school staff; 2) develop the school's plan for implementing required supplementary programs in secondary schools that do not immediately pursue whole-school reform; 3) develop a school-based budget to support the school's reform plan; and 4) work generally to build parental and community ownership and support of, as well as participation in, the school program and students' education.

The Department of Education, too, will refocus its attention toward the task of creating and financing programs in each individual school by creating School Review and Improvement Teams. Each team will be comprised of department program and finance staff who will work with and assist the School Management Teams to which they are assigned.

Reform, Restructuring and Accountability

The regulations reflect the emphasis on reform, restructuring and accountability that are important characteristics of Whole-School Reform. The rules require districts to decentralize finance and authority, delegating appropriate decisions to the school level.

They encourage districts to replace the status quo with required, research-proven programs, instead of merely adding those programs onto what already exists. Therefore, as proposed by the department and accepted by the Supreme Court, the regulations require districts and schools, wherever appropriate and to the maximum extent possible, to reallocate funds to support the implementation of required reforms. They also require that targeted funds, particularly Early Childhood Program Aid, be used for their intended purposes. Once all such allocations and reallocations are made, districts may demonstrate the need for, and request, additional funding to implement required programs in the plans they submit to the department.

Finally, the rules require each district to create a program of rewards and sanctions for individual school performance.

Communitywide Participation

To encourage communitywide efforts to improve students' education, the regulations require districts and schools to involve community providers of preschool, health and social services in the development of implementation plans, and also to use, and not unnecessarily duplicate, the programs and services of community providers.

Particularized Needs

As proposed by the department and accepted by the Supreme Court, the regulations permit schools to request funding for programs, in addition to those required, based on a demonstration of a particularized need. To make the case for such a funding request, the

school must, among other things: 1) identify particular populations of students not achieving the Core Curriculum Content Standards; 2) demonstrate that the achievement deficiency is caused by particularized needs which are not capable of being addressed existing, whole-school, or required supplemental programs; and 3) identify other research-based programs or services demonstrated to be effective in meeting such needs. In such cases, the school must also, where appropriate, consider using the programs and services of community providers and make all possible reallocations.

Facility Plans

The regulations assure that facility plans are developed in a way that supports essential programs effectively and efficiently by requiring that: 1) existing facilities of the district and the community, both public and private, be surveyed and, wherever possible, utilized; 2) state criteria and standards be applied; 3) qualified experts be consulted; and 4) each district form a broadly representative Facilities Advisory Board to review and approve its plans.

Appeals

Finally, as directed by the Supreme Court, the regulations establish a process by which decisions of the Department of Education may be appealed.

I hope that this information is helpful to you. We will arrange a follow-up meeting to discuss implementation of the regulations.

I believe that the department's exhaustive study of a year ago, and the subsequent extensive interactions with the courts, have produced a superior set of strategies supported by research and expert opinion. As a result, we have a unique and unprecedented opportunity to provide the children of your communities with a high-quality education, one that will enable them to achieve the Core Curriculum Content Standards.

The most productive and rewarding path is often the most challenging as well. However, all of the department staff and I are convinced that the challenge can be met, and we are looking forward with enthusiasm to working with you to reach the important goal we have set.

LK/cp:abbottregs
Attachment

CHAPTER 19A: IMPLEMENTATION OF COURT DECISION IN *ABBOTT V. BURKE*

Authority
P.L. 1998, c. 45, effective July 1, 1998 (Annual Appropriations Act, Fiscal Year 1998-99).

Source and Effective Date
[To be added by OAL]

Expiration Date
This chapter will expire on June 30, 1999.

SUBCHAPTER 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

SUBCHAPTER 2. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

SUBCHAPTER 3. WHOLE SCHOOL REFORM

SUBCHAPTER 4. SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAMS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

SUBCHAPTER 5. FACILITIES

SUBCHAPTER 6. APPEALS

SUBCHAPTER 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

6:19A-1.1 Purpose and Applicability of Rules

These rules are adopted pursuant to P.L. 1998, c. 45, in order to implement the remedial measures prescribed in the decision of the New Jersey Supreme Court in *Abbott v. Burke*, decided May 21, 1998, thus ensuring that public school children from the poorest urban districts receive the educational entitlements guaranteed them by the Constitution. Consistent with the decision of the Court, the rules apply to "Abbott districts" as defined in section 3 of the Comprehensive Educational Improvement and Financing Act of 1996 (CEIFA), N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-1 et seq., and are adopted to ensure the provision of a thorough and efficient system of education (T&E), as defined in section 4 of that act, to the students attending public school in those districts. The rules apply to Abbott districts in addition to the requirements of CEIFA and rules otherwise promulgated to implement that act; except that where differences in rules occur, the rules herein shall take precedence.

6:19A-1.2 Definitions

As used in this chapter, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, the following words shall have these meanings:

"Abbott district," as defined by N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-3, means one of the 28 urban districts in district factor groups A and B specifically identified in the appendix to Raymond Abbott, et al. v. Fred G. Burke, et al. decided by the New Jersey Supreme Court on June 5, 1990 (119 N.J. 287, 394) as follows: Asbury Park City, Bridgeton City, Burlington City, Camden City, East Orange City, Elizabeth City, Garfield City, Gloucester City, Harrison Town, Hoboken City, Irvington Township, Jersey City, Keansburg Borough, Long Branch City, Millville City, New Brunswick City, Newark City, City of Orange Township, Passaic City, Paterson City, Pemberton Township, Perth Amboy City, Phillipsburg Town, Pleasantville City, Trenton City, Union City, Vineland City, and West New York Town, and shall not include a charter school within any of these districts;

"Board of education" or "board" means the local board of education, or the State district superintendent in the case of a State-operated school district, of an Abbott district;

"Chief School Administrator " means the superintendent or administrative principal of a local district as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6:3-2.1, or the State district superintendent in the case of a State-operated school district, of an Abbott district;

"Core Curriculum Content Standards" means the standards of achievement established for the provision of a thorough and efficient education pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-4;

"Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Education or his or her designee;

"Department" means the State Department of Education;

"Developer" means an expert or team of experts that has effectively integrated research-based programs and strategies to develop a Department-approved whole school reform model;

"Early childhood expenditures" means those expenditures related to the provision of full-day kindergarten for five-year-olds and half-day preschool programs for three- and four-year-olds;

"School Management Team (SMT)" means a building based planning and decision-making team established pursuant to section 1.4 below;

"School Review and Improvement (SRI) Team" means a team of Department of Education staff assigned by the Commissioner to work with Abbott districts in implementing the Court's decision pursuant to section 1.3 below; and

"Secondary" means middle and high school grades 6 through 12, except in districts having an elementary structure incorporating grades 6 through 8, in which case it means grades 9 through 12.

6:19A-1.3 Assignment of DOE School Review and Improvement Teams

The Commissioner shall designate department staff to serve on School Review and Improvement (SRI) Teams. An SRI Team shall be assigned to each elementary school implementing Whole School Reform pursuant to subchapter 3 of this chapter and to each secondary school. The primary role of such teams shall be to work with the School Management Teams established pursuant to section 1.4(a) below, and with the developers and experts identified by the Department, in order to implement the directives of the Court. SRI Teams shall additionally serve as liaisons between schools and the Department and as sources of technical assistance in programmatic and fiscal areas.

6:19A-1.4 Establishment of School Management Teams

(a) Prior to August 30, 1998, the Chief School Administrator shall submit to the Department for approval, with a copy to the board, a procedure for the selection and training of a building based School Management Team (SMT) at every elementary school implementing Whole School Reform pursuant to subchapter 3 of this chapter and at every secondary school.

1. The submission shall also provide for the internal organization of the team and establish a mechanism for removal of team members.

2. The SMT shall consist of the building principal and representatives of parents, teachers and the community, and such other persons as will best enable the team to implement a sound program of school based decision making.

3. Upon recommendation of the SRI Team, a member of the SMT may be removed in accordance with the procedure established pursuant to (a)1 above.

(b) The Chief School Administrator shall ensure that the SMT is in operation prior to October 1, 1998, and that sufficient time and resources are allocated to the team to enable it to perform its work, including development of a whole school reform implementation plan pursuant to section 3.2 of this chapter.

(c) In those schools participating in Whole School Reform (WSR) pursuant to section 3.1(b) of this chapter, the SMT shall, in addition to the specific duties set forth elsewhere in this chapter, have the authority to undertake the following in consultation with its assigned SRI Team:

1. Oversee faculty selection of the WSR model to be used by the school in accordance with the requirements of section 3.1 of this chapter;

2. Develop curriculum and instruction designed to ensure achievement of Core Curriculum Content Standards;

3. Design a program of professional development to assist staff in the implementation of all aspects of WSR;

4. Prepare a school based budget in accordance with the requirements of section 3.3 of this chapter;

5. Make recommendations for the appointment, transfer or removal of teaching staff members, other than the building principal, and of instructional aides for early childhood programs. Such recommendations shall be presented by the Chief School Administrator to the board of education pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:27-4.1;

6. Make recommendations for appointment of a building principal, providing not less than three (3) candidates to the Chief School Administrator, who shall select one of the three candidates for recommendation to the board pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:27-4.1;

7. Develop and submit to the Department for approval, with a copy to the Chief School Administrator and the board, a school level educational technology plan demonstrating how educational technology will be infused throughout the selected WSR model, in all aspects of curriculum and instruction, to support achievement of the Core Curriculum Content Standards, and providing for acquisition and maintenance of necessary equipment and infrastructure, appropriate professional development activities and designation of staff to implement technology activities;

8. Provide for the programs to address the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness standards of the Core Curriculum Content Standards, including, at the secondary level, school-to-college transition programs, vocational instruction, structured learning experiences including work-based and volunteer programs, links to employers and post-secondary training programs, and career development services; and

provisions for reducing class sizes to a maximum of 15 preschool students, and 21 kindergarten students, per class staffed by one teacher and an aide.

SUBCHAPTER 3. WHOLE SCHOOL REFORM

6:19A-3.1 Adoption of Whole School Reform

(a) Each elementary school shall adopt a whole school reform (WSR) model by the 2000-2001 school year. The presumptive model shall be Success for All – Roots and Wings (SFA/R&W); however, permission to use other models may be granted by the Department where the choice of such model is justified. If any school shall fail to select a model by the commencement of the 2000-2001 school year, the Commissioner shall direct the school to implement a Department-approved WSR model.

(b) Each elementary or secondary school which has an agreement with a developer for adopting one of the Court-sanctioned models of WSR shall submit an application to the Department of Education to participate in the implementation of WSR for the 1998-99 school year. Application forms, including instructions and timelines, will be provided by the Department for this purpose.

1. Applications are to be completed by new and continuing schools implementing a WSR model. New schools must vote or reach consensus on selection of the model in accordance with the developer's requirements. All schools must have the agreement of the developer.

2. A separate application is required for each school.

(c) The principal of any elementary school not applying for participation in 1998-99 implementation of WSR pursuant to (b) above shall develop a plan for exploration of whole school models and eventual adoption of one such model. The plan shall include a timeline leading to selection of a model and initial implementation of WSR by the 2000-2001 school year, and shall be submitted to the Department for approval, with a copy to the board, on or before December 1, 1998.

(d) Any secondary school not applying for participation in 1998-99 implementation of WSR pursuant to (b) shall include a plan for exploration of whole school models and eventual integration of one such model into the school's program as part of the SMT activity required pursuant to section 4.1 of this chapter.

(e) Each of the following elements shall be addressed in a WSR model adopted by a school in an Abbott district:

1. Improved Student Performance: The model must lead to improved student achievement focused on the Core Curriculum Content Standards, as measured by the State assessment program (ESPA, EWT, and HSPT).

2. Research Based Program: Each school must provide a research-based program of curriculum and instruction supported by, and integrated with, an appropriate array of research-proven supplemental strategies (e.g., SFA/R&W).

3. School Based Leadership and Decision Making: The school must maintain its own planning and decision making structure, including establishment of an SMT pursuant to section 1.4 of this chapter, and must be led by a strong, effective principal. The principal must involve parents and faculty in setting annual student achievement targets. School staff and members of the community must be committed to working together in a comprehensive, concerted effort to ensure that each child achieves immediate success and maintains his or her self-confidence and enthusiasm for learning.

4. Integration and Alignment of School Functions: The school must take a comprehensive approach, rather than a piecemeal one, to assure effective school-level implementation pursuant to section 3.2. below. All school functions must collectively support student attainment of the core curriculum content standards. The school must have an effective and compatible program of curriculum and instruction, supported systematically by a well-planned school budget pursuant to 3.3 below.

5. Educational Technology: Educational technology must be infused in all aspects of curriculum and instruction, throughout the entire WSR model, to support achievement of the Core Curriculum Content Standards pursuant to section 1.5(d) of this chapter. Educational technology includes acquisition and maintenance of necessary equipment and infrastructure, provision of appropriate professional development activities and designation of appropriate staff to implement plans and activities.

6. Professional Development: All staff of the school must be engaged in an organized, continuous program of staff training, focused on the acquisition of knowledge and skills directly related to the achievement of the Core Curriculum Content Standards and the implementation of the selected WSR model.

7. Safe School Environment/Conducive to Learning: The school climate must be safe and conducive to learning. There must be a code of conduct that clearly defines acceptable and unacceptable student behaviors and the consequences for them. The district must provide required security staff and other necessary protective devices as set forth in section 1.5(f) of this chapter.

8. Student and Family Services/Coordination of Resources: Each elementary school must maintain a Family Support Team or other comparable entity that encourages parent involvement in the school and in students' learning; trains parents for volunteer roles; intervenes to solve behavioral, nutritional, attendance and other problems; receives teacher referrals of students who are not making progress; and makes referrals to appropriate health and human service agencies. Each middle and secondary school must provide health and social services in accordance with sections 1.5(g) and 4.1 of this chapter.

(c) Any board may apply, using a format prescribed by the Commissioner, for additional early childhood program aid to implement kindergarten or preschool programs.

1. Any board that applies for such additional aid for the 1998-99 school year shall demonstrate compliance with the provisions of section 1.5(j) of this chapter and shall further demonstrate that proposed early childhood expenditures exceed early childhood program aid received pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-16. Where early childhood program aid has been dedicated to other purposes, the board may apply for additional funds for those other purposes pursuant to the provisions of section 4.3(c) of this chapter.

2. If proposed early childhood expenditures include expenditures for facilities, the board shall demonstrate that it has reviewed alternatives for the provision of adequate space and estimates of their associated costs. The board shall further demonstrate its consideration of private and municipal community resources and options for leasing temporary facilities, and shall indicate the board's selected method for providing the necessary space. In the event that the chosen method is not the least costly, the board shall provide justification for elevating such method above each less costly option considered. Temporary facilities shall comply with the following minimum standards:

i. The gross classroom area shall be no less than 600 square feet;

ii. Toilet rooms shall be located in the classroom or visible from the classroom door; and

iii. The facility shall be free of violations of the Uniform Construction Code (N.J.A.C. 5:23-6.1 et seq.) and of the rules governing substandard educational facilities (N.J.A.C. 6:22-6.1 et seq.).

3. Any application for additional aid shall include:

i. A detailed budget of all existing and proposed kindergarten and preschool programs district-wide;

ii. An analysis demonstrating that no additional reallocations are possible within the district budget to fund the needed programs and facilities; and

iii. A specification of those expenditures that would need to be eliminated to make existing funds available for the programs and services to be supported by the requested additional aid.

4. The Commissioner may order the reallocation of funds within the district budget in accordance with the standards of section 4.3(c) of this chapter to accommodate any request for additional aid.

6:19A-2.4 Operational Plan

The board shall submit to the Department by November 2, 1998 an amended operational program plan. The plan shall provide for the full implementation by the commencement of the 1999-2000 school year of all early childhood programs required pursuant to this chapter, in

SUBCHAPTER 2. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

6:19A-2.1 Full-Day Kindergarten

(a) The board shall offer a full-day kindergarten program to all five-year-old students beginning in the 1998-99 school year or advise the Commissioner of the reasons full implementation is not occurring in the 1998-99 school year.

(b) The board shall offer a full-day kindergarten program to all five-year-old students by the commencement of the 1999-2000 school year.

6:19A-2.2 Preschool Programs

(a) The board shall offer a half-day preschool program to all three- and four-year-old students by the commencement of the 1999-2000 school year.

1. The board shall determine age eligibility for enrollment in preschool programs provided pursuant to this section using the same date it uses in determining age eligibility for kindergarten programs.

2. The board shall offer preschool programs, once implemented, for the duration of the school year.

(b) The board shall undertake a community planning process to enable the integrated and efficient provision of services to preschool students. As part of this planning process, the board shall contact every child care provider located within the district and licensed by the Department of Human Services (DHS), and other community providers of age-appropriate health and social services, to determine options for collaboration and coordination. The board shall cooperate with or utilize a DHS-licensed child care provider whenever practical to implement required preschool programs and shall not duplicate programs or services otherwise available in the community.

6:19A-2.3 Fiscal Requirements and Application for Additional Funds

(a) In the 1998-99 school year, any board planning to expand its preschool programs for three-year-olds must demonstrate prior full implementation of full-day kindergarten for five-year-olds and half-day preschool for four-year-olds.

(b) Early childhood expenditures may include the provision of transportation services pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:39-1.1 and facilities for preschool and kindergarten students enrolled in programs required pursuant to this subchapter. Early childhood expenditures also may include any early childhood transportation costs not already included in the 1998-99 district budget.

based upon the circumstances and needs of each building and the district overall. Any district may apply for a waiver of the required number of security guards based on a demonstration that the full number is not necessary to ensure safety under the circumstances present at a particular building.

(g) Prior to December 1, 1998, the Chief School Administrator shall develop and submit to the Department for approval, with a copy to the board, a plan providing for the establishment of an alternative middle and high school or other comparable program to meet the needs of students who are disaffected or disruptive or who have not been successful in traditional learning environments. Such plans shall include access to necessary support services, provide for coordination with the work of SMTs so as to identify and meet the needs of each school's students, and provide for full implementation of programs and services by the 2000-2001 school year.

(h) Prior to March 1, 1999, the Chief School Administrator shall establish a districtwide accountability system that includes both a system of rewards to recognize teachers, parents, and administrators who contribute to helping students attain the Core Curriculum Content standards, and a system of sanctions to be applied when an individual school fails to meet State standards.

(i) Prior to March 1, 1999, the Chief School Administrator shall develop and submit to the Department for approval, a plan to accommodate the transition to, and eventual full implementation of, school based management. Such plan shall specify changes in the structure and function of central administrative staff as will be necessitated by the decentralization of planning, budgeting and decision making in the district.

(j) Any early childhood program aid (ECPA) or demonstrably effective program aid (DEPA) awarded to a district, including ECPA funds placed in a reserve account, and neither expended or encumbered, nor anticipated as revenue, in the original approved 1998-99 budget, shall be appropriated at the direction of the Commissioner. The board shall provide an explanation for all such balances, and the Commissioner shall consider such explanation prior to directing appropriation of funds. The Commissioner shall further consider such balances during review of any application from the district for additional funds pursuant to section 4.3 of this chapter.

(k) The Commissioner shall deduct from the district's State aid, and the board shall budget for this purpose, an amount equal to 2 percent of the district's Abbott v. Burke Parity Remedy funding. Such deduction shall support expenses required to manage, control, supervise and implement the effective and efficient expenditure of State aid, including implementation of the educational reforms directed by the Court. Such expenses may include but shall not be limited to the cost of SRI Teams assigned to the district and such consultants, developers, investigators or experts as may be required for this purpose.

9. Develop a plan for accountability, including a system of rewards and sanctions consistent with the requirements of WSR as set forth in section 3.1 of this chapter.

6:19A-1.5 Responsibilities of Local District

(a) The board, administration, teaching staff and support staff of each district shall cooperate fully with the Department and its assigned SRI Team(s) in effectuating the directives of the Court, including but not limited to implementation of whole school reform, site-based decision making/budgeting, identification of reallocations necessary for the implementation of required or approved new programs and services, and effectuation of reallocations identified by SRI Teams pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-6. The Chief School Administrator shall ensure that each school is led by an effective principal; where a principal is not effective, the Chief School Administrator shall recommend the principal's transfer or removal to the board.

(b) The board shall accord the programs and services required pursuant to this chapter the highest priority in development of the school budget and shall make such reallocations and dedicate such resources as are necessary to ensure their full implementation within the prescribed time frames. To the extent resources are insufficient after all possible reallocation at the school and district levels, the board shall apply for additional funding pursuant to section 4.3 of this chapter.

(c) The board shall seek from the Commissioner such authorizations, equivalency determinations or waivers as are necessary to permit it to implement required or approved programs in an efficient and effective manner, or to effectuate necessary reallocations.

(d) Prior to October 1, 1998, each secondary school and each elementary school implementing whole school reform pursuant to subchapter 3 of this chapter shall have access to a full-time technology coordinator who shall assist with the development and integration of educational technology consistent with the requirements of section 3.1 of this chapter. The coordinator shall, in addition to such other duties as he or she may be assigned, provide assistance to the SMT as needed. Any district may apply for a waiver of the requirement to appoint a full-time technology coordinator at each school based on a demonstration that a full-time coordinator is not necessary under the circumstances present at a particular building.

(e) Prior to October 1, 1998, there shall be appointed for each secondary school within the district a full-time dropout prevention officer and a full-time staff member responsible for the coordination of health and social services and the referral of students to such services. These staff members shall, in addition to such other duties as they may be assigned, provide assistance to the SMT as needed.

(f) Prior to December 1, 1998, the Chief School Administrator shall submit to the Department a district-wide security plan appropriate to the district's circumstances and needs. At a minimum, such plan shall provide for development of a Code of Student Conduct and review of any existing student behavior policies to ensure maximum effectiveness; appointment of one security guard for each elementary school building and one for each 225 students at the secondary level; and acquisition and maintenance of such protective devices as may be necessary

SUBCHAPTER 4. SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAMS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

6:19A-4.1 Implementation of Required Supplemental Programs

(a) Prior to December 1, 1998, the SMT in consultation with the SRI Team shall develop and submit to the Department for approval, with a copy to the Chief School Administrator and the board, a plan to implement the following required programs and services over a two-year period commencing with the 1999-2000 school year:

1. A mechanism for access to the health and social services identified by the SMT as being essential for the educational attainment of students, through utilization of existing district staff, programs and services, and through coordination of and referral to community based providers;

2. A school security program, consistent with the requirements of section 1.5(f) of this chapter, appropriate to the building's circumstances and needs, including development of a Code of Student Conduct and review of any existing student behavior policies to ensure maximum effectiveness;

3. A mechanism for identifying students requiring referral to the district's alternative education program(s);

4. School-to-work or college transition programs, including career majors, vocational instruction, structured learning experiences including work-based and volunteer programs, links to employers and post-secondary training programs, and career development services;

5. Integration of technology into all aspects of the curriculum and instructional program to support achievement of the Core Curriculum Content Standards, including provision for acquisition and maintenance of necessary equipment and infrastructure, appropriate professional development activities and designation of staff to implement technology activities; and

6. A focused, ongoing program of professional development for all building staff, including administrative, teaching and support staff, designed to meet the specific needs of the school and its students as such needs relate to implementation of WSR and achievement of the Core Curriculum Content Standards.

(b) The plan shall be submitted to the Department on the form provided for this purpose, and shall at a minimum include:

1. An inventory of existing supplemental programs and services targeted to the area(s) of need, together with an assessment of their efficacy and efficiency;

2. Recommendations for elimination or modification of programs or services judged

been developed in accordance with the guidelines and requirements of the Department and the program developer. At a minimum, the plan must:

1. Be developed with the involvement of school staff, parents, community members and other stakeholders, in consultation with the developer and the Department;

2. Be consistent with the activity plan approved by the Department as part of the school's application for participation;

3. Include goals, measurable objectives, activities, timelines, budget data and an evaluation plan;

4. Include a timeline leading to full implementation of WSR by the 2000-2001 school year; and

5. Be approved by the chief school administrator, school principal and the SMT.

6:19A-3.3 School Based Budgets

(a) On or before December 1, 1998, the school shall submit for the Commissioner's approval a school based budget for the 1999-2000 school year for each school participating in implementation of WSR pursuant to section 3.1(b) above.

1. A zero-based budget shall be prepared by the SMT, with the assistance of the school business administrator, in a format prescribed by the Commissioner.

2. The SRI Team shall assist the SMT in the development of the budget.

3. The budget shall be developed assuming available revenues based on 1997-98 audited amounts and those allocated for 1998-99. Additionally, it shall account for anticipated revenues and reflect the resources necessary to implement WSR and required supplemental programs where applicable.

4. All local, State and federal funds, except where prohibited by federal law, shall be considered general funds available for WSR activities notwithstanding any restrictions that would otherwise apply.

5. The budget shall be certified as to adequacy, in writing, by the school principal.

(b) Where funds available within the 1998-99 budget, together with anticipated revenues, are not sufficient to support the proposed 1999-2000 budget, the principal shall further attest in writing that all available school-level resources have been reallocated for the purpose of implementing WSR and required supplemental programs, and that no further reallocation at the school level is possible.

9. Accountability System: Each school must establish an accountability system, consistent with the district accountability system established pursuant to section 1.5(h) of this chapter, that includes both a system of rewards to recognize teachers, parents, and administrators who contribute to helping students attain the Core Curriculum Content standards, and a system of sanctions to be applied when an individual school fails to meet State standards.

(f) Additionally, the following requirements must be met:

1. The school principal and staff must make an informed choice to use the WSR model. Voting or consensus procedures required by the developer of the model must be followed;

2. The district administration and school staff must agree to fully implement the model within three years and maintain implementation of the model after the initial three years;

3. All requirements of the developer must be addressed. An agreement must be signed by the district, the school and the developer to implement the model in accordance with the developer's and the Department's requirements;

4. There must be a clear commitment by the district administration, school staff, parents and community to faithful replication of the model selected;

5. Extensive professional development must be implemented according to the requirements of the developer and the Department;

6. The district must allocate the necessary resources to implement the model, and the school must use the allocated resources for this purpose;

7. The school must integrate all local, state and federal resources into the funding of one WSR implementation plan;

8. The schools must restructure all existing programs to focus on the WSR model being implemented; and

9. A plan must be in place to continue to reduce class size to 1:21 for grades 1-3 and 1:23 for grades 4-6.

(g) A WSR plan adopted at the secondary level must incorporate all programs and services specified in section 4.1 of this chapter. Additionally, the plan must address reducing the dropout rate, increasing the graduation rate, improving attendance and reducing class size.

6:19A-3.2 Submission of Implementation Plan

(a) On or before November 2, 1998, the SMT of each school participating in WSR pursuant to sections 3.1(b) and 3.1(c) above shall develop and submit to the Department, with a copy to

(c) Upon approval of the school budget by the Commissioner, the board shall allocate adequate funds for its support in the 1999-2000 district budget.

(d) Where a board determines that adequate funds will not be available in the district's 1999-2000 budget after all possible reallocations have been made, it shall make application for additional funds pursuant to the provisions of section 3.4 below.

(e) A board shall seek from the Commissioner such authorizations, equivalency determinations or waivers as are necessary to permit it to implement required or approved programs or services in an efficient and effective manner, or to effectuate reallocations necessary to provide such programs or services.

6:19A-3.4 Application for Supplemental Programs and Additional Funding

(a) To the extent that a board having a school participating in implementation of WSR pursuant to section 3.1(b) above determines that resources are insufficient, after all possible reallocation at the school and district levels, to support the WSR programs, the board shall apply to the Department of Education for additional funding. All such applications must be prepared, and will be reviewed, in accordance with the standards established in the applicable provisions of sections 4.2 and 4.3 of this chapter.

(b) Any school participating in implementation of WSR pursuant to section 3.1(b) above may recommend to the board, with a copy to the SRI Team, that a supplemental program or service be provided based upon a demonstration of particularized need that cannot be addressed through the WSR program.

1. In those instances where the board does not agree that the SMT has demonstrated a particularized need for a program or service or does not agree that the program or service is essential in order to enable students to achieve the Core Curriculum Content Standards, the board shall provide to the SMT a detailed statement of the bases for its determination.

2. In those instances where the board determines that a particularized need for a recommended supplemental program or service has been demonstrated and that the program or service is essential for student success in achieving the Core Curriculum Content Standards, over and above existing, whole school reform or required supplemental programs, the board shall submit its proposed plan for the program and the budgetary reallocations to fund it to the Department for approval in accordance with the provisions of section 4.2 and 4.3 of this chapter.

3. In those instances where the board determines that resources are insufficient to support the necessary program or service after all possible reallocation at the school and district levels have been made, the board shall apply to the Department of Education for additional funding. All such recommendations, and the ensuing procedures for their consideration and approval by the Department, shall be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of sections

3. A review of community resources which could be used to address the area(s) of need;

4. Recommendations for the programs and services needed to implement the SMT's plan, and the operating budget necessary to provide them;

5. Approval by the chief school administrator, the principal and the head of the SMT, if other than the principal;

6. A plan for exploration of whole school models and eventual integration of one such model into the school's program, for any secondary school not applying for participation in 1998-99 implementation of WSR pursuant to section 3.1(b) of this chapter; and

7. Such other information as the Department may require.

(c) The board shall accord the programs and services listed under (a) above the highest priority in development of the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 school budget, making such reallocations and dedicating such resources as are necessary to ensure their full implementation by the 2000-2001 school year. To the extent resources are insufficient, after all possible reallocations at the school and district levels, to support the required programs, the board shall apply to the Department of Education for additional funding pursuant to section 4.3 below.

6:19A-4.2 Additional Supplemental Programs

(a) Subsequent to completion of the implementation plan for the programs required pursuant to section 4.1 above, the SMT may consider whether there exists a particularized, demonstrated need for further supplemental educational programs or services which are essential to ensure students' educational success and without which students cannot achieve the Core Curriculum Content Standards.

(b) Upon finding such a need, the SMT shall recommend the appropriate programs and services to the board, with a copy to the SRI Team. Prior to any such recommendation, the SMT shall first undertake:

1. An assessment of student achievement in meeting Core Curriculum Content Standards and identification of particular populations not meeting such standards;

2. Where standards are not being met, a determination that the students' failure is caused by particularized needs which are not capable of being addressed by existing, whole-school or required supplemental programs at the school level;

3. An inventory of currently used programs and services targeted to the area(s) of need, together with an assessment of their efficacy in meeting such need;

4. A review of un- or underutilized internal and community resources which could be used to address the area(s) of need;

5. Identification of additional research-based programs or services demonstrated to be effective in meeting such needs and in improving student achievement in areas where the Core Curriculum Content Standards are not being met;

6. Recommendation of elimination or modification of existing programs or services identified as less than effective and efficient, or which would overlap with the proposed new program or service;

7. Development of an operating budget for the proposed new program or service; and

8. One or more public hearings in order to obtain parent, student and citizen input on the preceding matters.

(c) In those instances where a board does not agree that the SMT has demonstrated a particularized need for a program or service or does not agree that the program or service is essential in order to enable students to achieve the Core Curriculum Content Standards, the board shall provide to the SMT a detailed statement of the bases for its determination.

6:19A-4.3 Application for Additional Supplemental Programs and Additional Funds

(a) Upon determination by the board that a particularized need for a recommended supplemental program or service has been demonstrated and that the program or service is essential for student success in achieving the Core Curriculum Content Standards, over and above existing, whole school reform or required supplemental programs, the board shall submit its proposed plan for the program and the budgetary reallocations to fund it to the Department for approval. Applications for such approval must be submitted on forms provided by the Department and shall at a minimum include:

1. A general description of the program and an explanation of the particularized need which must be met in order to enable students to achieve the Core Curriculum Content Standards;

2. A description of the method and results of the student needs assessment underlying the request, including an identification of the specific population(s) to be served;

3. A demonstration that the need to be addressed cannot be met through existing, whole school reform or required supplemental programs, including an inventory and assessment of all such programs and an explanation as to why they are insufficient to meet the identified need; except that in the case of application for on-site health and social services, a demonstration must also be made as to why such programs cannot be provided efficiently or effectively off-site;

4. A detailed plan and budget for the proposed program or service, indicating staffing, supply, facility and other considerations, and including a demonstration, where appropriate, of compliance with applicable law;

5. A plan for evaluating the continuing efficacy and efficiency of the program; and

6. A demonstration that the requested supplemental program will not delay or impede implementation of, or does not duplicate, supplemental or whole-school programs and services required elsewhere in this chapter.

(b) Where a board determines that an essential program or service is unable to be funded through reallocation, the board shall apply to the Department for additional funds. Any application for additional funding must include the following:

1. Where the application is not submitted as part of an application for approval of supplemental program(s) pursuant to (a) above, a description of the program and the basis for the board's contention that it is essential, i.e., the program is required by law or has previously been approved by the Department;

2. A budgetary analysis demonstrating that no further reallocation from surplus or within the district's budget is possible and identifying those programs, services or specific expenditures that would be eliminated to fund the requested necessary program or service in the current budget year; and

3. A plan for incorporating the program or service into subsequent regular budgeting cycles.

(c) Where the Department concurs with the need for a particular program or service and the applicant contends that funding is not available for it, the Department may order reallocation of existing resources in order to accommodate the required program. In making the determination as to whether an existing program, service or expenditure should be exempt from reallocation, in whole or part, the Department shall consider whether:

1. The existing program, service or other expenditure is a school-level one directly serving the students in the school;

2. The existing program, service or other expenditure has demonstrated measurable results in enhancing the achievement levels of students in the school;

3. Elimination of the existing program, service or other expenditure would undermine the fundamental education program of the school;

4. The existing program, service or other expenditure is consistent with, and does not duplicate, the elements of the SMT's overall plan or the WSR plan, whichever is applicable;

5. The existing program, service or other expenditure is both research-based and demonstrably necessary over and above whole school reform and/or required supplemental programs;

6. The existing program, service or other expenditure is being delivered in the most efficient possible manner;

7. The existing program, service or other expenditure is of a priority equal to expenditures contained elsewhere in the district budget; and

8. The district has considered elimination of administrative and noninstructional expenditures before proposing elimination of programs, services and other expenditures that directly serve students.

(d) Where the Department is satisfied that the requested program or service is required pursuant to law or that a particularized need for it has been demonstrated, and further, that it is unable to be funded through existing resources, based on sufficient assessment by the district or SMT of the factors set forth above and the Department's independent review of information submitted and any additional information the Department may request, the Department shall request that the Legislature appropriate the funds needed to implement the program or service for the ensuing budget year.

(e) Any application rejected by the Department, either on grounds of demonstrated need or request for additional funding, may be appealed to the Commissioner pursuant to the provisions of subchapter 6 of this chapter.

SUBCHAPTER 5. FACILITIES

6:19A-5.1 Facilities Management Plan

(a) On or before January 15, 1999, the board shall prepare and submit to the Commissioner for review and approval a five-year facilities management plan that details the district's facilities needs and the board's plans to address them in accordance with instructions to be provided by the Commissioner.

1. The plan shall address the school years 1999-2000 through 2003-2004.

2. The plan shall include demonstration that the board has considered, and plans to implement or has dismissed with justification, the following options to address identified short- and long-term facilities needs:

i. Realignment of school sending areas and grade configurations;
ii. Interdistrict cooperative arrangements;
iii. Extension or restructuring of the school day;
iv. Extension or restructuring of the school year;

communication technologies such as the Internet and distance learning resources;

vi. Joint use of municipal or privately owned facilities;

vii. Partnerships with private industry.

3. The plan adopted by the board must be endorsed by the facilities advisory board established pursuant to paragraph (c) of this section.

(b) The board shall contract with a qualified demographer to project the district's enrollments, delineated by grade level and inclusive of three-, four- and five-year-year-old residents, through the 2003-2004 school year. The projection shall employ a cohort survival methodology or other methodology approved by the Commissioner, and shall serve as the basis for identifying the capacity and program needs detailed in the five-year facilities management plan.

(c) The board shall assemble a facilities advisory board to assist in its development of a facilities management plan. The advisory board shall include parents, teachers, school-level administrators, representatives of community groups, and at least one member of the SRI Team(s) assigned to school(s) in the district pursuant to section 1.3 of this chapter. The board shall retain a licensed architect and a licensed engineer, who shall serve on the facilities advisory board in addition to other duties prescribed in this chapter.

(d) The board shall prepare and submit to the Department an educational adequacy inventory of all existing district facilities.

(e) The board shall prepare and submit to the Department a report detailing the status of deficiencies identified in the Vitetta assessment submitted to the New Jersey Supreme Court pursuant to the Court's May 14, 1997 ruling in *Abbott v. Burke* or otherwise identified by the district's licensed engineer. The report shall include but not be limited to identification of the following:

1. Deficiencies that the district's licensed engineer determines to be emergent health and safety concerns;

2. Deficiencies identified in the Vitetta assessment and an indication of whether they have been corrected or remain; and

3. Deficiencies identified in the Vitetta assessment that may not require remediation under the rehabilitation subcode of the Uniform Construction Code (N.J.A.C. 5:23-6. 1 *et seq.*) as revised effective January 5, 1998 and that in the opinion of the district's licensed engineer do not require remediation.

(f) The submissions required of boards pursuant to paragraphs (a) through (e) of this section shall conform to the guidelines, criteria and format prescribed by the Commissioner.

SUBCHAPTER 6. APPEALS

6:19A-6.1 Applicability of Subchapter

Aggrieved applicants for Department authorization to improve or amend existing programs, adopt additional supplemental programs, build or renovate facilities or seek additional funding may appeal to the Commissioner in accordance with the provisions of this subchapter.

6:19A-6.2 Filing, Service and Documentation of Petition

(a) Any appeal filed pursuant to this subchapter must meet the filing, service and format requirements for petitions of appeal as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6:24-1.1 et seq., including the requirement for service on the Attorney General of the State of New Jersey. Such service should be directed to Department of Law and Public Safety, Division of Law, P.O. Box 112, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0112; Attention: Education Section.

(b) Any appeal filed pursuant to this subchapter must include, in addition to the petition required under (a) above, a copy of the complete application submitted to the Department and a copy of the determination being appealed from.

(c) Appeals may be filed only by the entity which submitted the application under dispute, or, in the case of applications filed by entities other than the board, by the board if it does not concur with the Department's determination; however, in any appeal where the board is not the petitioner, the board must be named as an indispensable party to the appeal.

6:19A-6.3 Filing, Service and Documentation of Answer

(a) Answers to petitions of appeal filed pursuant to this subchapter must meet the filing, service and format requirements for answers as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6:24-1.1 et seq.

(b) Answers to appeals filed pursuant to this subchapter must additionally include a copy of any information relied upon by respondent(s) in making determinations at issue, where such information is not a part of the documentation submitted by the petitioner pursuant to section 6.2(b) of this chapter.

6:19A-6.4 Submission of Position Statements and Replies

Within 20 days of the filing of respondent(s)'s answer(s), or expiration of the time for such filing, the petitioner shall file a letter memorandum setting forth with particularity the basis for its position, referencing the criteria established for the application process and the materials submitted in conjunction with it. Within 10 days of receipt of petitioners' memorandum, each respondent shall file such reply as it may wish to make. Within 5 days of receipt of any reply, petitioner may file a final response thereto. All submissions must be filed in triplicate (original and two copies) and served upon all other parties to the appeal at the same time they are filed with the Commissioner.

6:19A-6.5 Commissioner Review and Decision

(a) Upon receipt of the filings set forth above, or expiration of the time for their submission, the Commissioner shall review the total record before him and render a written decision, which shall be a final decision unless and until reversed on appeal. The Commissioner's decision shall include an appropriate order; where the relief ordered includes additional funding, the Commissioner shall make the necessary request to the Legislature.

(b) In rendering decisions pursuant to this subchapter, the Commissioner shall apply the same standards as are set forth for Department review in the operative rules for the type of application in dispute. The burden of proof shall be on the petitioning party to demonstrate that these standards were, or were not as the case may be, met by the applicant notwithstanding the Department's determination to the contrary.

(c) Should the Commissioner find that there are material issues of fact to be determined, the case may be transferred to the Office of Administrative Law for hearing as a contested case under the Administrative Procedure Act, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 52:14B-1 *et seq.*, N.J.A.C. 1:1-1.1 et seq., and N.J.A.C. 6:24-1.1 et seq.

(e) Pursuant to P.L. 1998, c. 45, Commissioner decisions rendered pursuant to this subchapter shall be final agency decisions and shall be appealable to the Appellate Division of the Superior Court.

Appendix H

Timetable of Abbott Requirements
2000-2001

The following table provides a listing of dates by which requirements identified in the regulations are to be addressed:

B. TIMETABLE OF REQUIREMENTS 2000-2001

Date Required	Responsibility	Task
Annually on or before Dec. 1	SMT	Prepare and submit to the DOE, with a copy to the CSA and the board, a WSR implementation plan, which integrates all local, state and federal resources developed in accordance with the guidelines and requirements of the DOE and the program developer. (6A:24-4.3)
Annually on or before Dec. 1	Principal in consultation with SMT	Prepare and submit as part of the WSR implementation plan a school-based budget that includes staff, and other goods and services needed to implement or maintain WSR. (6A:24-4.4)
Annually on or before Dec. 1	SMT	Develop and submit a school-level educational technology plan to be included with the WSR implementation plan. (6A:24-4.3)
Annually on or before Dec. 1	Secondary School SMT (in consultation with CSA, principal, and SRI team)	Prepare and submit as part of the WSR Implementation Plan a revised plan for implementation of Required Programs in Secondary Schools. (6A:24-4.3 and 6.1)
By Jan. 30, 2001	SMT	All secondary schools submit application to the DOE, with copies to the CSA and the board, a plan for implementation of a research-based WSR model or a whole school alternative program design. (6A:24-4.1)
By September 2001	District Board of Education	All four-year-olds and all three-year-olds are offered full-day, full-year preschool. (6A:24-3.4)
By July 1, 2002	District Board of Education	Any districts not currently implementing whole school reform must implement the requirements in the Abbott regulations. (6A:24-1.6)
By September, 2000	District Board of Education	Early childhood education programs shall achieve class size of one teacher and one aide for every 15 children in preschool and shall include one teacher and an aide for every 21 children in kindergarten. (6A:24-3.3)

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Biographical Data

Name	Andrea P. Atkins
Date and Place of Birth	February 7, 1959 Albany, Georgia
Elementary School	Madison Avenue School Atlantic City, New Jersey
High School	Atlantic City High School Atlantic City, New Jersey 1977
Undergraduate	Bachelor Of Arts Psychology Cheyney State College Cheyney, Pennsylvania 1981
Graduate	Master Of Arts School Administration Rowan University Glassboro, New Jersey 2001
Present Occupation	Third Grade Teacher South Main Street School Pleasantville, New Jersey