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THE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, AND EVALUATION OF A
SCHOOL-BASED PROJECT TO IMPROVE ACHIEVEMENT OF FIFTH GRADE
STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN RETAINED

A Dissertation Presented

By

BARBARA RIVERS WILLIAMS

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

February, 1990

Education

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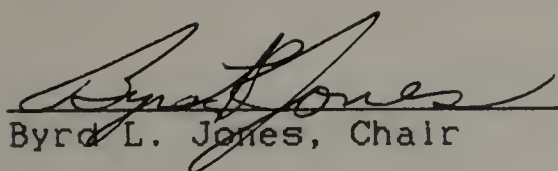
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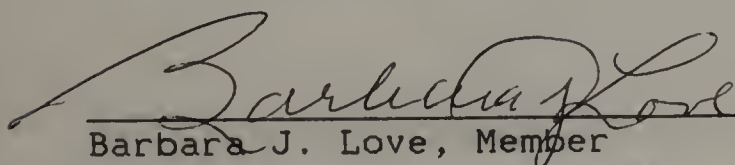
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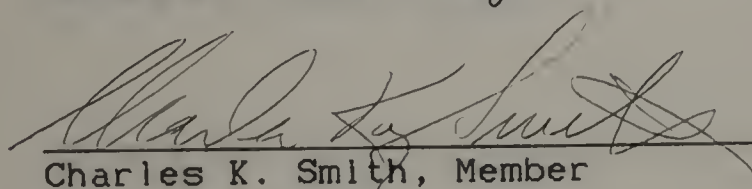
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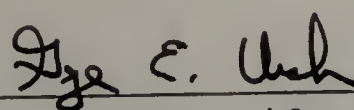
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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated with love to:

My mother, Tillatha McCullough R. Harding whose love and perseverance provided me roots;

and

My father, Arteal Daniel Rivers whose creativity and vision provided me wings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A school project like this needs guidance over and beyond the people involved in the job. Of the many people to whom I am indebted for completing this project, I would like to give special recognition to:

Dr. Byrd L. Jones, who guided the development of content, kept a watchful eye, and never tried to reform me when I was "out-of-synch."

Joan Zabawa, who continuously demonstrated that long distance problems can be effectively managed.

Kenneth Brown, who was a quiet and supportive partner.

Gloria Donoghue, who unselfishly contributed her time and spent many hours proofreading, making suggestions and remained positive, task-oriented and cheerful.

Faculty and staff of Washington Rose School, whose participation in all the details of the school based program demonstrated a firm commitment to their mission goal: "all children can learn."

Family and friends, whose boundless assurances and prayers helped me complete the long journey.

To all of them my deepest appreciation!

ABSTRACT

THE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION OF A
SCHOOL-BASED PROJECT TO IMPROVE ACHIEVEMENT OF FIFTH GRADE
STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN RETAINED

FEBRUARY, 1990

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Educators are pressed to take seriously their obligation for improving success in school for failure-expectant children and for changing the means used to achieve learning outcomes. This dissertation describes the processes, activities and suggested strategies for integrating staff development, parent outreach and after-school skill support for a small group of low-income Black children targeted for retention at the fifth grade. The project comprised three elements: an after-school skills development/homework hurdle program; a staff development program focusing on encouraging high teacher expectations for all children and a parent outreach program. The project sought to enable minority, failure-expectant children to experience success. Teachers practiced positive interactional

and support skills designed to demonstrate an understanding of how their behaviors and expectations impacted on student achievement.

The after-school project and staff development component incorporated characteristics drawn from the effective-schools research, such as: (a) the principal's leadership and attention to the quality of instruction, (b) school climate contributing to teaching and learning, (c) high expectations for performance of all students, (d) teachers committed to bringing all children to at least minimum mastery, and (e) assessing and monitoring student achievement. The project had positive effects on student achievement as measured on standardized tests and report card grades, as well as student behaviors. Teachers held higher expectations, practiced effective teaching strategies, and interacted more with colleagues and parents. Educators have a strong knowledge base for school improvement activities among current staffs, but there are no fixed methods or standard blueprints to explain how to combine people, ideas and programs to create a setting that meets all the diverse needs presented by poor and minority children with a history of limited academic achievement.

Viewing change as a process, the after-school project directly assisted at risk students in ways that helped teachers modify their strategies and organizational

routines to meet educational needs of Black, failure-
expectant children. With commitment and accountability for
success, learning outcomes increased through staff develop-
ment, parent outreach, attention to learning readiness,
social competencies, and mastery of basic skills. Failure-
expectant students came to think of themselves as capable of
learning; and their gains helped teachers see the importance
of positive expectations. The principal also increased a
repertoire of school improvement strategies.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
ABSTRACT	vi
LIST OF TABLES	xli
Chapter	
I. ISSUE OF RETENTION	1
Introduction	1
Demographic Background	5
Statement of Problem	15
Need for the Study	19
Statement of Purpose	22
Significance of Study	23
Methodology of Study	25
Subject Selection	25
Inservice Teacher Training Component.	25
Roosevelt Community/Washington Rose School	28
Limitations of Study	29
Evaluation of Study	32
Research Questions	33
References	35
II. STUDIES OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS	37
Introduction	37
Elements of an Effective School	39
Instructional Staff Development Training	49
Retention, Academic Attainment, and Black Students	63
Chapter Summary	87
References	90
III. METHODS AND PROCEDURES	98
Introduction	98
The Instructional, Administrative and Support Staff	106
Data Collection	107
Chapter Summary	108

IV.	OUTCOMES	111
	Introduction	111
	Student Record of Achievement, Behavior and Attitude	112
	Homework/Classwork	116
	Iowa Tests of Basic Skills	118
	Grades	120
	Behavior	122
	Health	124
	Chapter Summary	129
	Teacher Training Workhops: Objectives and Outcomes	130
	Session One: October, 1986	131
	Outcomes of the First Session	132
	Session Two: February, 1987	135
	Outcomes of the Second Session	137
	Session Three: May, 1987	138
	Outcomes of the Third Session	139
	Session Four, October, 1987	143
	Outcomes of the Fourth Session	144
	Section Summary	145
	Parent/Principal Interaction	146
	Chapter Summary	154
V.	MAJOR FINDINGS, ASSESSMENTS OF SCHOOL-BASED PROJECT, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE IMPLICATIONS	156
	Introduction	156
	Response to Research Question 1	157
	Response to Research Question 2	158
	Response to Research Question 3	159
	Response to Research Question 4	160
	Response to Research Question 5	164
	Future Implications	171
	Epilogue	174
	APPENDICES	176
	A. PARENTAL CONSENT FORM FOR STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN THE AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM	177
	B. INVITATION TO PARENTS TO ATTEND ORIENTATION ON NOVEMBER 13, 1986	180
	C. STUDENT DATA SHEET	182
	D. INTERIM PROGRESS REPORT FOR STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN THE AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM	184

E-1.	STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING WORKSHOP I	
	TEACHER EVALUATION	188
E-2.	STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING WORKSHOP II	
	TEACHER EVALUATION	189
F-1.	TEACHER EVALUATION AND TRAINING WORKSHOP III	
	TEACHER EVALUATION	191
F-2.	TEACHER EVALUATION AND TRAINING WORKSHOP IV	
	TEACHER EVALUATION	192
G.	PROGRESS REPORT FOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE	
	AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM	194
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY		195

LIST OF TABLES

1. School Attendance for Students Participating
in After-School Program, Academic
School Year, 1986-87. 114
2. School Attendance Profile for Former Students
in After-School Program, 1st Quarter,
Academic School Year, 1987-88 115
3. Grades Recorded on Report Cards Based
On Completion Of Homework/Classwork by
Students Participating In After-School Program,
Academic School Year, 1986-87 117
4. Profile of Iowa Tests of Basic Skills Grade
Equivalent Derived Scores for Students
Participating in the After-School Program,
May '86 and May, '87 119
5. Distribution of Final Numerical Scores on
Report Cards for Students Participating in
After-School Program, Academic
School Year, 1986-87 121
6. Health Conditions of Students Participating
in After-School Program as Recorded on
Health Files, October, 1986 125
7. Report Card Grades (1st Quarter) for Students
in After-School Program Presently Enrolled in
Seventh Grade, Academic School Year, 1987-88 . . . 127

CHAPTER I

ISSUE OF RETENTION

Introduction

Many educators have grown so accustomed to hearing sharp criticisms and to reading "crisis" reports about dysfunctional schools that they have become desensitized to serious problems. But some problems deserve to be seen as serious and are so severe with such long-range implications that they stand out from the rest. One such problem is the growing numbers of children teetering on the edge of failure--at risk of becoming part of the 4.3 million school leavers between the ages of 16 and 24. These are the children who lack academic persistence and the skills or habit of success, but are not necessarily abused, severely emotionally/physically handicapped or those needing in-depth therapy. They are children who consistently fail to take full advantage of the educational resources and opportunities available to them and no longer believe school provides hope to make their lives better (Hahn, 1987; Ogden & Germinario, 1988; Sagor, 1988).

Improving the education of failure-expectant children to success-expectant children should be one the most serious challenges and responsibilities facing educators. There are several reasons why educators should be increasingly concerned with improving the success in school of failure-expectant children.

First, a rising population of failure-expectant children means that in the future we will see more and more adults poorly educated. Growing populations of poorly educated adults have grave consequences for the economy. Large numbers of workers unable to perform satisfactorily in available jobs or benefit from training that might improve their performance result in deterioration and decline of the labor force and jeopardize the competitive position of the nation as a whole. At the same time, this ill-prepared work population is more likely to require social welfare, public health services, and institutional services. This populace is less likely to participate politically and is increasingly more likely to be involved in the legal system as a result of criminal activities.

Second, rapid increases in disaffected children and adults augment the appearance of a society composed of "haves" and "have-nots". The "haves" composed of Whites and Asians who are educated, performing professional, managerial and technical work and the "have-nots", a growing class of racial minorities and poor whites who face undereducation, poverty, and alienation from productive work. A perception that America is now two distinct societies could result in major political conflict and social rebellion. Millions face prospects of living at or below the poverty level and/or never entering the work force. The "haves" will resist

paying for services in an economy suffering from a variety of societal problems as the "have-nots" pursue remedies to improve their condition (Levin, 1988; Pinkney, 1984).

A third reason for concern is the question of equitable access to education. The notion of not helping children who do not succeed does not fit in American educational philosophy. Laws and policies have been implemented to address the educational needs of handicapped children, bilingual children and gifted and talented children. Improving schools for failure-expectant children to success-expectant children require specialized programs and modifying the means used to achieve learning outcomes (Levin, 1988; Ogden & Germinario, 1988).

Armed with the understanding of the perspective, experience and orientation of failure-expectant children, practical programs and staff development strategies and practices generated at the elementary level could enable these children to gain a locus of control over their lives and see that school can be a place where they can learn. Forgetting these children because they present problems would be an act of indifference and folly.

Children whose family dysfunction, learning deficits, and/or developmental disorders conspire to undermine their academic persistence and achievement find it difficult to progress in any school setting. When variables of minor-

lty status, poverty, victimization, exploitation, and a family history of school failure are added, the task can become virtually impossible for children to attempt without special interventions designed to counteract the negative impacts from the society around them (Davies, 1981; Ogden & Germinario, 1988).

Typically, schools have vacillated between social promotion and retention for elementary students while recognizing that neither advancement without readiness nor repeating a grade without changing the curriculum make sense. Students are retained in escalating patterns of failure, locking themselves into limited futures because of inadequate skills and underdeveloped abilities.

While poor and minority children with a history of limited academic achievement or persistence face great problems in their efforts to experience reasonable success in school, many children with identical demographic characteristics demonstrate considerable academic persistence and success (Clark, 1983; Joyce, 1983). In-school programs aimed at reversing a negative educational trend in individual children by incorporating intellectual challenge while nurturing self-image have demonstrably succeeded in preventing children from being retained, or eventually dropping out of school (Brookover et al., 1982). School programs have greater success when they change the schooling experience of poor and

experience of poor and minority children; combine inservice training courses that are designed to equip educators with skills that enhance students' academic persistence and success; involve everyone in the educational enterprise in a shared commitment to and accountability for success that all students can learn (Edmonds, 1979; North Carolina Performance Training Program, 1986; Gilbert & Gay, 1986).

Demographic Background

As Black families in the 1960s sought to follow "normal" ethnic patterns of advancement into middle class status and lifestyle, they experienced a quite different outcome in many locations. Some isolated communities in Long Island, New York, early developed homes and neighborhoods with small numbers of Black families. Soon they turned into largely Black communities due to a combination of factors. Using blockbusting and steering tactics, landlords, landowners, mortgage bankers, and real estate agents made agreements that prevented racial mixing of neighborhoods, apartment houses and mobile homes. The collective powers of the real estate industry acting as one central force and for a common racial purpose, created rules that denied Blacks equal access to housing and public education. Several communities, such as Hempstead, Roosevelt, Amityville, Brentwood and

Wyandanch were changed demographically, socially and economically from a White majority to a Black prosperous minority whose economic and social levels compared to that of the White majority and a growing disproportionate number of Blacks who were unskilled and/or welfare beneficiaries.

The community of Roosevelt, in Nassau County, New York, has a significant population of children who can be described as follows: they are Black, poor, test well within the normal range of intelligence, have experienced chronic academic failure by grade four, and have been retained at least one time. These intermediate-grade children have social, academic, personal, and economic needs or deficits that reflect the pervasive difficulties of daily life in the surrounding community.

Vulnerability doubled for those racially identified as Black. Black children living in Roosevelt were more vulnerable than White children to residential segregation, negative household population characteristics, violence, high rate of leaving school before graduation, low social and economic status, low per pupil expenditure and educational segregation/discrimination that created an expectation that a certain amount of segregation was normal.

By 1986, Roosevelt, Long Island was a racially isolated, Black community with a high percentage of families below the poverty level. The population of Roosevelt is 87.7

percent Black, of whom 16.4 percent had family incomes of less than \$10,000 annually, although the median family income for the whole of Nassau County was \$22,000 according to the 1980 census. Roosevelt had the lowest per capita income in Nassau County, partially because only 36.3 percent of the population in Roosevelt age 18 and over had completed 4 years of high school, and less than 5 percent had finished four years of college. Although 20.4 percent of the community's high school graduates completed one to three years of college, less than 25 percent had graduated.

Black men and women between the ages of 16 and 64 sustained a combined unemployment rate of 32.5 percent, according to the 1980 census. The New York State Unemployment Office estimated that 1985 unemployment rates in Roosevelt were the highest in Nassau County. These problems of unemployment, lack of education, and extreme low income per capita were compounded by the fact that one-third of the population lived in family settings with five or more persons and one in four families in Roosevelt had female heads of household living below the poverty level.

Although most poor families are headed by females, Black females represent 70 percent of the population as opposed to fewer than 10 percent of White females heading families classified as poor. Black children are four times as likely to live in poverty than White children. Lower

level of educational attainment may be a key factor to poverty and unemployment. However, there is powerful evidence rooted in discrimination that cannot explain the poverty gap as Black incomes have failed to outperform those of Whites with similar or much lower educational attainments (Cross, 1984; Pinkney, 1984).

Data collected during the 1980 census showed that Roosevelt's adolescent population presented certain specific and profound educational health, and economic needs. The data for Roosevelt reflected (a) teenage pregnancy rate of 27.8 percent, compared with 5.3 percent in Nassau County, (b) a crime/arrest rate for youth between the ages of 7 and 20 of 130.1 percent as compared with the county rate of 46.8 percent, and (c) a high school drop-out rate of 10.4 percent, as compared with 2.1 percent for the county as a whole. Although problems such as drug and alcohol abuse, unplanned pregnancy, divorce, desertion, truancy, running away and suicide were shared by both White and Black people, Black people were worse off than their White counterparts and residential segregation had disproportionately concentrated those problems in Roosevelt.

Poor Black Americans are reminded by their schools, their neighborhoods, and their oppressed status that they are excluded from and often by the majority population of Americans who have ordinarily found support, educational

encouragement, and upward mobility in public schools. As poor Black families grew from generation to generation, they learned that schools offered them substandard education with inadequate financing and limited opportunities for advancement. While public education promised opportunities for children to advance at least one step above their parents, poor Black Americans were denied upward mobility. As a result, many Blacks perceived no reason to turn to schools for direction, support, leadership and encouragement (Gentry et al., 1972).

Sarason (1972) suggested that current behaviors of groups of people have evolved understandably in the context of past behaviors in relation to a particular goal or circumstance. If Sarason is correct, then there is clear evidence that Blacks have had a troubled and often futile history of attempting to cope with schools and economic situations where they have been persistently deprived of equal access, equal education and equal opportunity based on that education. In the community of Roosevelt, one can witness the racially and economically biased isolation of an entire Black community whose schools have failed the children they are charged to serve.

Situated squarely in a county that is among the nation's top ten economically and socially desirable regions in which one can achieve a highly satisfying quality of life,

Roosevelt is a racially and economically isolated neighborhood. In the midst of plenty, schools fueled by tax income from private and business property values taxed at some of the highest rates in the nation, the Roosevelt community stands as testimony to the systemic racism that characterizes community development, plans, tax incentive programs, and business initiatives that multiply rapidly in communities that are predominantly or exclusively middle class and White. From the western end to the eastern tip of Long Island, a strong collaboration between political leadership and private industry has been repeatedly effective in generating high tax revenues, increased property values, improved employment, increased income for schools, increased development of private dwellings, better community maintenance programs, and enhanced community image.

This sound dynamic between private interests and public well-being has been a trend on Long Island in predominantly or exclusively White and affluent communities such as Great Neck, Cold Spring Harbor, Massapequa, Garden City, Dix Hills, Manhasset, Roslyn, Shoreham-Wading River, Huntington, Hauppauge, and Stony Brook. Once small rural communities have grown to thriving suburban settings. Many have successfully maintained a sense of the original community character and the capacity to provide high standards of human services--including public education.

Roosevelt should be a community developer's dream. Property values are low, tracts of land are available, the community is less than one hour from New York City and close to all major airports and highways, and there is a large body of able adults seeking employment. Despite the economic logic of investing in a community where business people could reap high returns from low output, developers choose areas with higher taxes, higher property costs, and small numbers of adults able to fill required positions. Such development trends indicate a consistent lack of faith that a Black community could provide the talent and labor necessary to fuel a thriving community.

In an economically, racially, industrially and socially isolated community, the Roosevelt public school system struggles to conduct the business of education with the lowest income from local tax revenues of any school system in Nassau County. Educational and instructional leaders in poor Black communities like Roosevelt, must struggle daily to help Black children keep their eyes on a prize that often eludes them as they reach out. As observed by Leacock (1969), the social and academic development of Black children has been strongly correlated with the lack of hope so pervasive in communities that have been subjected to racial bias and isolationist tactics designed to limit minority access to higher levels of economic and educational opportunity.

Roosevelt teachers have tried to make these children competitive for higher education and employment prospects in a region where education in neighboring communities is supported by some of the highest tax dollars in this country.

Children living in Roosevelt, Long Island can be expected to be very much like their peers in any of the neighboring communities, in that they respond strongly to high expectations, opportunities to learn, strong instructional leadership, tightly coupled curriculum, frequent monitoring and special programs designed to meet their developmental needs. Research by Comer (1980), Brookover (1982), and Lezotte (1987) indicates that schools providing staff training to increase teacher expectations, programs to increase achievement and programs to encourage and improve parent-school communications produce academically successful students, regardless of demographics or tax revenues.

In a community where children and adults alike see few models of the positive outcomes associated with school completion, academic achievement, and professional or business advancement, the role of instructional leader and educator is complicated by the fact that faculty, parents and children alike often become enmeshed in a negative cycle of lowered expectations related to the depressed social and economic environment. Children who are falling behind often have teachers who regard them as likely failures, and parents

who consider the school a source of pain and frustration. If poor Black students fail because school has not served or been accepted as a viable means to adult success, then it would be necessary to change behavioral patterns and that view of school for children, parents and teachers (Sarason, 1982).

Retention is a negative indicator of the academic path of any school population. Thus one step in examining the path of academic success and persistence in Roosevelt would reflect the degree to which its school children experience retention in the primary, intermediate and secondary grades. Out of the 2,846 children enrolled in Roosevelt in the 1985-1986 school year, 483 were retained; 50 in grades K-3; 21 in grades 4-6; 412 in grades 7-12. Approximately one in thirteen students were retained that year, and that excluded students under the auspices of the Committee on Special Education. This retention data reflected a pattern of failure for a significant population of Roosevelt students to complete high school. In an attempt to address some issues, Roosevelt School District supported actions to increase academic success and persistence by establishing programs, such as: Breakfast Program, Latch-Key, Nutrition Program, Summer School and After-School Extracurricular Activities Program.

Washington Rose School an 80 year old, two-story brick construction is situated in the poorest section of the Roosevelt community. In 1973 the building's interior structure was remodelled and developed as an open school. Cost overruns stopped the completion of the interior. The common characteristic of the plan was wasted space in a rectangular form; some areas without finished ceilings and all areas without walls and materials to absorb sound.

In 1984, fire destroyed a portable located at Centennial School, Roosevelt, New York, necessitating the transfer of thirty children from Centennial to Washington Rose School. A second structural change was made in the building. Walls were erected, defining specific classroom areas to accomodate these children. Washington Rose School housed 390 children in grades 3 through 6. Out of 390 children enrolled, 60 children were under the auspices of the Committee on Special Education. The professional and paraprofessional staffs, were divided into teams responsible for approximately 100 children for each of the four grade levels.

Four major academic subjects, offered in scheduled block-of-time combinations, were required of all students at all grade levels: language arts/reading, mathematics, science and social studies. The only other across-the-board academic requirements were health, computer and physical education. Organizational strategies included large-group in-

struction, small group instruction, individualized and independent study.

Statement of the Problem

Students come to school with high expectations, but not with as much reinforcement and support from homes as those where families share affluence and high educational attainment. Teachers lack salaries and resources considered normal in more affluent districts; although not so inadequate as to preclude success, only to make it more difficult to achieve.

Norms for standardized tests, competency tests and state curriculum are determined by majority schools. "Poor people of all races score much lower on standardized tests than do students from middle-class or upper-class families" (Cross, 1984, p. 468). Based on economic reasons alone, Black and poor children in Roosevelt will score much lower on standardized tests and competency tests than White children in neighboring school districts. Throughout their schooling, most poor and Black students fall behind state and national grade levels and the "measured gap" between Blacks and Whites in demonstrating ability in arithmetic reasoning, reading comprehension, vocabulary and writing grows.

Concentration of multi-problem families and children adds to demands for resources that have a cruel dilemma for

teachers. Teachers can give praise, grades and advancement based on what seem feasible standards and thus condone an immoral system of educationally cheating children or teachers can fail students who have not attained at state and national levels and shift the blame and expectation of failure to the student.

An extraordinary burden is placed on administrators, teachers and students in Roosevelt when modified curriculum, prevention strategies and intervention techniques are adopted. It is important for teachers and administrators to demonstrate dedication and skills and to show that students can learn even though one cannot expect staff to carry that burden continuously without outside support and a change in social attitudes that reduce barriers raised by White racism. No elementary school program focused specifically on the educational needs and developmental continuum of retained learners in Washington Rose School. In order for Roosevelt educators to take on the task of anchoring children securely in a cycle of school success, intervention strategies designed to maximize local resources and counteract community deprivation were required.

Children who were retained were noticeably less likely to complete high school, despite a presumption that retention was remedial, rather than punitive or reactive

(Shepard & Smith, 1986). The most vivid lesson taught to children by retention was that of failure. Retention and leaving school before graduation were highly correlated in Roosevelt. Since 1983-1984 the proportion of dropouts and retainees has worsened in Roosevelt. There are indications that school promotion/retention policies and lack of alternative programs addressing the needs of failure-expectant children may have cancelled the positive effects of learning.

A standard policy of promotion approved in 1981 by the Board of Education, for students in grades kindergarten through twelve, instituted changes that created additional course offerings of study and increased level of standard of achievement for students. Raising requirements without changing school programs and/or student/teacher behaviors made little difference on the increasing numbers of Roosevelt students who had not succeeded under previous standards and were already alienated from school.

Manifestation of multifaceted problems, such as: students older than their classmates, unplanned pregnancy, drug and alcohol abuse, poverty-related difficulties, truancy, cultural isolation, underachievement, and undiagnosed learning disabilities and emotional problems were reasonable indicators that a student retained in the elementary setting might be in danger of leaving school before graduation. An incomplete list of risk factors identified critical elements

that mutually related retention and leaving school before graduation in Roosevelt. But the most common reason for retention is reflected in children's lack of skills mastery and ongoing difficulties in doing schoolwork.

Grading standards employed by teachers in arriving at marks for students included absolute, comparative and clinical evaluations. Some teachers disliked the current promotion policy which assigned grades and compared relative standing of students with lesser ability against the standing of higher ability students. The comparative marking system ignored students who tried to achieve within the limits of their capacity, but failed to meet minimum performance level for promotion. Retention may have been the "reward" for children who were "doing their best."

Each year approximately 15 children in Washington Rose School are retained out of 400 and that excluded all students who are labelled handicapped. Many of these retained children are reading at or near grade level, have math scores at or near grade level, and present no special learning disabilities that might be obstacles to grade-appropriate academic success. Twelve of the fifteen students retained were in the fifth grade.

Although these children were capable of successful academic achievement, they lacked specific academic skills or habits of success. Furthermore, the school system had not

yet attempted organizational adjustments in keeping with unique needs of this class of student. Family systems combined with pervasive socialization process that instilled a language of failure, constituted a powerful outward force effecting these vulnerable children on the elementary school level. In a society where employment opportunities are dependent on educational preparation, these children faced a bleak future, unless new patterns of academic success were established.

Need for the Study

"Children who fail to attain levels of competence appropriate to the grades in which they are enrolled are recycled through the standard curriculum, after which it is assumed, they will have attained grade-level competence and go on to the next level, the next standard body of content, and so on" (Smith & Shepard, 1987, p. 130). Recent studies by educational researchers tend to agree that retention has negative effects on achievement and adjustment, (Holmes and Matthews, 1984; Smith & Shepard, 1985; Hahn, 1987).

Children are divided in their explanations of their problems with schools. A review of the reasons why children are retained may be a key to how schools address the problems. Children report such reasons for retention: poor

grades, dislike for school, dislike for teachers, dislike work/subjects, cannot do the work, alienation from peers, and family-related problems.

Next to the family, the school was an important institutional mold of children. Education, viewed as an important tool for achieving a better station in life and for establishing a basis for control and self-determination is but one part of the socialization experience. In the school setting, children learned social norms and values, patriotism, race relations, social-class differences, sex discrimination, and proper behavior for children in relation to adults and schooling.

When schools have replicated the social order, then the attitudes and beliefs of those in control of society came into the classrooms. If one is poor, Black or Hispanic, he/she may face great problems in efforts to experience a reasonable degree of success in school. Black or Hispanic children were asked to believe the premise that school provided equal educational opportunity and equal access to employment, respect or rewards. Black and Hispanic children were asked to operate successfully in two conflicting worlds; one represented by their community and the other by society. "At all levels of school completion, Blacks are in poverty far more often than Whites" (Cross, 1984, p. 222).

Children who were retained learned to dislike the school day and experienced difficulties. School failure, followed by retention is connected to poor academic performance, alienation from peers, conduct disorders, delinquency, crime, unemployment, depression, anxiety, substance abuse, adolescent parenthood and long-term dependency on the state, (Cross, 1984; Boyer, 1987). Although these problems are shared by both White and Black children, Black children living in communities like Roosevelt are worse off than White children. Whites continued to enjoy the advantage of domination over large sections of the economy and wealth producing activities because of discrimination against people of color.

In view of these critical needs presented by minorities with a history of academic failure, it is crucial to continue to develop, implement, and evaluate programs targeted at reversing failure at the elementary school level, where most first retentions occur (Shepard & Smith, 1985). The school and school system have each failed to offer sufficient programming designed to assess accurately and meet the needs of these students. Despite this lack of appropriate programming, children continue to be assessed as failures in a system that does not respond to their needs. Thus, children are praised for successes or condemned for failures, although they control neither the program nor its outcomes.

Presumably, professional educators should modify and supplement programs in order to help these particular students.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to plan, implement, and evaluate a program designed to interrupt the failure trend of a small group of Black students enrolled at Washington Rose School during 1986-1987. Students were selected based on their academic records. According to standardized test scores, teacher reports and report card grades, students showed persistent deficits that would make them candidates for retention in Grade 5 by June, 1986. The intervention strategy involved these at-risk children in a structured, school-based program designed to provide time and materials that would strengthen instruction related to skills and habits essential for academic achievement.

The program provided the children with a safe haven, separate from the negative messages they might receive directly and indirectly at home, school, or in the community. The program offered a stable, consistent environment where each youngster could receive personal gratification from mastering the habits and information developed to empower them in their daily lives. Therefore, the participants had opportunities to apply their developing skills in elementary school situations as well as in situations that may develop

in the community, where they can ultimately participate as trained, employable adults with solid histories of academic success throughout public school and post-high school education.

The program offered workshops where faculty and staff could analyze strategies and practice communication skills, cognitive and social skills, share ideas and resources, and model these learning activities in classrooms. Becoming active participants, faculty and staff facilitated the continuing development of learning for every child.

Significance of Study

The study is significant in its potential (a) for educators to take specific steps to address problems to effect positive academic change in children who are retained, (b) to describe a program that could be adopted and adapted so that children beyond the scope of the original participants benefit, (c) the potential to facilitate staff development for teachers to increase skills in instructional practices and processes to effect positive school change on children who are retained and, (d) for teachers to serve as in-house advocates.

Black and other minority children who enjoy the very best educational and economic support systems are still at a

significant disadvantage in their efforts to extract an increasingly better standard of living from the society, (Gentry et al., 1972; Pinkney, 1984). When minority status is combined with economic desperation, community depression, family dysfunction, and a school environment that confirms the hopelessness of academic persistence, the children have reduced chances to achieve. If the organization of schools, with their traditional and often punitive and repressive hierarchy is to prepare students, then, schools are designed to defeat those children who society has traditionally defeated. That population would include all economically disadvantaged children, including minorities and females who are not otherwise in a minority category.

Schools have an obligation to defy the Darwinian perspective that survival and success are benefits reaped only by those endowed with economic and social position and advantage. It is the mandate of public education to prepare children to survive and flourish in even the most hostile environment (Boyer, 1987). The significance of this study is firmly rooted in its intention to help children to empower themselves to use available resources on their way to achieving competence in the school system. The importance of this step cannot be overstated, since the success gained in the school setting can become the framework for children eventually achieved in the larger community.

Methodology of Study

This case study of an action research project represents the documentation, planning, implementation and evaluation of a multifaceted school improvement effort. The specific categories that guided data collection and case interpretation in this study are (a) identification of at-risk children, (b) program development, (c) staff development component to elicit teacher cooperation and to shape findings, (d) and program effects on children, parents, teachers, and school.

Subject Selection

A group of nine Black children was selected to participate in an after-school program designed to intervene in the school failure cycle that these students had developed. All were identified as candidates for retention in the school year ending 1985-1986, and all were in fifth grade. Criteria for inclusion was limited to the following factor: imminent potential for retention based on the Roosevelt School District grade level promotion policy.

Inservice Teacher Training Component

All classroom teachers of students selected were advised of the purpose and nature of the program, and were offered a total of four workshops covering the key areas impacting on academic persistence and success, (a) the nature

and expression of teacher expectations as a variable effecting student achievement, (b) formulating and communicating classroom rules as a foundation for academic and social development, and (c) specific strategies to reinforce positive change in students participating in the program. These topics areas were chosen in response to the interests and concerns expressed by classroom teachers on a faculty survey administered in the spring semester of 1986.

The workshops were designed to include guided practice in the form of role playing, to assure that the teachers could practice new basic interactional and support skills built into the intervention program. Strategies for workshop training were drawn from the North Carolina Effective Schools Teacher Training format (1986), which constituted a synthesis of the works of Edmonds, Sarason, Hunter, Lezotte and other who have pioneered in or influenced the effective schools movement.

Outcomes of staff development research conducted by educators within the Roosevelt School District were also included in the workshop. Each training session was followed up with classroom observations designed to support teachers in their process of acquiring and applying new or more highly developed skills regarding instructional focus, student reinforcement, and the art of time management to remain on-task.

In order to develop a viable, successful after-school program, an extensive review of the literature was conducted, accessing data bases including: ERIC Sociological Abstracts and Psychological Abstracts. The bodies of literature reviewed included: (a) school culture, (b) academic achievement and persistence as correlates, (c) educational needs and services for minority students with records of retention and/or other characteristics that make that student a candidate for retention or failure to complete high school, (d) effective schools research, (e) staff development and training, (f) program development and evaluation, and (g) issues regarding retention.

The supplemental academic support program employed a cross-media approach, including printed materials, projected pictures, audio-visual type materials, educational television and computer laboratory experiences. A symphony of instructional materials holistically connected formal and informal curricular with the diverse educational and social needs of the children. Teachers worked together developing activities, sharing materials and encouraging each other and the children. Special emphasis was placed on monitoring the children when they were doing homework by themselves, or with each other, so they could develop the skills and habits best suited to homework completion while they actually accomplished work assigned by their classroom teachers. The

program was designed with a clear focus on supporting the instructional direction set by the classroom curriculum.

Comprehensive components presented in the "Growing Up Together" manual developed by Effective Parenting for Children integrated classroom curriculum with functional skills needed in school and community. The "Growing Up Together" manual matched the academic and the affective developmental purposes of the total intervention plan developed for this study, particularly since the manual focused strongly on helping elementary age children learn a problem-solving approach allowing them to deal constructively with school, family, peer and behavior related problems. Curriculum-based activities were chosen selectively based on the needs of the students enrolled in the after-school program.

No statistical analysis was conducted to determine the relative success of the program implemented. Rather, self-reports, academic grades, and scores on standardized tests were used as determinants in assessing the relative impact of the program on students, teachers and parents.

Roosevelt Community/Washington Rose School

The setting for this study was the Washington Rose Elementary School, in the Union Free School District of

Roosevelt, 1986-1987, in Nassau County, Long Island, New York. Washington Rose School was 98 percent Black, 1 percent Hispanic, and 1 percent White. The teacher population was predominantly Black, with 23 percent either White or Hispanic. There were two males on the faculty, one of whom was Black, while the other is White. A Black female administrator served in the school building, implemented the project and conducted the study.

The catchment area includes a bedroom community of single-dwelling homes. There was some light industry, and some of the children lived in close proximity to that industry. All children walked to school, except a designated population under the auspices of the Committee on Special Education.

Limitations of Study

This study was limited to preventing the retention and improving the academic achievement of nine Black children in Grade 5. There was no effort to test the outcome of their progress against any control group, and there was no effort to generalize the outcome of this study to the conditions and programs available at other schools in Roosevelt or any other district. This study is limited to an assessment of whether the children enrolled in the program made sufficient strides

academically so as to preclude the possibility of retention in June, 1987.

While the scope of this specific study was limited to the number of children enrolled in the program, the study was aimed at developing and implementing educational approaches that equip students to succeed academically. This academic success and persistence was approached through direct support in an after-school setting, as well as through staff training and development to reinforce and entrench the affirmative thrust of the special program developed.

There remain issues about the researcher's role in initiating, implementing and assessing this staff development process. As a Black female administrator (with over 17 years experience in the school district) and with responsibility as principal of the Washington Rose Elementary School, the researcher continually balanced the possible biases of her role as active participant/observer with staff relationships that were both personally and professionally more extensive and lasting than this project. Because so few minority female elementary principals have taken leadership for school-based processes to address retention and school failure, the advantages seem to outweigh any disadvantages.

As with any case study, the researcher has an obligation to consider biases and outcomes that reflect the interactions shaped by the researcher's views and motiva-

tions. The first safeguard, of course, is to develop a self-awareness of one's own commitments and interactive patterns. What the researcher believes in and will fight for is perhaps the prime determinant of what the school will become. Because so much of school improvement and the creation of a positive school climate related to an instructional leader effectively articulating the school mission and promoting focused interaction among teachers around meaningful staff development, the researcher as principal translated project ideas into practice. Through involvement, the researcher participated in the improvement of classroom circumstances that enhanced learning. Also, the researcher in the role of principal suggests that these project efforts would continue to be part of the school's culture.

A second safeguard against the researcher's limited perspectives has revolved around a continual emphasis on the underlying processes. A multitude of educational studies have shown that a curriculum designed and advanced by a principal can almost always demonstrate some observable positive impact, although other schools or teachers find difficulties in replicating the curriculum or its effects. Evidently, implementation processes may matter more than the content of the proposed innovation. Thus, the content of workshops and evaluative responses are reported, not as proof that others could or should imitate the researcher, but in order to sug-

gest how other teachers and administrators in other buildings might organize and implement professional development and school improvement projects utilizing resources and skills ordinarily available in any school and local district.

Evaluation of Study

Evaluation of action research was measured against the following guidelines:

1. The academic improvement that developed from participation in the after-school project will impact positively so student participants will not require retention in the next grade;
2. Student participants will show significant improvement in their scores on standardized achievement tests;
3. Participants in staff development sessions will demonstrate greater insight into the role of the teacher in achieving academic success for all students, regardless of the economic, racial, religious, social or ethnic background of the students; improvement will be shown by the responses of participants to specific problems/items presented at the close of each of the four training sessions.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the content and direction of this action research project:

1. Does an after-school instructional support program help children at risk of retention develop better attendance habits?
2. How can an after-school instructional support program help children at risk of retention to develop better homework habits?
3. How can an after school instructional support program help children at risk of retention earn better grades than had been previously earned in the same content areas?
4. How can an after school instructional support program for children at risk of retention and including parent-principal contact regarding student achievement help parents previously neutral about the school become more actively involved in supporting positive educational goals for the child?
5. How can a series of four inservice seminars targeted at helping teachers understand and raise expect-

ations of failure-expectant children modify the failure or success expectations those teachers have of those children?

These research questions were developed in order to guide the process of developing and evaluating the after-school program, and to structure the nature of the literature review, presented in the following chapter.

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C H A P T E R I I
STUDIES OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Introduction

By the year 2000 one third of public school enrollment in the United States will be minority children--over half of whom will live in poverty if current patterns of income inequity continue. The nation's commitment to make better use of the 15,000 hours children and teachers spend together and provide quality education to all of its children while encompassing goals of fairness and equity will be challenged anew.

Schools make choices to include or sort out its students. Reviews of literature show that certain school conditions, policies and practices such as tracking, retention in grade, suspension, inappropriate placement and overrepresentation in special education programs leave many students at risk of failure. The risks of school alienation and exclusion are greater for poor and minority students than for affluent and White students (Bureau of Educational Research, 1987; Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1988; Oakes, 1985; Glenn, 1981).

Attitudes, skills, habits, perception of the future and self-image are among the variables significantly affected

by the teacher with whom the child spends 15,000 hours (North Carolina, 1986; Rutter et al., 1979; Yamamoto, 1980). In the United States, poor and minority children suffered most from the destructive effects of low teacher expectation, bias, inferior school equipment, inadequate school materials, and culturally biased standardized tests (Gentry et al., 1972; Pinkney, 1984; Cross, 1984; U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means 1985; Oakes, 1985). These damaging school based factors interacted with the difficulties faced by minority families, where the struggle to cope with multigenerational poverty, inferior education, and reduced opportunity in the workplace conspire to create an environment where "among oppressed minorities, families face great problems in their efforts to shape their children's futures so that they will experience a reasonable degree of success in school and on adult life," (Clark, 1983, p. ix). Black children were particularly vulnerable to such bias at school and struggles at home, as the economic, social and cultural tradition of America served to reinforce the perception that Black children were unlikely to achieve even average levels of success in school or in their communities (Pinkney, 1984; Cross, 1984).

Much of that vulnerability experienced by Black children manifested itself in chronic underachievement in the school environment (Glenn, 1981). With alarming frequency,

that vulnerability was often manifest in academic failure resulting in retention (Glenn, 1981; Sleeter & Grant, 1986). This pattern remained intact, despite the fact that retention particularly beyond the kindergarten level, has consistently been ineffective in helping children acquire the skills, habits, attitudes and knowledge fundamental to academic achievement (Abidin et al., 1971; Shepard & Smith, 1986;)

The after-school program developed and implemented for the purpose of this study was designed to equip children at risk of retention with academic and social skills and supports associated with school achievement. Since school achievement for poor Black children was rooted firmly in the effectiveness of the schools, and since the effectiveness of the school was strongly associated with the degree to which teachers were prepared to convey high expectations, this literature review was organized to cover three major areas of concern: (a) the elements of an effective school, (b) the role of inservice education in the development of growth of an effective school, and (c) the role of the effective school in successfully educating Black students who were at risk of being retained.

Elements of an Effective School

Reports in the late 1960s and early 1970s conducted by James Coleman and Christopher Jencks concluded that com-

monly cited differences had little effect on variations in students scores on achievement tests. The results of Coleman's (1966) report on Equality of Educational Opportunity indicated that schools could not be held responsible for student achievement since family background, socioeconomic status and related variables, such as variations in facilities and curricula, degree in student belonging and social composition of the student body were the most powerful predictors of student achievement and were beyond the school to control or impact. Jencks (1972) Inequality: A Reassessment of the Effect of Family and Schooling in America concluded that: equalizing the quality of high schools would reduce cognitive inequality by one per cent or less and that additional school monies or redistributing of resources would not reduce test score inequality or increase student achievement.

As a response to the conclusions drawn by the Coleman Report (1966) and Jencks' Inequality (1972) researchers set out to prove that schools do make a difference and that family background and socioeconomic status do not account for the total discrepancy in student achievement. These studies of inquiry called the Effective Schools Research were based upon identifying factors which promoted student learning beyond the influences exerted by home and social class. By identifying and then placing priority on

Improving the quality of some of these important characteristics, schools could improve for all learners (Edmonds, 1979; Brookover et al., 1982; Goodlad, 1984; Weber, 1971; Rutter et al., 1979).

Edmonds (1979) has presented convincing evidence that an effective school had assets that must include (a) strong instructional leadership on the part of the principal, (b) clear instructional focus in the school (c) school climate conducive to learning (d) teachers who convey to their students high expectations, and (e) program improvement based on appropriate measurement of student achievement through standardized and criterion-referenced testing.

Principals of effective schools demonstrated a high level of organization while maintaining a strong assertive instructional role, and clearly conveyed high expectations for students, staff and self. Principals were responsible for assuring that policies set forth by central or building administration were communicated with clarity and consistency to staff, students and parents. High quality communication demanded the principals maintain "high visibility and availability to staff and students, demonstrate strong support to instructional staff, and adeptness at parent and community relations," (North Carolina, 1986, Session 1).

The nature of the learning climate that characterizes a school may be affected by many factors, but the adult

staff--principal, teachers, aides and other staff personnel--is the major determinant of the learning climate in schools... The adult members of a school social system are the primary agents in developing the learning climate which defines the appropriate behavior for themselves and their students," (Brookover et al., 1982, p. 34). In effective schools, staff accept responsibility for students learning and demonstrates that all students can attain mastery of skills at the assigned level. There is a climate of high expectation for success and teachers believe they have the competence, skills and determination to insure that students learn what is expected of them.

In order to protect the integrity of school programs and enhance the potential for student achievement and school community satisfaction, instructional school programs must include curriculum, as well as the processes related to evaluation, placement, staff development and revision. First, there is curriculum which should be defined as skills and concepts, sequentially arranged from simple to complex. Second, there is student placement, which involves a means of placing a student in the program at a level which identifies, selects and presents several appropriate frames of reference providing for varying abilities. Third, there is the factor of student monitoring which should involve a means of teachers collecting information about what the students knew

before instruction, checking or regulating progress during the course of instruction, and what they have learned as a result of instruction. Fourth, there is evaluation, including both formative evaluation of each student's progress and summative evaluation of each student's achievement. In the absence of these critical variables, the school suffered in its capacity to lead students and staff to attain high levels of achievement (Edmonds, 1979; Lezotte, 1985).

Although the principal may have other functions in operating a school organization, the leadership role in establishing an effective instructional program in the school was foremost. Regardless of grade level or specific goal orientation of the particular school involved, a clear instructional focus relied heavily on the learning program, the instructional personnel, and the scheduled, regular assessment and revision of that program, based on content changes, staff development, and student assessment (Brookover et al., 1982; Edmonds, 1979, Lezotte, 1985).

Instructional personnel presenting these primary characteristics generated considerable achievement in students (Coger, 1975; Goodlad, 1984). This relationship between the characteristics of instructional personnel and the achievement of students was strongly associated with the ability of the teacher to apply those key characteristics to keep expectations high, and to use organizational skills and

enthusiasm for the content to succeed in maintaining high level of time on task (Brookover et al., 1982). Studies have repeatedly shown that the characteristics of instructional personnel were strongly associated with student achievement, while racial, social and/or economic background of students was found to be unrelated to student achievement (Brookover et al., 1982; Comer, 1987; Ginsburg & Hanson, 1986).

Just as it was demonstrated that the characteristics of the principal and the instructional personnel impact significantly on student achievement, a vast body of literature developed around the definition, assessment and modification of the school environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Rutter et al., 1979; Barth, 1980; Brookover et al., 1982; Leacock, 1969). In advancing a new conceptualization of the way children interacted with their environments, (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 3) observed that:

The ecological environment is conceived as a set of nested structures, each inside the next, like a set of Russian dolls. At the innermost level is the immediate setting containing the developing person. This can be the home, the classroom or the laboratory or testing room. The next step, however, requires looking beyond single settings to the relations between them. Such interactions can be as decisive for development as events taking place within a given setting. The third level of the ecological environment . . . evokes a hypothesis that the person's development is profoundly affected by events occurring in settings in which the person is not even present.

Such a hypothesis might lead an individual to a conclusion that there could be a relationship between the development of a child and the work that was done by his or her own parent, or the relationship that existed between the parents and teachers of the child (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Such interlocking and interdependent relationships were established between student achievement, when the environment was defined as being comprised of the following eight characteristics:

"an orderly school climate; clear, firm and consistent discipline; a cooperative family atmosphere; few classroom interruptions of any kind; parental involvement in student learning; positive community relations; adequate facilities and materials; and a well-kept school plant" (North Carolina, 1986, Session 1).

Literature on effective schools supported a strong association between students achievement and the characteristics of the school climate, instructional personnel and principal (Boyer, 1987; Brookover et al., 1982; North Carolina, 1986; Edmonds, 1982; Rutter et al., 1979). The importance of school environment or climate as defined by the above characteristics was supported by (Rutter et al., 1982) in their observation that "delinquent and non-delinquent pupils in high delinquency schools perceived the teachers as more authoritarian and less committed to learning. The finding suggested the importance of the school ethos or atmos-

phere . . . Possible relevant features (associated with student achievement) included the amount of teaching, degree of academic emphasis, extent and nature of ability groups, teacher expectations, styles of teaching and classroom management, the size of the school, patterns of discipline and the characteristics of overall school climate or atmosphere" (p.18).

Brookover et al. (1982) urged evaluation data for the purpose of program improvement "in order to develop and maintain an effective learning climate, frequent evaluation of instruction was essential. Assessment data should be used as an important tool for evaluating instructional effectiveness and to aid in decision making regarding curricular change and program improvement. The availability and use of assessment data should be an integral part of the school operation. Teachers and other staff can increase the level of student achievement in their classroom when they used assessment data to guide curricular and instructional modifications (Brookover et al. 1982, p. 245).

Although program development, implementation, and evaluation are critical to assuring that schools generate substantial student achievement, such program variables cannot be an end in themselves. Schools struggling to identify and meet the needs of students, faculty, administration, parents and the larger community often developed

program models that were implemented rapidly, evaluated superficially, and judged as a success or a failure, often within less than a year (House, 1979). In this fashion, programs were initiated and abandoned with such rapidity that the instructional staff, administrative leadership, students and parents became so disenfranchised with program innovation that they expected programs to fail. This perpetuated a system plagued by low expectations and chronic disappointment (Ravitch, 1983).

Substantial evidence supported the hypothesis that solid assessment and revision plans, combined with a principal offering sound leadership in a school, staffed by highly goal-oriented instructional personnel working in a positive environment implementing viable programs created an effective school, where students achieved regardless of their race, economic levels, educational background, cultural orientation, or family configuration (Boyer, 1987; Brookover et al., 1982; Leacock, 1969; Shepard & Smith, 1986; Comer, 1980; Frymier, 1983).

As increasing numbers of state education departments, school districts, and professional organizations explored the components that interactively comprised an effective school, some modifications of the original criteria have been made. However, those modifications appeared to have been linked to determining increasingly more specific

and quantifiable interactive variables (Zumult, 1986). As observed in the literature published by the New York Metro Effective Schools Consortium (New York State Education Department, No. 1, p. 3), factors which appeared to promote high levels of student achievement include:

1. strong administrative leadership by the school principal, especially in instructional matters;
2. a school climate conducive to learning;
3. schoolwide emphasis on basic skills instruction;
4. teacher expectations that children can reach high levels of achievement, regardless of student background;
5. a system for monitoring and assessing student performance which is tied to instructional objectives; and
6. parental involvement which is encouraged and organized

This set of elements is derived from the legislated program development, implementation and evaluation conducted throughout the North Carolina school system (North Carolina, 1986). The experience of the North Carolina Effective Schools Program supported a hypothesis that organization and goals of the school are critical to the achievement record of students. Given a consistent structure and positive goals children will likely achieve within the boundaries of teacher expectations.

Emphasis on setting academic goals provided a school district and each respective building with a context within which teacher expectations can be formulated. Teacher ex-

pectations were defined as inferences that teachers make about the future academic achievement of students and about the types of classroom assignments students needed, given their abilities (Brophy, 1979; Good, 1979). When student abilities were formulated with the understanding that ability to achieve academically was a variable subjected to change (Palmer, 1983), then it was necessary for teachers to understand specific academic goals identified for the school.

The success or failure of a program hinged substantially on the degree to which the classroom teachers had been trained to understand and accomplish the instructional goals and objectives central to student achievement (Barth, 1980, Brookover et al., 1982; Comer, 1980; Goodlad, 1983; Ravitch, 1983).

Instructional Staff Development Training

The assumption that competence in a profession is directly related to the extent of education and training is found in all professions and particularly in education. Inservice programs grew out of the needs of the educational establishment for teachers with greater skills and knowledge in relation to both subject matter and methods. As educators awareness increased, then inservice programs worked at devising strategies for helping teachers and for maintaining a supply of good teachers who were constantly growing professionally.

If a firm education in the theory and practice of teaching and learning were prerequisite for becoming and remaining a teacher with a strong history of empowering students to achieve, it was essential that a body of knowledge be defined that benefitted teachers performance. The Rand Change Agent (1975) found that inservice education programs were particularly worthwhile and effective when there was (a) concrete, teacher-specific and extended training (b) classroom assistance from project or district staff (c) teacher observation of similar projects in other classrooms (d) regular meetings that focused on practical problems (e) local development of materials and (f) participation of the principal in the training.

The development of an inservice teacher training program was necessary to place teachers in an active participatory role to test, evaluate and contribute to their knowledge, and grow professionally (Brookover et al., 1982; Sharan, 1987). The collective and individual experiences of teachers who entered inservice programs manifested attitudes toward students, learning, school administration, inservice courses, parents, opportunity, hope for the future, and a perception of the role played by the teacher in the context of the larger society (Brookover et al., 1982). Even when teachers had the same professional tasks and the same preparation for and experience with meeting those tasks, person-

al experience became the intervening variable that affected the learning needs and attributes they presented (Knowles, 1980).

Adults are themselves the richest resources for one another for many kinds of learning. Adults use experiences that emphasized techniques such as group discussions, simulation, laboratory experiences, field experiences, and problem-solving projects. But there were negative consequences as well. Adults often developed habitual ways of thinking and acting, or hold preconceptions about reality, prejudices, and defenses about their past (Knowles, 1980; North Carolina, 1986). These positive and negative consequences of personal and professional experience interacting with self-image of learners and the expectations of the group leader can profoundly effect the content and structure of an inservice training program for teachers (Brookover et al., 1982).

Personal and professional experience and the self-image of the teacher were variables that also interacted with the readiness of the adult learner acquiring skills, knowledge, attitudes and habits encouraged in the inservice education program. The review by Knowles (1980) assumes that adults become ready to learn what they experience in their life situation or need to know or be able to do in order to live more effectively. However, it was risky to assume that presenting adults with the opportunity and stimulus to learn

would necessarily empower them to abandon the reality they perceived on the basis of their experience. Adults functioned within a social environment of family, community (including work) and nation that influenced their development and learning. These factors form an interpersonal network that shaped their lives.

Those responsible for developing, implementing, evaluating and modifying inservice training programs for teachers accepted the experience presented by the teachers and worked to either diminish or enhance that perception of that experience in relation to the goals and objectives of the inservice program. If the nature of instructing adults progressed along on an assumed continuum of development (Sarason, 1976), then program development evolved on the understanding that the learner experience, self-image, and personal needs must be understood, validated, anticipated, and adjusted because they effected the integrity of the inservice training learning process (Knowles, 1980; Glenn, 1981).

While self-image, expectations, and personal readiness to learn were critical variables to be considered in all phases of inservice training for teachers, adult learning also required that consideration be given to the issue of the learner's orientation toward learning.

Adults are motivated to enter an educational activity because they experience a need in their life situation. They therefore enter with a life-centered, task-oriented or problem-centered orientation for learning. The chief implication of the assumption presented in the North Carolina program (1986, p. 8) was (1) the importance of organizing learning experiences (e.g., the curriculum) around life situations rather than according to subject-matter courses and (2) raising the level of the learner's awareness of the need to know what will be learned.

Perhaps the experience or self-image of the learner mitigated against his or her motivation to acquire the skills or knowledge presented in the context of the course (Richin, 1987). The instructor responsible for implementing the program should be both willing and prepared to validate the learner's feelings and experiences and encourage learners to modify their positions temporarily in order to test new ideas or practices (Richin, 1987). In this fashion, the trainer can reduce potential or existing defensiveness and increase the chances that a resistant learner can gain from experiences imparted by the program.

Considering the issues of learner orientation, readiness to learn, instructor expectations, and learner self-image, an inservice education program must be predicated on a firm grasp of the levels on which adults appeared to respond with the greatest apparent motivation. Wlodkowski (1985) observed that motivation was an essential but elusive

quality, significantly correlated with achievement yet difficult to quantify. "We know motivation is important because even without any specific agreement on the concept's definition, we know that if we match two people of the exact ability and give them the exact opportunity and conditions to achieve, the motivated person will surpass the unmotivated person in performance and outcome. To put it quite simply, when there is not motivation to learn, there is no learning" (Wlodkowski, 1980, p. 3). It was assumed that adults would respond to some external motivators--a better job, a salary increase, a promotion, and the like or respond to more potent internal motivators--self esteem, recognition, better quality of life, and self actualization (Herzberg, 1966; Maslow, 1970).

Teacher expectations in such programs as the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Wisconsin's Educators' Consortium for Excellence confirmed the importance of teacher expectations. Self-image, readiness to learn were critical variables considered in the development, implementation, assessment and modification of an inservice program for teacher training and development. Similar precepts have been adopted and integrated into the training model by New York Metro Effective Schools Consortium, which included Long Island and downstate New York.

Many people viewed education as an important means to achieve a better station in life and to establish a basis of control and self-determination. However, American society did not provide every child an equal chance to live the good life. The premise that school provides equal educational opportunity does not apply to all people. Even when educational attainments were identical, some children moved into positions of power and wealth on leaving school, while others were marked by powerlessness and poverty. In many instances, society distributed a part of its wealth and resources on the basis of race, gender, age and socioeconomic background. A self-fulfilling prophecy had repeatedly been associated with the presence of a growing population of angry and disenfranchised young people who were simply the most recent victims of a system that often served to confirm the biases of the larger society (Leacock, 1969; Cross, 1984; Pinkney, 1984; Ravitch, 1985; Brophy & Good, 1970; Oakes, 1985; Sleeter & Grant, 1986).

Inservice programs implementing change must counteract the accumulated, entrenched attitudes and beliefs of many teachers that there is a relationship between, for example, race and academic attainment or gender and academic achievement or socioeconomic level and academic attainment. If inservice programs are to have the desired effect of creating

a community of concern, then they must include substantive exposure to and practice with experiences that counteract dominant and repressive teacher perceptions of the needs and attributes of low income Black students at any grade level.

The thrust of inservice education was what Leacock (1969, p. 38) referred to as "the picture of a good teacher as one who used different modes of student involvement appropriate to the various subject areas as she developed her curriculum content," regardless of the racial, social or economic background of the children in the classroom. When inservice education strove to achieve that sort of teacher, then staff development outcomes helped redefine the school culture, developed a support system to block teacher biases regarding achievement and Black children and further strengthened the effectiveness of the school.

The right of all children to enjoy an adequate education is granted in our democratic system. There is considerable difference of opinion regarding the definition of an adequate education when schools are located in poor and minority populated areas. Inservice programs that are structured on the foundation of "teaching those they think they must" often served to reinforce teacher attitudes that sustained a status quo regarding teacher perception of a negative relationship between race and academic attainment. Staff training and development programs feeding into the

deficit schooling experienced particularly by minority children of the poor, were traditionally characterized by the same flaws that pervaded teacher education in general (Shane, 1983).

One flaw in teacher education in the post graduate setting was dissonance between the goals of the program and the structure of the organization. For instance, a teacher preparation program designed to improve student achievement may advise or even require regular, structured evaluation of the teacher by the administrator so that the teacher can enhance instructional skills deficits. However, many such efforts were characterized by two school structural problems: (a) a lack of regular teacher observation followed by problem solving conferences with the administrator; (b) the lack of administrator exposure to the issues, goals and needs identified in the teacher education model. Changes had often been set in motion without any technical basis regarding what may or may not work in relation to specific anticipated outcomes. Levine and Stark (1981) and Glenn (1981) described how staff development should be closely related to the instructional program of the school and expressed needs of teachers.

The Rand Change Agent Study found that the attitude of administrators was critical to long-term results and directly related to staff use of program methods and materials. Teachers could not be expected to respond enthusiastically to

inservice programs if principals and central office staff do not believe in the program. This problem of less than enthusiastic management often contributed to the failure of program change, organizational restructuring, school effectiveness, or school cultural change.

Although almost all states expanded administrator training programs, the fact remained that administrator education programs were rarely synchronized with teacher preparation programs. The North Carolina Effective Teacher Training Program addressed that common flaw inservice education by requiring that administrators and teachers share a common 30-credit training period. Further, administrators participated in an additional 30 credits of inservice education focused on the skill of teacher observation and evaluation (North Carolina, 1986).

A third problem in assuring successfulness of inservice programs for teachers was that programs were often conceived and implemented by people who had little grasp of the organizational, structural, or curriculum limitations placed on teachers in a given school setting. Therefore, many such teacher training programs were aborted, as they required teachers to succeed at tasks that were virtually nonfeasible (Deal, 1985; Lipsky, 1980). To illustrate, consider the inservice program designed to assure that teachers produce more academically successful students. The

program exhorted teachers to become better organized, structure the students with greater discipline, or increase the ability of their students to engage in problem solving. If the teacher did not know how to implement such teaching practices, then inservice seldom helped (Goodlad, 1983).

In discussing inservice programs, Goodlad (1983 pp. 68-9) noted:

Teachers simply taught as they were taught, modelling the teachers they observed during their sixteen or more years of school. Professional education came late in one's schooling. Professional preparation to teach was relatively short in duration and tended not to be sharply focused. Further, some of the courses taken introduced future teachers to alternative teaching methods usually presented in lecture. Professors talked about other ways, but students rarely observed or practiced them. The experiential part of preparation took place in classrooms. It appeared that the preparation teachers received by observing other teachers virtually assured that they would teach as teachers always have taught and would not transcend the conventional wisdom of their calling.

While learning, teachers, like others in student situations, retained approximately 75 percent of the skills they practiced; while they retained approximately 5 percent of the information they gathered while listening to lecture. Teachers instructed their students in the fashion that they had practiced, (North Carolina, 1986; Research and Development Center for Teacher Education, 1984). Therefore,

any inservice education program included the assurance that teachers attending the program practiced skills under the trained observations of their instructor. With those assurances, teachers less likely practiced new skills inaccurately, or simply failed to implement practices imparted in the inservice program. Liabilities inherent in certain inservice models included a lack of teacher participation, unrealistic expectations as to teacher ability to implement new skills, and poorly tested research and program supposition.

The Effective Schools model faced those deficits in training and development programs, by approaching the culture of the school as a sum of the parts that were defined as follows: (a) strong instructional leadership of the principal, (b) clear instructional focus, (c) positive school climate conducive to teaching and learning, (d) teacher behaviors which convey high expectations, (e) program improvement based on measurement of student achievement.

Teacher education programs were organized around needs that teachers identified as tangible and real. "People became more ready to learn those things that they experienced a need to know in life situation rather than those than those things they were told they had to learn," (Knowles, 1985, p. 7). Teachers experienced failure in working with children who did not master skills or acquire sufficient knowledge to

succeed academically. Therefore, it can be argued that teachers who dislike the experience of facing a situation where their students were retained might be motivated to learn how to increase student productivity and thereby reduce grade retention. If, however, teachers had the need to confirm that certain children will fail, then substantially if subconsciously they will be motivated to prove that hypothesis; once again showing the critical role of teacher expectation in student achievement (Brookover et al., 1982).

Teacher skills and expectations, combined with instructional leadership on the part of the principal, and overall effectiveness of the school generated academic achievement in children, regardless of the racial or economic background of the student involved (Edmonds, 1979; Glenn, 1981, Sleeter & Grant, 1986). This is not to say that all children respond to teacher expectations and instructional focus without difficulty, particularly when the children involved are physically ill or in other types of personal crisis resulting in stress-related disorders, physical disability, emotional disturbance, or other problems (Richin, 1987; Yamamoto, 1980).

Different stressors may undermine the ability of children to remain on task and academically productive. Substantial evidence, however, supported the position that children could be empowered to make themselves feel better

about a prevailing condition by taking control of their situation in school, and achieving, while getting the other professional help they required to continue to grow and develop in a healthy way (Brookover et al., 1982; Comer, 1980; Richin, 1987). An affirmative inservice training program designed to enable teachers compassionately to empower children, even when those children were in a relative state of crisis, was a critical part of effecting positive change in the school culture, developing a viable community of concern in the school, and eliminating problems of academic failure and retention.

Since schools are not static institutions, inservice education programs are one approach for making adjustments, innovations and improvements in teacher performance and student achievement. Inservice education programs can help schools focus on key characteristics and variables inherent in the school effectiveness studies such as, principal's leadership and teacher expectations. Inspired by an enthusiastic instructional leader, providing attention to the quality of education, teachers can be encouraged to demonstrate behaviors and practice skills conveying expectations that all students are expected to learn.

The following section of this literature review focused on the central issue of retention. Special emphasis placed on cumulative research that strongly related academic

achievement and retention to the larger and even more potent matters of how racism biased against the poor and impacted on teacher expectations, leadership by the principal, instructional focus, school climate, and the integrity of the school program. These were critical areas to explore vis a vis retention, since these areas were the five essential correlates of an effective school; and, in an effective school children will be challenged and encouraged at an appropriate level, and will not suffer the personal defeat that appeared to be inherent in academic failure and subsequent retention (Jackson, 1975; Katz, 1975; Holmes, 1983; Shepard & Smith, 1986).

Retention, Academic Attainment, and Black Students

The belief that there are direct correlations between educational attainment, class mobility and economic mobility are deeply entrenched in America's conventional wisdom (Cross, 1984; Pinkney, 1984). Schools improved competence that enhanced the probabilities for employment. Employment offered movement up the economic and social scale. However, this theory does not show how opportunities for acquiring wealth, income and social status are affected when racially restrictive regulations and discriminatory rules are employed.

Adults control and interpret the larger family and school systems. Bronfenbrenner (1979) expressed the relative

roughly congruent with the statures of their parents; and reinforced a White social structure.

When the status positions of the parents were minimal, characterized by incomplete high school education, chronic unemployment or underemployment, dependency on entitlement programs, and a long history of marginality, duplication of that status doomed children to continue the tradition of multigenerational poverty perpetuated by racism (Cross, 1984). With a long and troubled history of generations entrapped by slavery, and the repercussions of same that have echoed throughout since freedom for all was first proclaimed, poor Black children and families faced a unique set of imperatives in the society at large, and in the school, in particular. To the extent that education is important in controlling life's chances, schools have the opportunities to moderate educational differences (Bureau of Educational Research, 1987).

As recent history of the United States has shown, children of many other ethnic minorities had not necessarily been educated so as to perpetuate the educational and social status of their parents (Ravitch, 1985; Grandstaff, 1969; Tyack, 1974; Wright et al., 1983). Depending on society's perception of a particular minority, and the minority family experience in regard to function and power of education, the child may or may not have been urged to surpass the status of

impact of ecological theory on the nature of individual student achievement as a "process through which the growing person acquires a more extended, differentiated, and valid conception of the ecological environment, and becomes motivated and able to engage in activities they reveal the properties of, sustain, and restructure that environment at levels of similar or greater complexity in form and content" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 27).

As part of an ecological environment, school systems fostering a set of norms and values held by a particular segment of society act as powerful agencies for socializing children. Schooling through explicit instruction, activities and experiences contributed to children identifying social norms, accepting them and behaving in accordance with them. Cross (1984, p. 380) concludes that efforts of schools to provide excellence and equity for all students are often suspended by the "commanding forces of economic, political power embedded in the social and economic practice that we call racial caste".

Acting as transmitters of social and behavioral norms held by the "White" establishment, schools further separated poor and minority children along academic, social and racial lines. Schools often discouraged the interaction of ethnic minority groups and the poor into the mainstream of school activities; shaped minority and poor children to fit slots

the parents, and use the schools to the very best possible purpose (Wright et al., 1983; Clark, 1983). The complex and often explosive relationship between Blacks and Whites in America continues to be acted out in classrooms throughout the nation, where the White majority perception of Blacks as intellectually and socially inferior helped to perpetuate the educational and economic subjugation of the majority of American Blacks, even in districts where the teacher population were predominantly Black.

People who participate in the primary job market experience a sense of control and belonging in society. They have more and better chances to succeed, support their families, rear their children as responsible citizens, and find satisfaction and meaning in life. Disorganized and poorly functioning families were less able to provide children with effective parenting practices necessary for better outcomes in affective and cognitive skills. Poor families and some oppressed minorities faced great problems in their efforts to shape their children's future (Comer, 1987; Clark, 1983; Cross, 1984).

Discussing the role of family experiences in students' preparation for school learning, Reginald Clark (1983, p. 4) observed that:

Many parents assumed that the primary function of the school was to make their children literate and successful. . . . Our public schools have only

rarely performed that producer function. Especially with ethnic minority groups and the poor, our schools served as institutions that selected, sorted and controlled; that is the schools tended to make most incoming ethnic students and taught them just enough to enter occupational positions that paralleled the status positions of their parents. In this way schools functioned to reproduce the ethnic division of labor between competing groups of families.

In addition, the level of psychosocial and academic development necessary for children to be successful in school and in the primary job market had increased dramatically. Poor children were the fastest growing segment among those living in poverty. Children of poor families entering school with deficient skills and students fell behind after entering school finding higher standards forbidding barriers. Blacks, in particular, were excluded from the primary job opportunities, and had, in particular, suffered the related outcomes (Cross, 1984; Comer, 1987; Riley, 1986).

The first five years before a child begins his or her formal education are profoundly formative, and that children whose families were more skilled in the process of encouraging literacy and advocating for their children within the schools were more likely to experience academic success, regardless of their race or economic background (Clark, 1983). This point bears out the validity of the observation that children were generally educated to achieve within the boundaries of economic success experienced by their parents

(Comer, 1987). Nevertheless, children experienced enormous academic achievement in spite of their parents illiteracy or fears about advocating for their children in school settings (Brookover et al., 1983; Good, 1981; Leacock, 1969; Levine et al., 1985; Lezotte & Bancroft, 1985; North Carolina, 1986). The critical difference between the child who learned and the child who failed to learn appeared to be the effectiveness of the school, rather than the characteristics of the child (Edmonds, 1972; Goodlad, 1984; Rutter et al., 1982, Oakes, 1985).

Despite the overwhelming evidence to the contrary in the vast majority of cases, decisions regarding the education of children who failed to learn appeared to center on making the student change, rather than considering what changes might best be made by the school, in order to remediate existing academic failure, preventing future suffering (Jackson, 1975; Bloom, 1981; Brookover et al., 1982; Shepard & Smith, 1986).

Although the research supported the fact that victims of chronic multigenerational poverty and lack of competitive education in America were often Black (Cross, 1984), there was virtually no evidence that children would develop a history of academic failure in educationally appropriate settings unless they were defined as failure-expectant. Regardless of the different sources for their problems, all

of these students (who are at risk of retention) shared the common experience of prolonged school failure, (a) failure-ridden learning histories and (b) failure-related cognitive deficits. The commonality of their failure experience made diverse groups of children similar in two of these important respects.

Studies of the way in which children performed after failure show that there was a difference between the effect of failure on failure-expectant children, and the effect of failure on children who were success-expectant (Glenn, 1987; Finlayson, 1977; Holmes & Matthews, 1984). Studies by Stevens & Pihl (1982) showed that success-expectant learners often performed better after failure because they marshalled more effort, and used more effective problem-solving strategies than do their peers whose previous learning experience had set them to fail. "Failure-expectant children felt little control over their own performance, attributing their successes and failure to luck or factors beyond their control, rather than to their own efforts," (Stevens & Pihl, 1982, pp. 540-41).

Data regarding the impact of teacher expectations and school effectiveness on student achievement appeared to confirm that perception, as poor Black children who struggled for success-oriented stimulation and encouragement continually came up against teacher expectations that Black children

were unmotivated, ill-equipped for success, and generally in need of continual remediation (Leacock, 1969; Frymier, 1983; Jackson, 1975; Ginsburg, 1986). These depressed expectations have been reported by Black and non-Black teachers alike, as social, economic, and/or racial bias combined with a tendency of some teachers to believe that children with such great social burdens cannot be expected to master curriculum that may appear to the teacher to be unrelated to the immediate needs experienced by the children (Richin, 1987).

One of the most controversial steps often taken to remediate academic failure was to retain a student in an given grade (Rose et al., 1983; Holmes & Matthews, 1984; Shepard & Smith, 1985). Given the fact that poor Black students frequently experienced academic failure, a large number of children subject to grade retention were poor and Black (Jackson, 1975; Pellicano, 1987).

In regard to the chronic underachievement experienced by so many American Black students, whether their teachers are Black or White, Leacock (1969, p.7) observed the following:

One major contribution of John Dewey to the field of education was making the point that children learn through experience. . . . Deweyan principles can (therefore) be applied to the question of what is happening to one-third of our children who are not mastering school materials? We know that they are not learning in the way of certain formal knowledge and skills, but all day long at school

what are they learning? To a considerable extent, children are learning through their school experience not to learn what is presented as the substantive content of the curriculum.

Teachers do continue to retain kindergarten children on the basis of immaturity or lack of social skills, despite strong evidence that retention based on age-related or social skills readiness was negatively correlated with school achievement, with the resultant outcome that the children quickly learn the lesson of how to fail (Cross, 1984; Pellicano, 1987; Riley, 1986; Shepard & Smith, 1986).

The relationship between teacher expectation, student achievement, retention, and failure-expectant behavior on the part of the student appeared to conspire against the possibility that a student, once retained, succeeded in completing his or her high school education (Edmonds, 1972; Comer, 1980; Barth, 1980; Brookover et al., 1982). When asked if grade repetition increases the likelihood that a child would drop out before graduation, figures generated by data sources such as Current Population Survey, The High School and Beyond and Dropouts in America showed that, "students who had been held back a grade are up to four times more likely to drop out than those who had never been held back," (Hahn, p. 259). Granted there might be several reasons for a correlation between retention in elementary

school and failure to graduate; the fact cannot be ignored that failing a grade in school had multiple effects.

Graded school which divided students into classes according to their attainments, began in the 19th century. Industrialization, increasing numbers of immigrants seeking to become part of the national melting pot and the confidence in the power of education to level class differences and improve economic circumstances fostered the development of standardization in education. Children were described in relation to the grade standards as precocious, retarded, undisciplined, lazy and sinful (Ebel, 1960).

The practice of retention was developed in response to students who had low achievement or poor personal and social adjustment in school. Ebel (1960) cites that retention was so common during the 19th and earlier 20th century that it had been estimated that approximately every other child was retained at least once during the first eight years of school. By 1900, the question of whether to retain low-achieving and/or socially immature pupils in elementary grades had been a persistent concern of school administrators. The growing numbers of students failing to meet minimum requirements initiated research to study the retained population. Leonard Ayers in 1909 reported the first comprehensive study of pupil progress with his book Laggards in Our Schools (Ebel, 1960).

Retention remains a common educational practice, although research is inconclusive regarding its merits as an educational tool (Jackson, 1975; Holmes & Matthews, 1983; Medway & Rose, 1983). Actual studies are reasonably clear that the one thing worse than social promotion is retention. Amid the publications exploring the relationship between academic success, retention, and social development, few issues continued to generate as much controversy as that of retention and promotion.

Jackson (1975) substantially challenged the notion that social or academic retention was in any respect more beneficial for students than social or academic promotion. His point was essential that promotion and retention without additional skills and habit development, academic support and/or counselling were simply inadequate means of coping with academic failure. Research evidence indicated that retention as a treatment did not provide greater benefits to students with academic or adjustment difficulties than did promotion to the next grade. Jackson (1975) showed that the achievement and adjustment of retained children was not better--and in most instances was worse--than those of comparable children who were promoted.

Jackson (1975) reviewed more than 44 studies on grade retention. He urged readers against interpreting his extensive review of related literature as favoring promotion

or retention. Rather, the point emerging from the accumulated literature was that research designs were so poorly constructed that it was impossible to draw any conclusion other than the single observation that no study had statistically supported the hypothesis that retention was an educationally sound practice that could help children attain academic goals (Jackson, 1975).

Specifically, Jackson (1975) observed that the studies were flawed by the failure to sample a sufficiently large and randomized population; failure to carefully define interventions and control for intervening variables; failure to explore the interactive relationships that can skew results of the most scientifically controlled studies; failure to conduct longitudinal studies to determine the relative impact of, for example, kindergarten retention or promotion on the academic persistence of children as they enter adolescence and secondary school (Jackson, 1975).

Reviews by Keyes (1911), McKinney (1928), Klene & Branson (1929), Reiter (1973), Walker (1973) and Bocks (1977) reported basically the same findings, the majority of students who repeated a grade achieved no better the second time in the grade than they did the first time. A substantial number did poorer work the second time in the grade.

A two year study by Dobbs and Neville (1967) followed the academic achievement gains of sixty children

from eight low socioeconomic, urban schools. Thirty pairs of children, each pair consisting of a once-retained first grader and a never-retained second grader were matched on: (a) race, (b) sex, (c) socio-economic status, (d) type of classroom assignment, (e) age, (f) mental ability, and (g) reading achievement. Conclusions based on the findings were considered in relation to the limits established by the research. All participants were White, low socioeconomic children. Most of the children in the study were slow learners. Dobbs and Neville found that the promoted children made better gains in reading achievement each year of the study and significantly greater gains in arithmetic achievement over the two-year period. The researchers concluded that "continued promotion is best for all children" (Dobbs & Neville, p. 474).

More recent research on the effects of retention on achievement came to essentially the same conclusions. Nearly a decade after Jackson's attack on the equity, efficiency, and rationale of retention as compared with promotion, Holmes & Matthews (1984) conducted a mathematical analysis of previous research data gathered from studies identified as meeting standards of structure, reliability, and validity consistent with Jackson's (1975) standards of research.

The goal of this research was to determine the effects of retention on elementary and/or junior high school

age children. All studies selected compared a group of retained students with a group of promoted students and contained sufficient data to estimate an effect size (Holmes & Matthews, 1984).

Given the long-standing and controversial nature of the debate regarding both the impact of retention as opposed to promotion, Holmes and Matthews (1984) conducted a meta-analysis of retention/promotion studies. The meta-analysis of the 44 chosen studies included fully 11,132 students, with 4,208 retained students and 6,924 promoted students serving as controls (Holmes and Matthews, 1984). An analysis of the effect of promotion versus retention on student achievement, personal adjustment, self-concept, and attitude toward school showed a grand mean effect size of $-.37$, indicating that, on the average, promoted children scored $.37$ standard deviation units higher than retained children on the various outcome measure. The high degree of consistency in the measures applied lends credibility to the validity of these findings. In addition to the grand means, effects sizes were calculated on academic achievement (subdivided into various areas), personal adjustment (which included self-concept, social adjustment and emotional adjustment), and attitude toward school, behavior, and attendance. When Holmes and Matthews (1984) analyzed the data by grade level in which

retention took place (grades 1-6) they again found negative effects at all levels.

In fairness to the researchers exploring the relative impact of retention or promotion on students, it was important to observe that the implementation and evaluation of a scientifically sound and controlled study on the subject would require the large-scale and random retention and promotion of children. Researcher reluctance to conduct such a study was clearly related to the potential consequences of such study on children who were randomly selected for participation (Holmes & Matthews, 1984).

Retention has been shown to be less constructive than promotion, even when there were no mediating variables introduced, such as counselling or extra help programs designed to empower the child to be a competent student. The concept of retention as a threat that motivated or encouraged children to achieve, and inhibited failure behavior in children who are retained, had been contradicted in the research reviewed thus far (Shepard & Smith, 1987). The conclusion of this comprehensive report was that children made progress during the year in which they repeated a grade, but not as much as progress as similar children who were promoted. The average negative effect of retention on achievement was even greater than the negative effect on emotional adjustment and self-concept.

Researchers and others who ignored the interactive effect of social conditions, economic advantage, racism, teacher expectations, school ecology, and school leadership on the educational success of each individual child maintained that the student was the pivotal component in the academic attainment process (Taylor, 1978; Rose et al., 1983). Taylor (1978) questioned whether holding the child in a grade seemed to ignore the question of how effective the instruction was for that child. Further, it tended to (a) blame the child for failing, (b) failed to provide instructional strategies for individual differences in abilities and learning rates and (c) too easily absolved the school of responsibility for identifying alternatives to retention. Non-promotion depressed students making them doubt their abilities, and eventually told them to expect to fail again (Goodlad, 1954). In order to support the notion that this was a response that blamed the victim, it was necessary to look at the differences in retention rates and educational attainment of Black and non-Black children.

Niklason (1984) and Abidin et al., (1971) noted that reasons for retention are related to low academic achievement, but generally involved other apparently interactive variables, such as sex, race, and economic status. Teachers who reported recommending retention for precisely those reasons seemed to operate on the assumption that these children

are less teachable than children who had had economic and social advantages generally withheld from non-White children of low economic status. The incidence of elementary school grade retention appeared to vary between minority and nonminority children, from state to state, school system to school system within a state, and between schools in the same system (Abidin et al., 1971; Casavantes, 1973; Gredler, 1984). As an example, Gredler (1984) found a difference of over 18 percent in the K-2 retention rate between two schools in the same system, in close proximity. The only consistent criteria appeared to be related to instructional issues, focusing specifically on such characteristics as race, economic status, social position, sex, size, and other personal features presented by the children (Rose et al., 1983).

Between the 1960s and the 1970s, social promotions gained widespread acceptance. Schools could keep the children within their modal grade, and offer special assistance to bring them up to academic grade level, all while allowing the promotion in order to protect against emotional damage heaped on top of existing esteem problems related to underachievement (Rose et al., 1983). "Still, in 1976, 127,186 eight year-olds were enrolled below their modal grade. Children were more likely to be enrolled below the modal grade if they were Black or Spanish origin, their families were below the poverty level, the head of the household had less than 12

years of education, and they lived in the southeastern region of the United States," (Rose et al., 1983, p.203). This pattern of retention persisted despite the concrete evidence that children do not learn according to their race, ethnic background, income status, parental educational, or state of residence.

Children were far from passive receptors into which knowledge and understanding can be poured at a pace determined appropriate by the teacher. Students at every level of academic pursuit were part and parcel of the learning process as evidenced from the very moment of birth, as infants, toddlers, and preschoolers continually grasp for knowledge, power, communication skills, independence, love acceptance, and safety (Glenn, 1981). If poor Black children were found to be more consistently failure expectant (Rose et al., 1981), then it was reasonable to ask if the children were simply acting out the expectations of those responsible for determining the learning boundaries of the child in question. A typical profile of the child at high risk of being retained included (a) males, with various studies showing ratios of 2 to 1 up to 9 to 1 over females; (b) significantly lower academic achievement; (c) somewhat lower IQ--5 to 10 points; (d) parents unwilling or unable to intercede in the child's behalf, i.e. to contest the retention; (e) minority status; (f) low socio-economic status; (g) working mother;

(h) poor early readiness skills; (l) July to December birth-date; (j) late maturation, physical, mental, social or emotional; (k) high activity level (Ogden & Germinario, 1988; Glenn, 1981; Hahn, 1987).

Based on this set of criteria, academic success strongly correlated with being female and part of a racial majority, in addition to having economic status, social position, and the ability to anticipate and adhere to teacher expectations regarding behavior, mobility in the classroom, appearance, maturity, and self-control. Based on this criteria, the majority of American children, and certainly the majority of American males, would be considered to be at risk of retention (Pottorff, 1978). The relative vulnerability of a child to actual retention appeared to be related to certain dominant factors, including race, sex, background, and inability of the parent to attain the appropriate support services necessary to cause the school to provide the child with suitable educational supports.

There was certainly no legitimate educational research that would support the contention that any one of these variables placed a child at inherent risk of academic failure. Certainly being male is not to be considered a handicap, and an IQ difference of 5 to 10 points is considered insignificant (Palmer, 1984). Given the rapidly rising economic, educational, and social status of White ethnic

minorities in the United States, it is impossible to argue that poverty should in any way be associated with academic failure, and the presence of a working mother has not been shown to inhibit the educational attainment of middle-class children whose mother are now working outside the home.

Placing a child in kindergarten even though the child presented poor readiness skills has been shown to be associated with lowered achievement. Perhaps lowered achievement was caused by the bad feeling the child experienced in trying to keep up with his or her peers when the teacher instructed the group at the expense of the individual. But the learning differences related to age differences identified in the kindergarten and other primary grades disappeared when children moved into the intermediate level of school, as teacher direction and encouragement helped the children increase self-esteem and attain new school-related skills (Gredler, 1984; Shepard & Smith, 1987). Apparently early readiness skills were not necessarily related to academic achievement, if the teacher intervened with high expectations and strong supportive messages to the children involved (Shepard & Smith, 1987).

To continue the discussion regarding the relationship between the variable characteristics of at risk children, and the critical issue of intervening variables, such as teacher expectations based on racial, sexual and economic

bias, it is inappropriate to consider the possibility that children with a high activity level were necessarily at risk. Inclusion of this variable prompts further inquiry into whether children who were, perhaps, highly active, male, Black, poor, and living with a parent intimidated by the machinations of the school system were more at risk than children who were highly active, White, female, middle-class, and living with a parent who felt competent in placing demands on the school system.

Children who presented a potent combination of racial, economic, and sexual characteristics were more likely to experience retention than children who presented a different combination of features (Jackson, 1975; Casavantes, 1973; Rose et al., 1983). The fact that there have been what appeared to be positive effects of retention was often used by teachers and principals to rationalize such decisions. However, there was no way to prove conclusively that the retention was the cause of improved performance, and that these children would not have done as well or better had they not been retained. What may be overlooked was that it was possible for retention to improve performance to some degree but for promotion, particularly in a systematic and structured promotion (specific goals, etc.), to succeed even more (Niklason, 1984; Abidin et al., 1971; Rose et al., 1983).

Children with the racial, sexual, family, economic, social, and developmental characteristics were identified by Ogden & Germinario (1988) as typical of the at-risk child. If children with these characteristics were repeatedly shown to learn and adjust at or above an age and ability-appropriate level, then the important inquiry was not into the characteristics of the at risk child, but at the characteristics of the at risk school that produced these failing children (Ogden & Germinario, 1988; Cuban, 1989).

If racial prejudice and the resultant view of related high or low personal expectations were already in place by the time a child entered kindergarten, then was the responsibility of the educator to be the social institution that sets the alternative trend, raising success-expectant behavior in all children. Children entering kindergarten uncertain at best as to how they would be integrated into the mainstream needed to see how the principal led the whole school in asserting that all children were valued and could learn (Shephard & Smith, 1987).

Given the fact that retention has not shown that it helped children achieve, and given the additional fact that promotion supplemented by appropriate placement and educational support was strongly associated with achievement, it appeared that a school that does not retain was well on its way to overcoming its own at risk status.

All retentions were not a reflection of the racial bias, sexism, contempt for economic status or general bias on the part of school principal or teacher. Nevertheless, every educator in every school was faced at one time or another with a child who had failed to such an extent that it was impossible to promote the child as if he or she had attained at a rate equivalent to more successful students.

Research repeatedly demonstrated that grade retention was not only associated with emotional damage; it was unproven as a remedy for academic underachievement (Abidin et al., 1971; Dobbs & Neville, 1967; Jackson, 1975; Walker, 1984; Holmes & Matthews, 1984). In a decade where public pressure mounted to hold children accountable for learning by imposing minimum competency standards regardless of the presence or nature of teacher training programs to assure minimum instructional competency, it was very difficult to determine an equitable, effective, efficient and educationally sound means of coping with significant academic failure. The human and financial cost was staggering, particularly in view of the fact that a child who was retained is less likely to complete high school (Hahn, 1987; Shepard & Smith, 1987). Shifts in testing and promotion policies opened up a Pandora's box. Schools must decide when to stop automatically passing students through school. In high school, at the risk of failing to graduate many students? In the middle grades?

Or in the early elementary years? These questions may have been answered where states passed minimum competency laws. But few states offered school systems comprehensive guidelines on how to handle the additional children who failed to attain levels of competence appropriate to the grades in which they are enrolled, including what kind of remedial programs would be offered and how much would it all cost (Thompson, 1979; Shepard & Smith, 1987).

As a democratic nation, the United States cannot rely on the survival of the fittest accepting the notion that only one half of all students were capable of academic achievement. "Retaining a child once increases by 40 percent to 50 percent the risk that he/she will drop out later; two retentions increased the risk by 90 percent" (Riley, 1986, p. 217). Moreover, students who were retained pay with a year of their lives. Holding students back a year or more in elementary school increased the probability of dropping out (Hammack, 1986). The long-term economic and social implications of that cost become painfully self-evident in the recent data revealing that a child who does not complete high school was more likely to have a child of his or her own who does not complete high school (University of the State of New York, 1987, Increasing High School Completion Rates).

The role of the effective school in meeting the needs of the school-failure-expectant Black child at risk of

being retained was clear: the school community must engage in instructional practices, curricular strategies, administrative policies, or school maintenance procedures that demonstrate high expectations for all children (Edmonds, 1982; Comer, 1980; Rutter et al., 1979; North Carolina, 1986; New York State, 1987).

School culture must embrace the child in an instructional and developmental program designed on the assumption that all children can learn; create flexible arrangements that decrease grade isolation; use instructional practices that take consider variations in achievement, ability, linguistic competence, and background; and provide services that enhanced opportunities to learn and prevent failure. All professional and support staff must be trained to understand their role in promoting practices that met the needs of students without the need to sort, label, track and retain (New York State, 1987; North Carolina, 1986; Holmes & Matthews, 1984; Sager, 1988; Shepard & Smith, 1987).

Chapter Summary

The literature reviewed for the purposes of this study supported the contention that children can learn if the school had strong instructional leadership, a clear instructional focus, a safe and orderly environment, a positive relationship with parents and community, and demonstrated high expectations for student achievement.

Students and community never felt better about a school than do the people who worked in the school (New York State, 1987). When faculty and administration believed that they were responsible for assuring that the children strove to achieve, and that the children were challenged at an appropriate level and pace, then failure-expectant behavior was replaced by success-expectant behavior characteristics of children who learned, adjusted, and were promoted on the basis of academic attainment. The needs of failure-expectant students are met in an educational setting which provided maximum academic growth and fostered positive, satisfying success experiences.

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C H A P T E R I I I
M E T H O D S A N D P R O C E D U R E S

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to design, implement, and assess a comprehensive staff development and student support program structured to equip a small group of low-income, Black, sixth-grade students with appropriate school skills, habits, knowledge and attitudes. The rationale for this study was rooted firmly in three bodies of literature, (a) the effective schools literature, supporting the hypothesis that the school can educate all children regardless of their race, socio-economic level, sex, ethnicity, or family construct, (b) the literature regarding retention, which substantially demonstrates that retention generally reinforces student and teacher failure-expectancy, while having no appreciable, positive effect on student achievement and (c) staff development and school change literature resting on the theory that schools are dynamic social systems where successful efforts and activities can alter a school's instructional climate and people attitudes and behaviors.

This case study of an intervention program included a direct services component for children, as well as an in-house training and development component developed for all

faculty and staff in the Washington Rose Elementary School, located in Roosevelt, Long Island, New York.

Nine Black students were enrolled in the program, with five female youngsters and four male. Among the five families that did not receive public assistance, there was an average family income of \$1,096.00 monthly, with a low of \$600.00 per month, and a high of \$2000.00. The remaining four youngsters were from families receiving public assistance, receiving an average monthly income of \$349.00, with a low of \$230.00 and a high of \$416.00.

A total of five of the children had been enrolled in remedial classes prior to participation in the program. All of the children had been retained in the fifth grade, and four of the nine participants had been retained previously, in grades 1, 2, or 3.

All instructional, administrative and support staff participated in the staff development seminars developed for the purposes of this study, and implemented by the researcher, who was the building principal. Of the teachers and other school professionals who participated, a total of nineteen were Black and thirteen were White. Thirty out of 32 of the staff members were female. The instructional staff had been teaching in the building for an average of 24 years, and 85 percent are at the level of Masters plus 15 credits.

All students retained in the fifth grade were eligible for the program. Beginning in September, 1986, the academic attainment of all fifth grade retainees was monitored for the first 5 weeks of the 1986-1987 academic year, and it was determined that ten of the eleven retainees were failing in each subject area, while one child had minimally passing grades.

On October 8, 1986, seven teachers including three fifth grade teachers and four sixth grade teachers met at a grade level meeting convened by the researcher to review the progress of the retainees and to discuss an alternative promotion-and-after-school support program for the eleven students. Fifth and sixth grade teachers agreed to participate in a project that would promote the children to the sixth grade and provide supplemental instructional support after-school conducted by the researcher. Teachers expressed some reservations about the impact of the retainees entering existing sixth grade classes and the nature of promotion in the absence of achievement. At that juncture it was agreed that staff development seminars would address the nature of teacher expectations, the relationship between teacher expectations and student achievement, and the research regarding the instructional and developmental impact of retention on children.

Although student health status was not identified in the original research plan, it became evident that student

health needs were strongly related to student achievement. Beginning, November, 1986, the researcher and school nurse met monthly to discuss and review health needs or current health status for each project participant.

In order to secure permission for each child to enter the instructional support program before the close of October 1986, the principal contacted parents of the retainees by letter (see Appendix A) and by telephone during the sixth week of school. All parents agreed to permit their children's participation in the promotion and after-school program, and they were invited to come to the school for an orientation meeting (See Appendix B).

One child transferred to another school in the district; three children withdrew from school when their families left the district; one youngster was placed in a self-contained special education class April, 1987. With this exception, the group remained intact until February, 1987. A total of nine children were given permission by their parents to participate in the program. Once permission was received, the children were advised individually of the prospective change and asked for input regarding their feelings. They expressed general pleasure with the idea and were scheduled for class changes as of October 20, 1986.

In order to ease the transition prior to the promotion, an October 16th meeting was convened with the ten

children in the school library. The children sat with each other and discussed their reactions to the proposal that they would meet and work together. The principal/researcher acted as facilitator and clarifier. The children's meeting in the library lasted forty-five minutes and closed with an announcement that the transition would take place, as previously scheduled, on the following Monday. The group agreed that they would meet four times weekly to review homework, solve problems, receive and exchange ideas for achievement, and generally reinforce progress accomplished in the course of the regular school day. The researcher made herself available to the children if they wanted to meet privately to discuss any aspect of the transition.

All students met in the library after school three to four days a week for approximately one and one-half hours each day. The principal as researcher provided instruction and group leadership. Each session included homework hurdle help, with the researcher helping each child complete homework in all subject areas. Every day, before and after homework hurdle sessions, children with the principal/researcher reviewed daily accomplishments. Specific reference was made continually to group identity, group cohesiveness, and to the possibility that school is one place where the students can forget their troubles, and simply enjoy achievement for its own sake.

The study used a combination of approaches to gather information: documents, informal interviews, observations, and journal. Documents included educational information on each student using progress reports, report cards, and standardized reading and mathematics test scores. Teachers were informally interviewed each month during the study. A feedback system was provided for the teachers and researcher to test their observations, discuss aspects of the classroom (grouping patterns, format of lessons, use of materials), teacher-student interaction and inferences that emerged from the study. Student interviews were conducted at the beginning and at the end of the study. The form and order of interviews was informal. Semi-structured and open ended questions asked by the researcher focused on gathering information on students' home-life patterns and educational orientation, such as: school plans, goals, attitude on schooling, learning rituals at home, hobbies, games, availability of newspaper, recreation, daily rituals, assessment of school performance and attitudes toward family members and other adults (See Appendix C).

A log maintained by the researcher noted daily observations on how students habits and interactions affected school success and what characteristics of school life, such as, teacher attitudes, skills and behaviors were essential to their academic success. More importantly, the log served as

a "memory bank" for the researcher's own experiences, thoughts, and feelings about processes, activities or events which impacted on the study, specifically, and on the school, overallly.

Daily sessions included organizational, attendance, and communication skills development for the purpose of helping children become more comfortable with the habit of attending and achieving in school. Specific skills were imparted, including notebook management and calendar organization insuring that assignments were completed in a timely fashion.

Discussions on planning and implemenation by the researcher and sixth-grade teachers provided a step process for working with students in the after-school instructional program. At the onset of the study, five of nine students did not have notebooks/looseleafs. These students' papers were scattered in a desk or folder and buried in textbooks and at the bottoms of bookbags. Students wasted time hunting for things and were discouraged from making useful references and notes because materials were so difficult to find. Notebooks, notebook dividers, composition paper and pencils were issued to nine students. A lesson was conducted on organization of study-place and study tools/aids. Periodically, notebooks were checked by researcher and teachers for format, materials and content. Additional items needing renewing, such as

paper, pencils, folders and bookcovers were replaced upon student request.

Teachers identified academic tasks and types of assignments. Assignments completed included work which was done by a group or an individual. Since the researcher and teachers planned and worked cooperatively, students' learning experiences in the after-school instructional program were an outgrowth of particular lessons in classes. The researcher as facilitator, monitored and checked task accomplishments and evaluated each group or individual product (See Appendix D).

In addition, small group discussions were conducted focusing on problem-solving with topics drawn from actual or hypothetical problems with home or school. These topics ranged from peer relations to sibling rivalry to acknowledging the grief associated with death of a family member. These were not intended to be therapy sessions. Sessions were designed and implemented to help children reach out to each other and their teachers to derive satisfaction, control, and esteem from accomplishments in school while still coping with problems that trouble many children and adults throughout life. Children reviewed homework, celebrated achievement, worked out social and behavioral difficulties experienced in the class, and exchanged ideas about present and future hopes, dreams, and aspirations. This overall

procedure proved helpful in connecting students with school and enhancing the researcher's understanding of their home and school behaviors.

Activities were drawn from (a) the Growing Up Together curriculum guide developed by the Buffalo Public School Curriculum Department (prepared by J. Chelebowski, Buffalo Central School District, Buffalo, New York), (b) PROJECT R.E.A.C.H. (Reinforcing Effective Approaches to Curriculum for Health, developed by R. Richin for the Longwood Central School District, Middle Island, New York; and (c) the lesson plans of Washington Rose Elementary School sixth grade teachers of the children involved in the program. The Instructional, Administrative and Support Staff

All professional staff participated in a total of four seminars (a) the nature and causes of failure-expectant behavior in minority elementary school age children, (b) the nature of expectations by teachers and the impact of teacher expectations on student achievement, (c) strategies to encourage failure-expectant retained or non-retained youngsters to respond more consistently to high teacher expectations, and (d) strategies to overcome personal bias and reduced expectations in the school setting.

The seminars were conducted in October, February, May and October of the 1986-1987 and 1987-88 school year. Each session lasted for a period of 1 hour and 30 minutes

each, and they were followed up in individual observation and instructional support sessions conducted between the researcher and each teacher, administrator, and support staff (nurse, psychologist and social worker).

At the beginning and end of each seminars the participants received an anonymous attitude and information response sheet, (see Appendices E and F), in order to determine what, if any, impact the seminar might have had on teacher attitude, knowledge, or expectations of students.

Data Collection

Student grades, achievement on standardized tests, and behavior records were monitored by the researcher, in order to determine the degree to which the children were demonstrating adjustment and academic achievement in the sixth grade. This data is generated as an ordinary part of the school day and required no special collection procedures.

In the teacher seminars, all teacher response sheets were distributed and collected by the researcher. Analysis of data regarding student achievement is presented in table form illustrating attendance and performance over a period of eight months of instruction. Data analysis of teacher responses to attitude and information sheets is presented in frequency tables illustrating the extent to which teacher attitudes were responsive or resistive to instructional leadership on the part of the principal.

Chapter Summary

The methods and procedures of this case study design were based on (a) suggested elementary student improvement guidelines of the New York State Effective Schools Consortia, University of the State of New York (1987), (b) the program suggestions of Edmonds (1979) and Brookover et al., (1982); and (c) the North Carolina Effective Schools Program (1986). The project offered children opportunities for direct instructional support, social advancement, academic success, and direct contact with the principal of the school. That direct program was supported by staff development designed to alert teachers to strategies found to empower minority, failure-expectant children who had been retained at least once.

In developing the study, careful consideration was given to the potential of my role, and to minimizing the negative and maximizing the positive aspects of being a principal responsible for direct student and staff instruction and development, as well as parent outreach. After all, the study was consistent with roles and responsibilities of a building principal desirous of promoting forward movement for teachers so they could, in turn, promote progress for children and parents. In view of my goals as both a researcher and a principal, the results of the study were gratifying.

Out of the original group of 11 children, 6 remained in the school as of the third academic quarter. A total of 7 families were appropriately involved with promoting the formal education of their children. This includes the parents of one child who were subdued but visible and supportive as their child was evaluated for and then placed in a self-contained setting in Washington Rose School.

Of the remaining six, five appeared to have carried their progress into the seventh grade, with one child presenting chronic absenteeism that appears to be related to a home situation that the school has not yet identified or addressed. A total of 5 children can be said to have clearly made strong gains in academic, behavioral, social and school skills-related areas.

Given that each of the participants in the after-school program had a history of six years of deepening school failure, the often intractable nature of school teacher opinion and peer perception of other students, gains made by the children are considerable. The sixth grade at Washington Rose School was the children's first school experience that involved visible learning gains.

The program that developed took enormous amount of time both at work and at home. As principal/researcher the demands on personal time were often overwhelming as well as

they were rewarding. Returning to a regular, instructional setting reminded me that teaching is a repetitive, exhausting, unpredictable, and enormously gratifying experience.

C H A P T E R I V

OUTCOMES

Introduction

The study was concerned with the development, implementation and evaluation of a staff development and student support program targeted at helping improve the academic achievement and school habits of failure-expectant, poor, Black children recommended for retention in the fifth grade. The study was structured to enable students to acquire skills and habits essential to academic achievement and persistence and assist teachers in making instructional improvements to benefit failure-expectant learners and assure that teachers had opportunities to practice basic interactional and support skills built into the intervention program.

The data relevant to student behavior, achievement, and attitude comprises the first section of this study, and includes research outcomes regarding attendance, homework, standardized tests scores, report card grades, behavior and health status as identified by the school nurse. Although student health status was not identified in the original research plan, it became evident that student health needs were strongly related to student achievement. To protect the privacy of the children involved, all of their names have been changed.

This research project was designed to equip highly failure-expectant youngsters to advance to the sixth grade, be promoted to the seventh grade, and continue to demonstrate improved academic persistence and achievement. Therefore, this chapter includes data for two separate academic segments. First, during the 1986-76 academic year, which the students were in the sixth grade in Washington Rose Elementary School and enrolled in the after-school program. Second, during the first 10 weeks of the 1987-88 academic year, the students were in the seventh grade in the Roosevelt Junior-Senior High School and were in no special support or guidance programs.

The second primary section of this chapter is organized to report the program impact on teachers' expectations of failure expectant children, and includes data resulting from the teacher workshops. The closing portion of this chapter includes the researcher's observations of the program process and progress, based on a detailed log.

Student Record of Achievement, Behavior and Attitude

This research project targeted the following six factors relevant to student success: (1) attendance, (2) homework, (3) standardized tests scores, (4) report card grades, (5) behavior and (6) health. This section reports data relevant to each of these factors in turn.

In advance of reporting that data, it is important to establish that only 6 of the original 9 children remained enrolled in the program until its ended in June.

** One girl was withdrawn from school by her mother, February, 1987. There is no record of which school district she transferred to, or if, indeed, she is enrolled in school at all.

** One boy was withdrawn from Washington Rose Elementary School, and enrolled in the Long Beach School District, with a recommendation for testing to determine if the child is learning disabled.

** One boy was placed in a self-contained special education class in Washington Rose Elementary School, and is assigned to that class for the 1987-88 school year, as well.

By April of 1987, the original group of 3 boys and 6 girls had been depleted to include just 1 boy and 5 girls. The following data reflects the progress of those students who remained in the program.

According to New York State Education Law, Section 904 and local school policy, the category of student attendance has two major categories of concern: absenteeism and tardiness. Applicable data is presented in Table 1, in order to demonstrate student attendance habits for those children in the program through June, 1987.

TABLE 1

School Attendance for Students Participating in
After-School Program, Academic School Year, 1986-87.

Student	1st Qtr		2nd Qtr		3rd Qtr		4th Qtr	
	Abs.	Tar.	Abs.	Tar.	Abs.	Tar.	Abs.	Tar.
Bart	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0
Carla	0	0	6	8	8	10	5	3
Alice	3	22	3	11	6	12	2	4
Geri	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1
Dina	5	0	0	1	2	1	0	0
Sandra	0	0	3	0	1	0	1	0
Jamie								
Curt								
Jewel								

The above attendance data for each child completing the program shows that both Alice and Dina had attendance problems in the first quarter. Each of these children experienced considerable improvement in both attendance and on time arrival to school. No child presented problems attending the after-school program. They attended the program as scheduled and exhibited little reluctance in participating.

The data presented in Table 1 cover the academic quarters during which the program was in place. Follow-up data detailing attendance habits of these same students in

their first 10 weeks of seventh grade revealed that some of the students continued their solid attendance habits, while others experienced a dramatic decline in class and/or school attendance. Bart was chronically absent from science, physical education, foreign language class, and industrial arts, although he was on time to homeroom, and attended mathematics, social studies and English class.

TABLE 2

School Attendance Profile for Former Students
Participating in After-School Program,
1st Quarter, Academic School Year, 1987-88.

Student	Absent	Absent/Class	Tardy
Bart	2	40	0
Carla	Not enrolled. Family whereabouts unknown.		
Alice	33	0	4
Geri	3	0	0
Dina	4	0	4
Sandra	3	0	0

The attendance officer of the district contacted Alice's mother, while the grade level administrators and guidance counselor worked to help Bart develop the skills and habits he needed to attend classes he was failing, so he could understand how to reverse the failure.

Homework/Classwork. Student homework completion was recorded by teachers in register books and on the report cards for each quarter. In addition, records of student homework completion in the after-school program setting were maintained by the researcher, since the program developed for this study was designed to provide these children with the setting, support, skills, and habits they needed to complete their homework on a regular basis. All the children had difficulty understanding the homework tasks, the process of homework completion, and the materials required to complete various assignments in different subject areas.

Student classwork was also included in this section, since many teachers assigned incomplete classwork and class projects as homework. Teachers found the after-school program acted as an important ingredient in providing students with additional assistance to read, to explore, to investigate, complete and create individual projects. In subjects, such as social studies, science and literature, students received supervised study, increased assistance from the researcher, more encouragement, and were provided longer time in which to accomplish their objectives and solve problems.

TABLE 3

Grades Recorded on Report Cards Based on Completion of Homework/Classwork by Students Participating in After-School Program, Academic School Year, 1986-87

	<u>Completes Classwork</u>				<u>Completes Homework</u>			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Bart	U	N	N	N	S	S	U	N
Carla	N	N	N	S	N	S	S	S
Alice	N	N	S	S	N	S	S	S
Geri	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Dina	N	S	S	S	N	S	S	S
Sandra	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Jamie	N	N	W	W	U	N	W	W
Curt	U	U	N	P	U	N	N	P
Jewel	U	N	W	W	U	N	W	W

Four children did not demonstrate satisfactory rates of classwork and homework completion. Two children were withdrawn from school the third marking quarter; one child was placed in a self-contained classroom, the fourth marking quarter. However, the information gathered in the program setting focused on four stages of homework attack skills: planning, beginning, remaining on-task, and completing. In

the beginning of the program, Bart, Curt, and Jewel seldom demonstrated the ability to plan or begin homework, much less complete it. From January, 1987 until the time of withdrawal, Curt and Jewel were planning, beginning and partially completing homework and classwork with greater regularity. The principal/researcher's observations of the homework and classwork habits of the other children matched those of the classroom teachers: the students succeeded in completing the majority of their class and homework assignments.

Iowa Tests of Basic Skills. The use of the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills as standardized measurement to determine the range of ability and achievement within a class was practiced in the Roosevelt School District. Scores from the Iowa subtests included vocabulary, reading comprehension, language skills (spelling, capitalization, punctuation and usage), work-study skills (map reading, reading graphs and tables, knowledge and use of reference materials), and arithmetic skills (arithmetic concepts and problem-solving).

The total score produced in the language portion of the test reflects an average of the scores the student achieves on the spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and usage portions of the test. The total produced in the mathematics section of the Iowa test represented an average of the math concepts, math problems, and computation portions of the test. The composite score for the Grade Equivalent

status of the student represented an average of all his or her scores in the categories of vocabulary, reading, language, visual/reference materials and mathematics.

The Iowa Tests of Basic Skills were administered in May, 1986 and May 1987; first, when the six children were recommended for retention in fifth grade and second, after the six children were promoted to the sixth grade. The measurement of educational achievement for May, 1986 and May 1987 is shown on Table 4.

TABLE 4

Profile of Iowa Tests of Basic Skills Grade Equivalent Derived Scores for Students Participating in After-School Program, May, 1986 and May, 1987

Legend: Vocab..... Vocabulary
 Read..... Reading
 Lang/Total.. Language/Total
 W/Total..... Visual and Reference Materials
 M/Total..... Math Total
 Comp..... Composite Score
 86/87 1986/1987

3.2 = Grade Equivalent Level of 3rd Grade, 2 months

STUDENT	VOCAB		READ		LANG/T		W/T		M/T		COMP.	
	86	87	86	87	86	87	86	87	86	87	86	87
Bert	3.5	5.9	5.2	6.1	3.8	4.6	5.0	6.7	5.2	7.3	4.5	6.1
Carla	3.2	4.3	3.2	3.5	3.2	4.7	3.8	5.4	4.6	6.4	3.6	4.9
Alice	4.8	5.4	4.2	5.8	3.9	5.8	4.6	5.1	4.7	5.4	4.6	5.5
Gerl	5.3	5.3	3.4	6.4	4.0	6.1	3.2	6.7	4.0	7.3	4.0	6.4
Dina	3.9	3.9	2.8	4.1	4.0	4.8	3.8	5.2	3.9	6.3	3.7	4.9
Sandra	2.9	3.6	3.8	5.3	4.2	6.0	3.0	6.1	4.4	7.9	3.7	5.8
Total Avr.	3.9	4.7	3.9	5.2	3.9	5.3	3.9	5.9	4.5	6.8	4.1	5.6

The average growth in the area of vocabulary was derably stronger in mathematics, with an average increase of 2.3 years, and 2.0 years in the subtest of visual and reference materials. The gains made in each respective area of the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills indicate that the children enrolled in the program gained in all subtests with the exception of vocabulary when their scores are compared with those of the year before. Within one academic year, 1986-87, children who had progressed approximately 6 months for every year in school advanced fully one and one-half grades, on average according to the Iowa measure of cumulative grade equivalence.

Grades. Although all of the children in the program were recommended for retention at the fifth grade level, the majority passed their major subjects at the sixth grade level. Table 5 indicates the number of As, Bs, Cs, Ds, and Fs each child received as final grades before being promoted to seventh grade, recommended for summer school, or recommended for retention by the classroom teacher.

TABLE 5

Distribution of Final Numerical Scores on Report Cards
for Students Participating in After-School Program,
Academic School Year, 1986-1987,

Student	100-90	89-80	70-70	69-60	64-60	Below 60
Bart	0	0	5	4	1	0
Carla	0	0	0	4	6	0
Alice	0	1	1	6	2	0
Geri	0	1	7	2	0	0
Dina	0	0	2	3	5	0
Sandra	0	1	3	6	0	0
Total	0	3	18	25	14	0

This failure-expectant population of youngsters who were recommended for retention on the basis of the fact that they had failed virtually every major course throughout the fifth grade showed major improvement in the sixth grade. A total of 5 percent of the grades were B, 30 percent were C, 42 percent were D, and 23 percent were F. The previous year, 65 percent of the grades received by these students indicated that they were failing their major courses.

On the basis of these grades, Carla was recommended for retention, but she was advised that she could be promoted if she attended and passed summer school courses. In the interim, her family relocated. Dina was promoted to the seventh grade if she attended and passed summer school. She

and her family understood the requirement, followed through, and Dina was enrolled in and regularly attended seventh grade classes in the Roosevelt Junior-Senior High School.

Behavior. Within this group of children, there were no incidents of physical fighting, vandalism, theft, or insubordination. Therefore, there was no suspendable offense committed by any of the boys or girls who participated in the after-school program. In summarizing the behavior of these children, their teachers made the following comments on student evaluation forms and report cards.

Bart: "Restless and argumentative. Spends too much time being silly in class. The major problem that one faces with Bart is the constant 'snapping' (e.g., teasing). He has an understanding of basic skills, but does not always perform. Bart has settled down and developed better work and study habits."

Carla: "No behavior problems. Is shy, but has developed a better relationship with her peers. More confident in her ability to communicate orally."

Alice: "Alice required special attention. I had many talks with her. She often came to school angry and rarely smiled. She often asked to see the nurse. Lately, she has shown improvement. She smiles more. She still has difficulty getting along with male peers continuing to tease and antagonize them."

Geri: "No behavior problems. Geri is a delightful young lady who has developed a certain security about her ability. She has continued to practice good behavior and is very interested in her academic growth."

Dina: "Dina was used to being teased often by her classmates; especially her male peers. However, I found Dina to be a delight. She was extremely willing to please, and would do anything you asked of her. She tried very hard. When she is frustrated by teasing, she will scream at the culprit."

Sandra: "Sandra presents no behavior problem in class. When she is very frustrated, she withdraws and cries."

Washington Rose Elementary School records indicated that these children were seen in the principal's office for problem-solving sessions about situations that made them angry or sad. Bart and Curt were the only children consistently engaged in inappropriate behavior, which involved taunting and name-calling that escalated on the playground and in the classroom. Curt was placed in a self-contained setting. Finally by April, Bart, his classroom teachers and principal/researcher agreed that he was getting some of that behavior under control.

Personal contact by the researcher with secondary school personnel, provided information that Bart was the only child who had been enrolled in the after-school program requiring disciplinary action from an administrator in charge of the seventh grade. His infraction involved verbal abuse of another child, and took place at the beginning of the school year. He had not come to the attention of the administrator since that incident.

The balance of the participants in the program have not presented disciplinary problems, according to their seventh grade classroom teachers and their grade administrator.

Health. Initially, health as a factor impacting on the achievement and performance of the children in the program was not included. The researcher soon learned that it was a critical variable that had been previously overlooked when teachers, administrators, parents and the children themselves struggled to help encourage academic persistence. At her own suggestion, the Washington Rose Elementary School nurse, who is a Registered Nurse, advised the principal of the health status of each of the children in the program. Her notes comprise Table 6.

TABLE 6

Health Conditions of Students Participating in
After-School Program as Recorded on Health Files,
October, 1986

Student Name	Condition
Bart	20/40 vision (refuses to wear glasses) Obesity
Carla	Myopic (requires glasses; but has none.
Alice:	20/20 Vision Complains of pain in lower limbs; lethargy; appears fatigued; eyes often appears tired (Updated physical examination, pending)
Geri	Myopic (wears glasses; but needs to be reminded)
Dina	Myopic (referral for vision problem made two years consecutive); No home follow-through; obesity
Sandra	Myopic (wears glasses, but needs to be reminded).
Jamie	No physical problems.
Curt	No physical problems.
Jewel	Referral for vision problem, school year, 1986-87; No home follow-through.

On the basis of the above information, the children requiring glasses were provided the appropriate care, and were regularly reminded to wear their glasses. Some children

presented extreme resistance to optical examinations and corrective lenses. The group overcame this reluctance by approaching the use of glasses as an experiment. We asked the children if the glasses made them see better? Perform better in sports? Look fresh or intelligent? The children were asked to list the names of people in movies, television, commercials, theater, business, etc., who wore glasses. This strategy helped the children understand the need for corrective lenses, and feel better about wearing them.

Bart, the overweight child, clearly used his size to control and verbally bully the other children. Although it was beyond the scope of this project to counsel children extensively regarding healthy lifestyles, it was possible to assign reading and writing and discussion projects that focused on promoting health and discovering positive social ways of interacting with peers, adults and smaller children.

This program was designed to help children make needed gains in school habits and achievement in order to assure promotion from sixth to seventh grade and thereafter. Therefore the grades earned by these children in the first 10 weeks of their enrollment in seventh grade in the Roosevelt Junior-Senior High School should indicate something of their progress. From the data made available by the guidance office of the secondary school, it was possible to determine whether the six children enrolled in the after-school program

were either passing or failing their major and minor subjects. That data is presented in Table 7.

TABLE 7

Report Card Grades (1st Quarter) for Students in
After-School Program, Presently Enrolled in Seventh
Grade, Academic School Year, 1987-88,

Legend:	Egl....English	P Pass
	Math...Mathematics	F Fail
	S.S. ...Social Studies	/ Course not offered this quarter
	Sci....Science	
	Hlth...Health	
	For. Lang.. Foreign Language	
	Phy. Ed...Physical Education	
	Tech...Technical Education	
	Mus....Music	

Student	Subjects								
	Egl.	Math.	S.S.	Sci.	Hlth.	For. Lang.	Phy. Ed.	Tech.	Mus.
Barb	P	P	P	F	F	F	F	F	/
Calla	Not enrolled at this time.								
Alice	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
Geni	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Dia	P	P	P	P	/	F	F	/	F
Sabra	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
TOTAL PASS	4	4	4	3	2	2	2	2	2
TOTAL FAIL	1	1	1	2	2	3	3	2	2

Information gathered from the first quarter report grade showed that some of the children participating in the after-school program experienced failure in the junior-senior

high school setting. The data reflected (a) 3 of 6 children passed all major subjects of English, mathematics, social studies and science but failed minor subjects (b) 2 of 6 children passed both major and minor courses and (c) 1 child failed all subjects because of non attendance to school.

Based on these outcomes, a number of conclusions may be drawn. First, the secondary school reflected the largest organizational arrangement and physical plant experienced by the children participating in the after-school program. Direct access to guidance services, teachers, administrators and support programs was minimal. It is worth noting that that when the children were asked if there was a person in the school that they would readily turn to for help with a personal problem, the students could not name a secondary person. In two cases, the students said the name of a sixth grade teacher. Second, the affective climate of the seventh grade was poor. There were limited opportunities for students to participate in a variety of school activities that address physical, social and emotional needs. Third, there was limited evidence of curriculum correlation and interdisciplinary planning. Fragmented into an eight-period day, homogeneously grouped, the children were seldom called upon to practice and apply skills in different contexts.

Chapter Summary

This section has discussed how the children performed on standardized as well as subjective measures during the academic year of 1986-87, when they were promoted to sixth grade and enrolled in an after-school program designed to address their needs. In the areas of attendance, homework habits, basic skills, report card grades, reportable behavior problems, and health the children who completed the program showed progress in those areas where they were previously deficient. They performed at a sixth-grade level despite the fact that they had been recommended for retention at the fifth-grade level. One of the major disappointments in the study was the inability of the researcher to build upon the students' skills and habits for academic persistence through a student-outreach program. An outreach program may have helped students better address the organizational patterns and program arrangements presented by the secondary school.

Staff development workshops were a pivotal factor contributing to the ability of these children to risk expecting relative success, rather than relative failure. The following section of this chapter details the nature of the formal staff development workshops planned to instruct faculty in the tenets of effective schools, and thereby empower them to become success-expectant in relation to all children, including those who had previously failed.

Teacher Training Workshops: Objectives and Outcomes

This section reports the objectives and outcomes of the workshops offered to teachers. In conceptualizing a program model where the principal of the school would be responsible for developing and presenting the teacher training program, my status as principal might affect how teachers responded to the program. Indeed, the researcher intentionally capitalized on this potential to serve, in the words of Ron Edmonds, as a strong instructional leader for teachers and students.

The after-school program provided the principal as researcher opportunities to (a) model instructional focus and strategies for experienced teachers in the elementary school, (b) make clearer the purposes and strategies of the after-school program, and (c) share evidence that those strategies affected the adjustment, behavior and learning of the children enrolled in the program. Many discussions took place in informal settings, i.e. cafeteria, school yard, principal's office, and in the halls before and after school.

In addition, four separate workshops were developed and implemented by the researcher for all instructional staff at Washington Rose School. Only the first session was limited to the fifth and sixth grade teachers, since the purpose of the first session was to establish goals and objectives for the eleven children who had been retained in the fifth

grade. This section reports both the objectives and the outcomes of each of the four sessions conducted between October 1986 and October 1987.

Session One: October, 1986.

First five-week interim reports of the academic year, 1986-1987 indicated that ten of the eleven children retained at the fifth grade level were failing all subjects. Gerl was the only student passing, and she accomplished that goal by doing the minimum expected by the teacher. Before the close of the sixth week, one child was transferred to another elementary school in the district and one child was withdrawn from school when his family left the district, leaving just nine children who had been retained in the fifth grade, and who were proposed participants of the after-school program.

The researcher initiated a meeting with fifth and sixth grade instructional staff to accomplish the following:

1. to identify that all children who had been retained were currently failing, with the exception of one child, who was performing marginally;

2. to propose advancing the children to the sixth grade by implementing a reorganization of all fifth and sixth grade populations;

3. to present the scope and goals of the after-school program;

4. to inventory teacher attitudes toward and observation of the nine retained children, with special emphasis on academic issues, social patterns, parent support, and the need for support services external to the class setting; and

5. to assess teacher attitudes toward a promotion of the nine retainees with the addition of an after-school intervention program that the principal would conduct and evaluate.

Outcomes of the First Session.

The first session was conducted during the school day, at a special session for which class coverage was arranged for all fifth and sixth grade teachers. The researcher shared information with teachers that indicated that ten of the eleven children who had been retained at the fifth grade level were again failing, even though they were familiar with the classwork for which they were responsible. In a discussion about failure-expectant behavior, teachers saw little reason for them to believe that the retainees grades would improve over the remainder of the academic year. Apparently at the close of the 1986-1987 academic year, these children would have spent two years in fifth grade, and would have failed both times. This would place the children in a deeply entrenched failure cycle, and would put the school in an indefensible position of promoting them after two failures.

Teachers on both grade levels expressed hope and reservations when presented with the proposal to integrate the fifth grade retainees into the sixth grade classes. One teacher complained that "those" students would lower the homeroom's overall average on standardized tests (e.g., Iowa). When this teacher was advised that the students would be distributed throughout the sixth grade, thus presenting a statistically insignificant impact on the outcomes, she appeared appeased.

Teachers also expressed concern about the students' need for extra help and the potential for increased acting out in the classroom. Fifth grade teachers did not voice confidence that the children had the skills they needed to attempt sixth-grade work. The general consensus was that failure at the fifth-grade level necessarily predicted greater failures at the sixth-grade level. Other teachers were willing to try, but they questioned their skills in working with failure-expectant children. They were also anxious about the process of developing special life skills instructional materials for this population.

In addition, the faculty and researcher exchanged ideas and information about the role of the parents thus far. The program could appeal to each parents' desire to be a good mother or father to the child in question. Teachers and principal should view both children and parent with an eye

toward their strengths rather than their weaknesses. Already the student's family life impinged in many ways on the preparation for school and social coping skills of the students.

The staff decided that promotion would occur October 20th. From October through mid-January, regular contact, both formal and informal, continued with the researcher and sixth grade teachers responsible for students in the after-school program. Most meetings were specifically intended to (a) share information about student progress in the after-school and regular school day programs, (b) to help link research with instructional practices, and (c) to increase teachers' understandings that all children can learn, and that the self-fulfilling prophecy is a potent tool that can work either for or against a child.

The remaining three workshops used an experience based approach to learning. Activities were designed to enable teachers and support staff to more effectively integrate research and practice. Each session began with (a) an exercise, (b) included specific goals clarifying the purpose of the activity, (c) set the climate for teacher participation in the learning process, and (d) reinforced the fact that schools do make a difference in students' learning, and (e) that all children can learn.

Session Two: February, 1987.

The theme of the workshop was: "Perceptions and Expectations: Our Role in Promoting Success or Failure-Expectant Behavior". The objectives were:

1. to encourage all faculty to test a belief that all children can learn;
2. to explore the nature of power that is vested in the role of the teacher, regardless of the child's race, religion, gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity, or family system configuration;
3. to generate discussion about professional and personal attitudes toward adolescents and pre-adolescent;
4. to generate empathy for young people who are entering adolescence;
5. to identify effective teaching strategies, as detailed by Ron Edmonds, Larry Lezotte, the North Carolina Effective Schools Program, and the New York State Effective Schools Consortia.

Faculty and staff formed five groups. Each cluster included a regular classroom teacher, special education teacher, teacher assistant, and a support service staff member, i.e. nurse, social worker, psychologist, etc. and was assigned to designated tables in the library. Worksheets were placed on each table and each cluster selected one participant to record information. The principal/researcher

as facilitator established workshop focus by reading aloud Ron Edmonds's challenge to educator:

"We can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us. Whether or not we do it must finally depend on how we feel about the fact that we haven't so far."
(Edmonds, 1979).

This challenge generated a lively discussion about the nature and impact of teacher expectations, which proved an ideal segue into a presentation on the format, goals and progress of the after-school program. Teachers agreed that the children who had been failing in their second year of fifth grade were now passing in the sixth grade, in spite of concerns about the transition, the difficulty of the work, and the problems of adjusting to change in the classroom environment.

The balance of the session focused on clarifying and understanding how perceptions effected personal expectations of student learning in the context of the total school environment and was designed in the following format.

SESSION 2

Setting: 5 Groups

Purpose: Clarify and discuss the statement:
"Our perceptions effect our expectations and attitudes about student learning."

Time: 10 minutes

Task 1: List words describing adolescence. Do not limit your definition to your working with children in a school setting.

Time: 05 minutes

Group Response/Discussion

Time: 05 minutes

Task 2: List five methods of teaching/working with the adolescent(s) you have just described.

Time: 05 minutes

Group Response/Discussion

Time: 10 minutes

Task 3: List words describing children who have been deemed as failing.

Time: 05 minutes

Group Response/Discussion

Time: 05 minutes

Task 4: List a minimum of 5 strategies that enable you to teach the child you described in task 3. (Assume the child is appropriately placed, and required no more additional help external to the regular classroom setting than he/she already received.)

Outcomes of the Second Session.

In summary, teacher expectations, both positive and negative, often reflected personal biases in regard to socioeconomic status, race, gender, ethnicity, religion, attractiveness, weight, and social skills of the child involved.

The teachers were challenged by the researcher (facilitator) to recognize their own biases, work to eliminate/minimize the negative, and test the evidence that all children can learn by treating all children as students with a long history of learning, and with a great future of learning even more.

Rather than providing additional research data, a series of statements enabled teachers to collectively identify many effective teaching practices.

The teachers were faced with the challenge to consider their own role in the success or failure-expectancy of children. A wide range of strong responses indicated to the researcher a clear need for one-to-one formal and informal leadership ensuring faculty and staff in Washington Rose School continue working on the understanding that all children can learn.

Session Three: May, 1987

Formal teacher observations and informal teacher-principal meetings presented opportunities for the researcher to (a) focus considerable energy on individual and small group interaction, (b) provide appropriate wait-period until teachers had opportunities to regularly test the tenets of effective teaching practices in their own classrooms, over a period of several months, (c) continue in the role of facilitator, and (d) provide feedback in a nondirective manner.

Gradually most teachers accepted the tenet, all children can learn, and that retention is often self-defeating, as evidenced in the progress of the after-school group. A third workshop was scheduled to (a) summarize effective teaching practices identified by teachers in the previous session, and (b) discuss relationship between effective teaching practices and student achievement.

The objectives of the third workshop were:

1. to reinforce effective teaching practices identified by teachers in the previous session;
2. to report the progress of the after-school group;
3. to report on the health issues raised by the school nurse;
4. to review teacher observations regarding the behavior, academic attainment, social skills, and parental support of children participating in the after-school program;
5. to illustrate how teacher behaviors may reinforce students' attitude toward failure or success; and
6. to discuss ways that teachers and other school people can bridge the gap between student potential and student performance.

Outcomes of the Third Session.

The third session continued the theme of learning expectations for teacher and student. The researcher and workshop participants (a) restated how teacher behaviors

(perceptions/expectations) in school settings associated with perceptions/expectations effect student achievement, (b) discussed strategies to overcome anti-adolescent attitudes and biases, and (c) posed practical problem solving as a effective means of reducing stress and tension. All discussions were targeted at helping teachers overcome personal tensions or biases and remain focused on-task.

Members of the faculty formed groups organizing themselves in the same configuration as in the second workshop and followed a similar format to Session 2. Session 2 workshop linked interdependently to Session 3 as the researcher established a focus by providing participants opportunities to identify and discuss their own learning needs and expectations in the beginning of the workshop. Two teachers who instructed the children participating in the after-school program provided the group with a report which included the following: (a) student achievement, (b) student attitude toward learning, (c) student attitude toward teachers, (d) teacher attitude toward student, (e) special concerns and problems, and (f) parent involvement. Teachers concurred that (a) when they held high expectations and perceived students as high achievers then student achievement improved and (b) the strategy of promotion supported by after-school program helped all but one of the children

achieve the grades they needed to be promoted to the seventh grade. The second phase of the workshop was presented in the following format.

SESSION 3.

Setting: 5 Groups

Purpose: Continue discussion and examination of relationship between teaching behaviors and student achievement

Time: 05 minutes
 Task 1: Words can evoke images." Create a list of images that are elicited when you hear the word "blew".

Time: 05 minutes
 Group Response/Discussion

Time: 05 minutes
 Task 2: The telephone rings and you answer it. A caller begins to clearly speak to you. On the basis of a brief conversation, describe the caller.

Time: 05 minutes
 Group Response/Discussion

Time: 03 minutes
 Task 3: Given a series of lines and circles, describe the drawing.



Time: 03 minutes
 Group Response/Discussion

Time: 03 minutes
 Task 4: Form a mental picture of a high performing child. List 10 words describing that student.

Time: 03 minutes
 Task 5: Form a mental picture of a low performing child. List 10 words describing that student.

Time: 15 minutes
Group Response/Discussion

Time: 15 minutes
Task 6: Describe 5 teacher behaviors that encourage high performance.

Task 7: Describe 5 teacher behaviors that discourage high performance.

Task 8: Describe 5 instructional strategies and interactional strategies (practices) teachers can use to change failure-expectant attitudes to a success-expectant attitudes.

Time: 25 minutes
Group Response/Discussion

Time for personal reflection was provided as each group worked on the seven tasks. Group participants discussed the implications of each task, recorded their responses, described their findings, came together with the researcher, who then facilitated discussion with the total group.

The researcher's role provided systematic presentation of tasks that permitted teachers opportunities to view their attitudes and biases in an atmosphere which was relatively open and nonthreatening. Since our society is filled with symbols and images, there are times when teachers' descriptions are not compatible with their observations. The responses to tasks 1, 2, and 3 clearly illustrated this point. To one child a police officer could be someone who provides security for the community. To another child the

police officer could be someone who punishes and, therefore should be feared.

In summary the faculty agreed to meet the challenge posed by Edmonds, Lezotte, and the New York State Effective Schools Consortia. Teachers would use the same encouraging, supportive, high interactional, positive, focused, and challenging classroom strategies to teach low-performance children as they used in teaching high-performance children. The teachers were then encouraged to look for the positive impact of a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Session Four: October, 1987

Encouraged by increased achievement of students participating in the after-school program and by the effort of faculty and staff to continuously improve instructional effectiveness in Washington Rose School, a fourth workshop was held for teachers to engage in help-related exchange. The workshop focused on enabling teachers to share teaching practices and activities improving their work and encouraged teachers to work together with the principal toward school improvement.

In the workshop the following objectives were established:

1. to review effective schools practices;
2. to conduct case discussions,
3. to develop different ways for faculty to learn

how to cope with specific types of academic, behavioral, social, developmental, or problems presented by parent(s) of a child; and

4. to help teachers understand that it is acceptable to experience difficulty with children and/or parents; it is acceptable to ask colleagues for help, and it is unacceptable to either gossip about the child, or attribute the problem to the nature of the child and/or parent.

Members of the faculty and staff formed five groups as in the second and third sessions. Each group was provided a case and each member was encouraged to make a contribution to the group's cooperative effort. Group members exchanged ideas and shared feelings about their understanding of the case. They also shared their feelings about the procedures to resolve problem(s) posed by each case study. After completing the process, each group presented to the faculty, a report of strategies, activities or solutions to the case study.

Outcomes of the Fourth Session

This model of problem solving in the faculty meeting became a strategy used frequently to help faculty develop new approaches to difficult problems. In addition, group participants practice communication skills, such as discussion and feedback. As faculty practiced these skills, they also used cooperative learning skills to design, implement, modify, or evaluate a learning situation.

A total of five different children were discussed, one of which emerged from a discussion of retained children. It was therefore included in this section of the study. This problem-solving process contributed to increased faculty cohesion, freer discussion of fears and anxiety in teaching, more professional discussion of children's personal and developmental needs, and more positive teacher attitudes toward troublesome children. Teachers reported feeling very positive about using this particular forum for sharing, exchanging, planning together, or solving problems and making decisions.

Section Summary. This section included reports on the objectives and outcomes of each workshop developed for purposes of this study. By way of identifying the extent to which the faculty was effected by the progress of the program children as well as other children who were struggling to succeed at below-grade-level work, 8 teachers who were very apprehensive about advancing the children to next grade expressed surprise at the achievement of the children who were the subjects of the after-school program. In so doing, they publicly validated the progress.

Teachers have two options in approaching a child who failure-expectant or difficult. Teachers may identify problems, use problems to explain why the child fails, and accept

that failing status. Alternatively, teachers may identify problems, and use those problems as a starting point in developing cooperative instructional/learning strategies to overcome obstacles and move forward with increasing success for child and teacher alike. Teachers should see each other as valued resources and select the latter choice as the more professional and instructionally sound of the two options. The following section covers objectives and outcomes of parent/principal interactions.

Parent/Principal Interaction

The research base regarding effective schools supports an intuitive case that a strong, positive relationship between the parents of the students and the principal and teachers of the school is a correlate of an effective school, (Lezotte, 1985; Brookover et al., 1982; Comer, 1980). The principal should nurture a strong and positive parent-school relationship. Hence, the principal/parent relations component of this project resulted in assuring parents had a variety of opportunities to become involved with the school and with the formal education of their children.

In order to reflect how the relationship between the parents and the principal developed over the course of this project, this section was divided into segments that focus on

each type of parent contact that developed over the course of the academic year 1986-1987.

First Contact: October 16 and 17, 1986. The first contact with the parents acquainted them with the goals of the program and secured their permission for their children's participation in an after-school program. Letters and telephone calls made by the researcher provided notice to parents about the program. All parents gave verbal consent and then followed through by forwarding their consent forms. Parents were also invited to attend an Open School Night, scheduled for November 13.

Second Contact: November 10. Parents of the retained children had experienced years of negative interaction with the schools. The majority of parents of the children in the program had left school prior to graduation. In view of this background of school-failure-expectant behavior, the researcher extended a personal invitation asking parents to attend Open School Night on November 13th.

Third Contact: November 13. One parent came to Open School Night. Disappointed and angered at the lack of parent response, the researcher soon realized that the one parent attending Open School Night had a child achieving school success. This situation provided the researcher a key to understanding parents' needing opportunities to feel competent, involved, and proud in a school setting.

Fourth Contact: December 8. Mrs. C. confirmed that Bart completed household chores and failed to study and complete his homework. The researcher and mother discussed (a) how chores could be designated to all family members and (b) the best time for study and homework completion. Mrs. D. thanked the researcher for the suggestions who, in turn, took the opportunity to invite the parent to visit the school at any time.

Fifth Contact: December 11: Sixth-grade teachers met with the researcher and recommended parent conferences for Bart, Jewel, and Curt. Three letters are forwarded to these children's parents requesting conferences. Curt's parents responded quickly and established a December 14th meeting.

Jewel was absent seven days during the month of December. However, children and teachers witnessed Jewel walking in the community during school hours. A registered letter requested parent to contact the principal. Mrs. T. responded to the letter, January, 1987.

Sixth Contact: December 14. Curt's mother and father were an attractive couple in their twenties. When closely listened to, one heard a southern lilt in their speech. Conference discussion led by the principal/researcher described Curt's behavior as "unsatisfactory" and his school achievement "needing improvement." Mr. H. actively supported

and encouraged son's involvement in football and baseball. However, neither parent makes an intensified effort to check homework or engage Curt in lengthy conversations. Mr. H. noted that "Curt got everything and maybe he needed limits". Researcher and parents agreed that Curt would spend one hour every night engaged in activities, such as reading for pleasure and writing. Also, Mr. & Mrs. H. agreed to meet with teachers after the Christmas vacation.

Seventh Contact: January 20. Progress reports were mailed to the parents (See Appendix G). The children were visibly shaken when teachers shared progress information with them. The group did not make as much progress as they had hoped for. Mastery of some skills had been difficult. Because most parents were still not responding to the school-initiated contacts, the researcher resolved to confirm appointments with each of the three parents expected to visit the school on January 21.

Eighth Contact: January 21. Curt's cumulative records of academic performance and behavior were reviewed by his parents, sixth-grade teachers and researcher. All parties agreed that a psychological evaluation would better (a) determine his educational needs, aptitudes, and personality characteristics; and (b) insure he received appropriate educational services. Curt's parents promised to continue their support and monitor their son's school/class activities.

Bart's mother arrived at the appointed time. The researcher shared with the Mrs. D. how Bart often succeeded in disrupting class when he directed obnoxious and sometimes provocative remarks to his peers. Together we discussed different parenting skills that might be useful in helping mother manage Bart's behavior and still demonstrate her love and concern for him. Mrs. D. agreed, "to work on Bart" with the school's help.

The third and final meeting of the day was attended by Jewel's mother who looked very neglected and appeared to have been drinking. Ms. T who at 15 gave birth to Jewel, lived in Roosevelt most of her life, complained bitterly that she was overwhelmed by Jewel and life in general.

The meeting with Ms. T. was limited to a discussion of programs and services that might be helpful to her. The researcher secured Ms. T. a ride home and began work on a plan to bring this family to the attention of social services and school nurse. Just two months later, the mother withdrew her daughter from school, moved out of the community, and provided the school with no forwarding address.

Ninth Contact: January 29. The researcher was introduced to Jamie's mother as she withdrew him from school. Mrs. R. apologized for not responding to the school's letters. Wishing Jamie luck in his new school, the

researcher encouraged Jamie's mother to make time in her work schedule and work with her son's new school.

Tenth Contact: January 29. Mrs. D. was pleased to hear from the researcher as she related improvement in Bart's behavior. Mrs. D promised to "visit the school soon."

Eleventh Contact: February 14/24. Winter recess. A calendar was mailed to parents listing activities sponsored by Roosevelt's Public Library for Black History Month. Gina's foster parent accompanied four children participating in the after-school program to the library to hear African myths and legends.

Twelfth Contact: February 26. Mrs. S. informed the researcher that after school, Dina must pick up her younger brother who attends school five blocks away. Dina arranged to walk her brother home, and then returned to the after school program by 3:00 P.M. The researcher and teachers were encouraged by Dina's enthusiasm.

Thirteenth Contact: February 27. Parents received invitations to see their children in a school play. The school secretary was advised that the mother of one of the girls in the after-school program was missing. A brief check revealed the woman lived in Westbury, and had ostensibly left her daughter with a family friend.

Fourteenth Contact: March 2. Encouraging progress reports were mailed home. Dina's physical appearance had

improved dramatically, and Bart demonstrated improved self-control, concentrating on his work and interacting with his peers without being vicious, mean or nasty.

Fifteenth Contact: March 4. Five parents attended the school play. All the children in the after-school program had speaking parts. It was the first time that the group participated as a unit in any in-school activity, and the first time the parents were invited to simply applaud their children's success. This strategy proved extremely gratifying for the entire school, the special program children, the parents and researcher.

Sixteenth Contact: March 9. Jewel is withdrawn from school by her mother. When this change was reported to the group by the researcher, they nodded and immersed themselves in their work.

Seventeenth Contact: March 31. The Science/Math Fair entitled "Mad Scientists and Unknown Factors," was a big success for the school. The after-school program children helped set up the gymnasium and served as monitors/guides for the younger children and for parents. Three parents came to the fair. They beamed with pride at their children's accomplishments.

Eighteenth Contact: April 6. Curt was transferred to a self-contained setting in Washington Rose. His parents were there and thanked the researcher for providing the pro-

gram and the other assistance they required in facilitating the rapid and appropriate placement of their son.

Nineteenth Contact: April 7. Report cards were issued to students. Teachers and researcher reviewed with each child in the after-school program his/her accomplishments. By telephone, the researcher informed parents of their children's progress and briefly discussed specific short-term goals for each child. Parents and researcher planned to review these goals with the children and teachers at the Open House, on April 9.

Twentieth Contact: April 9. Three parents came to Open School Night. Teachers, parents and children reviewed goals and discussed strategies to meet those goals. Two parents called the school on April 10 apologizing for their absence on Open School Night.

Twenty-first Contact: May 13. Contacting each parent by telephone, the researcher praised their support and effort and discussed how the children had progressed in relation to the short-term goals set last month. All parents appeared to sound encouraged by the follow-up report.

Twenty-second Contact: June 11. Letters are mailed to parents inviting them to visit the school to discuss their children's final grades and recommendations for promotion with the researcher. No parent established an appointment. However, all parents expressed appreciation for the program

when the researcher called them and reviewed over the telephone the children's final grades and recommendations for promotion. Two parents expressed surprise at their ease in talking with a principal (researcher) and happy that their child was provided an opportunity to go to the sixth grade.

Parents were assured of the researcher's availability to assist them and were encouraged to visit the Junior-senior high school for help in answering questions about their child's seventh grade program. The speed with which parents assured the researcher that they knew "everything would be okay now" was troubling, since the researcher knew how much stress the family can feel when a child moved from the elementary to the secondary setting.

Chapter Summary

According to each measure of attendance, homework/classwork, achievement on standardized tests, report card grades, behavior and health, the children in the after-school program made advances in all areas of concern.

Advances on the part of the teachers were evidenced in their responses about the after-school group and about other children. The teachers' own failure-expectant behavior was modified somewhat by the success-expectant attitude firmly and consistently expressed by the principal/researcher in the workshops and during the work day.

Parents of the children involved in the program experienced what they reported as "the first nice time" they ever had in school when invited to the school play. They expressed surprise at the regularity and frequency of school contacts, and appeared to expect regular communication. The researcher received phone calls and written notes from parents who had not been in touch with the school since the children in question were first identified as low-achievers and difficult to cope with in school. The final chapter of this study offers both conclusions and recommendations for further study regarding the education of failure-expectant elementary school children.

C H A P T E R V

MAJOR FINDINGS, ASSESSMENTS OF SCHOOL-BASED PROJECT, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

This study documented the design, implementation and assessment of a focused staff development and student-centered instructional support program organized to help low-income, low-achieving Black children develop habits, attitudes, and skills necessary for success in school. The project applied research findings and its usefulness in initiating activities to empower failure-expectant children to achieve success in the school system. Included in the school improvement project were four school-based inservice teacher training sessions providing staff with information and activities to increase their awareness, practice skills, share ideas and resources and implement processes and methods on meeting the needs of failure-expectant students.

This voluntary and unfunded after-school program produced substantive advances in the demonstrated ability of failure-expectant children to achieve. Redefinition and reorganization of available resources changed how teachers and low-income, failure-expectant Black children related to each other. Viewing change as a process (Sarason) rather than a product, school improvement activities throughout the project are associated with putting together people, things and ideas

to create an environment that succeeds with low-achieving Black students. Teacher participation in inservice workshops, face to face discussions with the principal, involvement in the instructional process by the principal and parent outreach provided the means for achieving goals and contributed to improvement of practices, approaches and services to failure-expectant children.

The dissertation has described the design and implementation of an after-school program for students who had been retained. The study sought organizational adjustments and practical applications of available school-based resources in assessing and meeting the needs of this class of student. The conclusions have been organized around each of the eight research questions that guided the study. These answers should be interpreted in light of the review of significant studies that have clarified the identified characteristic features of successful staff development and school improvement efforts.

Response to Research Question 1

Does an after-school instructional support program help children at risk of retention develop better attendance habits?

All of the children enrolled in the study had attendance problems in the first five weeks of the academic year 1986-1987, when they were retained in the fifth grade.

Most of the participants in the after-school program did not present serious attendance problems unless their families were in the process of relocating either within or outside of the school district. Carla gradually overcame her tendency to arrive late in each successive quarter, as did Alice, whose tendencies were cut in half from the second quarter to the third. Dina also improved in attendance as the program progressed. At the close of the year, Carla and Alice had improved, but needed greater progress.

While these six children were enrolled in their after-school instructional support program, those who presented attendance problems demonstrated progress in that area. All children who completed the program attended the after-school sessions regularly.

Response to Research Question 2

How can an after-school instructional support program help children at risk of retention to develop better homework habits?

As recorded in grade books of fifth grade teachers, all of the children enrolled in the program in the academic year 1986-87 had very poor homework and classwork habits. Two children out of six brought notebooks, textbooks and writing tools to school on a regular basis. The after-school program

helped students focus attention on what materials and tools are needed to organize their school-based study-place and solve a particular problem. In addition to learning organizational skills, students received guided opportunities to practice skills in homework contexts and receive feedback during this practice to correct their own performance of the skill. As noted on their report cards, all but one of the children in the program showed significant gains in developing better homework habits while they were attending the after-school program. This outcome suggests that an after-school instructional program helped students become consciously aware of what they were doing, why they were doing it, how they were doing and helped students develop more effective repertory of skills to get along with or even achieve success.

Response to Research Question 3

How can an after-school instructional support program help children at risk of retention earn better grades than had been previously earned in the same content areas?

The children enrolled in this after-school program were failing virtually every subject as of the first quarter of the academic year 1986-87. Two persistent factors - poor cognitive abilities and lack of an active and cohesive approach to problem-solving differentiated the learning in-

volvement of failure-expectant students from that of their more successful peers. Focusing on students rather than on a specialized academic discipline, allowed the researcher to adapt curriculum to address individual basic skills needs in the after-school support program.

With a team effort, sixth grade teachers and researcher shared information about students, planned their weekly activities, worked together coordinating class and homework assignments, provided ongoing opportunities to cross-reference learning among disciplines and connected concrete examples from one subject to another with increasing rigor into the learning experience. Such information allowed for better planning of lessons, more purposeful grouping for instruction and distribution of school resources to students participating in the after-school program. The after-school program succeeded to the extent that students' grades improved substantially over the course of the 8 months that the program was in effect; helped students to think of abilities as skills that can be learned and supported students' feelings of competence.

Response to Research Question 4

How can an after-school instructional support program for children at risk of retention and including parent-principal contact regarding student achievement help parents previously

neutral about the school become more actively involved in supporting positive educational goals for the child?

Parents of the children enrolled in the after-school program had virtually never visited the school except to enroll or withdraw their children. If they attended a parent-teacher conference, it concerned some specific difficulty their child had in school. They had never been urged to come to the school to celebrate or praise an accomplishment of their son or daughter. Since the majority of parents were early school leavers, the researcher believed that the parents' ambivalence, uncertainties and low expectations for their children may be in part due to their own disappointing experiences in school and in part due to their perceptions of their children realistically succeeding in a racist American society. Lacking educational tradition and little understanding of the requirements necessary for academic success, parents learned to avoid the school.

During the months when the program was operative, the parents of the children involved in the after-school group became more actively involved in supporting school-related activities. In the course of informal conversations, parents reported feeling proud of the achievement made by their children.

Some parents supported the school and program by assuring that their children were in school on time, and that they were prepared, with their homework completed and their books and supplies in place. Two parents applied for library cards for their children. As one parent observed, "It is easier to get the kids to do the right thing [in school] when you think there's some hope for them."

This program was about hope and enabling children, teachers and parents to develop a shared view of the future, with a clearer image of children in productive positions within their families, their communities, and the society as a whole. There is evidence to support the observation that parents of the students enrolled in the program developed more positive, education-oriented attitudes and behaviors that were reflected in their support of school efforts to help children acquire needed skills, habits and knowledge.

One example of this improved attitude was the ease with which the researcher/principal was successful in contacting parents of children when there was a school-related issue that required school-parent dialogue. Prior to the program development, parents of five of the nine children who were failing in school were evasive and avoided any contact with the school. Even a registered letter was unsuccessful in eliciting response from the majority of these particular parents.

Following the program's inception, it was much easier to achieve and maintain contact with parents and conduct cooperative conversation. Parents even initiated contact in instances where they required information, ideas, referral for non educational services or help, and someone to talk with. This involvement had not been consistently carried over into the seventh grade, where one parent (Carla's mother) had become openly hostile and withheld her child from school. Bart's mother, on the other hand, had been a good resource for sharing the goals and objectives of the school.

Perhaps the termination of the majority of parent responsiveness or outreach to school was attributable to students graduating from sixth to seventh grade and entering a new school building. Transition to seventh grade is often traumatic as students and families adjust to new buildings with its own rules, a complex class schedule, more bureaucratic leadership, advanced content-related work and the complex social dynamics of adolescents.

Although there were gains made in enhancing parent-school relations for the duration of the after-school program, it was not unexpected that parents could experience difficulty in internalizing the new school-support attitudes desirable to help children maintain skills, habits, and knowledge required for success.

Response to Research Question 5

How can a series of four inservice seminars targeted at helping teachers understand and raise expectations of failure-expectant children modify the failure or success expectations those teachers have of those children?

All students who were enrolled in the after-school program were also enrolled in the classes of teachers who knew that the children had been recommended for retention in the previous grade, and that the principal of the school made the decision to promote these students. Significant success was experienced by the students when teachers became more positive in their attitudes toward teaching and expressing personal responsibility for their students.

Teacher responses on student evaluation sheets, in individual conferences, and in workshop all suggested that they used strategies that reflected their growing conviction that their own instructional practices were significantly related to the achievement of their students, regardless of the socio-economic, racial, ethnic, or linguistic background of the child, and regardless of the child's age, sex, weight or physical attractiveness. But, even when teachers held similar philosophies, they often created quite different environments for their students. Teachers had goals and expectations for what they wanted their students to be what

they wanted their students to learn, what was important in their students' behavior and how a classroom should operate. Thus, teachers may generalize their perceptions and assumed that students' school behavior represented the total child.

Initially, one sixth grade teacher outwardly expressed concern ("oh, no, not that child") while another teacher complained that "these children (retainees) will lower the homeroom's overall average on standardized tests". When the principal/researcher provided these teachers opportunities to openly discuss apprehensions or current experiences and perspectives, they were less defensive about their beliefs, habits and styles of teaching. Moreover, teachers understood that they had an impact on the working of the after-school instructional support program and on the school as a whole.

Framing the problem in terms of both students and teachers broadened the focus from deficits in learners alone to solutions in which teachers and principal assumed greater responsibility for changing conditions of the schooling experience contributing to failure and unsatisfactory performance of poor and minority children. Staff development played a key role by bringing teachers together and structuring situations where teaching beliefs or practices were seriously questioned or changed.

The staff development component focused on (a) actively engaging teachers in using classroom practices to effect change in student learning outcomes, and (b) encouraging teachers to convert the power of creating self-fulfilling negative prophecies into self-fulfilling positive prophecies. Staff development was organized to help teachers understand that change in their beliefs and attitudes is contingent upon evidence of change in learning outcomes of students. Teachers learned to change the "I don't know" response of a child into "maybe I do know" response that can be offered only if the teacher sets the climate of accepting all ideas as valid, and all children as worthwhile.

A significant portion of training and development process centered on teachers exploring their personal feelings toward children presenting faculty with more deficits than strengths. Workshops sessions emphasized that teachers could approach all children with high expectations for achievement, rather than approaching some children as failures from the start. In addition, workshop sessions provided teachers opportunities to meet with one another and with the principal to discuss their experiences, share perspectives, seek solutions to common problems, analyze the effects of instructional practices on students, and celebrate students' successes.

The progress made by the students in the after-school program suggested that the teachers approached these children as capable learners who could attain and demonstrate mastery of grade level materials, despite the recommendation for the students' retention in the previous grade. The after-school program played a small part in the children's education. The dynamics between the classroom teacher and students was an essential factor in the success of the program. In informal contacts, teachers themselves observed how students blossomed when highly positive expectations for learning, high levels of student participation, management of time, instructional preparation and feedback and monitoring were practiced.

Given the complex nature of group processes in planned school improvement no factor can be singled out as cause or effect. Emerging in the formulation of the research design is the interactive effect involving the following variables:

1. students' promotion to sixth grade;
2. students' involvement in the after-school program;
3. teacher participation in staff development workshops;
4. principal's dual roles;
5. persistent outreach to parents.

The interactive nature of these variables makes it impossible to ascertain the degree to which student participation in the after-school program impacted on the achievement, grades, behavior, or attendance of those children.

The primary goal was to use all possible strategies and avenues for support in order to empower these children and staff to become more success-expectant. The program was designed to offer children, teachers and parents an opportunity to see the school as an agency (a) serving the needs of poor, Black children, (b) devoted to enabling children to exceed, rather than duplicate the limited educational levels of their parents, and (c) organized to respond to the concerns of parents. Most of all, the program was organized to offer failure-expectant children, parents and teachers alike a different perspective of the role of the school in a low-income, Black community. To that end, evidence supports the effectiveness of the interactive strategy. It is impossible, however, to determine the degree to which the after-school program was a deciding factor in the improvement evidenced by the children, their parents and the faculty.

In reviewing the procedures and outcomes of this study, it is evident that there were problems that require re-thinking and continued study. As the researcher/principal, strong recommendations for further study would include, (a) the way children recommended for retention respond to

promotion combined with staff training and development, and (b) skills training for children who have not yet demonstrated the skills, attitudes and habits essential to acquire knowledge in the formal school setting, and (c) that other individuals with roles other than that of principal conduct such study, in order to determine whether the impact of the interactive model that emerged here is related to the model, or to the fact that the principal of the school developed and administered the program.

Status as researcher/building principal could have impacted on the way the program was received by the faculty, students and parents. No matter how faculty initially reacted they at least give the appearance of expressing beliefs consistent with those effective schools practices identified in the workshops.

Conducting the workshops heightened the researcher/principal's awareness to some teachers lack of conviction that all children can learn and that their expectations affected students' failure or success. There was no overt challenge to those teachers who demonstrated any reluctance in workshops. Rather, the researcher/principal accepted teachers initial, minimal cooperation with the understanding that it is virtually impossible to maintain firmly an opinion when you consistently verbalize and practice the contrary. The cognitive dissonance that develops as a result of hold-

ing one opinion and voicing or practicing another leads to movement on the part of the individual who might have initially rejected an idea or concept (Haynes, 1982).

Also, my role as principal affected the way parents perceived the program. At first, they seemed alarmed by being contacted by the principal and I believe it contributed to some avoidance and anxiety on the part of the parents. A non-administrator might have encountered less resistance and avoidance from parents but much would depend on the general pattern of community-school relationships.

However, once the original anxiety and avoidance was overcome, many of the parents enjoyed having what they knew to be a special relationship with the principal, since their children were in the only special program that the researcher/principal was directly responsible for conducting.

When parents came to school to see their children perform in a school play or when I spent time with each of them alone, the parents reported their positive feelings about the school. Two parents pointed out that the only time they had ever seen their principals was when they were suspended from school.

As an educator, this study helped increase the understanding that school people must provide failure-expectant children the opportunities to take positive risks in a

school setting, or watch them make negative choices and affirmed that even resistant teachers and parents can be empowered to overcome the pull of the negative self-fulfilling prophecy, and help all children learn.

If one voluntary and unfunded after-school program can produce substantive advances in the demonstrated ability of failure-expectant children to achieve, the implications are clear: with leadership toward a clearly defined mission, the school community of Roosevelt can generate levels of academic attainment expected only in higher-income White communities; that Roosevelt can produce an educated and education-oriented population of talented Black men and women with the skills, knowledge and confidence they need in order to achieve.

Future Implications

History tells us that public education did not serve or did not figure in a significant way to include growing numbers of poor and minority children. For more than 200 years, racial, social and economic discrimination embedded in the routine practices of America's schools, industries and communities have persistently denied poor children - often nonwhite and from other cultures - equal education, equal opportunity or equal access.

Therefore, a larger, present day issue is that the basic design of American schools have trapped teachers,

administrators and growing populations of poor and minority children in a web of shared failure. As we move toward the 21st century, there is strong reason to address the question: Will America renew its commitment to offer educational excellence and equity to all children.

Educators have a strong knowledge base from the effective schools research and related studies on teaching and learning. However, no fixed methods or standard blueprints exist as yet to explain how to put together the right combination of people, things and ideas to create a particular setting that succeeds in meeting all the diverse needs presented by poor and minority children with a history of limited academic achievement. All that is available are the common markers or characteristics of certain schools, programs and classrooms that appear in research literature and coincide with the practitioner's knowledge, judgment, experience and understanding about what works with failure-expectant students.

Schools must view change as a process rather than as a product while meeting challenges of shaping and preparing all students for not only a life of work, but also for a sense of personal worth. Schools must (a) fundamentally alter programs, school size, teacher organization, scheduling and relationships between student and teachers (b) emphasize effective teaching practices and use of a combi-

nation of instructional strategies that lead to the empowerment of students (c) provide alternative approaches to retention, suspension, sorting and tracking practices (d) incorporate students' culture into school routines and curriculum (e) empower teachers by allowing them to participate fully in decision-making involving student learning and school climate (f) change teaching behaviors and attitudes through formal staff development programs and (g) collaborate with parents and community-based organizations.

Unaided by state and district policy makers, many teachers and principals have opened windows of opportunity and changed the lives of poor, failure-expectant children. Based upon the results of a staff development and after-school instructional support program in an elementary school in this study, a school district can and must adopt school-centered policies, practices and experiences that reclaim its most vulnerable population.

Epilogue

Your world is as big as you make it.
I know, for I used to abide
In the narrowest corner nest in a corner
My wings pressing close to my side.

But I sighted the distant horizon
Where the sky line encircled the sea
And I throbbed with a burning desire
To travel this immensity.

I battered the cordons around me
And cradled my wings on the breeze
Then soared to the uttermost reaches
With rapture, with power, with ease!

(From Georgia Douglas Johnson's "Your World")

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM
FOR STUDENTS PARTICIPATING
IN THE AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

177

Roosevelt Union Free School District
Washington Rose Elementary School
Washington and Rose Avenues
Roosevelt, New York 11575

September, 1986

Dear

As the principal of Washington Rose School, I know that we have been in touch with each other from time to time. This time, I am asking for your permission to allow me to include _____ in a special program that I have developed as part of my studies to earn a doctoral degree in education.

The purpose of the program is to help children who have special academic needs, so that they can progress to the next grade and continue to learn how to achieve. The program will be held for one and one-half hours per day Monday through Thursday from 2:30Pm to 4:00PM. During that period of time, I will be helping your child do homework, improve study skills and develop the ability to use community resources such as the library, bank, health center and retail stores.

My goal is to see how an after school program focusing on a child's skills, habits and attitudes about school and community can affect that child's record of school achievement.

Your child will not be given any special tests or interviews in order to qualify for this special program. He/She has been chosen because h/she has been retained, has had difficulty with academic tasks, and because h/she has the potential to succeed. I will evaluate the success of the after school program on the basis of the grades earned by the children in the program. I will also be working with content teachers to inquire about assignments, test scores, attendance and class participation to develop and implement ways to help children succeed in the program. If the program helps the children improve academically, then it will be considered successful, and may be offered again next year.

I will be writing a dissertation about the after school program. That written work will be available at the school if you are interested in reading it. Although I will write about what took place in the after school program, I will not use your name or the name of your child at any time. In order to identify different children in the paper I will use pseudonyms. Whenever I include any written or verbal comment or work done by your child I will remove anything that could indicate h/her identity. In this way I will be able to protect your child's privacy.

Naturally, I understand that it may be difficult for you to allow _____ to stay after school Monday through Thursday. If there are no problems with scheduling or transportation, I hope you will let me try to help you solve those problems.

It is important for you to know that _____ does not have to participate. If you agree, and h/she agrees, then h/she will be included. You or h/she can end h/her participation in the program at any time. He/She is not obligated to stay through the program at any time. H/She is not obligated to stay through to the end just because h/she agrees to participate in the beginning. You or h/she are free to withdraw consent for me to use his/her papers or comments in my written work, if you tell me before the program is ended.

If anything about the program content or schedule is expected to change I will give you at least one week notice. If your schedule changes or _____ has other responsibilities that cause h/her to miss one or more sessions, I am sure you will let me know.

When you sign this form you will be assuring me that you will not make any financial claims on me for using the material gathered in the after school program.

Sincerely

Barbara R. Williams
Principal

I, _____, have read the above statement and agree to allow my child _____ to participate in the after school program under the conditions stated above.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Signature of Researcher

APPENDIX B

INVITATION TO PARENTS
TO ATTEND ORIENTATION ON
NOVEMBER 13, 1986

Washington Rose School
Roosevelt, New York 11575

November 7, 1986

Dear

In Washington Rose Elementary School a project has been developed to improve achievement of fifth grade students who have been retained.

Effective Friday, October 17, 1986 your son/daughter _____ was transferred from a fifth grade class to a new grouping in sixth grade. Specific assignments and projects will be designed to ensure that your child can be successful in learning the skills, habits and attitudes necessary for positive academic achievement. Your child will proceed through each subject as rapidly or as slowly as his/her ability permits.

An after school program, Monday through Thursday for one and one-half hours each day will provide additional instructional support and activities that will directly help your son/daughter.

In order to learn about the after school program's procedures and services, I have planned an evening ORIENTATION. I hope that you can join me in the school's auditorium on THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1986 AT 7:30PM. During the orientation you will have an opportunity to have your questions answered. If you are unable to attend this meeting, please call the school to arrange for a new date and time - 546-2463.

Your cooperation is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Barbara R. Williams
Principal

Dear Mrs. Williams:

I have read this letter and _____ will _____ will not attend this orientation.

Parent/Guardian

APPENDIX C
STUDENT DATA SHEET

Washington Rose School
Roosevelt, New York 11575

STUDENT DATA SHEET

Name: _____ Parent/Guardian _____
Address: _____
DOB _____ Sex _____

I. Parents and Home Experience

II. School History (Student)

III. Medical History (Health Issues)

IV. Student's Perceptions of School

V. School Personnel Perceptions of Student

VI. Classroom Observations of Student

VII. Discussion

APPENDIX D

INTERIM PROGRESS REPORT FOR
PARTICIPANTS IN THE
AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

Washington Rose School
Roosevelt, New York 11575

I N T E R I M R E P O R T

Student's Name _____
Teacher _____

Date _____
Marking Period _____
Abs _____ Late _____

This report offers an opportunity for better understanding of your child's current progress. Please study the comments below. If you wish to discuss this report, please call the Principal's Office, 378-7302. We will be happy to arrange a conference for you with the teacher.

Explanation of Grading System

S = Satisfactory NI = Needs Improvement U = Unsatisfactory

	S	NI	U
I. Attitudes and Interests in Learning			
1. Seems motivated	_____	_____	_____
2. Organizes work	_____	_____	_____
3. Works independently	_____	_____	_____
4. Needs encouragement	_____	_____	_____
5. Accepts changes in classroom routine	_____	_____	_____
6. Sets goals	_____	_____	_____
7. Ignores distraction	_____	_____	_____
8. Makes a thoughtful decision/choice	_____	_____	_____
9. Deals with group pressure	_____	_____	_____
10. Accepts responsibility for his/her behavior	_____	_____	_____
II. Work/Study Habits			
1. Listens carefully	_____	_____	_____
2. Asks for help	_____	_____	_____

		S	NI	U
3.	Brings materials to class	_____	_____	_____
4.	Follows instructions	_____	_____	_____
5.	Completes homework assignments	_____	_____	_____
6.	Completes class assignments	_____	_____	_____
7.	Contributes to discussion	_____	_____	_____
8.	Shares	_____	_____	_____
9.	Expresses feelings in acceptable ways	_____	_____	_____
10.	Shows understanding of another's feelings (tolerance)	_____	_____	_____
11.	Uses self-control	_____	_____	_____
12.	Respects others	_____	_____	_____
III.	Skills	S	NI	U
1.	Reading			
	Vocabulary	_____	_____	_____
	Word Analysis	_____	_____	_____
	Comprehension	_____	_____	_____
2.	Language Arts			
	Expression	_____	_____	_____
	Mechanics	_____	_____	_____
	Composition	_____	_____	_____
	Spelling	_____	_____	_____
3.	Mathematics			
	Computation	_____	_____	_____
	Concepts	_____	_____	_____
	Applications and Word Problems	_____	_____	_____
4.	Social Studies			
	Vocabulary	_____	_____	_____
	Concepts	_____	_____	_____
	Projects	_____	_____	_____

		S	NI	U
5. Science	Vocabulary	_____	_____	_____
	Concepts	_____	_____	_____
	Projects	_____	_____	_____
6. Minor Subjects	Art	_____	_____	_____
	Library	_____	_____	_____
	Phy. Ed.	_____	_____	_____
	Computer	_____	_____	_____

Teacher Comments: _____

Recommendations (Overall Performance)

- Continued good progress Improved preparation/study
 Improve attendance Improve attitude

 More serious approach to studies
 Increase class participation
 Improve test scores

APPENDIX F

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING
WORKSHOP III AND IV
TEACHER EVALUATION

Washington Rose School
Roosevelt, New York

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING
WORKSHOP I - October, 1986

Please evaluate today's session in terms of:

	Poor	Fair	Very Good	Excellent
1. Clear Purpose of Workshop	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Clarity of Presentation	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. There was a balance in the presentation between theory and application	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Presentation was well-prepared	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Usefulness of information, ideas and activities	_____	_____	_____	_____

Please include comments or suggestions. Was the information presented/shared today of any practical value to you? Thank you.

Name (Optional)

Washington Rose School
Roosevelt, New York

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING
WORKSHOP II - February, 1987

Please evaluate today's session in terms of:

	Poor	Fair	Very Good	Excellent
1. Clear Purpose of Workshop	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Clarity of Presentation	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. There was a balance in the presentation between theory and application	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Presentation was well-prepared	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Usefulness of information, ideas and activities	_____	_____	_____	_____

Please include comments or suggestions. Was the information presented/shared today of any practical value to you? Thank you.

Name (Optional)

APPENDIX E

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING
WORKSHOP I AND II
TEACHER EVALUATION

Washington Rose School
Roosevelt, New York

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING
WORKSHOP III - April, 1987

Please evaluate today's session in terms of processing, skill development and feedback:

My Team:

	strongly agree	5	4	3	2	1	strongly disagree
1. Had clear goals		5	4	3	2	1	
2. Made progress toward the goals		5	4	3	2	1	
3. Stayed on task		5	4	3	2	1	
4. Made decisions based on views of all		5	4	3	2	1	

My colleagues:

1. Listened well to each other	5	4	3	2	1
2. Helped each other by asking useful suggestions	5	4	3	2	1
3. Accepted criticisms and exchanged suggestions for the improvement of work/school program	5	4	3	2	1
4. All participated	5	4	3	2	1

Please include comments or suggestions. Was the information presented/shared today of any practical value to you? Thank you.

Name (Optional)

Washington Rose School
Roosevelt, New York

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING
WORKSHOP IV - October, 1987

Please evaluate today's session in terms of processing, skill development and feedback:

My Team:

	strongly agree	5	4	3	2	1	strongly disagree
1. Had clear goals		5	4	3	2	1	
2. Made progress toward the goals		5	4	3	2	1	
3. Stayed on task		5	4	3	2	1	
4. Made decisions based on views of all		5	4	3	2	1	

My colleagues:

1. Listened well to each other		5	4	3	2	1	
2. Helped each other by asking useful suggestions		5	4	3	2	1	
3. Accepted criticisms and exchanged suggestions for the improvement of work/school program		5	4	3	2	1	
4. All participated		5	4	3	2	1	

Please include comments or suggestions. Was the information presented/shared today of any practical value to you? Thank you.

Name (Optional)

APPENDIX G

PROGRESS REPORT FOR
PARTICIPANTS IN THE
AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

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