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No Child Left Behind and its communication effectiveness in diverse communities

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NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND AND ITS COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVENESS IN DIVERSE

COMMUNITIES

by
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ABSTRACT

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No Child Left Behind and its Communication Effectiveness in Diverse Communities
2005
Dr. Joseph Basso
Public Relations

The study sought to define the communication techniques and channels 15 school superintendents from randomly selected socioeconomically diverse school districts use to communicate the major provisions of federally mandated No Child Left Behind legislation to parents and the most effective techniques to communicate NCLB to parents in those districts most likely affected by the legislation. The author employed a Delphi technique and personal interviews to gather primary data.

Findings indicate that superintendents considered print media and group settings the most effective means through which to communicate NCLB provisions to target audiences. Additionally, the researcher determined that parents remain uncertain about NCLB's provisions and do not receive information from school districts regarding the law. Furthermore, parents believe that print media, Internet, radio and group settings provide the most effective means to communicate with target audiences about NCLB provisions.

MINI - ABSTRACT

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The author researched the methods school superintendents and parents deem most effective in communicating the provisions of the No Child Left Behind legislation. The researcher surveyed 15 southern New Jersey school superintendents and interviewed five parents from varying socioeconomic backgrounds. Print and electronic media, coupled with group meetings, proved the most important communication tools and channels.

With devotion's visage and pious action we do sugar o'er the devil himself.
Hamlet. Act iii. Sc. 1

To those that saw beyond words and pages to the truths beneath: Renee, Maxwell, Michael and Dolores, my thanks and devotion remain yours, always.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

An effective public relations program requires consistency, productive communication, top-down organizational effectiveness, and clarity. The maintenance of the relationship between an organization and its publics demands rigorous research. The relationship requires collaboration between the organization and its internal and external audiences, buy-in from the organization's management, and planning to be successful. Furthermore, implementation and review of a comprehensive public relations plan along with proper and consistent execution remain essential elements for success. The organization's continued receipt of good will depends on both the commitment of the entire organization to the proper maintenance of the relationship with stakeholders including the audiences from whom it derives its core business.

Additionally, relationship management between a community and its educational leaders can prove daunting. Community residents require complete and unfettered access to institutions and their leadership to build a viable school district. To this end, communication channels must remain open and free of real and potential impediments at all times.

Perceptions about organizational policy can hinder communication and destroy message effectiveness. Organizations must avoid these information gaps in communication channels at all costs. School districts must, in short, manage or otherwise obviate the existence of communication gaps.

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Problem

No Child Left Behind

In 2001, the Bush Administration enacted the *No Child Left Behind Act* (No Child Left Behind, NCLB).[1] Through a reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)* – the principal federal law affecting education from kindergarten through high school passed in 1965 – the administration touted NCLB as a "landmark in education reform designed to improve student achievement and change the culture of America's schools."[2] The act initiated a national wave of reforms as districts scrambled to meet the administration's requirements. The federal government, while spending more on education, creates no appreciable increase in per-student achievements despite standardized testing requirements. For example, while federal spending on kindergarten-through-12 education increased almost yearly under the ESEA, reading scores for children aged nine remained constant from 1975 to 1999.[3]

However, under the revised legislation, teacher quality receives greater attention. Further, federal school spending increases while the government simultaneously allows for greater flexibility in individual school spending and encourages schools to place a greater premium on scientific research when adopting educational programs and practices.

Vineland, a working-class, racially heterogeneous district in southern New Jersey, mirrors those districts most affected by the legislation. According to the Vineland *Daily Journal's* Deborah Marko, in September 2004 the New Jersey state Department of

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[1] United States Department of Education, "Introduction" 6 November 2001
<*http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml*>

[2] United States Department of Education

[3] United States Department of Education, "What *No Child Left Behind* Does for Parents and Children" 7 November 2004 <*http://www.ed.gov/nclb/overview/index.html*>

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Education released a report listing schools that failed to meet federal standards based on the academic year's standardized test scores. In Vineland, for example, every school except Max Leuchter and Durand Elementary appeared on a list designated for improvement. Marko further reported that the measurements of adequate yearly progress depended on year-to-year comparisons of students' scores on state exams given to fourth-grade, eighth-grade, and eleventh-graders. The state administers exams each spring.[4] Also, the NCLB designations spotlight the performance of student subgroups based on race, economic levels, and special-education status. According to Marko the district desires to close achievement gaps by phasing in higher benchmarks until all students reach mandated proficiency levels by 2014.[5]

However, educational subgroup categorizations – and, by extension, the process through which the government assigns standardized achievement designations – include several flaws. For example, a school could make the needs improvement list by missing one of the 41 indicators required for NCLB compliance. Further, benchmarks must be met for two straight years before the state will remove a school from the list. Also, one student's failure to meet state standards warrants inclusion on the list. Finally, the state permits only one form of compliance assessment.[6]

New Jersey congressman Robert Andrews (D-Haddon Heights) called NCLB a "worthwhile but flawed" law, arguing that both special education and English as a Second Language (ESL) students should receive different tests. "Special education students," he noted, "require an IEP – an Individual Education Program – through the

[4]Deborah Marko, "No Child Left Behind: Area schools falling short of standards; Dozen still fall under 'needs improvement,'" Daily Journal 30 September 2004

[5] Deborah Marko, Daily Journal

[6] Deborah Marko, Daily Journal

federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act." He also notes that these students have a separate curriculum and he wonders why they are evaluated with the same test. Further, Andrews stated that teachers should be rated with more flexible criteria. He also advocates longitudinal testing (testing of the same students yearly) rather than comparing students from one school year with students from another. Andrews added that funding from the federal government does not allow schools to meet NCLB requirements, noting that "there is a $9 billion hole between the requirements of NCLB and money provided by the government," ultimately calling the funding shortfall "unfair."[7]

Montclair State University's Dierdre Glenn Paul's study of reading standards relative to NCLB argued that black and Latino literacy learners – those learners ostensibly receiving the greatest aid from NCLB – suffer disproportionately from its implementation. Specifically, she noted that several analysts' critiques of the National Reading Panel's review of research supporting the implementation of Reading First – a nationwide effort to standardize reading achievement levels by academic year established as part of NCLB – failed to address the ways in which NCLB legislation exacerbates the existing achievement gap between black and Latino students and their white counterparts.[8]

The Vineland School District currently includes two schools in compliance with NCLB requirements. According to the school district's Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Marie Adair, two more will meet compliance standards at or near the end of the 2004-2005 academic year.

[7] Barbara S. Rothschild, "Andrews: Fix education law," Courier-Post, 1 October 2004

[8] Dierdre Glenn Paul, "The train has left: The No Child Left Behind Act leaves black and Latino literacy learners waiting at the station," Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy Volume 47, Issue 8, May 2004: 648-658

Perception Versus Reality

Paul's research also cites the findings of *A Multiracial Society with Segregated Schools: Are We Losing the Dream*, the 2001 report generated by Harvard University's Civil Rights Project. Her research regarding the study indicates that approximately 2.3 million U.S. public school students attend what the authors of the report called "apartheid"[9] schools. The study details the student subgroup of racial minorities' educational disenfranchisement. These students, the study argues, must be viewed in the broader societal context that is equivalently segregated (especially in relation to residential patterns). Black and Latino students, the study also notes, are more likely to receive "dis-education," or "the experience of pervasive, persistent, and disproportionate underachievement in comparison with their white counterparts."[10] Students attending these kinds of schools suffer from lower per-pupil monetary expenditure, less-experienced teachers, and less-challenging coursework.

Additionally, while school districts and parents tout the educational effectiveness of private versus public schools - most notably in the use of Title I funding (grants deeded to local education agencies, or LEAs, based on the number of poor children in school districts) for school voucher initiatives - they fail to note that private schools on average perform better than public schools due to student selectivity. The media claim that school vouchers either spell the end of the American public school system or provide a needed reality check for systems nationwide.[11]

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[9] Dierdre Glenn Paul, 649

[10] Dierdre Glenn Paul, 650

[11] Dierdre Glenn Paul, 650

Paul further noted that standards for academic success focused almost entirely on students' ability to successfully pass standardized tests; however, the research literature notes students' ability to perform well on standardized tests correlates directly with parental income, the level of maternal education, and the quality of classroom teachers.[12] The degree to which standardized test scores foretell future academic success remains a hot topic of debate in academic circles. Researchers note factors from student family literacy to internal family development as integral to sustained academic excellence.

Also, most U.S. children receive testing annually, especially children attending schools in poor communities. This occurred before the advent of NCLB rather than because of it. Indeed, research shows that children attending schools most often eligible for federal research dollars stand a greater chance of being tested than those that do not. NCLB, the study notes, merely expands testing to "schools that didn't already test for federal programs compliance," or schools primarily serving an "almost exclusively middle-class population of students."[13]

While NCLB proposes to aid students nationwide, the processes through which it determines student need often prove convoluted and, at times, indecipherable. For example, while special education placements occur at greater rates in schools serving large minority populations (schools NCLB should most clearly affect), difficulties in the special education referral process, assessment bias and a lack of cultural synchronization (a harmony established between the cultural systems of schools, diverse groups of learners, and the communities from which they come) all contribute to the rise in special

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[12] Dierdre Glenn Paul, 651
[13] Dierdre Glenn Paul, 651

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education placements among minority children and youth.[14] NCLB, then, applies differently to special education students versus traditional track students. At what cost, then, do schools with special needs populations implement NCLB?

New Jersey School Districts and Their Real and Potential Publics

New Jersey schools stand at a crossroads. According to Adair, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction for the Vineland School District, the district's perception in the local community, media, and outlying counties remains hardened and unchanging. Additionally, as areas grow to include more educated residents, these newcomers will potentially demand more of their respective districts, including (but not limited to) compliance with NCLB regulations, district-wide academic superiority to ensure their children's success and civic pride. Historically, the Vineland School District performed poorly relative to its neighbors in towns like Cape May and when compared to schools like Middle Township High School. Compounding the image problem is Vineland's status as an Abbott district.

Abbott School Districts

In 1981, the Education Law Center filed *Abbott v. Burke* on behalf of urban school children, challenging the 1975 *Public School Education Act, Chapter 212*, which created a new state-funding formula for public schools in impoverished areas. Lawmakers did not, however, raise taxes to pay for the funding. *Abbott v. Burke* argued that the PSEA proved inadequate to provide students with a thorough and efficient education.[15] In anticipation of the Supreme Court of New Jersey's decision in favor of the

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[14] Dierdre Glenn Paul, 652

[15] Education Law Center, "History of Abbott" 6 November 2004
<*http://www.edlawcenter.org/ELCPublic/AbbottvBurke/AbbottHistory.htm*>

Abbott children, then-governor James Florio introduced the *Quality Education Act* in

1990. The legislation included a $2.8 billion state tax increase.[16]

Additionally, in June 1990 the New Jersey Supreme Court ruled in *Abbott v.*

Burke (Abbott II) that inadequate funding denied students in urban districts a thorough

and equal education and further required the state to equalize funding between suburban

and urban districts for education while also providing extra or supplemental programs to

"wipe out disadvantages as much as a school district [could]."[17] This Abbott district

program set out to bring parity to education in New Jersey by providing funding for

urban districts equal to that of suburban ones. Author and educator Donald K. Sharpes

writes that children from urban districts "may be at risk simply because they come from

poor homes and disadvantaged environments." He further argues that the "modification

of recent laws may be reflected in the increased cost of educating special-need children

and youth."[18]

Abbott Districts (so named beginning in 1997) earn their designation due to their

respective socioeconomic statuses. These rankings, called *district factor groupings,*

began in 1975. The DFG index includes several factors such as percentages of target

populations with no high school diplomas, occupations, population densities, and per-

home aggregate incomes.[19] According to the criteria listed, the Vineland School District

earned an Abbott district designation.

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[16] Education Law Center

[17] Education Law Center

[18] Donald K. Sharpes, Advanced Educational Foundations for Teachers: The History, Philosophy, and Culture of Schooling (New York, RoutledgeFarmer, 2002), 471

[19] New Jersey Department of Education, "Abbott Districts" 7 November 2004 <*http://www.state.nj.us/njded/finance/sf/dfgdesc.shtml*>

The Teacher Education Effect .

As the United States grows, so grow the needs and compositions of its member populations. The increasing diversity of the U.S. population foretold an attendant increase in the diversity of the students in its educational systems. The debates concerning school desegregation and equitable learning opportunities grew commensurate with this increase in diverse populations nationwide. The landmark U.S. Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas,* a case involving racial segregation in public schools, recognized the importance of providing all children with an appropriate education (affording a student the best possible chance for sustained future educational and financial success). This, according to researcher Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, would help ensure the rights of marginalized groups in urban and other settings, regardless of race, ethnicity, language or disability.[20]

The educational achievement gap between urban schools and their suburban counterparts relates, in part, to urban students' vast differences in life experiences from those of their teachers who tend to be overwhelmingly white, middle class, and monolingual. Talbert-Johnson argues that teacher candidates in urban areas must come armed with teaching skills enabling the effective transmission of teaching messages to minority students.

Student Achievement

The achievement gap in part necessitating the implementation of NCLB now looms larger than in 1988 – in some cases as much as 50 percent larger. Minority SAT scores average 147 points lower than their white peers -195 points for blacks and 100

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[20] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, "Structural Inequities and the Achievement Gap in Urban Schools," Education and Urban Society, November 2004, Vol. 37, No. 1: 22-36

points for Latinos. Talbert-Johnson's research argues a mix of racial, environmental, and other institutional differences.[21]

Also, socioeconomics figure prominently in the widening of the achievement gap. In many urban districts in New Jersey, for example, student testing achievement splits along racial and ethnic lines, with black and Latino students fairing poorly in relation to their white counterparts. Minorities in these school districts average 70 points lower in student testing than whites. These students hailed from low-income areas. Additionally, students from families living below the poverty level in a number of urban areas fare more poorly than their white counterparts.

Further, student achievement derives its effectiveness from the culture of the school (the ability of the student population to identify with and internalize those themes espoused in a school curriculum). Talbert-Johnson reports that students who identify with the academic tenets of the schools they attend appear more motivated to achieve and experience higher educational gains.[22] Minority students in a number of geographic areas, however, often report feelings of alienation within their school communities and further fail to see education as rewarding.

Statewide Assessment Testing and Urban Environments

School districts, in attempts to both bolster their individual and collective student achievement standards and comply with NCLB legislation, try to design curricula to improve student performance and prepare them for post-secondary education. The Vineland School District, for instance, formed a mathematics and science partnership with Rowan University in Gloucester County, New Jersey. Vineland area high schools

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[21] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, 23

[22] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, 24

offer ten advanced placement courses. The district's Academic Placement Improvement Program (APIP) trains students to excel at college-level coursework. SAT scores for students in the program average just below 1,000.

Eighty percent of Vineland high school sophomores and juniors take the PSAT. Additionally, area employer Sun Bank sponsors area students at its branches at a cost of over $90,000 per year. To accommodate population growth, Vineland plans to build 5 new schools beginning in 2005. It also plans to develop *academies*, or focused classes designed in concert with area employers to give students hands-on training in specialized career fields in the health care and technology sectors. Statewide testing assessments for Vineland yielded a 95 percent proficiency rating (of the students tested in all subject areas, 95 percent achieved scores rating them "proficient" in the testing subject areas). Vineland's eighth grade students struggled overall to meet testing requirements.

Research into testing and urban environments by Laurence Parker of the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign revealed that many school districts chose to focus on the technical cores of curricula and mathematics relative to statewide testing assessments. The study further advanced the theory of *interest convergence* as a key operator in the successful deployment of public policy changes. According to Parker, whites, who tend to possess influence in policymaking and can subsequently set education agendas, agree to policy changes only if they coincide with a benefit to them. He further argues that whites, if subjected to policies designed to impede academic development, would actively work to abolish or otherwise obviate the effect of said policies. Thus, Parker concludes that whites support stringent testing standards for

students as minority students stand to suffer if unable to meet these standards while whites would encounter little or no ill effects as a result.[23]

Purpose

The researcher will identify the most effective methods for school districts to communicate the provisions of NCLB to their respective communities. This will, in turn, engender an articulation of these districts' progress toward fulfilling requirements of federally mandated NCLB legislation. Further, upon identifying the most effective communication methodologies, the study will identify the means through which these school districts can devise and deploy messages detailing their progress toward compliance and the initiatives currently in place to improve their progress. The study will also stratify target audiences and propose the best means to both reach these diverse audiences and aid them in retaining cognitions regarding district messages. Overall, the data may provide guideposts to school public relations professionals through which they can develop and maintain databases containing comprehensive data on the audiences they serve.

Delimitations

This study will not address all aspects of school public relations. This study addresses issues relative to compliance with NCLB specific to well-to-do, working class, and poor school districts in the state of New Jersey.

This study will not analyze all aspects of federal NCLB legislation. Rather, it will address the referenced school districts' efforts to convey targeted messages regarding

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[23] Laurence Parker, "Statewide Assessment Triggers Urban School Reform: But How High the Stakes for Minorities?" Education and Urban Society, Vol. 33 No. 3, May 2001: 313-319

NCLB and efforts toward district compliance to represented communities and their members.

This study focuses on the relationships between the referenced school districts and their surrounding communities. Because opinions can vary widely within a population, and levels of education regarding NCLB and testing among audience members may vary dramatically, the researcher cannot assume that public relations will change these communities' opinions regarding their respective school districts.

In examining the relationships between these disparate school districts and their attendant publics, the researcher can analyze only results of these studies and consider possible remedies based on the information presented. This thesis does not propose clear solutions for all school systems serving socioeconomically diverse communities experiencing information gaps between themselves and the communities they serve.

Because this thesis deals with school districts in the state of New Jersey's southern region, other districts in other states may have less or greater difficulty with community relations than is the case with those participating in this study. Indeed, differently constituted areas require different public relations models. Other urban, suburban, and rural areas may see varying factors at work in the influence of the school systems on their communities.

Purpose

Urban communities – specifically those with a median income at or near the federal poverty level – test their students more often than suburban communities. Federal legislation requires academic achievement at a specific level within a targeted time frame. To afford urban school districts the best chance for success, students, parents, and

other community stakeholders must receive accurate information about NCLB legislation, compliance standards, and district initiatives to meet the federal requirements. This study examines community attitudes toward the participating school districts, measures audience familiarity with NCLB, and proposes a public relations model to convey these districts' messages most effectively.

Two hypotheses form the basis of this thesis:

H1: Participating school districts must increase the number of parents and concerned citizens familiar with district attempts at compliance with NCLB by 50 percent.

Research indicates that the participating school districts have a perception problem that exists both within the communities they serve and the larger surrounding population. This occurred, in part, due to the lack of a cohesive public relations plan regarding the federal government's deployment of NCLB. Further, the participating districts had neither universal organizing principles regarding the law's enactment nor a cohesive definition of compliance Additionally, no universally accepted idea exists within the school districts' administrations as to what constitutes compliance. Further, the districts made no attempts to contact residents and other concerned stakeholders when NCLB compliance initiatives began.

To effectively deploy and promote NCLB compliance strategies to the communities, the districts require complete demographic pictures of their target audiences. The districts further require their audiences' assistance in providing students with the tools necessary to ensure classroom and standardized test success and, by extension, district compliance with NCLB standards.

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H2: An NCLB compliance plan will result in a 50 percent improvement in the total number of districts in southern New Jersey adhering to the legislation.

Success breeds an attendant acclimatized culture. Shernaz Garcia and Patricia Guerra of the University of Texas at Austin, in their study on creating positive educational environments, contend that the cognitive dissonance discovered in program participants between their beliefs and their assumptions and those reflected in culturally responsive pedagogy discovered a need to resolve these conflicts. Those study subjects who reported increased awareness of culture and its myriad potential impacts in educational settings, questioned and rejected previously held negative views, and grew more likely to recognize their role in student learning and success.[24] Consequently, the successful cementing of the relationship between the district and its publics relative to NCLB compliance can stimulate a culture of success.

Purpose

NCLB compliance requires a concerted effort from both the participating school districts and their schools and, by extension, the communities from which their students hail. The existence of an information gap between these districts and their publics relative to the tenets of NCLB prevents the acquisition of the data required to craft an effective message, effective deployment of their individual messages and audience buy-in and subsequent support. Elimination of these gaps increases these districts' chances of success with their NCLB compliance initiatives.

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[24] Shernaz B. Garcia, Patricia L. Guerra, "Deconstructing Deficit Thinking: Working with Educators to Create More Equitable Learning Environments," Education and Urban Society Vol. 36 No. 2, February 2004, 150-168

Terminology

The researcher defines the following key terms used in the study.

Abbott district: One of 30 poor urban school districts in New Jersey that are legally designated as special needs districts. The designation was first created by the New Jersey Supreme Court's <u>1998 Abbott vs. Burke decision</u>.[25]

Academy: A school for special instruction

Amorphous: 1. Lacking definite form; shapeless: 2. Of no particular type; anomalous; 3. Lacking organization, formless.

Cognitive dissonance: A condition of conflict or anxiety resulting from inconsistency between one's beliefs and one's actions.

Communication channel: The means through which an organization conveys information to a public

Communication tools/techniques: Strategies for the effective presentation and internalization of specifically targeted messages

District factor grouping: A means of ranking school districts in New Jersey by their socioeconomic status (SES).

Educational success: Graduation from a technical school, community college, or four-year college or university that provides a foundation to obtain a job with good earning potential.

Financial success: Earning an income that provides freedom from debt and extra spending money after financial responsibilities are disposed of.

Housing start: New housing construction

[25.] New Jersey Department of Education "School Facilities Frequently Asked Questions, 12 November 2004 <*http://www.state.nj.us/njded/facilities/over/faq.shtml*>

Interest convergence: A dominant group's endorsement of an idea or course of action regarding another group if the outcome is in the dominant group's best interest.

Longitudinal testing/study: The collection of data at different points in time.

National Reading Panel (NRP): In 1997, Congress asked the Director of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) at the National Institutes of Health, in consultation with the Secretary of Education, to convene a national panel to assess the effectiveness of different approaches used to teach children to read.[26]

Pedagogy: 1. The principles and methods of instruction; 2. The profession of a teacher; 3. The activities of educating or instructing or teaching; activities that impart knowledge or skill.

Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT): A standardized test providing firsthand practice for the SAT.

Public relations plan: A series of instructions regarding an organization's communication with its publics.

Publics: Groups responsible for an organization's success or to whom an organization is responsible.

Reading First: a focused nationwide effort to enable all students to become successful early readers built on a solid foundation of research. The program is designed to select, implement, and provide professional development for teachers using scientifically based reading programs, and to ensure accountability through ongoing, valid and reliable screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based assessment.[27]

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[26] National Reading Panel, "Formation of the NRP," 12 November 2004
<http://www.nationalreadingpanel.org/NRPAbout/about_nrp.htm>

[27] U.S. Department of Education, "Reading First," 12 November 2004
<http://www.ed.gov/programs/readingfirst/index.html>

Reauthorization: A reaffirmation or revision of an existing piece of federally-mandated legislation.

Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT): A test that measures verbal and mathematical reasoning skills students have developed over time and skills they need to be successful in college.[28]

School culture: The ability of a student population to identify with and internalize those themes espoused in a school curriculum.[29]

Stakeholder: One who has a share or an interest.

Student selectivity: (In a private school) The ability to limit the potential population from which a student body is drawn using stringent or otherwise highly selective admissions requirements.

Suburban community: A usually residential area or community outlying a city.

Thorough and efficient/appropriate education: An education affording a student the best possible chance for sustained future educational and financial success.

Urban community: Of, relating to, or located in a city

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[28] CollegeBoard.com, "SAT Reasoning Test," 12 November 2004
<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/about/SATI.html>
[29] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, 23

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Communication Research

Researchers studying school and community relations cite several influences on the public relations process and message effectiveness relative to the retention of cognitions. Specifically, the development and maintenance of the relationship between school organizations and their respective publics and the measurable effects of deployed strategies on target populations demand both sustained input from target audiences and the proper application of the gathered data to public relations plans. These, in part, serve to alter the desired behaviors within target populations.

Institutional Accountability

The University of Cincinnati's James Koschoreck discovered that certain school districts, despite populations consisting almost entirely of minority children, managed to achieve high levels of performance respecting state achievement standards. His research focused on identifying the best practices in districts marked by high achievement and, from the study's findings, extrapolating strategies to use in similarly constructed districts elsewhere. Using a case study approach including interviews with central office personnel, administrators, teachers, parents, and other community members, Koschoreck gleaned useable data from which he could draw certain conclusions.[29]

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[29] James W. Koschoreck, "Accountability and Educational Equity in the Transformation of an Urban District," Education and Urban Society, Vol. 33 No. 3, May 2001: 284-304.

The development and implementation of a performance-based accountability system generated a vehicle through which policymakers, educational researchers, practitioners, and the general public could evaluate public school education in terms of student outcomes on standardized achievement tests.[30]

The Academic Excellence Indicator System in Texas represents an integrated accountability system that includes an exceptional demand for racial and socioeconomic equity requiring equal levels of performance for all groups.[31] The testing referenced criterion agreed upon by both the observed school districts' representatives and the researcher. The results allowed for multiple indicators such as previous districts' combined average standardized test scores, school dropout rates, and school attendance rates.

Research included observation, analysis of district documents, and individual and focus group interviews with board members, central office personnel, school administrators, teachers, parents, and community members. The research yielded the following themes suggesting a larger organizational framework from which a system could potentially construct an effective plan of action to improve communication: (a) the historical context, (b) accountability as context, (c) commonly held district beliefs, and (d) systemic modifications.[32]

Studies further indicate educational authorities in public school districts figure prominently in the enactment and implementation of policies.[33] Thus, the researcher argues, local school districts should shape policies in such a way as to necessitate the

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[30] James Koschoreck, 2001: 285
[31] James Koschoreck, 2001: 285
[32] James Koschoreck, 2001: 287
[33] James Koschoreck, 286

involvement of administrative personnel at plan inception. The research further noted the school superintendents, principals, and teachers as key instructional leaders.

Several themes arose from the research suggesting avenues that, if consistently mined for information and used properly, could potentially provide a basis upon which a school system could craft an effective action plan for school-community relations. These include (a) the historical context emphasizing financial resourcefulness, tenacity, and commitment to educational reform underscoring issues of equity, (b) the context of a policy of accountability that both perceived historical inequity and instilled a competitive drive to achieve success, (c) a set of commonly held district beliefs supposing its children could succeed contingent on the system's acceptance of its responsibility for that success, and (d) a set of systems designed to produce the equitable outcomes district administrators believed possible.[34]

Equitable Learning Environments

Shernaz B. Garcia and Patricia L. Guerra of the University of Texas at Austin note the continued existence of a significant achievement gap between white, predominantly middle-class students and their poor and/or non-white peers.[35] Despite evidence indicating raised passing rates on statewide standardized achievement across all demographic groups, many schools continue to fall short of mandated achievement standards. Their research indicates educators' unwillingness to assume responsibility for students' low achievement and failure.[36]

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[34] James Koschoreck, 302

[35] Shernaz B. Garcia and Patricia L. Guerra, "Deconstructing Deficit Thinking: Working with Educators to Create More Equitable Learning Environments," Education and Urban Society, Vol. 36, No. 2, February 2004: 150-168

[36] Shernaz B. Garcia and Patricia L. Guerra, 150

According to Garcia and Guerra, school districts and educators prevent the permanent application of change efforts in part due to tendencies to place the problem within students and their families or within the school while ignoring links between school practices and student performance outcomes. Ultimately, the researchers posit that educators, unwilling to look to themselves as part of the problem, will not look for solutions within the educational systems in which they participate.

Additionally, according to the researchers, unwillingness to undertake change often reflects attitudes of complacency on the part of educators, schools' apparent inability to do adequate jobs in educating children, or an aggregate inability to educate them more effectively.[37] This thinking leads to attempts by educators to superimpose proven strategies designed for historically successful students and families on families from low-income and culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Ultimately, change efforts stall due to deficit thinking. Educators and educational leaders fail to look beyond traditional solutions for meaningful change.

Educational systems require an exploration of the process through which positive views of diversity become standard. Research designed to deconstruct the foundations of deficit thinking asks several questions, including: 1) What kinds of process and content experiences among school staffs lead to the development of intercultural knowledge and skills relative to school and classroom practices, 2) how considering prevailing views among teachers and administrators regarding student learning, how extensively and effectively can development affect core beliefs, and 3) how can staff development in

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[37] Shernaz B. Garcia and Patricia L. Guerra, 151

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intercultural competence link to school-wide reform efforts to close the aforementioned achievement gaps?[38]

The researchers began their project using a framework comprising a number of philosophical and theoretical perspectives regarding multicultural education. A well-established body of literature, both theoretical and empirical in nature, exists on intercultural communication theory and methods for intercultural training. Reviews of the respective disciplines saw the researchers integrate aspects of effective intercultural communication training with elements of effective staff development design drawn from both multicultural and general education. This, in turn, led to the discovery of the following underlying assumptions: (a) deficit thinking permeates society leading to its adoption and internalization by schools and teachers; (b) professional development in diversity includes non-white educators; (c) intercultural communication permeates every aspect of schooling; (d) cultural sensitivity and awareness do not automatically result in equity practices; and (e) professional development activities must systematically and explicitly link knowledge to classroom practices.[39]

Beliefs regarding minority students devolve into several larger subgroups with the patterns described remaining constant across variables including ethnicity, grade level, or student ability. The researcher lists the six subgroups below.

1) Overgeneralizations about Family Background

Many of the participants from the study (including both teachers and administrators) entered the study believing that many of their students entered school unprepared to learn. They linked the students' educational risks to sociocultural variables

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[38] Shernaz B. Garcia and Patricia L. Guerra, 152
[39] Shernaz B. Garcia and Patricia L. Guerra, 154

including poverty, limited English proficiency and racial or ethnic minority status.[40] The researchers offered a broader view of educational risk to include school-, classroom-, teacher-, and pedagogy-related variables as possible contributors to student failure. Research further provided awareness of ingrained cultural behaviors in both students and teachers and, by extension, afforded both parties access to alternate explanations about academic outcomes.[41]

2) Writing Students Off Before They Come To School

The researchers discovered that participants believed students' life experiences or behaviors weighed more significantly on their respective educational experiences than their learning characteristics or needs. Combined with a view of students' parents as unsupportive, teachers began assuming a caretaker role with students to the exclusion of the recognizance of student learning potential.

Further, recognition of the existence of the cognitive dissonance between participants' long-held beliefs and new knowledge proved problematic. Ultimately, despite improvements in participants' views of potential and actual student achievement, some participants maintained these beliefs.

3) Caring at the Expense of Academics

Despite respondents' obvious concern for the children they taught, the expressions of caring often came at the expense of academic instruction, leading researchers to wonder how much of students' poor academic achievement occurred due

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[40] Shernaz B. Garcia and Patricia L. Guerra, 159

[41] Shernaz B. Garcia and Patricia L. Guerra, 159

to limited academic time devoted to classroom learning tasks versus their learning abilities.[42]

Additionally, teachers' lowered expectations regarding student performance pervaded their beliefs. Researchers discovered a pattern of student- and family-focused deficits leading to student- and family-focused intervention programs designed to fix them. Few, however, identified inadequate teacher preparation, curriculum, or pedagogy concerns. Further, resources to advance culturally responsive curricula and intercultural communication proved sparse.

4) Absence of a Cultural Lens

Research participants failed to bring appropriate cultural lenses, or frameworks, to bear on their interpretations of student performance, parent involvement, or their own instructional styles and preferences.[43] That is, their cultural views encompassed artifact and behavior rather than hidden meaning and impact. Additionally, social-class differences as sub-cultural components did not occur to many study participants. Later, participants came to see culture as one lens through which we all observe and interact with our respective environments and that, relative to student learning, proved an important interface between students, teachers, and student academic performance and behavior. Researchers further determined that both student academic performance and behavior grew, in part, from a complex interaction between individuals and their learning environments.[44]

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[42] Shernaz B. Garcia and Patricia L. Guerra, 161

[43] Shernaz B. Garcia and Patricia L. Guerra, 161

[44] Shernaz B. Garcia and Patricia L. Guerra, 162

5) A Monocultural View of Child-Rearing Practices and Success

According to Garcia and Guerra, teachers often view success through their own sociocultural and linguistic experiences. Participants' ignorance of the ongoing interaction between culture, cognition, teaching, and learning led to the improper application of their own multicultural knowledge relative to classroom management, curriculum pedagogy, and parental involvement.[45] Further study and analysis led many to conclude that their misplaced beliefs led to unnecessary and, at times, destructive conflicts with both students and parents.

6) Students and Parents Need to Change; The System Works

Absent a cultural framework, and saddled with monocultural perceptions of students and their environments, teachers and administrators, rather than questioning the efficacy of the environments in which they taught and their overall systemic effectiveness, instead (in many instances) focused on parents' behaviors. Nonconformance with teachers' and societal standards regarding parental involvement led them to believe that the solution lay in better parent training or parent education programs.

Additionally, teacher perceptions of parent participation at school presumed that students' families devalued education. Subsequent reviews of teacher behavior led participants to conclude that alternative strategies could potentially produce more positive results.

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[45] Shernaz B. Garcia and Patricia L. Guerra, 163

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Student and Family Diversity

Finally, participants demonstrated an overall increase in awareness of the effects of culture in educational settings. They further questioned and often rejected their own negative views and became cognizant of their own prominent roles in the student educational process. This, in turn, led to a readiness to examine institutionalized instructional practices and possibly modify these practices to make them more culturally responsive.

Minority Literacy and the No Child Left Behind Act

Montclair State (NJ) University's Paul researched the No Child Left Behind Act and its attendant Reading First guidelines. Specifically, she cites studies critiquing the research conducted by the National Reading Panel, a group convened in 1997 to assess the effectiveness of different approaches used to teach children to read. Her research discovered flaws in the research used as the basis for Reading First guidelines. The flaws pertain to sampling, research methodology, and a broader relevance of the findings.[46] She further argues that the National Reading Panel's published research ignores potential impacts on black and Latino student populations, particularly the potential to exacerbate the existing achievement gap between black and Latino students and their white counterparts.

Additionally, the researcher cites a report published by Harvard University's Civil Rights Project - *A Multiracial Society With Segregated Schools: Are We Losing the Dream?* - detailing the existence of *apartheid schools*, or schools in which all students are racial minorities. The study reports that these schools must be viewed within a

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[46] Dierdre Glenn Paul, "The train has left: The No Child Left Behind Act leaves black and Latino literacy learners waiting at the station," Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, May 2004: 648 - 656

broader, equivalently segregated, social context. That is, black and Latino students attending these *apartheid schools* stand a greater chance of receiving what the study calls *dis-education*, characterized here as "the experience of pervasive, persistent, and disproportionate underachievement [of black and Latino masses] in comparison with their white counterparts."[47] This leads to a greater likelihood of student exposure to lower rates of per-pupil expenditure, less experienced or less qualified teachers, and less challenging curricula.

Additionally, while the media touted school vouchers in conjunction with the NCLBA's rollout, the researcher noted several aspects of the school voucher initiative ignored by media pundits spelling the end of the public school system. For example, private schools produce more successful students in part because they self-select. Additionally, private schools require parental involvement via financial commitment and support of school activities.[48]

Further, the NCLBA's emphasis on standardized testing ignores the fact that most U.S. schoolchildren receive testing annually, especially those attending schools in poor communities, or "the children... who attend schools that are eligible for... federal education program dollars."[49] Also, minority students, specifically blacks, represent 20 percent of students referred into special education programs. In short, minorities are overrepresented in every category of special education services in every American state. Paul notes that difficulties in the special education referral process, assessment bias, and

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[47] Dierdre Glenn Paul, 648

[48] Dierdre Glenn Paul, 650

[49] Dierdre Glenn Paul, 651

a lack of cultural synchronization all contribute to the rise in special education placements among minority children.[50]

Students in urban areas face greater difficulty relative to academic achievement than their peers in suburban areas. Florida International University's M.O. Thirunarayanan, in his study of student performance in urban areas, cites research indicating the aforementioned problems have been well documented over a period of time.[51] Further, research indicates that students in urban schools do poorly on national assessments, whereas suburban students tend to perform better. By comparing student performance of those in urban areas with those in suburban and rural areas using data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress, Thirunarayanan, makes a number of discoveries.

Thirunarayanan notes the major problems that residents of urban areas face include poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, underemployment, lack of affordable housing, and crime. Also, when compared to students in suburban areas, they were found to be twice as likely to be living in poverty.[52] Additionally, poorer school districts often lack adequate educational resources including qualified teachers, textbooks, and computers.

Using data from the National Center for Education Statistics' National Assessment of Education Progress, the researcher compared achievement levels on standardized tests of students located in central cities, rural areas, and suburban locations.

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[50] Dierdre Glenn Paul, 652

[51] M.O. Thirunarayanan, "The 'Significantly Worse' Phenomenon: A Study of Student Achievement in Different Content Areas by School Location," Education and Urban Society, Vol. 36 No. 4, August 2004: 467-481

[52] M.O. Thirunarayanan, 468

Testing subject areas included U.S. History, Geography, Mathematics, Reading, Writing, and Science. The NAEP tests students in grades four, eight, and 12.[53]

Thirunarayanan found that students in urban areas consistently performed significantly worse in many subject areas than students in suburban areas. During all assessment years included in the study, students from urban areas in grades four, eight, and 12 performed significantly worse in subject areas including geography, mathematics, and science than their counterparts from suburban areas. Further, urban students in grades four and eight performed significantly worse in total compared to suburban students.

Ultimately, Thirunarayanan offers little in the way of solutions to the problem of the significantly worse phenomenon, instead offering suggestions on alternative research strategies, particularly those studying exceptions to the significantly worse phenomenon discovered during his research.

Standardized Academic Achievement

Recent legislation regarding U.S. educational policy focuses on school accountability, particularly standardized testing and the effects of both accountability and standardized testing on educational equity. Linda Skrla of Texas A&M University and James Joseph Scheurich and Joseph F. Johnson, Jr. of the University of Texas at Austin argue that accountability systems and their total effect on educational equity are dynamic (over time), highly complex, varied, and implemented differently at all levels and sites.[54] Ultimately, they conclude that strong scholarship should carefully consider the entire range of listed criteria to arrive at views that respect and replicate the complexity of such systems.

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[53] M.O. Thirunarayanan, 469

[54] Linda Skrla, James Joseph Scheurich, and Joseph F. Johnson, Jr., "Toward a New Consensus oh High Academic Achievement for All Children, Education and Urban Society, Vol. 33 No. 3, May 2001: 227-234

Additionally, their research discovered that opponents of standardized testing tend to oversimplify the potential for improved educational equity due to increased accountability standards.[55] Critics further believe that equity-focused research discovering positive results for accountability includes inherent flaws.

The researchers posit the existence of a continuum on which the collective research, theory, and commentary on accountability policy exists, running from negative to mixed to positive effects.[56] The positive end boasts significant support among policy makers, legislators, business leaders, analysts, and the like for the view that increased educational accountability aids closing the achievement gap between minorities and whites.

Also, according to the researchers, other supporters of accountability as an equalizer in education argue for its status as a civil rights issue, citing the absence of standards as undermining minority achievement. They further insist that the growing standards movement "recognizes the need for uniform measures of student progress to ensure that education officials cease excusing inferior education for the very children who need high-quality education the most."[57]

Accountability and standardized testing, the researchers also argue, can reveal the deep inequity structured within traditional models and methods of schooling and force educators to make improvements. Further, the study cites school systems where increased accountability and educational equity led to overall district improvement. Participating

[55] Linda Skrla, James Joseph Scheurich, and Joseph F. Johnson, Jr., 227
[56] Linda Skrla, James Joseph Scheurich, and Joseph F. Johnson, Jr., 228
[57] Linda Skrla, James Joseph Scheurich, and Joseph F. Johnson, Jr., 229

districts listed improved planning, standardized data, and consistent and stable target state performance requirements as necessary tools to combat educational inequity.[58]

However, some studies report mixed effects. One study on state testing policy and its effects on educational attainment for students from varied socioeconomic backgrounds, for example, notes that states' testing policies "have complex relationships with key schooling processes... [and] operate in multiple ways, varying both in their effects of different types of students and measurable attainment."[59] They further attest that, rather than leveling the playing field, policies born of increased accountability standards may serve to "both amplify and attenuate [educational] stratification."[60]

Further, Skrla, Scheurich and Johnson report negative findings, including an overall reduction in teachers' skill levels due, in part, to an overemphasis on accountability via prescriptive practices. Others discovered that state testing improvements did not necessarily translate to improvement on national standardized tests.

In sum, the researchers argue for consensus among educational practitioners, policymakers, policy analysts, and others connected to U.S. education at all levels regarding minority children and those from low-income areas. These children, researchers contend, require the tools necessary to achieve high levels of academic success in all schools. Researchers conclude that this end is both possible and achievable and can be accomplished in the current political policy context.[61]

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[58] Linda Skrla, James Joseph Scheurich, and Joseph F. Johnson, Jr., 229
[59] Linda Skrla, James Joseph Scheurich, and Joseph F. Johnson, Jr., 230
[60] Linda Skrla, James Joseph Scheurich, and Joseph F. Johnson, Jr., 230
[61] Linda Skrla, James Joseph Scheurich, and Joseph F. Johnson, Jr., 231

Standardized Inequity in Urban Schools

Public education in the United States, according to the University of Dayton's Talbert-Johnson, serves an increasingly diverse student population. The myriad of problems facing students in urban areas directly relates to both school desegregation and equitable learning opportunities.[62] In *Brown*, the United States Supreme Court argued that racial segregation in schools was unconstitutional. All students, Talbert-Johnson argues, should receive an appropriate education. She further asks if *Brown* ensured equitable learning opportunities for minority children; minority children continue to lag behind their white peers in academic achievement.

Additionally, minority students from low-income families in urban areas face other challenges in their education. For example, their lives and experiences often differ dramatically from those of their (often) white, middle-class, monolingual American English-speaking teachers. Further, they often hail from homes where families speak some language other than American English. Finally, the researcher argues that preservice candidates require an arsenal of pedagogical skills to work effectively with minority students.[63]

According to Talbert-Johnson, at all ages and in all subjects, the achievement gap between minority students and their white peers, despite shrinking in the 1970s and early 80s (when minority students' score gains exceeded those of whites), is larger now than in 1988, in some cases by as much as 50 percent.[64] Declining scores in reading and mathematics for minorities further highlight this widening gap that becomes particularly

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[62] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, "Structural Inequities and the Achievement Gap in Urban Schools," Education and Urban Society, Vol. 37 No. 1, November 2004: 22-36

[63] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, 23

[64] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, 23

prominent as students progress through the K - 12 educational system. Additionally, the SAT scores for minorities average 150 points lower than those for whites. Also, despite upticks in overall minority student enrollment over the past 30 years, minorities still average lower rates of college entrance and completion than their white counterparts.

Efforts to address the achievement gap focus both on institutional differences including racial and environmental factors and on socioeconomic causes. Indeed, the effects of poverty remain the gap's most significant sociocultural cause.[65] For example, in 2000, of the 12 million American children living in poverty, minority children made up almost 7.2 million, or 60 percent.[66] The inability to address the adverse affects of poverty directly affects the achievement gap. Closing the gap directly depends on the quality of the schools students attend, the curricula they study, and their teachers.[67]

Additionally, schools and their attendant educational systems contribute to the achievement gap. Researchers identify student school cultural identification as an explanation for discrepancies in achievement among minority youth. Cultural identification among students contributes to higher levels of student motivation to achieve and experience greater educational gains. However, minority students often report feelings of alienation and fail to see school as rewarding. Further, research shows that minority students enrolled in urban settings display higher levels of emotional detachment than their white peers, especially males.[68] External expression of this disaffectedness can result in punitive consequences and a failure on the part of the affected student to identify himself as a successful student, the internalization a poor self-

[65] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, 24

[66] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, 24

[67] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, 24

[68] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, 24

image, and subsequent performances as such. This leads to what the researcher calls "disidentification," itself shaped by negative teacher expectations, academic tracking, punitive practices, and poor teacher support.[69]

Research suggests a link between disidentification and teacher-student relationships. The research further posits that minority success benefits directly from teacher support. Also, the data indicate that society's views of limited minority value and their inherent inferiority pervade the halls of academia, resulting in limited teacher support and decreased expectations of minority students.[70] This, in turn, leads minority students to disengage their self-appraisal from their academic performances, instead attaching self-worth to domains in which they feel more confident.

According to Talbert-Johnson, urban school districts track minority and poor children so that highly disproportionate numbers of these students migrate to special education and low ability classes. This potentially deprives students of the high-quality instruction (where available) necessary to prepare them for college and reduces students' chances to receive high school diplomas.[71]

Additionally, schools in poorer districts may require extensive physical repair. These schools may lack substantive financial aid and the moral backing of their surrounding communities. They may, due to various socioeconomic factors, predispose students to failure.

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[69] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, 25

[70] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, 25

[71] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, 26

Further, discipline, ethics, and punitive practices may reflect only the culture, mores, and needs of the dominant class.[72] These issues intensify for racially and ethnically diverse populations. Minority students, regardless of age, face the prospect of potential suspension at earlier ages, the receipt of lengthier suspensions, tracking into special education classes, conflict resolution via juvenile court rather than treatment, and excessive pathological labeling. The researcher also reports that established punitive techniques may prove counterproductive, ineffective, and overzealous.

Also, schools in urban areas suffer disproportionately from a lack of qualified teachers. This leads to enlarged class sizes, lack of access to higher level courses, and poor teaching. Excessive teacher turnover compounds the problem, with attrition rates higher in high-poverty, low-income areas. Teachers often lack appropriate levels of cross-cultural experience. According to Talbert-Johnson's research, teachers often enter urban academic environments comprised of high numbers of minority students with both high levels of naiveté and stereotypical views of the students. They further lack awareness of, or understanding of, discrimination including racism and its deleterious effects. Teachers also lack requisite levels of multicultural, bilingual, and urban education.

Additionally, trend data regarding public school enrollment and teacher characteristics indicates that minority students will have mostly white teachers throughout their respective educations.[73] According to Talbert-Johnson, white teachers often perceive white students as more capable than their minority counterparts. Teachers also expect more from them and more eagerly support their efforts to become

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[72] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, 26
[73] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, 28

academically successful. Often, the opposite occurs with white teachers and minority students, leading to lowered student expectations which, when coupled with teachers' underestimation of minority student ability, aid in the creation of low academic performance.

Talbert-Johnson proposes a comprehensive transformation in teacher education policies to include cultural responsiveness. She lists six characteristics of culturally responsive teachers including: (a) *sociocultural consciousness*, or the recognition of the multiplicity of lenses through which one can view reality and one's location in the social order's influence on said lens, (b) affirming views of ethnically and racially diverse students, (c) an inborn responsibility for and capability of promoting educational change, (d) understanding and promoting of learners' means of knowledge construction, (e) knowledge of students' lives, and (f) use of aforementioned knowledge to design and curricula building on this knowledge in educational contexts. Further, culturally responsive teachers challenge social inequities and challenge policies and practices that impede student progress. [74]

The *No Child Left Behind Act* demands qualified teachers in each classroom in America. The U.S. Department of Education states that "schools of education and formal teacher training programs are failing to produce the types of qualified teachers that the *No Child Left Behind Act* demand."[75] The Department of Education defines a highly qualified teacher as one "who has obtained full State certification as a teacher (including certification obtained through alternative routes to certification) or passed the State

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[74] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, 30
[75] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, 30

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teacher licensing examination, and holds a license to teach in such State."[76] Talbert-Johnson adds that any definition of a highly qualified teacher must include a combination of interrelated conditions and values and also includes an empathic disposition, manifesting itself in teachers' relationships with students.

Additionally, Talbert-Johnson argues that teachers in urban schools require knowledge of local urban cultures, the urban political economy, the bureaucracy of urban schools, and the family, community, and social service support networks serving urban centers. She further argues that teacher education programs advocating for social justice in urban schools require empathic relationships with community members.

Further, good teachers should exist within a framework that espouses and embraces diversity. Faculty members must internalize and exhibit knowledge, dispositions, and behaviors in support of efforts to teach minority students in urban classrooms to aspire to and achieve rigorous academic standards. Resource materials across content areas should exist within teacher education programs. Also, the low expectations, negative stereotypes, biases and prejudices, and cultural misconceptions accompanying teachers into classrooms must be identified, challenged, and reconstructed.[77]

Talbert-Johnson also asserts that culturally responsive teachers spend considerable time developing relationships with students. Educational inequities often find their basis in both race and social class differences.[78] Students, in turn, respond favorably to positive and affirming relationships. Empathy, Talbert-Johnson argues,

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[76] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, 30

[77] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, 31

[78] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, 32

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while necessary, does not constitute a sufficient requirement for culturally responsive teachers.

Efforts to promote classroom discipline, Talbert-Johnson continues, should include heightened emphasis on desired behaviors and ways to help children pursue and acquire orderly, successful lives. Interventions should include developmental and cultural sensitivity to students of varied socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds. Students require realistic performance expectations, effective instruction, and proper motivational prompts.

Educators must deal with minority ambivalence to education. Schools should promote the inclusion of all learners by including all aspects of students' lives in a mainstream curriculum rather than restrict student awareness of their own cultural backgrounds to limited dates or times.[79] Students should also recognize, analyze, debate, and attempt to discover remedies for social problems daily.

Urban School Reform

Schools use social justice principles to enact reforms for minority students in urban areas using state testing standards. Laurence Parker of the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign offers an analysis of teacher/administrator/community-led proactive policy initiatives in various areas.[80] The concept of *interest convergence* delineated in *critical race theory* figures prominently here. In *interest convergence*, whites concede or agree to public policy changes involving minorities if their interest converges with minority interest. State mandates required that schools and school districts faced state sanctions unless they met standardized testing requirements. In short, a social justice

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[79] Carolyn Talbert-Johnson, 32

[80] Laurence Parker, "Statewide Assessment Triggers Urban School Reform: But How High the Stakes for Urban Minorities," Education and Urban Society, Vol. 33 No. 3, May 2001: 313-319

agenda could succeed given the strength of the political pressure brought to bear at multiple levels to ensure minority success.[81] Overall, successful efforts exist in various academic settings to secure equitable and challenging education.

Whites, Parker believes, will tolerate policies with harmful effects on minority populations, though these same policies, if potentially detrimental to white interests, would cause a groundswell of community support for their defeat. Thus, whites have no problem advocating for higher testing standards or grade retention policies as they stand to lose the least upon implementation of these standards and policies. Research further shows the harmful effects of these policies on students in urban schools. Many educational reform policies, while ostensibly designed to improve minority achievement, simultaneously work to let whites off the accountability hook, figuratively speaking.[82]

Additionally, Parker questions the veracity of the data compiled in several of the districts comprised of mostly whites under study, as they struggle with issues of cheating. Furthermore, he questions the possible political implications of such standardized testing studies as they extend to larger populations with possible political agendas. He further questions the possibility of suppressed minority representation in such districts due to white majority power structures designed to promote specific political and ideological agendas.[83]

Also, Parker questions the differences among students in combined testing categories. He seeks greater specificity relative to category groupings including gender and the like. He further asks, 1) Which groups are excluded from tests, 2) What is the cut,

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[81] Laurence Parker, 314

[82] Laurence Parker, 315

[83] Laurence Parker, 316

or adjusted, score on the test, and what content do tests cover in the areas of math,

science, and writing?

Chapter 3

Research Design

To test the hypotheses, the researcher employed both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The researcher conducted a Delphi study of 15 randomly selected school superintendents from seven socioeconomically disparate school districts in southern New Jersey. Respondents listed their opinions on the most effective communication tools and channels with which to disperse information regarding the provisions of NCLB to each member of the expert panel's constituents and subsequently determine the differences engendered in deploying these messages to affluent and working class or poor districts.

Employing a Delphi study technique, the researcher asked participants to rank order their responses from the most effective method to the least. The researcher selected each respondent using a comprehensive list of 204 southern New Jersey school superintendents provided by the Southern New Jersey Department of Education and the New Jersey Department of Education Web site (http://www.state.nj.us/education/).

The researcher selected the names from the universe of 204 potential respondents by beginning with the first viable sample on the list and counting every seventh name until reaching the desired sample size. An inability to contact participants or otherwise compel their participation resulted in the revisiting of the list until the desired sample size was reached. The sample size allowed for a 95 percent confidence level. As the sample

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consisted entirely of the target audience and the sampling method included sufficient

randomization, the researcher avoided sampling bias.

Additionally, the Delphi study provided clues to each respondent's feelings

regarding what criteria they believe both constitute effective deployment of the NCLB

compliance messages and which systems present the most effective methodology for

executing the messages. These responses included answers such as newsletters, special

events, mailings and seminars. Further, to the degree that respondents indicate sufficient

knowledge of the act's provisions, the surveys also considered their knowledge of NCLB

and what they believe the legislation means for both their respective school districts in

general and respondents' students in particular. they inquire after respondents' views on

the disparate school districts' compliance with federal *No Child Left Behind* legislation

and school district achievement standards overall.

Upon the completion and receipt of the surveys, the researcher compiled a

comprehensive list based on the frequency of response occurrences, grouped them

according to these frequencies, and returned the list to the respondents to have them rank

order the second round of submissions. Upon receipt of these results, the researcher

resubmitted these to the panel for a final ranking of those communication tools cited most

often. By plotting results using both frequencies of answer occurrences and percentages

of respondent groupings in specific content areas, the researcher displayed data using

tables to show the frequency of the responses, presenting the data in a format designed

for ease of reference and application.

The researcher also conducted a series of personal interviews with 5 parents from

socioeconomically disparate school districts. The researcher randomly selected parents

from different districts using contacts gleaned from this and previous research efforts. The researcher initiated contact by phone or e-mail and conducted either phone or face-to-face interviews. The researcher desired in-depth information about and impressions of participants, particularly what they believed regarding NCLB in their districts in general and their respective comfort levels relative to knowledge of NCLB and its provisions in particular. Those ideas most important regarding researcher aims focused on what they already knew about NCLB. Questions included the law's potential for present and future effectiveness, each participant's school district's methodologies for achieving compliance, and participants' ideas of what communication techniques would prove most effective in providing parents with and other concerned citizens with basic information about NCLB.

Additionally, by using personal interviews, the researcher developed a broad profile of district parents including racial, gender and ethnic compositions of both the schools and their leaders.

The researcher organized personal interview data by searching for recurring patterns within the answers. By grouping the data into manageable subcategories, the researcher extrapolated frequencies of certain key phrases or words detailed with the listed questions. These, in turn, presented more specific data including impressions gained from populations with direct access to the desired publics.

Chapter 4

Results

The researcher obtained the following data via a Delphi study conducted among

15 school superintendents from 15 socioeconomically diverse school districts in southern

New Jersey. The researcher conducted the study from March 31 to May 31, inclusive.

The researcher chose the study participants using the New Jersey Department of

Education Web site and a list of school superintendents obtained from Frank Basso of the

New Jersey Department of Education. The Southern Region includes the Atlantic,

Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Ocean, and Salem counties.

The median family incomes of each follow.[83]

County Median Income Data

County	Median Family Income
Atlantic	$51,710
Burlington	$47,969
Camden	$57,429
Cape May	$51,402
Cumberland	$45,403
Gloucester	$62,482
Ocean	$56,420
Salem	$54,890

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[83] Answers.com, "Wilkipedia, the free encyclopedia," 22 June 2005 < http://www.answers.com/topic>

The researcher sampled 15 school superintendents and/or chief school

administrators to ensure the study's statistical significance. The sample size guaranteed a

95 percent confidence level in the study's results.

The researcher began the study by contacting the universe of potential participants

– what became a group of 66 school superintendents or chief school administrators - via

e-mail addresses obtained using the links from the New Jersey Department of

Education's website and the list of 204 school superintendents and chief school

administrators. The links detailed above include hypertext links to websites that, in most

cases, list contact information for each of the potential participants (see Figure 1). The

researcher introduced himself to each of the participants. The introductory e-mail

included an overview of the study and its purpose.

The research asked for and received the endorsement of Dr. Albert Monillas, the

Assistant Commissioner for the Southern Region of the New Jersey Department of

Education. Dr. Monillas' office provided a letter indicating his endorsement of the study

and further enjoining those potential participants contacted to aid the researcher via their

participation (see Figure 2).

The researcher asked each of the potential panel participants to submit a list of at

least 10, but no more than 20, communication techniques they believed would prove most

effective in educating parents and concerned citizens from socioeconomically disparate

school districts about No Child Left Behind. The researcher informed the potential panel

that, upon receipt of the first round of responses, he would return the list to the panel for

ranking from the most to the least important. Upon receipt of the rank ordered list, the

researcher returned the list to the panel for a ranking of the top fifteen communication

techniques. Receipt of the final fifteen communication techniques from the panel would complete the study.

Study Participant List

Below find the final list of participants:

I. Dr. Edward F. Gibson, CSA, Chesterfield Township, Burlington County
egibson@chesterfieldschool.com

II. Mr. John Polomano, Superintendent, Bordentown Regional School District, Burlington County
polomanoj@bordentown.k12.nj.us

III. Mr. Tom Christensen, Superintendent, Shamong Township, Burlington County
tchristensen@ims.k12.nj.us

IV. Mr. Loren Thomas, Superintendent, Pittsgrove School District
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V. Lorraine Gilch, Director, Elementary Curriculum - NCLB Program Coordinator (for Ms. Cheryl Smith, Superintendent), Maple Shade School District, Burlington County
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csmith@mapleshade.org

VI. Dr. Diane DeGiacomo, Superintendent, Buena Regional School District, Atlantic County
ddegiacomo@BUENA.K12.NJ.US

VII. Mr. Fred Pratta, Chief School Administrator, Lower Alloways Creek Township, Salem County
prattaf@lac-k8.net

VIII. Margaret M. Doran, Director of Special Programs, Greater Egg Harbor Regional High School District (for Dr. Adam C. Pfeffer, Superintendent), Atlantic County
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Aggregate Response Set I

The researcher compiled the following initial list of 41 responses from the final panel of 15.

- A special targeted newsletter (highly qualified teachers, learning level segregation)
- A regular informational quarterly newsletter
- Presentations to local and larger community groups to include a community health component (PTA, civic groups, churches, Board of Education, area social service agencies)
- Brochures (mailed and available in area schools)
- Discussion forum with a panel of NCLB experts
- District website with NCLB information and links translatable to other languages upon request
- Native language ads and op-ed pieces in area newspapers at federal government expense
- Interpreters available for diverse community ethnic groups at government expense
- Ethnically and demographically targeted media messages

- Ethnically and demographically targeted mailings to include legal documents
- Demographically specific cable public access programs (taped discussions of NCLB with district administrators) to include area web page
- E-mail notification (parents and concerned citizens can sign of for NCLB notification)
- Home visits by school district and government representatives
- Mailings (fliers, pamphlets)
- Grade-level parent meetings coupled with a child-focused school event (concert, art show)
- Weekly school information packets
- Hire area residents to canvass affected neighborhoods
- Banner planes
- Clergy meetings
- Faculty meetings (document responses)
- Specially appointed advisory council meetings quarterly (Faculty, staff, parent)
- Parent meetings prior to state assessment administration
- Automated telephone message delivery to constituent parents and other concerned citizens
- NCLB descriptions on Back to School Night
- Information in Parent handbooks
- School calendar inserts
- Key Communicator meetings held twice a year
- State of the School District forum
- Meeting at local eatery
- Report card mailing insert
- Interim report mailing insert
- After school workshop
- Posters
- CD/DVD presentations
- Day care/preschool outreach
- Informational kiosk at community events
- Parent workshops
- School bulletin board postings
- Downloadable presentations (PowerPoint, PDFs)
- Family math, science, and reading nights
- Classroom visits

The second round of responses ranked the list. Each of the panel participants

ranked the communication techniques from most to least important. The researcher

captured the top fifteen responses from each of the rank ordered lists and compiled a

master list based on those responses that occurred most frequently. For those

communication techniques that saw an equal number of responses, the researcher ordered

them alphabetically. The researcher concluded that this methodology would not result in

a statistically significant margin of error due to the small difference between response

groups. The list of techniques and their respective response rate frequencies follow.

Communication Techniques Frequency Response Set

Communication Technique	Response Rate
Brochures (mailed and available in area schools)	11
Information in Parent Handbooks	10
A regular informational quarterly newsletter	9
A special targeted newsletter (highly qualifies teachers, learning level segregation)	9
Family math, science, and reading nights	8
NCLB descriptions on Back To School Night	8
Report card mailing insert	8
School calendar insert	8
Grade-level parent meetings coupled with a child-focused school event (concert, art show)	7
Key Communicator meetings held twice a year	7
Parent meetings prior to state assessment administration	7
Presentations to local and larger community groups to include a community health component (PTA, civic groups, churches, Boards of Education, area social service agencies)	7
Demographically specific cable public access programs (taped discussions of NCLB with district administrators) to include area web page	6
District Web site with NCLB legislation and links translatable to other languages upon request	6
Parent workshops	6

Two of the panel participants did not return their final response sets. Repeated

attempts to contact the participants yielded negative results. The individual ranked

response sets from panel participants are appended herein.

The researcher concluded that, based on the frequency of occurrence of the most

highly ranked responses and the number of rank ordered lists that included the same

responses in their top 15, the panel considered the listed techniques most effective in communicating the provisions of NCLB to parents and other concerned citizens.

Personal Interview Questions

The researcher conducted a series of personal interviews with five parents of varying socioeconomic backgrounds that lived in different school districts in southern New Jersey. He asked each of the participants the following questions:

1. Which of the following describes your level of knowledge regarding No Child Left Behind: Low, Moderate, or High?

2. Has your school district attempted to educate you regarding NCLB?

3. What communication techniques do you believe would prove most effective in communicating the provisions of NCLB to parent and concerned citizens with little or no knowledge of the law?

4. How would you get the information about the event (if applicable) to the target audiences?

Two of the parents were male. Three of the parents were female.

One male parent was a married 39-year-old police officer for eight years in Camden, New Jersey. He had a high school level education. He had three children, two males, one a teenager aged 16 and another an adolescent aged 13 in the Winslow Township public school system and one female college student age 19 who was a junior at Bowie State University in Maryland. He was African-American. He lived in Williamstown, NJ. He described his NCLB knowledge level as low. Additionally, he said that the school district provided little information regarding NCLB. He proposed a school assembly for parents, students and other concerned parties. He further proposed that information regarding the assembly reach parents via notices sent home with the children. He also suggested that the school post notices in the community for non-parents

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and others. He intimated that word-of-mouth notification regarding the assembly could occur via key communicators in the community. The researcher interviewed him on June 16, 2005.

The next interview participant was a married 40-year-old Art Director for Rowan University's office of University Publications. He was a graduate of Rowan with a Bachelor's degree in Graphic Arts. He lived in Wenonah, NJ. He had two male children nine months and six years, respectively. The oldest child had recently entered the Wenonah Township public school system. He was white. He described his knowledge of NCLB as low. He indicated that the school district provided no information regarding NCLB. He proposed a newsletter mailing to include both parents and community residents detailing the basics of NCLB and its implications for parents and students alike. The researcher interviewed him on June 22, 2005.

The first female interviewed, a married 32 year-old African-American fourth grade teacher in the Philadelphia school district, earned an M.A. in Elementary Education from Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia, PA and a B.A. in Sociology from Rowan University in Glassboro, NJ. She lives in Camden, NJ. She had two daughters, a 12-year-old who attended the Camden Promise Charter School in Camden, NJ and a six-year-old who attended Saint Cecilia's Roman Catholic School in Pennsauken, NJ. She described her knowledge of NCLB as high. She described a major provision of the law as all children learning the same material.

The interviewee indicated that her school district apprised her of NCLB including an implementation plan and revised standards for determining pass/fail rates for students. She indicated that NCLB standards demanded that her school pass students regardless of

proficiency and ability. Before the implementation of NCLB, students were retained upon failure to meet minimum advancement requirements. She also argued that teachers lack specific information regarding the law and its provisions. Finally, she believes that NCLB lowers her school's aggregate grading scale.

This subject further advanced the idea of a mass mailing to all school district residents announcing an NCLB seminar at area schools. The seminar would provide information to attendees about NCLB. Federal government representatives would chair the meeting and provide NCLB information as well as answer any questions. The researcher interviewed her on June 16, 2005.

The next female subject, a married 31-year-old manager at Aetna, earned a B.A. in History from Rutgers University in Camden, NJ. An African-American, she lives in Pennsauken, NJ. She has two sons, one age five who will attend Saint Stephen's Roman Catholic School in Pennsauken, NJ and another age three who attended the Martin Luther King, Jr. Child Development Center in Camden, NJ. She described her knowledge of NCLB as low, recognizing it only as legislation championed by the Bush Administration in 2001. As she had no students in the Pennsauken, NJ school district, she could no reasonably expect to receive NCLB information from it.

The subject believed that a television campaign led by President George W. Bush would prove an effective means of providing information to all Americans about NCLB. It would include commercials featuring prominent entertainers enlisted to sell the Bush Administration's NCLB message. She also advocated placing full-page ads in newspapers including brief overviews of NCLB. She also believed that public service announcements by both the president on a national level and community leaders on a

municipal level offering information about NCLB would prove effective. The researcher interviewed her on June 20, 2005.

The final female subject, a married 42-year-old, is the director of Rowan University's Office of University Publications in Glassboro, NJ. She is white. She earned her M.A. in Public Relations from Rowan University in Glassboro, NJ and her B.A. in English and Journalism from Evangel University in Springfield, Missouri. She lives in Mullica Hill, NJ. She has two daughters, a 12-year-old and a six-year-old who both attended the Ambassador Christian Academy in Glassboro, NJ. The researcher interviewed her on June 22, 2005. She described her knowledge of NCLB as low.

The subject proposed a school assembly as a communication technique. She further proposed that the school district direct mail notification regarding the assembly to parents and other concerned parties. She believed that a follow-up phone call would reinforce the message to get out and gain NCLB information. She also believed that online publications with NCLB information would prove effective in disseminating information.

Interpretation

The data indicate that print media and group forums present the most effective means through which to permanently influence audience behaviors regarding NCLB. The top three communication techniques obtained via the Delphi study featured printed media while the personal interviews yield group gatherings announced via both key communicators and printed media.

Chapter 5

Discussion

Using both qualitative and quantitative research methods, the researcher determined that a number of effective methods exist through which school districts can communicate with their respective communities. The major tenets of NCLB can survive the transition to easily digestible points that can aid audiences in demystifying the law. Public relations professionals can create or strengthen the relationships between school districts and the populations they serve using the communication techniques detailed herein.

Additionally, parents and teachers alike lack basic information regarding NCLB. School districts themselves often misinterpret or improperly enforce NCLB legislation. The disparities in district adherence require a top-down study of federal, state, and local governments' issues communication practices and their seeming lack of effectiveness in those communities that NCLB purports to aid.

The federal government used poor public relations practices when it announced No Child Left Behind's introduction. Little research appears to have been done between the decision to implement the law and the news conference announcing its arrival. The lack of continuity in its application across school districts led the researcher to conclude that the government rushed the product to market with no idea of the most effective methods for ensuring its proper application.

Additionally, the government expended little effort in detailing which districts met or exceeded compliance standards. Those districts consistently testing at or above national averages still suffered due to poor preparation prior to NCLB's advent. The fluid nature of the implementation standards could place a school on the government's noncompliance list for one student.

Further, special education programs, traditionally ranked separately from traditional track education, now find themselves grouped with traditional students relative to NCLB compliance. Consider that special education programs suffer from an indistinct definition. Also, the researcher discovered that disparities in special education placement correlate directly with the ethnic composition of the districts under study. Minority students are more likely to be tracked into special education programs due to a number of factors including cultural insensitivity, preconceptions on the part of administrators and environmental factors such as poverty and high crime rates.

Also, school districts comprised of large minority populations receive testing at higher rates than that of their white peers. NCLB, then, seems an unnecessary redundancy considering that the districts requiring testing did so prior to the advent of NCLB. The federal government's inability to consider the potential long-term implications of NCLB's introduction indicates poor planning, research, and execution. Public relations practitioners should perform thorough research prior to embarking on any campaign, especially one such as the introduction of NCLB that includes potentially life-altering impacts.

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Appendix B
Aggregate Initial Response Set

Participant A

1. A special newsletter
2. The regular newsletter
3. Presentations with various community groups (Kiwanis, Rotary etc.)
4. Special large group meetings
5. Brochures
6. Discussion Forum
7. Information in the District Website
8. Panel discussion of experts

Participant B

The first and foremost way we can make an impact is to propose elimination of this anti public education law that people are laughing at more and more each day. Unless there are common standards followed by every state for every school in nation, in relation to AYP, this law is meaningless. Constituents can have information about their school that is vastly different then a school a mile away. This is one of the reasons why the law has become a laughing stock. But if you are looking for ways to communicate consider the following... PLEASE NOTE... ALL MUST BE AT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EXPENSE:

1. Provide native language adds in every newspaper. Every language spoken in the state must be covered.

2. Provide the services of interpreters to meet with parents in their homes, community centers, churches and the like. Again, every language must be covered.

3. Create media advertisements, again in EVERY LANGUAGE, that direct individuals to specific locations where they can receive information.

4. Provide information in common mailings that may be sent to the groups such as checks and other legal documents they might receive.

5. Provide information on cable and regular radio and television programs that are designed for specific demographics.

6. Develop an interactive web site that can be translated to ANY language upon request.

In all cases, we need to keep in mind that it is essential to convey this information in EVERY language that might be spoken.

Again without common standards it is difficult to broadly convey ANYTHING this complex.

Participant C

1. E-mail
2. Cable TV program
3. Community hall mtgs.
4. Newsletters (PTA, school, District)
5. Home visitations
6. Mailings
7. Brochures
8. Couple parent meetings with a child focused school event such as a concert, art show, etc.
9. Weekly school packets with a letter
10. Messages in homework planner
11. Couple meeting with community health service

Participant D

1. TV spots
2. Newspaper publications (ads, op-ed, letters Press releases)
3. Letters to parents
4. Public forums
5. PTA meetings
6. Discuss at back to school nights
7. Radio spots
8. Send info home with children

9. Hire students or welfare recipients to canvas neighborhoods
10. Banner planes
11. Billboards
12. Meetings with clergy and announce through churches

Participant E

1. Parent nights
2. Channel 19 - the public saw a taped NCLB discussion by administrators
3. Newspaper articles
4. Faculty meetings
5. Title I Parent meetings
6. Board of Education meetings (our meetings are taped and then put on Channel 19)
7. Newsletter sent home to parents
8. PTA meetings
9. Quarterly Special Education Advisory Council meetings
10. Parent Nights before the state assessments are administered
11. Monthly Parent Advisory Council Meetings

Participant F

1. Informational evenings
2. Mailings
3. Connect Ed Messages (telephone call message that is delivered to all parents.)
4. Brochures
5. Newsletters
6. Parent Conferences
7. Invitations to small group discussions
8. Attend PTA Meetings in all schools
9. Include description in opening of Back to School Nights
10. If available, use local cable television Webpage

Participant G

1. Parent Handbook
2. School Calendar
3. Letters explaining NCLB
4. Information explained at Back to School Night
5. PTO Newsletter each quarter
6. Handouts at Parent / Teacher Conference 2x's a year
7. Discussion at public portion of BOE meetings
8. Grade level meetings with teachers who speak to parents

9. School Site Council meetings with teachers, BOE members, and Community members who have volunteered on small committees
10. Key Communicators meeting twice a year
11. Speak at local Ruritan meetings held each month in a State of the School District
12. Information for Board of Education members to have to document their responses to citizen questions.
13. Luncheon meeting at the local luncheonette.

Participant H

1. Direct mailing to parents
2. Newsletters
3. Brochures,
4. School publications,
5. School/district websites,
6. Parent meetings,
7. Back to School Night special presentation,
8. Hold breakfast, lunch or dinner for parents and offer information
9. Newspaper
10. Report card mailing insert
11. Interim report mailing insert
12. Parent information fair (pertinent issues for parents [including NCLB] offered at tables similar to student career fairs)
13. After school workshop (hold bi-monthly parent workshops on pertinent issues [including NCLB] after school in the library, auditorium or computer lab, depending on topic).

Participant I

1. A series of articles in "Wednesday Packet," our weekly newsletter to parents.
2. An article in Tiger Tracks, a quarterly newsletter to all citizens.
3. A 3-fold brochure to be discussed at Back to School Night.
4. A full-page article in the newspaper.
5. Parent Articulation meetings – held 4 times a school year.
6. Explain at Family Math/Family Reading Nights – held for each grade level.
7. Presentation at a PTA meeting.
8. Presentation at a Board of Education meeting.
9. A rack of 3-fold brochures in the mail hallway of each school.
10. Letters to the editor/articles in weekly newspaper.

Participant J

1. Direct mailed newsletters
2. Informational brochures
3. Parent meetings
4. Informational posters
5. Website pages
6. Informational CD/DVD presentations
7. Educational channel programming
8. Key communicator's network
9. Presentations to social and civic associations
10. Outreach at day care/preschool facilities
11. Coordination with social service agencies
12. Informational kiosk at community events

Participant K

1. Weekly Newsletter to Parents
2. District Newsletter to all Residents
3. District Website
4. BOE Meetings - informational presentations
5. Separate letter to middle school parents pertaining to highly qualified teachers
6. Back to School Night
7. Letter to all parents prior to testing week - Grades 1-8
8. Parent Forums
9. Presentations to Home and School Association
10. Channel 19 – EAC

Participant L

1. Workshops/Seminars for Parents
2. TV shows
3. Information/Links on Website
4. Letters from Teachers
5. PTA briefings
6. School Monthly newsletters
7. Back to School Nights
8. School Bulleting boards
9. Blast e-mail notices/messages
10. Discussions at Board of Education meetings
11. Automated phone message system
12. Downloadable Power Point Presentations

Participant M

One of the techniques we use is that during our Quality Assurance Annual Report presentation in October that basically gives the "state of the state" address of our school district, we do an in-depth piece on NCLB in relation to our test scores with an accompanying power point explanation. This coming year, we are expecting to expand this technique by offering the report to our parents on our school website also. We believe this will assist in continuing to education our parents about NCLB.

Participant N

1. Newsletters
2. Parent workshops
3. PTO meetings
4. Mailings
5. School board meetings
6. Back to School Night
7. Special Events Night
8. Web Site
9. Community events
10. Town meeting

Participant O

1. District Parent Academy workshops on NCLB topics; evenings, daytime and Saturdays (We have two Super Saturdays per year.)
2. Pamphlets sent home.
3. Flyers sent home
4. Local Cable TV show highlighting NCLP topics
5. Family Math Nights (for students and parents)
6. Family Reading Nights (for students and parents)
7. Family Science Nights (for students and parents)
8. Email Notification System information (We use a district-developed community email notification system that parents can subscribe to.)
9. Back To School Nights - with Principal and teacher presentations
10. Parent Teacher Conferences
11. Classroom Visitations
12. School Volunteers

Aggregate No Child Left Behind Communication Techniques

- A special targeted newsletter (highly qualified teachers, learning level segregation)
- A regular informational quarterly newsletter
- Presentations to local and larger community groups to include a community health component (PTA, civic groups, churches, Board of Education, area social service agencies)
- Brochures (mailed and available in area schools)
- Discussion forum with a panel of NCLB experts
- District website with NCLB information and links translatable to other languages upon request
- Native language ads and op-ed pieces in area newspapers at federal government expense
- Interpreters available for diverse community ethnic groups at government expense
- Ethnically and demographically targeted media messages
- Ethnically and demographically targeted mailings to include legal documents
- Demographically specific cable public access programs (taped discussions of NCLB with district administrators) to include area web page
- E-mail notification (parents and concerned citizens can sign of for NCLB notification)
- Home visits by school district and government representatives
- Mailings (fliers, pamphlets)
- Grade-level parent meetings coupled with a child-focused school event (concert, art show)
- Weekly school information packets
- Hire area residents to canvass affected neighborhoods
- Banner planes
- Clergy meetings
- Faculty meetings (document responses)
- Specially appointed advisory council meetings quarterly (Faculty, staff, parent)
- Parent meetings prior to state assessment administration
- Automated telephone message delivery to constituent parents and other concerned citizens
- NCLB descriptions on Back To School Night
- Information in Parent handbooks
- School calendar inserts
- Key Communicator meetings held twice a year
- State of the School District forum
- Meeting at local eatery
- Report card mailing insert
- Interim report mailing insert
- After school workshop
- Posters

- CD/DVD presentations
- Day care/preschool outreach
- Informational kiosk at community events
- Parent workshops
- School bulletin board postings
- Downloadable presentations (PowerPoint, PDFs)
- Family math, science, and reading nights
- Classroom visits

Appendix D
Aggregate No Child Left Behind Communication Techniques (Participant A)

1. A regular informational quarterly newsletter
2. Key Communicator meetings held twice a year
3. CD/DVD presentations
4. Family math, science and reading nights
5. Brochures (mailed and available at school)
6. A special targeted newsletter (highly qualified teachers, learning level segregation)
7. Clergy meetings
8. Grade-level parent meetings coupled with a child-focused school event (concert, art show)
9. Downloadable presentations (PowerPoint, PDFs)
10. Report card mailing insert
11. Parent meetings prior to state assessment administration
12. NCLB descriptions on Back to School Night
13. Information in parent handbooks
14. Banner planes
15. Informational kiosk at community events

1. Native language ads and op-ed pieces in area newspapers at federal government expense
2. Interpreters available for diverse community ethnic groups at government expense
3. Ethnically and demographically targeted media messages
4. Ethnically and demographically targeted mailings to include legal documents
5. Discussion forum with a panel of NCLB experts
6. District website with NCLB information and links translatable to other languages upon request
7. Demographically specific cable public access programs (taped discussions of NCLB with district administrators) to include area web page
8. Presentations to local and larger community groups to include a community health component (PTA, civic groups, churches, Board of Education, area social service agencies)
9. Hire area residents to canvass affected neighborhoods
10. Clergy meetings
11. Day care/preschool outreach
12. Downloadable presentations (PowerPoint, PDFs)
13. Family math, science, and reading nights
14. Home visits by school district and government representatives
15. Brochures (mailed and available in area schools)
16. Parent workshops
17. School bulletin board postings
18. Information in Parent handbooks
19. NCLB descriptions on Back To School Night
20. Automated telephone message delivery to constituent parents and other concerned citizens
21. Report card mailing insert
22. Interim report mailing insert
23. CD/DVD presentations
24. Informational kiosk at community events
25. A regular informational quarterly newsletter
26. Grade-level parent meetings coupled with a child-focused school event (concert, art show)
27. Mailings (fliers, pamphlets)
28. School calendar inserts
29. Key Communicator meetings held twice a year
30. After school workshop
31. Parent meetings prior to state assessment administration Posters
32. State of the School District forum
33. Specially-appointed advisory council meetings quarterly (Faculty, staff, parent)
34. Weekly school information packets
35. Special targeted newsletter (highly qualified teachers, learning level segregation)

36. E-mail notification (parents and concerned citizens can sign of for NCLB notification)
37. Meeting at local eatery
38. Classroom visits
39. Faculty meetings (document responses)
40. Banner planes

Appendix D
Aggregate No Child Left Behind Communication Techniques (Participant C)

1. Home visits by school district and government representatives
2. Report card mailing insert
3. Interim report mailing insert
4. Information in Parent handbooks
5. School calendar inserts
6. A special targeted newsletter (highly qualified teachers, learning level segregation)
7. A regular informational quarterly newsletter
8. Presentations to local and larger community groups to include a community health component (PTA, civic groups, churches, Board of Education, area social service agencies)
9. Brochures (mailed and available in area schools)
10. Interpreters available for diverse community ethnic groups at government expense
11. Ethnically and demographically targeted media messages
12. Ethnically and demographically targeted mailings to include legal documents
13. Mailings (fliers, pamphlets)
14. Hire area residents to canvass affected neighborhoods
15. E-mail notification (parents and concerned citizens can sign of for NCLB notification)
16. Weekly school information packets
17. Specially-appointed advisory council meetings quarterly (Faculty, staff, parent)
18. Faculty meetings (document responses)
19. Grade-level parent meetings coupled with a child-focused school event (concert, art show)
20. Parent meetings prior to state assessment administration
21. Demographically specific cable public access programs (taped discussions of NCLB with district administrators) to include area web page
22. Family math, science, and reading nights
23. NCLB descriptions on Back To School Night
24. Key Communicator meetings held twice a year
25. Meeting at local eatery
26. Native language ads and op-ed pieces in area newspapers at federal government expense
27. After school workshop
28. Automated telephone message delivery to constituent parents and other concerned citizens
29. State of the School District forum
30. CD/DVD presentations
31. Day care/preschool outreach
32. Banner planes
33. Clergy meetings
34. District website with NCLB information and links translatable to other languages upon request

35. Parent workshops
36. Informational kiosk at community events
37. Downloadable presentations (PowerPoint, PDFs)
38. School bulletin board postings
39. Discussion forum with a panel of NCLB experts
40. Classroom visits
41. Posters

Appendix D
Aggregate No Child Left Behind Communication Techniques (Participant D)

1. A special targeted newsletter (highly qualified teachers, learning level segregation)
2. A regular informational quarterly newsletter
3. Brochures (mailed and available in area schools)
4. Weekly school information packets
5. Faculty meetings (document responses)
6. Specially-appointed advisory council meetings quarterly (Faculty, staff, parent)
7. Presentations to local and larger community groups
8. E-mail notification (parents and concerned citizens can sign of for NCLB notification)
9. Parent meetings prior to state assessment administration
10. NCLB descriptions on Back To School Night
11. Information in Parent handbooks
12. School calendar inserts
13. State of the School District forum
14. Key Communicator meetings held twice a year
15. Report card mailing insert
16. Interim report mailing insert
17. Mailings (fliers, pamphlets)
18. Grade-level parent meetings coupled with a child-focused school event
19. Posters
20. After school workshop
21. School bulletin board postings
22. Informational kiosk at community events
23. CD/DVD presentations
24. Parent workshops
25. District website with NCLB information and links
26. Discussion forum with a panel of NCLB experts
27. Clergy meetings
28. Downloadable presentations (PowerPoint, PDFs)
29. Banner planes
30. Family math, science, and reading nights
31. Hire area residents to canvass affected neighborhoods
32. Automated telephone message delivery to constituent parents
33. Meeting at local eatery
34. Classroom visits
35. Native language ads and op-ed pieces in area newspapers
36. Ethnically and demographically targeted media messages
37. Ethnically and demographically targeted media messages
38. Ethnically and demographically targeted mailings to include legal documents
39. Demographically specific cable public access programs
40. Home visits by school district and government representatives
41. Day care/preschool outreach

Appendix D
Aggregate No Child Left Behind Communication Techniques (Participant E)

1. Grade-level parent meetings coupled with a child-focused school event (concert, art show)
2. Presentations to local and larger community groups to include a community health component (PTA, civic groups, churches, Board of Education, area social service agencies)
3. Report card mailing insert
4. Parent workshops
5. Family math, science, and reading nights
6. Demographically specific cable public access programs **(taped discussions of NCLB with district administrators)** to include area web page
7. NCLB descriptions on Back To School Night
8. After school workshop
9. Classroom visits
10. Discussion forum with a panel of NCLB experts
11. Parent meetings prior to state assessment administration
12. Information in Parent handbooks
13. Specially-appointed advisory council meetings quarterly (Faculty, staff, parent)
14. Key Communicator meetings held twice a year
15. Brochures (mailed and available in area schools)
16. A regular informational quarterly newsletter
17. District website with NCLB information and links translatable to other languages upon request
18. School calendar inserts
19. A special targeted newsletter (highly qualified teachers, learning level segregation)
20. Mailings (fliers, pamphlets)
21. Faculty meetings (document responses)
22. State of the School District forum
23. Informational kiosk at community events
24. Downloadable presentations (PowerPoint, PDFs)
25. Day care/preschool outreach
26. Automated telephone message delivery to constituent parents and other concerned citizens
27. Interim report mailing insert
28. CD/DVD presentations
29. School bulletin board postings
30. Clergy meetings
31. E-mail notification (parents and concerned citizens can sign up for NCLB notification)
32. Ethnically and demographically targeted mailings to include legal documents
33. Native language ads and op-ed pieces in area newspapers at federal government expense
34. Interpreters available for diverse community ethnic groups at government expense

35. Ethnically and demographically targeted media messages
36. Home visits by school district and government representatives
37. Weekly school information packets
38. Posters
39. Meeting at local eatery
40. Hire area residents to canvass affected neighborhoods
41. Banner planes

1. Home visits by school district and government representatives
2. Demographically specific cable public access programs (taped discussions of NCLB with district administrators) to include area web page
3. District website with NCLB information and links translatable to other languages upon request
4. A special targeted newsletter (highly qualified teachers, learning level segregation)
5. Presentations to local and larger community groups to include a community health component (PTA, civic groups, churches, Board of Education, area social service agencies)
6. NCLB descriptions on Back To School Night
7. Information in Parent handbooks
8. Key Communicator meetings held twice a year
9. School calendar inserts
10. Report card mailing insert
11. School bulletin board postings
12. Parent workshops
13. Posters
14. Automated telephone message delivery to constituent parents and other concerned citizens
15. CD/DVD presentations
16. Brochures (mailed and available in area schools)
17. Interpreters available for diverse community ethnic groups at government expense
18. Ethnically and demographically targeted media messages
19. Ethnically and demographically targeted mailings to include legal documents
20. Family math, science, and reading nights
21. Classroom visits
22. Downloadable presentations (PowerPoint, PDFs)
23. Interim report mailing insert
24. E-mail notification (parents and concerned citizens can sign of for NCLB notification)
25. Mailings (fliers, pamphlets)
26. Weekly school information packets
27. Hire area residents to canvass affected neighborhoods
28. Day care/preschool outreach
29. Native language ads and op-ed pieces in area newspapers at federal government expense
30. Discussion forum with a panel of NCLB experts
31. A regular informational quarterly newsletter
32. State of the School District forum
33. Specially-appointed advisory council meetings quarterly (Faculty, staff, parent)
34. Grade-level parent meetings coupled with a child-focused school event (concert, art show)

35. Parent meetings prior to state assessment administration
36. After school workshop
37. Informational kiosk at community events
38. Meeting at local eatery
39. Faculty meetings (document responses)
40. Clergy meetings
41. Banner planes

Appendix D
Aggregate No Child Left Behind Communication Techniques (Participant G)

1. A special targeted newsletter (highly qualified teachers, learning level segregation)
2. A regular informational quarterly newsletter
3. Presentations to local and larger community groups to include a community health component (PTA, civic groups, churches, Board of Education, area social service agencies)
4. District website with NCLB information and links translatable to other languages upon request
5. Demographically specific cable public access programs (taped discussions of NCLB with district administrators) to include area web page
6. Grade-level parent meetings coupled with a child-focused school event (concert, art show)
7. Faculty meetings (document responses)
8. Brochures (mailed and available in area schools)
9. Parent meetings prior to state assessment administration
10. NCLB descriptions on Back To School Night
11. Information in Parent handbooks
12. School calendar inserts
13. Key Communicator meetings held twice a year
14. State of the School District forum
15. Parent workshops
16. CD/DVD presentations
17. Downloadable presentations (PowerPoint, PDFs)
18. Family math, science, and reading nights
19. After school workshop
20. Report card mailing insert
21. Specially-appointed advisory council meetings quarterly (Faculty, staff, parent)
22. Discussion forum with a panel of NCLB experts
23. Native language ads and op-ed pieces in area newspapers at federal government expense
24. Interpreters available for diverse community ethnic groups at government expense
25. Ethnically and demographically targeted media messages
26. Ethnically and demographically targeted mailings to include legal documents
27. E-mail notification (parents and concerned citizens can sign of for NCLB notification)
28. Home visits by school district and government representatives
29. Mailings (fliers, pamphlets)
30. Weekly school information packets
31. Hire area residents to canvass affected neighborhoods
32. Banner planes
33. Clergy meetings

34. Automated telephone message delivery to constituent parents and other concerned citizens
35. Meeting at local eatery
36. Interim report mailing insert
37. Posters
38. Day care/preschool outreach
39. Informational kiosk at community events
40. School bulletin board postings
41. Classroom visits

1. District website with NCLB information and links translatable to other languages upon request
2. Demographically specific cable public access programs (taped discussions of NCLB with district administrators) to include area web page
3. Home visits by school district and government representatives
4. Presentations to local and larger community groups to include a community health component (PTA, civic groups, churches, Board of Education, area social service agencies)
5. Discussion forum with a panel of NCLB experts
6. Grade-level parent meetings coupled with a child-focused school event (concert, art show)
7. Classroom visits
8. Family math, science, and reading nights
9. Parent meetings prior to state assessment administration
10. Automated telephone message delivery to constituent parents and other concerned citizens
11. Brochures (mailed and available in area schools)
12. A regular informational quarterly newsletter
13. NCLB descriptions on Back To School Night
14. Information in Parent handbooks
15. School calendar inserts
16. A special targeted newsletter (highly qualified teachers, learning level segregation)
17. Mailings (fliers, pamphlets)
18. Weekly school information packets
19. Key Communicator meetings held twice a year
20. Report card mailing insert
21. Interim report mailing insert
22. After school workshop
23. State of the School District forum
24. Meeting at local eatery
25. Native language ads and op-ed pieces in area newspapers at federal government expense
26. Interpreters available for diverse community ethnic groups at government expense
27. Ethnically and demographically targeted media messages
28. Ethnically and demographically targeted mailings to include legal documents
29. E-mail notification (parents and concerned citizens can sign of for NCLB notification)
30. Banner planes
31. Clergy meetings
32. Faculty meetings (document responses)
33. Specially-appointed advisory council meetings quarterly (Faculty, staff, parent)
34. Hire area residents to canvass affected neighborhoods

35. Posters
36. CD/DVD presentations
37. Day care/preschool outreach
38. Informational kiosk at community events
39. Parent workshops
40. School bulletin board postings
41. Downloadable presentations (PowerPoint, PDFs)

Appendix D
Aggregate No Child Left Behind Communication Techniques (Participant I)

1. A special targeted newsletter (highly qualified teachers, learning level segregation)
2. Brochures (mailed and available in area schools)
3. E-mail notification (parents and concerned citizens can sign of for NCLB notification)
4. Grade-level parent meetings coupled with a child-focused school event (concert, art show)
5. Weekly school information packets
6. Information in Parent handbooks
7. School calendar inserts
8. Report card mailing insert
9. Interim report mailing insert
10. Family math, science, and reading nights
11. Parent workshops
12. A regular informational quarterly newsletter
13. Presentations to local and larger community groups to include a community health component (PTA, civic groups, churches, Board of Education, area social service agencies)
14. Discussion forum with a panel of NCLB experts
15. District website with NCLB information and links translatable to other languages upon request
16. Native language ads and op-ed pieces in area newspapers at federal government expense
17. Interpreters available for diverse community ethnic groups at government expense
18. Ethnically and demographically targeted media messages
19. Ethnically and demographically targeted mailings to include legal documents
20. Demographically specific cable public access programs (taped discussions of NCLB with district administrators) to include area web page
21. Home visits by school district and government representatives
22. Mailings (fliers, pamphlets)
23. Hire area residents to canvass affected neighborhoods
24. Banner planes
25. Clergy meetings
26. Faculty meetings (document responses)
27. Specially-appointed advisory council meetings quarterly (Faculty, staff, parent)
28. Parent meetings prior to state assessment administration
29. Automated telephone message delivery to constituent parents and other concerned citizens
30. NCLB descriptions on Back To School Night
31. Key Communicator meetings held twice a year
32. State of the School District forum

Appendix D
Aggregate No Child Left Behind Communication Techniques (Participant I)
(cont.)

33. Meeting at local eatery
34. After school workshop
35. Posters
36. CD/DVD presentations
37. Day care/preschool outreach
38. Informational kiosk at community events
39. School bulletin board postings
40. Downloadable presentations (PowerPoint, PDFs)
41. Classroom visits

Appendix D
Aggregate No Child Left Behind Communication Techniques (Participant J)

1. Hire area residents to canvass affected neighborhoods
2. Clergy meetings
3. Day care/preschool outreach
4. Presentations to local and larger community groups to include a community health component (PTA, civic groups, churches, Board of Education, area social service agencies)
5. Interpreters available for diverse community ethnic groups at government expense
6. Grade-level parent meetings coupled with a child-focused school event (concert, art show)
7. Informational kiosk at community events
8. Specially-appointed advisory council meetings quarterly (Faculty, staff, parent)
9. Parent workshops
10. Parent meetings prior to state assessment administration
11. Family math, science, and reading nights
12. Key Communicator meetings held twice a year
13. Information in Parent handbooks
14. After school workshop
15. NCLB descriptions on Back To School Night
16. Meeting at local eatery
17. State of the School District forum
18. Brochures (mailed and available in area schools)
19. District website with NCLB information and links translatable to other languages upon request
20. Ethnically and demographically targeted mailings to include legal documents
21. Interim report mailing insert
22. Report card mailing insert
23. A special targeted newsletter (highly qualified teachers, learning level segregation)
24. Demographically specific cable public access programs (taped discussions of NCLB with district administrators) to include area web page
25. E-mail notification (parents and concerned citizens can sign of for NCLB notification)
26. Weekly school information packets
27. Automated telephone message delivery to constituent parents and other concerned citizens
28. School calendar inserts
29. Posters
30. A regular informational quarterly newsletter
31. CD/DVD presentations
32. Demographically specific cable public access programs (taped discussions of NCLB with district administrators) to include area web page
33. School bulletin board postings
34. Home visits by school district and government representatives

35. Ethnically and demographically targeted media messages Discussion forum with a panel of NCLB experts
36. Native language ads and op-ed pieces in area newspapers at federal government expense
37. Faculty meetings (document responses)
38. Mailings (fliers, pamphlets)
39. Downloadable presentations (PowerPoint, PDFs)
40. Classroom visits
41. Banner planes

Appendix D
Aggregate No Child Left Behind Communication Techniques (Participant K)

1. A regular informational quarterly newsletter
2. A special targeted newsletter (highly qualified teachers, learning level segregation)
3. Grade-level parent meetings coupled with a child-focused school event (concert, art show)
4. School calendar inserts
5. NCLB descriptions on Back To School Night
6. Parent workshops
7. Report card mailing insert
8. Interim report mailing insert
9. Brochures (mailed and available in area schools
10. Presentations to local and larger community groups to include a community health component (PTA, civic groups, churches, Board of Education, area social service agencies)
11. Mailings (fliers, pamphlets)
12. Weekly school information packets
13. Faculty meetings (document responses)
14. School bulletin board postings
15. Family math, science, and reading nights
16. Classroom visits
17. Posters
18. Key Communicator meetings held twice a year
19. Information in Parent handbooks
20. Parent meetings prior to state assessment administration
21. Specially appointed advisory council meetings quarterly (Faculty, staff, parent)
22. Home visits by school district and government representatives
23. State of the School District forum
24. After school workshop
25. Day care/preschool outreach
26. Informational kiosk at community events
27. Downloadable presentations (PowerPoint, PDFs)
28. CD/DVD presentations
29. E-mail notification (parents and concerned citizens can sign of for NCLB notification)
30. Native language ads and op-ed pieces in area newspapers at federal government expense
31. Discussion forum with a panel of NCLB experts
32. District website with NCLB information and links translatable to other languages upon request
33. Ethnically and demographically targeted media messages
34. Demographically specific cable public access programs (taped discussions of NCLB with district administrators) to include area web page
35. Ethnically and demographically targeted mailings to include legal documents

36. Hire area residents to canvass affected neighborhoods
37. Interpreters available for diverse community ethnic groups at government expense
38. Meeting at local eatery
39. Automated telephone message delivery to constituent parents and other concerned citizens
40. Clergy meetings
41. Banner planes

1. A regular informational quarterly newsletter
2. Banner planes
3. Brochures (mailed and available in area schools)
4. Native language ads and op-ed pieces in area newspapers at federal government expense
5. Posters
6. Interpreters available for diverse community ethnic groups at government expense
7. Key Communicator meetings held twice a year
8. Parent meetings prior to state assessment administration
9. A special targeted newsletter (highly qualified teachers, learning level segregation)
10. Family math, science, and reading nights
11. Clergy meetings
12. Specially-appointed advisory council meetings quarterly (Faculty, staff, parent)
13. CD/DVD presentations
14. E-mail notification (parents and concerned citizens can sign of for NCLB notification)
15. Mailings (fliers, pamphlets)
16. District website with NCLB information and links translatable to other languages upon request
17. Downloadable presentations (PowerPoint, PDFs)
18. Classroom visits
19. Parent workshops
20. Ethnically and demographically targeted mailings to include legal documents
21. Interim report mailing insert
22. Discussion forum with a panel of NCLB experts
23. Ethnically and demographically targeted media messages
24. Grade-level parent meetings coupled with a child-focused school event (concert, art show)
25. Weekly school information packets
26. Home visits by school district and government representatives
27. Hire area residents to canvass affected neighborhoods
28. Faculty meetings (document responses)
29. School bulletin board postings
30. NCLB descriptions on Back To School Night
31. Automated telephone message delivery to constituent parents and other concerned citizens
32. Information in Parent handbooks
33. State of the School District forum
34. After school workshop
35. Informational kiosk at community events
36. Day care/preschool outreach

37. Presentations to local and larger community groups to include a community health component (PTA, civic groups, churches, Board of Education, area social service agencies)
38. Demographically specific cable public access programs (taped discussions of NCLB with district administrators) to include area web page
39. Meeting at local eatery
40. Report card mailing insert
41. School calendar inserts

1. Information in Parent handbooks
2. School calendar inserts
3. Meeting at local eatery
4. Brochures (mailed and available in area schools)
5. A special targeted newsletter (highly qualified teachers, learning level segregation)
6. Interim report mailing insert
7. Report card mailing insert
8. State of the School District forum
9. Demographically specific cable public access programs (taped discussions of NCLB with district administrators) to include area web page
10. Ethnically and demographically targeted mailings to include legal documents
11. Ethnically and demographically targeted media messages
12. Native language ads and op-ed pieces in area newspapers at federal government expense
13. A regular informational quarterly newsletter
14. District website with NCLB information and links translatable to other languages upon request
15. E-mail notification (parents and concerned citizens can sign of for NCLB notification)
16. Faculty meetings (document responses)
17. Specially-appointed advisory council meetings quarterly (Faculty, staff, parent)
18. Weekly school information packets
19. Day care/preschool outreach
20. Parent workshops
21. CD/DVD presentations
22. NCLB descriptions on Back To School Night
23. Parent meetings prior to state assessment administration
24. Mailings (fliers, pamphlets)
25. Discussion forum with a panel of NCLB experts
26. Presentations to local and larger community groups to include a community health component (PTA, civic groups, churches, Board of Education, area social service agencies)
27. Interpreters available for diverse community ethnic groups at government expense
28. Home visits by school district and government representatives
29. Key Communicator meetings held twice a year
30. After school workshop
31. Family math, science, and reading nights
32. School bulletin board postings
33. Automated telephone message delivery to constituent parents and other concerned citizens
34. Grade-level parent meetings coupled with a child-focused school event (concert, art show)

35. Posters
36. Informational kiosk at community events
37. Downloadable presentations (PowerPoint, PDFs)
38. Classroom visits
39. Clergy meetings
40. Banner planes
41. Hire area residents to canvass affected neighborhoods

Appendix E
Final Rank Ordered No Child Left Behind Communication Techniques

1. Brochures (mailed and available in area schools)
2. Information in Parent Handbooks
3. A regular informational quarterly newsletter
4. A special targeted newsletter (highly qualified teachers, learning level segregation)
5. Family math, science, and reading nights
6. NCLB descriptions on Back To School Night
7. Report card mailing insert
8. School calendar insert
9. Grade-level parent meetings coupled with a child-focused school event (concert, art show)
10. Key Communicator meetings held twice a year
11. Parent meetings prior to state assessment administration
12. Presentations to local and larger community groups to include a community health component (PTA, civic groups, churches, Boards of Education, area social service agencies)
13. Demographically specific cable public access programs (taped discussions of NCLB with district administrators) to include area web page
14. District Web site with NCLB legislation and links translatable to other languages upon request
15. Parent workshops

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

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RICHARD J. CODEY, ACTING GOVERNOR

WILLIAM L. LIBRERA, COMMISSIONER
ALBERT MONILLAS, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER

Dear Superintendent:

I need your help to participate in a brief research study aimed at school superintendents and administrators in the southern New Jersey region.

Benjamin Daniel, a graduate student studying Public Relations at Rowan University in Glassboro, is conducting a study that seeks to determine those communication tools you believe would prove most effective in communicating the provisions of No Child Left Behind to parents in your respective districts. Potential responses include special events, mailings, newsletter, town meeting, seminars, and the like.

The study uses a Delphi technique. This requires three rounds of questioning via email. Soon, Ben will mail you a brief question asking that you list all communication techniques that you believe would be helpful in communicating the provisions of NCLB to parents. Next, Ben will list all the responses given by all 15 participants. He will then send this list to you in Round 2 of the study. You'll be asked to rank order the list from 1-10 from most important to least important. Ben will tally-up the responses and give the group's rank order. Finally, Ben will email the rank ordered list and respondents will have one final opportunity to re-rank the list and make comments.

Again, I encourage your participation in this study as it represents an opportunity to gather and use data affecting all of the children we educate. Additionally, we can aid those districts most severely affected by the legislation in developing messages necessary to better educate our students' parents regarding NCLB.

Please help Mr. Daniel and our parents and students by participating in this study.

Regards,

Dr. Albert Monillas

Dr. Albert Monillas
Assistant Commissioner
Southern Region