CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING WITHIN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOLS: A MIXED-METHODS INVESTIGATION OF THE THREE-STUDENT PROJECT

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The year 2014 marked the deadline for school districts across the country to comply with the No Child Left Behind legislation. Yet, achievement gaps between Whites and Blacks, present during the year of implementation of the legislation, are still present today. While many interventions and school reforms have been launched since 2001, theoretical frameworks for closing racial achievement gaps have been lacking. This mixed-methods investigation of the Three-Student Project within professional development school settings was conducted to learn about culturally responsive practices perceived to have been used by participants, the impact of the Three-Student Project on student achievement and school culture, and the impact of the Three-Student Project on preparedness of student teachers to be culturally responsive practitioners. Findings suggest the Three-Student Project together with the many different culturally responsive practices present made a positive impact on school culture, student achievement, and student teachers' preparedness to become culturally responsive teachers. The achievement gap between African-Americans in the initial site and Whites statewide was closed in Mathematics and narrowed substantially in Reading. Implications of the context of implementation are discussed.

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This I Pray

My Father, awesome Father
Give me the discipline, the strength
the courage, and the wisdom
To be who You want me to be
the peace and quiet that I may hear your voice
Connections to people who care
The personality to motivate people, and
the resources to make a difference
And every day, give me time with you
that You will guide my way
Grant me the quiet, that I may hear your voice
Give me a Mentor
Give me these things I pray,
So that I may give back to everyone
and to You, what You have given to me
This I pray

God

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CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND

Academic achievement has been a means for students through which doors are opened to the American dream (Hochschild & Scovronick, 2003). Documented in our country's Declaration of Independence is the right to "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" (Declaration of Independence, 2013, paragraph 2). The extent to which one is able to realize that right is reflected by the documented income of groups of citizens in the United States Census (2010), where notable differences arise. Such differences may be merely a reflection of the hard work an individual invests in one's self. However, for groups of minorities in our country, the picture is painted not with a brushstroke of simple hard work, but instead, with a contextual canvas of inequalities that have manifested themselves throughout history (Spring, 2001), and are embedded in many facets of life (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 2012). The educational arena is one facet where deculturalization has marginalized minority groups and the historical struggle for equality continues today (Spring, 2001).

Many people believe that to push toward the goal of equality, academic achievement would be an obvious road traveled. For example, in the pursuit of equality, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) initiated the National Education Program, as well as the Legal Defense and Educational Fund, to ensure academic equality. State and federal policies, such as the Indian Removal Act in 1830, and landmark court cases, such as *Dred Scott vs. Sanford* in 1857 and *Plessy vs. Ferguson* in 1896, that sought or led to legalized separation of races in education and other arenas, were undermined when groups such as the NAACP fought them. The result was subsequent policies and landmark cases that moved our nation toward a more equitable society. Such cases and polices included *Brown vs. Board of*

Education in 1954, *Hernandez vs. Texas* in 1954, *Affirmative Action* in 1961-1965, the *Bilingual Education Act* in 1968, *Cisneros vs. Corpus Christi* in 1970, *Indian Education Act* in 1972, and *Lau v Nichols* in 1974. Such actions by our federal government may have moved our country in the direction toward more financially equitable situations for minorities, but disparities in the level of education attainment between Whites and other minorities are still evident (Census, 2010).

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), whose predecessors were the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and Goals 2000, is "An Act to close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility, and choice, so that no child is left behind" (p. 1425). NCLB includes in its call for equitable educational opportunities, the need to close the academic achievement gap between minority and nonminority students. Evidence about gaps between subgroups of students was published by the College Board's National Task Force on Minority Achievement (1999). Gaps were found among students' National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) test scores, grades, class ranks, Advanced Placement test scores, SAT test scores, and college attendance and matriculation rates. Subgroups evidencing gaps behind Whites include African-American, Native-American, and Latino, all of which showed lower scores in the above stated areas. Furthermore, evidence showed that the gaps existed despite the socioeconomic backgrounds of each group.

Awareness of academic achievement gaps became general knowledge after NCLB implemented sanctions against school districts that did not meet annual yearly progress. This meant the government was serious about closing academic achievement gaps. NCLB required districts across the country to report scores for all students, divided in racial, economic, and

gender subgroups. By the year 2014, all student groups of all school districts in the United States are required to be at least proficient on state standardized tests (NCLB, 2001).

Statement of the Problem

Districts have moved to raise overall achievement on standardized tests since NCLB was enacted. NCLB called for all students to meet minimum proficiency levels by 2014. Proficiency meant that students either met minimum standards for proficiency or that they met advanced levels of proficiency. Largely, all subgroups had increased in the percentage of students who were proficient and advanced since 2002. For example, in the state of Pennsylvania, there was a 26.7% increase in African-American fifth grade students who scored at least proficient between the 2002 and 2007 Pennsylvania State System of Assessments (PSSA) tests. Likewise, Latino/Hispanics experienced a 20.9% gain in students who were at least proficient during the same time period. Similarly, Pennsylvania's 8th and 11th grade African-American and Latino subgroups saw significant increases in the percent of students who scored proficient and above between 2002 and 2007 on the state assessment. While Pennsylvania and other states touted gap closure between White and African-American and Latino students between 2002 and 2007, the 2011 Mathematics PSSAs still showed a 25% gap in the percentage of White students who were proficient and above compared to African-Americans, a 21% gap between Whites and Latino/Hispanics, and a 13% gap between Whites and Native-Americans who were proficient and above. Similarly, the Reading PSSAs show a 27% gap in the percentage of White students who were proficient and above compared to African-Americans, and a 26% gap between Whites and Latino/Hispanics (Ed.gov, 2012).

Furthermore, 52% of White students in grades 3-8 and 11 scored advanced on the mathematics section of the 2012 PSSAs, while only 21% of African-Americans, 26% of

Latino/Hispanics, and 37% of Native-Americans scored advanced on the same tests, widening the gap between Whites and these three groups from the previous year's PSSAs. The results, therefore, evidenced continued significant and widening gaps between Whites and other minorities in the advanced level (Ed.gov, 2012), even more so than in the proficient and advanced levels when reported together. While many districts have worked to improve overall scores and move subgroups into at least the proficient categories, academic achievement of Whites compared to most minorities still evidence gaps. Additionally, larger gaps exist at the advanced level.

Consistently and pervasively, academic achievement on state standardized tests evidence gargantuan gaps between White and minority students (Berends, Lucas, & Penaloza, 2008; Ceci & Papierno, 2005; Chang, 2008; Cohen, Garcia, Apfel, & Master, 2006; Ed.gov, 2012; Ferguson, 2008; National Association of Educational Progress, 2011; National Center for Education Statistics, 2011; Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2012). Multicultural Education is an educational reform movement and a process to create equitable education for all students (Banks, 1997). Economic background cannot solely account for such gaps (Berends, Lucas, & Peñaloza, 2008). Because race has played an ominous role throughout the history of the United States and is in the woven fabric of United States citizens, viewing achievement gaps through a cultural lens is vital (Ladson-Billings, 2009) to help ensure that every student is not only proficient, but that equitable achievement is attainable, leaving no student group behind.

Au (2011) supported the need for culturally responsive pedagogy because she says that it has a "diverse constructivist" approach. This teaching with a cultural mindset takes into account "the ways that knowledge claims, of educators and their students are related to cultural identity and shaped by ethnicity, primary language and social class" (Au, 2011, p. 39). She recognizes

that the experiences students bring with them to classrooms may differ from the experiences of their teachers, thus the need for an approach through a cultural lens prevails.

Consequences of NCLB resulted in many school districts implementing school reforms if they were to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) goals under the law. One reform, Professional Development Schools (PDS), described in 1990 by the Holmes Group in their book, *Tomorrow's Schools: Principles for the Design of Professional Development Schools,* began an era of promise for those looking for such reform. The authors advocated for collaboration between schools and universities throughout the United States that would later become the basis for reform in schools across the country.

PDSs have been implemented in many sites across the country. The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (2001), also known as NCATE, developed standards for such schools (Teitel, 2003; Tunks & Neapolitan, 2007). Two schools that have adopted PDS as a school reform are the subjects of this study. These two K-5, inner city schools have implemented this reform and are collaborating with a university to bring student teachers to the school for an in-depth, year-long, hands-on, pre-service teaching experience. However, there is a facet very unique to these schools that is not written in a PDS handbook; it is an initiative known as the "Three-Student Project."

Purpose of Study

State standardized test results have shown promise for the first school in this study to implement the Three-Student Project (Site A) which is now in its fifth year of implementation. While this school came short of the reading proficiency target of 72% by just a few percent (68%), overall mathematics scores exceeded the required minimum proficiency target of (67%) by over 20% in 2011 (89%). Scores leading up to 2011 in both reading and mathematics have

been on a steady incline. Fifth grade scores in 2012 reached 83% in reading and 89% in mathematics, both of which were over the state target of 81% and 78% respectively. This school in 2005 had not made AYP in either reading or mathematics. Such progress is notable. The second school is in the first year of implementation so no data are available at this time.

While there is a growing volume of literature on PDS, the novel approach known as the Three-Student Project (3SP) has not yet been studied. Additionally, since culturally relevant pedagogy tenants are known to impact the closure of achievement gaps, the presence and extent of their uses in this PDS model is important knowledge. The purpose of this study was to investigate the Three-Student Project in the context of the PDS, through the lenses of Culturally Responsive Teaching and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. Additionally, the impact, if any, of the Three-Student Project on the student teachers, the students, school culture, and the school's overall goal of raising achievement for their student body was addressed.

Significance

These elementary schools are populated mostly with African-American students. Scores for mathematics have increased steadily from 80% proficient in 2007 to 89% proficient in 2011. Reading scores have increased steadily since 2008 from 52.6% to 68% proficient in 2011. Mathematics scores have been markedly higher than reading scores during the same period. Furthermore, the 53% of students who performed at advanced levels on the 2012 mathematics PSSAs was significantly higher than the 34% of students who scored proficient for the same year. During both 2011 and 2012, scores for both African-American students and students who were economically disadvantaged were similar with no significant difference in the scores, suggesting that either students from both groups scored equally or that most of the students in the school both were African-American and were from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Although the initial site never met the AYP target in Reading for groups labeled as "all students," "Blacks" or "economically disadvantaged" students, the scores rose steadily over the past several years. More importantly, mathematics AYP targets have been consistently met during the years of 2007 through 2011 for the same groups. Additionally, mathematics scores for Blacks in the school have been consistently above and beyond the state average for Blacks; and, for the year 2011, their scores have been above the White scores as well (Ed.gov, 2012). The significance of this study is that schools and whole districts across the country are struggling with their abilities to show closure of academic achievement gaps between African-Americans and their White counterparts, since many diverse districts show that their Whites are meeting state targets, yet their Blacks are not. If districts could achieve parody having their Black students achieve on par with their White students, not only would their achievement gap be closed promoting educational equity, but the district as a whole could be seen as meeting all of their targets, thereby, making AYP. AYP is essentially the state's stamp of approval, and means that a district is meeting the proficiency demands of the federal NCLB mandate. Therefore, what is being done at these elementary school sites could be a model for schools who are both struggling to provide equitable education for minority students as well as struggling to meet the demands of NCLB. The significance of this study is to identify the impact of the Three-Student Project in PDS sites in order to provide a viable option for districts seeking to close academic achievement gaps between White and Black students.

Research Questions

This embedded mixed-methods study helped determine what makes this school stand out to achieve the formidable results of higher percentages of African-Americans in an inner-city school scoring proficient on state standardized tests. The following questions were investigated:

1. What culturally responsive practices are perceived by principals, teachers, and student teachers as being used in these professional development schools?
2. How did the student teachers build relationships with the three students?
3. What are student teachers', parents', teachers', and principals' perceptions of the impact of the Three-Student Project on school culture and student achievement?
4. In what ways, if any, has the Three-Student Project impacted student achievement and academic behaviors?
5. What impact has the Professional Development School's Three-Student Project had on student teachers' preparation to become culturally responsive teachers?

Theoretical Frameworks

Theoretical embeddedment centers on these major areas of focus: Constructivism, Critical Race Theory, culturally relevant practices, and a metaphor for the success of diverse students known as *A Gardening Metaphor*. Constructivism spans an era of scholars such as Vygotsky, Piaget, and Bruner and is characterized by the belief that learners build meaning though social interaction (Vygotsky, 1978), and that connections to prior knowledge are important in the construction of meaning (Piaget, 1970). The significance of this school of thought is that in order for educators to help students activate their prior knowledge, and therefore make meaning from their new context, educators must first know their students' backgrounds and interests. Often, teachers come from backgrounds that are different from the students they teach. Therefore, getting to know the backgrounds of the students they teach is essential for teachers to help students connect that prior knowledge to learning experiences within the classroom.

The second part of the foundation for this study was an explanation as to why race is a lens through which education of diverse students should be viewed, known as Critical Race Theory in Education (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). This theory finds application here because comparisons in academic achievement of student groups have been made throughout our country's educational historical context, and have been, in part, a basis for NCLB. This act drives current assessment practices nationwide and requires states to look at racial subgroups critically and is purposed around improving achievement and closing gaps between Whites and non-Whites (No Child Left Behind, 2001). Critical Race Theory (CRT) in education explains some of the inequities in resources for Whites and non-Whites (Delgado & Jean, 2012).

The third focus area centers on the instruction of diverse students and includes the work of two scholars: Geneva Gay and Gloria Ladson-Billings. These scholars build on the ideas proposed in CRT, and outline ways the instruction of teachers can better meet the needs of students who are non-White (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Recognizing that teachers often come from the mainstream culture, these culturally responsive approaches incorporate the backgrounds of students of color into the instructional approach, as well as provide a context for which diverse students can be more successful.

Finally, the last area of focus centers on the holistic needs of students of color. A Gardening Metaphor (AGM) seeks to describe the contextual needs of students by comparing their academic and environmental needs to that of a "glorious bloom" (Taylor, Orgass, Kouyatè, & King, in progress). AGM recognizes that because the problem of achievement gaps is dynamic and multifaceted in nature, teachers, administrators, communities, and systems must work hand-in-hand if we are to see gaps close. Additionally, AGM draws much of its basis from culturally responsive practices, as well as CRT.

Definition of Terms

A Gardening Metaphor (AGM) – Taylor et al. (in progress) uses a metaphor to describe the context under which academic success of African-American students flourish, which he calls, "A Garden Metaphor." This metaphor consists of seven parts, each of which metaphorically describes what Taylor et al. have synthesized from the literature and found present in schools successful at closing achievement gaps. The following are components of AGM: Soil (Antecedents), Seed (Curriculum and Pedagogy), Root (Culture), Environment (Context), Gardeninger (Teacher), Gardener Support (Administration), and Gardener Schools (Institutions) (Taylor et al., in progress).

Achievement Gap - The National Center for Education Statistics defines achievement gaps as follows: "Achievement gaps occur when one group of students outperforms another group and the difference in average scores for the two groups is statistically significant (that is, larger than the margin of error)." Evidence about gaps between subgroups of students was published by the College Board's National Task Force on Minority Achievement (1999). Gaps were found among students taking the NAEP tests, grades, class rank, Advanced Placement tests, SAT tests, and college attendance and matriculation rates. Subgroups evidencing gaps include African-American, Native-American, and Latino, all of which showed lower scores in the above stated areas. Furthermore, evidence showed that the gaps existed despite the socioeconomic backgrounds of each group.

Critical Race Theory - Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) argued that the concepts of race and property rights play a significant role in the United States and that understanding how these two interact in our society will provide a depth of understanding of the presence of inequity, such

as is experienced by African-Americans in both the legal arena as well as the educational domain.

Critical Race Theory in Education - Application of Critical Race Theory in education means implementing a pedagogy that is culturally inclusive and responsive to the African-American experience in the United States (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy - Ladson-Billings defined culturally relevant pedagogy as having a foundation in three areas: "(a) Students must experience academic success; (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence; and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order" (1995, p. 160). "Culturally relevant teaching requires that students maintain some cultural integrity as well as academic excellence" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 160).

Culturally Responsive Teaching - Gay (2000) defined culturally responsive teaching as: "Using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them. It teaches to and through the strengths of these students. It is culturally validating and affirming" (p. 29).

Geneva Gay characterized culturally responsive teaching as (a) acknowledging "the legitimacy of cultural heritages of different ethnic groups, both as legacies that affect students' dispositions, attitudes, and approaches to learning and as worthy content to be taught in the formal curriculum;" (b) "builds bridges of meaningfulness between home and school experiences as well as between academic abstractions and lived socio-cultural realities;" (c) "uses a wide variety of instructional strategies that are connected to different learning styles;" (d) "teaches students to know and praise their own and each others' cultural heritages;" and (e) "incorporates

multicultural information, resources, and materials in all the subjects and skills routinely taught in schools" (Gay, 2000, p. 29).

Diverse Constructivism - Au (2012) stated that "A diverse constructivist orientation attempts to look at how schools devalue and could revalue the cultural capital of students of diverse backgrounds" (p. 39).

Professional Development School - Teitel (2003) described professional development schools as "special cases of school-university collaboration in which the experience in partnership formation provides a rich background for the efforts to 'grow' PDSs" (p. 2). Essentially, PDSs are schools that are in partnership with a university and are a "venue for literal praxis," and "bridge the gap between the abstract and the authentic in the preparation and development of teachers and other educators" (p. 2).

Three-Student Project - The Three-Student Project is a unique PDS model that uses student teachers to provide research-based interventions to students on the cusp of being proficient on state standardized tests.

Research Design /Methodology

The impact of the Three-Student Project, with emphasis on the development of relationships between the student teachers and the students within the project, as well as the development of student teachers into culturally responsive teachers, in two professional development schools was studied using a mixed-methods approach. Quantitative data were collected from principals, teachers, and student teachers using the AGM Inventory. Achievement test scores were located, reviewed, and analyzed. Parent surveys were sent, but none were returned. Qualitative data were acquired through observations of the student teachers

and students during Three-Student Project lessons, teacher and student teacher focus groups, and interviews of the two principals and former Three-Student Project student teachers.

Because this study was unique and was within the boundaries of two locations (Creswell, 2007), one of which is under its first year of implementation, sampling was limited only to those within the sites and project, therefore, purposeful sampling was employed. Triangulation was obtained through quantitative and qualitative data. Yin (2003) recommended six types of information to collect: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant-observations, and physical artifacts. Student-teacher assessment forms used to assess student learning were reviewed. Both focus and individual interviews took place with teachers, student teachers, and the two principals. Additionally observations of the student teachers' interactions with students took occurred.

Interview protocol were developed for focus interviews and individuals completed with student teachers, teachers, and principals. A survey was given to parents. Additionally, the AGM Inventory (developed by Jerome Taylor, Sarah Orgass, and Épryl King) were given to teachers, student teachers, and principals. The inventory was adapted to meet the needs of this study. Permission was obtained to use and adapt the inventory.

Summary

Exploring culturally relevant teaching in a professional development school can provide insight into the effectiveness of professional development schools to close achievement gaps between minority students and their mainstream counterparts. This study sought to explore a unique project within the professional development school context through the lens of culturally responsive teaching. Findings from this study could have implications for other PDS schools

and possibly traditional elementary schools seeking to close gaps for students from minority backgrounds.

To that end, the next section explores the body of research on Multicultural Education. Next, constructivism and critical race theory in education is discussed as theoretical frameworks underlying this study. Additionally, since culturally responsive practices are purported to impact the achievement of minority students, Culturally Responsive Teaching (Gay, 2000) and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995) were investigated. Government policy impacts the decisions districts and teachers make with regard to their instruction; therefore, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, also known as the NCLB (2001) were reviewed as well as interventions used by districts to help meet the needs addressed in NCLB. Finally, research on Professional Development Schools, school culture, and urban schools were explored.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the literature as it relates to Multicultural Education, the theoretical framework for this study, as well as the topics that make up the context of the sites under study. Multicultural Education encompasses several theories and practices that promote equal educational opportunities for all. The theoretical framework which includes constructivism, critical race theory in education, and culturally responsive practices are discussed. Additional sections include interventions, professional development schools, and research on urban schools, and school culture. These facets, when connected, set the contextual environment for the Three-Student Project.

Multicultural Education

At one end of the Multicultural Education spectrum is the very foundation laid by James A. Banks, who envisioned a more equitable society where people were no longer marginalized by the hand of mainstream, dominant society. Banks' works were aimed at neutralizing forces that impacted people of color, women, and other marginalized groups. His conceptualizations, among others, are the foundation for culturally responsive practices discussed later in this review of literature; and, therefore, directly impact this study. For this reason, Multicultural Education is included in this review of literature.

Banks writing the forward for Gay (2000) conceptualized multicultural education into five dimensions: "content integration, the knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, an equity pedagogy, and empowering school culture and social structure" (p. viii).

Subsequent writings by Banks helped others to further understand how each dimension interacted with the others and were insufficient when implemented alone. Understanding Banks' work begins with understanding each of these dimensions.

Content integration in its most simple form is the use of cultural content or examples which are used to illustrate subject matter being taught. It is not just simply integration of cultural content, but a purposeful use of this content to build skill or knowledge in the subject area. The knowledge construction process was described by Banks (1996) in a typology of knowledge: personal/cultural, popular, mainstream academic, transformative academic, and school knowledge. He describes mainstream academic knowledge as the ideas, theories, or paradigms that make up the established Western canon taught in schools and colleges across the country. Transformative academic knowledge are the ideas, theories, or paradigms that provided opposition to mainstream knowledge and challenged the status quo (Banks, 1996). Effective teaching would include knowledge and use of both mainstream as well as transformative knowledge. Prejudice reduction identified characteristics of students' attitudes toward race, and attempted to critically analyze those prejudices for clarity and correction of misconceptions. Equity pedagogy consisted of using culturally responsive instructional practices that used the strengths from students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds in the process of teaching. Lastly, empowering school culture and social structure included the view of the school as an institution with system-wide structures that must be reformed because the system was greater than its parts (Banks, 1995).

Multicultural Education emerged in the literature as a growth out of the earlier Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and 1970s (Banks, 1995). Prior to Multicultural Education, the related literature was transformative scholarship that gave more authentic interpretations of

slavery (Banks, 1995). Both transformative scholarship and the works of Banks sought to provide perspectives outside of the mainstream culture, not just from a White, middle-class point of view. Multicultural Education sought to provide more meaningful experiences to students of color, and to provide all students with the ability to scrutinize information for legitimacy and accuracy, which can only come when all perspectives have been evaluated.

Banks (1995) purported that Multicultural Education countered literature whose purpose was to legitimize the marginalization of peoples. American Negro Slavery, by Ulrich B. Phillips (1918) is an example, which Banks said described slaves as happy with their situation of inferiority, and receiving the benefits of their civilizers. Banks (1995) also noted the work of Herrnstein and Murray (1994) called The Bell Curve, the benefactors of which should be the subject of question, as well as those whose positions of inferiority it legitimizes.

The beginnings of multicultural education in the literature can be found in 1979 with Banks' work entitled *Multiethnic/Multicultural Teacher Education: Conceptual, Historical, and Ideological Issues*. From that point, Banks continued to conceptualize his ideas as Multicultural Education entering more and more of his work into the literature. The reach of Banks and subsequent multicultural scholars can be found today across content areas. For example, Au (2011) has applied ideas from Banks and others to literacy in the classroom, addressing the needs of Chinese Americans, as well as other non-English native speaking groups. Neito (2004, 2007) focused on its application to Latino and multilingual populations. Legaspi and Rickard (2011) applied multicultural ideas in the context of mathematics curricula, Choi and Chepvator-Thomson (2011) to physical education, and Chin (2011) to art education resources.

The impact of Multicultural Education can also be seen more broadly in the studies of Gorski (2000, 2002, 2004, 2007), as well as Clark and Gorski (2002). Gorski and Clark (2001)

applied this information in the context of the digital age. Differences in computer ownership and internet access can be found by socioeconomic status (Clark & Gorski, 2001) and race (Gorski & Clark 2001) which the authors note contribute to the digital divide and associated academic success.

Today, current scholarship in multicultural education can be found in multicultural teacher education (MTE), such as the work of Gorski, (2009). In a study and thorough analysis of syllabi of multicultural teacher education and related courses, Gorski (2009) categorized such courses into three major areas: conservative, liberal, and critical. Conservative approaches taught multicultural education in a light that viewed dominated groups as the "other," and groups that needed "help" existing in current mainstream structures to achieve the mainstream value of success. Liberal multicultural education courses were a step more than conservative courses, and approached MTE from the perspective of celebrating and appreciating differences, but ignore what those implications mean for dominated groups. Critical approaches to MTE scrutinized traditional approaches and power relationships to uncover implications for dominated groups. Also, critical approaches worked to reform schools so that they broke down those traditional power systems which kept groups marginalized by dominant groups (Gorski, 2009). Additionally, Gorski found the following:

- Close to 16% of the syllabi analyzed were found to be consistent with Jenks et al.'s (2001) notion of "conservative multiculturalism."
- 58% were dominated by elements of "liberal multiculturalism."
- 29% fit Jenks et al.'s (2001) description of "critical multiculturalism" and therefore,

- 71% of the syllabi describe "multicultural education" courses that appear inconsistent with basic theoretical principles of multicultural education. (p. 302)

This study also uncovered a new typology for MTE, according to Gorski (2009). The relevance of this typology is the presence of a sociopolitical layer which he reflects in his new typology cited here: "(1) Teaching the "Other," (2) Teaching with Tolerance and Cultural Sensitivity, (3) Teaching with Multicultural Competence, (4) Teaching in Sociopolitical Context, and (5) Teaching as Resistance and Counter-Hegemonic Practice" (Gorski, 2009, p. 312).

Multicultural Education is grounded in constructivism and is well documented across the curriculum. Critical Race Theory in Education is supported by Multicultural Education. Both laid the foundation for culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b, 2001) and culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2000), as well as for other culturally responsive practices described by scholars such as Au (2011) and Nieto (2002, 2004, 2007a, 2007b). As such, Constructivism, Critical Race Theory in Education, and Culturally Responsive Practices are discussed as the theoretical framework for this study.

Theoretical Framework

Theoretical underpinnings must be selected, researched, and analyzed for connections to a study. Such connections are necessary in understanding the rationale for research and making sense of research outcomes. This study's focus on culturally responsive teaching has its theoretical groundwork laid in both Constructivism and Critical Race Theory. The following explores both as it relates to culturally responsive practices in the era of No Child Left Behind, as well as responses to the legislation and the effectiveness of those responses on the demographic population served by participants in this study. Finally, because the sites in this study are

professional development schools (PDSs) in urban settings, both PDS and urban schools, as well as school culture were also explored.

Constructivism

Constructivism is based on theories developed by Vygotsky, Piaget, and Bruner. Their ideas articulate that a learner builds meaning through his own interactions (Bruning et al., 2004). This perspective on learning is shared by many theorists including Vygotsky, Piaget, Bruner, and others who each lend their own experience to shape its definition. For the purposes of this study, the researcher focused on Vygotsky and Piaget.

According to Vygotsky (1978), learners build their own meaning through social interaction. Vygotsky's theory of the Zone of Proximal Development explains that beyond a child's actual developmental level, a child can also learn through interaction with a more knowledgeable person (Vygotsky, 1978). Prior knowledge as the basis for what learners build upon is the work of Piaget (1985) and Bruner (1986). Because children access prior knowledge in the process of constructing knowledge, and because some of what they have learned has been acquired outside of school, interactions between cultural groups influence the prior knowledge that they bring with them, and therefore, their knowledge construction.

Constructivism is the theoretical foundation for this study because the Three-Student Project involves interaction between the student teacher and the student as well as parents. Building relationships is an important part of the Three-Student Project because it helps to facilitate the interaction between the student-teacher and the student. Interactions with parents support the progress of the students. Additionally, since children bring prior knowledge with them to the learning environment, knowing the students (and incidentally their parents) is an important part of facilitating the interaction that takes place.

Critical Race Theory in Education

The majority of the student population at the sites in focus were African-American. Differences in achievement between African-Americans and Whites are not solely attributed to economic conditions. It is therefore necessary to give consideration to a theoretical view that contextualizes the achievement gap between our country's mainstream White majority and the African-American minority.

CRT in Education explains such inequities as the achievement gap and is founded upon principles of CRT. According to Delgado and Stefancic (2012), CRT explored the relationship between "race, racism, and power" and emerged as a way to "combat subtler forms of racism" that proliferated after the civil rights movement had waned (pp. 2-3). CRT scholars argued that race was a central construct in our nation and that those in power in our country made decisions and policy that positioned them on the top of an inequitable social construct that placed all others at the bottom (Bell, 1995; Carter, 2008; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Davis, 1995; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Lopez, 1995; Solorzano & Yosso, 2001; Zamudio, Russell, Bridgeman, & Rios, 2011). According to Delgado and Stefancic (2012), the basic tenets of CRT are

- Racism is "the common, everyday experience of most people of color in this country" (p. 7),
- our hierarchical system favors Whites,
- race is socially constructed and not genetic, and
- "differential racialization" is implemented by the dominant culture at different times to serve the needs of the dominant culture.

Resulting effects of racism were inequitable ways of living for minorities. These inequities were evident in the legal system where CRT found its footing, but CRT scholars used

CRT to analyze inequities across disciplines, including education (Zamudio, Russell, Bridgeman, & Rios, 2011). "Critical Race Theory (CRT) offers us one such race-conscious approach to understanding educational inequality and identifying potential solutions" (Zamudio, Russell, Bridgeman & Rios, 2011, p. 2).

During the 1970s, and 1980s, scholars explored and developed underlying principles (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012) that would later make up the CRT foundation. CRT entered into the realm of education as scholars sought to understand "issues of school discipline and hierarchy, tracking, affirmative action, high-stakes testing, controversies over curriculum and history, and alternative and charter school" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p. 7).

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) synthesized scholars' work on critical race theory in the legal realm and applied it to the education arena. They argued that race must be a consideration in educational decision-making. Having noted that the evidence of race as a factor in all walks of life was found in the discrepancies in graduation rates, college entrance and matriculation rates, suspension rates, access to curriculum, resources, and access to teachers who resemble the students (Haberman, 1999; Howard, 2010), the authors also concluded that any decision-making should be made with race in mind and should be focused on social justice (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) analyzed human rights through the lens of CRT. They argued the case that human rights did not abound, but instead, property rights were the reality. Since property rights overshadowed human rights, they argued that greater rights were extended to those with property as well as to those whom individuals with property chose to extend those rights, and therefore human rights did not in reality exist.

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) purported that property rights overshadowed educational rights. This meant that when one looked at the way quality education, curricula, and resources were distributed, one would find that the end result of property rights distribution was social inequities in education. Since the current public education system is funded through property tax, only those with high property value will receive the best education. The example illustrated by the authors was the story of two high school students, one White and one Black, who when examining the catalogue of courses from which to select, the White student's options abounded. The Black student did not even have the minimum required mathematics courses for college entrance from which to make his selection. Such a situation exemplifies the relevance of the impact of race and the history of inequities facing Blacks that directly resulted in their lack of property ownership as the result of decision making of Whites with property (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

Zamudio and colleagues argued that CRT scholars saw the mainstream system of education as a perpetrator of racial inequities. "Critical race theorists view mainstream education as one of the many institutions that both historically and contemporarily serve to reproduce unequal power relations and academic outcomes" (2011, p. 4). For example, inequities along education lines are impacted by macro-level policies such as segregation, desegregation and resegregation, bilingual education, and affirmative action and also at the micro-level such as what takes place in schools and classrooms (Zamudio et al., 2011).

Colorblindness, a view that all people are seen the same way regardless of their color, can have the impact of ignoring the context behind the access of people of color to quality education and how people of color experience educational settings and instruction. Colorblindness assumes that all people are where they are by result of their own choices, and if they are not there

yet, that they can and will be where they are going as a result of their own choices. Zamudio and colleagues call this "The Myth of Meritocracy, Colorblindness, and Whiteness" (2011, p. 26). Colorblindness ignores socio-political contexts which may provide barriers to success for people of color.

Colorblindness ignores constructivist theories of education. Constructivists purport that students bring with them a set of background experiences from which they construct or build meaning in order to learn (Bruner, 1986; Bruning et al., 2004; Piaget, 1985; Vygotsky, 1978). Because much of what students of color bring with them is influenced by the backgrounds of their families, also of color, there will be a disconnect between these students and their teachers, as most of their teachers will have been from a White, middle class background (Haberman, 1999; Howard, 2010). When in a school of White children who have mostly White middle class teachers, the backgrounds of those teachers and students are more closely aligned. As teachers use their background experiences to illustrate learning, the connection to that learning is made easier for students from similar background experiences. In one study of an urban school population, Haberman (1999) found that almost 55% of the student population was African-Americans, yet fewer than 19% of the teachers were African-American. Instead, 79% of the teachers were White. The White students then would be at an advantage to have teachers that mirror their background experiences. Many districts across the country, and in particular, urban areas experience similar demographics where the majority of teachers are White and yet the district serves a diverse population of students who often do not share the ethnic backgrounds of their teachers (Howard, 2010). Additionally, CRT in Education scholars argue that the resources in schools that are traditionally White, often suburban, have property rights to more resources and more enjoyable opportunities (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

The issue of teachers having similar backgrounds to their students could be addressed by the teachers gaining intimate knowledge of the culture and interests of the students they teach. Whereas mainstream teachers have more in common with mainstream students, teachers could acquaint themselves with the historical and cultural backgrounds of diverse students and use this information to reach diverse learners (Tidwell & Thompson, 2008). This solution based on the ideas purported by CRT in Education scholars is one that puts race at the forefront of educational decision-making and is known as Culturally Responsive Teaching (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Culturally Responsive Practices

The following section discusses culturally relevant pedagogy (Gay, 2000) and culturally responsive teaching (Ladson-Billings, 1995) as instructional practices that put race at the forefront of instructional decisions in order to meet the needs of diverse learners. This section will also describe AGM as a framework for closing racial achievement gaps (Taylor et al., in progress). National reform policy and large and small scale interventions will be discussed as well as their effects on closing the achievement gap between White and African-American students. Because the sites in this study are PDSs, and are located in an urban setting, PDSs, school culture, and urban schools will also be discussed.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

CRT in Education scholars make the argument for culturally relevant pedagogy because it puts race at the forefront of educational decision-making. In the past, decisions have been made regarding curriculum that had a central focus of White society, even though the population being served was diverse in nature. In one study, Dennick-Brecht (1993) found the need for more culturally inclusive textbooks. Recognizing the context under which minorities existed in our country, Ladson-Billings (1995) described culturally relevant teaching as “collectively

empowering" and gave three criteria for this kind of teaching: "(a) Students must experience academic success; (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence; and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order" (p. 160).

Au (2011) stated that the first key to success of educating diverse students is to understand "that the challenge is complexly determined and multifaceted and therefore the response to the challenge must be multifaceted, as well" (p. 1). Au recognized that educators must build meaning on the backgrounds of diverse students, and the strengths they bring from home. This perspective is shared also by Gay (2000). Gay (2000) illustrated this stating that making knowledge accessible and meaningful means "recognizing the worth of the information and contributions ethnic groups have made to the fund of knowledge students should learn and making it available to them" (p. xvi). These proponents of practicing culturally responsive teaching have built these ideas directly out of the context of critical race theory because culturally responsive practices put race first when deciding instructional approaches.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Culturally responsive teaching "is defined as using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively" (Gay, 2002, p. 106). Using her research of successful teachers of minority students, Gay discussed her examination of five components that characterized teachers who practiced culturally relevant instruction. These elements were "developing a knowledge base about cultural diversity, including ethnic and cultural diversity content in the curriculum, demonstrating caring and building learning communities, communicating with ethnically diverse students, and responding to ethnic diversity in the delivery of instruction" (Gay, 2000, p. 106).

In order to develop a knowledge base that is culturally diverse, Gay suggested that teachers learn the contributions to our society of various cultural backgrounds. Teachers should become aware of the learning and communication styles, as well as the cultural values, of different cultural backgrounds. One example Gay gave of culturally responsive teaching drew from Campell's (1995) study on ethnic stereotyping. Since, according to this study, media has had a negative impact on minority groups because representations of minorities in the media have also been negative, culturally responsive teachers would teach their students how to be selective consumers and how to analyze media messages critically.

Gay (2000) argued that becoming more culturally responsive is necessary because such is already the case with mainstream students because the majority of teachers share the same background. Gay (2000) stated that it is:

> Both simple and profound. It is simple because it demands for ethnically different students that which is already being done for many middle-class, European-American students--that is, the right to grapple with learning challenges from the point of strength and relevance found in their own cultural frames of reference. (p. 114)

Profound, however, is the fact that students who are non-mainstream had been expected to meet academic expectations while also struggling to do so in a context that was unfamiliar to them (Gay, 2000).

A Gardening Metaphor

Taylor and colleagues (in progress) have identified characteristics of schools which have high populations of African-American students, yet have been successful in producing high percentages of students who are proficient in both reading and mathematics. Many of those characteristics are responsive to the cultural needs of the students. Taylor et al. (in progress)

calls these Dame-Dame schools and defines them as "predominately Black low-income public schools which have nearly closed or actually reversed racial and socioeconomic gaps in reading and math" (in progress, p. 1).

Research conducted on these schools showed that the schools scored high on an inventory developed by Taylor and colleagues known as the AGM Inventory. The inventory was developed using characteristics uncovered in Taylor's research. The significance of the use of the inventory in this study is that one of the schools in this study shares qualities consistent with the Dame-Dame schools: a high percentage of African-American students, a high percentage of students from low-income backgrounds, and high proficiency levels on state standardized tests in mathematics. Because components of the inventory are consistent with theories of culturally relevant pedagogy, giving this inventory to the teachers and principals may help determine the presence of culturally responsive practices within both of the sites.

This AGM model was developed in part based on the culturally relevant school of thought and involves teachers, administrators, and community supports for the success of African-American students, with application to other minorities. The model involves seven components: Soil, Seed, Environment, Gardener, Gardener Support, and Gardener Schools. Each component is a metaphor for the vital needs of academic and community support for student success. The following is a description of the seven components.

Taylor et al. (in progress) describes the Soil component as the student provisioning for justice. In this component, there are five subcomponents. Following Ladson-Billings' (1995) description of culturally relevant pedagogy as being "collectively empowering," this component requires teachers to weave into the regular instruction introduction and discussion of African-Americans who have overcome challenges to learning. Making the connection that "if they can

do it, you can too," students will be empowered to overcome challenges to learning as well. This component also draws on theories of constructivism and social learning theory because it requires teachers to utilize team building, teamwork, and peer-encouragement toward students reaching learning goals. Specifically, this component builds the efficacy of students to believe in themselves and each other and to accomplish this goal by drawing on the role models that came before them. This component also helps to fight against the ideas presented in Fordham and Ogbu's (1985) studies on "acting White," which is the idea that doing well academically is not associated with blackness (Taylor & Kouyate, 2003), but instead is characteristic of Whites.

The second component in Taylor's metaphor (in progress) is Seed. This part addresses the idea of high expectations and eliminates what President Bush, during his presidential acceptance speech of 2004, called the "soft bigotry of low expectations." This component requires alignment of curriculum to state and national standards, and calls for students to be moved from mastery learning to a deeper understanding of the content. All students at both high and low levels of performance should be stimulated to be curious about learning. This component requires not just rigor, but depth of learning. Taylor et al. (in progress) cites evidence of gap widening (Ceci & Papierno, 2005) if these qualities are not in place.

A cultural provisioning for justice is the description Taylor et al. (in progress) gives to the third component, Root. Drawing again on culturally responsive schools of thought, Root requires teachers to use relevant and meaningful cultural materials to increase students' pursuit for new knowledge and improve their emotional competence. Furthermore, Root helps students to appreciate their culture and to "see how culture can help them make good decisions at and beyond school" (p. 6).

The fourth attribute to AGM is Environment. This component speaks directly to the need for community involvement as a context for successful students. Environment makes the call for schools to reach into the community, holding the community accountable, and to celebrate the involvement of parents, churches, organizations, and neighborhood groups. At the same time, these same community resources reach back to the schools, holding them accountable for the success of their children. This connectivity between school and community is an example of Vygotsky's social learning theory, where groups are working together toward a common goal. Constructivism is also woven in Environment, as students construct or build the understanding that high academic excellence is expected of them in every facet of their lives.

Gardener is the fifth component of AGM. This component speaks to teachers' sense of self-efficacy, as teachers must believe in their students and espouse to them that they have high expectations, as well as to strive and meet the needs of even the most difficult of students. Teachers are called to function as a team toward the goal of high achievement. Additionally, teachers are called to go above and beyond the school walls and reach out into the arms of the community, including organizations, churches, and parents. A "gardener" is called to have knowledge of what it takes to have his or her minority students succeed and to ensure implementation of those vital needs. In a sense, this component calls for teachers to share characteristics of leaders.

Administrator provisioning for justice is the description Taylor et al. (in progress) gives to Gardener Support. Here, principal leadership is a must, as the principal's role is to allow an environment that is conducive to educational justice. At every level, the principal is called to support this cause, providing encouragement to teachers and making educational justice possible for the students being served. The principal provides resources, acts as a role model, modeling

methods for gap closure within the classroom as necessary, and provides feedback to support teachers' roles in implementing practices that seek to close academic achievement gaps.

Finally, the seventh member of AGM, Garden Support institutions, are the higher education and other educational institutions' support for providing courses, professional development, and empowerment for closing academic achievement gaps. Here, policies and practices are evaluated to ensure the educational justice goal's success.

The AGM inventory is of relevance because it measures the degree of potential to close academic achievement gaps between racial groups. With districts struggling to comply with the Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, also known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the inventory may hold the promise of a map leading toward achievement equity, which was a goal of NCLB.

No Child Left Behind Act

The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (also known as the No Child Left Behind Act or NCLB) instituted in 2001, created a new foundation for educational equity, requiring that all students be proficient by 2014 (Ed.gov, 2010). Standardized tests were implemented at every state level in an effort to comply with such a law. What followed was the release of standardized test scores in such a way that groups of student achievement could be analyzed and evaluated. The evidence showed more than substantial gaps in academic achievement between White students and some minority groups of students, such as Hispanic, African-American, and Native-American students (Ed.gov, 2010), and these gaps continue to persist today (Educational Testing Service, 2009).

Achievement Gaps: Factors

There are, in fact, many factors related to academic achievement gaps. In addition to economic background as a factor, other factors include school-level factors such as the quality of teachers, quality of programs, availability of resources, and community- and home-level factors such as family engagement, parenting styles, and community resources (Carter, 2008; Eberly, Joshi, & Konzal, 2007; Epstein, 2001; Ferguson, 2008; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Sheldon & Epstein, 2005; Trivette & Anderson,1995; Smith, 2006; Taylor, 2010; Wenglinsky, 2004). Each of these factors plays a role in the existence of academic achievement gaps for minority students.

Additionally, deeper analysis of achievement data by focusing in on comparison of students from low-income backgrounds compared to overall achievement revealed that substantial gaps surfaced for students from low-income backgrounds. This knowledge has set into motion a plethora of research (Ceci & Papierno, 2005; Chenoweth, 2006; Ferguson, 2008; Gay, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Rothstein, 2004; Schweinhart, 2003; Smith, 2006) in an effort to understand the phenomena of academic achievement gaps and to develop methods to help address the narrowing of these gaps.

One particular area of focus involves instruction that effectively supports learning for student subgroups such as the African-American subgroup (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2001). Of particular interest is the idea that while there is research that shows correlation between income and achievement, the phenomenon of achievement gaps for this group does not easily fit that research simply because African-Americans are not characterized in whole as having low-income backgrounds (Berends, Lucas, & Peñaloza, 2008). So, while the idea of income being correlated to achievement explains some part of academic achievement gaps as a whole, it does

not account for the many members of minority groups who are not from low-income backgrounds, and yet are still underachieving.

Achievement rates of students have been mandated to be disaggregated into scores by subgroups as a requirement of NCLB. Examples of disaggregation are scores that are broken down by gender, race, and income. What has been discovered consistently throughout the country are gaps in reading and mathematics achievement between Whites and Asians and their Latino, African-American, Native-American counterparts, as well as students from low-income backgrounds. Standardized test scores of students from these subgroups have been scrutinized over the years. Districts have found a need to respond to the disparities between subgroups through reform efforts and interventions in an effort to raise achievement levels (Durden, 2008). The following is an examination of an eclectic set of interventions as well as the effectiveness of some of these interventions to meet the needs of minority students and close the racial achievement gap.

Gap-Closing Effectiveness of Interventions

A large body of research on interventions for struggling learners reveals a variety of different reading and mathematics interventions of varying levels of effectiveness. Some interventions are large scale and may or may not produce a significant effect on their target populations, while small interventions may produce impactful results (Nesbit, 2010). Of particular interest, is while many interventions may prove to be effective for their overall population in terms of improving skill in subject matter, it is important to know whether any are developed and targeted specifically to close achievement gaps for minority students. The following is an analysis of interventions in both reading and mathematics content areas and of whether their gap closing effectiveness emerges in the literature.

Reading Interventions

What Works Clearinghouse investigated interventions such as Reading Mastery©, Accelerated Reader©, and Lexia Reading©. Reading Mastery© is a direct instruction approach that can supplement the core reading curriculum or it can be used alone. It is used mostly in kindergarten through sixth grades. This report on Reading Mastery© found that it had positive effects on fluency but not comprehension (What Works Clearinghouse, 2010). Accelerated Reader© is used in addition to the reading core curriculum. It is a guided reading intervention program with the aim of helping improve reading comprehension skills. Students read books and then take computer-based quizzes (What Works Clearinghouse, 2010). Teachers are informed about students' progress through computer-based reports. What Works Clearinghouse (2010) found limited evidence in improvement for reading fluency and some improvement for comprehension. While these interventions are aimed at helping struggling readers, none of them purport to aid in the closing of academic achievement gaps on standardized tests, nor do results of gap closing effectiveness emerge in the What Works reviews.

Lexia Reading© is also a computer-based program and was investigated by What Works Clearinghouse (2009). This program aims to improve basic reading skills including phonics. The evidence found improvement in alphabetic and comprehension for their target populations; however, no evidence emerged in the research of its impact on closing achievement gaps for minorities.

Reciprocal Teaching is a metacognitive developing strategy that involves having reading modeled to students. In a study by Carter (2011), this strategy was used over nine weeks. A significant impact was found and was specific to students at risk in an elementary charter school setting. On the state assessment, these students evidenced 28% growth and outperformed the

growth of Arkansas students. While this study did not claim to close achievement gaps, it should be noted that the success obtained was done in a school whose demographics include a high population of African-American students and students who receive free or reduced lunch (Carter, 2011).

Mathematics Interventions

Similar to the previously-mentioned reading interventions, a variety of mathematics interventions with varying degrees of effectiveness also emerged from the body of research. One example is called the Taped-Problems Intervention (TP). This intervention involved students listening to mathematics problems which were pre-recorded and following along on a corresponding mathematics worksheet. The goal for students was to solve the problem before the answer was given on the tape. Results of several previous studies showed that this intervention improved mathematics fluency in different mathematics fact skills. Similarly, this study also showed improvement over the three-week period of intervention. While this study did not report the closure of academic achievement gaps, all participants in the study were African-American and did improve their mathematics fluency skills (McCallum, Schmitt, Schneider, Rezzetano, & Skinner, 2010).

Another study by Poncy, McCallum, and Schmitt (2010) compared two different kinds of interventions. The first intervention, known as Copy, Cover, and Compare ©, or CCC, resembled traditional flash cards. Students looked at a problem and its answer, covered it, and then wrote the problem and answer. Then they compared to see if their answers were accurate. This study found that this strategy did improve mathematics fact fluency (Poncy, McCallum, & Schmitt, 2010). On the other hand, the second intervention involved fact families from the program Facts that Last, or FTL. This intervention shared the same goal of building

mathematics fluency, but did so through associated facts in the same fact family. Having already learned addition facts, associated subtraction facts were remembered because they had the same numbers within the fact family. This strategy did not evidence improvement over the control group (Poncy, McCallum, & Schmitt, 2010).

Two reviews of studies done by What Works Clearinghouse (2010) showed mixed effects on mathematics achievement. One was Saxon Math© used at the middle school level, and the other was Accelerated Math©, a computer-based program that focused on the skill and drill practice of mathematics facts. This study focused on elementary students. Again, although these mathematics interventions have shown varying degrees of effectiveness, meaning some worked well and others did not, none of them were designed specifically to close the racial achievement gap, nor did evidence emerge in the research of their effectiveness in closing achievement gaps for minority students.

Large and Small Interventions

In Nisbett's (2010) review of the following interventions and their effectiveness to close achievement gaps, his analysis was that some really large and expensive interventions, such as Head Start, have not made much of an impact. Head Start is a federally funded program that spans the country and has been in place for over a decade. According to Nisbett's (2010) analysis, interventions that have shown substantial effects are the Perry Preschool Project (Schweinhart, 2003) and Abecedarian Project. The Perry Preschool Project was an early intervention project involving two years of the preschool program and home visits with parents that gave assistance to parents on helping their children with academics. The project used a Piaget style approach in which children were seen as active learners (Bracey & Stellar, 2003). The Abecedarian Project was also an early childhood intervention and involved treatment in

preschool and the first three years of grade school. This intervention involved curriculum support in preschool and a focus on parental involvement in grade school (Campbell, Ramey, Pungello, Sparling, & Miller-Johnson, 2002). Nisbett (2010) noted that both of these programs have evidenced large gains in IQ at the start of primary school which lasted throughout, large standardized achievement test improvements, cuts in retention rates, increases in college entrance rates, and lower rates of students ending up on welfare as adults. Both of these programs focused on early literacy, addressing children during preschool years. The High/Scope Perry Preschool involved children who were Black and from low-income backgrounds. Because this program focused on minority students and evidence substantial progress, it could be said that it was specifically implemented to affect minority students and, therefore, address the achievement gap for minority students. However, no evidence emerged that shows that this was developed specifically to close academic achievement gaps for students of color, nor does evidence emerge that this intervention could be implemented in schools with diverse populations. Furthermore, projects like this were of a smaller scale.

Nisbett (2010) also noted that both vouchers (Rothstein, 2004) and Charter schools (Gleason, Clark, Tuttle, & Dwover, 2010) are large scale expensive interventions that had shown little evidence of improvement overall in academic achievement. However, some large-scale whole school programs such as Uncommon Schools©, Achievement First©, Harlem Children's Zone©, and Knowledge is Power Program© had shown marked impact on student achievement by increasing the amount of time children are in school, such as summertime or weekends (Nisbett, 2010).

Smaller, minority-targeted interventions that might be done on a classroom level have had positive effects for these students. Interventions such as small group and one-on-one

instruction have been found to be effective in Mathematics instruction (Slavin, 1989) and with students at risk of reading failure (Foorman & Torgensen, 2001). Small group instruction can manifest in a variety of ways, including two-, three-, and four or more- students within groups (Good et al., 1990). In their review of the National Reading Panel report on reading (2000), Foorman and Torgensen (2001) found that phonics instruction in small groups was effective with students with learning disabilities and those who come from low socio-economic backgrounds. While the authors' meta-analyses of interventions did not elicit interventions targeted solely on minority achievement improvement, Foorman and Torgensen (2001) purported that "Risk status is not entirely inherent in the child, but always involves a mismatch between child characteristics and the instruction that is provided" (p. 206). Many minority children, and those from low socio-economic backgrounds come to school lacking in reading prerequisite skills (Foorman & Torgensen, 2001). Addressing the needs of students at-risk of reading failure involves either increasing time spent in regular Reading instruction, or providing small group or one-on-one instruction (Foorman & Torgensen, 2001).

One intervention aimed at students from low-income backgrounds focused on teaching students that they had control over their intelligence and that it was less genetic than once thought. Teachers reported that the students in the intervention group worked harder than the control group (Dweck, 2007). Another intervention, also noted by Nisbett (2010), included having students write about their most important family values. While this assignment was given to both Black and White students, a large effect on students from low-income, minority backgrounds was found as opposed to the little or no impact found on Whites or Blacks from higher economic backgrounds (Cohen, Garcia, Apfel, & Master, 2006).

Interventions have ranged from small, classroom-based strategies to national reforms such as Head Start, and have varied in their abilities to reach targeted groups of students such as those from minority backgrounds. One reform's scope is somewhere in the middle and a focus in this study. This reform is known as Professional Development Schools (PDSs). This reform has been used in urban school settings to help strengthen the preparation of urban teachers. For example, Fenway High School and Boston Arts Academy were two PDSs in Boston that helped prepare teachers in a setting involving small groups of teachers and students, which facilitated relationship building (Teitel, 2003). The background and purpose of PDSs are discussed next.

Professional Development Schools

Consequences of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) *Act* resulted in many school districts implementing school interventions and reforms if they were to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) goals under the law. One reform, PDS, described in 1990 by the Holmes Group in their book, *Tomorrow's Schools: Principles for the Design of Professional Development Schools* began an era of promise for those looking for such reform. In their book, the authors advocated for collaboration between schools and universities that would later become the basis for reform in schools across the country.

History of Professional Development Schools

Over 1,000 PDSs were in place by 1998 in most of the country (Darling-Hammond, 2005). PDSs have been implemented and many districts sought to continue to improve upon the concept. The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (2001), also known as NCATE, developed standards for such schools which were adopted by many who would continue to seek to improve upon PDS sites (Teitel, 2003; Tunks & Neapolitan, 2007).

Teitel (2003) described the history of the PDS movement as succeeding collaborative reforms of the 1970s which he calls teacher centers. The PDS movement followed and could be seen as a response to *A Nation At Risk* (Klaumeier, 1990), or "the alternative certification movement" (Dixon & Ishler, 1992, as cited in Teitel, 2003, p. 3).

Teitel (2003), in his synthesize of previous research found that over 15 years, four goals of professional development schools had developed:

- "improvement of student learning,
- preparation of educators,
- professional development of educators, and
- research and inquiry into improving practice" (p. 6)

Benefits of Professional Development Schools

PDSs have been implemented in a range of schools, both urban and suburban, and have offered many benefits. New ideas and approaches are more easily implemented in a PDS, since one benefit of the PDS model has been "simultaneously improving schools and the education of educators" (Goodlad, 1986 as cited in Miller & Silvernail, 2005). Today, one of the benefits in the rigors of the standards based and standards assessed movements is higher performance levels, as well as the recognition of diversity as a value (Teitel, 2003).

PDSs "seek to reshape fundamental values, beliefs, and paradigms for schools and school change while they are negotiating two worlds and inventing new programs" (Darling-Hammond, 2005, p. 21). Ladson-Billings' (1995) call for the use of culturally relevant pedagogy and the need to put race at the forefront of educational decisions would require a shift in values and beliefs. PDSs have received more attention because of the concentration of efforts to close achievement gaps between students of differing race and social class backgrounds (Teitel, 2003).

Individualized plans that involve the collaboration of teachers, student teachers, parents, and administrators to find solutions for students of color in urban PDS sites are a demonstration of the commitment to practices that close achievement gaps for students of color (Teitel, 2003).

Limitations of Professional Development Schools

Policies and structural supports are key if PDSs are to succeed. Because of the high collaborative nature of PDSs, a large amount of energy is required to implement and maintain these reforms (Teitel, 2003). In 1997, Valli and colleagues gave a critical analysis of equity within the PDS setting and found progress to be slow. According to Teitel (2003), perhaps that is because prior to now, an equity agenda did not really exist. Also, because PDSs were constantly in a state of fluidity, it was hard to standardize what it meant to be a PDS. Also noted was that in start-up years, it was difficult to document the process or maintain data, as a result of the immense energy spent implementing PDSs (Teitel, 2003). The following discusses school culture as a benefit to PDSs.

School Culture

A natural benefit to a successful professional development partnership is the presence of a positive school culture. School culture is defined as "shared vision, values, goals, beliefs, and faith in school organizations" (Roby, 2010, p. 92). A positive school culture is one in which students flourish, and students are responsive to instruction (Malloy, 2005). When characteristics are present that often have a negative impact outside the school environment, a positive school culture can counteract those influences (Stolp & Smith, 1995).

Bower, Bowen, and Powers (2011) studied what they called "Family-Faculty" trust which is a reciprocal measure of the trust between schools and families. Their study was based on a previous study by Hoy, Tarter, and Woolfolk Hoy (2006) which looked at teachers'

perceptions of this relationship. Bower, Bowen, and Powers took it a step further, incorporating parent perceptions as well. The idea behind this was that if there was a healthy, mutual trust between teachers and parents, it would contribute to a positive school climate.

This component is a necessary inclusion as a focus in this study because Taylor et al.'s (in progress) inventory calls for a healthy relationship between the schools and the community. According to his metaphor for the success of minority students, parents, and community celebrate the accomplishments of teachers and schools when students succeed. Similarly, the school and teachers reach into the community to create collaboration conducive to student success. Bower, Bowen, and Powers (2011) noted that teacher efficacy in promoting this collaborative relationship is a necessary part in creating a positive school culture environment. Additionally, high expectation for students' success contributes to the necessary environment for success of minority students (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995b, 2009). Returning to Roby's (2010) definition of school culture as "shared vision, values, goals, beliefs, and faith in school organizations" (p. 92), it would follow then that this statement would also have to be true:

Teachers and administrators

- visualize a school where not only are all students proficient, but students from low income minority backgrounds are equally proficient to mainstream students;
- share the goal that all want and value the vision of all students equally proficient regardless of race or income;
- believe that they can have all students proficient regardless of race and economic background; and
- have faith in one another that they will bring this vision to fruition.

Considering the characteristics of a positive school culture, the characteristic of lower standardized test scores for subgroups in urban schools, and that the schools participating in this study were from an urban area, the following section is a description of urban schools.

Urban Schools

The National Center for Education Statistics (2011), or NCES, stated that the racial balance of Whites and Blacks within our country takes on opposite characteristics when considering urban schools. For example, large cities overall were reported to have a higher percentage of Black and Hispanic fourth graders assessed, while national average percentages show that White fourth graders make up a larger portion of those tested than Blacks and Hispanics combined. Regarding economic demographics, NCES (2011) stated that "Fifty-two percent of fourth-graders were eligible for free/reduced-priced school lunch nationally compared to 73% in large cities" (p. 13). Urban schools, therefore, have a higher challenge to meet, as those subgroups that tend to evidence lower scores, such as students from low-income backgrounds, and minority students, show higher populations in urban areas. Therefore, meeting AYP overall in urban schools means meeting AYP with higher concentrations of students who have evidenced consistent underachievement when compared to their mainstream counterparts. Many scholars felt that due to the uniqueness that characterizes urban schools, specialized skill and knowledge are important in preparing perspective teachers for successful urban school experiences (Stairs, 2010).

In order to address underachievement in urban settings, many schools implement interventions or specialized instructional strategies in addition to typical instruction. Some examples of successful interventions in the urban setting exist. For example, Ahuja (2007) found leadership that involved teacher input and co-investment in decision-making contributed to a

successful urban high school. One school showed not only improvement in Reading, but scores that superseded state averages which the researchers attribute to Reciprocal Teaching, a strategy that involved lower-reading readiness students being paired with higher reading-readiness students to increase comprehension (Carter, 2011). Another study conducted by Chang (2008) investigated a high-achieving urban high school in Southern California and found that more than student engagement, strong leadership, and school culture were factors that participants perceived as making an impact on their school achievement. One study by Anthony (2011) found that when leadership changed, programs suffered, in a school with a university partnership. Upon grooming of the new leadership, many programs were enabled again. Gordan and colleagues (2009) researched urban Black male students and found mentoring as a successful intervention for their participants. Nelson-Royes and Reglin (2011) showed that of participants in an afterschool program who attended on a regular basis, qualitative reports from their case study participants indicated reading improvement.

In addition to leadership, curriculum, and community culture were perceived to have made the most impact on one urban high school in California, even more than student engagement (Chang, 2008). While these interventions were implemented and the authors cited above reported evidence of success, racial gaps in achievement are still present in most urban schools. Since urban schools have higher populations of students from African-American and Hispanic backgrounds, it would be important to know what, if any, interventions aim specifically to close the racial achievement gap between students of color and their mainstream counterparts. One study by Gordon et al. (2009) reported high academic achievement among African-American male students who were mentored and exposed to Afro centric style instruction. The students were instructed within a culturally responsive environment that emphasized the

strengths of African-Americans and built a sense of pride for the participants. While this intervention was successful, it is uncertain whether other factors in the study were equally impactful, such as homogenous male grouping during instruction.

Social capital has also been a factor in urban school high academic achievement obtainment. Leana and Pil (2006) investigated 88 urban public schools to learn about internal and external social capital and found a causal relationship between social capital and academic achievement. Similarly, Martin and Martin (2007) studied an intervention known as the Williams Project. This project relied on social capital and collaboration within the community. The authors recommended that more needs to be learned about students' backgrounds and the involvement of family and culture within the learning environment.

Interventions within urban schools are important strategies in improving academic achievement of minorities in urban settings. The significance of interventions in this study is that a very unique intervention exists within the two sites of this study. The Three-Student Project was, therefore, investigated as an intervention. Additionally, because culturally responsive practices are known to impact the achievement of minority students, this research viewed the Three-Student Project through a culturally responsive lens.

Summary

Multicultural Education laid the foundation for the need to incorporate culturally responsive pedagogical practices into student learning experiences. Multicultural Education scholars make the case for the need to integrate cultural content, empower students, and teach to and through the strengths that students from diverse backgrounds bring with them. The theoretical frameworks for this study include constructivism because of the learning that takes place in the interactions between the students and their student teachers. Since we know that

children construct meaning based on prior knowledge and in settings where their backgrounds do not necessarily match the backgrounds of their teachers, it will be important to learn how the student teachers build relationships with their students in order to bring background experiences into the learning setting. Culturally Responsive Teaching offers the underpinning for the need for culturally responsive practices to ensure that learning is relevant and meaningful to students and offers equitable learning opportunities, as well.

Interventions are relevant to this study because an aim of the NCLB is to close academic achievement gaps. Whereas most interventions have not specifically targeted minority students in an effort to close academic achievement gaps, culturally responsive teaching does claim to meet the needs of minority students (Au, 2011; Durden, 2008; Gay, 2000, Ladson-Billings, 1992a, 1992b, 1992c, 1995a, 1995b; Nieto, 2004, 2007).

The two sites in this study were PDSs within an urban setting. It is important to learn how the unique project, known as the Three-Student Project, impacts student progress and school culture. Such progress in academic achievement in an urban PDS may have implications for other schools looking to meet the needs of their minority students, as well. Chapter III outlines the methodological approach used to explore the case of the Three-Student Project within a Professional Development School.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the Three-Student Project within two PDSs and to learn about culturally responsive practices used in the schools and the impact of those uses on the preparation of student teachers to become culturally responsive teachers. This chapter describes the research questions, research design, sample, instrumentation, data collection, and data analyses used in this investigation, as well as any limitations involved.

Research Questions

When considering research questions, Creswell (2007) recommended an "overarching question and several subquestions" (p. 108). The overarching question of this study was "What is the impact of the Three-Student Project on student achievement and student teacher preparedness to become culturally responsive teachers?" Thus, research questions developed for this investigation were:

1. What culturally responsive practices are perceived by principals, teachers, and student teachers as being used in these professional development schools?
2. How did the student teachers build relationships with the three students?
3. What are student teachers', parents', teachers', and principals' perceptions of the impact of the Three-Student Project on school culture and student achievement?
4. In what ways, if any, has the Three-Student Project impacted student achievement and academic behaviors?

5. What impact has the Professional Development School's Three-Student Project had on student teachers' preparation to become culturally responsive teachers?

Background for Method Selection

The Three-Student Project was housed at two elementary schools. The first school had been implementing the project for several years and the second school was in its first year of implementation. These were the only two sites to have begun the Three-Student Project at the time of this investigation. This project was developed by the principal of the first site, along with a professor from the university providing the student teachers at both schools. The first site had made notable gains in state achievement tests and had essentially closed the mathematics achievement gap and had been making progress toward closure of the reading achievement gap. It was important to take an in-depth look at this project, both at the established site and new site to learn more about the impact of the Three-Student Project on student achievement. Also, if culturally responsive practices played a role in student achievement, it was important to know if the project impacted student teachers preparedness to be culturally responsive teachers.

Research Methods

"Using mixed methods within the confines of a single study can simultaneously broaden and strengthen the study" (Yin, 2006, p. 41); therefore, this method of investigation was chosen for this study. This mixed-method investigative design was employed to both qualitatively learn about the processes and perceptions of the project, as well as quantitatively investigate practices consistent with schools that tend to have higher levels of achievement despite having high levels of African-American and low-income students. As a mixed-methods study, it is important to

explain both qualitative and quantitative methods used. The qualitative method used for this investigation is the case study.

Case Study

According to Creswell (2007), "case study research involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system (i.e., a setting, a context)" (p. 73). Case studies may also be part of a larger context such as mixed methods designs, or it may be that the case study encompasses the other methods (Yin, 2006). This study was set within the context of a bounded system, as the Three-Student Project was only located in two school buildings at the time of the investigation.

Mixed-Methods

Yin (2009) described three rationales for mixed methods approaches using case study. The first rationale is the desire for triangulation, or to learn whether different evidence sources converge to show the same findings. In this scenario, case study results would be compared to the results from the other methods. A second rationale described is where the case study is part of a larger study that would include quantitative data. The case study facet would emerge as a need for further exploration after the quantitative data has been analyzed (Yin, 2009). Lastly, Yin (2009) explained that the case study may be used complementary to other methods. In this scenario, the data are analyzed separately, yet may be reported together in the final analysis. For the purposes of this study, the latter rationale was used as the case study and quantitative methods are complementary in this case and will be analyzed separately, yet reported together in the final analysis.

It is important to note that because this study is a mixed-methods investigation, it cannot be looked at solely as Case Study research. However, it can be seen as both a topic of selection

(Stake, 2005) and the method for the qualitative part of this research. Therefore, this study explored the case of the Three-Student Project and investigated the project both qualitatively and quantitatively in a QUAL-quan investigative design. The next section explains the qualitative part of this investigation.

Qualitative Methods

Qualitatively, six sources of evidence are recommended by Yin (2009): "documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, and physical artifacts" (p. 99). For the purposes of this study, documentation, archival records, interviews, participant-observation, and physical artifacts were used. Interviews, both individual and focus groups were used to learn about teachers', student teachers', and principals' perceptions of the Three-Student Project, as well as culturally responsive practices that were used throughout the school and the impact of those practices on student teacher preparedness. Interviews and focus group questions consisted of between eight and 12 questions. These interviews provided explanations about the Three-Student Project processes and their usefulness to impact student achievement.

Participant observations helped both to contextualize the case, as well as provide insight on behavior and motives (Yin, 2009). Participant observation of student teachers working with students in the Three-Student Project shed light on the process of the Three-Student Project and whether student teachers used culturally responsive practices with their students. Observations focused on the sessions between the student teachers and the students of theirs that participate in the Three-Student Project.

Physical artifacts (See Appendix A) collected include some of the documents given to student teachers that explain the Three-Student Project, and the forms student teachers would use

to document student progress. Since both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in this investigation, it is necessary to describe the quantitative methods utilized.

Quantitative Methods

"Quantitative research is the collection and analysis of numerical data to describe, explain, predict, or control phenomena of interest" (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009, p. 7). The quantitative feature of this study was conducted in two parts, with an additional facet being an analysis of standardized test and assessment data at each of the building levels. The first part of the quantitative data were collected using AGM Inventory (Taylor et al., in progress) (See Appendices B, C, and D). This inventory was based on the author's *A Gardening Metaphor: A Framework for Closing the Racial Achievement Gap* which included components that were culturally responsive. The AGM Inventory was used because of its use in previous Dame-Dame research which showed a correlation between schools who serviced high percentages of African-American students who are from low-income backgrounds yet 85% or more of the population were proficient and above in both Reading and Mathematics. Further information about the framework is addressed later in the Instrumentation and Pilot section of this chapter.

A Parent Survey (See Appendix R) was given to parents of the students in the Three-Student Project. The purpose of this instrument was to solicit parent perceptions of the impact of the Three-Student Project which would help answer one of the research questions. The survey sought to learn whether parents felt the Three-Student Project helped their children's academic achievement. Additionally, parent insight was sought as to the use of culturally responsive practices they might learn about from their children. Parent perceptions could potentially help strengthen what is learned about the Three-Student Project through the eyes of those implementing the project.

In addition to the Parent Survey and AGM Inventory, archival records of assessment data from publically available resources were used to gain a picture of the academic achievement levels of each of these sites. Specifically, because of the nature of the need to close academic achievement gaps, and because much of the literature surrounding the topic were related to achievement on state standardized test scores, the Pennsylvania State System of Assessment (PSSA) scores were reviewed at the building and grade levels. The focus was on achievement and trends before and since the inception of the Three-Student Project. The archival data served as a means of triangulation to strengthen what was learned about academic achievement within the Three-Student Project sites.

Sample

Similar to a phenomenological study, this investigation explores the Three-Student Project and the high achievement atypical of one of the site's demographical population. It is important to learn from those living this phenomenon and gain their perceptions as to whether they attribute this phenomenon to the presence of the Three-Student Project, a phenomenon in and of itself. Therefore, purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2007), or specific use of participants who were not only working at these sites, but specifically who worked within the Three-Student Project at these sites, was necessary. This study employed both unique and convenience sampling (Merriam, 2009). Because the Three-Student Project is a unique phenomenon and is currently implemented within two locations, only those two locations could be part of the study. Additionally, interviews could only be conducted with teacher, student teacher, and principal volunteers located at those two sites. Convenience sampling occurred because only those participants who volunteered could be a part of the study.

Site Demographics

The first site was a K-5 elementary school in an urban setting in Western Pennsylvania. Approximately 400 students attended the school during the 2012-2013 school year, 87% of which were African-American and 7% were White. Approximately 88% of the student body qualified for free and reduced lunch and about 19% had special needs. This elementary school was situated in a community setting. As a French-emphasis magnet, students attending the school may have come from other areas of the district. All students in grades K-1 were taught French and those in grades two through five needed to be enrolled in the program to receive French studies. Each grade level was comprised of two to three classrooms. There were about 10 paraprofessionals and support staff. The school's principal was an African-American male.

Six teachers from this school, along with their student teachers, participated in the Three-Student Project and therefore had been invited to participate in this study, along with the school's principal and site-coordinators. Details of the project will be discussed in Chapter IV.

The second site was also a K-5 elementary school in an urban setting in Western Pennsylvania. This school was also situated in a neighborhood setting. The school served about 534 students, 96% of which were African-American, 1% were White, and 3% were multi-racial. Eighty-six percent of the population qualified for free and reduced lunch. Twenty-four percent were students with special needs.

This site was chosen because of its participation in the Three-Student Project, however it is important to note that the school structure was just two years young, with the Three-Student Project in its infancy stages of under a year. The building had been closed several years and was reopened and reconstituted. Approximately 80% of the staff and the principal were replaced the first year, and 50% of the staff replaced the second year--the year of the implementation of the

Three-Student Project. Because of the many changes the building and students experienced, full implementation of the Three-Student Project did not take place within the timeframe of this investigation. However, information gleaned about the use and impact of the Three-Student Project within this building was valuable to this study and would have implications to all considering implementing a project such as this within their own district or schools.

Gaining Access

The success of this investigation relied heavily on volunteer willingness and availability, therefore the site-liaisons and principals were viewed by the researcher as "gatekeepers" (Creswell, 2007). They provided information as to when participants could be accessed in order for the principal researcher to provide background about this investigation and to solicit volunteers. In addition to the building principals, the site-liaisons remained contact people for when site visits were made by the researcher or when study instruments could be collected.

Instrumentation and Pilot

Instrumentation used in this investigation included interviews, AGM Inventory, and a parent survey. Piloting of interview protocols and parent surveys were conducted and are discussed in this section. Also, reliability and validity of the AGM Inventory are presented as well.

Interviews

An interview is a way of collecting data that involves the researcher and participant having a discussion focused on topics related to the research study (Merriam, 2009). The researcher had formulated interview questions that guided the discussion in a manner that helps answer the research questions. This study involved the use of semi-structured interviews where the interviews were guided by specific questions but needed to be modified (Merriam, 2009) as

new information was learned, or if after previous questions, it was determined that the proposed subsequent questions were not appropriate for the participant. Interviews were necessary because the behaviors solicited could not directly be observed. For example, the perceptions of teachers about the impact of the Three-Student Project could not be directly observed. Both individual and focus group interviews were utilized.

Focus group interviews are a method of obtaining data from a group of people who have shared experiences with the topic and is socially constructed in nature (Merriam, 2009). "The object is to get high-quality data in a social context where people can consider their own views in the context of the views of others" (Merriam, 2009, p. 386). This study involved a focus group with student teachers to learn their thoughts and opinions within the context of each other's perceptions.

Piloting of Individual and Focus Group Interview Protocols

For this study, interview protocols (See Appendix F, G, and H) were designed for the principals, teachers, and student teachers who were part of the Three-Student Project. Piloting the protocols involved seeking review of the protocols and input from administrators, teachers, and previous Three-Student Project student teachers. The administrators who piloted the principal interview protocols included a current elementary building principal, a director of curriculum and instruction, and a teacher with principal certification. Six administrators from other districts were asked and these three responded. Seven teachers from other districts were asked to pilot the teacher interview protocol. Four responded and represent elementary, middle, and high school classrooms. Student teachers requested for piloting the student teacher protocol were selected because they were former Three-Student Project student teachers who were familiar with the program. Three former student teachers responded and piloted the student

teacher protocols. One of them was a teacher at one of the sites, but was not a participant in this study. Five parents of elementary-age children were asked to review the parent survey and three responded.

First, a document was prepared that gave thorough instructions on how to review the protocols and the areas of focus for review. For example, reviewers were asked to give feedback on the following:

- Understandable instructions
- Clear wording
- Sufficient detail
- Regional differences
- Difficult sections
- Irrelevant questions
- Adequacy of answers
- Length of questions
- Convenience

A matrix (See Appendix I) was developed that listed each interview question and each research question. Reviewers were asked to place an "X" in the table for each research question that could be answered by the interview items. Administrators were asked to complete the review for the principal interview protocols, teachers were asked to complete the review for the teacher interview protocols, and both teachers and former Three-Student Project student teachers were asked to review the student teacher interview and observation protocols. Once returned, each group of protocols were analyzed for comments on the items, as well as the research questions it was thought they would address. Based on the input from reviewers changes were

made to the protocol items. Some items were added or removed in order to better ensure that the research questions could be adequately answered.

A Gardening Metaphor Inventory

The quantitative aspect of this study involved the use of AGM Inventory (Taylor et al., in progress). This inventory was based on Taylor's *A Garden Metaphor: A Framework for Closing Racial Achievement Gaps*, which was discussed in Chapter II. This framework outlined important factors in the justice attainment of closed achievement gaps. These were framed in the metaphor of a "glorious blossom" with each necessary component being Soil, Seed, Root, Environment, Gardener, and Gardener Support. Each of these areas made up the components of the AGM Inventory. The ratings given on the inventory are the extent to which the rater perceives the item actions to have taken place. The items measure teacher actions such as displaying pictures of and leading discussions about African-American role models who have overcome obstacles, as well as principal actions such as encouraging teachers to move toward the goal of closing achievement gaps, among others (Taylor et al., in progress). Five items were listed under each component and solicited a rating on a four-point Likert scale. Participants were to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each statement. Statistical method of analysis will be discussed in the Data Analysis section of this chapter.

This inventory was administered to teachers, student teachers, and the principals. The inventory asked participants to rate their perceptions of six aspects of teacher and principal practices, as well as school environment. Each aspect solicited responses to five items for a total of 30 items. Because the first of the Three-Student Project sites had experienced a level of achievement almost parallel to that of the Dame-Dame sites, and given the correlation between high results on the AGM Inventory and schools with high achievement who are also highly

populated with African-American students and students from low-income backgrounds, it was important to learn whether the AGM Inventory results would be duplicated at this site, and to compare those results with the qualitative part of this investigation.

Validity and Reliability of A Gardening Metaphor Inventory

The process of establishing reliability and validity of the AGM Inventory included three phases, beginning with Conceptual, followed by Discovery, and Investigation. First, Taylor and colleagues (2014) conducted a thorough review of the literature. Additionally, dialogue and discourse followed to form ideas about schools with large percentages of African-American students who were also high achieving on state standardized tests. These ideas were about the success of atypical (predominantly African-American, predominantly low-income, and predominantly proficient and advanced on state standardized tests) schools and lead to the next phase, Discovery. During this phase, Taylor and colleagues set preliminary criteria (75/75/75) for establishing Dame Dame status, with the gold standard being 85/85/85. They identified 108 schools that met criteria for Dame Dame schools. Development of the AGM Inventory took place and the educational justice project team was funded to bring in three of the 108 principals during each of two rounds of visitations. Each round involved a public lecture by the visiting principal, a two-hour survey/interview, two hours of visitation with the local urban public school district administration staff, and completion of the AGM Inventory. They used the qualitative survey data combined with AGM Inventory data to learn about behaviors consistent among the principals. They also examined the Dame Dame principal ratings on the AGM Inventory. An evaluation of more than 20 whole-school reforms which were identified by the United States Department of Education allowed for application of the AGM to these reforms. What was learned was that only two of the reforms showed gap-closure. However, these two did not meet

requirements for the Dame Dame designation. All of the cases identified by Taylor and colleagues (2014) which met the minimum Dame Dame standards, also showed acceleration toward gap closure. In this way, Taylor assumes informal support for validity, but recognizes the need for larger numbers of schools with which to test formal validity (Taylor, 2014).

Their findings from their Dame-Dame research also uncovered some commonalities among those principals and schools which were designated with Dame-Dame status. Taylor and his colleagues give the following list of 10 attributes to characterize these Dame-Dame schools:

1. Dame-Dame principals were strong leaders who took primary responsibility for school-wide policies and practices;
2. Dame-Dame principals strongly believed in their students, carried exceptionally high expectations for them, and created environments necessary for them to excel;
3. In Dame-Dame Schools, student growth was continuously monitored and assessment results used to inform individual plans that worked best for each student;
4. In Dame-Dame Schools, teachers created small flexible group instruction to facilitate positive learning environments for students;
5. Dame-Dame principals required exemplary/near perfect student attendance;
6. Dame-Dame principals require exemplary/near perfect teacher attendance;
7. Dame-Dame principals expected and fostered collaboration between teachers and principal, teachers and teachers, and teachers and parents;
8. Dame-Dame principals spent an exceptional amount of time observing teachers in classrooms and interacting with students;

9. In Dame-Dame Schools, the level of principal and teacher turnover may be lower than in comparison public schools serving predominately black low income schools; and
10. In Dame-Dame Schools, the level of teacher satisfaction may be higher in [sic] than in comparison public schools serving predominately black low-income students. (Taylor et al., in progress, p. 22-23)

Regarding internal reliability, Taylor asserts that "Given preliminary findings of a strong relationship linking AGM vs. non-AGM reforms to just outcomes (to be evaluated further in future studies), it is highly unlikely that results reported would issue from measures of unacceptable reliability" (Taylor, 2014, p. 2). Because Taylor's framework for closing racial achievement gaps is the foundation for the AGM Inventory, because no other framework for closing racial achievement gaps emerged in the literature, and because the initial site for the Three-Student Project has shown evidence of racial achievement gap closure, it was important to learn how these sites might measure according to AGM standards.

It is important to note here that although the AGM Inventory was given to principals, teachers, and student teachers in this study, prior testing of the instrument was restricted to principals. Although the inventory was adapted to allow administration to teachers and student teachers, the results of prior testing may not necessarily be applicable across these populations. The purpose of the use of the AGM Inventory was to add a layer of understanding about the academic achievement of the sites in this study. It was interesting to learn what could be gleaned from these two groups, and to learn whether they were similar or dissimilar to the results of the AGMs administered to the principals.

Parent Survey

Finally, the second quantitative component of this study is the Parent Survey. This instrument was researcher-designed specifically to learn about the perceptions of parents of Three-Student Project students of the impact of the project on their child's behavior and academics. Development of any survey is important to the study. Therefore, Czaja and Blair (2005) suggested the following criteria when developing survey questions:

1. Does the survey question measure some aspect of one of the research questions?
2. Does the question provide information needed in conjunction with some other variable?

   {*If no, to both A and B, drop the question. If yes to one or both, proceed.*}
3. Will most respondents understand the question and in the same way?

   {*If no, revise or drop. If yes, proceed.*}
4. Will most respondents have the information to answer it?

   {*If no, drop. If yes, proceed.*}
5. Will most respondents be willing to answer it?

   {*If no, drop. If yes, proceed.*}
6. Is other information needed to analyze this question?

   {*If no, proceed. If yes, proceed if the other information is available or can be gotten from the survey.*}

7. Should this question be asked of all respondents or of a subset? {*If all, proceed. If a subset, proceed only if the subset is identifiable beforehand or through questions in the interview.*}. (p. 71)

Parent Survey Pilot

Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2009) suggested pilot testing of the survey instrument, saying it "provides information about deficiencies and suggestions for improvement. Having three or four individuals complete the questionnaire will help identify problems" (p. 181). In the case of this study, it was not possible to have individuals complete the survey because they would need to have had a child in the Three-Student Project in order to answer the questions which were related to the project's impact on their child's achievement. Since all parents who have children in the Three-Student Project were invited to complete the survey, none of them could be asked to help pilot the survey items. Therefore, the seven individuals who were asked were not parents of children who were in the Three-Student Project, but were asked to give feedback and make suggestions. The directions for review ask the reviewer to focus on the following:

- Understandable instructions
- Clear wording
- Sufficient detail
- Regional differences
- Difficult sections
- Irrelevant questions
- Adequacy of answers
- Length of questions

- Convenience

Additionally, those providing the feedback were asked to look at a matrix of survey items and research questions. These individuals were asked to place an "X" under the research questions they felt each survey item addressed. Based on the feedback given, changes were made to refine the parent survey. Wording was changed in one of the items and an item was added to the survey to ensure the research questions could be adequately addressed.

Data Collection Methods

Qualitative data such as interviews, observations, archival records, and physical artifacts were collected for this study. Quantitative data collected included AGM Inventories, building-level state standardized achievement test data, and Value-Added Measure (VAM) scores. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected for this mixed-methods investigation for triangulation of data. These methods are discussed in more depth next.

Interviews

An interview is a way of collecting data that involves the researcher and participant having a discussion focused on topics related to the research study (Merriam, 2009). Since the interviews for participants at both sites needed to be conducted within a four-month time-span, the researcher developed a schedule for data collection between the two sites and distributed the schedule to the building administrators. Individual interviews of the teachers from both sites were conducted in January. A total of five teachers including a site-coordinator were interviewed from Site A. Five teachers including the site-coordinator were also interviewed from Site B. Since student teachers returned from their semester break at the very end of January, their interviews and observations were scheduled for February. Four student teachers from Site A were interviewed individually and five of the student teachers from Site B

participated in a focus group interview. Additional individual interviews were conducted with the principals from both Site A and Site B, one during the month of March and one during the month of April. Interviews for all participants ranged from 15 to 45 minutes in length depending on the person's role and length of answers. Some interviews were transcribed by the researcher and the rest were transcribed through an independent on-line service (Verbalink.com). As each of the interview transcriptions were completed, the transcriptions were sent back to participants via email for member checking. The researcher included directions for transcript review for each participant. Participants were asked to review their transcript for accuracy. In the case of revisions, participants were asked to make such revisions right on their transcripts, highlighting the changes made. If no changes were to be made, directions for revision stated that the transcript need not be returned to the researcher.

Observations

Observations of student teachers took place during the month of February at the student teachers' convenience, since schedules differed between student teachers and since students with whom they worked also varied. The researcher observed sessions between the student teacher and the students within the Three-Student Project. Sometimes student teachers met with each student individually, and sometimes in small group settings. The purpose of these sessions between the student teachers and their Three-Student Project students was to provide early intervention. In order to get a general understanding of the sessions, specifically, the intervention provided by the student teacher to the student, the researcher transcribed the student teachers' interactions with the students during these sessions. Analysis of the observations are addressed in the Data Analysis section of this chapter.

Archival Records and Physical Artifacts

Archival records of state standardized test data were collected from the Pennsylvania Department of Education website paayp.emetric.com. PSSA scores for both reading and mathematics were available at this site and included the most recent year's results for this assessment. Results were reported both as a whole building, and were also broken down by grade level within each site, by content (reading, mathematics, writing, science), and disaggregated further into subgroups of students. For the purpose of this study, only the schools' reading and mathematics scores were reviewed and analyzed. Physical artifacts collected included documents given to student teachers which explain the Three-Student Project program, processes, and expectations.

A Gardening Metaphor Inventories

AGM Inventories were distributed to the participating student teachers in March and to participating teachers and principals in May. Participants were asked to place the AGM Inventories back in their envelopes and place them in a box that was marked for the Three-Student Project study. The researcher then went to each site to retrieve the sealed envelopes from each box. Because these data would need to be analyzed by site, and by participant role, it was important to mark them as such. Therefore, inventories were labeled the following way: Teachers from Site A were labeled T-A-1 through T-A-6; student teachers from Site A were labeled ST-A-1 through ST-A-6, and the principal was labeled as P-A-1. Similarly, teachers from Site B were labeled T-B-1 through T-B-5, student teachers were labeled ST-B-1 through ST-B-3, and the principal was labeled P-B-1. Additionally, one of the site-coordinators was noted as such because this participant did not have a classroom teacher role, and therefore could

not respond to items as a classroom teacher resulting in four of the six AGM components being left blank.

Once retrieved, data from the AGM Inventories were entered into an Excel spreadsheet with the previously stated labels across the top, and each AGM Inventory component down the side. Each circled item from each participant was entered into the Excel spreadsheet by category. Continuing with the author's recommended method of analysis, the researcher used the excel tools to add each of the six components and obtain a sum. Each of the component sums were divided by 20 and then multiplied by 100. This number according to the author's method of calculation became the subtotal. Each subtotal was divided by six to obtain the Justice Potential, or J_k. All teachers' scores were averaged together for a total, all student teachers' scores were averaged together for a total, and principals' totals were stand-alone since there was only one principal per building.

Data Analysis Plan

Analysis of data collected for this investigation follows a QUAL-quan approach. Qualitative data (individual interviews, focus group interviews, observations, and review of Three-Student Project documents shared with student teachers) were analyzed first, followed by quantitative analysis of the AGM Inventory results. Standardized test scores at each of the sites were analyzed for trends in achievement. Because no Parent Surveys were returned, none could be analyzed for this study.

Qualitative Analysis

According to Creswell (2007):

Data analysis in qualitative research consists of preparing and organizing the data (i.e.,

> text data as in transcripts, or image data as in photographs) for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes, and finally representing the data in figures, tables, or a discussion. (p. 148)

The following section describes the processes of preparing and organizing the data, followed by the process of identifying emerging themes, and reducing and condensing the data into meaningful parts for analysis.

All individual and focus group interviews, as well as observations, were analyzed using NVIVO9 software; therefore, each interview transcript and observation notation was loaded into the program and analyzed for emerging themes. As themes were identified, they were coded as "nodes." As responses were coded for one theme and subsequent interviews were reviewed, former codings were changed to reflect what was learned in subsequent interviews or responses. Once all coding had been completed for both transcripts and observations, some remaining nodes were combined.

Examples of coded information include demographical participant background, examples of culturally responsive teaching, pre- and post-project observed student behaviors, and other items relevant to this study. To help make sense of the data, the researcher formulated questions related to the research questions. For example, one of the research questions was "What are parents', teachers', student teachers', and principals' perceptions of the impact of the Three-Student Project on school culture and student achievement?" To organize a way to analyze the data for answers to this question, information which had been previously coded and stored in one set of nodes had to be further broken down into responses from teachers only, student teachers only, principals only, and then separated by site. Once this process took place, each set of responses was reviewed and combed for additional emerging themes. Additionally, the

researcher developed a list of sub-questions that would guide queries made of the data. These queries, or sub-questions, helped the researcher to answer the research questions previously stated in this chapter.

Observations of the interaction between student teachers and their Three-Student Project students were important because the researcher was looking to identify any culturally responsive practices observed during these sessions. But also, observing these sessions from beginning to end not only provided information on culturally responsive practices, but also gave a clear picture of what happened during this key part of the Three-Student Project. Therefore, observations of these sessions entailed not only transcribing the student teachers' interactions, but analyzing these sessions for culturally responsive practices that might occur.

Both interview and observation data were analyzed for patterns both within-site and between sites. Patterns between teachers, student teachers, and principal responses within each building were explored as well as patterns between teachers, student teachers, and principals of both sites.

Archival records and physical documents were analyzed for themes in academic achievement trends, and for a better understanding of the Three-Student Project. After qualitative data analysis was conducted, quantitative data were analyzed and compared to the qualitative data.

Quantitative Analyses

Quantitative analyses for the AGM Inventories were guided by the developers' suggested method of analysis. Each of the six components of the AGM which are Soil (Antecedents), Seed (Pedagogy), Root (Culture), Environment (Context), Gardener (Teacher), and Gardener Support (Principal) consisted of five actions. Each action was rated on a four-point Likert scale, with

four being the highest. Therefore, each of the items in a component could be added for a total score of 20 points for the component. The total for each component was then divided by 20 and multiplied by 100 to be given a percent. The higher the percent, the higher the potential of those practices under each component to contribute the justice potential. The justice potential, or "Jk" is the total percent of all six components divided by six for a range of points from zero to 100. The significance of the AGM Inventory is that in Taylor et al.'s work with schools across the country whose student populations were 85% or more African-American and 85% or more from low-income backgrounds were also 85% or more proficient in both reading and mathematics on state standardized tests, qualifying them for Dame-Dame status. Taylor et al. (in progress) studied six such cases through a two-hour interview with each building administrator and a public lecture, in addition to the administrator completing an AGM Inventory. All six of these Dame-Dame schools have ratings from their administrators that are high overall on the AGM Inventory.

It was important to learn the AGM ratings for each building, specifically for the first school in this study, as its population is 87% African-American, 88% come from low-income backgrounds, and 88% of those who took the state standardized tests scored proficient or above in mathematics. To earn the Dame-Dame Gold status, the 85% or more of those who took the state standardized test would also need to be proficient and above for reading (Taylor et al., in progress). While this school is certainly on its way to such status, what is notable is that there is no school in Pennsylvania who has made the Dame-Dame Gold status. What was learned from the AGM Inventory rating from this school will certainly add to the research base on schools who are successful at closing achievement gaps.

Limitations

This study, by nature of a case study, focused only on schools who at the start of this study had implemented the Three-Student Project. By nature of this project, it was implemented in a PDS setting. Findings may be applicable under limited PDS settings. Additionally, both schools in this study had high populations of students who were from low-income backgrounds and were African-American. Findings may be applicable to settings with similar demographics.

As a limitation of access, the researcher was unable to learn the specific assessment scores of individual students within the Three-Student Project which would have added to the knowledge learned in this study. Parents of students in the Three-Student Project were known only to the school teachers, student teachers, and building administrator, not to the researcher. Therefore, the researcher was reliant upon the student teachers and teachers to send home the consent forms and Parent Survey instrument. Even though the consent forms and surveys could be mailed via self-addressed stamped envelope, these items needed to first make it home to the parent. Absent permissions to know personal student information limited the ability to reach the potential parent participants. No Parent Surveys were returned for use in this study.

Summary

This mixed methods investigation of the Three-Student Project within two professional development school settings involved qualitative data collection methods, much like a case study, as well as quantitative methods of data collection. Interviews, focus groups, and observations were conducted first, followed by administration of the AGM Inventory to teachers, student teachers, and both building principals. Additionally, the Parent Survey was sent home with students.

Analysis of qualitative data was completed using NVIVO9 software and involved the use of coding for emerging themes and a process of reduction and recoding. AGM Inventories were analyzed using the author's suggested method for analysis, which led to scores he called the justice potential, or J_k. Analysis followed a QUAL-quan approach, meaning the qualitative data were analyzed first, followed by the quantitative data which complemented the qualitative data.

In Chapter IV, findings from the interviews, focus groups and observations, and reviews of archival records and physical artifacts will be discussed. Quantitative data reporting will follow qualitative data reporting. Since no parent surveys were returned, they will not be discussed. Data will be discussed with a distinction between the two buildings since they are at different levels of implementation.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This chapter presents analyses of data collected for this mixed-methods investigation of the Three-Student Project (3SP). Data collected included document review, individual and focus group interviews, observations, and A Gardening Metaphor (AGM) Inventories from principals, teachers, and student teachers of two professional development school (PDS) settings. This investigation sought to understand the following research questions:

1. What culturally responsive practices are perceived by principals, teachers, and student teachers as being used in these professional development schools?
2. How did the student teachers build relationships with the three students?
3. What are student teachers', parents', teachers', and principals' perceptions of the impact of the Three-Student Project on school culture and student achievement?
4. In what ways, if any, has the Three-Student Project impacted student achievement and academic behaviors?
5. What impact has the Professional Development School's Three-Student Project had on student teachers' preparation to become culturally responsive teachers?

Analyses of data are presented by research question (RQ) based on the logical progression of information gleaned from each. Therefore, RQ1 and RQ2 are presented first. RQ3 and RQ4 are presented simultaneously, followed by RQ5 (See Figure A). The next section details information about site and participant demographics from both locations. Their names have been changed to protect the anonymity. The two sites are Hope Elementary (HE) and Rising Star Academy (RSA). Interpretations of these data are discussed in Chapter V.

Site Location Building Population Demographics

According to the district's website (which is not referenced here to respect confidentiality), 399 students attended HE during the year of study. Eighty-seven percent were African-American, 7% were Caucasian, and the remaining 8% made up the Multi-Racial, Asian, American Indian, and Hispanic subgroups combined. Additionally, 55% were female and 45% were male. Likewise, 534 children made up the student body in RSA. Racial make-up of the student body included 96% who were African-American, 1% was Caucasian, and 3% were multi-racial. Gender-based demographics reported that 49% were female, and 51% were male.

Also worth noting, according to the district's website, HE earned a Star Rating for being ranked in the top 25% of schools throughout the state. The district also included a score based on students' growth from the previous year to the current year known as a Value Added Measure (VAM) score. HE's 2012 VAM score in mathematics was 99, and in Reading the VAM score was 66. A score of 50 is the state average.

Description of the Participants

Teachers who were assigned student teachers from the partner university implementing the 3SP and those teachers who participated as site-liaisons were invited to participate in this study, in addition to the building principal, student teachers, and all parents of participating 3SP students. A total of five classroom teachers, one of whom doubled as a site liaison, and one additional site liaison teacher from HE consented to participate. For the purpose of this study, the site liaison teacher may be referred to as a teacher, or site liaison. Additionally, all six HE student teachers agreed to participate. Five teachers, the site-liaison, all six of the student teachers, and the principal consented to participate from RSA. One parent consent form was returned without the survey. The consent form included a phone number. Attempts to reach the

person who sent the form included several phone calls and messages on voice mail, but no one returned the calls. No other consent forms were returned; and, therefore no parents consented to participate in this study. Principal, teacher, and site-liaison participants varied in grade-level, building tenure, and years within the project. All participants have either chosen, or been assigned, a pseudonym in order to protect their anonymity (See HE Participant Demographics and RSA Participant Demographics, Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1

Hope Elementary Participant Demographics

Pseudonym	Data Collected	Role	Grade	Building Tenure	3SP Project Years
Hooper	*I/AGM	Principal	K-5	6 years	9
Barbara	*I/AGM	Teacher	K	21 years	5
Holly	*I/AGM	Teacher	1	17 years	5
Nicole	*I/AGM	Teacher	K	23 years	5
Yolanda	*I/AGM	Teacher	4	7 (15 dist)	5 (said 7)
Madison	*I/AGM	Site-Liaison Teacher	3	7 years	6 to 9
Ella	*I/AGM	Site-Liaison	3	7 years	5
Allison	*AGM	Student Teacher	3	5 months	1
Lynn	*AGM	Student Teacher	3	5 months	1
Athena	*I/AGM	Student Teacher	4	5 months	1
Jessica	*I/O(2)/AGM	Student Teacher	1	5 months	1
Kelsey	*I/O(2)/AGM	Student Teacher	K	5 months	1
Kristie	*I/O/AGM	Student Teacher	K	5 months	1
Total Data Collected	I = 8 O = 5 AGM = 13 3SP Documents				

Note. *I = Interview, O = Observation, AGM = A Gardening Metaphor Inventory, 3SP = Three-Student Project.

Table 2

Rising Star Academy Participant Demographics

Pseudonym	Data Collected	Role	Grade	Building Tenure	**3SP Project Years
Shannon	I/AGM	Principal	K-5	2	1
Lucy	I/AGM	Teacher	K	2	3
Toby	I/AGM	Teacher	1	2	1
Ham	I/AGM	Teacher	4	2 (12-13 dist)	1
Abby	I/AGM	Teacher	3	3	1
Michelle	I/AGM	Site-Liaison Teacher	K-5	2	1
Heather	O	Student Teacher	4	5 months	1
Joyce	Foc. I/O	Student Teacher	4	5 months	1
Shana	Foc. I/O	Student Teacher	4	5 months	1
Pat	Foc. I/O	Student Teacher	1	5 months	1
Calli	Foc. I/O	Student Teacher	K	5 months	1
Jennifer	Foc. I/O	Student Teacher	3	5 months	1
Total Data Collected	I = 6 Foc. = 1 O = 5 AGM = 6 + 3ST 3SP Documents (SL)				

Note. * I = Interview, O = Observation, Foc. I = Focus Group Interview, AGM = A Gardening Metaphor Inventory, 3SP = Three-Student Project. ** Includes 3SP experience in a previous school, also includes current year.

Some participants who consented chose only parts of the study in which to participate. For example, three student teachers chose not to be interviewed and three student teachers chose

not to be observed. Additionally, some student teacher AGM Inventories were not returned or were returned blank.

Description of Data Collection Procedures

Because this was a mixed-methods investigation, data were collected both qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitatively, both focus and individual interviews, as well as observations and document review, were conducted. Six teachers (including the site liaisons), six student teachers, and the principal of HE consented, and five teachers, six student teachers, and the principal of RSA consented to participate. Therefore, a total of 11 teachers and 12 student teachers consented, as well as two principals. One parent consent form was returned, but that individual did not return the parent survey. No other parent consent forms or surveys were returned. Individual interviews were conducted with the principal, teachers, and student teachers in HE. Individual interviews took place with the principal and teachers of RSA, while a focus group interview was held with student teachers in RSA. Document review was conducted with guiding documents given to the student teachers by the school/university partnership about the 3SP (See Tables 1 & 2). Quantitatively, the Justice Potential (J_k) of the AGM Inventories for principals, teachers, and student teachers helped to answer RQ4, as well as state standardized tests and Value-Added Assessment (VAM) scores.

Interview Protocols

All interview protocols were piloted by having experts review the items and provide feedback; changes were made to the protocol to reflect the feedback. Principal interviews consisted of items referring to principal tenure, school demographics, implementation of the 3SP, school culture, culturally responsive practices, impact of the project, and advice the principal

would give another administrator about implementing the 3SP. Tables 3 and 4 illustrate the interview protocols used with each participant and/or building category:

Table 3

Administrator Interview Protocol: Hope Elementary

Item Number	Interview Item				
1	How long have you been a building administrator at this building?				
2	Describe the school's demographics (race, socioeconomic status, etc.).				
3	At what point				
Barbara	*I/AGM	Teacher	K	21 years	5
Holly	*I/AGM	Teacher	1	17 years	5
Nicole	*I/AGM	Teacher	K	23 years	5
Yolanda	*I/AGM	Teacher	4	7 (15 dist)	5 (said 7)
Madison	*I/AGM	Site-Liaison			
		Teacher	3	7 years	6 to 9
Ella	*I/AGM	Site-Liaison	3	7 years	5
Allison	*AGM	Student			
		Teacher	3	5 months	1
Lynn	*AGM	Student			
		Teacher	3	5 months	1
Athena	*I/AGM	Student			
		Teacher	4	5 months	1
Jessica	*I/O(2)/AGM	Student			
		Teacher	1	5 months	1
Kelsey	*I/O(2)/AGM	Student			
		Teacher	K	5 months	1
Kristie	*I/O/AGM	Student			
		Teacher	K	5 months	1
Total Data Collected	I = 8 O = 5 AGM = 13 3SP Documents				

Note. *I = Interview, O = Observation, AGM = A Gardening Metaphor Inventory, 3SP = Three-Student Project.

The principal in RSA was not asked about the evolution of the 3SP because this was the first year of implementation in her building. Therefore, that item was not part of the principal's interview protocol. All other question items from Table 3 were a part of the interview (See Table 4).

Table 4

Administrator Interview Protocol: Rising Star Academy

Item Number	Interview Item
1	How long have you been a building administrator at this building?
2	Describe the school's demographics (race, socioeconomic status, etc.).
3	At what point in your tenure here was the Three-Student Project implemented?
4	How did the Three-Student Project come to be implemented in your building?
5	Describe the school culture prior to implementation of the Three-Student Project. a. Student attendance b. Student behavior c. Student academic performance d. Student social behaviors e. Staff attitudes f. Staff attendance
6	Compare and contrast prior school culture to current school culture.
7	If there is a change, to what do you attribute the change in school culture?

Table 4 (continued)

Administrator Interview Protocol: Rising Star Academy

Item Number	Interview Item
8	Both currently and within the past, what are some examples of culturally responsive practices that you feel have been used in your school? a. Expectations? (High expectations – Failure is not an option – helping students to persist at a task) b. Empowerment? (Helping students to see that they can overcome obstacles – and show others who have done so) c. Connections to students' own racial/ethnic/religious culture? (Either through content, or context, students learn about their culture) d. Communications with parents? (Give examples [if any] of partnership with parents) e. Relationship building? (How do teachers [and the principal] get to know the students, [experiences] and their cultural background?
9	Describe the level of parental involvement in your school. Has there been a change in parental attitudes since the Three-Student Project was implemented?
10	What impact do you think the Three-Student Project has had on a. Academic performance? b. School culture? c. Parental involvement? d. Student teachers' preparation to become culturally responsive, and good teachers overall?
11	What advice would you give principals about the implementation of this project in their own buildings?

Teacher Interview Protocols

Teacher interview items from both HE and RSA were the same. Initially, RSA items were designed slightly differently to illicit what was challenging and rewarding about implementing the 3SP, and also did not include teacher demographic information. However, it was quickly learned that demographic information was needed to determine whether any of the

teachers had taught previously in another building that had implemented the 3SP. The building was closed down as part of the district's right-sizing plan in 2006. The researcher thought it was important to know who had prior experience with the project. Also, what was learned during some of the beginning interviews (and verified with subsequent interviews) was that the 3SP was not fully implemented in RSA. Therefore, the items asked of teachers in RSA were changed to reflect similar questions as the ones asked of teachers in HE in order to compare answers between a school that had been seasoned at implementing the 3SP, and a school that was in its first year of implementation. Table 5 illustrates the questions asked of teachers from both buildings.

Table 5

Teacher Interview Protocols: Hope Elementary and Rising Star Academy

Item Number	Question
1	What grade do you teach?
2	How long have you taught at this school?
3	How many years have you been a cooperating teacher in the Three-Student Project?
4	What is the academic level of the students in your class who are assigned to the Three-Student Project?
5	Do you have students in your classroom with lower academic performance than those in the Three-Student Project? If so, how many?

Table 5 (continued)

Teacher Interview Protocols: Hope Elementary and Rising Star Academy

Item Number	Question
6	Describe the behaviors of the students within the project. a. Academic (For example: on task, participatory, distracted, difficulty comprehending, retains information . . .) b. Social (For example: interacts well, displays difficult behavior, shares with others . . .)
7	Have you noticed any differences in the behaviors of the students in the Three-Student Project or their classmates toward them since the beginning of the year?
8	"Culturally relevant teaching requires that students maintain some cultural integrity as well as academic excellence" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 160). Culturally Responsive Teaching – Gay (2000) defined culturally responsive teaching as "using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them" (p. 29). What culturally responsive practices do you implement in your classroom?
9	School culture can be described as the values and beliefs of the students and employees and are expressed through their actions and interactions with others. School culture can impact student achievement. a. Before the Three-Student Project was implemented, how would you describe the culture of the school? b. After the Three-Student Project was implemented, how would you describe the culture of the school? c. How would you describe the school's level of achievement before the Three Student Project was implemented? d. How would you describe the school's level of achievement after the Three-Student Project was implemented?
10	What impact do you think the Three-Student Project has had on student teachers' preparation to implement culturally response practices?

Student Teacher Interview Protocols

Interviews of student teachers were divided into two groups. Individual interviews were conducted in HE with student teachers because the school is seasoned in implementation of the 3SP. Very specific information could be gathered from these participants about how the 3SP works and the project's effectiveness through the perceptions of a student teacher. Also, since HE was seasoned at implementation of the 3SP, the effectiveness on student teacher preparedness to be culturally responsive teachers, and good teachers overall could be linked to the 3SP.

RSA did not follow the 3SP with fidelity. Therefore, it was difficult to learn about the impact of the project on their preparedness to become culturally responsive teachers and good teachers overall. Because of the differences between the two groups of student teachers and the readiness of their buildings in following 3SP protocol with fidelity, the researcher followed a different interview protocol for these student teachers. Student teachers in RSA were invited to a focus group interview where questions were posed to the group.

Individual Interviews – Hope Elementary

Interview protocol for student teachers in HE were designed to learn about relationship-building, strategies used during intervention sessions with students, culturally responsive practices, and classroom culture. Student Teacher Interview Protocol for HE are reflected in Table 6.

Table 6

Student Teacher Interview Protocols: Hope Elementary

Item Number	Question
1	How many students do you see each week, and at what academic level do they perform?
2	Think back to your first sessions with your students. How would you describe your first sessions with your intervention students?
	a. Did you have difficulty getting the students to work with you?
3	How would you characterize your relationship with your intervention students?
4	What are some of the challenges in establishing a relationship with the intervention students and how did you overcome them?
5	What strategies are you using when you work with your three students:
	a. Reading:
	b. Mathematics:
6	What tools are you using to carry out those strategies?
7	How do you track and monitor student progress?
8	How do you know whether the strategies you used have been effective?
9	Gay (2000) defined culturally responsive teaching as "using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them" (p. 29). What kinds of culturally responsive practices have you observed within the students' classroom?
10	What kinds of academic behaviors are you observing with your three students within the classroom? (For example: on task, participatory, distracted, difficulty comprehending, retains information . . .)? Do these behaviors differ from the beginning of the year? If so, in what ways?
11	What kinds of social behaviors are you observing in the classroom? (For example: interacts well, displays difficult behavior, shares with others . . .)? Do these behaviors differ from the beginning of the year? If so, in what ways?
12	How would you describe the culture of the classroom?
	c. How would you describe the culture of the school in general?

Focus Group Interview Protocol – Rising Star Academy

Focus group interviews were conducted with student teachers at RSA. Question items were posed that related to the impact of the 3SP, parental involvement, school culture, and teacher preparedness to become culturally responsive practitioners and good teachers overall. Table 7 illustrates the focus group interview protocol used at RSA.

Table 7

Focus Group Interview Protocol

Item	Question
1	Compared to students who are not participants in the Three-Student Project, what were the academic behaviors of the students within the Three-Student Project before your intervention lessons began? (For example: on task, participatory, distracted, difficulty comprehending, retains information . . .) How would you describe their academic behaviors now?
2	Compared to students who are not participants in the Three-Student Project, what were the social behaviors of the students within the Three-Student Project before your intervention lessons began? (For example: interacts well, displays difficult behavior, shares with others . . .) How would you describe their social behaviors now?
3	If the participants in the Three-Student Project showed a change in their academic and social behaviors, to what do you attribute these changes?
4	In your opinion, has the Three-Student Project had an impact on the level of parental involvement of the students participating in the project? If so, in what ways?
5	In your opinion, how has the Three-Student Project had an impact on school culture?

Table 7 (continued)

Focus Group Interview Protocol

Item	Question
6	In what ways has your participation in the Three-Student Project impacted your preparedness to become a culturally responsive teacher?
7	In what ways has the Three-Student Project had an impact on your readiness to become a well-prepared classroom teacher overall?

Observation Protocol

Observations were conducted of student teachers in both HE and RSA in order to learn more about the processes involved in the 3SP, and to learn about whether culturally responsive practices were taking place during these sessions. Specifically, the researcher was interested in knowing whether culturally responsive practices occurred during 3SP sessions, and if so, what kinds of culturally responsive practices were occurring. Table 8 illustrates the behaviors the researcher looked for during observations.

Table 8

Student Teacher Observation Protocol

Item	Intervention Session Characteristics Observed
1	What does the intervention look like from beginning to end?
2	Did the student teacher use language that reflected high expectations of the student?
3	Did the student teacher encourage the student?
4	Did the student teacher use culturally responsive references to scaffold the student? • Did the student teacher make connections to current or historical figures who have overcome challenge, or any other cultural reference? • Did the student teacher help the students to see a connection between their hard work and higher achievement?
5	When the student accomplished the goal of the intervention session, how did the student teacher communicate that to the student?

Document Review

A description of the 3SP was taken from not only teachers, student teachers, and principals, but also documents retrieved from one of the site-liaisons, and a folder given to the researcher. Only documents given to the researcher about the 3SP that were absent of any student data were reviewed for this study. A summary presentation by student teachers in HE to their building principal, site liaison, and university partnership representatives helped paint a more complete picture of the 3SP. Analysis of these documents and the summary presentation are presented in the analysis portion of this dissertation.

Description of the Three-Student Project

This study sought to understand the impact of the 3SP on student achievement and student teachers' preparedness to become culturally responsive practitioners. Therefore, it is necessary to construct a clear picture of the 3SP, its goals, processes, and outcomes. In order to describe this project, analyses of guiding documents given to the student teachers in September by the site/university partnership as well as interview data are necessary.

According to the guiding documents, the 3SP objective is to "provide individual attention to students performing at a basic level in order to improve academic achievement" (see Appendix A). Steps involved include analyzing test data such as the Pennsylvania State System of Assessment (PSSA), Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) assessments, Mathematics Unit Assessments (MUAs), and Curriculum Based Assessments (CBAs) to identify students who are performing at a basic or below basic proficiency level in reading and mathematics. Together with the teachers, student teachers use baseline data to choose three students, one of whom must be in the learning support program. Once students are identified, the student teachers develop a plan of action (see Appendix A) for supporting these students. This includes making a schedule (including back-up times to lessen the possibility that students miss sessions) (see Appendix A), collecting baseline data (see Appendix A), identifying skills in need of support based on the baseline data, prioritizing those skills, followed by researching and developing strategies to address each skill in need of support. Once this plan is in place, the student teachers begin implementing the 3SP. This involves the student teacher meeting with the identified students four or more times a week during 15-minute sessions, for a total of at least one hour per week. Reading and Mathematics each make up two of the sessions. For both reading and mathematics, the student is given support on the specific skills in need, as well as in

the area of fluency. On a weekly basis, student progress is monitored and recorded. This involves review of weekly test scores, curriculum-based assessments, DIBELS, and weekly mathematics basic facts timed tests. Finally, student teachers are held accountable through submission of weekly logs (see Appendix A), attendance at weekly meetings, and through principal observations. At the end of the school year, a final student summary is submitted and presented to site and university staff (see Appendix A).

In addition to this plan of action, student teachers are responsible for making connections with parents at home. They are to send monthly parent letters that detail the reading and mathematics plans of action, share academic progress, report on student accountability such as homework, classwork, and book reports, and share any attendance or behavior concerns.

The guiding documents state that benefits to the participating students are that: 1) they receive focused individualized academic instruction, 2) the project increases their classroom participation, 3) they build confidence in school and life, 4) they receive one-on-one positive attention and persistent motivation, and 5) they develop student-teacher relationships (see Appendix A). Stated benefits to the student teacher include receiving double the classroom experience, gaining experience analyzing data to drive instruction, and gaining experience with differentiation of instruction, in addition to working with experienced, successful teachers and taking part in all classroom and school activities.

According to the guiding documents, the school is also a benefactor of this partnership. Student-teacher ratios are smaller, there is an increase in class and school academic performance, and there is enhanced school-to-home communication (See Appendix B).

Analysis

Analysis of the data follows a QUAL-quan approach. According to Gay and Airasian (2003), a QUAL-quan method of analysis is one where qualitative data are analyzed first and quantitative data are analyzed last, however both are reported together in the discussion. This approach was taken because the qualitative data are the focus of this study and the quantitative data are complementary to the qualitative data. Figure A illustrates the organization of data analysis for this study.

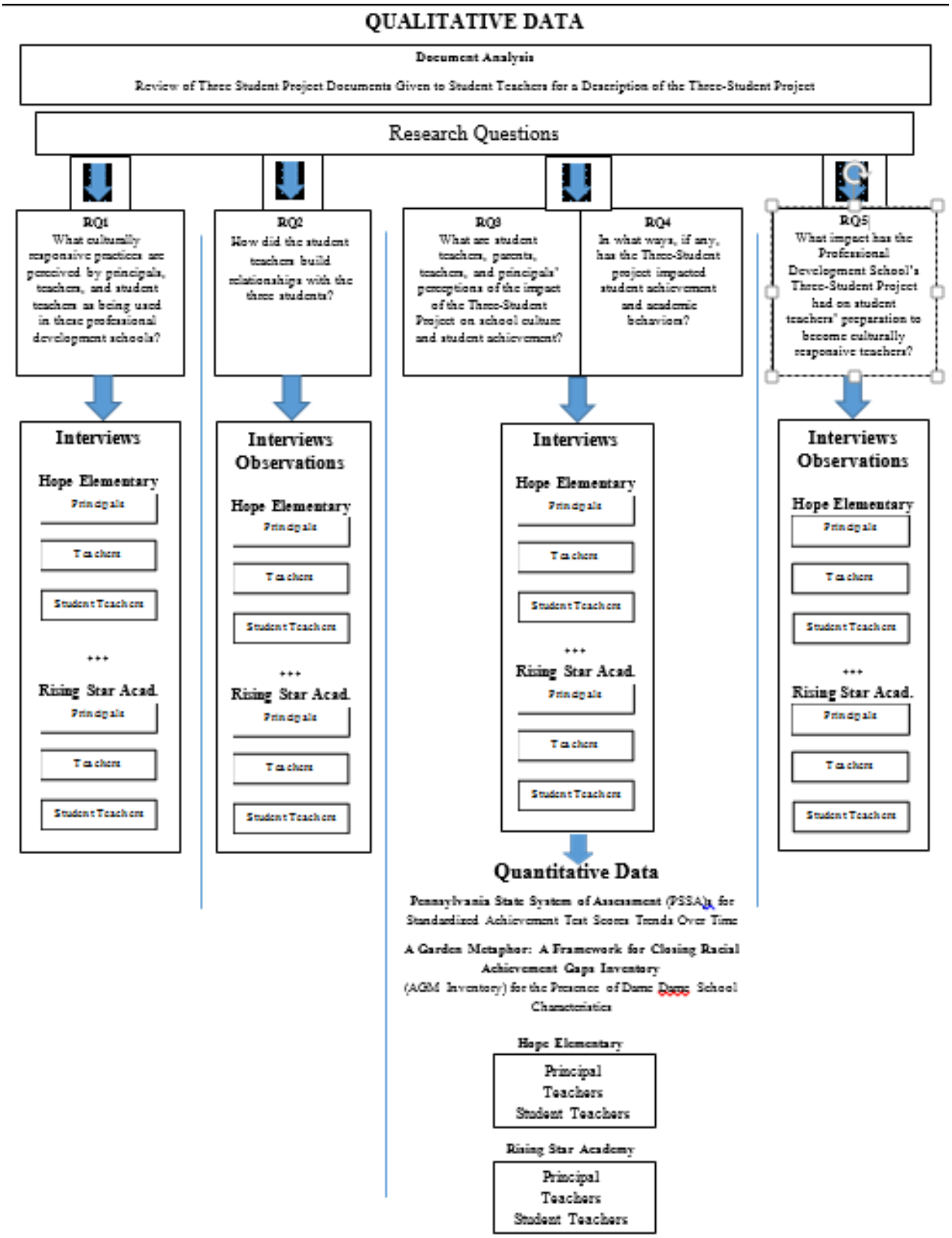

Figure 1. Research data analysis graph.

Organization of the analyses is structured according to research question. For each research question, each building will be reported separately. Rationale for reporting each building separately is because it was found that RSA participants were not following protocol for the 3SP with fidelity. Because of their level of implementation, as reported by participants at RSA, there was not enough information available to determine whether the 3SP was truly making an impact on student achievement, school culture, or student teachers' preparation to become culturally responsive teachers. At the time of this study, RSA had only been implementing the 3SP for less than a year. During this time, the researcher learned that student teachers had not been meeting with students regularly, nor had they communicated with parents how their children in the 3SP were doing, which is an important part of the 3SP. Additionally, standardized achievement test data had not been released by the state for the PSSA scores yet for the year of implementation. Therefore, analyzing and reporting the two buildings separately is necessary to determine whether the project has made an impact on student achievement and teacher preparedness for culturally responsive teaching within HE who has been following the 3SP with fidelity. It is important to note also that analysis of RSA is based on perceptions of participants, based on the level of implementation of the 3SP.

Research Question 1

What culturally responsive practices are perceived by principals, teachers, and student teachers as being used in these professional development schools?

Data collected which answer RQ1 come from principal, teacher, and student teacher interviews from both HE and RSA, as well as from the student teacher focus group interview at RSA. Data is presented first for HE, and then for RSA. Through data analysis, culturally responsive teaching practices emerged and were identified. Through data reduction, were broken

down into categories. Categories included: Assessments, cultural references, curriculum and instruction, data-driven decision-making, discipline, empowerment, expectations, engagement, environmental, preparation for instruction, historical struggle, learning of African-Americans, learning style, individual beliefs, and relationship-building. In some instances, data from one building contributed more to a category than the other building. However, data from both sites were used to create category names. Further data reduction uncovered these themes: Inclusion, Equitable Monitoring, Purposeful Instruction, Knowledge of Student, and Preparation (see Table 9).

Table 9

Culturally Responsive Practices, Emerging Themes

Inclusion	Equality Monitoring	Purposeful Instruction	Knowledge of Student	Preparation
Assessments Cultural References Curriculum/ Instruction Historical Struggle Learning of African-American Figures	Data-Driven Decision Making Discipline	Empowering Transformative Validating Comprehensive Multidimensional Emancipatory	Engagement Environmental Learning Style Relationship Building	Preparation for Teaching AA Children

The following describes the aforementioned themes and their associated categories of culturally responsive practices for HE.

Culturally Responsive Practices Perceived as Used at Hope Elementary

Inclusion

Knowledge of students' cultural background and experiences were used in curriculum, instruction, and assessment decisions. These decisions included the learning of African-Americans and the accomplishments they have made to the country's history. Categories that were uncovered and through analysis lead the researcher to the theme of Inclusion were cultural references, curriculum or instructional decisions, assessments, learning of African-American figures, and the historical struggle of African-Americans. A description of findings follows.

Cultural References and Curriculum/Instruction

References to students' cultural background were a way of including students and their backgrounds in learning processes. Curriculum and instructional decisions were made specifically to ensure inclusionary practices. For example, at the administrative level, Principal Hooper asked that all of his teachers participate in a building-wide Jeopardy game in which students would be taught about a famous African-American that has made a historical impact on society. Principal Hooper explained:

> As we move to a part whereas on every Friday . . . the teachers have chosen a person of African-American descent and an event of African-American descent, and they have to . . . study that person and talk about that person during class. And I – the person is different from kindergarten all the way up to fifth grade. And so the people in kindergarten on the first Friday are talking about their particular person, and then there's a Jeopardy game whereas even the kindergarten students are learning about the person in fifth grade. But you're to learn deeply about the one person and event, in your grade level and try to include that throughout your lesson on every Friday. And at the mid-year

> and at the end of the year the teachers have like – we call it Jeopardy – game. We made of all the people that we were studying and they're learn – they're seeing how well they know this person; it'll be a person from every grade level that will be African-American Jeopardy game winner. So I think it is definitely involved.

The interview with Principal Hooper also uncovered that he felt that it was important to include other cultures and backgrounds while teaching, and shared his perception of how well teachers were following through with his wish to see it done. He stated:

> When we got in to the teaching part, including [students' culture], we said it is extremely easy to include African-American culture in science and social studies. There is no excuse no matter what the – no matter what you're studying at that time, there is no excuse not to include people of color. Not just African-Americans, but people of color in your studies. So I think – I know that the teachers have got a lot better at that.

He also felt strongly about not allowing a single cultural reference (for example, a reference to an African-American) to be left in the moment in which it was taught, but rather, to have that reference brought into other lessons as well. He said:

> You want to include that person as much as – if you just let it stand just during that one study time, you're really not giving it the credence that it needs. That can be included a lot more. And I think the teachers are doing more of that. Again there's definitely a lot – there's more room for improvement, but we're way beyond where we used to be.

During teacher interviews at HE, teachers shared information about their own teaching, and that of their student teachers, where they used cultural references in their classrooms. Barbara shared that during one lesson, she referred back to a previous lesson on Freedom Corner, which was where people gathered for Peace March walks. She shared that her students made the connection

between the previous learning, and current learning through the cultural reference. Holly shared that she, too, made cultural references. She stated, "I always try to pull in literature that represents the ethnicities in my classroom." When probed for an example, she shared this:

> Every Friday we've been talking about a famous African-American and pulling that into the learning and then I've been trying to relate it to their experiences by making them either write about something, or talk about it. And, a lot of the times the kids are making connections with basically their backgrounds and the things that we've been introducing in our studies . . . specifically on Fridays, and also with the literature.

Holly also gave a couple names of African-American authors that her class studied: Eloise Greenfield, and Nikki Giovanni. Another teacher, Nicole, spoke of also including authors and illustrators who were African-American and of ensuring that students understood the purpose of her including them in instruction. So, Holly had made cultural references by incorporating African-American literature and authors, and previous and current lessons were tied together through these references.

The examples previously given were related to specific African-American people or historical events. However, some teachers gave scenarios involving aspects of culture not related to one's race or ethnicity, but rather, where they lived. One teacher gave some examples of the use of the students' home and community environment in making instructional decisions. She was explaining that there were times when concepts were mentioned in the district resources, such as the reading basal, that were not easily relatable to her students. Some of these examples were reading passages about farming, or mathematics problems involving counting sheep. Here was how she handled the challenge of getting over a culturally-specific instructional barrier:

> Not that they don't know what a sheep is, but that they would be more engaged and more willing to be involved and participate if it is something that is relevant to them. So we talk about things that they . . . even elapsed time . . . . I'm trying to think about what the book told us to do, and I was like "no, no, no." We're going to do two-hour delays, we're going to be doing bus schedules, a lot of them ride the bus . . . I would never have known what the bus schedule was or how to ride the bus or anything else. But they all are very aware of how bus schedules work and PAT bus and all that, so bringing those in definitely is not only my duty, but it actually helps them to be more engaged in the classroom.

Yolanda also used students' home and community environment in instructional decisions as well. She reported that while teaching the solar system, she recognized that it was a concept involving unimaginable distance between objects. Her response was that she tried to first get the students to understand areas around where they lived, neighborhoods and streets, and then moved outward from there. She felt that this was "taking from what they know, what they're familiar with and then going from there and build[ing] out." Yolanda also gave an example her student teacher used in class. The example used students' experiences within the school to anchor her approach. Here is her example:

> One of the student teachers did this particular lesson. They were talking about rights . . . and just how the civil war [was] people within a state fighting one another. We were all part of the United States but we had that civil war. That's what it was. She broke it down to if you're having a fight with someone in your class or if all of room 210 was having a fight with 207 and now you're on different sides.

One student teacher shared her experience with cultural references, which was a part of the greater building-wide Jeopardy activity. She said that she did a lesson on people influential in Black History in preparation for the Jeopardy game. Asked about other examples, she felt that students' basals had stories in them, but noted that the stories were not reflective of students' cultures all of the time, yet still felt that the basal was multicultural.

Many of the teachers participating in this study gave lots of examples of cultural references they have used, or in the last case a student teacher used, while instructing their students. Several examples were related to incorporating literature by African-American authors and illustrators, or famous African-Americans, and one was a reference to a historical event. Other examples were not directly related to students' race or ethnicity, but rather the culture of where they live or attend school. Considering the expectation of the principal which was shared at the beginning of this section on cultural references, and considering the examples teachers shared about how they incorporated cultural references throughout their teaching, it validates that this is not just a building level expectation, but also one in which is implemented by the teachers.

Assessments

In actuality, the previous examples were of curriculum and instructional decisions. But here is one teacher's examples of how culturally responsive practices tied into assessment at HE. Ella, a site liaison in her building, gave examples including students writing from their own experiences, teachers giving problem-solving problems which are written using African-American facts, and she stated that all grade levels participated in an African-American Jeopardy game. Information given by this site-liaison teacher about the Jeopardy game was shared earlier in this chapter as reported by the principal and other teachers. Confirmed again is an example a student teacher named Kristie gave, who shared this:

> For their reading assessment, they took what they learned from [the Jeopardy game] and they wrote sentences themselves. So they would obviously sound out what they heard because it was a little difficult for them to write the sentences specifically. But I would say it, and then they would just sound out each word, and that was based off what they learned [from the famous African-Americans and Jeopardy] also and they remembered it. It was awesome; so they were all . . . their assessment grades were all pretty well.

Another student teacher, Kelsey, felt that the students were excited and engaged during the Jeopardy game. She said, "They literally . . . it was close. All the classes were racing each other, and I think it came down to the tiebreaker. They were all . . . they all knew it. I don't know it just . . . sponges." So, this student teacher noted that not only was the learning of African-Americans assessed through the Jeopardy game, but that the students were able to remember what they learned, like "sponges." The next section further details how HE teachers engaged students by having them learn about people with similar cultural backgrounds to their own.

Learning of African-American Figures

Shared earlier in this chapter was the expectation by the building principal at HE of teachers to teach about a famous African-American from the beginning of the year until the culminating building-wide activity, Jeopardy. This building-wide expectation is confirmed through the interviews of teachers and student teachers. Teachers were asked to give examples, if any, of culturally responsive practices in their own instruction. What follows are examples they gave. First, Barbara shared about the teaching of famous African-Americans. As a kindergarten teacher, she shared the challenge of adapting it for her students, and how it was overcome. Here is her story:

> I don't know if [anyone] told you anything about this . . . that we all are teaching the children about famous African-Americans and we're trying to even pull in more Pittsburgh people like August Wilson, and people like Madame C.J. Walker. And having the kids learn facts about them. And now, February is Famous African-American Month so we're actually going to have a jeopardy game that is grade-level wise. Like you know, you can't have a kindergartener up against a fifth grader. But the Kindergarteners, we had sat down, cause, this is the first year we've done this. So, we were like "How are we going to do this for kindergarten?" cause this is like almost impossible. So what we did was, we, the teachers last year came up with all the people and came up with all the facts. So we compiled the jeopardy game together, and then you had to figure out how it's going to look at each level. So we decided in kindergarten that we were going to make pictures of every single person, whether it's Martin Luther King, Obama, whatever, and we just took and made little fact cards on the back of our pictures. So, throughout the year, during social studies, or anytime we had any extra break in the day, we just start flashing these pictures out there and then go on over the facts, and stuff like that. So we'd incorporate it in our writing as well. You know, um, Martin Luther King's birthday, you know, Presidents, Election Day, you know, anytime that we can pull it in there. So, now that February is coming up, it's time for the big Jeopardy game . . . .

Barbara's example of how she incorporated culturally responsive practices while teaching was specific to the learning of African-American people and was implemented because of the expectation of the principal. Her example shared not only the expectation, but the challenge of adapting to a building-wide expectation on a kindergarten level, and how she overcame that challenge. Other teachers also reported that they too have been teaching about famous African-

American figures. Holly said, ". . . every Friday we've been talking about a famous African-American and pulling that into the learning." Madison, HE's site liaison who is also a classroom teacher elaborated on this expectation, saying "My principal is very adamant about non-sports related achievements of African-Americans." She then goes on to share her example, which is included in its entirety here:

> I teach math, science, social studies, so, every month we have to do a problem solving. And, it's more open ended, it's all open ended to prepare the students of thinking through a process not having answer choices, just thinking what the problem is asking and writing out a lengthy definition, explanation, and solving it. So, every month, I attempt to bring that back to something that's culturally relevant to them. This past month we talked about the inventor of the super soaker. His name is Lonnie Johnson. And they were very interested to know that, you know, that he is very successful. That was one of his 40 or 400 or whatever the number was, inventions. But that he, you know, something, not only is he an African-American who's a successful inventor but something that they think is the coolest thing ever, like super soakers, he invented a super soaker? And so we talked about how he was curious and how when something went wrong, he was actually fixing an air conditioner, a heating unit, and a hose blew off, and caused this great burst of steam, and he stooped and thought, kids would love if that amount of pressure could come out of a toy. And that is where it all began. And so, we started exploring, "what things do you like to play with? What things, you know, where do you think that idea might have come from? How could you come up with an idea?" So, taking things that just as kids they enjoy, let alone African-American kids that think that they might not be

> able to do anything or create anything new, and saying look how this came about just out of an idea!

Her example illustrates how culturally responsive instruction was embodied in the learning of an African-American, but was done in the content area of science, as well as mathematics. Yolanda also shared about contributions in her science class. She said,

> The kids in my science class had to research African-American inventors. So some people researched Garrett Morgan, Madam CJ Walker, Lonnie Johnson and found out some of the things they invented that we use every day that they had no idea. And then with [Madam CJ Walker], and I just learned this, that she actually had a beauty salon here in Pittsburgh, so when they patented that – and I didn't know that – and when we talked about that, we were excited about that because they had no idea. A lot of them had heard about Madam CJ Walker because of the hair products and the straightening, but didn't know she had connections to Pittsburgh.

Nicole's interview confirmed the principal's expectation and shared her example of culturally responsive practices, which also involves the Jeopardy game, as did the second site liaison, Ella. Nicole shared that she, too, had her students learn about African-Americans and then play the Jeopardy game. Her example involved reading stories about famous African-Americans. Including African-Americans in instructional content is one way to include students' backgrounds in the learning context. Including actual events which tell about the history of African-Americans, and the struggle for freedom and equality is another. Included next is an example given about how teachers included learning of the historical struggle of African-Americans.

Historical Struggle

Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) includes cultural references throughout the instructional process. These references can be both of cultural figures, (current and historical), and also about the historical struggle of African-Americans (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Taylor, in progress). One specific example that addressed the historical struggle was from a teacher at HE. Barbara shared that during one lesson, she referred to a previous lesson on Freedom Corner, which was where people gathered for Peace March walks. She shared that her students made the connection between the previous learning and current learning through the cultural reference. Another example, this one given by a student teacher named Athena, involved the Emancipation Proclamation. Athena said, "They . . . our kids literally memorized I'd say . . . they got 100% on the . . . and these were hard, things that I didn't know. Emancipation Proclamation, I knew that . . . but these kids can't even pronounce . . . and they memorized the Emancipation Proclamation! The year, the name of everything, so much stuff it was awesome." Through these examples, teachers have brought in events that were meaningful and relevant to their students, as well as gave validation to students of the role people who shared their culture played in the history of the United States.

Equality Monitoring

The next theme, Equality Monitoring, includes examples of data-driven decision making, which involves the use of student assessments in making instructional decisions which affect students. Principal Hooper shared this practice:

> We sit down at the beginning of every year, and we have . . . a certain level that we want our students to have. And that's not just . . . at the end of the year. We have monthly data meetings to see – are we there yet? And every year – I'm sorry – in every month we

> look at that – how close are we to our goal? And if we're not there – is this too rigorous? Is it rigorous enough?

His example here showed that his teachers were very aware of assessment data which was reviewed as a team monthly. He continued, saying:

> Not once have we ever lowered our beginning of the year expectations because of where they are. We look back and say, "What have we not done to get them to the goal?" Cause we looked at this in the beginning of the year, and that was our expectation. We're not gonna lower our expectations. We're just gonna have to get better with our teaching.

This showed high expectations, which were needed for equality monitoring. Principal Hooper also shared that they do not rely on PSSA data alone. He said "The PSSA is not the one determinant of whether or not our students know it or don't know it. It is a bar against all the other school districts, but it is not the one and only measure that our students need to have." During the team meeting at the end of the school year, other classroom level and grade level data were presented which confirmed that HE does not just focus on standardized test scores. Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy, or DIBELS, scores were presented along with other benchmark data. Principal Hooper said during his interview, "So the teachers sort of see . . . a locust of control within themselves. They don't make excuses for why the kids aren't doing well. If they're not where they need to [be], then what can I do differently?"

The site liaison, Ella, shared that student assessments help to provide small group and individualized instruction. Equality monitoring helped the students to get what they needed. Equality monitoring also means looking at discipline practices that ensure that students from cultures different from the mainstream are not being disciplined disproportionately to their White counterparts. The next section sheds light on HE's discipline practices.

Discipline Practices

Discipline practices involve a variety of aspects, from classroom level management techniques to building-wide consequences such as suspensions. Suspensions out of class and school removed students from their classrooms where instruction is taking place. In Pennsylvania, African-American students are suspended at a rate more than four times higher than White students (ACLU, 2013). At HE, Principal Hooper shared:

> We've only suspended . . . last year six students total. This year I think we've only suspended five students total. So I really don't have a high suspension rate, and usually that suspension really doesn't really fall towards the Three Student Project students. Because they're able to participate more at a higher level, they're seeing the benefit of working with that one – with that – you know, with the student teacher from [the partnering university]. They're seeing the benefit from that, and they are doing better in class because of that.

Equality monitoring involved data-driven instructional decisions that aimed to have high expectations of African-Americans, and embodied the belief that African-Americans could learn at the higher levels of their mainstream counterparts. This monitoring helped to ensure that the students at HE were receiving high-quality educational services by the principal, teachers, and student teachers. Discipline practices helped to ensure that students who might otherwise be suspended, were present in school and learning. According to Principal Hooper, at the time of the interview, only five suspensions had occurred, and the previous year, only six students were suspended.

Purposeful Instruction

As mentioned previously in this chapter, culturally responsive teaching is not simply inclusion, but rather instruction with a purpose. In finding instructional practices at HE that were empowering, validating, emancipating, and evidenced high expectations of students, the next theme which emerged was Purposeful Instruction. Geneva Gay (2000) characterized CRT as validating, comprehensive, multidimensional, empowering, transformative, and emancipatory. One who is looking to ensure this kind of teaching, is teaching with a purpose. This purpose is driven by underlying expectations that students are capable of performing at high levels and at levels equitable to others; in other words, not underperforming. Principal Hooper spoke of having high expectations which meant that teachers maintained high levels of instruction because they believed the students could perform. He stated, "The high expectations are definitely there. I think that's the teachers doing an excellent job with having rigorous classroom instructions for the students in expecting all to be there no matter what their level . . . or achievement is." If teachers believe students can succeed at high levels, they will instruct students at high levels. As stated previously in the Assessment section of culturally responsive practices uncovered at HE, Principal Hooper pointed out that at the beginning of each year, teachers aim for where they want students to be, and that they do not lower expectations for students just because of where they are at the start of the year. Hooper and the teachers look to within. Principal Hooper said, "What have we not done to get them to the goal? Cause we looked at this in the beginning of the year, and that was our expectations. We're not gonna lower our expectations. We're just gonna have to get better with our teaching." Hooper stated that these goals were revisited throughout the year with the outlook that they will meet their goal by the end of the year.

Holding high expectations is a prerequisite for teaching in a manner that helps students live up to one's expectations. Earlier examples were given of teachers referring to historical struggles, or African-Americans who have overcome a challenge, or African-Americans who were inventors and scientists. These examples were not only validating to African-American students, but empowered them that they, too, can be like these examples which counter the negative images portrayed often in media and news sources. When teachers take the stance that no matter where students are academically at the start of a school year, they will hold high expectations and deliver rigorous instructional opportunities to students, they are teaching with a purpose, and that purpose is to help these students achieve at high levels, despite expectations often encountered by students of color elsewhere. This purposeful teaching was complimented with Knowledge of Student, which is the next theme that emerged.

Knowledge of Student

Use of knowledge of student readiness levels, as well as student cultural backgrounds helped teachers to plan high engagement opportunities, environmental visuals which reflect student culture, and activities based on students' learning styles. Building relationships with students was important in gaining knowledge of students. Each of these categories will be enumerated below.

Engagement

Learning that was meaningful and relevant to students' home lives and cultural background helped to keep students engaged in the learning process. Examples include many previously stated situations, such as the teaching of stories written by African-American authors, teaching of African-American inventors, such as the inventor of the Super Soaker, Lonnie Johnson, and the inventor of black hair care products, Madam C. J. Walker. Not only was the

example of Lonnie Johnson exciting to kids because of the toy he created, but he was also of the same racial background as the students at HE.

Environmental

Environmental visuals, such as students' evidence of learning of African-American people and history were shared by multiple teachers and student teachers in their examples of learning through the Jeopardy game, and earlier preparations for the game. Ella stated, "Teachers are required to have representations of African-Americans around their classrooms. Student work is displayed in the classrooms and hallways," and that "Students write about their own experiences." A student teacher, Jessica, spoke of using the nature that surrounded the students as a way to bring what they knew and saw into the classroom. She said, "Our topic last week in reading was birds so we're like 'what birds do we see around our neighborhood?' We try to make it relate to their lives as much as we can."

Learning Style

Ella, one of the site liaisons, shared ways student learning was individualized, and modernized to match today's digital learners.

> Computer programs such as First in Math©, Compass Learning©, and Study Island© allow students to work on content on their level and at their own pace. Students and teachers use technology such as smart boards, computers, digital presenters, and iPads to access and interact with educational content.

Principal Hooper, as mentioned earlier, spoke of how data teams met monthly to get to know student progress, and how this progress was presented at the end of the year, by student teachers to the school/university partnership. Teachers, who understood the cultural background of their students knew to use meaningful and relevant examples throughout instruction, such as the

example given earlier in this chapter of the teacher who knew that bus schedules and school delays were a more meaningful way to teach elapsed time. Another teacher, who understood ethnic hair, which was a common physical characteristic of students within HE, presented Madam C. J. Walker as an inventor of black hair care products, some of which are still used in today's modern black hair care products. Knowledge of students meant that teachers and student teachers were familiar with students, not just in the academic sense of following student progress on benchmark assessments and standardized tests, but also getting to know who the students were holistically, which included knowing their cultural backgrounds and relying on that knowledge to enhance the instructional decision-making process.

Relationship Building

This characteristic emerged more in the data analysis for RQ2 which is specific to how student teachers built relationships with their students. Interview questions related to relationship building were only asked of student teachers about their students in the 3SP. Although this facet of the study is discussed under RQ2 in this chapter, it is important to note it here as a characteristic of the larger theme of Knowledge of the Student and as a facet of culturally responsive practices. To restate what will be discussed later in this chapter, getting to know students both individually, and as a student group with shared experiences, backgrounds, and interests, is key. Principal Hooper at HE was explicit about his expectation that "When a student walks in the classroom they should feel as though they're in a classroom that respects their culture and the classroom that looks like the people in the classroom." In order to help students feel connected to the classroom, those who educate them must know, not just about their academic levels, but also about aspects of their culture in order to connect learning to their background experiences. In the later section of this chapter on Relationship Building, accounts

from student teachers of how they built relationships with the students in the 3SP are presented. Again, it is mentioned here in order to underscore its relationship to the theme Knowledge of Student.

Culturally Responsive Practices Perceived as Used at Rising Star Academy

While HE interviews of teachers, student teachers, and the principal uncovered culturally responsive practices which were used in the environmental context of the 3SP, and therefore, experienced by student teachers as part of their internships at HE, and even used by student teachers in their instructional processes, the same was true at RSA, with similar outcomes. But what follows is a description of culturally responsive practices at RSA, accompanied by somewhat dissimilar reported beliefs in its use.

RSA Principal Shannon, when asked about culturally responsive practices (CRPs) within her building, was not confident about the use of CRPs among her teachers. She stated, "I don't feel systematically we're doing a good job on culturally responsive practices." Principal Shannon felt that her building needed to focus more on teaching behaviors than academics at first. So, the insight she shared, at first, came from culturally responsive practices through the lens of teaching behaviors, instead of teaching content. She shared this:

"We're doing more, I think, behaviorally than we are academically when it comes to culturally responsiveness." Regarding a systemic social behavior system Principal Shannon instituted at RSA, she says, "The expectations are high — we do have high expectations and our leveling system shows it, and we try to do it more community than competitive, which is important, like, we're all responsible for each other and it's not like penalized." Here, Principal Shannon was referring to a leveling system that helped manage student social behaviors. She explained that interventions were structured in tiers. Students received Tier One, Tier Two, and Tier Three

interventions much in the same way they might for reading instruction. Again, this is included here to highlight and emphasize the amount of focus dedicated to teaching appropriate behaviors. The following excerpt explains her leveling system:

> We have a leveling system school-wide that kindergarten just started it in February, because the kindergarteners it's a little harder. So all kids come in as a neutral. You're either on your way up to go to a Positive, and after a Positive, you become a — you have to pledge — you become a Lion, and then after Lion — we don't have any Executives yet. We have a lot of pledges to get to Lions, but that's another thing. It takes a couple years before you get the different levels, or you drop down to the Concerns. Concerns would be your Tier Two kids. So do we have mental health in place? . . . we have family links, we have girls group, boys group, we have one-on-one mentors, so we try to figure out what can we do for those kids that are concerns, and when we talk about them as a school. So third through fifth grade, we have an assembly every Thurs . . . but the concern is, "Why are you a concern?" What are we doing — what can we do — like, we'll say to the positives, "Positives, what can we do to get these Concerns back up? We don't want anyone being a Concern." So sometimes they get a peer mentor as well, and it's explaining to get to the kids to improve their behavior from each other. The leveling system is all about peer redirections, peers helping each other, and the kids have a rubric — in grades three to five they have a rubric, so they know where they are on their behavior, on their leveling system, based on their behavior. So that's our — that's how we manage Tier One, Tier Two, Tier Three. Tier Three students end up in the academy with, and then we — again,

> make sure, do we have — what do we have in place for these students because we try to be as preventative as possible of someone getting any designation. Especially African-American males. So we figure if we have strong behavior things in place, that we'll stop referring so many kids to the ES classroom . . . .

Principal Shannon shared that it took the whole first year of her being at the school to help get student behaviors back on track, and that they were still in the process of doing it during the year of the study. By mid-year, they were finally able to focus on student learning of academic content, rather than behaviors. She said:

> I have teachers coming out and saying, "This is the first year I've been able to focus on academics." Like they used to be good teachers because they could manage their classroom. Well now that behavior's not an issue, they're realizing they're not equipped to get to the academics. So that's where — that's why I feel like the high expectations academically aren't there in all our classes yet, 'cause I think people were so caught up in the behaviors for so long that they're not there — no that's all right — they're not there with the academics.

Principal Shannon's comments about behavior and her leveling system are included because it was part of her response to questions about culturally responsive practices within her building. Her comments illustrate her perception that teaching appropriate behaviors, which was her focus at the time, were perceived by her to be a culturally responsive practice.

Throughout further investigation through interviews with teachers and the student teacher focus group interview, it was uncovered that participants in the 3SP did implement culturally responsive teaching practices within their classrooms, though perhaps not to the extent that teachers at HE implemented these practices. As a part of data analysis and further data

reduction, data uncovered in the interviews at RSA helped contribute to the categories and themes of culturally responsive practices implemented in these professional development schools. What follows is a description, according to participant interviews, of culturally responsive practices implemented at RSA.

Inclusion

As stated previously, the theme of inclusion emerged upon finding examples of practices in place that categorically meant that students' cultures and experiences were represented in the curriculum and instructional decisions of their teachers. Knowledge of students' cultural background and experiences were used in curriculum, instruction, and assessment decisions. These decisions included the learning of African-Americans and the accomplishments they have made to our country's history. Categories that were uncovered, and through analysis lead the researcher to the theme of Inclusion were cultural references, curriculum or instructional decisions, assessments, learning of African-American figures, and the historical struggle of African-Americans. A description of findings from RSA interviews follow.

Cultural References and Curriculum or Instructional Decisions

Principal Shannon, when asked about cultural references, curriculum and instructional decisions, stated, "Our texts are district, but teachers are getting better at supplementing and bringing [resources] — that's an area that we are getting [better at]." Principal Shannon felt that some teachers were better at it than others. "I have some teachers that are phenomenal at it." She states that the district materials have not always been at the level they are now.

> But it's, the district curriculum is growing as well . . . I don't think we're perfect yet, but I do think the district has grown since I've been in the district, has grown a ton in making

> sure there's more culturally relevant materials. Are we there yet as a school, I mean, as a district? No, but they've definitely come a long way.

Principal Shannon also shared that prior to her arrival at RSA, she had a roundtable session with her African-American students who:

> Talk[ed] about how it fe[lt] to be a student and always only hear about slavery and never hearing about — and the kids, it wasn't me talking, it was the students talking — so it was so powerful, and I was happy that the central office at least listened. And then they started making the changes they've been making, so it's been good.

So, while culturally responsive teaching through inclusion of content and cultural references has not been in the center of Principal Shannon's radar at RSA, it was certainly on the peripheral, and she was waiting to be able to turn her attention to it. She did, however, acknowledge that some teachers were phenomenal at implementing culturally responsive practices.

Further investigation of culturally responsive practices through teachers' lenses was necessary to get a more defined picture. Therefore, as part of the interview process, teachers at RSA were asked about their culturally responsive practices within the classroom. Uncovered were in fact, many culturally responsive practices, which will be reviewed next.

Lucy, a teacher at RSA, asserted that she tried to bring into her lessons, content about African-American figures. She said:

> I try not to do just the February thing, you know it is something that we do all year long. They bring books in, they talk about people . . . I try to bring in people like Coretta Scott King. We had readers come in and [ask] you know, "Who is Martin Luther King?" and [the students] didn't have a clue.

Toby, an African-American male teacher at RSA, shared "We could sprinkle in those African-American names in story problems. I do a little bit of that. We could read books that have African-American images in them. I do do that consciously." Another teacher, Ham, said that his way of making his teaching culturally relevant was making learning interesting by having students graph a survey of their favorite artists. He continued, saying, "So they had a couple of rappers, a couple of singers, and they surveyed the fourth and fifth grade class. So, it made it more relevant for them because they know who 2-Chainz is . . . ." Another example Toby gave was when teaching expanded form. He shared:

> I know that Pittsburgh is like huge on the Steelers. They love the Pittsburgh Steelers. So that was the time when we were looking at using numbers in expanded form, just taking the individual players – the most popular players – and giving them their salary for playing. It makes it like some millions and I said that's perfect for the numbers they need to expand, so they have to expand that number. So who is it, like Troy, Hines Ward, he makes that much money? Let's expand it. Like just something that they could relate to. So we did that.

Toby's example highlighted references to students' cultural backgrounds while teaching expanded form, and Ham's example highlighted student interest in artists who shared their same cultural backgrounds. Lucy's example was about referencing African-American historical figures.

Abby gave some examples of inclusionary practices of teaching reading skills through culturally relevant materials. Here is her story:

> We have our McMillan, we have our Pathway and our curriculum that we are to use, but I've been pulling books that they can relate to like their first book. These are books that I

read to them, but every skill that we're covering, we do it through that book because they're so into the books. So the first one was "Justin and the Best Biscuits in the World." We were able to – we compared what his thoughts were on housework at the beginning to the end, so we did a compare and contrast there. We did the beginning, the middle and we did plot setting. We did it through that book and then we read Sugar Plum Ballerinas and we talked about – we did the same types of things with that. We were talking about inferencing, so we pulled in inferencing. So trying to find books that are culturally relative to them and pulling in those skills so when we get the reader out they're kind of like ugh, but when we're having a book discussion and talking about it then, you can see the difference. So that's one of the things that I've been doing. I think that some things just – I don't know if this is the right things to say or not. I think there are some things that are culturally relative because you share the same culture. So some things you may do in the classroom that you don't consider, it's just natural.

Michelle is the school/university's partnership's site liaison at RSA. When asked about culturally responsive practices that she perceived as being used at RSA, she shared:

I think it varies from classroom to classroom, definitely. I don't think that we do enough of it [culturally responsive teaching]. I don't think that the average teacher is trained to have a cultural background knowledge of what their students are doing, nor do they necessarily seek more information from it. But I know [another teacher] is working on a project, math related, with Africa and the United States and things of that nature coming up through the history of the United States and it's mathematically based. He's doing a math problem for the month. I know that another teacher in the building, some of the literature that she tries to choose and use and examples that she uses are all culturally-

based. So I think there's some conscious effort of it, I just don't think we do it well enough.

RSA teachers that shared about culturally responsive practices agreed that such practices were being used in the building, and have given examples of cultural references to persons, places, or events related to the cultural background of the students. They have shared that they made conscious decisions to incorporate culturally relevant materials, despite district resources that may not include enough. But many, like Michelle and also Principal Shannon, agree that these types of practices should be used more, and perhaps would like more training.

While teachers have shared their experiences with using culturally responsive practices that include the cultural backgrounds of their students via persons, or events, it was important to know how student teachers were perceiving implementation of these practices at RSA. Therefore, a focus group interview was scheduled to learn from student teachers about how they perceived culturally responsive practices were implemented at RSA, both by their cooperating teachers and by themselves. Use of popular culture to connect with students was a common approach among student teachers to keep their students engaged. They not only used the cultural reference to relate the learning, but they also found that it engaged the students in the learning. One student teacher spoke of using a popular song to teach parallelograms. She gave the melodic rendition during the focus group interview, "Parallella, ella, ella, eh!" So, she incorporated popular cultural music into her mathematics lessons. Another discussed using pop-culture as an antecedent to learning or as a context to which learning took place. Here was her example:

We were doing factors the other week, and I had them figure out—list their favorite artist, their favorite song. Then they had to count up how many letters there were. And

> whatever the total was, say it was 16, they had to then find all of the factors for 16. So they were really engaged with that.

Another student teacher spoke of using rap, combined with technology, to teach counting. Here was her example:

> I use songs a lot too, especially in mathematics, seems to be the easiest time to use it. But for counting, find little rap songs online or something that help them remember to count. Or for shapes, we have a 3D shape rap that we do every day. So, yeah. Songs. I use a lot of songs.

One student teacher spoke of use of songs and rap in teaching grammar to her students.

> I teach grammar, and we did a lesson on "to be" verbs. So we talked about Niki's Minaj's I Be's In The Trap, and then I had them remix it so that it's the right way. So they will walk around singing I Am In The Trap, instead of Be, but they remember. So someone says, "I be," they'll be like, "what? It's I am!" So they have that.

In summary, there were many examples of cultural references as culturally responsive practices at RSA. Teachers and student teachers gave examples of cultural references, and also mentioned inclusion of students' cultural backgrounds in their learning experiences. Examples included references to modern-day pop culture, music, and icons, as well as athletic figures. Other examples were of reading authentic texts and discussing authors who were of students' cultural background.

Assessments

Unlike HE, RSA participants did not explicitly discuss the role of culturally responsive practices in assessing student learning. But the examples they gave include assessment type practices. For example, in Toby's example, cultural references were used in story problems.

Ham's example included the use of cultural context in graphing student surveys, an outcome which is in itself an assessment of student learning. Contrasting the two sites, participants at HE shared that the Jeopardy game was specific to what students had learned about African-American historical figures, and that it was the expectation of the principal that teachers at HE teach students about these historical figures. The Jeopardy game was an assessment of student learning of these historical figures. Additionally, at least one HE interview evidenced use of African-American references in mathematics assessments, such as in problem-solving. RSA participant interviews uncovered one similar scenario in which Toby sprinkled [African-American figures'] names into problem solving activities. One other practice at RSA that could be considered to be culturally responsive will be discussed under Equality Monitoring later in this section. The example does not reference the cultural background of the students to the students in problem-solving or assessment type application, but rather is responsive to the needs of African-American students.

Learning of African-American Figures

Stated earlier was Lucy's example of talking about Coretta Scott King and having a reader read a book about Martin Luther King, Jr., to students in her classroom. Other than the names of Coretta Scott King and Martin Luther King, Jr., no other historical African-American figures were mentioned during the RSA interviews. Abby mentioned using books by African-American authors, such as Whoopi Goldberg's Sugar Plum Ballerinas, and Toby used current African-American figures such as Hines Ward as a cultural reference in mathematics expanded form instruction. However, unlike HE, explicit teaching about African-American figures, especially historical figures, did not emerge as an explicit expectation of the principal or a common practice among each of the teacher participants. Noted was that more modern-day

African-American sports and entertainment figures were referenced during instruction among many of the student teachers and some of the teachers.

Historical Struggle

One example of a reference by a RSA teacher was uncovered. Lucy shared her use of teaching about Martin Luther King Jr. and how he taught non-violence and peace. She would say to her students, ". . . you know we want to act like Martin Luther King, we want peace . . . ." But this was the only reference to the historical struggle of African-Americans uncovered at RSA. Next, exploration of data considered to be equality monitoring is discussed.

Equality Monitoring

Principal Shannon shared her belief about student failure. "So we have a playbook, the teachers created a playbook, and the reason I wanted to get to it was student failure is not an option." The importance of this in terms of Equality Monitoring is that it set the stage for high expectations and persistence until the desired result was achieved. She continued:

> Teachers are already good at creating multiple opportunities for success, so, for example, my whole third grade team last year, they did pre-test, post-test, re-teach. They did a pre-, post-, re-teach, peer taught, then re-teach again, like, students have multiple opportunities to take a test. And it wasn't always just students — the teacher re-teaching, the student to student re-teaching and building, again, that collaboration among the students. That's just something we're really working on.

Principal Shannon's example illustrates action on the belief that failure is not an option for her students. Multiple opportunities to take a test give them more opportunities for success. This action illustrates her responsiveness to the needs of African-American students. Another

practice that emerged as equality monitoring was embodied in discipline practices at RSA and will be discussed next.

Discipline Practices

Principal Shannon shared about her efforts to curb the suspension rate at RSA. She shared that the school year previous to the year of this study, there were over 280 suspensions, and she saw a need to keep students in school. She implemented a school-wide positive behavior support system and discussed it in terms of a leveling system. She said:

> So it goes — start at neutral, you can go down to concern, you can go up to positive, and then from positive to a lion and a lion to the executive. So we are doing a much better job behaviorally, not great, but better.

Students throughout the building were aware of the different levels and a teacher in one part of the building would experience the consistency of other adult enforcers, such as other teachers and the principal, handling behavioral situations similarly. Principal Shannon said that at the point of interview, which was around March, there were only six suspensions and that it was a complete turn-around for the school. She shared that her mindset was changed when she and her teachers attended a conference and heard a quote. She said:

> If a child doesn't know how to swim, we teach. If a child doesn't know how to do math, we teach. If a child doesn't know how to read, we teach. If a child doesn't know how to behave?' And it was a question mark, like, do you punish or do you teach? And it really got us thinking, "We need to teach."

The positive behavior model Principal Shannon implemented was in response to the need for students to learn appropriate positive behaviors. Instead of disciplining, she decided that her school needed to teach appropriate behaviors. In terms of equality monitoring, Principal

Shannon was monitoring the use of suspensions at her school and decided in the grand scheme of things, it was inequitable and contributed to lower levels of learning because there were so many occasions where students were out of school when learning was taking place. Her response to what could have been otherwise seen as a need to discipline students for negative behaviors became a practice of teaching students at RSA appropriate behaviors. Other than Principal Shannon's responses about discipline practices, the subject did not come up much with teachers or student teachers. One teacher, however, shared a conversation she had with her student teachers. Abby, a teacher, talked about her interaction with her student teacher when discussing discipline practices.

> I remember sitting down and telling her, "There are certain things you just don't need to engage in because you're not dealing with a student or students who are going to back down. They have no real fear, so you can't interact with them in that way. You can't engage with them in that way. You're better off doing it a different way, not trying to go head-to-head because you're not gonna get anything from that."

Her practice here was responsive to the culture of the students in which she taught. The next section discusses the theme of Purposeful Instruction.

Purposeful Instruction

As mentioned in the earlier report of data gathered at HE, Purposeful Instruction was instruction with the purpose of empowering, validating, emancipating (Gay, 2000) and holding high expectations for students. At RSA, Abby gave an example of purposeful instruction.

> They talked a little bit in the book about slavery, and it was interesting to see how much the students didn't know, but how interested they were in finding out about it and how important that was for them to have that information to understand. I was able to link it

> to them as far as these were the things that happened in the past. This is why you need to do things. You have much more opportunity than your ancestors had and you need to make good use of that.

Her example included teaching about slavery, but the lesson did not end with the fact that slavery existed. Instead, she took the next step of making the connection with the students that it was a past struggle, and that they could learn from what happened. Earlier, the example was given by Lucy about bringing Martin Luther King, Jr., into lessons for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, and that the students did not really know who he was. What was important was that she wanted to make the connection between how he acted, what he taught, and how she believed students should act. She said, "And we can say, you know we want to act like Martin Luther King, we want peace, we want this, we want that . . . . You know, and he tried to help you keep your hands to yourself . . . ." In both of these examples, students were validated by learning about an important historical figure, and were empowered to overcome obstacles, or to handle situations in a peaceful way. Another example of this validation and empowerment came from Ham, who said, "But through the exposure of all avenues of our living, be it recreational, academic, whatever, they can see that we have a great deal of African-Americans that have been successful."

Another example of purposeful instruction came from a student teacher during the focus group interview. She was empowering them in her example. She said:

> So I had them fill out a sheet with questions on it of what they want to be, what college they want to go to, and why—the question was what makes you great, or why are you great? They filled that out, and then if they got it signed and turned back in, so I had

> permission to take pictures of them, I took their picture and put them up there with the people who were making history as well. So I wanted to integrate them into that as well.

So, at RSA, examples of culturally responsive practices embodied in the theme of Purposeful Instruction emerged. The next section discusses the theme of Knowledge of Student, which emerged from the categories of engagement, environmental, learning style, and relationship building.

Knowledge of Student

Knowledge of Student emerged as a theme because of practices uncovered such as knowing the cultural backgrounds of students in conjunction with knowing student readiness levels and learning styles, which were relied on in some instructional decision-making at RSA. Building relationships, which was uncovered as a building-wide activity, not just a teacher-to-student activity at RSA, was also a characteristic that arose. The following outlines practices that speak to educators' knowledge of students within RSA.

Engagement

Abby, a teacher, shared an example of culturally responsive instruction through keeping her students engaged in the learning. As a matter of context, Abby was sharing about how she introduced different African-American authors and stories, and how she consciously pulled these resources to supplement district curriculum resources. Here, she was speaking of her student teacher's interactions with the students. She said:

> [The student teacher] could see the difference between when we get out the reader and we look at Dear Juno or we look at something else, they're not necessarily feeling it. They're not engaged. But when we're doing this [reading stories which reflect their culture] . . . they're relating to it.

And she emphasized, ". . . it's different when you can relate." This was one example of how a teacher kept her students engaged. Other examples include several activities in which student teachers used pop culture to engage their students in learning. These examples were discussed earlier as the use of a popular song used to teach about parallelograms, and Niki's Minaj's "I Be's In The Trap." These were examples that used students' cultural backgrounds to engage them in the learning process.

Environmental

Regarding physical environmental cultural responsiveness, Principal Shannon said:

> So, stuff hanging, yes. Yes, the teachers are very good about making sure — for the most part — very, very good about making sure if they have anything up that it's more geared toward African-American students since that's our whole population.

Lucy shared, "I think one of the biggest things is just making sure that they see themselves represented in the room."

One student teacher spoke of using the community environment during a mathematics lesson. This is what she shared:

> We went to the corner store. This is what you bought from the corner store. This is how much it all is. So they can go and apply it in their real life, and then they write their own problems occasionally, and they talk about getting their hair done, and the beads and all that sort of stuff. So that's incorporating it.

These were the only examples given of cultural responsiveness through students' classrooms or the community.

Learning Style

One teacher at RSA spoke very candidly about adapting to the students' ways of learning. Lucy said, "I cannot bring my upper middle class White values into this neighborhood, and into this school and think that they're all going to adapt to me. I have to adapt to them." She spoke of preparing herself to teach these students. "In the book Black Children, there's a very clear chart . . . . How White Children Learn, How African-American Children Learn." She went on to share how she tried to incorporate what she learned from the books she has read about teaching African-American children. Lucy gave this account of learning in her room:

> So my room is noisy, my room is, I try to incorporate all of the things I learned from Janis Benson-Hale about an African-American learner. And, you know you have to do things, you have to, you can't just sit and show them a movie, they have to sit and actually do the experiment or they need to go out and take a walk and learn about trees because we see them. And you know so I tried to make sure things are relevant that way. I have tried very hard to make sure that the literature that we read has people that look like them . . . that they can have a book in their hand, not just that I read – so it's not like I'm just reading Ezra Jack Keats books, but they actually have books in their hands with children who look like them. Some are dark-skin, some are light skin, some are you know, whatever. You know, there's a whole range because they are a whole range. I know there was a lot of call and response and we do do that kind of stuff. It really did start with knowing what type of learner an African-American child is, and trying to plan lessons around that.

Toby also shared about how he used his understanding of students' learning styles to instruct his students. He said:

> I'd say the biggest thing that I do that's culturally relevant is the style of interacting with students. It's going back to a little bit of research. We know that in some cases, and I know that I remember reading this in the "Multiplication is for White People" book, and it shows up in Nigeria book where students learn not just from the teacher but for the teacher. So, while I don't put a lot of emphasis in sprinkling in the content, it's our style of interacting . . . .

So, here, culturally responsiveness was embodied in the way that Toby interacted with his students.

Relationship Building

In the area of relationship building, Principal Shannon discussed it as a systematic process in her building. She explained it as a function of morning meetings which she called Guided Group Intervention, or GGI. Here was her account:

> Well first of all, all students go to a morning assembly. So we've a third through fifth one, third through fifth grade, first grade does their own, second grade does their own, and kindergarten does theirs in the cafeteria. Then after that they do a GGI where first grade calls it a morning meeting, the other grades call it GGI, where the students talk about how they feel. Like are they having a red day, yellow day, green day, why you're having that day, and it builds that type of community and relationship in the classroom. So there's a bigger community — like grade level communities — and then inside the classroom, there's a classroom community where kids can say, "I'm having a red day because last night blah blah blah blah blah blah blah." This is going on. Guided Group Intervention, it's just a place for kids to be able to share what's going on in their life. And I'm gonna have — so the teacher would be like, "He's having a red day today, guys.

Remember we need to be a little nicer." And then the teacher knows there's something going on, do I need to alert the social workers, is it something that I can take care of, so it really starts to build that community and relationships? And it's funny, at the beginning of the year, I had a teacher that wouldn't allow them to talk about anything that happened outside of class. She was like, "Well, we're only talking about, basically, that's stuff at home." And we had a long con — now she's like, "I'm so glad I do this." She's starting to see why it's important. So it's been a lot of growth in that area.

Principal Shannon made explicit her expectation of relationship building by implementing Guided Group Intervention, or GGI. She felt it not only helped build relationships between teacher and student, but also between student and student.

Toby shared this about relating to the students:

As a Black male, I have got relationship or connection, I'm from the community, I can get down with them if that makes sense, whether it's the way I talk, you know, my interaction style, language or whatever, they see me as being connected. So again, it's the inspiration of not just learning from me, but learning for me. You know, wanting to please me, wanting to meet the standard that I set. I think that's the biggest culturally relevant practice that goes on here. And just, you know the relationship. You know, affirming what they do, affirming their efforts . . . you know, you're not supposed to touch kids, but sometimes a hand on their head, a hand on their shoulder, building that relationship so that the students feel comfortable enough to take risks, intellectual risks, in terms of raising their hand, giving answers, you know, that whole piece. So, I think that's where we are in this classroom.

> Toby also shared that he felt this was important for his student teacher as well. He said: When she had a list of students to choose from, one of the criterias that she considered was, through this project, she could develop a relationship with a student where otherwise she anticipated being a behavior problem. So, I thought that was important.

As he and his student teacher had conversed at length about this, he also shared:

> She's [a] middle class, White suburban female dealing with Black urban boys from low-income setting. So where like cultural gaps in a lot of different ways, again we've had conversations and I think she understands that it's her job to bridge those cultural gaps, and not the students' job. So, she's willing to meet them where they are as opposed to expecting them to make the adjustment for her. You know, it's on the shoulders of the teacher to establish healthy working relationships.

Here, Toby spoke of the importance of developing a relationship, even with a student whom the student teacher might otherwise consider a behavior problem. Last, of culturally responsive practices, and perhaps one of high importance to those new at implementation, is the theme that emerged, which is labeled Preparation to Become a Culturally Responsive Teacher.

Preparation for Teaching African-American Children

During one of the interviews, a teacher, Lucy, spoke about what she did to prepare herself to meet the needs of her students, whom were African-American. Another teacher, Toby, spoke of a book that he had read that impacted his teaching style with his students, also whom were African-American. So, while interviewing the other teachers, this was one area that was added to the interview questions. When asked about whether she felt that her student teachers become good, culturally responsive teachers, Abby shared her thoughts:

> I believe that her being in here and what she has been exposed to in the classroom does make her more aware that you do have to be more culturally relevant, that everything – same size doesn't fit all. That you do get more – I would say that from her observations of – and I'll just go back to the Justin book. She and I have had conversations, and she was just really excited about how much more engaged they were and how much more they were excited about listening to that book and hearing that book and doing the skills that we were responsible for doing.

Asked whether her student teacher saw a need for culturally responsive teaching, Abby responded:

> I believe that she is seeing that. I see her interact with the students differently. I see her trying to pull that in, like when we think about books that we can read in the class. She's looking to find something that they can relate to.

One student teacher, during the focus group interview shared how she felt about culturally responsive practices at RSA. She said:

> But I would interject that the community of the school is African-American, so there's not a lot that we have to do to really integrate that culturally, because it's already culturally set in African-American. A lot—the majority of the teachers are African-American. Most of the kids are African-American. So the way that they're interacted with, spoken with, that culture's already here because so much of the school is already their culture, and from their homework. So a lot of the libraries, [they're] all [African-American].

A teacher shared her own experience which is included here because it shows the quality level of the cooperating teacher paired with a student teacher in the 3SP. She shared what she felt it took to prepare herself to teach African-American children. Here is what she shared:

> Well, honestly I started, I grew up in Mount Lebanon, so I came from a very White, middle to upper class neighborhood. And, when I got my job in the city, knowing, I student taught in the city, but it was up in Squirrel Hill, so it was a more diverse population. My first school was completely African-American, and I cried every day. And, I was like, um, I don't know what I'm doing. And I remember very clearly sitting on my filing cabinet in my room and thinking, there are 27, whatever I had, there were 26 of them and one of me. I cannot bring my upper middle class White values into this neighborhood, and into this school and think that they're all going to adapt to me. I have to adapt to them. So, I started on a learning quest (I don't know what the word is) but read Gloria Ladson-Billings, Janis Benson-Hale.

As a final piece of advice, Lucy shared, "Know who your clients are. And if you don't know who your clients are, you need to learn who they are.

Research Question 1: Summary

A restatement of RQ1 is offered here: What culturally responsive practices are perceived by principals, teachers, and student teachers as being used in these professional development schools? The answer to this research question came from interviews because questions were asked specifically about culturally responsive practices participants used, or observed within their buildings. Culturally responsive practices were uncovered through the interviews of participants of both buildings. Examples of these practices included monitoring suspensions, teaching students about famous African-Americans, teaching about a place that was a part of the

historical struggle of African-Americans, relationship-building, having high expectations for students, implementing a building-wide behavioral program, and preparing oneself to meet the needs of African-American students.

The next section addresses RQ2, which adds a layer of data to the information gathered about relationship-building under RQ1. Specifically, RQ1 was designed to elicit culturally responsive practices as perceived as being used by participants within the professional development schools implementing the 3SP. RQ2 was designed to learn specifically about how student teachers built relationships (a culturally responsive practice) within the professional development schools implementing the 3SP.

Research Question 2

How did the student teachers build relationships with the three students?

The next section of this chapter presents the data for RQ2: How did the student teachers build relationships with the three students? Teacher-student relationships are an important aspect of culturally responsive practices (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2001) and are necessary for their implementation. Getting to know students both individually and as a student group with shared experiences, backgrounds, and interests was key. Data gathered, which addressed RQ2 came from building principals, student teacher individual interviews, student teacher focus group interviews, and observations of student teacher intervention sessions with their 3SP students.

Research Question 2: Hope Elementary Interviews – Principal Hooper

It was important to note an expectation shared by Principal Hooper of HE. He stated:

> When a student walks in the classroom they should feel as though they're in a classroom that respects their culture and the classroom that looks like the people in the classroom. When they walk into the classroom they see a whole bunch of scientists on the wall, and

> they're in science class, and none of the scientists looks like them, that's not culturally relevant. There are plenty of people of color that are in the science area, and so I asked the teachers to please find those.

Principal Hooper's expectation sets up the environment for student teachers to build relationships with their students through inclusion and representation, and also to getting to know their shared experiences as African-Americans, not just as individual students. It was, therefore, important to know whether the student teachers at HE had evidenced knowledge and use of the students' experiences as African-Americans in addition to using knowledge and use of students' academic levels during observations of their one-on-one intervention sessions with students. Also important was what student teachers could share about building relationships with the students. There were six student teachers whose placements ranged from kindergarten to fourth grade. Of the six student teacher participants, four agreed to interviews, and three to observations. The following two sections are reports of both student teacher interviews on the topic of relationship building, and also observations of their sessions with students.

Research Question 2: Hope Elementary Interviews – Student Teachers

Student teachers at HE were interviewed during the month of February. Questions asked related to relationship-building included: 1) Think back to your first sessions with your students. How would you describe your first sessions with your intervention students? 2) Did you have difficulty getting the students to work with you? 3) How would you characterize your relationship with your intervention students? 4) What are some of the challenges in establishing a relationship with the intervention students and how did you overcome them?

It is important to note that the student teachers at HE began their student teaching experiences at the start of the school year, as their placements were for a full year. Interviews of

the experiences with relationship building took place in February. Student teachers needed to recall their experiences with their three students and building relationships with them that may have occurred earlier in the school year. Additionally, because of their dual certification requirements, student teachers also were required to include a special education student among their three students they followed within the 3SP. This potentially meant that if there were no students in their current placement that received special education services, student teachers may have been given a student that was not within the classroom of their placement. This student was not met with until formal one-on-one sessions began. So, some of the student teachers' 3SP students were from within their homeroom placement, and a third student may be from another class or even in a different grade entirely. The following are the results of the student teacher interviews at HE.

Athena shared that her relationship with her 3SP students began at the start of the school year. When asked about her relationship with her 3SP students, she shared "I already felt like I had a relationship built with them from August," and "I didn't really have that many problems forming that relationship and that rapport." Kelsey shared that she began relationship building only a short time prior to beginning her intervention sessions and that she had only just begun that process with the student who was not in her classroom placement. "I would say a little bit before then, but with my second grade student, obviously, that was like the first time that I really got to interact with him." When asked about their perceptions of the rapport they had with students, most generally felt positive about their relationships. Kristie shared, "They all like to work with me I'd say, so it's a good working level." Jessica stated:

> Two of my students I already had a very good relationship with because they're in my classroom already. However my third student is not in my class, she's in a different teacher's class, so I had to build a relationship with her.

Athena reported that she had already build a relationship with her 3SP students prior to beginning their intervention sessions. She said:

> So my teachers had already been asking me to take them out in the hallway, work with them one on one maybe to fix something that they did wrong in their homework or to help them on a test that they didn't do well on. So we had already built that rapport. I think it's pretty positive . . . all three of them I have a pretty positive relationship with.

Student teachers were asked about the kinds of strategies they used to gain a rapport with the students. Athena shared that she spent time with her 3SP students outside of her intervention sessions. "I gave them all the option to come in during recess or lunch to read a novel together." Kristie shared about how she got to know her 3SP students. She felt that "learning their strengths and their weaknesses, learning their learning skills as well," were important in establishing a relationship with her 3SP students. Kristie continued, saying "The biggest thing for me is trying to find out what he likes and what he enjoys, because he's not going to be into it if he's just reading something that he doesn't enjoy." Kelsey responded that for her, relationship building was about "getting to know them, finding out what they like, don't like, because that's so important to know, you know, if they're interested in it then they're going to respond to it, if they're not, then forget it." Kelsey also felt it was important to make a connection to students' home-lives as a part of relationship building. She stated, "I'm always asking if they weren't here, 'Why weren't you here?' You know, is something going on at home, just to find out more about that." Jessica utilized a behavior plan to help build a relationship with her students. She

stated, “I am doing a behavior plan, so at the end of each session if I feel they have been listening to me or they’ve been on task and followed my directions, I give them a sticker. Then every five stickers they get a prize.” She also shared that, “we like to, you know, hear their opinions and we try to, especially in reading, relate to stuff like at home.”

In sharing about how the student teachers build relationships with their students, it was uncovered that spending time with the students was one way a student teacher nurtured her relationship with her 3SP students. For another, learning about students’ home lives helped her establish a rapport with them. Still another, rewards for following her directives were important in her gaining that student’s engagement in their interactions. While these are all relevant to building relationships with students, especially the example of the student teacher making a connection to students’ home lives, it was important to learn whether student teachers were accessing students’ shared experiences as African-Americans to see how they were using that connection to students’ cultures to encourage learning. It was important as well to observe for the presence of other aspects of culturally responsive practices, such as evidence of high expectations, encouragement, use of cultural references, and connections made between students’ hard work and higher achievement. Each of these will be discussed following the interview data from RSA which is presented next.

Research Question 2: Rising Star Academy – Principal Interview

Principal Shannon shared a building-wide directive in which she felt impacted relationship building. It is called Guided Group Intervention, or GGI. This activity is done every morning in kindergarten, first, and second grades where it is simply called a morning meeting, whereas third through fifth grade called it GGI. During this time, students had discussions about the kind of day they felt they were having. Principal Shannon described it

further, stating "Like are they having a red day, yellow day, green day, why you're having that day, and it builds that type of community and relationship in the classroom." Like HE, there is an expectation from the principal, that all teachers follow, that relationship building is important. Unlike the interview with Principal Hooper at HE, the Principal Shannon did not share in her interview an emphasis on the students' shared experiences of African-Americans as being important in the relationship building process. Instead, Principal Shannon used an approach that focused on community building within the school and classrooms.

Research Question 2: Rising Star Academy – Teacher Interviews

When asked about culturally responsive practices Toby, a teacher a RSA, engaged in within the classroom, one of his answers was directly related to engaging his student teacher in discussions about building relationships with students, and is stated earlier in this chapter under Relationship Building. This information is shared here because of its relevance to the research question. Toby, a Black male teacher, shared a bit of his own connectedness with students that also spilled over into conversations about his student teacher. Toby felt his rootedness within the community and also his cultural background, being similar to that of the students, gave him a sense of connectedness with the students. The importance Toby placed on relationship-building was evident in his conversation with his student teacher where he tried to instill as a value in his student teacher, that she should develop a relationship with her student. He said that in choosing a student for the 3SP, she should consider picking a student "she could develop a relationship with [that she] otherwise . . . anticipated being a behavior problem." The rationale he shared for doing so was that his student teacher was a "young White female." He felt that there were cultural gaps that were intersecting here, such as her middle class, White, suburban background that did not mesh with "Black urban boys from low-income setting." He also shared he felt it

was important that "she understands that it's her job to bridge those cultural gaps, and not the students' job. So, she's willing to meet them where they are as opposed to expecting them to make the adjustment for her." The next section presents data from the observations of student teachers working with their 3SP students during their intervention sessions.

Research Question 2: Observations – Hope Elementary and Rising Star Academy

The purpose of the observations of student teachers' intervention sessions with their students was to learn about the 3SP intervention process, to learn about student teachers' interactions with their 3SP students, and to learn about the relationships they had with their 3SP students. The process involved observing student teachers while they were instructing during their intervention session with their 3SP students, and learning about what the session looked like, to learn about the interaction between the student teachers and their 3SP students, and most importantly, to determine if aspects of culturally responsive practices were present at the time of the intervention sessions. While there were six student teachers at HE who consented to participate in the study, only three participated in the observations. For each student teacher, two intervention sessions were observed. First, transcripts were made of the student teacher's interaction with the 3SP students. The transcripts were analyzed for aspects of culturally responsive instruction. These aspects were high expectations, encouragement, culturally responsive references in scaffolding, connections to current or historical figures that have overcome challenge, and connections between hard work and higher achievement. Explanations of those characteristics follow as they relate to the observation protocol.

Did the student teachers use language that reflected high expectations of the student? According to Merriam-Webster Online, the word "expect" is defined as to "look forward," or to "suppose," or "think," or to "consider reasonable, due, or necessary." Holding high expectations

meant one would have to look forward to high levels of some scenario. If someone were to have high expectations of a student, that person would "consider reasonable, due, or necessary" that the student would achieve at high levels. If the student teacher had high expectations of a student, and the student did not perform as expected, that teacher would continue to try with that student until he or she performed as expected. Contrasted, if a student teacher had low expectations of a student, that student teacher may not continue because having more faith in himself or herself than that of the student, might conclude that the student is unable to rise to the task. If a student was working on a task and failed, and the student teacher assumed the student could and should be able to complete the task, then the teacher would be likely to scaffold, both by asking questions to help the child find understanding, and by encouraging the student to try again. Words or phrases used might include "You can do it," or "I know you know this," or "Try again." Perhaps even "I expect more of you," or "This is not your best work." Therefore, if a student teacher had high expectations of a student, the student teacher would act on that expectation through encouragement of the student, and also perseverance at helping the child accomplish the task. The following presents how student teachers evidenced high expectations at HE and RSA during observations of their intervention sessions:

Research Question 2: Hope Elementary – Student Teacher Observations

Four of the six observations evidenced language that reflected high expectations of the 3SP students. Examples included student teachers persisting with their students, reviewing missed answers, working together to find the correct answer, and relationship-building through taking turns reading a passage. For example, Kristie persisted in scaffolding when her student still missed words. She went back over the words and sounds that her student missed and had her student say them with her. Another student teacher, Jessica, persisted by doing more review

items with her student after learning her student did not remember some answers. She explained to her student why the answers given were incorrect, and together, they found the correct answer. During a second observation, Jessica persisted when her student was highly distracted and had difficulty reading. She sounded out words, or told words to her student. After her student repeated the word, Jessica pointed to each word as her student read. Jessica illustrated with her hands when she asked her student about the word "dove." Jessica answered questions her student had about the story. She also modeled parts of the story, taking turns reading with her student. All of these were ways Jessica persisted with her student during their intervention session.

Research Question 2: Rising Star Academy – Student Teacher Observations

Heather evidenced high expectations of her student by keeping her informed about how she was doing, and the level of work expected of her. Her student had read 109 words per minute and Heather told her her goal was to meet 138 words per minute. She explained to her student exactly what she felt kept her from reading enough words during her timed reading. Jennifer evidenced high expectations through persistence with her student. Multiple scaffoldings were needed during their intervention session. Sometimes it took four or even five scaffoldings before her student came to be able to answer questions. Shana explained to her student that she believed she could get an answer correct but was making a "small, simple mistake." Shana persisted at the task by giving her student three more attempts like the first one, allowing her to have multiple attempts at success. Twice, Joyce used language that evidenced high expectations of her student. She told her students that she picked them for the intervention sessions in order to help them "make some gains." She reminded her student that she was smart, and did not move on until the student agreed with her assessment.

Did the student teachers encourage the student? Words or phrases of encouragement may include "You can do it," or "Try again." Once a student gives a correct answer, words of praise would continue to encourage the student. Examples might include "You did it!" or "Good Job," or "That's the level of work I expect from you!"

Research Question 2: Hope Elementary – Student Teacher Observations

Encouragement was observed in half of the observations. Kristie, for example, used words like, "We'll try again next week," when her student had not met her goal. When a student had difficulty answering a question item, Jessica said, "These can be tricky," which gave the student assurance. Kelsey used the words, "Keep working," as a way to encourage her student.

Research Question 2: Rising Star Academy – Student Teacher Observations

Three instances of encouragement during student teacher intervention sessions were observed. Shana encouraged her student by sharing with her that during their next intervention session, they would work on the next problem together. Heather encouraged her student by telling her to "try again." Joyce encountered her student being upset with herself and saying that she felt stupid. Joyce assured her that she was "not dumb" and that she "could do it." When the student realized she hadn't been listening to Joyce and tells her so, Joyce puts her hand on her students head to encourage her. Joyce also told her student that they would work together to help her and that it would "get better."

Did the student teachers use culturally responsive references to scaffold the student? Morton and Bennet (2010) in their review of Ladson-Billings (1995) work note that "successful teachers co-constructed knowledge with students, were enthusiastic about learning, and readily scaffold students' learning with the stance that failure was not an option" (p. 140). As students make errors, scaffolding is important because children learn more through scaffolding than they

do independently (Vygotsky, 1978). Ladson-Billings (1995) used the term culturally responsive to underscore the need to connect strongly with students' home and community culture. Gay (2002) coined the term cultural scaffolding in discussing teacher practices with students of different backgrounds, and explained that it was "using their own cultures and experiences to expand their intellectual horizons and academic achievement" (p. 109). Culturally responsive references while scaffolding may support students' need to correct a longstanding notion that Blacks are intellectually inferior (Taylor, in progress) which may lead to learned helplessness. Morton and Bennett (2010) shared in their research of pre-service teachers that these teachers "demonstrated culturally relevant pedagogy when they related to students in personal ways. They recognized a developing connection and bonding with the students and often expressed pride in their work" (p. 144). The authors also shared that the pre-service teachers in their study exhibited culturally responsive practices when relating to the students they taught, such as in sharing about each other's families. So, examples of culturally responsive references might include relating back to something in the child's background when discussing how the student might complete the task at hand. For instance, if a child is stuck on a task, a teacher might say "Remember when you told me you ate all those mints at home? Pretend that these are those mints. What would it look like if you had 23 mints in your bowl yesterday, and ate five of those mints today? How many mints would you have left?" In this way, the teacher, who took time to learn about the student's background experiences at home, scaffolded by using the experience from home to help the student learn or practice a skill at school.

Research Question 2: Hope Elementary – Student Teacher Observations

Two of the observations evidenced student teachers working together with students to complete problems. Kristie told her student that they would do some more together and Jessica, although not explicitly stated, worked together with her student to find the correct answer. However neither of these cases really accessed students' cultural backgrounds or home experiences. None of the other student teacher observations at HE evidenced culturally responsive references during the intervention sessions.

Research Question 2: Rising Star Academy – Student Teacher Observations

Four of the observations at RSA evidenced culturally responsive references to scaffold students. Joyce accessed the student's home life in order to help her student focus on the lesson. Here, the student was shutting down and losing engagement in the lesson. Joyce said, "Do you remember that nice thank you note your mom wrote me?" To re-engage the student. Also, when the student was shutting down, the student teacher told her she felt she was closing her out. When the student apologized, the student teacher asked, "What are we going to do to get back on track?" Joyce reminded the student that when the previous day, the student told Joyce that she did not like something, Joyce had listened to her. The student acknowledged this was the case. Then Joyce said, "So what can we do?" The student said she saw what Joyce was talking about, and that she hadn't been listening to Joyce. The two laughed a bit. Later in the session, Joyce said to the student, "Are you going to get your attitude together?" After the student nodded, Joyce continued, "You're going to try, and I'm going to try." This example began with a reference to the student's home life and a note that the child's mom had written the student teacher. That scaffolding, together with the persistence of the student teacher were both relationship-building and helped the student to be re-engaged in the intervention session.

Another student teacher, Calli, referenced students' culture by accessing their "verve," or their tendency to be in motion. She did this through the use of a music video on-line which she played and had the students stand up and use their legs and arms in exercises where they counted for each repetition. The students counted to 100, with their arms and legs, and then danced. Calli also had a second internet musical program that used rap to get students to count using exercise.

Shana and her student picked a problem together for the student to complete, and told the student, "Try the next one. We'll be done even if you get it incorrect," in order to motivate the student to keep going. While this did not relate to the student's culture, it did assure the student that she was not alone and helped alleviate any concern the student had with having to continue to struggle after the requested problem was completed.

Lastly, Jennifer accessed knowledge of students living in a digital age when she asked her student for a "tweet," which is something people do in social media today. She did this when trying to get the student to understand main idea. He was to read the paragraph and come up with a "tweet," or main idea for the paragraph. So, four of the six observations evidenced a culturally responsive reference to help the students stay engaged during their intervention sessions.

Did the student teachers make connections to current or historical figures that have overcome challenge, or any other cultural reference? Based on Taylor's (in progress) framework for closing racial achievement gaps, *A Gardening Metaphor*, a culturally responsive teacher might share with a student who is struggling with a concept the name of a person who shares a similar background with the child, who accomplished something using the knowledge the student is attempting to gain to contribute to society. For example, if the child is African-

American and is struggling with a science equation, the teacher might share with the student that Mae Jemison, the first African-American woman in outer space, had to learn physics in order to assist with the controls in the space shuttle. The teacher might share that Mae had to grapple with science equations just like this one, and succeeded. At no time were these kinds of references observed during intervention sessions at HE or RSA.

Did the student teachers help the students to see a connection between their hard work and higher achievement? The connection between hard work and higher achievement is an important factor in the achievement of African-American children (Taylor, in progress). Our country's history has revealed that this was once not the case for African-Americans. With systemic institutionalized racist practices in place, such as those instituted after landmark case *Plessy v. Ferguson*, African-Americans could work equally as hard, if not harder and not be permitted the privileges of being White (Spring, 2010). For generations, this knowledge would have been passed down, on both sides, Black and White. Even if government policies were in place, such as Affirmative Action, to counter beliefs of that time, the fact that it was even needed meant that such privileges were still in place. In fact, although Affirmative Action policy is being challenged in many states, it is still practiced today in most. If teachers could help counterbalance the belief of intellectual inferiority, and if teachers helped children to know that in today's world, it is much more true that higher work does in fact equal higher achievement, then students will believe that their hard work can and will in fact, pay off. Therefore, this action is necessary to counter the belief that hard work will not pay off.

Research Question 2: Hope Elementary – Student Teacher Observations

Kristie and her student had met prior to the observed session, and her student had completed a timed-test at that time. During the observed session, Kristie asked her student if she

thought she had a higher score since the last time they completed a timed test. After her student said "Yes," Kristie told her student they could count together to find out. Kristie said, "Last time was 8, and this time was 22!" Kristie gave her a high-five. This helped her student to see the connection between hard work and higher results. During a second intervention session observed, Kristie repeated this action with the next student. She asked if the student thought she did better than last time, and she had. Then Kristie told her, "You will do better next time too!" Kelsey also helped her student to see the connection between hard work and high achievement when she asked, "How many more do you have to do to get your treat?"

Research Question 2: Rising Star Academy – Student Teacher Observations

At RSA, three of the six observations evidenced language that showed a connection between students' hard work and higher achievement. Calli told both of her students how they were doing, and that they had improved. Shana checked her students' work and said, "Very good! You didn't let this one trick you! All of those are correct!" Then she had her students put a check mark on her chart to show that they had mastered the skill. Heather showed her student where to mark on her graph that was used to keep track of the student's score.

When the student accomplished the goal of the intervention session, how did the student teachers communicate that to the student? Praise is an important part of learning. It "substantiates students' beliefs that they are becoming more competent and raises self-efficacy and motivation for learning" (Schunk, 2008, p. 362). Students need positive reinforcement such as praise and look for it as a beacon to assure them that their attempt at a task was worthy and produced a positive result. As teachers assist students, children will persevere at a task if they are experiencing success. Praise tells students when they are experiencing success. It would be important to know how the student teacher communicated to the students that they had been

successful at an attempted task. Words or phrases that might communicate this could be "You did it," or "Good job," or even "I knew you could do it!" Positive reinforcement may also be visible, such as in a smile or a hand up for a high-five.

Research Question 2: Hope Elementary – Student Teacher Observations

All six observations at HE evidenced some communication that students had accomplished the goal of the intervention session. Kristie, for example, gave a student a high-five and gave praise whenever she got sounds correct during a phonics lesson. When she got the word correct, Kristie would say, "Very good!" At the end of the session, when the student completed a timed-test, Kristie said, "Good job!" When Kristie had a student who did not do as well as hoped during the session, she said, "We'll try again next week." During Jessica's intervention session, she gave a student a sticker to communicate how the session went. During another session, Jessica counted the number of words the student read during a timed session and told the student, "Good job!" Kelsey told her student that he had earned another sticker for his chart, and for a second student told him how many numbers he got correct and that he should "keep working!"

Research Question 2: Rising Star Academy – Student Teacher Observations

Observations at RSA also evidenced communications of praise or reward. When Joyce told her student that they would "work together," and that "You're going to try, and I'm going to try," she was communicating her expectation for the next time. Perhaps this was not a praise, but as a reward for trying hard, this student knew she would not be alone. Calli had communicated that her students had improved, and told her student "Very good! Next time, we'll work on the next one." Calli had given the student a high-five and had the student put a check mark on her

chart to show that she had mastered the skill. Heather told her student they would continue the next day.

The observations of student teacher interactions with students were coded for high expectations, encouragement, culturally responsive scaffolding, making connections to current or historical figures who have overcome obstacles, connections between hard work and achievement, and communications of praise – or reward. Next, data were consolidated into tables to look for patterns in each of the above areas. The following tables are summaries of the interactions between student teachers and their 3SP students during observed 3SP intervention sessions.

Table 10

Hope Elementary – Student Teacher Intervention Session Observation Summary

Observation	Kristie 1st	Kristie 2nd	Jessica 1st	Jessica 2nd	Kelsey 1st	Kelsey 2nd
Did the student teacher use language that reflected high expectations of the student?	NO*	Yes Persisting reviewing missed answers	Yes Reviewing missed answers Working together to find correct answer	Yes Relationship building (taking turns reading passage) Persistence	NO*	Yes Reviewing misses answers (on three occasions)
Did the student teacher encourage the student?	NO*	Yes "We'll try again next week."	Yes Assurance These can be tricky	NO*	NO*	Yes "Keep working!"

Table 10 (continued)

Hope Elementary – Student Teacher Intervention Session Observation Summary

Observation	Kristie 1st	Kristie 2nd	Jessica 1st	Jessica 2nd	Kelsey 1st	Kelsey 2nd
Did the student teacher use culturally responsive references to scaffold the student?	NO*	Yes Relationship building	Yes Searching for answer together	NO*	NO*	NO*
Did the student teacher make connections to current or historical figures who have overcome challenge, or any other cultural reference?	NO*	NO*	NO*	NO*	NO*	NO*
Did the student teacher help the student to see a connection between their hard work and higher achievement?	Yes Asking student if they felt score was higher now	Yes	NO*	NO*	Yes Asking student how many more until goal is met	NO*

Table 10 (continued)

Hope Elementary – Student Teacher Intervention Session Observation Summary

Observation	Kristie 1st	Kristie 2nd	Jessica 1st	Jessica 2nd	Kelsey 1st	Kelsey 2nd
When the student accomplished the goal of the intervention session, how did the student teacher communicate that to the student?	Praise Then gives a high five and a "good job" to the student	Encourage-ment Student Teacher "We'll try again next week. Do you think you will to better next time too? Student says yes.	Reward She gave the student a sticker	Praise "Good job!"	Reward He earned another sticker for his chart and goal setting - how many more he needed to get his treat. He need three more stickers for the row. Student teacher focused him that once he filled his chart (five rows of five stickers) he would earn his treat.	Encourage-ment Gave score "Keep working"

Note. *NO = none observed.

Table 11

Rising Star Academy – Student Teacher Observation Summary

Observation	Joyce	Calli 1st Session Ended Early	Calli 2nd	Shana	Heather	Jennifer
Language reflecting high expectations	Yes Twice explained why picked Reinforce capability	NO*	NO*	Yes Reinforce belief in student Provide more chances to succeed Explained answer thoroughly	Yes	Yes Persistence in scaffolding
Evidence of encouragement	Yes Assurance Physical contact Will work together Reassurance	NO*	NO*	Yes Will work together	Yes Try again	NO*
Evidence of culturally responsive references relationship building reference to home culture	Yes Reference to home Relationship building twice Reference to relationship	NO*	Yes Use of kines-thetic form (addresses verve) Rap as the selection of choice	Yes Relationship building	NO*	Yes Technological reference

Table 11 (continued)

Rising Star Academy – Student Teacher Observation Summary

Observation	Joyce	Calli 1st Session Ended Early	Calli 2nd	Shana	Heather	Jennifer
Evidence of connections to current or historical figures who have overcome challenge	NO*	NO*	NO*	NO*	NO*	NO*
Make connection between their hard work and higher achievement	NO*	NO*	Yes Status showed improve-ment	Yes Gave status and praise highlighting improve-ment	Yes Had student track progress	NO*

Table 11 (continued)

Rising Star Academy – Student Teacher Observation Summary

Observation	Joyce	Calli 1st Session Ended Early	Calli 2nd	Shana	Heather	Jennifer
When the student accomplished the goal of the intervention session, how did the Student Teacher communicate that to the student?	Yes Assures student she was not without help	NO*	Yes Showed improve-ment	Yes Gave praise, showed relation-ship, and relates hard work to achieve-ment	Yes Student Teacher related hard work to achieve-ment	NO* Student Teacher tells student they will continue tomorrow

Note. *NO = none observed.

Research Question 2: Summary

In summary, RQ2 asked about how student teachers built relationships with their 3SP students. Data collected to address this question included student teacher individual interviews and observations from HE. The principal interview and student teacher observations at RSA were also used to answer RQ2. The focus group interviews uncovered that student teachers were not yet fully implementing the 3SP, and meeting with students in one-on-one settings often, if at all. Therefore, questions about relationship building were not asked of student teachers during the focus group interview. Some information was shared regarding relationship building during the principal and a teacher interview at RSA, so that information was also revealed in this section.

Principal Hooper at HE, shared his expectation for practices that had the potential to nurture relationships, such as using knowledge of students' cultural background to create a physical learning environment for students, and develop relevant and meaningful learning experiences. Student teachers at HE, during individual interviews, reported building relationships with their 3SP students by spending time with them, learning about students' home lives, and rewarding students to gain engagement during their interactions. Because it was important also to learn whether student teachers were accessing students' shared experiences as African-Americans, and to learn whether student teachers were making connections to students' cultures to encourage learning, observations of intervention sessions between student teachers and their 3SP students took place.

During the intervention sessions at HE, the focus of the observation was both to understand the process of the intervention sessions from beginning to end, and also to observe for culturally responsive facets such as relationship building, among others. At HE, student teachers showed practices which reflected high expectations of their 3SP students. Many of the student teachers were persistent, and worked with their students to find correct answers. Words of encouragement were observed as well as some scaffolding. Scaffolding did not include student teachers accessing students' cultural backgrounds or home experiences. Absent, however, from evidence through observation were connections to students' background culture, and shared experiences as African-Americans. One student teacher evidenced making a connection between hard work and higher achievement, and did so during both of her observations. At the end of the sessions, each of the student teachers at HE showed evidence of communication to students about the progress of their sessions, whether the goal was achieved or if students needed to work at the goal again the next session.

At RSA, Principal Shannon gave a directive that involved building-wide participation in morning meetings or assemblies known as Guided Group Intervention. This intervention time served as a community building technique which, in turn, supported relationships between teachers and students. Student teachers at RSA showed relationship building by having high expectations for their students, goal-setting, persisting, scaffolding. They showed encouragement and reassured their students. Several of the student teachers evidenced culturally responsive references to scaffold students. Knowledge of students' culture and use of that knowledge to develop activities was evidenced with a student teacher who accessed internet-based music videos to teach counting. Another used a reference to social media. Helping their students to see a connection between their hard work and higher achievement was also evidenced at RSA. Communication of students' progress was evidenced through praise or rewards. None of the observations at RSA evidenced connections to current or historical figures that have overcome challenge. The next section of this chapter reports data regarding the impact of the Professional Development Schools' 3SP on school culture and student achievement.

Research Question 3

What are student teachers', parents', teachers', and principals' perceptions of the impact of the 3SP on school culture and student achievement?

Research Question 4

In what ways has the Three-Student Project Impacted Student Achievement and Academic Behaviors?

Due to the clear relationship between RQ3 and RQ4, the data for these questions will be presented simultaneously. For example, data that would be used to answer RQ3, regarding perceptions of the impact of the 3SP on student achievement and school culture would also help

to answer RQ4. RQ4 asks about the ways the 3SP has impacted student achievement and academic behaviors. Data used to answer these questions came from interviews, the AGM Inventory, and PSSA reading and mathematics school-level achievement results. The following is the analyses of data for RQ3, and RQ4.

Research Question 3/Research Question 4: Data Analysis

Student achievement is defined here as the outcome of student learning and was measured by classroom tests, projects, common assessments, benchmark assessments, performance assessments, and /or standardized assessments. For the purpose of this study, only the state standardized tests and school value added measures score (if available), in addition to participant testimony of their observations of student achievement and school culture, were analyzed because the primary investigator did not have permission to view individual test score data. Therefore, participant testimony as obtained through individual and focus group interviews were analyzed for these research questions.

Academic and social behaviors were characteristics of school culture investigated during this study. Academic behaviors were defined as students' actions that impact their learning. Examples of academic behaviors included how well students attended to instructional activities, their participation rates, school attendance, study habits, testing skills, retention of learned material or skills, and frustration levels. The impact of the 3SP on academic achievement was assessed through comparing achievement test scores and interview responses before the 3SP was implemented and after the project was implemented. If interview testimony described a positive change in academic and social behaviors since implementation of the 3SP, if participants had attributed those positive changes to the implementation of the 3SP, and if achievement scores had also increased since the implementation of the 3SP, then the increase in PSSA assessment

scores would be a way that the 3SP had impacted student achievement and school culture. Also, AGM Inventory results will be presented to add depth to understanding of the achievement levels of these sites.

Tools used to collect data for RQ3 and RQ4 involved interview protocol which were piloted previously to ensure the most effective questions were used to learn whether the 3SP positively impacted student achievement and academic behaviors, as well as the AGM Inventory. The following are analyses of the results of interviews of the principals, teachers, and student teachers of HE, compared to PSSA standardized achievement assessment scores and trends, as well as AGM Inventory results. Following these analyses for HE, the same will be presented for RSA.

Research Question 3/Research Question 4: Hope Elementary

Implementation of the 3SP began during the 2007-2008 academic school year. In order to have a picture of the impact of the project on student achievement and academic behaviors, a description of student achievement and academic behaviors prior to, or at the beginning of implementation of the 3SP was necessary. Principal Hooper, who co-founded the project came to the school in 2005, where according to his interview testimony, district policy did not allow building-wide changes during the first year of an administrator's tenure.

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) website, PSSA scores reported for the 2005-2006 year, which is the year prior to implementation, were that in mathematics, 59% of students who took the PSSAs were at least proficient. Since most of the school was populated by African-American students, that percent is nearly consistent with the 58% of African-American students who took the PSSAs that were at least proficient. During the

same year, only 43% of all students who took the PSSAs were at least proficient in reading, also nearly consistent with the 42% of African-Americans who were at least proficient.

Research Question 3/Research Question 4: Hope Elementary Interviews – Principal Hooper

Principal Hooper was the building administrator at HE where the 3SP has been in place since 2007. When asked to share about the level of student achievement, Principal Hooper shared that the school's value added measure (VAM) score was the highest in the district and that their PSSA scores were "actually in the top 5% in the state as far as moving student scores on the PSSA." He stated, "The teachers in mathematics actually are in the top 1%, but the school is in the top 5% as far as doing that." When asked whether he believed that the 3SP had impacted student achievement and academic behaviors, Principal Hooper shared his positive belief. "It has definitely had an impact on all the students that are involved . . . it's improved all the students in most of the areas." Compared to scores prior to implementation of the 3SP, Principal Hooper stated that overall achievement had risen.

When asked about student academic behaviors, Principal Hooper felt that the student teachers were a factor in these behaviors, but not a determining factor.

> I don't think that the student teachers are a final determinance on how well my students are behaving in the school overall. But the three students, they're doing good with those . . . but overall, I don't think that the school would be out of control without them.

Principal Hooper did feel the 3SP impacted student attendance. He stated, "they [the student teachers] definitely help with attendance."

Having established that Principal Hooper believed there was a change in student achievement since the implementation of the 3SP, the next step was to learn whether he

attributed his school's achievement to the 3SP. Hooper replied, "If I didn't have this Three Student Project, I really don't think that our VAM scores would nearly – would be as high as they are if I did not have – and that's both the school and the teachers' VAM scores would not be as high if I didn't have this program." Based on Hooper's responses, it would appear that he perceived positive change in student achievement and academic behaviors since the 3SP was implemented, and he also attributed the positive change to the 3SP itself.

Research Question 3/Research Question 4: Hope Elementary Teachers' Interviews

This section involves the interviews of six teachers, all of whom had students and/or student teachers participating in the 3SP. In order to learn about their perceptions of the impact of the 3SP on student achievement and academic behaviors, the researcher asked these participants background questions about the achievement levels of students in their rooms who were in the 3SP, as well as their academic behaviors. Once achievement levels for 3SP students were established, the researcher asked about changes in their levels of achievement, and whether the teachers believed the 3SP made an impact on the achievement of students within the project. Next, data will be presented about how these teachers perceived the achievement levels and academic behaviors of the students in the 3SP, whether there were changes in their levels of achievement and behaviors, and whether they attributed those changes to the 3SP, other factors, or both.

A variety of academic behaviors were reported by teachers at HE at the start of the year, and also during the time after the 3SP had been implemented. Most reported a positive change in academic behaviors. For example, Barbara felt that at first, the students were not as eager to participate. She stated that her three students were "children that sit back and wait. You know, if I ask a question, they're not going to have their hands up. You know, if I do call on them, they

might give me a response." However, Barbara saw a change in her students' academic behaviors, stating "Yeah, I would say, like, the biggest is that they love to learn." She felt that the change was attributed to the 3SP. She said:

> When people ask me like, what is [our school's] success, cause you know we're ranked as one of the top in the state, and stuff, I always say "It's the student teachers," you know, cause that's the only thing we have different than all the other [urban] public schools. You know we're all on the same curriculum, we all have the same type of kids. It's not that [this school] has a better neighborhood or better kids than anybody else. We all have the same. But what we have that no one else has is this connection with [the university], these student teachers that come in here.

Holly also saw a change in behavior. She claimed that she had seen an increase in the already positive behaviors her 3SP students had shown. She saw an increase in one student's interest in reading and that he wanted to be more fluent. "Over the past couple of months, I've seen his behaviors increase more so. And his interest in reading has gone up. I'd say, just more so with his wanting to be more fluent and to be a better reader." She did note that his work in writing did not experience the same increase, stating "But as far as the written work, he needs definitely more motivation in that area."

Holly had been teaching in the school since the 3SP had been implemented. When asked to consider years prior and how students' academic behaviors changed, she stated:

> When I think about kids from previous years also, I think that they became more confident in themselves. And, I think that gave them the confidence to want to work with the other kids in the class much more . . . . They developed just that willingness to do more and to be a part of their classroom more so than just feeling a little bit isolated

> because they may not have had the strongest skills and now, I think it made them a little more outgoing, I can say, in some way, or more confident.

Not all teachers at HE attributed positive changes to the 3SP, however. Nicole felt that one thing that changed was that her students became dependent on the student teachers. Nicole shared that when a student teacher is not working with her 3SP students, it was a hindrance because her students depended on them. She did feel that the level of achievement had indeed changed. Although she felt the students depended on the student teachers, she also felt that the positive change was due to having the student teachers. When asked about whether she attributed the change to having a student teacher in general and having students pulled out and worked with specifically, as they are in the 3SP, she stated, "Yeah, I guess so because they do work specifically with those students, and the expectation of those students is to move and it has been successful."

Yolanda discussed the school's level of achievement before and after the 3SP was implemented. "All the scores were low," she said. She also talked about how when new students came to the school and experienced the 3SP, they tended to struggle at first.

> I'm thinking even those two students, the two students who are really struggling are not students that had been here at [this school]. It's both their first year of being here and that's always a difference. We can always tell students that go to [Hope Elementary] from K all the way up to five and we can tell when the students are new. Two out of the three students that I have in the student project are new to the school and it shows.

When asked to describe the level of achievement at the time of the interview, Yolanda affirmed:

> It's excellent. Reading scores have been going up here, and especially now that the teachers, I mean we've all been here a number of years so the consistency of the teachers.

> The principal has been here since that started, so that has definitely helped that we're all on the same page.

When asked how much of this positive change Yolanda would attribute to the 3SP itself, she had a very different answer than most of the other teachers. "I might have to say none, because the student teachers change every year. We're the ones who are consistent. The student teachers kind of go in and out. It does help to get that one-on-one with the student."

Ella was the school's site liaison. Unlike the other teachers participating in the 3SP, Ella did not have a classroom. But she did have experience with the other participating teachers and their 3SP students, as well as the participating student teachers. When asked about her perception of the 3SP and its impact on student achievement, Ella shared:

> The 3SP has provided us with the ability to provide more students with individualized instruction. Students in the 3SP typically become more focused and increase their test scores because they receive individual tutoring and their academic deficiencies/ misconceptions are addressed quickly.

With regard to academic behaviors, Ella shared that the student teachers have a hand in monitoring student behaviors.

> Student teachers are asked to monitor the completion of classwork and homework of students involved in the 3SP. They are also asked to monitor student behavior and performance throughout their school day. Typically, students involved in the project show an increase in positive academic behaviors as a result of the one-on-one assistance and guidance they receive from their student teacher.

Ella felt that the successes the school was seeing were the result of the 3SP.

> Before the Three-Student Project, our school's level of achievement was nowhere near its potential. Our school did not meet AYP and individual student data were not routinely used to inform instruction. With the implementation of the Three-Student Project as well as a school wide focus to use student data to drive instruction, our school's level of achievement has consistently improved each year. Each year, we strive to make improvements to the implementation of the Three-Student Project. We use student teacher and teacher feedback to determine areas to improve, activities and areas of focus.

For the most part, the teachers at HE who participated in the 3SP reported seeing a positive change in student achievement and academic behaviors. All but one teacher attributed the changes to the presence of 3SP. Yolanda, who felt that none of the changes were due to the 3SP felt that consistency of teachers was more of a factor. Despite this, she did acknowledge that the one-on-one students got from the student teachers (a unique component of the 3SP) did help. See Table 12 for a summary of HE's teachers' responses.

Table 12

Summary of Hope Elementary Teachers' Responses

Teacher	3SP Academic Level	Academic Behaviors at Start of Year	Change in Academic Behaviors During 3SP	Attribution of Change
Barbara	Low Achievement	Non-participatory unless elicited	Yes: they love to learn. Participatory More confident Believe school is fun Yes "Oh, a tremendous [difference]. I love it."	The student teachers Connection with university
Holly	Reading-Basic Math-Average	Very motivated Very outgoing Spunky attitude toward school Loves learning	Increase in positive academic behaviors Increased interest in reading Desire to be more fluent Little to no change in writing	

Table 12 (continued)

Summary of Hope Elementary Teachers' Responses

Teacher	3SP Academic Level	Academic Behaviors at Start of Year	Change in Academic Behaviors During 3SP	Attribution of Change
			Previous years – kids were more confident during 3SP Developed willingness to do more and to be a part of their classroom more Less feelings of isolation	
Madison	Lower to middle of basic	Somewhat off task Not behavior Issues Reserved, quiet Normal participation rate		

Table 12 (continued)

Summary of Hope Elementary Teachers' Responses

Teacher	3SP Academic Level	Academic Behaviors at Start of Year	Change in Academic Behaviors During 3SP	Attribution of Change
Nicole	Basic	Difficulty staying on task Difficulty retaining information	Became dependent on student teachers Yes, the achievement level has changed	Change is due to upper administrative change rather than presence of student teachers Change could be because the student teachers do work specifically with those [3SP] students, and the expectation of those students is to move and it has been successful
Yolanda	Below basic and proficient	Very easily distracted Very difficult getting homework back	It's excellent Reading scores have been going up here	Yes – change is due to 3SP New students struggle since they did not experience 3SP Consistency of staff (teachers/ principal) Everyone is on the same page

Table 12 (continued)

Summary of Hope Elementary Teachers' Responses

Teacher	3SP Academic Level	Academic Behaviors at Start of Year	Change in Academic Behaviors During 3SP	Attribution of Change
				Asked about how much of these changes are because of the 3SP: none, because the student teachers change every year. We're the ones who are consistent.
Ella (liaison)	n/a	n/a	More focused and increase their test scores Before the 3SP, our school's level of achievement was nowhere near its potential. Our school did not meet AYP and individual student data was not routinely used to inform instruction.	Because they receive individual tutoring and their academic deficiencies/ misconceptions are addressed quickly Is a result of the one-on-one assistance and guidance they receive from their student teacher 3SP, school wide focus to use student data do drive instruction

Table 12 (continued)

Summary of Hope Elementary Teachers' Responses

Teacher	3SP Academic Level	Academic Behaviors at Start of Year	Change in Academic Behaviors During 3SP	Attribution of Change
			Students involved in the project show an increase in positive academic behaviors Our school's level of achievement has consistently improved each year	

Because the student teachers are a part of the make-up of the 3SP, it was important to also learn from their perspective whether there was any change in academic behaviors since the 3SP began. Because the student teachers were not around before the 3SP began, not much was elicited as to any attribution in change.

Research Question 3/Research Question 4: Hope Elementary Interviews - Student Teachers

There were six student teachers who consented to participate in this investigation. Of those six, only four agreed to the interviews. These four have grade placements, so they have students that are in the grade in which they are placed. But since they also have dual certification in Special Education, they were also required to have a student who was placed in

special education in their 3SP student groups. As with the principal and teachers, student teachers were also asked about student achievement levels and academic behaviors, as well as whether they noticed any change in behavior since the start of the project. Since the student teachers were not in the building prior to the start of the 3SP, they had little to add as to what they attributed change (if any).

The participating student teacher interviewees shared that students' academic behaviors and achievement levels did change. Athena reported higher participation rates and confidence:

> I think they're a little bit more confident now and I think it might just be that they've been working on these skills since August, and now . . . but I do think that all of them I'd say participate more and are more confident in their answers. If they're answering something or even if they're asking a question they're more confident with their questions.

Kelsey felt her students' academic behaviors were improving, stating, "…well, they've definitely been getting better." Also, Kelsey felt that regarding achievement, her students were improving. "Yeah, there's a huge improvement there, especially with one of them." While Kelsey and Athena felt there was improvement in academic behaviors, Kristie felt her students were not participatory, and that the behaviors did not change. [Their behaviors are] "not great. They're really not participating, both of them." Additionally, Kristy shared regarding any change in behavior that they are "pretty consistent."

Jessica shared that one of her students used to be more on task prior to the interview, but that "he's been very off task and out of his seat a lot, and mean to the other kids recently too." Jessica wondered if there was something going on outside of school because from the beginning of the year until the time of the interview, the student had been improving. She felt the negative

change in behavior was atypical. She did however report that her other students have improved in academics as well as academic behaviors. She shared "I could see her academic growth since three student. A lot - like definitely Reading." Table 13 summarizes the results of the student teacher interviews regarding academic behaviors at HE:

Table 13

Hope Elementary – Student Teacher Interviews

Student Teacher	3SP Academic Level	Academic Behaviors	Change in Academie Behavior	Attribution of Change
Athena	2 middle in math 1 low in math 2 low in reading 1 low to middle in reading	"Very confident, participates, behaves, fairly focused" Participates A little more immature maybe "Raising his hand, flying out of his chair"	More confident Participate more Confident asking questions	
Kristie	Basic	"Not great. they're really not participating, both of them"	Not much of a behavioral difference Pretty consistent	

Table 13 (continued)

Hope Elementary – Student Teacher Interviews

Student Teacher	3SP Academic Level	Academic Behaviors	Change in Academie Behavior	Attribution of Change
Kelsey	Basic to below basic Basic	Pulling back	Typical behavior Definitely been getting better They have been getting getter since the beginning of the year, absolutely Hugh improvement	Because academic behavior has changed, academic achievement has changed Because he's retaining so much more information. I mean I see him under-standing so much more Two teachers paying attention to 30 kids is way better than one

Table 13 (continued)

Hope Elementary – Student Teacher Interviews

Student Teacher	3SP Academic Level	Academic Behaviors	Change in Academie Behavior	Attribution of Change
Jessica	They started a basic	More focused and on task in the beginning	Now between basic and proficient He's been very off task and out of his seat a lot, and mean to the other kids recently It (behavior) definitely has changed Up until January, behaviors were getting better Participating and focused I could see her academic growth since three student – reading	Unsure if student likes more attention

The principal and most teachers reported a positive change in student achievement and academic behaviors. Also, most teachers and the principal attributed the changes to the 3SP. One teacher said that she did not attribute the positive change to the 3SP, but she did acknowledge the impact from one-on-one attention (a unique component of the 3SP). Reports from the student teachers were split. Some felt there were definite positive changes in student achievement and academic behaviors, but two also felt that some students' behaviors did not change. The qualitative data generally indicate both a positive change in student achievement and academic behaviors and the change generally being attributed to the 3SP at HE.

Research Question3/Research Question 4: Hope Elementary - Quantitative Data

Triangulation of the qualitative data was done through review of quantitative data, both in student achievement test data for the building, and through review of the AGM Inventory. The results of the inventory will be discussed later in this chapter. Results for standardized achievement test scores for this school are summarized Table 14.

Table 14

Hope Elementary Pennsylvania State System of Assessment Achievement Test Score Trend From 2006-2012

Math	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
All	59	80	82	84	86	89	87
Black	58	79	82	84	85	87	86
E.D.	55	83	80	84	85	89	88
Reading	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**
All	43	60	51	55	58	68	62
Black	42	58	50	53	57	66	60
E.D.	37	62	53	55	58	70	63

Note. Taken from http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/school_assessments/7442.

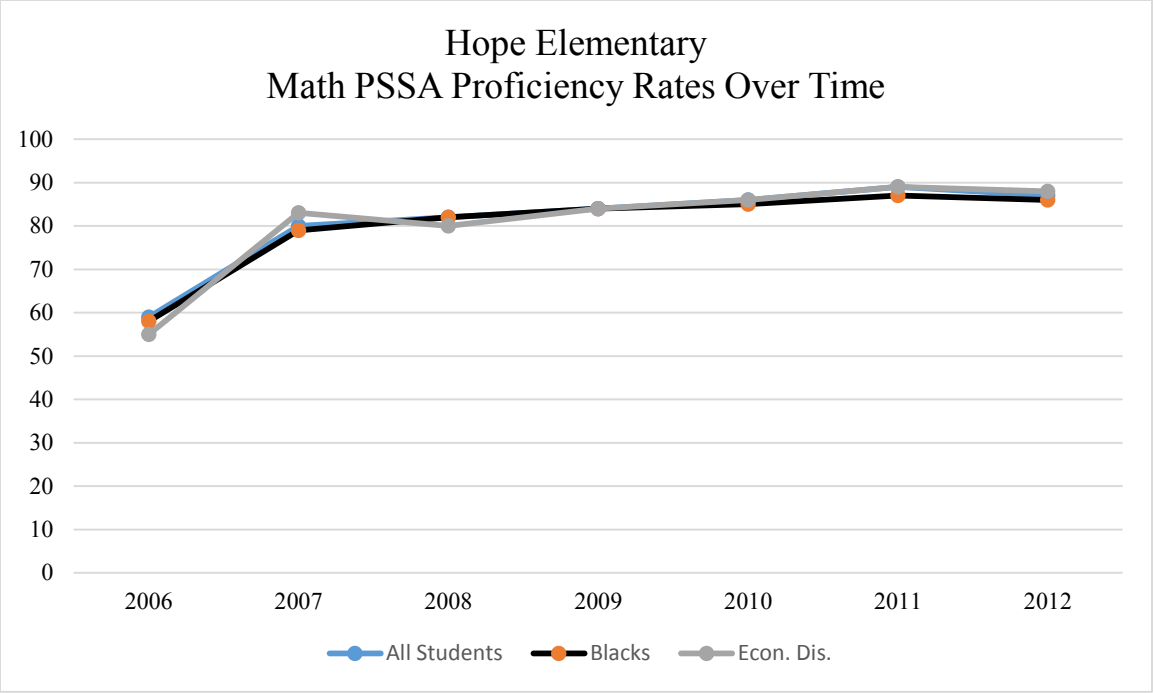

Figure 2. Hope Elementary mathematics Pennsylvania State System of Assessment achievement test score trend from 2006-2012.

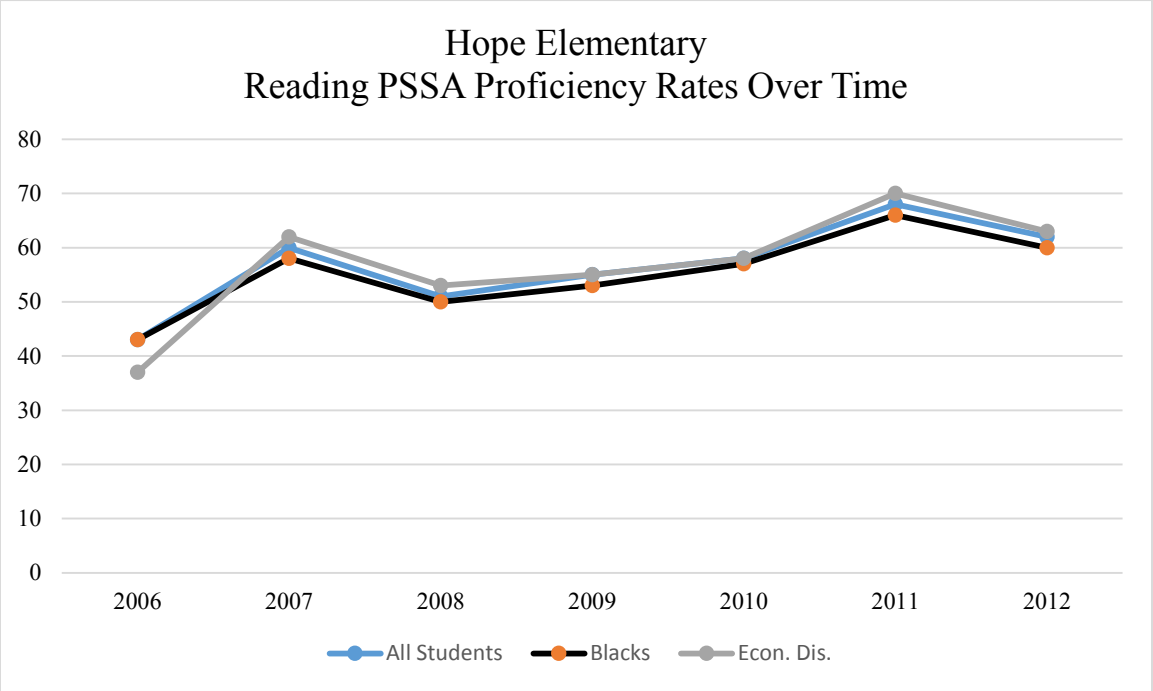

Figure 3. Hope Elementary reading Pennsylvania State System of Assessment achievement test score trend from 2006-2012.

Principal Hooper shared that the 3SP was first implemented at HE during the 2006-2007 school year. Because PSSAs are given during the spring, this means that the PSSA scores reported for 2007 are the scores that are inclusive of the first year that the 3SP was implemented. Based on scores reported by the PDE, HE experienced a dramatic increase from the year prior to implementation to the year when it was first implemented. For example, in 2006 (during the year prior to implementation) 59% of students tested on mathematics PSSAs in HE were proficient. Only 43% of students who took the PSSAs at HE were proficient in reading. In just one year, the mathematics proficiency rate increased from 59% to 80%, and the reading proficiency rate increased from 43% to 60%. That is a 21% improvement in mathematics and a 17% improvement in reading. Scores continued to increase, on average, from 2007 to 2011,

when 89% of all students at HE were at least proficient in mathematics, and 68% were proficient in reading.

At the time of data collection for this study, participants at HE (the principal, teachers, and student teachers) generally reported a positive change in academic achievement which they generally attributed to the implementation of the 3SP. State standardized achievement test scores since the implementation of the 3SP indicate drastic improvement within the first year, and steady improvement over the next five years. It would appear then, that the test scores support the general attribution of positive change in student achievement by participants at HE to the implementation of the 3SP.

PSSA scores over time support participant perceptions of achievement score increases which began during the year the 3SP was implemented and increased steadily over time. During the 2011-2012 school year, which was four years after implementation, HE students evidenced 87% proficiency level in mathematics and 62% in reading. Table 15 illustrates a comparison with district and state-level data:

Table 15

Hope Elementary, District, and State 2011-2012 Reading and Mathematics Pennsylvania State System of Assessment Data Comparison

	Hope Elementary Scores Math 2011-2012	District Scores Math 2011-2012	Pennsylvania State Scores Math 2011-2012
All	87	59	74
White	n/a	75	80
Black	86	48	50
E.D.	88	53	60
	Hope Elementary Scores Reading 2011-2012	**District Scores Reading 2011-2012**	**Pennsylvania State Scores Reading 2011-2012**
All	62	55	71
White	n/a	72	78
Black	60	44	47
E.D.	63	48	55

Table 15, which shows comparison 2012 mathematics PSSA data for HE, it's parent district level data, and state-level data, shows that HE's African-American population, or Black subgroup, was 38% more proficient or advanced than its parent district, and 36% more proficient or advanced than Black students at the state level. In fact, HE's Black students outperformed the White state average of 75% proficient or advanced on 2012 mathematics PSSAs. On 2012

reading PSSAs, 60% of HE's Black students were proficient or advanced, which was 16% higher than its parent district's proficiency levels for Blacks, and 13% higher than the state proficiency levels for the same subgroup. These data support participant testimony regarding their perception of high achievement for the school. The next section presents AGM Inventory data for an additional layer of understanding about this school's academic achievement levels. Taylor's (in progress) framework for closing the racial achievement gap was the basis behind his AGM Inventory. The inventory consisted of six sections: Soil, Seed, Root, Environment, Gardener, and Gardener Support. As discussed in Chapter II, the inventory was used in Taylor's research of schools he termed "Dame Dame" for their high levels of achievement in reading or mathematics, despite having had a population of at least 75% African-American and at least 75% of the school's students were from low-income backgrounds. Soil addressed racial stereotypes by counterbalancing them. In this category, teachers would, for example, teach about African-Americans who have overcome challenges to learning. Seed addressed expectations of student ability, requiring teachers to have high expectations for student learning. Learning would have to be rigorous and students would need to be stimulated to learn deeply about content. Root dealt with the presentation of learning through a culturally relevant lens. Teachers would need to rely on knowledge about their students' backgrounds and integrate that into students' learning experiences. The fourth component was Environment which spoke to the students' context for learning. It addressed community and schools holding each other accountable for closing racial achievement gaps and celebrating such success. Gardener dealt with teachers' beliefs and actions toward the closure of racial achievement gaps. Finally, Gardener Support dealt with the leadership of the building principal and the extent to which the principal would allow, supports,

and encourage teachers to carry out practices which close racial achievement gaps. The following are the results of the AGM Inventory.

Research Question 3/Research Question 4: Hope Elementary A Gardening Metaphor Inventory Results - Principal

According to Taylor (in progress), schools whose population demographics were at least 75% African-American, at least 75% low income, and whose standardized test scores evidenced at least 75% or more of the students were proficient or advanced in mathematics or reading had principals who scored at least a 75 J_k on the AGM Inventory (See Appendix B). Those principals who scored less than 75 J_k on the AGM Inventory did not meet all three conditions. Based on the AGM Inventory given to the principal of HE (See Table 16), a school which was ≥ 75% African-American, ≥ 75% low income, and ≥ 75% proficient or advanced in mathematics during the 2011-2012 school year, this school met the criteria for Dame Dame status.

The AGM Inventory completed by Principal Hooper evidenced a total Justice Potential (J_k) score of 75.83. The minimum J_k score contributing to the designation of Dame Dame status was 75. The Dame Dame status met by HE, combined with state standardized test score trends since the beginning of the 3SP, VAM scores, and participant interview data suggest that the 3SP made an impact on student achievement and academic behaviors. Table 16 summarizes Principal Hooper's AGM Inventory results.

Table 16

A Gardening Metaphor Inventory Results – Principal – Hope Elementary

	P – HE – 1
Total SO%	85.00
Total SE%	85.00
Total RO%	75.00
Total EN%	30.00
Total GA%	80.00
Total GS%	100.00
Total Subtotal	455.00
Total Sub/6	75.83
Total J_k	75.83

Teachers at HE were also asked to complete the AGM Inventory, Teacher Version (See Appendix C). All six teachers participated in the completion of the inventory. To preserve anonymity, teachers were not asked to include their names on the inventories. Once returned, the researcher assigned them the labels T for teacher, HE for Hope Elementary, and each inventory was assigned a number (1-6) for the purposes of reporting only. Results of the AGM Inventory, Teacher's Version, evidenced a J_k of 87.23. The minimum J_k for Dame Dame designation was a 75.00. Teacher inventory results show that teachers perceive the presence of characteristics of a Dame Dame school. The results of the AGM Inventory, Teacher Version are found in Table 17.

Table 17

A Gardening Metaphor Inventory Results – Teachers – Hope Elementary

	T-HE-1	T-HE-2	T-HE-3	T-HE-4	T-HE-5	T-HE-6	Average
Total SO%	70	80	95	90	90	95	86.65
Total SE%	80	80	95	95	100	95	90.85
Total RO%	75	70	90	65	100	100	83.35
Total EN%	65	80	85	80	100	100	85.00
Total GA%	95	95	95	95	100	95	95.85
Total GS%	55	70	75	95	100	95	81.65
Total Subtotal	440	475	535	520	590	580	523.35
Total Sub/6	73.33	79.17	89.17	86.67	98.33	96.67	87.23
Total J_k	73.33	79.17	89.17	86.67	98.33	96.67	87.23

Student teachers were also asked to complete the AGM Inventory, Student Teacher Version (See Appendix D). All six student teachers who participated in the 3SP also participated in completion of the inventory. To protect anonymity, they were not asked to include their names on the inventory. The researcher assigned designations for each inventory completed for

the purposes of reporting the data. The following are the designations: ST (Student Teacher), HE (Hope Elementary) and each returned inventory was labeled one through six. One student teacher did not complete two sections of the inventory.

Results of the AGM Inventory, Student Teacher Version indicate a J_k of 77.50. The minimum required for Dame Dame designation was a 75.00. Results show that student teachers perceived characteristics of Dame Dame schools to be present at HE. Table 18 summarizes the results of the AGM Inventory, Student Teacher Version:

Table 18

A Gardening Metaphor Inventory Results – Student Teachers – Hope Elementary

	ST-HE-1	ST-HE-2	ST-HE-3	ST-HE-4	ST-HE-5	ST-HE-6	Average
Total SO%	80	70	75	80	65	70	73.33
Total SE%	80	65	65	100	95	50	75.83
Total RO%	70	70	85	100	80	75	80.00
Total EN%	45		75	100	65	45	66.00
Total GA%	85	85	100	100	95	80	90.83
Total GS%	50		100	100	85	60	79.00
Total Subtotal	410	290	500	580	485	380	440.83
Total Sub/6	68.33	72.5	83.33	96.67	80.83	63.33	77.50
Total J_k	68.3	72.5	83.3	96.7	80.8	63.3	77.5

Research Question 3/Research Question 4: A Gardening Metaphor Inventory Summary – Hope Elementary

Results of each of the AGM Inventories show that Principal Hooper, teachers, and student teachers at HE perceived that characteristics of Dame Dame schools are present in HE.

Teachers' scores indicated a perception stronger than that of the principal. Student teachers' scores indicate a perception similar to that of Principal Hooper. Student teachers and Principal Hooper scored Environment the lowest. Principal Hooper's score was a 30, and the student teacher's score was a 66. Teachers had a higher perception of characteristics present under Environment, than that of the principal or student teachers.

The significance of the AGM Inventory for HE is that the score, combined with school demographics of at least 75%, and student performance on state standardized tests which evidenced that at least 75% of students were proficient in mathematics meant that HE met all of the criteria for Dame Dame designation.

Research Question 3/Research Question 4: Rising Star Academy

The 3SP was implemented at two sites at the time of this study, therefore, it was important to take a qualitative and quantitative look at the second site, referred to here as RSA. This second site is located in the same school district as the first. Stated at the beginning of Chapter IV was that participants in the second site, RSA reported that not all the facets of the 3SP were followed consistently due to the readiness of the school to do so. For example, some teachers and the principal reported that behavior was more of a priority both the previous year, and during the first half of the year this study was conducted. The principal shared her behavior focus in this way:

> Every month we teach and re-teach our behavior expectations or your behavior norms. You call them norms. So literally the first four months of school, we brought a school bus, kids had to practice sitting on a school bus, like you teach, "This is how we want you to walk in the halls." And we teach and re-teach and re-teach and re-teach every single month.

Interviews with teachers at RSA confirmed that they were only just getting to focus more on academics at the time the interviews were conducted, which was between January and March. Interviews with both teachers and student teachers revealed that some student teachers had not pulled their students in the 3SP regularly, and all but one student teacher had not done any of the parent communication piece. The report of data collected from RSA that follows takes into consideration this school's needs at this time which made it unable to follow the 3SP in the same way as HE. Certainly, if the needs of the school were more behavioral and it did not allow full implementation of the 3SP, the answer to the research questions from RSA would be impacted.

Data gathered from RSA for RQ4 come from principal and teacher individual interviews, the student teacher focus group interview, and observations of the student teachers working with their students in the 3SP. Additionally, quantitative data on the building's state standardized test scores will be reported for a look at achievement both prior to and during the year of 3SP implementation. Finally, AGM Inventory data will be presented for an additional layer of understanding about this school's level of academic achievement.

Research Question 3/Research Question 4: Interviews – Principal Shannon

The researcher asked Principal Shannon about the school's level of achievement as well as her perception of the impact (if any) of the 3SP on student achievement and academic behaviors. Her assessment of student achievement in her building began with state standardized test scores, which uncovered poor achievement levels.

> [Our achievement level] was abysmal. Horrible. We're in the high 30s for Mathematics and Reading. It was — it was just bad. Our fifth graders — our girls — our fifth grade girls I think were 7%, and our boys were — fifth grade averaged at 25% with the girls really taking a hit.

When asked about the previous year, she stated, "Our academic performance was atrocious last year. Same as the year's prior, too . . . ."

Principal Shannon attributed the school's poor achievement to poor behaviors in the school. As stated earlier in this chapter, she began to implement a school-wide behavior plan to move the school into the right direction. The following interview excerpt describes the behavioral focus of RSA and the program that was followed to address these behaviors. The excerpt is included here to emphasize Principal Shannon's position that behavior instruction overshadowed academic instruction for some time. The excerpt follows an account of a professional development she and staff from her school attended on behavior. She reflected on what was learned, and shared what she gleaned by her and her teachers.

> [What] I took away and my teachers took away was a quote from PBIS that says, "If a child doesn't know how to swim, we teach. If a child doesn't know how to do math, we teach. If a child doesn't know how to read, we teach. If a child doesn't know how to behave?" And it was a question mark, like, do you punish or do you teach? And it really got us thinking, "We need to teach." So we do a lot more with teaching kids what our expectations are and what we're doing.

Regarding achievement levels, Principal Shannon had already shared about the previous two years of achievement. The 3SP was only implemented this year at RSA, therefore, no state standardize achievement test data were yet available for this school post-implementation. Therefore, the principal did not share whether she felt there was a change in student achievement since the 3SP had been implemented.

When asked about whether she attributed any positive change in student behaviors to the implementation of the 3SP, her response was about the teachers, not the project. Her response is indicated here:

> I attribute it to the teachers that — I don't attribute it to — I think anything that we would've brought in would've worked, because the teachers designed it, and the teacher wanted it. So I don't know if anything would have worked, but the teachers really took the time as a group, like, so, for principles — and this is a very different, I have a very different principle stance now than I had in my previous job — so I'm used to telling people what to do. "We're gonna do this, we're gonna do this, and this is my plan, kind've." It wasn't a whole lot of collaboration on things. I had a couple teachers I would work with, but, you know, you have a couple and that was usually it. But this — what we did here at [our building] was different because everyone had a say. So everybody — we went to visit 90/90/90 schools last year, to the 90/90/90 conference, we visited KIPP, we visited — I mean, we just really went out and visited all different — and it wasn't just my pick of teachers, it was really random who got to go, and so a lot of the staff got to go out to do things. They worked in their different teams, they did all the research, then every staff meeting each month, each team presented on what they were and got their feedback. So it was that process to me and we had very — we lost 50% of our staff again this year, because of — due to the furloughs. So we — 80% of us came new last year, over 80, "cause I'm an addition to the 80 — and then we lost another 50% of the staff again this year." So people were shocked that this year was such a better start with that much of a

> staff turnover, but the staff heard and saw everything that the previous staff had done. So they automatically realized, "Oh the teachers did this; the teachers wanted this." So for — that's what I attribute it to. The hands-down — it's the fact that teachers owned, wanted, and asked for, "This is what we want [our building] to look like."

Regarding academics, Principal Shannon confirmed what other teachers were saying regarding academic focus.

> I have teachers coming out and saying, "This is the first year I've been able to focus on academics." Like they used to be good teachers because they could manage their classroom. Well now that behavior's not an issue, they're realizing they're not equipped to get to the academics.

Asked specifically about the impact of the 3SP, Principal Shannon felt she just didn't have enough information to make that evaluation.

> I just feel like I don't know a lot yet about the impact for A, B, and C, Academic performance, school culture, and parental involvement. Like, I don't know that, I don't know that I have enough data or feedback to be able to give.

Additionally, her words confirmed that the 3SP has not been in the forefront of her priorities.

> I really haven't talked about — we've been doing so many other things that I ha — like the Three Student Project has not been my focus this year. It really hasn't. Like, getting the students — teachers a place to have class was a bigger issue. The things that we've had issues with, that's something that I wish — I wish I could answer this better.

Summarizing, Principal Shannon could not attribute any changes in student achievement or academic behaviors to the implementation of the 3SP because: 1) behavior instruction was more of a focus, and 2) they have not fully implemented the 3SP as of her interview. While the whole school in general had not focused highly on the 3SP, some teachers reported based on their individual levels of implementation. The following section reports teacher perceptions of the impact of the 3SP on student achievement and academic behaviors.

Research Question 3/Research Question 4: Rising Star Academy Interviews - Teachers

Four teachers and the site-liaison consented to interviews at RSA. Grades taught ranged from kindergarten to fourth grade with the site-liaison covering kindergarten through fifth grades. While one of the teachers reported having prior experience with the 3SP in another building, for the others, this was their first year of implementation. When asked about the impact (if any) of the 3SP on student achievement and academic behaviors, the teachers were asked to focus on achievement and behaviors within their classrooms. By achievement, what was requested was information on the students' academic behavior habits. Participation levels, engagement levels, and levels of focus were some of the examples elicited from the teachers. Additionally, how the 3SP students were performing academically in reading and mathematics were also solicited. Behaviors at the start of the year ranged from students being easily distracted, and not returning homework, to being less engaged and not retaining information. Academic levels ranged as well. Not all students who were selected for the 3SP were the lowest achieving students. For example, Lucy stated her 3SP students were low in both reading and Mathematics, and that these were her lowest two students. However, Ham shared that his 3SP students were all middle-level students and that he had four or five students performing at lower

levels. Still another teacher, Abby, reported that she had 10 students who were lower performing than her 3SP students.

The teachers were asked about whether there were changes in the academic behaviors of their 3SP students since the implementation of the 3SP. Abby and Lucy reported changes in academic behaviors and achievement. Lucy stated that the students were getting more focused and were turning in homework. Abby acknowledged that students were not at their benchmarks, but they have improved. "Yes. There's been – we've seen a great deal of improvement. Are the students at the benchmarks or the places where they're standardized? No, they're not there yet but they are making great improvements. They're making great progress." Toby did not feel there was opportunity for change, stating "No, I don't think that there's been enough contact to warrant change." The site-liaison's role with children in the school was mostly one of social behavioral problems, so she was unable to speak much to the academic behaviors or achievement levels of the students. She did, however, state that she felt the one-on-one with students helped build self-esteem and motivation for students to want to work harder in school.

Finally, since some of the teacher participants from RSA shared that there were changes in behavior since the 3SP was implemented, a final question posed was, to what did the participants attribute the change? Lucy did share that there was a change in her 3SP students' academic behaviors and she attributed those changes to the students having more one-on-one attention from the student teachers. She felt that it gave the 3SP students a sense of feeling successful, made them feel that the student teachers took interest in them, helped them to see their own growth, and the one-on-one attention also helped the students to understand content previously not understood. Lucy stated "Sometimes it's nice to have somebody just pull you aside and say 'Hey, let's just talk about this a little more.' And then they're like 'Oh, I get it!'"

For Lucy, she felt the impact was huge. Based on Lucy's response, one can see that the student teacher for her 3SP students had, in-fact, been pulling the students and spending one-on-one time with them. Unlike Lucy, Toby, and Ham both reported that they were unable to assess the impact of the project because their student teachers really had not begun pulling students yet. Even though Abby shared that her students had made real progress, and were harder working, she hadn't given an attribution to the change in academic behaviors. Michelle did not have the same interaction with 3SP students as the classroom teachers had because she was not a classroom teacher. She shared that her role meant that students interacted with her as a function of discipline. As a site-liaison, she shared her perspective from her work with coordinating the 3SP. From this perspective, she also attributed the changes shared by other teachers to the one-on-one interaction with the student teachers. She said:

> There is not much of a desire on their part for learning, but that one-on-one attention that they're receiving with the student teacher, working on those basics that they're not strong in, I think just helps to build the self-esteem, to encourage a student to want to try harder in school.

Table 19 summarizes the results of the teacher interviews at RSA.

Table 19

Rising Star Academy – Teacher Interviews for Research Question 3 and Research Question 4

Teacher	3SP Academic Level	Academic Behaviors	Change in Academie Behavior	Attribution of Change
Lucy	Kindergarten 2-3 students Low in reading and math	Easily Not returning homework Social: one is quiet, non-social The other is too social	Getting more acclimated and more comfortable More focused Turning in homework More appropriate social behaviors	One-on-one with student Sense of feeling successful 3SP - student teachers taking interest in them Student being helped to see their own growth Talking one-on-one with students to help them get it Impact is huge

Table 19 (continued)

Rising Star Academy – Teacher Interviews for Research Question 3 and Research Question 4

Teacher	3SP Academic Level	Academic Behaviors	Change in Academie Behavior	Attribution of Change
Toby	1st Low in reading and math	Distracted Off-task Less engaged Too social during learning time	Not enough contact to warrant change	Impact not able to be assessed
Ham	4th Middle level	Inconsistent understanding Difficulty retaining information Off task	More comfortable	Not enough contact to warrant change Have not noticed any change in Behaviors

Table 19 (continued)

Rising Star Academy – Teacher Interviews for Research Question 3 and Research Question 4

Teacher	3SP Academic Level	Academic Behaviors	Change in Academie Behavior	Attribution of Change
Abby	3rd Basic level	Show effort Staying on task Try hard Easily frustrated Good at retaining information	Work harder Great deal of improvement Making real progress	No attribution given
Michelle	K-5 Liaison	n/a	n/a	One-on-one builds self-esteem to want to try harder to work in school

Because student teachers worked with students in the 3SP and student teacher roles were directly involved in the 3SP, they were asked to share their perceptions about the impact of the 3SP on student achievement and academic behaviors.

Research Question 3/Research Question 4: Rising Star Academy Interviews – Student Teachers (Focus Group)

There were six student teachers who consented to participate in this study. Five of them were available to participate in the focus group interview. It was uncovered during the interview that these participants generally had not been seeing their students in the one-on-one intervention setting yet. At the time of this interview, they really had not started the process of implementing researched strategies in the structured way that HE had. Based on the teacher interviews and the interview with the site liaison, as well as the principal, this may be because the behaviors of the students in the school did not allow the building to move forward with this level of implementation. One of the student teachers did report starting this process, but for the others, they either pulled the students informally in a group setting, or did not pull them yet at all. It is with this in mind that the following qualitative data are reported.

The first research question asks if there is any change in academic behavior, then to what did the participants attribute the change? Jennifer did not observe a noticeable change in her students' academic behaviors since the beginning of the year. She felt that they were less participatory in the larger group setting and more participatory in the small group setting. She also reported that when her 3SP students were together in the small group setting, they did not tend to work well with each other. She stated, "…with the dynamic of my group, they don't work well within the group sometimes. It's a competition between them and then it gets, because of where they are with their behavior, then turns negative from that." Calli shared a similar scenario of participation in that her 3SP students participated more in a one-on-one group setting. "Two of mine participate more when we're one on one. They're really quiet and more reserved when we're in a small group or a whole group setting. And then one of mine

participates throughout any type of setting." Calli also shared that only one student seemed to show a change in grades: "The only change I would say now is with one student in particular, she'll only do work if I'm doing work one-on-one with her, most of the time." For her other two students, she reported their grades as being the same, but noted that they were As and Bs before, and continued to be As and Bs. Shana did note a change in academic behaviors. She shared that her 3SP students were now more likely to participate and she attributed that to the time she spent with them. She stated, "…once these students have gotten—have went through the three student project, and I've kind of instilled what I call academic confidence in them, they are more likely to raise their hand and try a question." Joyce did express a change in academic behaviors.

> I want to add too I noticed that one of the students in particular is extremely quiet and pretty withdrawn, and in the beginning of the year, she would—she has that desire to participate but she was never confident in her answers. Whether or not she had the right thinking or the wrong thinking, she wasn't confident in her answers. Now she raises her hand every single question, whether the thinking is right or wrong, she has that confidence to still participate.

While noting a positive change in academic behaviors for this student, Joyce still felt that academic achievement with her 3SP students was still pretty consistent. Pat noted that students were progressing, but did not comment on any grade improvement or improvement in academic behaviors. Table 20 summarizes response from the student teacher focus group at Rising Star Elementary.

Table 20

Rising Star Academy – Student Teacher Focus Group Summary of Student Achievement and Academic Behaviors

Teacher	Academic Behaviors	Change in Academic Behaviors	Attribution of Change
Jennifer	Less participatory in larger group setting More participatory in the small group setting Does not work well with other 3SP students during small 3SP group		

Table 20 (continued)

Rising Star Academy – Student Teacher Focus Group Summary of Student Achievement and Academic Behaviors

Teacher	Academic Behaviors	Change in Academic Behaviors	Attribution of Change
Calli	More participatory in one-on-one setting	One-on-one dependency	
	Quiet and reserved during small or whole group setting	Grade improvement for one	
	One participates throughout any type of setting	One student will now only work if accompanied by the student teacher	
		No change for the others	
		They were As and Bs. They are As and B	
Shana	3SP student did not attempt to answer questions	3SP students are more likely to raise their hands and attempt to answer	Attributed to the 3SP and time she has instilled academic confidence in them

Table 20 (continued)

Rising Star Academy – Student Teacher Focus Group Summary of Student Achievement and Academic Behaviors

Teacher	Academic Behaviors	Change in Academic Behaviors	Attribution of Change
Joyce	Quiet, withdrawn Desire to participate but not confident in her answers	Pretty consistent academically Hard to see progression Now she raises her hand every single question, whether the thinking is right or wrong, she has that confidence to still participate	
Pat		Progressing So they're progressing with mine, in that the skills that I want them to work with, we've moved on – we're not still on the first one	

Because participants at RSA had not yet fully implemented the 3SP at the time of the interviews, it was hard for them to assess whether there were clear changes in student

achievement attributable to the implementation of the 3SP. Some participants reported some changes in academic behaviors, but attribution of these changes to the 3SP were also unable to be assessed. Furthermore, because the 3SP was only first implemented during the year of this study, no standardized achievement test data during the year of implementation could be gathered for the purpose of triangulation of data.

Table 21, Figure D and Figure E are thereby presented to inform about student achievement at RSA prior to the implementation of the 3SP, which was during the 2012-2013 school year. It is worth noting that scores for both reading and mathematics were on a steady general incline until the 2010-2011 school year, topping off at 48% proficient in mathematics, and 36% proficient in reading. However, the following school year, 2011-2012, when the school experienced a reported 80% teacher replacement and new principal as reported by Principal Shannon, the school experienced a marked decline. Only 32% of all students who took the 2012 PSSAs at RSA were proficient in mathematics, a 15 point drop from the previous year. Reading scores for all students in 2012 showed a nine point drop from the previous year.

Table 21

Rising Star Academy – All Students (Grades 3-5) Proficiency in Mathematics and Reading Scores Over Time

Math	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
All	27	30	38	41	40	48	32
Black	27	29	38	40	40	48	32
E.D.	27	33	40	42	42	48	32
Reading	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**
All	27	25	27	32	33	36	27
Black	28	24	27	33	33	36	27
E.D.	26	27	28	33	33	36	28

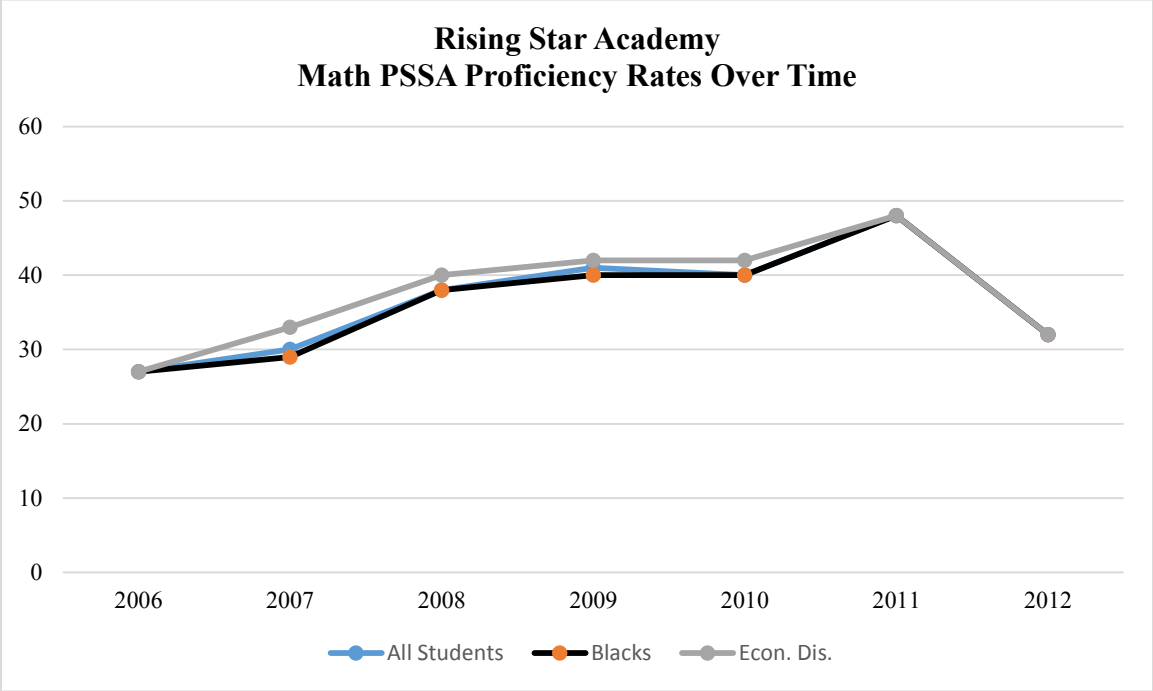

Figure 4. Rising Star Academy mathematics Pennsylvania State System of Assessment proficiency rate trends over time.

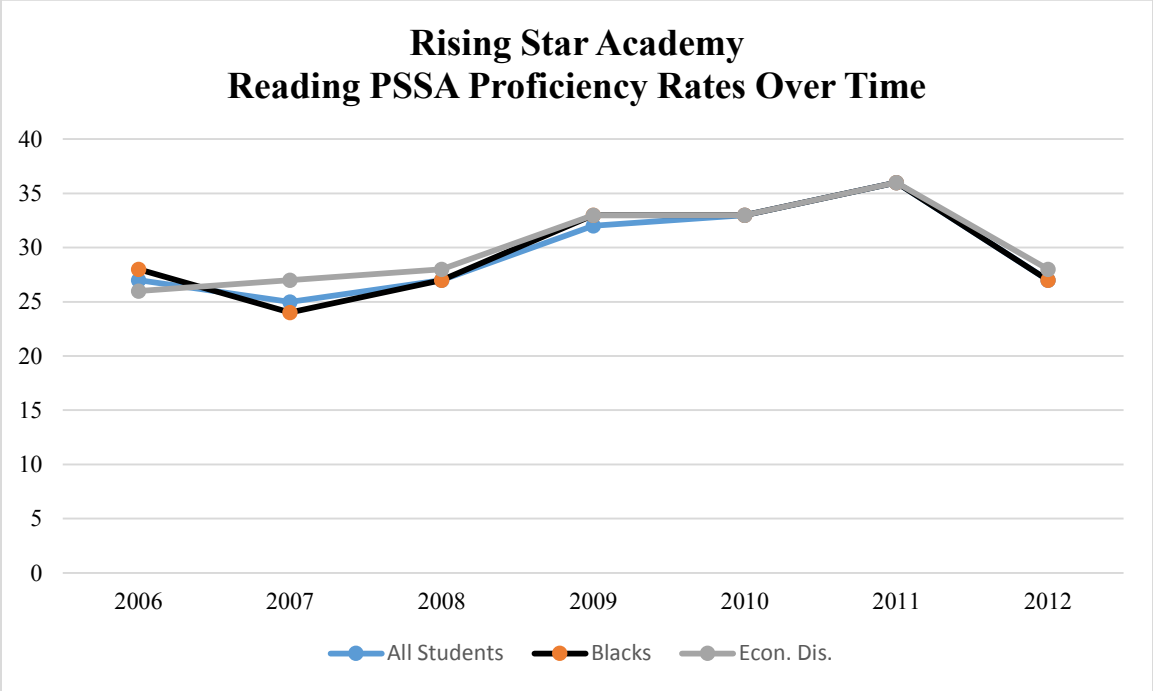

Figure 5. Rising Star Academy reading Pennsylvania State System of Assessment proficiency rates over time.

Research Question 3/Research Question 4: Rising Star Academy – A Gardening Metaphor Inventory Results – Principal

Stated in the earlier section on HE's AGM Inventory results, the inventory had applications to schools which were of high African-American demographics, high levels of students from low income backgrounds, and yet had high levels of academic achievement proficiency rates in either reading or mathematics. HE's principal inventory fell in-line with Taylor's (in progress) research, meaning that HE had a population of at least 75% African-American, at least 75% of the students were from low-income backgrounds, and yet, at least 75% of the students were proficient in mathematics. Principal Hooper had completed the inventory and his Justice Potential (J_k) score was at least 75. The school's demographics, the students' proficiency levels, and Principal Hooper's J_k rating combined give his school the designation of Dame Dame status.

RSA Principal Shannon also consented to complete the AGM Inventory. Her building's demographics met the criteria to be eligible for Dame Dame status should her building's proficiency rating also meet the criteria, as well as her rating on the AGM Inventory. However, as noted in the previous section, her building's level of achievement did not evidence the required minimum of 75% or more of the students performing at least proficient on the state standardized test, and Principal Shannon's J_k score on the AGM was not at least 75 (See Table 22).

Table 22

A Gardening Metaphor Inventory Results – Principal – Rising Star Academy

	P – RSA – 1
Total SO%	60
Total SE%	60
Total RO%	42.5
Total EN%	5
Total GA%	65
Total GS%	65
Total Subtotal	297.5
Total Sub/6	49.58333333
Total J_k	49.58

Teachers at RSA were asked to complete the AGM Inventory – Teacher Version. There were five teachers who completed the inventory. Of those five, one completed two sections, possibly because the site-liaison teacher at RSA was not a classroom teacher and could not answer classroom-related inventory items. Results of the AGM Inventory – Teacher Version indicate a perceived Jk of 78.71 among RSA teachers. One category, although low, is consistent with findings from Taylor (in progress) which were that many schools that met the criteria for Dame Dame designation were often low in Environment. One other category, Gardner Support (GS) was also rated significantly lower. Results of the AGM Inventory – Teacher Version are summarized in the table below.

Table 23

A Gardening Metaphor Inventory Results – Teachers – Rising Star Academy

	T-RSA-1	T-RSA-2	T-RSA-3	T-RSA-4	T-RSA-5	Average
Total SO%	85	85	90	70		82.5
Total SE%	95	100	90	90		93.75
Total RO%	80	90	100	100		92.5
Total EN%	55	50	75	30	70	56
Total GA%	85	90	90	85		87.5
Total GS%	75	45	75	5	100	60
Total Subtotal	475	460	520	380		472.25
Total Sub/6	79.17	76.67	86.67	63.33		78.71
Total J_k	79.17	76.67	86.67	63.33		78.71

Student Teachers at RSA were also invited to participate in completion of the AGM Inventory – Student Teacher Version. Of the six student teachers who consented to participation in this study, three agreed to complete the inventory. Each returned inventory was given the designation of Student Teacher (ST), RSA, and labeled one through three. This was to protect

the anonymity of the participants, and to allow for separate analysis of the student teachers versus the teachers or principal. Results of the AGM Inventory – Student Teacher Version indicate a score of 75. Seventy-five is the minimum score meeting criteria for eligibility of Dame Dame designation. Sub-category scores ranged from 53.33 to 91.67. The lowest score rating was of Environment (En) and is consistent with other inventory results of Dame Dame schools. The highest, at 91.67, was of the Gardener (GA) category. Table 24 summarizes the AGM Inventory – Student Teacher Version results.

Table 24

A Gardening Metaphor Inventory Results – Student Teachers – Rising Star Academy

	ST-RSA-1	ST-RSA-2	ST-RSA-3	Average
Total SO%	65	60	85	70.00
Total SE%	75	75	95	81.67
Total RO%	80	65	90	78.33
Total EN%	10	85	65	53.33
Total GA%	90	90	95	91.67
Total GS%	65	85	75	75.00
Total Subtotal	385	460	505	450
Total Sub/6	64.17	76.67	84.17	75.00
Total J_k	64.17	76.67	84.17	75.00

Taylor's work (in progress) suggested that if characteristics on his inventory were present, schools would be able to close and even reverse trends in achievement gaps between African-American and White students. Hope Elementary School's proficiency levels do, in fact,

show reversal of the Black/White achievement gap trend. Later in this chapter, characteristics of culturally responsive practices as perceived by participants at both schools will be explored.

Research Question 3/Research Question 4: Summary

In summary, RQ3 asks, "What are student teachers', parents', teachers', and principals' perceptions of the impact of the Three-Student Project on school culture and student achievement?" RQ4 asks "In what ways has the 3SP impacted student achievement and academic behaviors?" Participant perceptions were elicited regarding the nature of academic and student behaviors (as a function of school culture), as well as their perceptions of the status of student achievement levels. Quantitative data including PSSA scores, and VAM scores were presented (if available) for triangulation of data. AGM Inventory results were presented to give a more in-depth understanding of school achievement levels.

When asked about whether there was an increase in student achievement, almost all participants reported a positive change in student grades, or achievement scores. Most also reported a positive change in student academic behaviors since the implementation of the 3SP. Of greatest importance, most attributed the improvement of student achievement and academic behaviors at HE to the 3SP.

While evidence seems to support what participants have shared, which in general, was that the 3SP positively impacted student achievement and academic behaviors at HE, project implementation at RSA did not occur to the same level of fidelity, and therefore, participants could not attribute any changes in achievement or behavior to the implementation of the 3SP. Next, data addressing RQ5 are presented in order to understand the impact of the 3SP on student teachers' preparedness to become culturally responsive and good teachers overall. Next, data

addressing RQ5 are presented in order to understand the impact of the 3SP on student teachers' preparedness to become culturally responsive and good teachers overall.

Research Question 5

What impact has the Professional Development School's Three-Student Project had on student teachers' preparation to become culturally responsive teachers (RQ3)?

Data collected which answers RQ3 come from principal interviews, teacher interviews, student teacher interviews, and the student teacher focus group interview. Data are reported by school and by participants.

Research Question 5: Hope Elementary Interviews – Principal

Principal Hooper was asked to share his perception of how prepared the 3SP student teachers were to be culturally relevant practitioners and good teachers overall. At first, his responses were focused on being good teachers overall. He spoke of the student teachers' readiness levels to enter a classroom as being ahead of most student teachers. For example, he stated:

> I know that they're differentiated instruction within the classroom is above most fist-year teachers. They're able to know what activity [they are] supposed to prepare for that particular classroom or that particular lesson to help that student. And the impact of it – to look at it and analyze it and change [their] instruction the next day is above most first-year teachers, because they know that the data really is a higher determinant of how to work with a student – not just what the teachers feels, but what the data is saying. So as far as being able to do differentiated instruction, they're above.

As far as instructional delivery, Principal Hooper said, ". . . they're probably eight or nine months ahead of most other student teachers . . . of understanding what they should do on the

first day, understanding where – what they should do during the next month." He also felt that student teachers were unaware of just how prepared they were. He said, ". . . they don't understand how much more they're ahead than most of the other student teachers." So, Principal Hooper definitely felt the 3SP students were well prepared, even to the extent of being ahead of other student teachers by months. Asked about student teachers' preparation to be culturally responsive teachers, his response was "I would say for sure." Next, teachers shared their thoughts and perceptions about the readiness of their student teachers in the 3SP.

Research Question 5: Hope Elementary Interviews – Teachers

Holly felt the 3SP effectively prepared student teachers. She said:

> I think it definitely prepares them much more than they would anywhere else. I think that they become more sensitive, definitely more sensitive to the issues and to the concerns and the needs of the children, and just kind of opening up doors for them to look into other ways that they can bring culture back into the classroom for these kids.

In reference to the use of culturally responsive teaching, Nicole felt that the 3SP was a good role model. She said:

> I think that they, just by seeing the model or seeing that it's an important part of our curriculum, that they have picked it up and have hopefully carried it along with them as they've gone onto their teaching careers. I know during the time that they're in the classroom, like I said its part of our curriculum, so they have no choice but to depict that kind of cultural environment.

Asked about how teachers prepared the student teachers, Nicole said, "Even when they're developing their lessons we try to encourage them to use pictures of diversity and not just pictures of one ethnic over another."

When asked whether the 3SP prepared students to be culturally responsive teachers, Yolanda replied that it did. She explained her rationale as the 3SP helped with:

> Understanding that all kids can learn, regardless of African-American learning support. They can learn. You just have to meet them where they are and then move them from that point. So when you work with the three students one-on-one, you have to pinpoint exactly what they know, what they demonstrate, their strengths and weaknesses, and then find out different strategies to help them grow academically.

Research Question 5: Hope Elementary – Student Teachers

During interviews, if there was time, one additional question that was posed to student teachers was "What advice would you give another student teacher to help him or her be prepared to teach in a setting with similar demographics?" The answer one student teacher gave sheds light on her preparedness to be a culturally responsive practitioner, because she felt that it was important to get to know the students. Jessica stated:

> Just I would say try to understand where they come from and their background because they may have a behavior problem and that just might be because something's not right like at home. So I would always say before you punish them, just try to get to the root of the problem you know . . . . Get to the – their backgrounds, their families, where they're coming from. Because not every student has the perfect home and stuff.

Research Question 5: Rising Star Academy – Principal Shannon

Asked about whether the 3SP helped teachers to become culturally responsive, and better teachers overall, Principal Shannon's perception was that it did. Her answer is stated below:

> Do I think that this helps the teachers become culturally responsive and better teachers overall? I do. I think anytime that a new, a person coming into education can spend one-

on-one time with children is huge, because it starts to move away — I guess it goes back to race in general. When you can start pulling away stereotypes that you've had and get to know people one-on-one, it just changes, like, you start seeing people as a person instead of the race and the stereotypes that always go along with it, and I think that the majority of our student teachers are white, we only have one African-American student teacher, and I don't know them to say that they have a lot of experience or don't have a lot of experience with African-American people, but I would probably bet that the majority of them do not. So the fact that they get one-on-one time with the students and can have real conversations with them and work with them and get to know their families and their parents, I think it starts to change myths that they may have, or stereotypes that they may have or even biases that they keep to build better relationships, and I also think it gives them a better understanding of where — of what their students need.

Principal Shannon's perception is focused on the idea of student teachers having one-on-one attention with students. She focused on the idea that this environment removes stereotypes because it helps student teachers get to know their students. Her answer is consistent with her response when asked about culturally responsive practices within her building. She shared about GGI and the morning meetings that allowed for getting to know students. But, as she admitted, they (as a building) needed to do better with culturally responsive instruction. So, in the way of building relationships, Principal Shannon felt that the 3SP helped her student teachers become more culturally responsive and better teachers overall. But, specifically, her perception was that the 3SP helped her student teachers become better at the relationship building part of culturally responsive practices. While it was important to learn Principal Shannon's perception of the impact of the 3SP on student teachers' preparedness to become culturally responsive and good

teachers overall, it was also important to learn the perceptions of teachers and student teachers. Next, teacher perceptions are revealed.

Research Question 5: Rising Star Academy – Teachers

Lucy, a kindergarten teacher at RSA shared her thoughts, which were mixed in nature. She felt the 3SP helped student teachers be better prepared teachers, but also thought that the 3SP showed them to focus only on the students at the lower-readiness level. She stated:

> I think I like the Three-Student Project because I think it is very important to look in-depth at one or two students and be able to say "This is what the student is missing, and this is how I can fill that hole." I do think it's important for them to plan, and they will do this overall student teaching but it's not necessarily with the Three-Student Project. To be able to look at a room and say, I have this child who can't write her name, and I have this child who can read books on a first grade level, and how do I help them both, how do I grow them both, how do I sit in a room all by myself, and be able to meet the needs of all of the students. So, the Three-Student Project is great, but I'm not sure that it gets them thinking about that whole range. Because you're always looking at the low.

She elaborated further on her concern, saying:

> It's not fair to those kids who come in knowing, I mean, I had I think three kids who knew every letter and every sound when they walked in the door the first day of school. And then I have these down here that are in the Three-Student Project, but have made great gains, but I can't say, "Well you just hang on and wait till these kids catch up" because that's just not fair. So I think part of my job with my student teacher is to make sure that she understands that you have to make sure that you're meeting the needs of every kid.

Later, what Lucy said perhaps hones in her perception of how the 3SP helps the student teachers. She was sharing about how students come to school with baggage and one never knows what baggage has manifested itself, affecting the students' moods. She said, "And that's why I like the year-long part of it, that they see from the beginning – [if they came in the middle of the year], coming in now, [they'd] miss all the hard stuff we did."

Asked about how the 3SP helped his student teacher become a culturally responsive teacher, Toby's focus was on relationship building. He said:

> In fact, when she had a list of students to choose from, one of the criterias that she considered was, through this project, she could develop a relationship with a student where otherwise she anticipated being a behavior problem. So, I thought that was important. That's about as far as we've gotten.

Toby's student teacher had not delved deeply into the Three-Student Project process yet, and his response validated that point.

Ham, another teacher at RSA shared that his student teacher had only just begun teaching her lessons. He reflected on things he wished he had done in the past, but chose to do this year regarding helping his student teachers have more culturally responsive practices. He said:

> In previous years I didn't necessarily say it like explicitly or I didn't bring out the importance of making that connection, even though I did it or I would do it. I didn't have the conversation where you've gotta make sure that you take their background into consideration as you sit down and plan your lessons. Throw some things in there that's gonna make sense to them based on their culture. But I actually did it this year at the beginning of the year. Actually, well they just started like teaching her lessons and we had a conversation about what it should look like. So I didn't do that. I should have done

> that. I think they would have gotten more out of the lessons and students would have had a better experience if they'd done it. But it's definitely a part of my practice now because I think it's important.

Ham's response showed that his student teacher was getting preparation from him to make decisions more intentionally reflect students' culture, and that it was because he felt it was important in the learning process.

Abby felt her student teacher was being prepared to be a culturally responsive practitioner. Asked whether her student teacher was showing understanding of culturally relevant practices, she said:

> I believe that she is seeing that. I see her interact with the students differently. I see her trying to pull that in, like when we think about books that we can read in the class. She's looking to find something that they can relate to.

All three of these examples show that 3SP student teachers are being positively impacted by their experiences within the professional development school. One teacher was uncertain if it was all completely positive because she felt that the 3SP only focused on a small number of students and that the reality was that teachers had a class full of children with a variety of levels of preparedness. Her concern was that student teachers also be prepared to teach students at the high end of the readiness spectrum. For the most part, the examples these teachers gave were more focused on the relationship-building aspect of the 3SP as being the biggest contributor, yet at the time of year of their interviews, the student teachers had only just begun the process. As noted in earlier parts of this chapter, most student teachers had not even begun to see their 3SP students in the one-on-one formal setting of addressing a skill using research-based strategies, and recording student progress. If they had begun meeting with their 3SP students, it was in a

group, and without direct intent on providing the formal intervention strategies that were a major focus of the formalities and processes of the 3SP. Still, the impact perceived by these teachers focused on the one-on-one setting that provided the opportunity for relationship building. The next section presents the perceptions of the student teachers themselves, on the impact the 3SP has on their preparedness to be culturally responsive teachers.

Research Question 5: Rising Star Academy – Student Teachers

As part of the focus group interview at RSA, questions were asked to learn about the implementation of the 3SP and student teacher perceptions of the impact of the 3SP on student teachers' preparation to become culturally responsive and good teachers overall. During the focus group interview, data were uncovered that underscored Principal Shannon's self-reported lack of focus on the 3SP, as well as teacher reports that student teachers had not yet fully engaged in the 3SP process. For example, when student teachers were asked whether they were at the stage where they were pulling their 3SP students individually for 15 minutes each, Shana agreed that they "should be," but were not necessarily doing that. Joyce said that she was, "except for one." Jennifer said she was only "four days a week." Calli preferred not to answer the question and said, "I'm deferring." Shana elaborated:

> When I can, but I work with them a lot in class. So I don't know if that's—I guess they're working. Like she does hers in DI, so she's pulling all three. So I have my two who are in class, so I pull them as the other students are working, and I'm not pulling them out of the classroom.

Calli said:

> When I can, but like I said, it's hard for me. I have one prep period that I pull them, and if I realistically getting 15 minutes with each, all three of them in that 45 minutes, it

> doesn't happen because it doesn't—we aren't at our prep with my kids by the time the bell rings. We pick them up. That time is taken down, so I can maybe fit two in that prep period . . . . So any other time that I'm pulling them out, that's during my instruction time that I'm giving in my classroom . . . . So I'm not going to step out and miss that, working with my kids that I have now, to then—I'm not going to miss my lessons that I'm teaching to pull them out. So it's switching them between second period.

Joyce shared, "I find that it's very rushed. I try to get mine in. I do get all mine in, but I feel like I'm rushing through it to get it all in." Calli said, "Or that I'm trying to multitask with them, so then I kind of feel bad." One student teacher felt that her 3SP students were not really benefitting because, "they're not getting the full thing, because my mind's set on my instruction while also trying to sit with them and work with them. So it's like not the whole, I don't know." Her response showed a bit of confusion on how the 3SP should even be working. Another student teacher shared that she took liberty to do what she felt was right. She said:

> I just focus on what I really see that they need help with. For one, the student who has a learning disability. She really needs help with reading. So do we do math? No. I gave her a math pretest, and she basically got an 80 out of all the questions, and she doesn't really need help with that. So when I do meet with her, it's mostly in reading.

It is with this context that data from student teachers at RSA are presented to answer RQ5, which addresses the impact of the 3SP on student teachers' preparation to become more culturally responsive. Most student teachers did not feel that the 3SP positively impacted their preparedness to become culturally responsive teachers. For example, Shana stated:

> To be quite honest, I don't think it does. That sounds rude. I just now only teach a half a day. And next week I'm going to start teaching all day, and realistically I just don't

> know when I'm going to have time to pull these three students out. And so now, I think it would have been more effective had I been doing the three student project with them maybe in class, but working on three separate areas. I feel like that makes you an ineffective teacher if you're only picking three students to help remediate their skills, when so many of the students also need remediation.

This student teacher did not feel it was effective to only pull three students. Additionally, her perception was that it was unfair to only pull three students. She elaborated saying:

> It's almost unfair when I have, I'll say nine, nine out of the 20 kids who needed someone to do a three student project and I only have three. And then those three are even cusp kids who are you can push them over to getting them to proficient, but do I think that they'll know this maybe pass it? I'm teaching them tricks. They don't have a deep understanding of what it is. So I feel it might be more important to be actually in front of them and teaching everybody in a small group setting, versus just three. And it takes out the time I can work with the other students as well. So it's kind of not preparing me. So I don't see myself doing this as an actual teacher.

Here, Shana was negatively impacted by her perception that it was unfair to only pull three students, and by her challenge of needing to find time to work with her three students, especially when it came time to carry full responsibility for teaching full day. Quite possibly, as both the principal and teachers reported that the 3SP had not been a focus at RSA, the time needed to fully plan a way with student teachers to overcome these challenges had not occurred. Calli shared that instead of working with her 3SP students individually, she worked with them in her classroom Differentiated Instruction (DI) groups, as a function of DI. She said:

> We do it in DI groups. We analyze the class as a whole. I work with my three in a DI group. That's what drives their data, their analysis of that data is what drives our focus group. But we also have everybody else in their groups working on their skills. So in that way, the three student project geared me towards that, but not as a whole. Three students is like they said, unrealistic. We have a math and a reading DI every day for 40 minutes. It's what the time period is, not that we get the full 40 minutes, but that's what it gets. So I do pull mine every day for that amount of time, working on their skills, but I also teach all day.

Jennifer shared a more positive perception of the impact of the 3SP on her preparation to become an effective teacher. She said:

> I think that the process of sitting down, analyzing the three students' academic strengths and weaknesses and kind of categorizing them and prioritizing them, thinking of skills and strategies, activities, what have you, for those individual students is extremely beneficial. If you're going to do that for the entire class after your teacher preparatory program, then yeah, that's extremely beneficial to you.

While she thought that the 3SP was definitely helping the students, she was uncertain about her own preparation. She continued, saying:

> So I think that really only the preparatory work that went into it has been beneficial because I don't need—I don't want to say that I don't need, because that's not the case, but I don't feel as though my one-on-one sessions is benefitting me. I know it's benefitting them, but it's not really preparing me anymore than doing all of the skills and all that kind of prelude work.

In order for the question to be answered, "What impact has the professional development schools' 3SP had on student teachers' preparation to become culturally responsive teachers," another question needed to be addressed first. That question was whether there were culturally responsive practices occurring in the PDS. RQ1 addressed culturally responsive practices perceived by participants as being used in the PDS. Therefore, confirmation of their use within the school was documented. The next question was whether student teachers were either witnessing or using culturally responsive practices. The focus group interview uncovered culturally responsive practices which student teachers were using in their classrooms, or with their 3SP students. In each intervention session, culturally responsive practices were evident.

Culturally responsive practices were uncovered in both PDS sites. Student teachers at both sites showed evidence of the use of culturally responsive practices. While the principal, teachers, and student teachers alike at HE felt that the 3SP prepared them to become culturally responsive teachers, student teachers, and to some degree one of the teachers at RSA, did not feel the 3SP adequately prepared them to be culturally responsive practitioners. Perhaps, as a result of the strong behavior focus, RSA was unable to fully implement the 3SP. Perhaps, because, as reported by student teachers, they had not been fully able to overcome the time challenge needed to work with students one-on-one, they had not been able to see the results of the 3SP implemented with fidelity. In the case of HE, the PDS's 3SP, as reported by participants, has in fact prepared student teachers to become culturally responsive teachers, and good teachers overall.

Research Question 5: Summary

Principal Hooper felt that the 3SP prepared student teachers to be good teachers overall. He felt that their level of preparation was eight to nine months ahead of most teachers entering

the field. He also felt the 3SP had helped the student teachers be culturally responsive practitioners. Teachers at HE also felt that the 3SP prepared student teachers at high levels. Many felt that the one-on-one intervention sessions helped student teachers to get to know students and how to help them grow academically. Internalization of the need for culturally responsive practices was evidenced in one student teacher's advice to other student teachers, which was to get to know students' "backgrounds, their families, and where they're coming from."

Principal Shannon's focus was on changing student behaviors as opposed to the implementation of the 3SP. She did not feel it had been implemented long enough or well enough to be able to say whether the 3SP had impacted student teachers' preparedness to be culturally responsive teachers and good teachers overall. She did emphasize the environment of the school as helping to remove stereotypes. Principal Shannon stated that she felt her building needed to do better in the area of culturally responsive instruction, but did feel the 3SP helped the student teachers build relationships with her students. In this way, she did feel that the 3SP had a positive impact on their preparedness to be culturally responsive teachers. Teachers at RSA showed mixed perceptions about whether the 3SP had a positive impact on student teachers' preparedness for culturally responsive teaching. While some felt it was good to take an in-depth look at individual students' learning, they also felt that the 3SP did not allow the student teachers to think about the whole range of learners. Some focused on the relationship-building aspect of the 3SP and felt that this would help student teachers become more culturally relevant practitioners. One teacher felt that because of the culturally responsive practices she used in her classroom, her student teacher was interacting with her students differently. According to many of the interviews at RSA, 3SP student teachers were being positively impacted by experiences

they had within the professional development school, but most were uncertain about whether it could be attributable to the 3SP.

Summary

This chapter presented data from two professional development school sites which implemented the 3SP during the 2011-2012 school year. The first school, HE, experienced significant improvement in academic achievement scores over the years since the 3SP was first implemented in 2006. Because schools and districts across the country have struggled with closing the achievement gap between Whites and African-Americans, it was important to learn the ways in which the 3SP impacted student achievement and academic behaviors, if at all. The research questions were chosen to learn about culturally responsive practices within the school, including relationship-building practices that might be in place because of the body of research on culturally responsive teaching and the impact such practices have had on closing racial achievement gaps. Finally, it was important to learn whether the 3SP had impacted student teachers' preparation to become culturally responsive teachers. The significance of this investigation is that which is learned about the 3SP in these PD schools could have implications for other schools and districts seeking to close the achievement gap between White and African-American students.

Chapter V is a summary of this investigation as it relates to the theoretical framework and research lens presented in Chapter II. Limitations of this study will be presented as well as recommendations for school districts, administrators, teachers, and school/university partnerships. Finally recommendations for future research will be discussed.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

School districts across the country are looking for ways to improve student achievement and close the racial achievement gap between Whites and their minority counterparts. Although many different kinds of reforms and interventions have been implemented throughout the country (Carter, 2011; Douglass & Horstman, 2011; Ludwig & Miller, 2005; McCallum, Schmitt, Schneider, Rezzetano, & Skinner, 2010; Nesbit, 2010; Ritchey, Silverman, Montanaro, Speece, & Schatschneider, 2012; What Works Clearinghouse, 2010), African-American children continue to experience academic achievement gaps (National Assessment of Education Progress, 2011). Hope Elementary (HE), one of the sites in this study, serviced a population of more than 85% African-American students, and more than 80% of the students were from low-income backgrounds. HE sought to implement an initiative to help address achievement in the school. The initiative is known as the Three-Student Project (3SP) and is a function of this professional development school setting. Since the project was implemented in 2006, mathematics standardized achievement scores for the school's African-American students had sharply increased to levels higher than Whites across the state of Pennsylvania, and the school's African-American reading levels have out-paced both district and state averages for African-American students. Success with the 3SP led the second school, Rising Star Academy (RSA) to join the project and both sites were the focus of this study. Like HE, RSA was also an inner-city elementary school mostly comprised of African-American students from low-income backgrounds. While the country has struggled to evidence education equity between Whites and Blacks, HE's African-American mathematics achievement scores had exceeded the White state

average, essentially closing, even reversing achievement gap trends between Whites and Blacks. For this reason, this study sought to learn more about the impact of the 3SP on student achievement and academic behaviors.

The 3SP involved student teachers from the school/university partnership implementing research-based strategies while working with students in one-on-one settings during intervention sessions. Because culturally responsive practices have been known to have a positive impact on the achievement of African-American students (Gay, 2000, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1992; Ladson-Billings, 1992b; Lamar, 2009; Taylor, 2010), it was important to learn about culturally responsive practices at these Professional Development Schools (PDSs). Each site's participants included the principal, teachers, and student teachers who participated in the 3SP. This investigation involved collecting, analyzing, and interpreting qualitative data, such as interviews, focus group interviews, document review, and observations. Triangulation of data came from quantitative data collection involving building-level student achievement scores and participant completion of A Gardening Metaphor (AGM) Inventories (Taylor, in progress).

This mixed-methods investigation of the 3SP within these professional development school settings was designed to answer the following research questions (RQs):

1. What culturally responsive practices are perceived by principals, teachers, and student teachers as being used in these professional development schools?
2. How did the student teachers build relationships with the three students?
3. What are student teachers', parents', teachers', and principals' perceptions of the impact of the Three-Student Project on school culture and student achievement?
4. In what ways, if any, has the Three-Student Project impacted student achievement and academic behaviors?

5. What impact has the Professional Development School's Three-Student Project had on student teachers' preparation to become culturally responsive teachers?

This chapter discusses the results of the data as it pertained to the research questions and each research site. Results of data collection and analysis from both HE and RSA are discussed simultaneously. Next, implications of these results are discussed, followed by recommendations for implementation and future research.

Discussion of Research Question 1

What culturally responsive practices are perceived by principals, teachers, and student teachers as being used in these professional development schools?

Results of data collection and analysis show that participants from both HE and RSA perceived many different culturally responsive practices as being used within the schools. Categories of culturally responsive practices emerged, as did themes, through the data reduction processes. Categories included cultural references, curriculum and instruction, assessments, data-driven decision-making, discipline, empowerment, expectations, engagement, environmental, historical struggle, learning of African-Americans, learning style, individual beliefs, relationship-building, and preparation for instruction. In some instances, categories were comprised of data more from one site than the other. However, data from both sites were used to create category names. Further data reduction uncovered these themes: Inclusion, Equitable Monitoring, Purposeful Instruction, Knowledge of Student, and Preparation for Culturally Responsive Teaching.

Characteristics labeled as Inclusion would have been important in counter balancing stereotypes and beliefs about African-Americans as less inferior and unable to learn (Taylor, in progress). Including cultural references during instruction would have shown students the

richness African-Americans have added to the fabric of American life and would have also showed the great struggles that African-Americans have been able to overcome. Principal Hooper at HE expected his teachers to teach about African-American figures each month. This culturally responsive practice allowed students to see themselves as part of the fabric of the world in which they lived. In this way, the culturally responsive practice would not have been simply inclusion, but also would have been instruction with a purpose. Geneva Gay (2000) characterized Critical Race Theory (CRT) as validating, comprehensive, multidimensional, empowering, transformative, and emancipatory. Inclusion of current and historical African-Americans as well as historical contributions African-Americans have made to the progression of society would be validating and empowering to students at HE and would offer alternative ways of thinking and perceiving African-Americans. This kind of instruction would carry the purpose of not only validating African-American students' place in society, but would empower these students to take their places among the powers within society. It would help them transform their ways of thinking about success from the stereotypical threat and the belief that acting smart or successful meant acting White, to thinking and believing that acting smart and being successful meant also acting Black. Inclusionary practices such as these would emancipate students from the belief in insuperiority to parity.

Other characteristics uncovered during participant interviews involved knowledge of students' cultural backgrounds and learning styles, and the use of this knowledge in instructional delivery and decision-making (Au, 2011; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1992a, 1995, 1995a, 1995b; Nieto, 2004). Knowledge of historically inequitable practices that contributed to the oppression of African-Americans (Spring, 2001) would be the foundation for why culturally relevant practitioners would look at discipline practices and use that information to drive both

instructional decisions and policy (Johnson, 1999). Lucy, a teacher at RSA, explained that she was of a White, middle-class background and knew that if she were to reach her students, she needed to acquaint herself with understanding of the history and struggles, and culture of African-American students. Therefore, she read books about African-American culture and how to teach students of color. Such practices would have been helpful in building relationships with the students in this study.

The participants in this study were mostly of the mainstream culture, yet they built relationships with students who were not of their shared culture. Gay (2002) defined culturally responsive teaching as using the "cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively" (p. 106). Many of the participants in this study spoke of acquainting themselves with the historical and cultural backgrounds of their students, a practice that allows teachers to use this information to reach diverse learners (Tidwell & Thompson, 2008).

Equality monitoring practices uncovered involved data-driven decision making and monitoring of discipline practices at these sites. At HE, Principal Hooper had shared that students who were in the 3SP were not among the students who had been suspended. He felt that the 3SP and the time the participating students spent with the student teachers was a contributing factor to the low suspension rate and to improved behaviors. Principal Shannon's response to the previous year's high suspension rate was the implementation of Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) in order to curb the rate of suspension. This brought her numbers to only five by March of the year of this investigation. In this way, she helped keep her students in school where learning was taking place.

Data-driven decision-making manifested itself in many ways. For example, the 3SP was set up so that student teachers used intervention strategies with students in a structured way and assessed the students' progress in each skill addressed on a weekly basis. This progress was recorded on a weekly basis and sent directly to the principal. From the very beginning of the 3SP process, data were used to drive the decisions about which students were chosen for the project and how they would be supported regularly. Data monitoring occurred at all levels from the principal to the student teachers. At both HE and RSA, culturally responsive practices like these were practiced and expected.

Discussion of Research Question 2

How did the student teachers build relationships with the three students?

Results of data collection and analysis indicate that student teachers at both HE and RSA used multiple strategies for building relationships with students. At the time of the interviews, HE student teachers had already begun their one-on-one sessions with their 3SP students and shared activities such as inviting their students to eat lunch with them, or reading them a story in order to build rapport. RSA student teachers had not fully implemented one-on-one interventions at the time interviews were scheduled, so data regarding their relationship-building came only from observations. During observations of the intervention sessions, RSA student teachers evidenced multiple forms of relationship building, such as showing high expectations, giving encouragement and praise, scaffolding, and making connections between hard work and higher achievement.

Noted, however, neither HE nor RSA student teachers referred to African-American figures who had overcome challenges to learning during the observed intervention sessions. It is interesting that even though Principal Hooper at HE was explicit to his building the expectation

to integrate African-American figures into instruction, that none of the student teachers used this as a strategy to connect to their students during their intervention lessons. RSA student teachers also did not evidence references to African-American figures who had overcome challenges to learning during the observed intervention sessions. However, RSA student teachers did use some cultural references during their observed intervention lessons. For example, the internet music mathematics rap video was used to teach counting, and having students get into motion during another video helped access African-American students' supposed predisposition to movement, known as "verve" (Carter et al., 2008). Perhaps because most participating student teachers at RSA were not yet at the stage where they were meeting one-on-one with their 3SP students, the internet music and motion activities lended themselves to the group settings in which most of the student teachers were meeting with their 3SP students. Whereas, student teachers at HE, in meeting with their students one-on-one, were able to do more individualized strategies which lent themselves to a one-on-one setting. Whether one-on-one, or in small group settings, student teachers at both HE and RSA evidenced a variety of relationship-building strategies with students in the 3SP.

Discussion of Research Question 3

What are student teachers', parents', teachers', and principals' perceptions of the impact of the Three-Student Project on school culture and student achievement?

Results of data collection and analyses indicate differences in the perceptions of the impact of the 3SP on school culture and student achievement between HE and RSA. Participants at HE reported increases in positive academic and student behaviors as well as student achievement. All but one participant attributed the positive changes to the 3SP, and upon further prompting for clarification, that teacher shared that the one-on-one sessions student teachers had

with students did make an impact on her students. Principal Hooper also felt that the academic and behavioral improvements were attributable to the 3SP. Whereas, many RSA participants, such as the principal and several teachers, felt that it was still too early in the 3SP implementation to see any changes in academic achievement. Some noted that some student behaviors had changed for the better, such as the 3SP students getting more confident at answering questions. Several of the student teachers and teachers felt that the 3SP students were becoming too dependent on the student teachers. Also, several of the teachers and student teachers pondered about how fair it was to only work with three students at the lower readiness levels when there were more students who needed help and spanned the academic range. Perhaps these teachers and student teachers had yet to realize the full potential of the 3SP being that they had not fully implemented the one-on-one sessions at the time of the interviews. It is also possible that while many of the small group activities observed recognized students' culture and incorporated their shared culture as African-Americans into their sessions, the intimacy granted by the one-on-one sessions may have allowed for more individualized attention. In any event, RSA participants in general, were unable to attribute any positive academic changes to the 3SP.

Principal Shannon at RSA and her site-liaison both spoke of the intervention sessions as being impactful, but their reports were not consistent with those of participating teachers and student teachers. For example, both Principal Shannon and her site-liaison, Michelle, felt that one-on-one interactions with students were a positive attribute of the 3SP, yet student teachers at RSA had shared they had difficulty even trying to make time for one-on-one sessions. Only one student teacher at RSA reported meeting with all three of her students in one-on-one sessions. Teachers also felt that it was too early to gauge effectiveness of the project because student

teachers had not yet begun working with their 3SP students individually. Additionally, Principal Shannon shared that she did not always know what was going on in the 3SP because she left that responsibility to her site liaison. She shared that she felt more conversation should perhaps take place between herself and the liaison in the future, so she could be more informed about the project. Therefore, participants at RSA felt there were both negative and positive changes in student behavior, and generally were unable to attribute positive changes to the 3SP.

It is important to note that while parents' perceptions of the impact of the 3SP on student achievement and academic behaviors were elicited, only one consent form was returned, and it was returned without the parent survey. Contact information was available on the consent form, however, several calls to and messages left at the phone number given were unreturned. No other consent forms or parent surveys were returned. These consent forms and parent surveys were placed in a self-addressed stamped envelope and teachers and student teachers were asked to send them home with the students who were in the 3SP. The researcher was not permitted to know who the students were in the 3SP, so approaching them to give them the forms was not possible. When the letters were given to teachers and student teachers, some of them shared that it might be difficult to get them back from parents, and that they too have had difficulty getting work or forms back from parents. The school district sent out parent surveys once a year to elicit feedback from parents about their perceptions of the schools. It was noted that the response rate for these surveys was only 10%. Therefore, although parent perceptions were sought, it was not possible to include this data because no surveys were returned.

Discussion of Research Question 4

In what ways, if any, has the Three-Student Project impacted student achievement and academic behaviors?

Triangulation of previously discussed interview data was achieved through review of quantitative data. The impact of the 3SP on student achievement is most visible in the review of the Pennsylvania State System of Assessment (PSSA) reading and mathematics score trends at HE. Both reading and mathematics proficiency scores rose sharply during the first year of implementation. Mathematics scores continued to rise steadily for five years straight, as did reading scores with the exception of one year. African-American mathematics proficiency rates at HE not only rose above the level of the White proficiency rate statewide, but the level of students at the advanced proficiency level in mathematics was more than half of the students tested. Reading proficiency rates may not have reach a level on par with mainstream counterparts statewide, but the trend was toward gap closure, and was substantially higher than other African-Americans in the district or state. Principal Hooper reported that his school was in the top 5% in the district, and top 1% in mathematics alone in terms of Value Added Measurement (VAM) scores. Also, AGM Inventories were consistent with Taylor's (in progress) framework for closing racial achievement gaps and qualify the school for Dame Dame designation. Perhaps more than the interview data, of interest was that the most significant improvements in standardized test scores occurred the same year of initial 3SP implementation.

Interview data were consistent with quantitative data at HE. At this site, interview data suggested that participants perceived the 3SP to impact student achievement in a positive way, and the state standardized achievement score trend shows marked improvement since initial implementation. VAM scores were reported to be in the top 5% in the district, and AGM Inventory results gave HE Dame Dame designation. At RSA, participant interviews were mixed because the project had not yet been implemented with fidelity. Many participants who did

comment on the merits of working with students one-on-one could not attribute any improvements to the implementation of the 3SP because it was still too early.

Discussion of Research Question 5

What impact has the Professional Development School's Three-Student Project had on student teachers' preparation to become culturally responsive teachers?

Results of data collection and analysis for RQ5 indicated that the 3SP is perceived as having a positive impact on student teachers' preparation to become culturally responsive teachers, but it was unclear whether participants perceived this due solely to the 3SP, or in part due to the context under which the 3SP was situated. For example, the guiding documents given to the student teachers by the school/university partnership do not explicitly state culturally responsive practices as a requirement for documentation. The guiding documents are explicit about expectations for student teachers to meet with students one-on-one, utilize strategies, document progress, and report this information to their cooperating teachers and principals. Yet, there was nothing explicit in the guiding documents stating student teachers should show evidence of culturally responsive teaching. Some culturally responsive behaviors may be in place due to student teacher training prior to placement. A question for consideration, however, is if the placements had taken place in a different context, such as in a school whose student demographics mostly represented the mainstream culture, and yet the student teachers were still working with lower readiness students who were African-American, would those students have been exposed to culturally responsive scaffolding, instructed using cultural references, or helped to see the connection between hard work and higher achievement? Many of these behaviors which relate specifically to the students' race are reported to have happened naturally within the context of these PDS sites. A restatement of part of one of the student teachers' interview is that

the student teachers did not have to make many modifications to the student environment, to handouts, or other resources such as classroom libraries because it was already done for them. A student teacher stated that if she wanted to borrow a worksheet from another teacher in the building, it had already been modified to represent the students' racial background. Therefore, it is possible that student teachers' preparedness for culturally responsive teaching may have also been a function of their placements, not just the processes and expectations of the 3SP.

Theoretical Considerations

This investigation rested on the research of Multicultural Education, Constructivism, Critical Race Theory, Culturally Responsive Practices, and A Gardening Metaphor as a framework for closing racial achievement gaps. The previous section discussed the research questions as they related to culturally responsive practices and A Gardening Metaphor as both were directly investigated as a function of the research questions. The following further discusses Multicultural Education, Constructivism, and Critical Race Theory as they apply to the results of this investigation.

Multicultural Education as it Relates to the Results

Banks' (1995) five dimensions of multicultural education were: (a) content integration, (b) the knowledge construction process, (c) prejudice reduction, (d) equity pedagogy, and (e) empowering school culture and social structure. Content integration is one dimension of multicultural education that occurred at the PDS locations. Participants at both sites shared that they taught about famous African-Americans who had contributed to society. At HE, teachers taught about historical figures and inventors which was a way of empowering students. Similarly, RSA participants used cultural references such as referring to African-American authors, R&B artists, and athletes during language and mathematics lessons. Understanding the

knowledge construction process, participants shared practices that helped students construct knowledge through meaningful experiences, much like they would experience in their culture.

Constructivism as it Relates to the Results

Noted in Chapter II, according to Vygotsky (1978), learners build their own meaning through social interaction. Most of the students who attended the PDS locations in this study shared a common cultural and economic background and their interactions with one another helped learning to occur. Because learners also build upon prior knowledge as they learn (Bruner, 1986; Piaget, 1985) it was important for teachers to get to know their students' backgrounds and use that as a foundation for which to instruct students. Toby at RSA felt that he related to the students, having come from the same neighborhood as the students. He shared the importance of being able to relate to students with his student teacher and helped to guide her through that process. Relationship-building was evident at both PDS locations. As a function of the 3SP, student teachers were asked to have one-on-one intervention sessions with students. This was occurring regularly at HE, and student teachers shared the ways in which they built and nurtured relationships with their three students. At RSA, the principal spoke of how relationship-building was implemented as a function of their Guided Group Instruction morning meetings where students were able to share what kind of day they were having. Teachers and student teachers were able to get to know their students better through this process and build relationships of mutual respect. Construction of knowledge meant that teachers had to acknowledge students' racial background in order to help students draw from their experiences as African-American students. The idea of race as a central construct for decision-making in education is an idea central to Critical Race Theory in Education (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

Critical Race Theory in Education as it Relates to the Results

Because most of the educators in the study were of the mainstream culture (White, middle-class), and because most of the students were not from mainstream culture (African-American, low-income background), the relevance of Critical Race Theory in Education (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995) was explored. Critical race theorists have purported that race was a central construct and that those in our nation who were in power used the motivation of maintaining those positions of power as the basis for their decision-making and policy (Bell, 1995; Carter, 2008; Zamudio, Russell, Bridgeman, & Rios, 2011). Therefore, it was important to learn how these kinds of actions were being neutralized in order to remove the racial barrier to learning. Since studies of discipline practice had uncovered disproportionate disciplinary actions such as the suspension rate of African-American students (American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania, 2014), having practices in place to monitor such inequities were important to note. Both HE and RSA reported monitoring of their suspension rates. In the case of RSA, the more than 280 suspensions that happened the year previous were reduced to just six as of March due to purposeful implementation of the PBIS there. At HE, it was noted that none of the 3SP students were among the five or six suspensions, which the principal noted he felt was a result of their participation in the 3SP and the relationship building that occurred. The response Principal Shannon had to an extremely high number of suspensions was equality monitoring and culturally responsive.

Limitations

This investigation was limited to professional development schools whose demographic population were mostly African-American students from low-income backgrounds in K-5 buildings within an urban public school district setting. This study attempted to learn about

culturally responsive practices within these two PDS locations, however, the demographic population in this study was African-American. While studies suggest culturally responsive practices benefit Hispanic, Native American, and other minority populations, the demographics of these two sites were not representative of these other demographic subgroups.

Limitations also centered around Rising Star Academy. According to Principal Shannon's interview, this site underwent significant restructuring. Because 80% of the staff was replaced the year prior to this study, and another 50% the year of the study, this site did not experience the level of stability Hope Elementary experienced. This impacted the ability of the data collected from this site to reflect the fidelity of implementation followed at Hope Elementary. During individual teacher interviews and the student teacher focus group interviews, it became clear that RSA had not implemented the 3SP to the point where student teachers were meeting with their 3SP students individually. When this became evident, the researcher did not feel it would be possible to obtain interview data from RSA student teachers on relationship building. Later, once observations were conducted and relationship building practices could be observed, it was too late in the school year to return to interview student teachers about relationship building practices. Therefore, individual interview data on the topic of relationship building at RSA was not able to be collected. A limitation of this study related to RSA not fully implementing the 3SP at the time of the investigation is that it was unclear to what extent participants could make attributions of changes in achievement and behaviors to the implementation of the 3SP, which was one of the research questions in this study.

A final limitation was that Principal Hooper was one of the co-authors of the Three-Student Project. Bias about the project could be present in his interview because he would naturally have a preference for something he was a part of creating. That said, triangulation of

data through analysis of state standardized test scores confirmed his position that his school was high achieving, and confirmed a trend of improvement since the implementation of the Three-Student Project.

Recommendations

As districts continue to seek reforms in their efforts to close racial achievement gaps, implications of the results of this investigation are important considerations. Offered next are recommendations for those considering implementation of the 3SP through school/university partnerships such as PDSs. Recommendations for school administrators considering implementation of the 3SP are discussed. Additionally, advice from participants of this study are provided within the recommendations, as having implemented the project themselves, their input and suggestions are especially noteworthy.

Recommendations for School/University Partnerships

School districts seeking reforms and solutions to closing academic achievement gaps might consider two aspects, which the researcher believed to be working together toward the goal of achievement gap closure in this study. First, consider working in partnership with a university on the scale uncovered in this study to implement the 3SP. This will no doubt allow for a lower teacher-to-student ratio, as student teachers are not only another adult in the class, but as in the case of the 3SP, are implementing an intervention strategy that works. While the strategy of pulling students in a one-on-one or small group setting is not new, following the processes involved in the 3SP will allow for more structured settings and a linear process that moves student skill mastery forward at the students' individual paces. Working with a university would allow for the extra workforce needed to assist in such a process.

The second item for consideration is the culturally responsive context in which the school/university partnership thrived in this study. The demographic population represented by the students within the PDS sites were mostly African-American students from low-income backgrounds. Because culturally responsive teaching practices were not explicitly addressed in the school/university's guiding documents, it might be tempting to think that the 3SP, as worked through the guiding documents would be enough of an intervention for their schools. However, these PDS sites were mostly African-American students. During the focus group interview at RSA, one student teacher shared that the student teachers as a group did not have to change much in order to use culturally responsive practices. She shared that all of the resources in the classroom libraries, and handouts created by teachers were all representative of the culture of the students within the school. During visits, the researcher saw many visible displays reflective of the students attending the schools. Many of the teachers interviewed were already using culturally responsive teaching practices to make learning meaningful to the students. If a school district is considering implementing the 3SP to close racial achievement gaps, the context under which the 3SP would be implemented may need to be modified in the event that teachers are not already using culturally responsive teaching practices to meet the needs of their African-American students. If they are not already using culturally responsive practices, it is recommended that they consider professional development on the implementation of culturally responsive practices for teacher use with their culturally diverse students.

An item for consideration of partnering universities relates to the contexts chosen for professional development schools. If the 3SP were situated in a different setting where most of the students were not African-American, or if the teachers were not using CRPs, partnering universities would need to consider whether their student teachers have been prepared enough to

enter schools equipped with culturally responsive teaching experiences and training to implement CRPs absent the CRP modeling that took place here. Partnering universities would also need to consider whether CRPs should be more explicitly required by the guiding documents given to student teachers for their placements. If it is the intention for the student teachers to gain experience teaching using CRPs, then it is recommended that there be processes and protocols built into the guiding documents for the student teachers to follow. It is unclear whether the outcome at HE would be the same if it were not already established by the administrator that culturally responsive practices take place within the site.

In the case of RSA, this site was in the first year of implementation and had recently experienced restructuring which replaced 80% of its teachers and the principal the year prior to implementation, and an additional 50% of the teachers the year of implementation. One teacher at HE shared that she attributed the success of HE to the stability of the staff. RSA's staff was not stable at the time of implementation. Principal Shannon shared that procedures were not in place at the school and much of her energy was devoted to getting procedures back in place and implementing practices that would help manage student behaviors so that learning could take place. It is possible that this did not allow for the level of attention to implementation that Principal Hooper recommends as noted in the next section. Next, is discussed the advice as well as recommendations for administrators given by Principals Hooper and Shannon.

Recommendations for Administrators

As administrators seek to find solutions for raising achievement in their schools, consideration of a school/university partnership is warranted. However, some additional advice came from the principals in this study. Principal Hooper, for example, offered this financial food for thought:

> [The project] is an extreme money saver. I don't have to hire paraprofessionals, because I have student teachers. And they understand the academic delivery . . . . This year I had six student teachers. Now if I had six paraprofessionals, [it] would cost me $50,000.00 per [paraprofessional]. That's $300,000.00 that's saved by not having them. It didn't cost me a dime but time. And I'm willing to give up time to save $300,000.00 that I can hire another [teacher]. So a principal would understand the budgetary portion of it the most . . . . [The student teachers] are such a great supplement when they are trained well to do what they need to do.

Principal Hooper saw a financial benefit for partnering with a university and implementing the 3SP. The project saved money that would have been spent on paraprofessionals. Academically, the benefit will be higher levels of achievement. From the first year of implementation, state standardized mathematics achievement test scores increased substantially, and maintained steady growth almost every year for five years in a row. Reading achievement test scores also jumped substantially the first year of implementation, dipping the second year and then rising steadily the next three years. Most importantly, was that HE closed the racial achievement gap in mathematics when compared to the state White average and its reading achievement test scores for African-Americans were 16% higher than the district scores for African-Americans.

Principal Hooper offered some additional advice for implementation. Regarding school culture, Principal Hooper suggested making clear the benefit to teachers. Student teachers are another set of trained hands, not simply another person to manage, or someone who takes up your time. He said, "It's an exchange of information between the student teacher and the teacher and . . . the students." Principal Hooper shared the benefit to his teachers in this way:

> I would show them directly what the student [teachers] are doing with the three students . . . how much of this basic skill work with students is helping [teachers] on a weekly basis within the classroom and the success that the students have had from the beginning of the year to the end of the year. . . . I think that a principal would need to see the data in a macro form and in micro form and the budgetary savings. I think a principal would say, "Bring me that program!"

Principal Hooper also strongly advised a high level of involvement on the part of a principal seeking to implement this project. He stated, "If you're not going to be involved, don't get it started . . . . If the principal is not involved, it's not going to have the impact that it really could have." In the case of RSA, Principal Shannon had given much of the responsibility to her site liaison. She had recommended having someone like her to run the project. She said:

> I think having someone that you trust oversee it so you can get information when you need it, and then give them guidelines on — hindsight, I wish I would have asked for monthly updates from her, and that's something we can work on — do moving forward since we're gonna get it. How can I get updates about it? Who the — like, what's going on with the kids they're working with? Well, like, some of the questions you're asking me, maybe those should be things I need to get to know monthly, and then maybe each month I work one-on-one with student teachers just to hear what they're saying, but I would have one person that's able to run it for you, so you don't have to manage it, 'cause it's a lot to manage. And build time into your schedule even if it is once a month just to try to keep better, so you have a better understanding of what's happening so you can appreciate the impact it's having.

Principal Shannon thought the project was a lot to manage. Perhaps this was because she was already implementing the Positive Behavior Interventions and Support along with Guided Group Intervention and it left her with less time to focus on a project such as the 3SP. According to Principal Shannon, these other programs were necessary to address the behavior issues she was encountering. According to Principal Hooper's interview, he would not recommend implementing the 3SP unless the principal was very involved.

Another recommendation for building administrators is that the progress of the students in the 3SP be very highly monitored. Principal Hooper shared that his student teachers had to send their reports directly to him, as well as their cooperating teachers. This allowed him to have a higher level of involvement, oversee students' progress, and helped hold student teachers accountable for consistency and fidelity of the program. He shared that if there was a reason why a student missed a session, it was the student teachers' responsibility to reschedule their sessions. This, too, helped maintain consistency and fidelity to the project. Finally, at the end of the school year, prior to student teachers' graduations, they were required to present the progress made with each of their three students in a formal setting with both the school and the university professors. Perhaps, in addition to ensuring fidelity of the project, this year-end presentation also gave Principal Hooper a clear summary picture of the work of the project.

Recommendations for Student Teachers

One concern shared by some student teachers at RSA was that students were becoming too dependent on the student teachers. This was not a concern presented by student teachers at HE. It is possible that due to the timing of data collection, RSA student teachers had not yet implemented the project enough that students were feeling confident enough to display independence. Perhaps keeping the intervention sessions one-on-one, as was being done at HE,

would allow the students to gain a level of relationship with the student teachers that would facilitate confidence when in the larger group setting.

Student teachers should also prepare themselves for culturally responsive teaching. It may be possible that student teachers are placed in schools and classrooms that have not implemented the level of culturally responsive practices found at the sites in this study. Student teachers will need to be equipped and prepared to implement CRPs as it is possible that CRP use, in conjunction with full implementation of the 3SP is what made the difference at HE.

Recommendations for Further Research

The need to close racial achievement gaps is evident across the state and country. It was hoped that this investigation would shed some light on practices in an elementary school that may be responsible for such closure. Data collected in this study indicated that the practices observed and learned within this one school could possibly have been responsible for closing the racial achievement gap in this school. Application of these same practices in a new setting was attempted with the second school, RSA. It is recommended that a follow-up study be conducted at RSA once the 3SP has been fully implemented. Also, a similar study in a new setting with similar demographic characteristics could be conducted to confirm results of this study. Additionally, it may be of interest whether the 3SP would be able to achieve the same results in a building with similar demographic characteristics that had not been using culturally responsive practices in order to add strength and clarity to whether both factors, present together at HE, are of importance in closing achievement gaps. While this is added as a recommendation for future research, it should also be noted that RSA did not have staff consistency like HE. RSA's reconstitution which resulted in replacement of 80% of the teachers and replacement of the principal one year, and then another replacement of 50% of the staff the following year may have

impacted students' achievement during the year leading up to this study and the year the investigation was conducted.

A second recommendation for future research would be to implement the 3SP at a site that is not predominantly African-American. For example, a site that has African-American students with low achievement rates but is not set in an urban setting, or a site that has mostly White students but many (or most) are from low-income backgrounds. It would be important to learn whether the 3SP could be as successful in a school with different demographics.

Summary

This investigation explored culturally responsive practices within professional development schools implementing the Three-Student Project, through gleaning perceptions of teachers, student teachers, and principals. Building relationships with students, as a function of culturally responsive practices, were evident. Student teachers in both schools were perceived as having preparedness to be culturally responsive teachers, but it was unclear if this was a function of the Three Student Project, or site context. Participants at Hope Elementary believed there was an increase in student achievement and academic behaviors and most attributed the increase to the implementation of the Three-Student Project. Rising Star Academy participants were generally unable to attribute any change in academic achievement to the presence of the Three-Student Project because it had not yet been fully implemented. Triangulation of qualitative data was accomplished through quantitative data, such as state standardized test scores and A Gardening Metaphor Inventories. Quantitative data were consistent with participant perceptions and observations.

Schools looking to close racial achievement gaps should definitely consider a school/university partnership and implementing the Three-Student Project. The case of Hope

Elementary shows that racial gap closure can be done. Recommendations and advice from the principal and staff for its implementation should be taken into consideration when implementing the project.

One final thought for consideration is this: To change nothing, is to change nothing. If changes are not made to current practices, the status quo will remain, and many students of African-American, and quite possibly other minorities, will continue to experience the "soft bigotry of low-expectations" (Bush, 2004). Teacher expectations of students mean that one will persist if the expected outcome is not obtained. High teacher expectations mean that one will persist when the outcome is not high. If districts and schools do not persist at attempts to close racial achievement gaps, it will be a reflection of their acceptance with the outcome. To change nothing, is to change nothing. The question schools and districts must ask themselves is what is their expectation of African-American students? If their response is to change nothing, then nothing will change. Implementation of the Three-Student Project is a viable option for change.

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APPENDIX A

Physical Artifacts (Guiding Documents)

3 Student Project

OBJECTIVE: Provide individual attention to students performing at a basic level in order to improve academic achievement.

1st: Analyze test data

- Tests: PSSA, DIBELS, MUAs, CBAs
  - Students who perform *basic or low proficient* in reading

2nd: Identify students

- Classroom teacher and teacher candidates choose three students who show potential to move to proficient or advanced (1 student must be identified as Learning Support)
  - Based on test results
  - Evaluation of attendance and behavior

3rd: Devise a Plan

- Make a schedule; include back-up times
- Collect baseline data
- Create an action plan
  - Identify skills based on data
  - Prioritize skills
  - Develop various strategies to address each skill

4th: Work the Plan

- 4 or more 15 minute sessions per week

Total of 1 hour per week per student!

  - Reading (2+ sessions)
    1. Skill
    2. Fluency
  - Mathematics (2+ sessions)
    1. Skill
    2. Fluency

5th: Monitor Progress

- Weekly test scores
- Periodic MUAs and CBAs
- DIBELS (reading fluency)
- Weekly math basic facts timed tests

6th: Accountability

- Weekly logs
- Weekly meetings
- Principal Observations

VALUE of the 3 Student Project:

Students

- Receive focused individualized academic instruction
- Increase classroom participation
- Build confidence in school and life
- Receive one-on-one positive attention and persistent motivation
- Develop student – teacher relationships

Parents: Making the Home & School Connection

- Monthly parent letters
  - Reading and math plan of action
  - Academic progress
  - Student accountability
    - Homework
    - Classwork
    - Book reports
  - Attendance concerns
  - Behavior update

Teacher Candidate

- Double the Classroom Experience
- Learn how to analyze data to drive instruction
- Learn how to differentiate instruction based on student needs
- Partnerships with experienced, successful teachers
- Take part in preparation of all classroom and school activities

School

- Decrease student – teacher ratio
- Increase overall class academic performance
- Increase overall school academic performance
- Enhance home – school communication

Reading Spreadsheet ⟷ Reading Log

(This document is a guide for filling out the Reading Spreadsheet. It also shows the link between the Spreadsheet and the Log.)

Reading Fluency and Comprehension (One 15-minute session)

Repeated Reading Rate with Prosody..... 1.5 minutes

What is it?

Repeated reading from current story in MacMillan (passage selections can be found on the side bars of the MacMillan Manual)

Kindergarten: leveled readers

What to Record

Page number (Reading prosody chart has been added to your 3 student log)

Kindergarten: Title of leveled Readers

How many times and when can it be done?

Should be done at least 3 times per week; can be done during the 90 minute reading block

One should be done as a choral reading; the other **two** should be done **independently**

One of the independent reading can occur during your <u>15 minute reading fluency session</u>

Students can be pulled out of **any special subject class** for this activity.

Weekly Fluency Rate..... 2 minutes

What is it?

1 minute timed fluency reading

This passage should be a cold read that is new to the students

Kindergarten: letter naming fluency, phonemic segmentation fluency, nonsense word fluency

What to Record

Words per Minute

Kindergarten: items (letters, phonemes or words per minute) per minute

How many times and when can it be done?

Should occur after you have done everything else listed in this section. This gives students the opportunity to show growth.

Students can be pulled out of **any special subject class** for this activity

Vocabulary Words ..... 4 minutes

What is it?

Focus only on the vocabulary words for the week that the students do not understand.

Kindergarten: Include robust words

What to Record

Number correct out of the number attempted

How many times and when can it be done?

Once per week during your <u>15 minute reading fluency session</u>

Sight Words..... 4 minutes

What is it?

Decodable and high frequency words taken from leveled readers and decodable books

Focus on <u>all</u> words up to that point.

What to Record

Number correct out of the total number

How many times and when can it be done?

Once per week during your <u>15 minute reading fluency session</u>

Graphic Organizer ..... 8 minutes

What is it?

Current graphic organizer presented by MacMillan.

What to Record

Page number; *Yes* or *No* (Do they understand?)

How many times and when can it be done?

Once per week during your 15 minute reading fluency session

During your 90 minute reading block (as it is being done in class, make sure your 3 students understand)

Submit at least one per month that each student has completed independently.

25 Book Challenge

What to Record

New book reports since the last log - Total number of book reports (Example: **1 - 6** 1 new book report since last log – 6 total book reports for the year)

- Keep in mind that your students need to be on track for reaching the benchmark goal for each report period. (1st report period = 6; 2nd report = 12; 3rd report = 18; 4th report = 25)

NOTE: if students read one book per week, they will be on track to meeting this challenge.

You should know the answers to the following questions.

What are your students reading?

How long will it take them to read it?

Is it appropriate for their reading level?

Do they understand what they are reading?

Monthly Parent Report and Graph

What is it?

Report: A report written to the parent that informs them of the student's progress through the action plan. It addresses the specific skills covered that month and the student's performance.

Graph: A graph created in Excel that shows the baseline rate and each month's fluency rate.

What to Record

Report:

- How many sessions
- Days absent and tardy
- Overall behavior (classes and 3SP sessions)
- Skills covered
- Explanation of scores or performance
- Suggestions for activities at home

Graph:

- Template will be provided
- Student's *words per minute* read on DIBELs cold read

How many times and when can it be done?

One report at the end of each month

Reading Skill (One 15-minute session)

Action Plan Skill ..... 15 minutes

What is it?

4Sight or SBA skill identified on student's action plan.

What to Record

Name of skill	Date	Time
Strategy	Source	Result

How many times and when can it be done?

Once per week in a 15- minute session

3 Student Project Action Plan

Teacher Candidate Name: _____

Cooperating Teacher Name: _____

Student #1: _____

MATH SKILLS (listed in order of priority)	STRATEGY #1	STRATEGY #2	STRATEGY #3
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			

READING SKILLS (listed in order of priority)	STRATEGY #1	STRATEGY #2	STRATEGY #3
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			

Teacher Candidate: _____

Week of: _____

Student Name:

Absences:	**Tardies:**
Behavior:	

Math Skill :	
Date:	**Length of time:**
Strategy:	
Strategy Source:	
Result:	

Math Fluency:	
Date:	**Length of time:**
Strategy:	
Strategy Source:	
Result:	

Teacher Candidate: _____

Week of: _____

Student Name :

Absences:	**Tardies:**
Behavior:	

Reading Skill :	
Date:	**Length of time:**
Strategy:	
Strategy Source:	
Result:	

Reading Fluency:	
Date:	**Length of time:**
Strategy:	
Strategy Source:	
Result:	

Repeated Reading Rate with Prosody			
Paid attention to periods, commas, end punctuation	☐ never	☐ sometimes	☐ always
Accuracy	☐ skipped words	☐ self-corrected	☐ read every word
Read with feeling	☐ never	☐ sometimes	☐ always

3 Student Project

Teacher Candidate – Grade: _____

Cooperating Teacher: _____

Student #1: Assessment:

Baseline (Proficiency level - raw score)	Mid (Proficiency level - raw score)	Year End (Proficiency level - raw score)
Reading		
Math		
Previous year: Assessment – Proficiency level – raw score		

Student #2: Assessment:

Baseline (Proficiency level - raw score)	Mid (Proficiency level - raw score)	Year End (Proficiency level - raw score)
Reading		
Math		
Previous year: Assessment – Proficiency level – raw score		

Student #3: Assessment:

Baseline (Proficiency level - raw score)	Mid (Proficiency level - raw score)	Year End (Proficiency level - raw score)
Reading		
Math		
Previous year: Assessment – Proficiency level – raw score		

Student Name: _____

Kindergarten Reading Spreadsheet

Week of	Repeated Reading Rate w/ Prosody	Weekly Fluency Rate	Vocabulary/ Robust Words	Sight Words	Graphic Organizer	Action Plan Skill	25 Book Challenge	Monthly Parent Report and Graph		
12/7/2009										
12/14/2009										
1/18/2010										
1/25/2010										
2/1/2010										
2/8/2010										
2/15/2010										
2/22/2010										
3/1/2010										
3/8/2010										
3/15/2010										
3/22/2010										
3/29/2010										
4/5/2010										
4/12/2010										
4/19/2010										
4/26/2010										

Teacher Candidate: _____

Student Name: _____

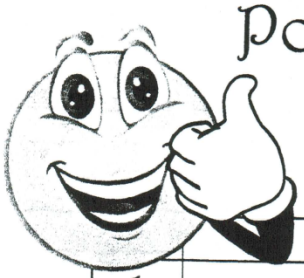
1st - 5th Reading Spreadsheet

Week of	Repeated Reading Rate w/ Prosody	Weekly Fluency Rate	Vocabulary Words	Graphic Organizer	Action Plan Skill	25 Book Challenge	Monthly Parent Report and Graph		
12/7/2009									
12/14/2009									
1/18/2010									
1/25/2010									
2/1/2010									
2/8/2010									
2/15/2010									
2/22/2010									
3/1/2010									
3/8/2010									
3/15/2010									
3/22/2010									
3/29/2010									
4/5/2010									
4/12/2010									
4/19/2010									
4/26/2010									

Read One on One Log

Teacher Candidate: _____

Student Name	Date																			
1 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
22 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
23 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
24 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
25 ⊥	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



Positive Notes Log

Teacher Candidate: _____

	Student Name	Date
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		

3SP Final Student Summary

Teacher Candidate: _____ Grade: _____

Student: _____

Report Card Summary

	Reading	Math	Absence	Tardies	Homework
1st Qtr					
2nd Qtr					
3rd Qtr					

Unit Summary

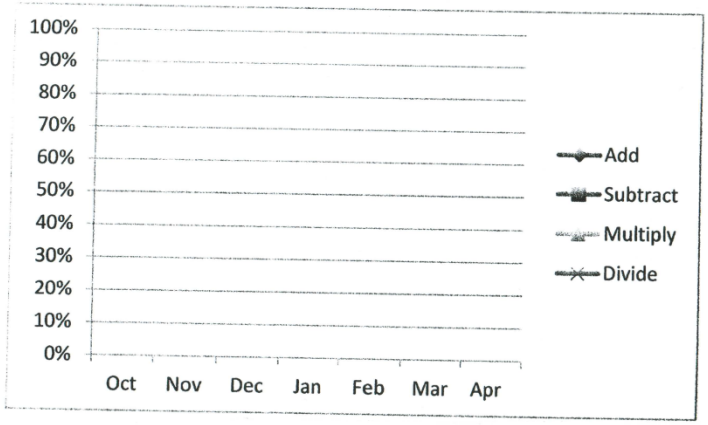
	Reading	Math		Reading	Math
Unit 1			Unit 7		
Unit 2			Unit 8		
Unit 3			Unit 9		
Unit 4			Unit 10		
Unit 5			Unit 11		
Unit 6			Unit 12		

DIBELs

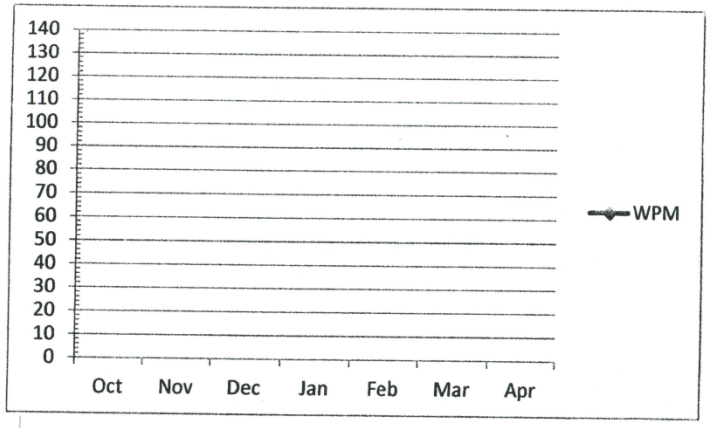
1st Admin	
2nd Admin	

25 Book Challenge

Math Fluency



Reading Fluency



2011-2012

Month	Percent
Oct	
Nov	
Dec	
Jan	
Feb	
Mar	
Apr	

Directions: Select an operation. Enter the average percent the student scored during your sessions for that operation.

Month	WPM
Oct	
Nov	
Dec	
Jan	
Feb	
Mar	
Apr	

Directions: For each month, indicate the highest Words Per Minute the student was able to achieve during your sessions.

APPENDIX B

A Gardening Metaphor Inventory – Administrator Version

AGM Inventory R1
Administrators Version
Jerome Taylor, Sarah Orgass, and Epryl King

Directions: First indicate whether you have been instructed to rate activities covering THE LAST MONTH __ or THE LAST YEAR __

Next, read each of the following items carefully and objectively—honestly. Then rate the extent to which behaviors described in each statement match instructional or administrative behaviors in your classrooms and school during the period of observation selected above:

NEVER (0), **RARELY** (1), **SOMETIMES** (2), **FREQUENTLY** (3), **ROUTINELY** (4).

Item	0	1	2	3	4
SO					
1. Teachers displayed and discussed pictures of distinguished black individuals who overcame early obstacles to learning (*e.g.,* Ben Carson, MD, Frederick Douglass).	0	1	2	3	4
2. Teachers helped students face learning challenges by patiently encouraging them to try harder.	0	1	2	3	4
3. Teachers helped students face learning challenges by patiently encouraging them to spend more time on their assignments—or ask for assistance.	0	1	2	3	4
4. Teachers helped students see that learning is important to their future and to the future of their neighborhood and community.	0	1	2	3	4
5. Teachers structured teams whose students inspired one another to strive toward successful completion of their assignments.	0	1	2	3	4
Total SO					____
SE					
1. Teachers stimulated and sustained the curiosity of students at *every* level of performance—from high to low achievers.	0	1	2	3	4
2. Teachers planfully moved students from mastery of basic skills to mastery of deeper concepts underlying basic skills.	0	1	2	3	4
3. Teachers' instructional plans were aligned with state and national standards.	0	1	2	3	4
4. Teacher assigned daily seatwork to consolidate mastery of learning at *all* levels of instruction—from basic to conceptual learning.	0	1	2	3	4
5. Teacher assigned daily homework to consolidate mastery of learning at *all* levels of instruction—from basic to conceptual learning.	0	1	2	3	4
Total SE					____

AGM Inventory
Page 2

RO					
1. Teachers used curriculum and practices that increased students' quest for new knowledge (*e.g.,* self-confidence, learning orientation, and self-reliance).	0	1	2	3	4
2. Teachers used curriculum and practices that improved students' emotional competence (*e.g.,* self-persistence and self-esteem).	0	1	2	3	4
3. Teachers used curriculum and practices that improved students' social skills (*e.g.,* love and respect and interpersonal skills.	0	1	2	3	4
4. Teachers used curriculum and practices that improve students' appreciation of his or her culture.	0	1	2	3	4
5. Teachers used curriculum and practices that helped students see how their culture can help them make good decisions within and outside the classroom.	0	1	2	3	4
Total RO					____
EN					
1. School implemented plan to promote excellence in academic engagement and achievement outcomes with parents, peers, churches, organizations and neighborhoods.	0	1	2	3	4
2. School monitored the extent to which parents, peers, churches, organizations and neighborhoods implemented this plan.	0	1	2	3	4
3. School recognized and celebrated parents, peers, churches, organizations and neighborhoods that were implementing this plan.	0	1	2	3	4
4. Community implemented plan that held schools and school districts accountable for excellence in academic engagement and achievement outcomes.	0	1	2	3	4
5. Community recognized and celebrated schools that were successfully accelerating the closure of racial achievement gaps.	0	1	2	3	4
Total EN					____
GA					
1. Teachers showed strong positive regard for all students in their classroom.	0	1	2	3	4
2. Teachers promoted and sustained high expectations of all students in their classroom.	0	1	2	3	4
3. Teachers utilized feedback in ways that enhanced my sense of efficacy and enjoyment of teaching.	0	1	2	3	4
4. Teachers worked in collaborative teams which identified students' progress and corresponding methods for improving students' progress.	0	1	2	3	4

(Continue on next page…)

GA (Cont'd).					
5. Teachers participated in plans and activities that enhanced levels of parent, peer, church, organization and neighborhood support of academic excellence.	0	1	2	3	4
Total GA					____
GS					
1. Principal oversaw training in methods and practices that accelerate the closure of racial achievement gaps.	0	1	2	3	4
2. Principal assigned master teachers or instructional leaders who supported teachers' implementation of methods and practices that accelerate closure of racial achievement gaps.	0	1	2	3	4
3. Principal oversaw plan for teacher teams that shared their work and developed *and* monitored collaborative strategies for accelerating closure of racial achievement gaps.	0	1	2	3	4
4. Principal oversaw plan for providing *timely* assessment driven feedback on the extent to which teacher methods and practices were accelerating closure of racial achievement gaps.	0	1	2	3	4
5. Principal oversaw plans for recognizing teachers that were successful in accelerating closures of racial achievement gaps.	0	1	2	3	4
Total GS					____
Note: Percentages are based on (Subtotal/20) x 100					
1. Total SO%					____
2. Total SE%					____
3. Total RO%					____
4. Total EN%					____
5. Total GA%					____
6. Total GS%					____
Total Subtotal %'s					____
J_k = (Total Subtotal%)/6					____

APPENDIX C

A Gardening Metaphor Inventory – Teacher Version

AGM Inventory R1
Teachers Version
Jerome Taylor, Sarah Orgass, and Epryl King

Directions: First indicate whether you have been instructed to rate activities covering THE LAST MONTH __ or THE LAST YEAR __

Next, read each of the following items carefully and objectively—honestly. Then rate the extent to which behaviors described in each statement match instructional or administrative behaviors in your classroom and school during the period of observation selected above:

NEVER (0), **RARELY** (1), **SOMETIMES** (2), **FREQUENTLY** (3), **ROUTINELY** (4).

Item	0	1	2	3	4
SO					
1. Teacher displayed and discussed pictures of distinguished black individuals who overcame early obstacles to learning (*e.g.,* Ben Carson, MD, Frederick Douglass).	0	1	2	3	4
2. Teacher helped students face learning challenges by patiently encouraging them to try harder.	0	1	2	3	4
3. Teacher helped students face learning challenges by patiently encouraging them to spend more time on their assignments—or ask for assistance.	0	1	2	3	4
4. Teacher helped students see that learning is important to their future and to the future of their neighborhood and community.	0	1	2	3	4
5. Teacher structured teams whose students inspired one another to strive toward successful completion of their assignments.	0	1	2	3	4
Total SO					____
SE					
1. Teacher stimulated and sustained the curiosity of students at *every* level of performance—from high to low achievers.	0	1	2	3	4
2. Teacher planfully moved students from mastery of basic skills to mastery of deeper concepts underlying basic skills.	0	1	2	3	4
3. Teacher's instructional plans were aligned with state and national standards.	0	1	2	3	4
4. Teacher assigned daily seatwork to consolidate mastery of learning at *all* levels of instruction—from basic to conceptual learning.	0	1	2	3	4
5. Teacher assigned daily homework to consolidate mastery of learning at *all* levels of instruction—from basic to conceptual learning.	0	1	2	3	4
Total SE					____

AGM Inventory
Page 2

RO					
1. Teacher used curriculum and practices that increased students' quest for new knowledge (*e.g.,* self-confidence, learning orientation, and self-reliance).	0	1	2	3	4
2. Teacher used curriculum and practices that improved students' emotional competence (*e.g.,* self-persistence and self-esteem).	0	1	2	3	4
3. Teacher used curriculum and practices that improved students' social skills (*e.g.,* love and respect and interpersonal skills.	0	1	2	3	4
4. Teacher used curriculum and practices that improve students' appreciation of his or her culture.	0	1	2	3	4
5. Teacher used curriculum and practices that helped students see how their culture can help them make good decisions within and outside the classroom.	0	1	2	3	4
Total RO					____
EN					
1. School implemented plan to promote excellence in academic engagement and achievement outcomes with parents, peers, churches, organizations and neighborhoods.	0	1	2	3	4
2. School monitored the extent to which parents, peers, churches, organizations and neighborhoods implemented this plan.	0	1	2	3	4
3. School recognized and celebrated parents, peers, churches, organizations and neighborhoods that were implementing this plan.	0	1	2	3	4
4. Community implemented plan that held schools and school districts accountable for excellence in academic engagement and achievement outcomes.	0	1	2	3	4
5. Community recognized and celebrated schools that were successfully accelerating the closure of racial achievement gaps.	0	1	2	3	4
Total EN					____
GA	0	1	2	3	4
1. Teacher showed strong positive regard for all students in their classroom.	0	1	2	3	4
2. Teacher promoted and sustained high expectations of all students in their classroom.	0	1	2	3	4
3. Teacher utilized feedback in ways that enhanced my sense of efficacy and enjoyment of teaching.	0	1	2	3	4
4. Teacher worked in collaborative teams which identified students' progress and corresponding methods for improving students' progress.					

(Continue on next page…)

AGM Inventory
Page 3

GA (Cont'd).					
5. Teacher participated in plans and activities that enhanced levels of parent, peer, church, organization and neighborhood support of academic excellence.	0	1	2	3	4
Total GA					____
GS					
1. Principal oversaw training in methods and practices that accelerate the closure of racial achievement gaps.	0	1	2	3	4
2. Principal assigned master teachers or instructional leaders who supported teachers' implementation of methods and practices that accelerate closure of racial achievement gaps.	0	1	2	3	4
3. Principal oversaw plan for teacher teams that shared their work and developed *and* monitored collaborative strategies for accelerating closure of racial achievement gaps.	0	1	2	3	4
4. Principal oversaw plan for providing *timely* assessment driven feedback on the extent to which teacher methods and practices were accelerating closure of racial achievement gaps.	0	1	2	3	4
5. Principal oversaw plans for recognizing teachers that were successful in accelerating closures of racial achievement gaps.	0	1	2	3	4
Total GS					____
Note: Percentages are based on (Subtotal/20) x 100					
1. Total SO%					____
2. Total SE%					____
3. Total RO%					____
4. Total EN%					____
5. Total GA%					____
6. Total GS%					____
Total Subtotal %'s					____
J_k = (Total Subtotal%)/6					____

APPENDIX D

A Gardening Metaphor Inventory – Student Teacher Version

AGM Inventory R1
Student Teacher Version
Jerome Taylor, Sarah Orgass, and Épryl King

Directions: First indicate whether you have been instructed to rate activities covering over THE LAST MONTH __ or THE LAST YEAR __

Next, read each of the following items carefully and objectively—honestly. Then rate the extent to which behaviors described in each statement match instructional or administrative behaviors in your classroom and school during the period of observation selected above:

NEVER (0), **RARELY** (1), **SOMETIMES** (2), **FREQUENTLY** (3), **ROUTINELY** (4).

Item	0	1	2	3	4
SO					
1. Student Teacher used resources and materials that displayed and discussed pictures of distinguished black individuals who overcame early obstacles to learning (*e.g.,* Ben Carson, MD, Frederick Douglass).	0	1	2	3	4
2. Student Teacher helped students face learning challenges by patiently encouraging them to try harder.	0	1	2	3	4
3. Student Teacher helped students face learning challenges by patiently encouraging them to spend more time on their assignments—or ask for assistance.	0	1	2	3	4
4. Student Teacher helped students see that learning is important to their future and to the future of their neighborhood and community.	0	1	2	3	4
5. Student Teacher structured teams whose students inspired one another to strive toward successful completion of their assignments.	0	1	2	3	4
Total SO					____
SE					
1. Student Teacher stimulated and sustained the curiosity of students at *every* level of performance—from high to low achievers.	0	1	2	3	4
2. Student Teacher planfully moved students from mastery of basic skills to mastery of deeper concepts underlying basic skills.	0	1	2	3	4
3. Student Teacher's instructional plans were aligned with state and national standards.	0	1	2	3	4
4. Student Teacher assigned daily seatwork to consolidate mastery of learning at *all* levels of instruction—from basic to conceptual learning.	0	1	2	3	4
5. Student Teacher assigned daily homework to consolidate mastery of learning at *all* levels of instruction—from basic to conceptual learning.	0	1	2	3	4

AGM Inventory: Student Teacher Version
Page 2

RO					
1. Student Teacher used curriculum and practices that increased students' quest for new knowledge (*e.g.,* self-confidence, learning orientation, and self-reliance).	0	1	2	3	4
2. Student Teacher used curriculum and practices that improved students' emotional competence (*e.g.,* self-persistence and self-esteem).	0	1	2	3	4
3. Student Teacher used curriculum and practices that improved students' social skills (*e.g.,* love and respect and interpersonal skills.	0	1	2	3	4
4. Student Teacher used curriculum and practices that improve students' appreciation of his or her culture.	0	1	2	3	4
5. Student Teacher used curriculum and practices that helped students see how their culture can help them make good decisions within and outside the classroom.	0	1	2	3	4
Total RO					____
EN					
1. School implemented plan to promote excellence in academic engagement and achievement outcomes with parents, peers, churches, organizations and neighborhoods.	0	1	2	3	4
2. School monitored the extent to which parents, peers, churches, organizations and neighborhoods implemented this plan.	0	1	2	3	4
3. School recognized and celebrated parents, peers, churches, organizations and neighborhoods that were implementing this plan.	0	1	2	3	4
4. Community implemented plan that held schools and school districts accountable for excellence in academic engagement and achievement outcomes.	0	1	2	3	4
5. Community recognized and celebrated schools that were successfully accelerating the closure of racial achievement gaps.	0	1	2	3	4
Total EN					____
GA					
1. Student Teacher showed strong positive regard for all students in their classroom.	0	1	2	3	4
2. Student Teacher promoted and sustained high expectations of all students in their classroom.	0	1	2	3	4
3. Student Teacher utilized feedback in ways that enhanced their sense of efficacy and enjoyment of teaching.	0	1	2	3	4
4. Student Teacher worked in collaborative teams which identified students' progress and corresponding methods for improving students' progress.	0	1	2	3	4

(Continue on next page…)

GA (Cont'd).					
5. Teacher participated in plans and activities that enhanced levels of parent, peer, church, organization and neighborhood support of academic excellence.	0	1	2	3	4
Total GA					____
GS					
1. Principal oversaw training in methods and practices that accelerate the closure of racial achievement gaps.	0	1	2	3	4
2. Principal assigned master teachers or instructional leaders who supported teachers' implementation of methods and practices that accelerate closure of racial achievement gaps.	0	1	2	3	4
3. Principal oversaw plan for teacher teams that shared their work and developed *and* monitored collaborative strategies for accelerating closure of racial achievement gaps.	0	1	2	3	4
4. Principal oversaw plan for providing *timely* assessment driven feedback on the extent to which teacher methods and practices were accelerating closure of racial achievement gaps.	0	1	2	3	4
5. Principal oversaw plans for recognizing teachers that were successful in accelerating closures of racial achievement gaps.	0	1	2	3	4
Total GS					____
Note: Percentages are based on (Subtotal/20) x 100					
1. Total SO%					____
2. Total SE%					____
3. Total RO%					____
4. Total EN%					____
5. Total GA%					____
6. Total GS%					____
Total Subtotal %'s					____
J_k = (Total Subtotal%)/6					____

APPENDIX E

Parent Survey

Parent Survey

1. How many years has your child participated in the Three-Student Project?
   This year only two years three years

Directions: Please rate the following statements in this way: (SA) Strongly Agree, (A) Agree, (U) Undecided, (D) Disagree, (SD) Strongly Disagree.

		(SA)	(A)	(U)	(D)	(SD)
2.	My child's grades are better since he/she has been participating in the Three-Student Project.					
3.	My child's behavior has improved since he/she has been participating in the Three-Student Project.					
4.	My child enjoys school more since he/she has been participating in the Three-Student Project.					
5.	My child's student teacher has communicated with me on a regular basis since he/she has been participating in the Three-Student Project.					
6.	I receive updates on how well my child is doing in the Three-Student Project.					
7.	My child enjoys going to school.					
8.	My child completes his homework daily.					
9.	I feel connected to the school and my child's educational experience.					
10.	In my opinion, the Three-Student Project has had a positive impact on the academic progress of my child.					
11.	In my opinion, the Three-Student Project has had a positive impact on the social behavior of my child.					

APPENDIX F

Individual Interview Protocols – Principal

Administrator Interview Protocol: Hope Elementary

Item #	Interview Item
1	How long have you been a building administrator at this building?
2	Describe the schools' demographics (race, socioeconomic status, etc).
3	At what point in your tenure here was the Three-Student Project implemented?
4	How did the Three-Student Project come to be implemented in your building?
5	How has the Three-Student Project evolved since it was first implemented here?
6	Describe the school culture prior to implementation of the Three-Student Project. a. Student attendance b. Student behavior c. Student academic performance d. Student social behaviors e. Staff attitudes f. Staff attendance
7	Compare and contrast prior school culture to current school culture.
8	If there is a change in school culture, to what do you attribute the change in school culture?
9	Both currently and within the past, what are some examples of culturally responsive practices that you feel have been used in your school? a. Expectations? (High expectations – Failure is not an option – helping students to persist at a task) b. Empowerment? (Helping students to see that they can overcome obstacles – and show others who have done so) c. Connections to students' own racial/ethnic/religious culture? (Either through content, or context, students learn about their culture) d. Communications with parents? (give examples [if any] of partnership with parents) e. Relationship building? (how do teachers [and the principal] get to know the

	students, [experiences] and their cultural background?)
10	Describe the level of parental involvement in your school. Has there been a change in parental attitudes since the Three-Student Project was implemented?
11	What impact do you think the Three-Student Project has had on a. Academic performance? b. School culture? c. Parental involvement? d. Student teachers' preparation to become culturally responsive, and good teachers overall?
12	What advice would you give principals about the implementation of this project in their own buildings?

Table 4: Administrator Interview Protocol: Rising Star Academy

Item #	Interview Item
1	How long have you been a building administrator at this building?
2	Describe the schools' demographics (race, socioeconomic status, etc).
3	At what point in your tenure here was the Three-Student Project implemented?
4	How did the Three-Student Project come to be implemented in your building?
5	Describe the school culture prior to implementation of the Three-Student Project. a. Student attendance b. Student behavior c. Student academic performance d. Student social behaviors e. Staff attitudes f. Staff attendance
6	Compare and contrast prior school culture to current school culture.
7	If there is a change, to what do you attribute the change in school culture?
8	Both currently and within the past, what are some examples of culturally responsive practices that you feel have been used in your school?

	a. Expectations? (High expectations – Failure is not an option – helping students to persist at a task) b. Empowerment? (Helping students to see that they can overcome obstacles – and show others who have done so) c. Connections to students' own racial/ethnic/religious culture? (Either through content, or context, students learn about their culture) d. Communications with parents? (give examples [if any] of partnership with parents) e. Relationship building? (how do teachers [and the principal] get to know the students, [experiences] and their cultural background?)
9.	Describe the level of parental involvement in your school. Has there been a change in parental attitudes since the Three-Student Project was implemented?
10.	What impact do you think the Three-Student Project has had on a. Academic performance? b. School culture? c. Parental involvement? d. Student teachers' preparation to become culturally responsive, and good teachers overall?
11.	What advice would you give principals about the implementation of this project in their own buildings?

APPENDIX G

Individual Interview Protocols – Teachers

Table 5: Teacher Interview Protocols – Hope Elementary and Rising Star Academy

Item	Question
1	What grade do you teach?
2	How long have you taught at this school?
3	How many years have you been a cooperating teacher in the Three-Student Project?
4	What is the academic level of the students in your class who are assigned to the Three-Student Project?
5	Do you have students in your classroom with lower academic performance than those in the Three-Student Project? If so, how many?
6	Describe the behaviors of the students within the project. a. Academic (For example: on task, participatory, distracted, difficulty comprehending, retains information…) b. Social (For example: interacts well, displays difficult behavior, shares with others…)
7	Have you noticed any differences in the behaviors of the students in the Three-Student Project or their classmates towards them since the beginning of the year?
8	"Culturally relevant teaching requires that students maintain some cultural integrity as well as academic excellence" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 160). Culturally Responsive Teaching - Gay (2000) defined culturally responsive teaching as "using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them (p. 29). What culturally responsive practices do you implement in your classroom?
9	School culture can be described as the values and beliefs of the students and employees and are expressed through their actions and interactions with others. School culture can impact student achievement. a. Before the Three-Student Project was implemented, how would you describe the culture of the school? b. After the Three-Student Project was implemented, how would you describe the culture of the school? c. How would you describe the school's level of achievement before the Three-Student Project was implemented?

	d. How would you describe the school's level of achievement after the Three-Student Project was implemented?
10.	What impact do you think the Three-Student Project has had on student teachers' preparation to implement culturally responsive practices?

APPENDIX H

Individual and Focus Group Interview Protocols – Student Teachers

Table 6: Student Teacher Interview Protocol – Hope Elementary

Item	Question
1.	How many students do you see each week, and at what academic level do they perform?
2.	Think back to your first sessions with your students. How would you describe your first sessions with your intervention students? a. Did you have difficulty getting the students to work with you?
3.	How would you characterize your relationship with your intervention students?
4.	What are some of the challenges in establishing a relationship with the intervention students and how did you overcome them?
5.	What strategies are you using when you work with your three students? a. Reading: b. Mathematics:
6.	What tools are you using to carry out those strategies?
7.	How do you track and monitor student progress?
8.	How do you know whether the strategies you used have been effective?
9.	Gay (2000) defined culturally responsive teaching as "using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them (p. 29). What kinds of culturally responsive practices have you observed within the students' classroom?
10.	What kinds of academic behaviors are you observing with your three students within the classroom? (For example: on task, participatory, distracted, difficulty comprehending, retains information…)? Do these behaviors differ from the beginning of the year? If so, in what ways?
11.	What kinds of social behaviors are you observing in the classroom? (For example: interacts well, displays difficult behavior, shares with others…)? Do these behaviors differ from the beginning of the year? If so, in what ways?
12.	How would you describe the culture of the classroom?

13.	How would you describe the culture of the school in general?

Focus Group Interview Protocol – Rising Star Academy

Item	Question
1.	Compared to students who are not participants in the Three-Student Project, what were the academic behaviors of the students within the Three-Student Project before your intervention lessons began? (For example: on task, participatory, distracted, difficulty comprehending, retains information…) How would you describe their academic behaviors now?
2.	Compared to students who are not participants in the Three-Student Project, what were the social behaviors of the students within the Three-Student Project before your intervention lessons began? (For example: interacts well, displays difficult behavior, shares with others…) How would you describe their social behaviors now?
3.	If the participants in the Three-Student Project showed a change in their academic and social behaviors, to what do you attribute these changes?
4.	In your opinion, has the Three-Student Project had an impact on the level of parental involvement of the students participating in the project? If so, in what ways?
5.	In your opinion, how has the Three-Student Project had an impact on school culture?
6.	In what ways has your participation in the Three-Student Project impacted your preparedness to become a culturally responsive teacher?
7.	In what way has the Three-Student Project had an impact on your readiness to become a well-prepared classroom teacher overall?

APPENDIX I

Matrix - Principal Individual Interview Protocols

Matrix H: **Principal Individual Interview Protocol (Building A)**

Research Questions / Instrument Assessed	RQ 1 In what ways has the Three-Student Project impacted student achievement and academic behaviors?	RQ 2 How did the student-teachers build relationships with the three students?	RQ 3 What impact has the Professional Development School's Three-Student Project had on student teachers' preparation to become culturally responsive teachers?	RQ 4 What are parents', teachers', student teachers', and principals' perceptions of the impact of the Three-Student Project on school culture and student achievement?	RQ 5 What culturally responsive practices are perceived by principals, teachers, and student teachers as being used in these professional development schools?
1. How long have you been a building administrator at this building?					
2. Describe the schools' demographics (race, socioeconomic status, etc).					
3. At what point in your tenure here was the Three-Student Project implemented?					
4. Describe the school culture prior to implementation of the Three-Student Project.					
5. Compare and contrast prior school culture to current school culture.					
6. To what do you attribute the change (if any) in school culture?					

7. What culturally responsive practices do you perceive as being used in your school? a. Expectations? b. Empowerment? c. Connections to students' own racial/ethnic/religious culture? d. Communications with Parents?					
8. Describe the level of parental involvement in your school. Has there been a change in parental attitudes since the Three-Student Project was implemented?					
9. How has the Three-Student Project evolved since it was first implemented here?					

Matrix I: **Principal Individual Interview Protocol (Building B)**

Research Questions / Instrument Assessed	RQ 1 In what ways has the Three-Student Project impacted student achievement and academic behaviors?	RQ 2 How did the student-teachers build relationships with the three students?	RQ 3 What impact has the Professional Development School's Three-Student Project had on student teachers' preparation to become culturally responsive teachers?	RQ 4 What are parents', teachers', student teachers', and principals' perceptions of the impact of the Three-Student Project on school culture and student achievement??	RQ 5 What culturally responsive practices are perceived by principals, teachers, and student teachers as being used in these professional development schools?
1.How long have you been a building administrator at this building?					
2.At what point in your tenure here was the Three-Student Project implemented?					
3.How did the Three-Student Project come to be implemented in your building?					
4.Describe the school culture prior to implementation of the Three-Student Project.					
5.Compare and contrast prior school culture to current school culture.					

6. To what do you attribute the change (if any) in school culture?					
7. What culturally responsive practices do you perceive as being used in your school? a. Expectations? b. Empowerment? c. Connections to students' own racial/ethnic/religious culture? d. Communications with Parents?					
8. Describe the level of parental involvement in your school. Has there been a change in parental attitudes since the Three-Student Project was implemented?					

APPENDIX J

Matrix - Teacher Interview Protocols

Matrix F: **Cooperating Teacher Individual Interview Protocol (Building A)**

Research Questions / Instrument Assessed	RQ 1 In what ways has the Three-Student Project impacted student achievement and academic behaviors?	RQ 2 How did the student-teachers build relationships with the three students?	RQ 3 What impact has the Professional Development School's Three-Student Project had on student teachers' preparation to become culturally responsive teachers?	RQ 4 What are parents', teachers', student teachers', and principals' perceptions of the impact of the Three-Student Project on school culture and student achievement?	RQ 5 What culturally responsive practices are perceived by principals, teachers, and student teachers as being used in these professional development schools?
1. How long have you taught at this school?					
2. How many students have you had in the Three-Student Project?					
3. What is the academic level of the project students?					
4. Do you have students with lower performance than those in the Three-Student Project? If so, how many?					
5. Describe the behaviors of the students within the project? a. Academic b. Social					

6. What culturally responsive practices do you implement in your classroom?					
7. How would you describe the culture of the school and the school's level of achievement before the Three-Student Project was implemented?					
8. Have you ever had a student teacher before?					
9. What impact has the Three-Student Project had on student teachers' preparation to become culturally responsive teachers?					

Matrix G: **Cooperating Teacher Focus Group Interview Protocol (Building B)**

Research Questions / Instrument Assessed	RQ 1 In what ways has the Three-Student Project impacted student achievement and academic behaviors?	RQ 2 How did the student-teachers build relationships with the three students?	RQ 3 What impact has the Professional Development School's Three-Student Project had on student teachers' preparation to become culturally responsive teachers?	RQ 4 What are parents', teachers', student teachers', and principals' perceptions of the impact of the Three-Student Project on school culture and student achievement?	RQ 5 What culturally responsive practices are perceived by principals, teachers, and student teachers as being used in these professional development schools?
1. What are your perceptions of the Three-Student Project?					
2. What has been most challenging about implementing the Three-Student Project?					
3. What has been the most rewarding part of implementing the Three-Student Project?					
4. If you could change anything about this project, what would it be?					
5. In your opinion, has the Three-Student Project made an impact on school culture? If so, how?					
6. Has the Three-Student Project made an impact on academic achievement? In what ways?					

APPENDIX K

Matrix - Student Teacher Interview Protocols

Matrix C: **Student Teacher Individual Interview Protocol**

Research Questions / Instrument Assessed	RQ 1 In what ways has the Three-Student Project impacted student achievement and academic behaviors?	RQ 2 How did the student-teachers build relationships with the three students?	RQ 3 What impact has the Professional Development School's Three-Student Project had on student teachers' preparation to become culturally responsive teachers?	RQ 4 What are parents', teachers', student teachers', and principals' perceptions of the impact of the Three-Student Project on school culture and student achievement?	RQ 5 What culturally responsive practices are perceived by principals, teachers, and student teachers as being used in these professional development schools?
1. How many students do you see each week, and at what academic level do they perform?					
2. Think back to your first sessions with your students. How would you describe your first sessions with your intervention students? a. Did you have difficulty getting the students to work with you?					
3. How would you characterize your relationship with your intervention students?					

4. What are some of the challenges in establishing a relationship with the intervention students and how did you overcome them?					
5. What kinds of culturally responsive practices have you observed within the students' classroom?					
6. What kinds of academic behaviors are you observing of the project students within the classroom? a. Do these behaviors differ from the beginning of the year? If so, in what way?					
7. How would you describe the culture of the classroom?					
8. How would you describe the culture of the school in general?					

Matrix D: **Student Teacher Focus Group Interview Protocol (Building A & B)**

Research Questions / Instrument Assessed	RQ 1 In what ways has the Three-Student Project impacted student achievement and academic behaviors?	RQ 2 How did the student-teachers build relationships with the three students?	RQ 3 What impact has the Professional Development School's Three-Student Project had on student teachers' preparation to become culturally responsive teachers?	RQ 4 What are parents', teachers', student teachers', and principals' perceptions of the impact of the Three-Student Project on school culture and student achievement?	RQ 5 What culturally responsive practices are perceived by principals, teachers, and student teachers as being used in these professional development schools?
1. Compared to students who are not participants in the Three-Student Project, how were the students' academic and social behaviors before your intervention lessons began? How would you describe their academic and social behaviors now?					
2. If the participants in the Three-Student Project showed a change in their academic and social behaviors, to what aspect of the Three Student Project do you attribute these changes?					

3. In your opinion, has the Three-Student Project had an impact on the level of parental involvement of the students participating in the project?					
4. In your opinion, how has the Three-Student Project had an impact on school culture?					
5. In what ways has your participation in the Three-Student Project impacted your preparedness to become a culturally responsive teacher?					
6. In what way has the Three-Student Project had an impact on your readiness to become a well-prepared classroom teacher overall?					

APPENDIX L

Permission to Use and Adapt the AGM Inventory

Email Exchange

SUBJECT **Educational Justice Theory and Praxis**

FROM Jerome Taylor TO You
From Jerome Taylor
To Epryl King

Hello Epryl,

Am I thrilled or what over news of the receptivity of your chair with our model for producing educational justice. On the nature of our model in general and Dame-Dame applications in particular, I am including an early draft of our proposal (due September 22, 2012) that also includes preliminary information on your validity question (attachment 1, pages 18-26 in particular). This application will be modified in three ways. First, I will be including updates to the literature, and second I will be including an evaluation of the 'soft' version of our Dame-Dame application in Hill District Elementary Schools (last attachment). Third, the program officer of the section of Institute of Educational Sciences (USDE) to which we are sending this application advised that we submit this as a development and innovation application rather that a scaling-up proposal which it is at the moment. Our September submission will address each of these three items.

Also, since your chair and committee don't know me from a can of paint, I'm sending along a brief bio which you should feel free to share with them along with any or all of the remaining attachments. Finally, on the matter of using our AGM Inventory, the answer is an enthusiastic affirmative. I'm including the AGM along with two comparison measures that might be of interest in your study. I wish you the best, Epryl.

Kindest regards,

jerry

From: Epryl King
Sent: Wednesday, July 25, 2012 6:27 PM
To: Jerome Taylor ; jerome taylor
Cc: Epryl King
Subject: Validity Testing of Garden Metaphor Inventory and Permission

Hi Dr. Taylor!

I had a wonderful first meeting with my new dissertation chair and committee. The last time you and I met, we discussed the possibility of incorporating your Garden Metaphor into my dissertation. It looks like my new dissertation

committee is more approving! So, one question we have is whether you have already done validity testing of your inventory. I'm guessing you have done this in order to conduct the Dame Dame research, but I wasn't sure.

One thing my committee and I discussed was giving the teacher version to the teachers at the school where my study will be conducted. I'm guessing that you have not done validity testing with this version. In any event, I will need your permission in writing to use the inventory for my study.

My committee felt it was absolutely possible to look at this school through the lens of AGM, which makes me very happy. One committee member would like to co-publish an article once the study is complete.

In any event, I thought I'd catch you before you left to inform you of my request to have your permission in writing to use the inventory, and of course, I need to know whether you have already done validity testing on it.

Thanks Dr. Taylor!!!
Epryl

P.S. I haven't seen Nancy yet today. Her daughter runs tomorrow. My daughter ran today and made it to the finals for the 800 M, ranking 7th of 52 girls that qualified for the championships!

RE: Permission to Adapt AGM Inventory

FROM Jerome Taylor TO You
Hide Details
From Jerome Taylor
To Epryl King

Indeed, Epryl!

jerry

Date: Fri, 7 Sep 2012 09:28:31 -0700
From: eprylking@achievementgap.info
Subject: Permission to Adapt AGM Inventory
To: taylor@pitt.edu; jxtaylor69@msn.com
CC: eprylking@achievementgap.info

Hello Dr. Taylor!

I am writing to ask that in the event I need to adapt your inventory, may I have your permission to make the changes necessary for my study?

Of course, I will email you the changes that were made (if any).

Thanks Dr. Taylor!

Epryl