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The Impact of Parental Military Status on the Achievement, Attendance, and Attitudes of Fourth Grade Students

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The Impact of Parental Military Status on the Achievement, Attendance, and Attitudes of

Fourth Grade Students

By

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Abstract

THE IMPACT OF PARENTAL MILITARY STATUS ON THE ACHIEVEMENT,

ATTENDANCE, AND ATTITUDES OF

FOURTH GRADE STUDENTS

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Military service men and women provide security and services both locally and globally. These services sometimes require deployment and separations of active duty military personnel away from their families. These separations and the subsequent stresses could be substantial in the lives of younger children. Not only can these students be affected emotionally, but the achievement, attendance, and attitudes of these fourth grade students in this study are compared to fourth grade nonmilitary students to evaluate the differences between the two groups. How does the fourth grade military student group measure up to their counterpart?

To address this question, the researcher analyzed three areas of data for fourth grade students. First is achievement, the Terra Nova Normal Curve Equivalence Scores for reading, language, and math of students with an active duty parent and compared to the congruent test scores for nonmilitary fourth grade students. The next factor, the attendance rates for fourth grade students were compared to those of nonmilitary students to determine if there is a significant difference. Finally, the social skills ratings from report cards of these two groups were analyzed to determine if there is a significant difference between the military and nonmilitary students. (This dissertation investigates

one approach to measuring the differences in these three areas to assess the effects of

mobility, family adaptation, and resilience of younger children.)

Acknowledgements

Today is one of many milestones of joy in my life. It is so memorable because today I write the last words of a dissertation that has dominated my thinking for the last few years. This day is overshadowed by far though, by the day I met Christ and began a wonderfully challenging adventure with Him. The next overshadowing is cast by the day I married my wonderful husband. Hook, you have been the best cheerleader and faithful husband any wife could imagine. For over 31 years, you have believed in me as well as my educational endeavors, as much as I have. For that reason, I plan to spend the rest of my life demonstrating to you and to God how thankful I am. My wonderful children were a major motivator for this achievement. I want desperately for Serita, Matthew, and Grace to know what is possible when you work hard, dream big, and rely on God's help. My friends and family members have shown immeasurable grace as I've focused on this endeavor. I am forever grateful for your understanding and patience. I love you all dearly and because of you, I am acutely aware of just how blessed I am.

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Many people had a part in the completion of this dissertation, which makes this a joint project and corporate achievement. This endeavor proves the validity of an African proverb: Together, all of us can achieve more than any of us separately.

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Chapter One

Introduction

The study district for this research project is home to a United States Air Force Base in the mid-west. In 1896, this district began enrolling its first students. Its first clients came from Army families stationed nearby. This began a long term relationship between the military and the learning community in the study district. From the very beginning, military students were a priority to educate for this study district.

Since those humble beginnings, much has changed in the study district and the community as well. This study described fourth grade student data concerning varied components related to the military student in fourth grade compared to the nonmilitary student in fourth grade. One aspect that inspired this study is the tremendous growth of the school district since 1896. Another consideration was the restructuring (BRAC) of the mission and assignments of the military since 1991. Lastly, the impact of military lifestyle and mobility relating to academic and social achievement of fourth graders in this district are to be examined. Data was analyzed to determine the status, impact, and projections concerning the military student in this district. This research provided indicators to determine current status and necessary support to maintain or improve achievement for this population.

Purpose of the Study

Currently, the available research is limited which provides data pertaining to students of the armed forces. This national population, of 1.2 million, is significant enough to warrant study. This data assists in determining the current personal status and academic welfare of these military students. Historically, with limited data and research,

it was difficult to measure the effects of military life on the children involved. Thus, there are two critical questions to pose at this point. The first, how are military students performing in public schools? The second question, asks what is education's response to this acquired data? The results of this study support current research concerning the well being of military students in public schools. The data also confirm the effectiveness of instructional strategies in this research group.

Constitutionally, every student has the right to a quality education, regardless of his needs or location. The Department of Defense (DOD) reminds educators that this quality education must include the military student (DOD, 2008). The children of this mobile population deserve attention to their special needs and lifestyle as much as the conventional civilian student.

Dramatic changes have transpired in this district since 1991. Each year, including the 9-11 tragedy, increasing challenges have arisen that influence this military community and student population alike. The educators within this small mid-western school community are acutely aware of the unique components of military life that impact their students.

One particular dramatic change took place in 1991. The DOD routinely examines, through the BRAC process, existing military missions and installations overseas and in the United States. The DOD seeks ways to increase military efficiency and capture cost savings. The Strategic Air Command in this small community morphed into a more streamlined STRATCOM. Many military families and learning communities are affected by this realignment globally and domestically. This realignment resulted in community instability, financial losses (impact aid) and educational challenges. These

changes required educators to address military student needs while continuing to improve the status of this unique group (DOD, 2008).

This special grouping of military students is quite substantial. The DOD reports over 1.2 military children in the United States and abroad. Public and private schools educate over 80,000 military students that are not enrolled in DOD schools. Children in DOD schools are educated directly on the military installation (DOD, 2008). Educators are both entrusted and challenged to prepare these students for a successful future in spite of their mobility, family instability, and learning readiness.

This BRAC process and its subsequent assessments are pivotal for the education of military students. In 1946, the Department of Defense established the DODDS (Department of Defense Dependents Schools), for overseas bases to educate and train students. This agency's purpose originally was to organize schools overseas for military dependents. This organization developed slowly over the next decade into the DODEA (Department of Defense Education Activity). This group was recommissioned to organize, manage, and direct the education of more than 84,000 eligible DOD members and civilian children in 194 schools. Today, the DODEA operates 200 (pre-K through grade 12) schools in 15 districts, 12 foreign countries, 8 states (Guam and Puerto Rico). DODEA employs approximately 8,785 teachers and serves 87,000 students (DOD, 2003). This entity was established to ensure quality education while maintaining the morale, mission, community connectedness, and homeland security for all.

Since military students will not all be educated in DOD schools, educators of military students must adjust their instruction to the needs of this unique population. Teachers spend enormous amounts of time that focus on instruction for students. The

achievement of the military student requires knowledge, awareness, and cultural engagement beyond a teacher's "normal realm" of focus. Mike Schmoker espouses instruction as the number one factor of achievement. Schmoker identified the inefficiency and mediocrity of instruction as "the buffer". This buffer of inefficiency could easily be averted when educators utilize the learning community and alleviate the isolation which encourages the buffer to continue (Schmoker, 2006). Continuing instruction that does not meet the specific needs of students is an injustice to our educational system and our clients as well. This may be especially true for military families. Educators that are unaware of the unusual factors affecting military life may not realize the highest degree of achievement possible for the military student.

Educators that understand the life, mission, and transitions of the military child will be able to better educate those students. Teachers may develop specialized strategies through local educational agencies or staff development in military communities to assist military students more effectively (DOD, 1994).

Retention, not just instruction, is a critical issue when handling students of mobility. Schmoker states as well that it is the responsibility of educators to make the curriculum "stick". He lists ways to instruct students so that more material is learned and retained as well. The mobile, parentless, disconnected military student requires an instructor able to make the curriculum relevant and applicable. For this content retention to take place, instructors must be aware of the special needs of these students to make the curricular content "stick" (Schmoker, 2006).

Marzano believes that a successful student needs positive exchanges with staff members to overcome some of these challenges (Marzano, 2006). This may strongly

affect children of military families that repeatedly lose friends and family connections.

These students often realize academic or social gaps in their lives. One educational

strategy to support these deficits in mobile, disconnected students is to intentionally build

up the individual value of each student. Marzano's three pluses and a wish model

provides a practical strategy that ensures a more positive outcome for staff and students.

This model requires that three positive statements are shared with the learner before a

corrective (positive format) statement is shared for improvement. This strategy may be

implemented in social and academic skills alike. These exchanges may be educational or

personal in nature depending upon the needs of the individual student (Marzano, 2006).

Educators that possess an awareness of the special needs of military students are capable

to provide a more positive learning environment for steady improvement.

An additional method of providing assistance to military students supported by

Marzano's research involves teacher leadership. Marzano explains that educators

understanding their leadership roles may assist (military) students to become increasingly

stable students and citizens by modeling appropriate behavior while engaging the

students beyond the classroom content material (Marzano, 2006) .

Wood, Halfon, Scarlata, Newacheck, & Nessim, (1993) deem it critical for

educators to identify the similarities and differences in their students. Military students

possess unique attributes that demand special consideration by instructors. These special

attributes may include worldwide and multicultural exposure, a history of extensive

travel, deeper awareness of global issues, and many may speak more than one language.

Military students need educators that value these differences.

Providing practical academic feedback and personal recognition from staff members is also crucial for optimal learning. Military students may not receive enough positive feedback in the absence of a parent and loss of peer groups. Sensitive educators provide this to their students to improve their social, academic, and achievement results (Chartrand, Frank, White, & Shope, 2008).

This study district currently has practices in place to assist all students, especially those connected to the military. First, teachers are encouraged to assist mobile students by providing stabilized curriculum. In the study district, the curriculum is paced and scheduled throughout the year. The main subject areas are taught systematically to ensure a smoother transition for families that must move, even within the district, to another school because of housing transitions. This allows students to shift schools without realizing significant loss of core skills and achievement.

Another strategy employed in the study district is the use of preassessments. Preassessments allow students to demonstrate their current knowledge base in content areas. Instructional time is maximized when teachers are aware of what students know before planning instructional activities for most subject areas. This practice also limits time teaching what students are familiar with already. Preassessments facilitate differentiation necessary for students of mobility.

A different practice in the study district which encourages all students, including military students to grow, is the operation of after school programs. These programs are based on DuFore's experiences as an educator and researcher. DuFore, DuFore, Eaker, Karhanek, (2004) emphasizes that after school clubs in the elementary buildings could reinforce all students' self-esteem, address their academic needs, and build personal

community and social connections that diminish due to military transfers. Military students in this district can attend an after school program with other military students. Teachers relay information to the after school club sponsors that will guide their activities while participating in the club. The sponsors and volunteers assist the practice of necessary skills while encouraging the positive well-being of these students.

An additional practice in this study school is the use of peer recognition certificates. This practice empowers students to select fellow classmates to receive Firebird Flame certificates, special lunches with the principal, school wide recognition, and prizes for making positive choices at school. This peer recognition empowers students to share positive feedback and motivation with other students. It also offers positive peer pressure for students that may not "buy in" to the process with adult staff only because it is the right thing to do (Marzano, 2006).

Military readiness and service is a fundamental element of American history, freedom, and life. The military is a prominent part of mobile groups, but is not the only group influenced by mobility. There are other subgroups and cultures that lend themselves to common factors as the military. Clergy, migrant workers, and construction workers are groups having factors that affect the lifestyle, education, and the well-being of their families. These factors include changes in family structure, mobility, and varying expectations and misconceptions from other groups. Because of the nature of the services these groups provide, high mobility rates are often expected. Mobility can be defined as the movement of individuals or families by choice or by force. Mobility is a not merely a geographical factor, it is an educational factor. The mobility rate in the United Sates has doubled that of Great Britain and Germany collectively (Wood, et al.,

1993). Military status, occupation opportunities, and family structure are some of the changes that force relocation of families. These changes in family composition, physical and geographical affect the educational process and outcomes of mobile student learners including students of military families (Pribesh & Downey, 1999). Educational circles must demonstrate awareness of the needs of the military family. Instruction does not always consider military status as a factor in instructional planning. Mobility rates, including military mobility, are increasing due to job advancement, distressed family situations, and military conflict. An estimation of approximately six million children between the ages of 5 and 13 will change their residences each year (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 2000).

Because of these Census Bureau indications, educators must be aware that students will likely move or have significant family difficulty or transitions during their educational career. These transitions may require adaptations enabling children to meet the challenges that accompany these military mobility factors in an educational setting. Boushey & Moser (2006)) believe that students may not be able to focus on tasks at hand because of greater personal concerns such as poverty, war, and mobility. The military status and placement of armed forces members can impact military student's ability to succeed.

This exploratory research seeks to determine if there are significant differences between fourth grade military and nonmilitary students both academically and socially. When significant differences are found, adjustments are necessary to accommodate these student needs. Strategies might include curricular preassessments, pacing changes, expectation adjustments, one-on-one or small group sessions with counselors, follow up

practices to document and determine progress of the students, and intentional relationship building activities between new students and teachers. Special services such as a district case worker may also be warranted to provide necessary services for the student and family affected by military status.

The uncertainties and stress of the military lifestyle that affect family structure changes, may also interrupt life events, and fragment the successful education of students involved. Military related factors that affect military members are much like those related to eviction, divorce, death, deployment, and job loss. Some children are resilient in such changes, while others struggle personally and educationally (MacDermid, Samper, Schwarz, Nishida, & Nyaronga, 2008).

The Daily 5 is more than a management system or a curriculum framework; it is a structure that helps students develop the daily habits of reading, writing, and working independently that will lead to a lifetime of literacy independence. Authors of the Daily 5 state that reading ability and learning strategies may not be successful when students are concerned about their family status or well-being (Boushey & Mosher, 2006). This inability to focus on learning strongly impacts a military student's ability to be successful at school.

Instruction for the military child can be redefined for educators to meet the needs of this ever changing clientele. The possibility of mobility and life uncertainty on an urban child under ten years old who simply moves ten blocks away and joins a strange environment may be more detrimental than making a move twenty miles away. Brown & Orthner (1990) believe that stability, not distance is not the key factor for mobility. Stability is the key factor for any student success. Since many students attached to the

military will not finish school in the building where they started their education, mobility is becoming more of a concern for educators. Districts must consider the impact of servicing students of mobile families and armed forces members, even if it is a transfer from one school to another school within the same district.

Student transfers of military students with their parents need not be long distance to make a significant impact on students learning process. Military status, and its effects on the family, cannot be ignored by educators (Levine & Lezotte, 1990).

It is normally assumed that the class that begins together will finish together, but in a military community, that is not the usual expectation. Effective teachers within a military community should expect and prepare military students to learn and succeed. For this population of teachers and students; mobility is expected and common place. Frequently, no special instructional services and training are made available for teaching staff and students to insure success. With little evidence to support the status and academic success of military students, it is paramount that educators find strategies to promote instructional excellence for these students. District support and training is needed for teachers to engage learners of all backgrounds including students of military families in the educational process (Brown & Orthner, 1990).

If military status influences stability and success of students, then more supportive data is needed. Research in these areas currently is not conclusive.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the Terra Nova standardized achievement, district and state writing skills, attendance, and Boys Town Social Skills behavior of fourth-grade students whose parents are active duty military members of the

armed services compared to the Terra Nova standardized achievement, district and state writing skills, attendance, and Boys Town Social Skills behavior of the same school fourth grade students whose parents are nonmilitary. Data from this study demonstrates proficiency of current instructional strategies in the study district. Data also supports adjustments to instructional practice as well.

Dependent Measures

The study has three dependent variables that are (1) Achievement (a) standardized Terra Nova achievement scores, (b) district and state writing scores, (2) Behavior of Boys Town Social Skills for the fourth grade study group and (3) Attendance, data will be collected from AS400 data base.

Research Questions

The research questions were used to analyze the outcomes for fourth grade students attending a public elementary school in a military community. Results from both military and nonmilitary students were compared in this study. The following research questions are used to analyze student achievement.

Overarching Pretest-Posttest Achievement Research Questions 1-3 analyzed data to indicate whether fourth-grade students whose parents are active military lose, maintain, or improve their pretest beginning fourth grade scores compared to posttest ending standardized fourth grade Terra Nova scores compared to the fourth grade standardized scores of nonmilitary fourth graders?

Research Question 4 was used to analyze student writing of fourth grade students whose parents are active military parents compared to fourth grade students whose parents are nonmilitary parents measured by the Fall Writing Assessment District Scored

compared to posttest ending grade Writing Assessment State Scored which considered the traits of (a) ideas, (b) organization, (c) voice, (d) sentence fluency, (e) word choice, and (f) conventions rubric scores.

Overarching Pretest-Posttest Social Skills Research Questions number 5-7 were used determine if the fourth grade students whose parents are active military lose, maintain, or improve their pretest beginning 4th grade Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card compared to posttest ending grade Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card (a) follows instruction, (b) accepts criticism or consequence, (c) gets staff attention appropriately, (d) disagrees appropriately, (e) makes an apology, and (f) assumes responsibility.

Overarching Posttest-Posttest Attendance Research Question number 8 was used to analyze attendance frequencies for all fourth grade students. This attendance data was gathered from BPS AS400.

Assumptions

The study had several strong features. All fourth grade teachers in the research school were included in the program. The research school's district supported the researcher through this fourth grade same school study. This study measured skills that were foundational in the fourth grade curriculum. The research district's provision of internet available database information helped to establish a framework for working with fourth grade participants. This study examined a school-wide set of fourth grade achievement, attendance, and behaviors. Training was provided to all fourth grade teachers to ensure that the strategies necessary for instructing and differentiating assignments for student need were uniformly provided. Research school district support

personnel also provided the researcher at the research school with ample time to follow-up web-based data. The researcher worked with the research school administrator on a regular basis to review curricular and data progress. Reports were provided to the administrator to monitor progress of the study and gather necessary feedback.

Delimitations of the Study

This study was delimited to the fourth grade students of one elementary school in a suburban military school district who were in attendance from the fall of 2009 to the spring of 2010. All fourth grade students in 2009-2010 were required to take the Terra Nova standardized battery in the fall. Data for Terra Nova results, district and state writing scores, attendance, and Boys Town Social Skills behavior ratings were collected routinely throughout the school year for the study. Study findings are limited to students participating in the fourth grade level curriculum.

Limitations of the Study

This comparative study was confined to fourth grade students ($N = 28$) participating in a yearlong fourth grade instructional program. Study participants in the first arm ($N = 14$) represent fourth grade students having a military parent. Study participants in the second arm ($N = 14$) represent fourth grade students that do not have a military parent. Both groups are measured by standardized Terra Nova test scores, district and state writing scores, attendance, Boys Town Social Skills, and report card results for study data. The limited sample size may limit the utility and generalization of the study results and findings in other settings.

Definition of Terms

Achievement. Level of attainment or proficiency in relation to a standard measure of performance, or, of success in bringing about a desired end (Education.com, 2008)

Adaptive Behavior. Observed, reported characteristics of student as perceived by classroom teacher using a survey or reporting document.

Assessment. Assessment is the systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving learning and development. (Education.com, 2008).

Attendance. The total number of days the student was absent during the year as reported by Bellevue Public Schools AS400 (2009-2010).

Behavioral Data. Adaptive Behavior includes the age-appropriate behaviors necessary for people to live independently and to function safely and appropriately in daily life. Adaptive behaviors include real life skills such as grooming, dressing, safety, safe food handling, school rules, ability to work, money management, cleaning, making friends, social skills, and personal responsibility (About.com, 2010).

BRAC. (Base Realignment and Closure). Procedures related to streamlining military base selection and closures (DOD, 2004).

Daily 5. Explicit modeling practice, reflecting and refining take place during the launching phase, preparing the foundation for a year of meaningful content instruction tailored to meet the needs of each child. The Daily Five is more than a management system or a curriculum framework; it is a structure that will help students develop the habits that lead to a lifetime of independent literacy (Boushey & Moser, 2006).

Deploy. Deployment is defined as any current or past event or activity that relates to duty in the armed forces that involves an operation, location, command, or duty that is different from the military member's normal duty assignment (DOD, JP 1-02, 1994).

DOD. Department of Defense, the governmental agency established to manage the national security of the United States. The agency also regulates the administration of military branches of service (DOD, 2003).

Firebird Flame Certificate. A certificate a student can earn at Fairview. Each student may be voted for by their peers to receive this certificate weekly. Students vote for a student because of positive choices demonstrated in class on a weekly basis. These certificates are given to the student by the principal each week along with a prize and school wide recognition.

Impact Aid. Monies paid to school districts to service non-tax paying clients of military or military contracted persons. When funds are appropriated by Congress, the DOD Impact Aid for Large Scale Rebasing Program provides financial assistance to LEA's that are heavily impacted by the increase or reduction in military dependent student enrollment resulting from large scale rebasing. Eligible LEA's have (or would have had) at least 20% military dependent students in average daily attendance in their schools, as counted on their Federal Impact Aid application for the preceding year, and have an overall increase or reduction of no less than 5% military dependent students or no less than 250 military dependent students as a direct result of large scale rebasing (DOD, 2004).

LEA. Local Educational Agencies. A local education agency is a government agency which supervises the provision of instruction or educational services to members

of the community. People may also use the term "school district" to refer to a local

education agency. Classically, local education agencies include several schools, including

grammar, middle, and high schools, along with education support programs such as

independent study programs. In remote areas, there may only be one school under the

purview of a local education agency

(Wisegeek.com. 2010).

Military. Any of the Armed Forces commissioned to serve the United States, of,

relating to, or characteristic of members of the armed forces (American Heritage

Dictionary, 2009).

Military Student. A dependent child involved in the educational process

belonging to any service member or military contracted personnel. The definition of

"military dependents" may vary in state residency policies. The DOD term in current use

is "family members," which signifies immediate relatives, including spouses and

children. States or individual institutions may have different interpretations, some

including a dependent spouse, others including a spouse regardless of independent

income, yet others - no spouse at all, only dependent children. Listings in this Guide

make this distinction whenever the information was provided clearly. One should not

make assumptions about "dependents" for residency classification without checking the

specific policy or regulation.(American Heritage Dictionary, 2009).

Mobility. Mobility can be defined as the movement of individuals or families by

choice or by force. The total number of times a students or nuclear family member has

relocated by choice or by force. Any child who enters or leaves school between the last

Friday in September and the last day of school is counted in the mobility rate. An

individual child counted only once. This number is divided by the K-12 Fall

Membership taken the last day in September. (NDE, 2010).

Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE). Normal curve equivalent is defined as standard

scores with a mean equal to 50 and a standard deviation equal to 21. Running from 1 to

99, the numbers on the NCE line indicate how many students out of a hundred had a

lower score. NCE scores are often used to compare standardized test performance over a

period of years (Salvia & Ysseldyke, 2004).

Norm-referenced test (NRT). Norm-referenced tests are defined as tests that

measure and compare an individual's performance to the performance of a similar group

of students who have taken the same test. An example is the Terra Nova Achievement

Test.(Wikipedia, 2008).

Nonmilitary. Civilian members of society or community that are not directly

connected to the Armed Forces or their services (Wikipedia, 2008).

OEA. The Office of Economic Adjustment (American Heritage Dictionary,

2009).

PCS. Permanent Change of Station, an assignment for military personnel that is

longer than 90 days usually. This assignment allows for families to accompany the

service member, unless it is considered a remote duty station (DOD, 2004).

Reading Comprehension. Reading comprehension - techniques for improving

students' success in extracting useful knowledge from text (Mayer (2003), p 34) as

defined by Partnership for Reading (2010), Reading comprehension is understanding a

text that is read, or the process of "constructing meaning" from a text. Comprehension is

a "construction process" because it involves all of the elements of the reading process

working together as a text is read to create a representation of the text in the reader's mind (Mayer, 2003).

Reading Vocabulary. A person's vocabulary is the set of words they are familiar with in a language. A vocabulary usually grows and evolves with age, and serves as a useful and fundamental tool for communication and acquiring knowledge, the ability to derive meaning for words found in a text based on prior knowledge, using context clues, or word roots and derivatives (Wikipedia, 2010).

Reading Language. Scores that are based on the ability to recall text facts and understand passages of information presented, with both oral and written materials. Partnership for Learning (Wikipedia, 2010).

Report Card Grades. Scores that are based on a 10 point scale, grades A-F indicate progress of the student through essential grade level material, A report of a student's progress presented periodically to a parent or guardian (Answers.com, 2010).

Standardized Achievement Test. A standardized test is designed for use in a uniform manner. Proper use of such test instruments requires giving and evaluating the test under controlled conditions (ehow.com, 2010).

Tardy. The total number of days the student was not present at the opening bell of the school day during the year as reported by BPS AS400 (2009-2010).

TDY. Temporary Duty Station, an assignment given to a serviceman for a short period, usually less than 90 days (DOD, 2004).

Terra Nova Achievement Tests. Standardized tests that assess the proficiency of basic skills of academic success. The Terra Nova is a standardized achievement test designed to provide achievement scores that are valid for most types of educational

decision-making. Areas that are assessed are Reading/Language , Mathematics, Science,

and Social Studies. Primarily, the inferences from the test results include measurement

of achievement of individual students relative to a current nationwide normative group

and relative program effectiveness based on the results of groups of students. Progress

can be tracked over years and grades. The result is used to analyze the strengths and

weaknesses of a student's achievement in each content area, to plan for further

instruction, to plan for curriculum development, and to report progress to parents. The

purpose is to assess academic achievement for most types of educational decision-making

(Ehow.com, 2010).

Significance of the Study

This study contributed to already established research, practice, and policy. It is

of significant interest to educators seeking ways to assist students from military families.

The results provide information that is productive to facilitate optimal learning for

military students in spite of stressful family conditions.

Contributions to Research

There is limited research relating to the achievement, attendance, and behaviors of

students within military families. The results of this study facilitate dialog and

interventions to better accommodate these and other students. (These results could also

inform theoretical and practical data concerning the effectiveness of the practices and

strategies used in this program.)

Contribution to Practice

Based on the outcomes of this study, the study school and district may decide whether to continue current curriculum and instruction as it is or make adjustments to modify instructions for this population of students in the district.

Contribution to Policy

Local level policy may be impacted by this study. Should results indicate that specialized instructional practices are needed for these military students, district discussion can generated to consider changes in current staff training, instructional strategies and educational practices to encourage success with students.

Organization of Study

In this study, Chapter 1 presents the history and specific factors related to military families. The educational needs of these students will be addressed later in subsequent chapters. Chapter 2 is a review of the literature relating to military family factors, achievement, attendance, and behaviors. Chapter 3 contains discussion relating to the research design and methodology utilized in this study. Chapter 4 continues the presentation and analysis of the data. Chapter 5 summarizes the results of the study accompanied by recommendations for further study in the future.

Conclusion

Members of an effective educational process, especially those serving in a military community, must utilize the best and most productive practices to ensure the successful transition of students of military families into a successful learning situation. Many of the students whose parent is attached to the military may lose ground educationally or socially due to mobility transitions or lifestyle demands. When

educators apply engaging instructional techniques such as differentiation, creative, caring, and effective school-wide instructional and individual behavioral plans, these students demonstrate greater success and stability. Fewer children are trapped in the cycle of lagging skill development, systematic educational gaps, and a pattern of increased stress. Instruction for the students of military families should reflect the same commitment by educators to accommodate these needs as those for divorce, death, and Individual Educational Plans.

Chapter Two

Review of the Literature

This literature review provides research data from studies which relay factors affecting the lifestyle of military members and their families. This literature review also supports an empirical study that compares fourth grade students with a military parent to fourth grade students with nonmilitary parents. This study group is based in a military community's public school which compares both groups by measuring the achievement, attendance, and behavior of the fourth grade participants. This study has its focus on the psychological stress of this study group as well as the educational aspect. The main areas of literature review for this study are (1) the personal, emotional, and social components of children with a military parent, (2) the effect of the mobility of the military members upon the achievement of children, and (3) the policies and practices of educational staff affecting these children of military families.

Limited research data

Even though the use of military personnel has greatly increased since the 911 tragedy in 2001, there appears to be a limited amount of interest in the status of the military or military families in the last ten years. The DOD declares that by the end of 2008, 1.7 million American service members served in two military engagements abroad, OIF (Operation Iraqi Freedom, which began in March 2003) and OEF (Operation Enduring Freedom, which began in December 2008), yet there has not been a marked increase in research data concerning this ever increasing population affected by war and tragedy.

Although current research data appears to increase slowly, a small clutch of researchers continue to focus on the stability and well-being of children with absent parents such as immigrants, the divorced, clergy, and military households. Particularly over the past decade, scientists, professors, and researchers have completed projects that show that an absent parent can affect the academic, social, and psychological well-being of family members. One such study by Anita Chandra, demonstrated that school staff felt that parental deployment negatively affected the social and emotional performance of some children and youth. Other children, however, were shown to cope well. It not only has been assumed, but now is supported by current research data that the increased use and deployment of military personnel due to global conflict mandates the need for more data concerning the effects of parental absence both positively and negatively on military families (MacDermid et al., 2008).

Mobility

Mobility is defined as the movement of individuals or families by choice or by force. That definition includes the total number of times a students or nuclear family member has relocated by choice or by force (NDE, 2010). Military personnel, as they transition both in and out of the home, not only influence the lives of the servicemen, but their families as well. These transitions shape the dynamics that determine the success of adults and children alike.

Factors connecting military mobility and the status of the families involved vary. These factors include coping skills, achievement, attendance, and attitudes that reach beyond the military community.

One prominent component connected to the military is mobility. Because of the nature of military service, servicemen may be temporarily stationed away from their families (TDY), transferred to a remote assignment (without families), or deployed for war-time service without their families. Even though the children are not moving, their lives are impacted by the mobility of the military member's absence or transition. Multiple studies support the premise that both school and home life are influenced by the transitions of family members both into as well as out of the family unit. The rationale and reasons for these differences are not yet completely understood. Each study is helpful in understanding the science of the military student. Today, both the benefits of being in a mobile family group, as well as the unconstructive effects of bearing that family status have some basis for concern. Gray areas surrounding the research remain, but in this review, substantiation is found to warrant paradigm shifts of current thinking concerning our responses as educators to children with military connections.

Mobility is often viewed with pessimistic connotations, yet researchers of mobility have disproved the theory that if parents are absent, the effects are destined to be harmful for the family. Facts presented in this review will demonstrate positive factors that affect the military family as well as those that are detrimental (Weber, 2005).

The Psychological Effect of Mobility on the Military Family

Mobility is only one of the factors impacting military families. Results from empirical study supported by data gathered from 1,083 Army and Air Force respondents, confirms that the psychological and emotional well-being of military families are impacted by mobility. Surveys completed by service members, spouses, and children revealed provoking results. The pre-move and post-move data demonstrate that

resilience and risk were measured at three broad levels (1) the individual, (2) the family, and (3) the community. This experiment concluded that members that sought to move were more resilient in the transition than those who viewed the move as non-voluntary and undesirable (Chartrand et al., 2005). Crucial factors shown to influence the level of resilience in children and families were age of the children involved, parental gender, and timing of the move. Some examples include, moving with older children is more difficult than moving with younger children; moving during the summer was easier for the children while more difficult for adults; and outcomes for stressors were different for the service member as compared to those of the spouses.

Studies related to absentee parents are varied, individual, and gives a different reason for the separations, such as jobs, military, death, and divorce. One hypothesis is that this factor influences the life of military children in several different ways. The mental, emotional, and social aspects of a student's success, or lack thereof, may be related to the absence of a military family member or family transition.

One critical study was conducted by Anita Chandra. Chandra testified before congress in March of 2010, concerning the well-being of the military child. Military deployment is at an all-time high after Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom engagements. Thus, the ever increasing effects of the war on families must be considered. Chandra relayed statistically based research data to congress that focused on the findings related to two significant questions: First, how are military children generally faring across important domains, such as school and social life? Secondly, what types of challenges face youth specifically related to deployment? Chandra's findings concluded that the study provides important data on the well-being of military children and

quantitatively demonstrates the differential experience of children of deployed personnel based on the total months of parental deployment. Further, this study offers insight that will guide continued intervention and future research (Chandra, et al., 2005).

Attitudes, resilience, and coping skills were measured and the results show support first hand that parental absence, length of absence, age of the child, and purpose and timing of moves determine the degree of positivism of military family members (Hillenbrand, 1976).

Beneficial results of military separations on family dynamics

Although absentee parents negatively impact families, benefits are realized as well. The Military Family Research Institute (MFRI) at Purdue University has released scientific evidence compiled at the request of the Office of the Military Community. This research intended to examine both civilian and military settings that may provide insight about individual and family resilience in spite of deployments. Resilience is defined by these researchers as a phenomenon or process reflecting positive adaptation to a significant adversity or trauma. This resilience is a construct subsuming two distinct dimensions. The first dimension is significant adversity. Secondly, is the factor of positive adaptation. Researchers and scientists, MacDermid, et al., 2008) declare that one cannot be deemed resilient in the absence of a significant stressor(s). This research confirms Heubner & Mancini (2005) qualitative research study of adjustment among adolescents in military families. These adolescents were able to adjust and demonstrate resilience because of their personal coping skills being complemented by family and community support.

Student Achievement Influenced by Parental Military Status

This study examines more current data concerning military deployments and family separations that affect hundreds of thousands of students' achievement. Student success is unequivocally influenced by the military lifestyle. Before the Gulf War and 911, there was little consideration for the military child and their general well-being. Due to the increased deployments of military servicemen, more observation, thought, and research are needed to analyze the disruptions to normal family life that influence children. Chandra's study along with feedback from other teaching staff supports the fact that schools are becoming, more increasingly, the place of stability for more students (Chandra et al, 2008).

School Policies and Procedures for Adjustments to Meet the Needs of Military Students

Provision of Peer Camp Opportunities

Research supports the need for camps and other small group opportunities for this specialized group of children. Anita Chandra, a current researcher for military studies, piloted a camp for adolescents called Operation Purple. The purpose of this camp was to equip military children with tools to help deal with the stresses that result from a parent's deployment, through an exciting and memorable camp experience in a "purple" themed environment. This camp purpose is to also to allow young children of deployed parents to engage other children from a common situation. Many activities took place, but the surveys the children responded to provided data for Chandra's findings (Chandra et al., 2008).

Mental health consultants at each camp location assisted the researchers as they sought to gauge the students coping status. The Chandra findings include (a) that younger children and girls reported more anxiety,(b)caregivers of boys reported more difficulties with their child's attention level and emotional health, (c) the active duty caregivers reported more child emotional difficulties than Reserve component caregivers ($p<.05$), (d) reserve caregivers reported that their children had more skills in interacting with others (pro-social skills) than active duty caregivers ($p<.01$) (Chandra, et al., 2008).

Chandra's study (2008) supports the need for providing such camps or other homogenized group opportunities for military children. These camps enable these children a common peer group, access to a professional counselor, and allow opportunities for current data to be collected for this special population, validates the need for programs and camps for military children that are separated from a parent.

Drs. Angela J. Huebner and Jay A. Mancini, of the Department of Human Development at Virginia Technical Institute, in 2004 conducted research for the Military Family Research. The qualitative data also confirms the need for camps and other special opportunities for students to have positive interaction that support military families and adolescents (Huebner & Mancini, 2005).

Staff development for educators

Information from previous conflicts and from the ongoing engagements in Iraq and Afghanistan indicate that the effects of war go far beyond the deployed service member. Children and families struggle with changes resulting from an absent parent or spouse as well as changes when the absent service member returns (Chandra et al., 2008). These struggles influence the children's performance in school.

The mental health of the at-home parent plays a crucial role in children's adjustment during deployment. The mental health of the returning service member strongly affects the children as well as family functioning and relationship satisfaction. Therefore, it is critical that the needs of the entire family are considered by educational staff members. Pilot programs both within and outside the VA currently underway address this important issue. Educators are not always prepared appropriately to support children dealing with separation issues. Most teachers do not receive any specialized training to positively support this special population (VHA, 2009).

Teaching staff members and their feedback are a resource sine quo non relating to students and educational policy. School or district policy and strategy adjustments made for military students will vary yet; will address some basic needs for this population of students. Specific issues relating to military families include lack of parental support, developmental challenges due to stress, age of child, adoption of responsibilities and roles, transitions of family members within the household, and media coverage of wartime events. McFarlane (2009) supports this statement in his report stating that military separations effect younger students differently than older children. Staff responsible for early childhood groups should be aware that the average military family moves two to three times a year and will experience disruptions to relationships, learning, and environmental social connections. Staff members must provide more than instruction for these students. These educators must communicate and facilitate parenting training opportunities for parents to encourage reconnections of intimate bonds and counteract negative effects of separations in the military family. McFarlane's work declares that this

military environment creates multiple risks that impact the mental health of the families, which is critical to the children's adjustment (McFarlane, 2009).

Age of Military Children

Age is a vital factor for military children. McFarlane (2009) declares that the age of the child is a critical factor when considering the effects of deployment or parental absences. One study found that children over the age of three are significantly at risk of developing depressive symptoms and more prone to externalizing behaviors (Chandra et al., 2008). This component is crucial information for educators of military students.

Role Confusion of Military Children

Role confusion is another issue to consider with military students. When parents are absent, sometimes children must step up to take on extra tasks that the service member would normally do (McFarlane, 2009). This extra task load at home would affect the effort and motivation that these students would normally have at school. Although the home tends to re-stabilize after the servicemen return, the role ambiguity is a factor to reconcile with this population. McFarlane's study demonstrates two particularly significant times of stress for the military family. These critical times are the separation period and the reentry of the service member to the family. Children's schoolwork is affected by the military deployment and the residing caregiver's behavior resulting from the absence (McFarlane, 2009).

Implications for future policy change

These study findings of Chandra and Huebner & Mancini provide insight into how military children are faring while fueling future program and policy development. At the same time however, we know that dozens, if not hundreds, of programs are already

being implemented across the defense and civilian sectors to support military families in coping with deployment. Just as there had been no studies to date that examined the health, functioning, and well-being of military children during an extended era of conflict, there are also no studies that systematically assess the programs in place to support them. Given the high interest and previous investments in these programs, it is imperative to ask questions to determine if these programs are meeting the needs of the families. (If the programs are not effective, it should be decided whether the programs should be continue or how might they be improved). These findings also suggest that these programs be examined to assess not only how they align with the deployment and reintegration continuum but also how their content matches what we know about the needs of the military family. Understanding program efficacy and effectiveness will also require more rigorous methodologies to assess the program's impact on child and caregiver outcomes (MacDermid et al., 2008).

Implications for future research

While this study provides important new information about the relationship between parental deployment and the well-being of the military child, several areas warrant further research. First, the strong support linking caregiver mental health with child well-being and deployment-related difficulties highlights a need to examine the emotional health of these non-deployed caregivers and the stressors that they experience. Second, given the impact of military parent reintegration on children, more scrutiny is needed on how military parent mental health (e.g., PTSD) may impact children and the family. Third, it is critical to know whether the association between cumulative time of parental deployment and child difficulties continue to worsen or if there is a time point

where these problems diminish. In addition, it is important to analyze how child well-being changes as deployments continue. Fourth, a study which delves into the reasons why girls and older youth may be having more challenges with deployment is merited. Future research should examine factors related to youth outcomes during parental deployment (e.g., mental health of the non-deployed parent) and assess the effects of deployment on other measures of behavior such as school engagement and academic performance.

Finally, Chandra (2008) concludes that more research is needed to investigate pathways through which other family characteristics, such as housing and parental employment, affect children's deployment experience and well-being. The expanding research will provide a deeper understanding of the military needs of our clients, providing care and services that produce the best education for this population.

Conclusion

As 21st century educators prepare to meet the challenges presented by 21st century youth, intentional, targeted, school-wide efforts will need to be employed. The DOD provides resources and materials that educate teachers and community members concerning the special needs of military dependents. Many of the military students that become detached from the educational process are lost because of well intentioned, yet untrained educators that teach students without sensitivity, placing them on the all too certain path of detachment, lowered GPA's, poor attendance, and possibly even dropping out of school. When educators apply engaging instructional techniques such as differentiation, creative resilience training, caring and effective school-wide expectations such as in-school recognition and community wide engagement for targeted groups, great

progress can be made toward reducing the number of children trapped in a vicious cycle of increasing detachment in their already unstable lives.

Chapter Three
Methodology

Participants

Number of participants. The maximum accrual for this study ($N = 28$) included a naturally formed group of fourth grade students ($n = 14$) whose parents are active duty members of the armed services and a naturally formed group of same school and neighborhood fourth grade students ($n = 14$) whose parents are nonmilitary.

Gender of participants

Of the total number of selected (28) fourth grade students with parents who are active duty members of the armed services, 16 students are boys (7 boys, 25% with a active duty parent and 9 boys, 32.1% with nonmilitary parents) and 12 are girls (7 girls, 25% with a military parent and 5 girls, 17.8% with nonmilitary parents). The gender ratio of the study subjects is congruent with the research school district's demographics for fourth grade students. Three (10.7%) of the selected group were eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch and four of the study group participants (14.2%) were eligible for SPED services.

Age Range of participants

The age range for all study participants ($N = 28$) will be from 8 years old to 10 years old. The age range of the study subjects is student population studied range from age 8 years to 10 years old. The age range of the study subjects is congruent with the research school district's demographics for fourth grade students.

Racial and Ethnic Origin of Participants

Of the total number of students selected ($N = 28$), Twenty four (85.7%) are Caucasian, two (7.1%) are African American, one (3.5%) are Hispanic, and one (3.5%)

are Asian. The racial and ethnic origin of the study subjects is congruent with the research school district's demographics for fourth grade students.

Inclusion Criteria of Participants

Students selected for this study attended the research school for the entire fourth grade school year.

Method of participant identification

Fourth grade students whose parents are active duty members of the armed services and same school and neighborhood grade students whose parents are nonmilitary who completed the fourth grade school year and completed all administered achievement and writing assessments are included in the study.

Research design

The pretest posttest two-group comparative efficacy study design comparing fourth grade students whose parents are active duty members of the armed services and fourth grade students whose parents are nonmilitary is displayed in the following notation.

Group 1 X_1 O_1 Y_1 O_2

Group 2 X_1 O_1 Y_1 O_2

Group 1 = study participants #1. Naturally formed group of fourth grade students ($n = 14$).

Group 2 = study participants #2. Naturally formed group of fourth grade students ($n = 14$).

X_1 = study constant. All study participants received instruction in an academic classroom based on the research school district's approved fourth grade curriculum and

standards. These students received consistent instruction from district approved curriculum. These study subjects received instruction from three same-school collaborative tenured co-teachers.

Y_1 = study independent variable, same school fourth grade students, condition #1. A parent who is currently an active duty member of the armed services.

Y_2 = study independent variable, same school fourth grade students, condition #2. A parent who is not an active duty member of the armed services.

O_1 = study pretest dependent measures. (1) Terra Nova scores for fall semester third grade subjects including (a) reading, (b) language, and (c) math scores, (2) writing as measured by the beginning school year fourth grade Fall Writing Assessment District Scored (FWADS), (3) attendance as analyzed by the data gathered from AS400 for Fall, first quarter and (4) Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card ratings for the following skills (a) follows instruction, (b) accepts criticism or consequence, (c) gets staff attention appropriately, (d) disagrees appropriately, (e) makes an apology, and (f) assumes responsibility.

O_2 = study posttest dependent measures. (1) Terra Nova scores for spring semester fourth grade subjects including (a) reading, (b) language , and (c) math scores, (2) writing as measured by the beginning school year fourth grade Spring Writing Assessment State Scored (WASS), (3) attendance as analyzed by the data gathered from AS400 for spring, fourth quarter and (4) Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card ratings for fourth quarter for the following skills (a) follows instruction, (b) accepts criticism or consequence, (c) gets staff attention appropriately, (d) disagrees appropriately, (e) makes an apology, and (f) assumes responsibility.

Independent variable description

The independent variables for this study are two student groups representing fourth grade students from military families and fourth grade students from nonmilitary families. Both groups were selected from the same student population in the same elementary school.

The purpose of this study was to examine the achievement, grades, writing skills, attendance and behavior of fourth grade students whose parents are war ready active duty members of the armed services compared to the achievement, grades, writing skills, attendance, and behavior of same school fourth grade students whose parents are nonmilitary.

Dependent measures

The study's three dependent variables are (1) achievement, (2) attendance, and, (3) behavior for the fourth grade study group. The first of these variables, achievement, was analyzed using the following dependent measures overall grade level academic performance as indicated from the Terra Nova scores as well as district and state writing scores. The attendance was analyzed by data, which was collected from Bellevue Public School's AS400 data base. The last dependent variable is that of behavior which was measured by report card ratings of six Boys Town Social Skills. These three dependent variables were utilized to compare the results of the fourth grade student group having a war-zone ready active duty military parent compared to the results of the fourth grade student group that does not have a military parent.

Research questions and data analysis

Research Questions 1 through 3 analyzed student standardized achievement test scores of fourth grade students whose parents are active duty military compared to fourth grade students whose parents are nonmilitary.

Overarching Pretest-Posttest Achievement Research Question #1. Did fourth grade students whose parents are active duty military compared to students whose parents are nonmilitary lose, maintain, or improve their pretest third grade scores compared to posttest fourth grade Terra Nova reading scores?

Analysis. Research Question #1 was analyzed using repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA), test to examine the significance of the difference between students whose parents are active duty military compared to students whose parents are nonmilitary fourth grade students pretest third grade scores compared to posttest fourth grade Terra Nova reading normal curve equivalent scores. Because multiple statistical tests were conducted, a .05 alpha level was employed to help control for Type 1 errors. Means and standard deviations are displayed in tables. Post hoc tests were conducted if a significant main effect was found.

Overarching Pretest-Posttest Achievement Research Question #2. Did fourth grade students whose parents are active duty military compared to students whose parents are nonmilitary lose, maintain, or improve their pretest third grade scores compared to posttest ending fourth grade Terra Nova language scores?

Analysis. Research Question #2 was analyzed using repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA), test to examine the significance of the difference between students whose parents are active duty military compared to students whose parents are

nonmilitary third grade students pretest scores compared to posttest fourth grade Terra Nova language normal curve equivalent scores. Because multiple statistical tests were conducted, a .05 alpha level was employed to help control for Type 1 errors. Means and standard deviations are displayed in tables. Post hoc tests were conducted if a significant main effect was found.

Overarching Pretest-Posttest Achievement Research Question #3. Did fourth grade students whose parents are active duty military compared to students whose parents are nonmilitary lose, maintain, or improve their pretest third grade scores compared to posttest fourth grade Terra Nova math scores?

Analysis. Research Question #3 was analyzed using repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA), test to examine the significance of the difference between students whose parents are active duty military compared to students whose parents are nonmilitary third grade students pretest scores compared to posttest fourth grade Terra Nova math normal curve equivalent scores. Because multiple statistical tests were conducted, a .05 alpha level was employed to help control for Type 1 errors. Means and standard deviations are displayed in tables. Post hoc tests were conducted if a significant main effect was found.

Research Question # 4 was used to determine whether fourth grade students whose parents are active duty military compared to students whose parents are nonmilitary lose, maintain, or improve their pretest beginning fourth grade Fall Writing Assessment District Scored (FWADS) scores compared to posttest ending fourth grade Spring Writing Assessment State Scored (WASS) scores?

Overarching Pretest-Posttest Achievement Research Question #4. Did fourth grade students whose parents are active duty military compared to students whose parents are nonmilitary lose, maintain, or improve their pretest beginning fourth grade Fall Writing Assessment District Scored (FWADS) scores compared to posttest ending fourth grade Spring Writing Assessment State Scored (WASS) scores?

Research Question #4 was analyzed using repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA), test to examine the significance of the difference between students whose parents are active duty military compared to students whose parents are nonmilitary beginning fourth grade Fall Writing Assessment District Scored (FWADS) scores compared to posttest ending fourth grade Spring Writing Assessment State Scored (WASS) scores. Because multiple statistical tests were conducted, a .05 alpha level was employed to help control for Type 1 errors. Means and standard deviations are displayed in tables. Post hoc tests were conducted if a significant main effect was found.

Research Questions 5-7 were used to analyze Boys Town Social Skill mastery of fourth grade students whose parents are active duty military parents compared to fourth grade students whose parents are nonmilitary parents as recorded on report cards.

Overarching Pretest-Posttest Social Skills Research Question #5. Did fourth grade students whose parents are active duty military have fewer, equal, or more ratings of satisfactory or excellent fall beginning fourth grade Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card ratings compared to spring ending fourth grade Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card (a) follows instruction, (b) accepts criticism or consequence, (c) gets staff attention appropriately, (d) disagrees appropriately, (e) makes an apology, and (f) assumes responsibility?

Analysis. Research Question 5 was analyzed using a Chi square test to determine the frequencies of the number of fourth grade students whose parents are active duty military rated as satisfactory or excellent on the fall 4th grade Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card compared to spring fourth grade Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card for (a) follows instruction, (b) accepts criticism or consequence, (c) gets staff attention appropriately, (d) disagrees appropriately, (e) makes an apology, and (f) assumes responsibility. A .05 alpha level was employed to help control for Type 1 errors. Frequencies and percents are displayed in tables.

Overarching Pretest-Posttest Social Skills Research Question #6. Did fourth grade students whose parents are nonmilitary have fewer, equal, or more ratings of satisfactory or excellent fall beginning fourth grade Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card ratings compared to spring ending fourth grade Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card (a) follows instruction, (b) accepts criticism or consequence, (c) gets staff attention appropriately, (d) disagrees appropriately, (e) makes an apology, and (f) assumes responsibility?

Analysis. Research Question 6 was analyzed using a Chi square test to determine the frequencies of the number of fourth grade students whose parents are nonmilitary rated as satisfactory or excellent on the fall fourth grade Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card compared to spring fourth grade Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card for (a) follows instruction, (b) accepts criticism or consequence, (c) gets staff attention appropriately, (d) disagrees appropriately, (e) makes an apology, and (f) assumes responsibility. A .05 alpha level was employed to help control for Type 1 errors. Frequencies and percents are displayed in tables.

Overarching Posttest-Posttest Social Skills Research Question #7. Did fourth grade students whose parents are active duty military compared to fourth grade students whose parents are nonmilitary have congruent or different ending fourth grade Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card frequencies of satisfactory or excellent ratings for (a) follows instruction, (b) accepts criticism or consequence, (c) gets staff attention appropriately, (d) disagrees appropriately, (e) makes an apology, and (f) assumes responsibility?

Analyses: Research Question 7 was analyzed using a Chi square test to determine the difference between posttest spring fourth grade Boys Town Social Skills mastery scores of less than satisfactory or excellent for students whose parent are active duty military compared to posttest spring fourth grade Boys Town Social Skills mastery scores of satisfactory or excellent for students whose parent are nonmilitary for (a) follows instruction, (b) accepts criticism or consequence, (c) gets staff attention appropriately, (d) disagrees appropriately, (e) makes an apology, and (f) assumes responsibility. A .05 alpha level will be employed to help control for Type 1 errors. Frequencies and percents will be displayed in tables.

Research Question #8. Did fourth grade students whose parents are active duty military have a different number of cumulative days absent compared to fourth grade students whose parents are nonmilitary? The number of students with five or less days absent was compared to the number of students with more than five days absent.

Analysis: Research question #8. A chi square test of significance analyzed frequencies of absences of fourth grade students to compare the number of students whose parents are active duty military to the number of students whose parents are

nonmilitary with five or less cumulative days absent or more than five days absent. A

.05 alpha level was employed to help control for Type I errors. Frequencies and percents

are displayed in tables.

Data collection procedures

All study achievement, behavior and attendance data was made available through

Bellevue Public Schools AS400 data base and Inform Assessment Reporting Program

(Pearson). Permission from the appropriate school research personnel was obtained.

Two randomly selected groups of fourteen students in one arm and fourteen randomly

selected students in the other were obtained to include achievement, attendance, and

behavior data. Non-coded numbers will be used to display individual de-identified

achievement , attitudes, and attendance data. Aggregated group data, descriptive

statistics, parametric statistical analysis was utilized and reported with means and

standard deviations in tables.

Performance site

The research was conducted in the public school setting through normal

educational practices. The study procedures did not interfere with the normal

educational practices of the public school and did not involve coercion or discomfort of

any kind. Data was stored in spreadsheets and computer flash drives for statistical

analysis in the office of the primary researcher and the dissertation chair. Data and

computer files were kept locked in file cabinets. No individual identifiers were attached

to the data.

Institutional Review Board

Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the protection of Human Subjects Approval Category. The exemption categories for this study were provided under 45CFR. 101 (b) categories 1 and 4. The research was conducted using routinely collected archival data. The letter of support from the district was provided for the IRB review.

Chapter Four

Results

The purpose of this study was to determine the achievement, attendance, and behavior differences between two fourth grade student groups. One group of students had a military parent and the other group of students did not have a military parent. This study analyzed achievement, attendance, and behavior of naturally formed groups of fourth grade students in a public school within a military region. All study material measures related to each variable were retrospective, archival, and randomly collected school information. Permission from the appropriate school authorities had been attained before any data was collected. All data was de-identified for privacy of the participants.

Demographic information of the study group is displayed in Table 1. Of the total number of selected (28) fourth grade students with parents who are active duty members of the armed services, sixteen students are boys (seven boys, 25% with a active duty parent and nine boys, 32.1% with nonmilitary parents) and twelve were girls (7 girls, 25% with a military parent and five girls, 17.8% with nonmilitary parents). The gender ratio of the study subjects is congruent with the research school district's demographics for fourth grade students. Three (10.7%) of the selected group were eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch and four of the study group participants (14.2%) were eligible for SPED services. The age range for all study participants ($N = 28$) were from 8 years old to 10 years old. The age range of the study subjects was congruent with the research school district's demographics for fourth grade students. Of the total number of students selected ($N = 28$), twenty four (85.7%) were Caucasian, two (7.1%) were African American, one (3.5%) were Hispanic, and one (3.5 %) are Asian. The racial and ethnic

origin of the study subjects was congruent with the research school district's demographics for fourth grade students.

Research Question #1-3. Did fourth grade students whose parents are active duty military compared to students whose parents are nonmilitary lose, maintain, or improve their pretest third grade scores compared to posttest fourth grade Terra Nova reading, language, and math normal curve equivalent scores?

Research Question #1

Did fourth grade students whose parents are active duty military compared to students whose parents are nonmilitary lose, maintain, or improve their pretest third grade Terra Nova reading scores compared to posttest fourth grade Terra Nova reading scores?

There was a statistically significant main effect for reading (pretest/posttest), F (1, 26) = 8.59, p = .01. There was no significant interaction between reading (pretest/posttest) and parental military status, $F(1, 26)$ = 1.72, p = .20. There was no significant main effect for parental military status, F (1, 26) = 0.69, p = .42.

The statistically significant main effect for reading (pretest/posttest) indicated that scores of students whose parents are nonmilitary significantly decreased from the pretest (M = 69.43, SD = 16.30) to the posttest (M = 57.07, SD = 22.52). The means and standard deviations of the Terra Nova reading test are displayed in Table 2. The ANOVA for Terra Nova reading is displayed in Table 3.

Research Question #2

Did fourth grade students whose parents are active duty military compared to students whose parents are nonmilitary lose, maintain, or improve their pretest beginning

third grade Terra Nova language scores compared to posttest ending fourth grade Terra Nova language scores?

There was no statistically significant main effect for language (pretest/posttest scores), $F(1, 26) = .54$, $p = .47$. There was no significant interaction between language (pretest/posttest) and parental military status, $F(1, 26) = 3.73$, p=.06. There was no significant main effect for parent military status, $F(1, 26) = 1.56$, $p = .22$.

The means and standard deviations of the Terra Nova language scores are displayed in Table 4. The ANOVA for Terra Nova language is displayed in Table 5.

Research Question #3

Did fourth grade students whose parents are active duty military compared to students whose parents are nonmilitary lose, maintain, or improve their pretest third grade Terra Nova math scores compared to posttest fourth grade Terra Nova math scores?

There was a statistically significant main effect for math (pretest/posttest), $F(1, 26) = 12.33$, $p = .002$. There was no statistically significant interaction between math (pretest/posttest) and parents' military status, $F(1, 26) = 1.39$, $p = .25$. There was no significant main effect for parent military status, $F(1, 26) = 0.19$, $p = .22$.

The statistically significant main effect for math (pretest/posttest) indicated that scores of students whose parents are nonmilitary were significantly different from the pretest ($M = 70.93$, $SD = 21.23$) to the posttest ($M = 54.00$, $SD = 30.82$). The means and standard deviations of the Terra Nova math test are displayed in Table 6. The ANOVA for Terra Nova math is displayed in Table 7.

Research Question # 4

Did fourth grade students whose parents are active duty military compared to students whose parents are nonmilitary lose, maintain, or improve their pretest beginning third grade Fall Writing Assessment District Scored (FWADS) scores compared to posttest ending fourth grade Spring Writing Assessment State Scored (WASS) scores?

Fail to reject the null hypothesis because there was no statistically significant main effect for writing (FWADS/WASS scores), $F(1, 26) = 1.30$, $p = .27$. There was no significant interaction between writing (FWADS/WASS scores) and parents' military status, $F(1, 26) = 0.71$, $p = .41$. There was no significant main effect for parent military status, $F(1, 26) = 1.60$, $p = .22$. The means and standard deviations of the FWADS and WASS writing scores are displayed in Table 8. The ANOVA for FWADS and WASS writing is displayed in Table 9.

Research Question #5

Did fourth grade students whose parents are active duty military have fewer, equal, or more ratings of satisfactory or excellent fall beginning fourth grade Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card ratings compared to spring ending fourth grade Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card (a) follows instruction, (b) accepts criticism or consequence, (c) gets staff attention appropriately, (d) disagrees appropriately, (e) makes an apology, and (f) assumes responsibility?

Table 10 displays the frequency of students whose parents are on active military duty fall and spring Boys Town social Skill mastery report card ratings. The chi-square (χ^2) test for independence was calculated comparing the number of superior or excellent ratings in the fall compared to the number of superior or excellent ratings in the spring.

The results of χ^2 displayed in Table 10 were not statistically significantly different (χ^2 (5, N = 28) = 0.06).

The null hypothesis of no difference between fall and spring Boys Town social Skill mastery report card ratings was not rejected. There was no significant difference between fall and spring ratings for students whose parents are on active military duty.

Research Question # 6

Did fourth grade students whose parents are not active duty military have fewer, equal, or more ratings of satisfactory or excellent fall beginning fourth grade Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card ratings compared to spring ending fourth grade Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card (a) follows instruction, (b) accepts criticism or consequence, (c) gets staff attention appropriately, (d) disagrees appropriately, (e) makes an apology, and (f) assumes responsibility?

Table 11 displays the frequency and percent of students whose parents are not on active military duty fall and spring Boys Town social Skill mastery report card ratings. The chi-square (χ^2) test for independence was calculated comparing the number of superior or excellent ratings in the fall compared to the number of superior or excellent ratings in the spring. The results of χ^2 displayed in Table 11 were not statistically significantly different (χ^2 (5, $N = 28$) = 0.13).

The null hypothesis of no difference between fall and spring Boys Town social Skill mastery report card ratings was not rejected. There was no significant difference between fall and spring ratings for students whose parents are not on active military duty.

Research Question # 7

Did fourth grade students whose parents are active duty military have fewer, equal, or more ratings of satisfactory or excellent ending spring posttest fourth grade Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card ratings compared to fourth grade students whose parents are not active military ending spring fourth grade Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card (a) follows instruction, (b) accepts criticism or consequence, (c) gets staff attention appropriately, (d) disagrees appropriately, (e) makes an apology, and (f) assumes responsibility?

Table 12 displays the frequency and percent of students' fall Boys Town social skills ratings whose parents are on active military duty compared to students whose parents are on not active military duty spring Boys Town social skill mastery report card ratings. The chi-square (χ^2) test for independence was calculated comparing the number of superior or excellent ratings in the spring of students whose parents are on active military duty compared to the number of superior or excellent ratings in the spring of students whose parents are on not active military. The results of χ^2 displayed in Table 12 were not statistically significantly different (χ^2 (5, $N = 28$) = 0.24).

The null hypothesis of no difference between students whose parents are on active military duty and students whose parents are on not active military duty spring Boys Town social Skill mastery report card ratings was not rejected. There was no significant difference between spring ratings for students whose parents are on active military duty and students whose parents are not on active military duty.

Research Question # 8

Did fourth grade students whose parents are active duty military have a different number of cumulative days absent compared to fourth grade students whose parents are nonmilitary? The number of students with five or less days absent was compared to the number of students with more than five days absent.

Fail to reject the null hypothesis. As demonstrated in Table 13, there was no statistically significant difference between the military and nonmilitary groups for attendance ($X^2(1, N=28) = 0.45, p = .35$). There was no significant relationship indicated by the chi square data between the numbers of absences for military students compared to the number of absences for nonmilitary students. The analyzed frequencies for attendance as determined by the chi square (X^2) are displayed in Table 13.

Table 1

Demographics of Study Group

Name	Military	Attendance	Gender	Fr/Rd Lunch?	SPED	Teacher	Ethnicity
1	Yes	173.0	Girl	No	No	H	White
2	Yes	165.5	Boy	No	No	H	White
3	No	165.5	Boy	No	Yes	H	Black
4	Yes	162.0	Girl	No	Yes	S	Asian
5	No	171.0	Boy	No	No	H	White
6	Yes	172.0	Girl	No	No	H	White
7	No	173.0	Boy	No	No	H	White
8	No	171.0	Girl	No	No	H	White
9	No	169.0	Girl	No	No	H	White
10	No	171.5	Boy	No	Yes	H	White
11	Yes	168.5	Girl	No	No	S	White
12	Yes	172.0	Girl	No	No	C	White
13	Yes	173.0	Girl	No	No	C	White
14	Yes	163.0	Boy	No	No	C	White
15	No	165.0	Boy	No	No	C	White
16	Yes	168.0	Boy	No	No	C	Hispanic
17	No	166.0	Girl	No	Yes	C	White
18	Yes	164.5	Boy	Yes	No	C	White
19	Yes	167.5	Boy	No	No	C	White
20	No	168.0	Boy	No	No	C	White
21	No	160.0	Girl	No	No	C	White
22	No	167.5	Boy	No	No	C	White
23	No	163.5	Boy	No	No	C	White
24	Yes	171.5	Girl	No	No	C	White
25	No	168.5	Boy	Yes	No	C	White
26	Yes	164.0	Boy	No	No	C	White
27	No	137.0	Girl	Yes	No	C	Black
28	Yes	165.5	Boy	No	No	C	White

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Fourth Grade Terra Nova Reading Scores

	3rd-Grade		4th-Grade	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Nonmilitary Students	69.43	16.30	57.07	22.52
Military Students	71.00	15.59	66.29	20.17
Total	70.21	15.67	61.68	21.50

Table 3

Terra Nova Reading Scores for Students with Military and Non-Military Parents

Source of Variation	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	*d*
Between Subjects					
Group	1	407.16	0.69	.42	ns
Error	26	592.66			
Within Subjects					
Language Test	1	1020.12	8.59	.01	0.46
Reading Test * Military	1	204.45	1.72	.20	ns
Error	26	592.66			

ns = not significant

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for Fourth Grade Terra Nova Language Scores

	3rd Grade		4th Grade	
	M	SD	M	SD
Nonmilitary Students	64.14	23.00	54.00	18.57
Military Students	65.14	17.11	69.71	22.16
Total	64.64	19.90	61.86	21.60

Table 5

Terra Nova Language Scores For Students with Military and Non-Military Parents

Source of Variation	df	MS	F	p	d
Between Subjects					
Group	1	977.79	1.56	.22	ns
Error	26	625.72			
Within Subjects					
Language Test	1	108.64	0.53	.47	ns
Language Test * Military	1	57.79	3.73	.06	ns
Error	26	203.21			

ns = not significant

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for Fourth Grade Terra Nova Mathematics Scores

| | 3rd-Grade | | 4th-Grade | |
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Nonmilitary Students	70.93	21.23	54.00	30.82
Military Students	70.43	22.31	62.00	24.11
Total	70.68	21.37	58.00	27.46

Table 7

Terra Nova Mathematics Scores For Students with Military and Non-Military Parents

Source of Variation	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	*d*
Between Subjects					
Group	1	196.88	0.19	.67	ns
Error	26	182.50			
Within Subjects					
Mathematics Test	1	2250.45	12.33	<.05	0.52
Math Test * Military	1	182.51	1.37	.25	ns
Error	26	1057.28			

ns = not significant

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for Fourth Grade FWADS and WASS Writing Scores

	FWADS		WASS	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Nonmilitary Students	5.23	1.61	4.62	1.62
Military Students	5.59	1.75	5.50	1.00
Total	5.41	1.66	5.06	1.40

Table 9

FWADS and WASS Fourth Grade Writing Scores For Students with Military and Non-

Military Parents

Source of Variation	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	*d*
Between Subjects					
Group	1	5.32	1.60	.22	ns
Error	26	3.34			
Within Subjects					
Writing Test	1	1.70	1.30	.27	ns
Writing Test * Military	1	0.94	0.71	.41	ns
Error	26	1.31			

ns = not significant

Table 10

Boys Town Fall and Spring Report Card Ratings for Students Whose Parents are on

Active Duty

Social Skill Domains	Number of Students with Superior or Excellent Ratings		
	Fall N	Spring N	X^2
Follows Instructions	11	11	
Accepts Criticism	13	13	
Gets Attention Appropriately	13	13	
Disagrees Appropriately	14	13	
Makes an Apology	14	13	
Assumes Responsibility	12	11	
Total	77	74	0.06

X^2 not significant for Observed versus Expected cell frequencies with $df = 5$ and tabled

value = 11.07 for alpha level of .05.

Table 11

Boys Town Fall and Spring Report Card Ratings for Students Whose Parents are not on

Active Duty

Social Skill Domains	Number of Students with Superior or Excellent Ratings		
	Fall	Spring	
	N	N	X^2
Follows Instructions	11	14	
Accepts Criticism	12	14	
Gets Attention Appropriately	13	14	
Disagrees Appropriately	12	14	
Makes an Apology	13	14	
Assumes Responsibility	12	14	
Total	73	84	0.13

X^2 not significant for Observed versus Expected cell frequencies with $df = 5$ and tabled

value = 11.07 for alpha level of .05.

Table 12

Boys Town Spring Report Card Ratings for Students Whose Parents are on Active Duty

Compared to Students Whose Parents are not Active Military

	Number of Students with Superior or Excellent Ratings		
	Spring	Spring	
Social Skill Domains	N	N	X^2
Follows Instructions	11	14	
Accepts Criticism	13	14	
Gets Attention Appropriately	13	14	
Disagrees Appropriately	13	14	
Makes an Apology	13	14	
Assumes Responsibility	11	14	
Total	74	84	0.24

X^2 not significant for Observed versus Expected cell frequencies with *df* = 5 and tabled

value = 11.07 for alpha level of .05.

Table 13

Attendance of Students whose Parents are Active Military Compared to Students whose

Parents are Not Active Military

Days Absent	Military N (%)	Non-Military N (%)	X^2
Less than 5	6 (43%)	8 (57%)	
5 or more	8 (57%)	6 (43%)	
Total	14 (100%)	14 (100%)	0.45

Chapter Five

Conclusions and Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of parental military status on the achievement, attendance, and attitudes of fourth grade students. Data for students with military parents was compared to that of nonmilitary students. The study analyzed achievement, attendance, and attitudes of students attending a public school within a military area. The study focused only on fourth grade students within one elementary school. All study achievement, attendance, and attitudes measures related to each of the dependent variables were retrospective, archival and routinely collected school information. Permission from the research school district and the Institutional Review Board for the protection of Human Subjects was obtained before achievement, attendance, and attitudes data was collected and analyzed.

Conclusions

The following conclusions may be drawn from the study for Research Question #1. Overall, the fourth grade students Terra Nova results for reading Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) scores indicated that there was a significant difference in students' pretest third grade reading scores and posttest fourth grade reading scores. Fourth grade students with nonmilitary parents reading scores were lower at the posttest fourth grade assessment than those of military students.

The following conclusions may be drawn from the study for Research Question #2. Overall, test results indicated that there was no significant difference between pretest Terra Nova Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) scores for third grade Language scores compared to posttest Terra Nova Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) scores for Language.

The Terra Nova language scores were consistent for military and nonmilitary students; pretest and posttest scores.

The following conclusions may be drawn from the study for Research Question#3. Overall, there was no significant difference between pretest Terra Nova Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) third grade scores for math compared to posttest Terra Nova Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) scores for math. The Terra Nova math pretest and posttest scores were consistent for both military and nonmilitary students.

The following conclusions may be drawn from the study for Research Question #4: Overall, there was no significant difference between pretest Fall Writing Assessment Scores (FWADS) scores for fourth grade students compared to spring posttest Writing Assessment State Scored scores (WASS) for writing. The fourth grade writing pretest and posttest scores were consistent for both military and nonmilitary students.

The following conclusions may be drawn from the study for Research Question #5. Overall, report card ratings for pretest and posttest results indicated that students with military parents had consistent ratings for the Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card (a) follows instruction, (b) accepts criticism or consequence, (c) gets staff attention appropriately, (d) disagrees appropriately, (e) makes an apology, and (f), assumes responsibility. There was no significant difference from the beginning of the year ratings to the end of the year ratings.

The following conclusions may be drawn from Research Question #6.

Overall, report card ratings for pretest and posttest results indicated that students with nonmilitary parents had consistent ratings for the Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card (a) follows instruction, (b) accepts criticism or consequence, (c) gets staff

attention appropriately, (d) disagrees appropriately, (e) makes an apology, and (f) assumes responsibility. There was no significant difference from the beginning of the year ratings to the end of the year ratings.

The following conclusions may be drawn from Research Question #7a: Overall, report card ratings for posttest scores for military students compared to posttest scores for nonmilitary students indicated that both groups of fourth grade students had consistent ratings for the Boys Town Social Skill mastery report card (a) follows instruction, (b) accepts criticism or consequence, (c) gets staff attention appropriately, (d) disagrees appropriately, (e) makes an apology, and (f) assumes responsibility. There was no significant difference between military posttest scores compared to nonmilitary posttest scores.

The following conclusions may be drawn from the study for Research Question #8. Overall, there was no significant difference between military students' attendance rates compared to attendance rates for nonmilitary students.

Discussion

The data from this study indicate that parental military status may have little impact on the outcome of fourth grade students' achievement, attendance, and attitudes. The research questions analyzed achievement of fourth grade students with active duty military parents compared to the achievement of fourth grade students with nonmilitary parents in same school setting. Two of the three achievement components (language and math) demonstrated no significant difference, regardless of the parents' military status. Reading scores, however, were significantly lower for nonmilitary students than for the military group. How is this possible when military deployments and separations are

reported to have such adverse impact on the family? The findings of this study confirm study results reported by MacDermid et al., (2008) which declare that military separations and stresses do not have to be a negative factor for family members.

Analyzing the second component, attitudes of fourth grade students, indicated that military and nonmilitary students responses and choices in social settings were congruent. These social competencies were rated in the same school environment with collaborative co-teachers.

The test results for the last component, attendance, were analyzed and demonstrated no significant difference between the military and nonmilitary groups. The attendance frequencies were consistent for both groups.

This study focused on the achievement, attendance, and attitudes of fourth graders. Students across other grade levels were not considered. This study was not intended to minimize the importance or severity of the effect of military stress upon families. The intent of this study was to determine if military involvement impacted student achievement, attendance and attitudes significantly. This study found that overall achievement was consistent for both military students and nonmilitary students. Factors that may have contributed to this balance in achievement include a strong surrounding military community and involvement of military volunteers.

This study seems to reaffirm what Drs. Angela J. Huebner and Jay A. Mancini, of the Department of Human Development at Virginia tech, stated after their 2004 research for the Military Family Research. That research declared after school programs a beneficial resource for military student success. The after school program provides academic, social, and physical support for students. Studies by Schmoker (2006) and

Chandra et al., (2008) support the necessity for providing such programs, camps, or other homogenized group opportunities for military children. They both stated the importance of after school programs in order to "do whatever it takes" to help students improve socially and academically. DuFore (2004) also affirms this practice. Students that need or want support academically or socially are assisted by school staff and volunteers. Some students are recommended by teachers for extra assistance. School staff, military members, and community volunteers are available two hours each week one hour increments) for these students. This is a free service for all students both military and nonmilitary. One hour is offered after lunch each day. The other hour is offered after school one day each week.

An additional contributing factor that may have led to the strong consistency of the fourth grade students' results may have been the positive environment provided for students in this community, especially the three pluses and a wish method of encouragement and correction (mentoring). Providing supportive and positive interactions at school facilitates motivation for learning while creating more connected bonds for students affected by mobility.

The last influencing condition may have been related to teacher quality and expectation. The three teachers in this study were all products of the study district. Two of the three graduated from the study school district and the other, a 23 year resident of the study district. These teachers are acutely aware of the uniqueness and needs of this population. Two of the three teachers in the study have been a part of military families as well. Teacher empathy and effectiveness can be a positive connection for students of mobility. These qualities are well represented in this well trained staff.

This study analyzed fourth grade student's achievement, attendance and attitudes. Determining whether the status of student's military orientation affected their performance may have been influenced by other conditions not stated in these findings. Other factors related to military and nonmilitary student groups should be studied and evaluated. This analysis would focus on the results of the educational program, staffing and instructional strategies, school counselor services and input, and volunteer opportunities provided in this school.

This study district differs from its surrounding districts not just by military population, but by its funding resources. This study emphasizes the awareness and commitment of this district to the special needs of all children, especially those influenced by mobility and family separations. In spite of decreasing government funding and dwindling Impact Aid, apparent measures have been taken by this study district to ensure opportunities for success for their student population.

Because of concern for the growing number of students related to deployment of military service men and women, this study should reemphasize the need for instruction for young children that is empathetic, supportive, and positive. In this research district, equality is promoted and encouraged for all students. In spite of mounting global tension and uncertainties that affect adults and children alike, it is reassuring to see that all children are performing well and consistently in a mobile and diverse community.

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