A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT / CITIZENSHIP PROGRAMMING AS A SCHOOL

IMPROVEMENT PLAN OPTION AND THE RELATIONSHIP TO PERFORMANCE

ON STATE STANDARDIZED TESTS AND REDUCED INCIDENCE OF NEGATIVE

STUDENT BEHAVIORS

BY

DIANA ROMITO

DISSERTATION ADVISOR: DR. WILLIAM SHARP

BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study was to find existence of a relationship between the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program when used as part of the Indiana School Improvement Plan requirements and increased academic achievement as measured by several generally accepted data points provided from ISTEP+ tests. More specifically, the ISTEP+ scores of third grade test takers enrolled at those schools which were identified by the Indiana Department of Education website as having committed to a Character Development / Citizenship program in part to fulfill their School Improvement Plan requirements were compared to those of all other 3rd grade ISTEP+ participants in the state. In order to find evidence of academic growth, for the following year, 4th graders of experimental group schools were again compared to all other Indiana 4th graders who registered an ISTEP+ score. In order to make comparisons and conclusions, the data labeled Median Scale Score, Total Percent Passing and Cut Scores were used.

In addition to strictly academic data retrieved from the Indiana Department of Education databases, building level administrators of those participating Character Development / Citizenship program schools were asked to complete a survey addressing incidence of negative student behavior for the year of program implementation as compared to previous years. Further questions were posed in order to assess the building

level administrator's expectations and realizations in regard to improvements shown after the implementation of the programming. Levels of program rigor and fidelity were addressed by asking administrators to indicate the length, frequency and duration of the programs they chose to implement.

While the academic improvement data were mixed in result and generally inconclusive, many individual data points showed improvement in academic achievement for the given comparison category. In addition, building level administrators reported improvements in Academics / Test Scores and Behavior / Discipline after the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program at their school. Limitations are discussed and recommendations for further study are included.

SIGNATURE PAGE

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Approved By:

_____   _____
Committee Chair   Date

_____   _____
Committee Member   Date

_____   _____
Committee Member   Date

_____   _____
Committee Member   Date

_____   _____
Dean of the Graduate School   Date

Ball State University

Muncie, Indiana

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"For in the end, the welfare and the very existence of our society does not so much depend on the IQ's of its inhabitants, as on their character" - Wynne

"Character is higher than intellect" – Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Within the character of the citizen, lies the welfare of the nation." - Cicero

DEDICATION

To Kenny, the love of my life. Thank you for believing in me and standing by my side. Your love and support are all that I need to get through whatever life brings our way.

To Beth, my best friend and other half. Thank you for knowing who I could be before I even knew who I was.

Without you two, I might be alive but I wouldn't be living.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Educating for character and citizenship was one of the original goals of American

public education. A successful educational system "ensures continuity of our democracy

from one generation to the next" (Brewer, 2007, Significance of the Problem, ¶ 5). As

quoted by President Theodore Roosevelt, "To educate a man in mind and not in morals is

to educate a menace to society" (Rusnak, 1998, p. 9). Few would dispute the belief that

children need to be taught not only right from wrong but also decision making skills and

to understand the impact that their actions have on those around them and on the world.

Character education is needed because "a strong, functioning civil society demands high

moral and ethical values and behaviors" (Schaeffer, 1998a, ¶ 4). Lockwood (Nisivoccia,

1998, p. 9) has documented "a disturbing rise in poor behavior among our youth" which

he believes proves the "need for schools to focus on producing ethical behavior in

children." Educating children in the cognitive as well as behavioral aspects of positive

character and citizenship can be accomplished in the public schools setting as various

subject areas and settings lend themselves to opportunities for good decision making.

Character education must be understood as a pervasive, multifaceted, institutional

endeavor (Berkowitz & Fekula, 1999) and the schools have the far reaching presence in

the community to make this task approachable. The school, as a microcosm of society,

gives children the opportunity to examine their role in the larger context as well as

examine the potential consequences of their actions. While schools are perhaps the ideal

setting for learning values and societal norms and "there is a growing trend towards

linking the solutions to …social problems to the teaching of moral and social values in

our public schools" (Murray, 2009, Introduction, ¶ 1), modern schools are primarily

tasked with continually improving academic achievement. In addition to the focus on

purely academic achievement, schools tend to steer clear of the topics of values or

character education and focus more on the values of achievement and efficiency (Valde,

1999). In the late 20th century, schools moved away from character education and

citizenship education as "American society grew more complex and diverse" (Haynes &

Berkowitz, 2007, Change is Coming, ¶ 1). When contemplating the implementation of a

character education program, many schools are wary as they do not want to impose one

set of values or traits over another or be seen as promoting a particular cultural

perspective. Former Secretary of Education Rod Paige (2003) stated in an address at the

Character Education Partnership 10th Anniversary Dinner that we "must help students to

understand universal values like respect, tolerance, responsibility, honesty, self-restraint,

family commitment, civic duty, fairness and compassion." He continued by saying,

"These are not values of a particular religion. They are the values shared by all people of

character, who are committed to freedom and justice." According to Valde (1999),

"schools cannot be neutral places: they must either accept their responsibility for

promoting genuine community, moral consciousness, and spirit- or, even if unwittingly,

share responsibility for our society's moral decay" (Introduction, ¶ 1). In layman's

terms, if the schools don't stand for something, in the form of character or values

education, they (and the students) will fall for anything. Without a concerted effort to find

balance between academics and character development and to integrate character

education into the standardized test oriented curriculum, character content may continue

to be neglected in an attempt to devote more time and effort toward the seemingly more

academic skills.

Statement of the Problem

The youth of American society is lacking in character, civility, and citizenship.

The need for character education programs is expressed through statistics regarding

school violence, truancy and dropout rates (Was, Woltz & Drew, 2006). Proponents of

character education "claim the need to offset the growing trend of youth violence and the

increasing number of dysfunctional families with a focus on the building of character

within the students" (Raymond, 2001, Statement of the Problem, ¶ 3). The national

education report *A Nation at Risk* addressed the need for character education in the public

schools in response to "a substantial long term decline in the conduct of young

Americans along with declining academic performance in school" (Murphy, 1998, p. 14).

Coupled with these school based indicators, "were statistics that showed the effect that

the breakdown of the traditional family and the lack of traditional socialization had had

on school performance" (Murphy, 1998, p. 14). Schools attempt to manage the

pervasiveness of these negative behaviors while simultaneously "motivating students to

excel and advance to their fullest academic and social potential" (Gooding, 2004,

Context of the Problem, ¶ 1). Because character education "implies adult authority and

the transfer of values held by adults to students" (Titus, 1994), the public schools, as

stable and all inclusive institutions, are often looked upon to instill necessary character

skills in the general American public. In 21st century American society, we are

experiencing a pendulum shift of focusing on rights before responsibilities. According to

Sommers (2002), "too often, we teach students to question principles before they even

vaguely understand them" (p. 25). American public schools do not devote substantial

time or resources to implementing character education programs (Creasy, 2008). "Despite

the clear national interest in character education, many schools are leery of engaging in

supplementary initiatives that, although worthy, might detract from what they see as their

primary focus: increasing academic achievement" (Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn &

Smith, 2006, p. 448). Because of the current climate of high stakes testing, schools are

"skewing their curricula toward the narrow content of tests, in some cases actually

dropping entire subject areas that are not being tested that year" (Berkowitz & Bier, 2004,

p. 78). While schools are left with the responsibility of graduating civilized students with

appropriate social and personal skills, they are also charged with continually improving

their academic performance in the form of ever increasing scores on state standardized

tests. Because the content of the Character Development / Citizenship curriculum is not

included on these state standardized tests, "educators rationally respond by transferring

resources to math and reading instruction (and drill)" from many other programs

including character development and citizenship education (Creasy, 2008; Rothstein,

2009, p. 36). Schools and communities are often faced with choosing between educating

children for positive character traits and citizenship and teaching them to pass

standardized tests. With failure to show growth on standardized tests potentially resulting

in schools being marked as "failing" and subsequently subjected to massive terminations

and reorganizations, it is evident why schools choose to spend their time on the academic

skills and material, leaving character development curriculum by the wayside.

Purpose of the Study

This study was intended to measure several objectives. The first objective was to

find a relationship between the implementation and practice of a Character Development

/ Citizenship program and state standardized test scores. The finding of a positive

relationship between the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship

program and higher state standardized test scores as well as higher rates of total percent

passing on state standardized tests for those children involved versus those not involved

will provide additional evidence that character education programs do not hurt and in

fact, show probability to enhance academic achievement as measured on state

standardized tests.

The second objective was to determine if incidence of negative behavioral issues,

specifically office referrals, suspensions and expulsions, were lessened and if so by what

percentage after the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program.

The finding of a diminished percentage of negative student behaviors will provide

additional evidence that Character Development / Citizenship programs positively affect the behavior of the student body in schools using such programs.

The third objective of the study was to discover a statement from building level administrators as to the expectations for and benefits derived from the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program for their student body. The finding of academic and / or behavioral improvements from the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship will provide evidence that, for those schools who wish to use Character Education as a means toward academic and behavioral improvements from their student body, benefits can be expected. The finding of benefits largely meeting expectations for the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program will provide evidence that for those administrators with realistic expectations to be derived from the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program, benefits will likely be realized.

The final objective was to determine the degree and manner of implementation used by those building level administrators who chose to implement character education programs as part of their state required School Improvement Plan. The finding of high levels of fidelity and rigor of implementation along with a positive correlation of program implementation and academic improvement and program implementation and reduced incidence of negative student behaviors will provide evidence that Character Development / Citizenship programs, when implemented with high levels of fidelity and rigor, positively benefit the academic progress and behavior of the student body in schools using such programs.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study was to provide additional evidence that the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program does exist along side higher state standardized test scores and higher rates of score increases for those participants. This study varies from similar studies in that the unique variable was the use of a Character Development / Citizenship program by public schools as an Improvement Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan. There are a limited number of options for programming that a school may chose for their Focus Areas in the School Improvement Plan. While it is legislative code in Indiana that schools provide moral and citizenship instruction, the fidelity and rigor of those programs are not regulated. By choosing schools which chose to use the programming as part of a plan toward improved academic achievement, as is the requirement of the programs committed to in the School Improvement Plan, one could extrapolate that these schools were regulating and monitoring the not only the fidelity and rigor of the program implementation but the results and gains realized by implementing the programming. Next to a truly experimental study issuing a prescription for the fidelity and rigor of a curricular program, the researcher believes that this level of state required program commitment is best in determining the correlation between the implementation of a program and academic achievement and improvement. In addition to evidence of academic gains, this study was to provide evidence, if it existed, that for those Character Development / Citizenship programs applied with appropriate fidelity and rigor, student behavior will improve and the realistic expectations of building level administrators will be met. There

are many studies which show that Character Development / Citizenship programs

positively correlate to improved student behavior. By including that aspect in this study,

the researcher can independently tie together the multiple potential benefits of Character

Development / Citizenship programming in one population. With many schools choosing

to spend the majority of the school day devoted to standardized test preparation, careful

choices have to be made about the curriculum and content offered with any remaining

time. If character education programs were shown to be compatible with efforts to

improve achievement, more schools may take on the added curriculum (Benninga,

Berkowitz, Kuehn & Smith, 2006). While schools are often willing to use any program

which is proven to bring improvement to academic achievement and student behavior,

they may choose not to participate in or endorse any kind of Character Development /

Citizenship program unless research shows a positive correlation between the

implementation of the program and increased academic achievement as well as reduced

incidence of negative student behaviors. The more scientific evidence provided which

supports the position that character education programs positively correlate to increased

academic achievement and reduced incidence of negative student behaviors as evidenced

by state standardized test scores and administrator reporting, the more schools may be

willing to allocate resources to providing this important curriculum.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

Does the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program relate to higher levels of academic achievement as determined by ISTEP+ data for those schools which designate Character Development / Citizenship as an Improvement Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan?

Does the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program relate to reduced incidence of negative student behaviors as reported by building level administrators?

What academic and behavioral expectations do building level administrators have regarding the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program and the effect such a program will have on the student body?

With what level of fidelity and rigor do building level administrators implement Character Development / Citizenship programs upon declaring such programs as a Focus Area intended to improve academic achievement as a part of their Indiana School Improvement Plan?

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement

Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will show scores at or below

state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Median Scale Score on the English /

Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for third grade students for the year

of the Character Development / Citizenship program implementation.

Null Hypothesis 1:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement

Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will not show scores at or

below state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Median Scale Score on the

English / Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for third grade students

for the year of the Character Development / Citizenship program implementation.

Hypothesis 2:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement

Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will show scores above state

average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Median Scale Score on the English /

Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for fourth grade students for the

year following the Character Development / Citizenship program implementation.

Null Hypothesis 2:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement

Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will not show scores above

state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Median Scale Score on the English /

Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for fourth grade students for the

year following the Character Development / Citizenship program implementation.

Hypothesis 3:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement

Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will show rates at or below

the state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Total Percent Passing for the

English /Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for third grade students

for the year of program implementation.

Null Hypothesis 3:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement

Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will not show rates at or

below the state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Total Percent Passing for the

English /Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for third grade students

for the year of program implementation.

Hypothesis 4:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will show rates above the state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Total Percent Passing for the English /Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for fourth grade students for the year after program implementation.

Null Hypothesis 4:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will not show rates above the state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Total Percent Passing for the English /Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for fourth grade students for the year after program implementation.

Hypothesis 5:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will report reduced incidence of negative student behavioral issues when compared to previous years as reported by the building level administrator for the year of the Character Development / Citizenship program implementation.

Null Hypothesis 5:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement

Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will not report reduced

incidence of negative student behavioral issues when compared to previous years as

reported by the building level administrator for the year of the Character Development /

Citizenship program implementation.

Delimitations

The researcher has chosen to work with several specific restrictions in this study.

The schools chosen for comparison to state averages were chosen based on their self

reporting of implementing a Character Development / Citizenship program for the

purpose of increasing student achievement as is one of the required goals of the Indiana

School Improvement Plan. Only public schools and public school test data were used for

the population groups. Test data available through the Indiana Department of Education

were used in order to ensure consistency of reporting. The choice to compare statistics

based on ISTEP+ scores for English / Language Arts and Math tests does allow for

consistent comparisons on highly reliable and valid tests as determined by the Indiana

State Department of Education. However, using only those test data does not allow for

determining a level of improvement on other academic measures such as school-based

assessments, Terra-Nova, NWEA, or DIBELS. The data queried for comparison were

pulled only based on year of reporting and subsequent school year and did not consider

changes in population / student migration or building boundaries for individual districts.

Specific student's scores were not used, rather the grade level group's scores as a whole were used; consequently exact cohorts were not developed.

Only test data for grades three and four were used and only elementary level administrators were surveyed for this study. Elementary school ISTEP+ test data was queried from elementary schools only as beyond elementary school, attendance at various feeder schools could skew results when looking at the potential for student participation in Character Development / Citizenship programming at those various feeder schools. By only querying elementary schools, the amount of exposure to a Character Development / Citizenship program implemented for purposes of improvement as per the Indiana School Improvement Plan model could more likely be controlled. Administrators were asked to report the levels of negative student behaviors, program expectations, and levels of fidelity and rigor in a survey format. This data and information may not be corroborated by independent sources and both the question and response are subject to participant interpretation.

<div align="center">Definitions</div>

Blue Ribbon School – schools that have won the National Award for Excellence; schools which represent the best in American education; also known as the "U.S. Department of Education's Elementary Education Recognition Program" with the purpose being to "identify and give public recognition to outstanding pubic and private elementary schools across the United States." These schools are recognized for "doing an exceptional job with all of their students in developing a solid foundation of basic skills

and knowledge of subject matter and fostering the development of character, moral values, and ethical judgment." (Murphy, 1998, p. 203)

Character Education - activities and experiences organized by a provider for the purpose of fostering positive character development and the associated core ethical values (also described as moral values, virtues, character traits, or principles) (http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/)

ESL – those learners considered to be learning English as a Second Language

Fidelity - the quality or state of being faithful; accuracy in details (http://www.merriam-webster.com)

ISTEP+ - Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress Plus - The Indiana statewide standardized assessment tool. The test includes Math and English / Language Arts sections for all students in grades three through eight and science and social studies sections for select grade levels. (www.doe.state.in.us)

NWEA – Northwest Evaluation Association – the MAP test: Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) are state-aligned computerized adaptive tests that accurately reflect the instructional level of each student and measure growth over time (http://www.nwea.org/assessments/)

DIBELS – Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills - are a set of procedures and measures for assessing the acquisition of early literacy skills from kindergarten through sixth grade. (https://dibels.uoregon.edu/dibelsinfo.php)

Median Scale Score – Student achievement levels relative to the Indiana Academic Standards are reported by ISTEP+ as scale scores. These three-digit, equal interval scores are expressed on unique scales by subject (English/language arts and mathematics). ISTEP+ scale scores typically range from about 300 to 850. The median scale score is the average of these scale scores for a given group. (www.doe.state.in.us)

Rigor – quality of being unyielding or inflexible; strict precision (http://www.merriam-webster.com)

School Improvement Plan - School improvement planning is a process by which members of the school community conduct a thorough evaluation of their school's educational programming during the accreditation year and develop a written school improvement plan that establishes the starting point for ongoing evaluation efforts; provides a road map for school improvement; and unifies independently organized school improvement efforts from various areas of the total school program into a single, focused process. (www.doe.state.in.us)

Standardized Test - A test administered in accordance with explicit directions for uniform administration.

Total Percent Pass – the total percentage of those students whose ISTEP+ score

earned them the rating of "Pass" or "Pass Plus." (www.doe.state.in.us)

Summary

While few would debate the importance of educating children for positive values, character traits and aspects of citizenship, there are still too few schools earnestly taking on the responsibility. Because schools must deliberately choose the content of their curriculum and use thoroughly researched programs, character education programs may not be chosen for implementation if they do not show substantial benefits to the overall academic achievement. Public schools are the ideal setting for teaching children about positive character traits and those with a vested interest in seeing an increase in character education curriculum should continue to initiate research on the effectiveness of such programs so that our nation may return to an expectation of civilized, respectful, and personally responsible citizens.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Character education is experiencing resurgence in implementation and popularity

in the American public schools and "has become the fastest growing school reform

movement in the United States" (Prestwich, 2004, p. 140; Williams, 2000). There was a

time in history when educating for positive character traits and democratic citizenship

was the primary focus of the public education system. Because societal demands

changed, the public schools were forced to change along with them and character

education, at several separate times in American history, was largely dropped as a

curricular focus. Public educators now are dealing with unprecedented demands on them

and on their time with the children in their care. Performance on standardized tests is a

primary focus of education in response to the federal Elementary and Secondary

Education Act of 2001, commonly known as "No Child Left Behind." With that

standards-based movement and its emphasis on test scores as the "primary means of

accountability", the curriculum has narrowed to focus on those content areas which are

measured on standardized exams, leaving character education in the pile of seemingly

non-urgent topic areas (Howard, Berkowitz & Schaeffer, 2004, p. 189). Schools are

required to continually improve on a multitude of performance indicators in order to

obtain funds and retain local control of their function. Simultaneously, the public is

calling for schools to respond to the recent increase in youth violence and apathy by

instilling values and character into America's youth. When forced to make choices with

time and other resources, "academic success – in the shallow sense of grades and SAT

scores – has been emphasized at the cost of virtue" (Lockwood, 1997, p. 13).

                            What is Character Education?

        In order to present the aspects, merits, benefits, drawbacks, and relevant research

on the topic of character education, one must first understand exactly what is being

discussed. Within the definition of character education is where part of the problem of

discussing the topic lies. Because there any so many varying definitions of character

education in addition to character itself, the discussion can easily digress into exactly

what is being discussed. In addition to the exact definition of character being frequently

debated, the topic of character education can be difficult to define due to the hundreds,

perhaps thousands, of ways that educators interpret the subject area and the various topics

being discussed all under the encompassing term character education.   According to the

Character Education Partnership (Otten, 2000), "character education is an umbrella term

used to describe many aspects of teaching and learning for personal development"

(Definitions and Approaches, ¶ 1).   Labels included under this umbrella may include

"moral reasoning / cognitive development"; "social and emotional learning"; "moral

education / virtue"; "life skills education"; "caring community"; 'health education";

"violence prevention"; "conflict resolution / peer mediation"; "ethic / moral philosophy"

(Otten, 2000, Definitions and Approaches, ¶ 1). Character education has often been

regarded as "synonymous with, compatible with, and/or a subset of citizenship

education" (Howard, Berkowitz & Schaeffer, 2004, p. 190). Because of these various

descriptors of character education programs, some schools include their efforts in these

various topic areas when asked if they provide character education programs while others

choose not to include themselves in the category of character educators because they do

focus specifically on citizenship or life skills education (Berkowitz & Beir, 2004).

Character education programs can range from "a limited set of stand alone and

homegrown lessons to fully integrated, comprehensive school-reform models"

(Berkowitz & Bier, 2004, p. 74). Consequently, conducting research on the effectiveness

of character education becomes murky given that what one school reports as their effort

to implement a character education program may look vastly different from another

school reporting the same efforts. While these differences exist and are well

documented, those researching character education have come to a professional

agreement as to what qualifies as a character education program when seeking the

evidence of an existing program for research purposes. This agreement is based on a

school's effort to provide education based on one of the many following components.

Character education in a general sense, according to Marvin Berkowitz, is "the

long term process of helping young people develop good character" (Sanchez, 2004,

Defining the Issue, ¶ 2). Lickona defines character education as "the intentional

proactive effort to develop good character" (Leming, 2005, p. 385). In another setting,

Thomas Lickona provided this definition for character education:

the deliberate, proactive effort to develop good character in kids – or, more simply, to teach children right from wrong. It assumes that right and wrong do exist, that there are objective moral standards that transcend individual choice – standards like respect, responsibility, honesty, and fairness – and that we should teach these directly to young people (Neill, 2007, What is Character Education?, ¶ 1).

Character education does find itself encompassing many different subsets in name. Some character education programs focus on traits referred to as values. Walburg and Wynne differentiated character and values by saying values involve dispositions and character refers to "observable actions that reflect values" (Sanchez, 2004, Defining the Issue, ¶ 1). Lickona melded these two concepts by saying that "character …(is) a matter of values in action" (Sanchez, 2004, Defining the Issue, ¶ 1).

By Anne Lockwood (1997), the definition is "…any school initiated program, designed in cooperation with other community institutions, to shape directly and systematically the behavior of young people by influencing explicitly the nonrelativistic values believed directly to bring about that behavior" (p. 5-6). Per Prestwich (2004), character education is "the deliberate effort to cultivate virtue" (p. 140).

The variations of character education lead to the trouble of presenting a unified definition of such a program. Programs range from those presenting a finite set of practicable skills to those which focus on theoretical, abstract, or overarching concepts which are meant to transcend specific situations (Lockwood, 1997). Some programs focus on school wide climate and culture while others rehearse character attributes.

Within these examples, the lists of skills, attributes, and concepts can vary greatly from programs presenting a few general ideas to those programs which present a minute concept for every week of the standard 36 week school year (Lockwood, 1997). Character education is also described as the "intentional, proactive effort by schools, districts, and states to instill in their students important core values such as caring, honesty, fairness, responsibility and respect for self and others" (Haynes & Thomas, 2001, p. 151). According to Timothy Gooding (2004), character education is "a calculated approach that reinforces the social skills and patterns of behavior needed to promote the development of citizens who contribute positively to the society in which they live" (Context of the Problem, ¶ 1). Although some definitions of character education deal purely with the personal values and social skills of development, character education is "often the umbrella term that describes concerted efforts to teach a number of qualities such as civic virtues, respect and responsibility, social and emotional learning, empathy and caring tolerance for diversity and service to the community" (Schwartz, Beatty & Dachnowicz, 2006, p. 26). Yet another broad definition of character education is "any school based K-12 initiatives either intended to promote the development of some aspect of student character or for which some aspect of student character was measured as a relevant outcome variable" (Schwartz, Beatty & Dachnowicz, 2006, p. 29). Skaggs and Bodenhorn (2006) endorse the following definition of character education: "any deliberate approach by which school personnel, often in conjunction with parents and community members…help children and youth become caring, principled, and responsible" (p. 84).

Aristotle defined good character as the life of right conduct. A life of good character is also one of virtue and Aristotle joined these two concepts in professing that there are two aspects to both of these concepts: self-oriented virtues or right conduct in relation to one's self, and other-oriented virtues or right conduct in relation to other persons (Lickona, 2001). With this viewpoint, character education should focus on internal traits and external traits. In a definition which focuses more on the citizenship aspect of many popular character education programs, Sommers (2002) states that "effective character education is based on core ethical values which form the foundation of democratic society – in particular, respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, caring, justice, fairness, civic virtue, and citizenship" (p. 37). In Baltimore, MD, schools promote "21 consensual ethical values which include internal and external values… values that are viewed as consistent with the U.S. Constitution and as beneficial to both the individual and society" (Lickona, 2001, p. 240). Lickona (Berkowitz & Bier, 2009, p. 1) provides another, more socially conscious definition in stating that "character education is the deliberate effort to develop good character based on core virtues that are good for the individual and good for society."

While this is a diverse list of the definition of character education by some significant contributors to the field, it is in no way exhaustive. The Indiana Clearinghouse for Citizenship and Character Education provides seven different definitions just on its "definitions" webpage. With a clearinghouse providing this many definitions, it remains clear why professionals in every level of education still vary on their definition of

"character education." Regardless of the definition used or the exact nature of the program being implemented, there is consensus on how to make any program effective.

What Does Effective Character Education Look Like?

The most critical part of effective character education is that it "connects intellect to character" and addresses the "disparity between thinking and doing" (Coles, 1995, P. 68). Along this line, Williams (2000) finds the definition of effective character education as a program which emphasizes "knowing the good, loving the good, and doing the good"; thereby encompassing the "cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains" (Key Concepts in Character Education, ¶ 1). Howard, Berkowitz & Schaffer (2004) list the interrelated parts as "moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral behavior" (p. 190). Lockwood (1993) endorses this definition by citing the explanation by Lickona that "you want young people to understand moral values, to heartily endorse these values, and to take action based on them" (p. 73). "Moral education that is merely intellectual misses the crucial emotional side of character, which serves as the bridge between judgment and action" (Lickona, 1993, p. 9). Davidson (Davidson & Lickona, 2007; Davidson, Lickona, & Khmelkov, 2007, p. 31) discussed two parts of character, leading to the need to have two aspects to character education. He divides character into "performance character and moral character." Performance character is relative to internal characteristics of strength whereas moral character is relational and with respect to external matters. Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn & Smith (2006) define character education "in terms of relationship virtues – respect, fairness, civility, tolerance; self-

oriented virtues – fortitude, self-discipline, effort, perseverance; or a combination of

the two" (p. 449). Further, according to Leming, effective programs should include

interesting, engaging activities for kids that focus on the desired behaviors (Lockwood,

1997). Leming also promotes the notion that effective programs should use clear,

developmentally appropriate language, meaningful examples, and include the thoughts of

stakeholders and their demands of appropriately behaving children. These effective

programs, according to Leming, also include positive reinforcements and rewards for the

opportunity to practice good behavior (Lockwood, 1997).

In an overarching, general way, character education should "be intentional and

comprehensive" (Berkowitz, 2002, p. 45). Haynes and Thomas (2001) also add that it

must be intentional. According to Berkowitz and Beir (2004), programs must be

implemented faithfully. The implementers, generally teachers, need to be fully trained in

the method of implementation. Program contents must be fully and accurately delivered

and implemented with fidelity. Schaeffer (1999) believes the program must "focus on

values throughout the school curricula and culture" (p. 4). Programs deemed most

effective "represent comprehensive, often schoolwide or districtwide, multifaceted

approaches" (Berkowitz & Beir, 2004, p. 76). Such programs are "multi-component

models that include classroom management, curricular, social skills training, parent

involvement, and/or school-reform elements" (Berkowitz & Bier, 2004, p. 76).

Regardless of what the curriculum looks like, it is important that the school community

reach consensus on the values to be taught in order to create ownership and to obtain buy-

in for the program. This consensus must be reached by all stakeholders in the community

(Haynes & Thomas, 2001). Brooks and Kahn (1993) reference a pilot character education program in the Los Angeles Unified School district as having collected from other programs, the eleven key elements for effective programs. Those elements include direct instruction, language based curriculum, positive language, content and process – processing being the teaching of application of the content, visual reinforcement, school climate approach – expanding beyond the classroom to all facets of school life, teacher-friendly materials, teacher flexibility and creativity, student participation, parental involvement and then some, and evaluation. These elements show that programs can vary in their exact contents but that successful programs encompass these similar traits.

Regardless of the name on the package or the exact verbiage used, character education programs must be "intentional, proactive and comprehensive…promoting the core values in all phases of school life" (Lickona, Schaps & Lewis, 1997, p. 29). In science, sometimes determining what something is begins by determining what it is not. Haynes and Berkowitz (2007) propose that character education is "far more than slogans or quick fix lessons about a work of the week" (How it Works, ¶ 1) instead, it must become "integral to the daily actions of everyone in the school community" (Haynes & Thomas, 2001). The Boston University Character Education Manifesto (1996) states, "Character education is not a single course, a quick fix program, or a slogan posted on a wall; it is an integral part of school life" (p. 4). While character education curriculum must be purposeful and encompassing, "effective character education is not an add-on, but instead uses 'teachable moments' in every classroom" (Haynes & Berkowitz, 2007, How it Works, ¶ 4). Thomas (1991) proposes that "character education should focus on

real-life, day-to-day situations" and prepare children "for later in life when reason will influence their conduct" by providing them with "habit-oriented moral instruction and practice" (The Current Paradigm, ¶ 4,5). Nisivoccia (1998) cites Streshly and Schaps's data gathering efforts which indicated that "a character education program that is broadly conceived and carefully carried out can have positive effects on students' attitudes, social skills and behavior" (p. 14). In the summary of the large research project entitled *What Works in Character Education* conducted by Berkowitz and Bier (2009), the conclusions were as follows in reference to effective practice: the chosen program must be effectively designed and implemented, an effective program rarely looks the same in two separate instances, it has far reaching implications and long term benefits, and it must be done well / with fidelity. In addition, effective programs use effective strategies for implementation including professional development, peer interaction, direct teaching, skill training, have an explicit agenda, involve the family and community, provide modeling and mentors, integrate into the academic curriculum and use a multi-strategy approach (Berkowitz & Bier, 2009). While this may seem like a rather large task list, it is in line with the necessary elements of any successful program or initiative. Character Education, like any educational program, must be implemented fully, faithfully, with fidelity, have clear goals and methods, and be developmentally appropriate for the children being asked to participate in it in order to maximize the program potential.

What Should Character Education Aim to Accomplish?

According to Schwartz, Beatty, and Dachnowicz (2006), "all character education programs share the following goals: increasing students' awareness of moral and ethical questions, affecting students' attitudes regarding such questions, (and) affecting students' actions" (p. 27). The goal of an effective program according to Schaeffer (1999) is to "surround students in an environment that exhibits, teaches and encourages practice in the values our society needs so our children are not only told about the values but also internalize them and make decisions and act in accordance with them" (p. 4). The goal according to the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (Berkowitz & Bier, 2009, p. 1) is to "raise children to become morally responsible, self-disciplined citizens." Haynes and Thomas (2001) propose that the goal of character education is to "develop students socially, ethically, and academically by infusing character development into every aspect of the school culture and curriculum" (p. 153). Former Secretary of Education Lauro F. Cavazos (2002) believes that "values education should help students find their place in the world and should build their self-confidence" (p. 696). Schaeffer (1998a) also believes that character education means "helping young people not only understand what is right (or preferable) but to want to take the right course and in fact, act upon it" (¶ 9). Character education curriculum should "help students commit themselves to a set of positive values and act on them consistently" (Burrett & Rusnak, 1993, p. 17).

A History and Political Perspective of Character Education

For most of history, in all societies and parts of the world, education has primarily been about character and moral development and secondarily about academic knowledge (Williams, 2000). Plato and Aristotle proposed that the training of "good and virtuous citizens" was the role of education (Education Week, 2004, ¶ 2). Socrates stated "the mission of education is to help people become both smart and good" (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999, p. 19). John Locke, the 17th century philosopher, believed "(academic) learning was secondary to virtue" (Education Week, 2004, ¶ 2). Character education has a long and varied history in American education even before American schools were formally developed (Prestwich, 2004). The original laws of the United States, as they were at that time colonies, declared that schools were to be established for the distinct goal of transmitting moral values, making it the oldest mission of the schools (Laud, 1997; Schaeffer, 1999). Huffman (2006) cites Lickona in stating "schools were founded to make kids good, then to make them smart" (p. 59). Character development and education were the manner in which the founding fathers intended to further the democratic concepts of independence, responsibility, and self-reliance. This education helped to establish the citizenship and work ethic needed in the "newly industrialized society" (Rusnak, 1998, p. 17, Sanchez, 2004). The states, upon developing their individual educational systems, recognized that "moral and social development was essential to a child's education and required deliberate action"; a theory that became known as character education (Schaeffer, 1998c, p. 30). Thomas Jefferson spoke of the need for our public education system to "infuse virtue into the masses" (Leming, 2005, p.383). The

leading men of this time, George Washington, Benjamin Franklin and Noah Webster

saw character education as a means to "unify an increasingly ethnically and socially

diverse population" and to produce men whose "manners, morals, and habits are perfectly

homogeneous with those of the country" (Leming, 2005, p.383). These men saw

character building in the schools as a way to unify a nation of newly joined citizenry and

give them a common creed. The 18th century began to bring about various schools of

thought regarding character education. Methods ranged from more traditional

approaches of teaching values to a relativistic approach focused less on right and wrong

and more on teaching students to think critically about decisions and ethical dilemmas.

This relativistic approach is the basis for more modern methods of character education

(Was, Woltz & Drew, 2006).

John Dewey, the influential early 20th century American educator and

philosopher, "saw moral education as central to the school's mission" (Huitt, 2004,

Character Education in the United States, ¶ 1). It was also at this time that the National

Education Association publically approved the sentiment that "the building of character

is the real aim of the schools and the ultimate reason for the expenditure of millions for

their maintenance" (Leming, 2005, p.383). During this time, with a renewed social

commitment to character education, there was a distinct shift in some of the verbiage

used to describe the educational venture. Words such as "values" and "morals" were left

out of discussions in favor of "character", a more generalized term meant to define

appropriate social behavior rather than proposing a "right" or "pious" manner of

behaving **(**Leming, 2005**).** Conversely at this time in the early part of the 20th century,

"logical positivism" arrived in the United States which began to bring about the discussion of the difference between facts and values, the latter of which was determined to be expression of feeling, not objective truth. Consequently, in some circles, morality became an issue of value judgment and not a subject for public schools (Lickona, 1993, p 6).

Prior to World War II, character education remained the central focus of public education (Sanchez, 2004). Following World War II, America embraced Dr. Spock and the immerging method of values education became one of allowing children to choose their values path instead of one of direct instruction. In addition, after the Second World War, immigration was greatly decreased which reduced the perceived need to indoctrinate new Americans on the values and ways of America (Elkind, 1998). This reduction in the teaching of character education also may have resulted from a landmark study conducted by the Teacher's College at Columbia University which led many educators to "conclude that formal character education programs were ineffective" (Titus, 1994). Any lingering character education curriculum was generally relegated to Social Studies departments and transformed into Citizenship and patriotism content, which was deemed appropriate given the political climate of the time and the impending Cold War (Leming, 2005). In the middle of the 20th century, the United States was embroiled in new political phenomena such as the "red scare" abroad and racial tensions domestically which again, put such non-concrete learning objectives as character education on the back burner (Lerner, 2006). Also at this time, the newly popular role of television began showing what the ideal family looked like and how people with good moral character

behaved and interacted within society (Burrett & Rusnak, 1993). When the intellectual competition with other nations became the primary focus of American education in the 1950s, character education was dropped in favor of more rigorous concentration in math and the sciences (Sanchez, 2004; Starr, 1999). The decline of character education programs at this time was also attributed to the reported fear that "teaching morality would be equated to the teaching of religion" (Skaggs & Bodenhorn, 2006, p. 84).

In the 1960s, autonomy and individual rights began to take precedence over responsibility which "delegitimized moral authority" and weakened social commitment (Lickona, 1993, p. 6). The backlash against what could be seen as indoctrinated character education at this time could also have been attributed to the recent Vietnam conflict which sent many young Americans into a revolt against anything which they perceived to be a controlling, totalitarian regime (Burrett & Rusnak, 1993; Lerner, 2006). The mix of scientific orientation with the rejection of an indoctrinated moral code led to the insurgence of "ethical relativism" which dominated the 1960s era of free thought and the upheaval against the oppressive government (Goble & Brooks, 1983, p. 18). Following the events known as the "Cultural Revolution" of the late 1960s, the American public again called for character education to be reinserted into the education system as America was newly concerned with the "well being of youth" (Leming, 2005, p.385). As American society continued to diversify in the latter 20th century, the society became more pluralistic and a question of whose values should be taught was again ignited along with the continuance of the debate that values education brings to the distinction between

church and state (Lickona, 1993). The fear of litigation over those separations turned many educators away from direct values education (Sanchez, 2004).

Another shift in theory began when the United States Supreme Court stated in their 1986 decision on *Bethel School District No 403 v Frasier, 478 U.S. 683*, that "teachers have the responsibility to inculcate the shared values of a civilized social order" (Lasley & Biddle, 1996, p. 158). The Reagan era of the 1980s brought about the more conservative views toward American society and another pendulum swing in American minds regarding the direction of the youth (Leming, 2005). The landmark education report *A Nation at Risk*, published in 1983, noted that the American concern for education also involves the "intellectual, moral and spiritual strengths of our people, which knit together the very fabric of our society," once again highlighting the fact that character education intends to support the American mission of democracy and citizenship (Murphy, 1998, p. 14). In 1987, the National School Boards Association proposed, to the United States Department of Education, a project to enhance character education development in the schools (Huitt, 2004). From the mid 1980s to the mid 1990s, the conversation slowly moved from should values and virtues be taught to which values and how (Murphy, 1998). The pervasiveness of many social ills has "led many educators and political leaders to once again look to the schools to educate not only the minds but also the consciences of children" (Starr, 1999, An Historic Imperative, ¶ 3). The social situation in the 1990s lead to a character education movement "fueled by a sense of crisis regarding the character of our young people" (Prestwich, 2004, p. 142). Since the early 1990s, the federal government has shown their endorsement of character education by

way of making grants available to states wishing to pursue character education

programs in their schools (Education Week, 2004). As is evidenced by the education

laws in almost all states, it is apparent that the original mission of education included

teaching children to be good citizens both ethically and academically making character

education much more than a recent fad but in fact the original primary function of public

education (Schaeffer, 1998a). This federal and state support can be attributed in part to a

response to the American labor force which requires workers who are dependable,

honest, and can work with others (Lickona, 1997; Prestwich, 2004). President Clinton in

his 1996 State of the Union Address called for American schools to "teach character

education, to teach good values and good citizenship" (Boston University, 1996, p. 3,

Lockwood, 1997, p. 3). Even President Bush engaged in the public discussion by stating,

as quoted by then Secretary of Education, Rod Paige, "Our children must learn to make a

living, but even more, they must learn how to live" (Paige, 2003). Since more schools

systems are on board regarding the need for character education, the debate is turning

from Should we or shouldn't we? to How do we best transmit values to our students?

(Leming, 2005).

Curricular Trends in Character Education

Regardless of the specific attempts at a character education curriculum, all adults

with whom children come in contact in the school setting are models and teach character

education, whether intentionally or not (Haynes & Thomas, 2001). Modeling and

example are two widely accepted forms of teaching and adults who come in contact with

children in an educational setting have the opportunity to consistently practice these

proven techniques with great effect (Starnes, 2006; Williams, 2000). Berkowitz (2002)

found when examining the "Science of Character Education" and what works insisted

that "first, it is clear that the primary influence on a child's character development is how

people treat the child" and "second, we know that children learn, and their development

is influenced by, what they observe" (p. 58-59). When asked to reference where

character education fits in to the curriculum, Ryan and Bohlin are quoted by Benninga,

Berkowitz, Kuehn and Smith (2003) as saying, "the simple answer is everywhere" (p.

20). Many extracurricular and co-curricular activities provide opportunities for students

to make values choices and encourage students to practice good values (Titus, 1994).

"Since education seeks to help students develop as persons, character education is part

and parcel of the whole enterprise" (Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn, & Smith, 2003, p. 20).

Because the purpose of character education is to educate the whole child in life strategies

and to integrate life lessons into the curriculum, it is clear that "character education is

good education" (Berkowitz & Bier, 2004, p. 82).

There are several methods for teaching character education, each with their own

attributes and none required to be mutually exclusive in order to be effective. Direct

instruction, also known as 'curricular' or 'formal', uses separate lessons planned for and

delivered by the teacher and "incorporate(s) the lessons into a formal curriculum." This

method is recommended by Peterson and Skiba "to ensure the students fully understand

the statement" (Prestwich, 2004, p. 144). Indirect instruction, also referred to as the

'instructional' model or the 'informal', focuses on modeling and tends to take those

'teachable moments' which are based on student experience and work from them. In these scenarios, students are tasked with finding the problem, the moral lesson and to solve the problem independently (Leming, 2005; Nicholson, 2002; Was, Woltz & Drew, 2006). Per Nicholson (2002), "most research on direct instruction finds that this approach is most likely to produce long-term changes in student behavior when it is combined with adult modeling of proper behavior, changes in school climate, community collaborations, and opportunities that allow for personal implementation and reflection" (Direct Instruction, ¶ 4). These debates centered on the appropriateness or perceived benefits of one approach versus the other are in line with other pedagogical models in debating whether teacher centered or child centered methods are best for learning. As with any curricular initiative, the goals and expected outcomes must be clear in order to properly institute a successful program (Berkowitz & Fekula, 1999). Typically, the justification for selecting one approach over another is "less than scientific", typically "based on convenience, external advocacy, limited knowledge, intuition and so on" (Berkowitz, 2002, p. 47).

Integrated Character Education is one popular curricular model for character development. This model emphasizes the affective dimension of learning and decision making, linking the cognitive with the affective to bridge the gap between knowing and doing (Burrett & Rusnak, 1993). Lickona emphasizes that "character education which is strictly intellectual misses the crucial emotional side of character which acts as a bridge between judgment and action" (Titus, 1994). James Leming, a noted character education researcher, contends that the programs that show the most promise are those which

"combine developmental insights into how children learn with research finding about how children are socialized" (Lockwood, 1997, p. 25). Many Blue Ribbon Schools incorporate character education into their curriculum in highly effective ways. Character education qualities are incorporated into social studies, English, and guidance programs. Some focus on a virtue-of-the-week / month and include family participation in their objectives. Staff may incorporate role playing and the use of literature to teach values. One elementary school even uses puppets to broach topics of ethical judgment and manners. Of these Blue Ribbon Schools, 40% stated that they promoted character development through a specific curricular program of units in the curriculum. Approximately 11% of the Blue Ribbon Schools responded to a survey about their curriculum by stating that they use a commercially developed character education program. In addition to the curricular materials, many Blue Ribbon Schools stated that their school libraries contained materials which teachers used to promote positive character development. This literature can be used in a variety of settings and content areas and is a popular method of integrating character education into the curriculum (Murphy, 1998; Prestwich, 2004). Character education content can be integrated into "everyday curriculum in just about every subject" including math and physical education and often in connection with service learning, "constructive activities outside of the traditional classroom context" (Berkowitz, 2002; Creasy, 2008, ¶ 11; Nicholson, 2002, Active Engagement, ¶ 1). However, according to the Elaine Otten (2000) writing for the Social Studies Development Center at Indiana University, character education programs

are most often brought in to the consciousness of students through literature and the "study of heroes and heroins" (Definitions and Approaches, ¶ 7).

Bigler (2008) discusses the "many different ways to implement [a] character education program" but cites "a comprehensive / holistic approach to implementing the program has shown to be most effective because it uses all aspects of schooling for character development" (p. 45). Character education programs which are effective include "meaningful and challenging academic curriculum that respects all learners and helps them succeed" (Lickona, Schaps & Lewis, 1997, p. 30). While the specifics of character education curriculum may be debated at length, there is little dispute that character education programs are needed and must work in tandem with academic curriculum in order to be effective (Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn & Smith, 2006). "Academic competence and character development are not mutually exclusive but complementary" (Huitt, 2004, Character Education in the United States, ¶ 5). Anderson (2000, p.140) proposed that character education must be "entwined in all curriculums," not a separate curriculum (Haynes & Thomas, 2001). Prestwich (2004) also advocates, by method of citing others, "infusing the entire school and curriculum with character education" (p. 144). In her article entitled, "How to Integrate Character Education into the Curriculum," Jane Gilness (2003) "came to the conclusion that character education cannot be isolated, codified, and packaged into tidy little instructional units in a how-to manual" (p. 343). Character education must be an all encompassing effort throughout the school building. "From the classroom to the playground, from the cafeteria to the faculty room, the formation of good character must be the central concern" (Boston University,

1996, p. 4). The chosen program will "require an all-encompassing approach that focuses on the moral impact of the school community" (Sanchez, 2004, What to Do, ¶ 1).

In a classroom where character education is to take place, there must first be "a positive classroom climate replete with a strong sense of community and proper relations among members" (Gilness, 2003, p. 343). "Research indicates that learning environment, often referred to as part of the invisible curriculum, can have a positive effect on student pro-social values" (Titus, 1994). Berkowitz (2002) proposes that "the degree to which children perceive their schools as caring communities is directly related to the effectiveness of those schools in promoting student character development" (p. 57). When looking for schools which exemplify effective character education, Schaeffer (1998c) found that these schools "immerse themselves in character education" (p. 31). These effective schools would ideally "focus on behavior rather than traits" (Prestwich, 2004, p. 145). They do not employ small, "'add-on' program(s)" which are "extricable from the daily life of the school" (Schaeffer, 1998b, Obligation, ¶ 6) instead they enrich their academic curricula with discussions of values, help students internalize core values and integrate community service in to the school day. Anderson (2000) echoed that sentiment by saying, "character education is not a quick-fix program, it is a part of school life" (p. 139). Add on programs tend to give teachers the feeling that they are required to fit in another program, thereby making more work when in fact, if properly designed, character education should be an approach to teaching what is already required which when effective, makes the overall job of teaching easier (Haynes & Thomas, 2001). Effective character education does not mean utilizing the "quick, add-on program, but

instead integrating character development into all aspects of the school – its

curriculum, extracurricular activities, management, governance and interpersonal

relationships among adults and students" (Schaeffer, 1998a, ¶ 10). Schaeffer (1998a)

refers to several administrators of schools noted for their award winning character

development programs in stating that they have "integrated character education into

everything they do" and that "some have made direct connections between character

education and their states' new academic standards" (¶ 18, 20). Former Secretary of

Education Rod Paige (2003) proposed that "comprehensive and quality character

education is critical. Character education cannot be covered in ten minutes a day. It must

be at the heart of the entire education program. Character can't be taught in a course, it is

a way of living."

Why (explicitly) Teach Character Education? and Why is Character Education the Job of the School?

The list of reasons why character education should be taught and why it should be

the responsibility of the public schools is comprehensive and compelling. Schaeffer

(1999) believes that character education "can provide our nation's youth with the

information and skills they need to mature into ethical and virtuous people" (p. 1).

Lickona believes "character education is necessary in order for us to be fully human. The

qualities and strengths of good character define the hallmarks of human maturity and

development" (Sanchez, 2004, The Challenge, ¶ 1). Lasley and Biddle (1996) quote,

regarding the need to explicitly teach values, "value neutrality is more dangerous than

value advocacy" (p. 159).   Ryan and Bohlin (1999) propose that "a citizenry without

character leads to two inevitable alternatives: social chaos or a policeman at every

corner" (p. 18). "Yet, the real value of character education is far broader. It is not to

protect against violence but to protect the fabric of our society" (Schaeffer, 1998a, Help

for Troubled Students, ¶ 3). The Boston University Center for Advancement of Ethics

and Character (1996) professes that "true character education is the hinge upon which

academic excellence, personal achievement, and true citizenship depends" (p. 3).

Howard, Berkowitz, and Schaeffer (2004) point to a well-functioning democracy and

enlightened citizenry as the need for character education in public education. Schwartz,

Beatty, and Dachnowicz (2006) believe that "because a democratic society depends on a

citizenry that shares such values as justice, fairness, responsibility, and caring, many

believe that it is the obligation of schools, both public and private, to teach such values"

(p. 27). Values education provides perspective, "largely by putting the individual into a

community context" (Cavazos, 2002, p. 696). The Elementary and Secondary Education

Act of 2001, commonly known as No Child Left Behind, calls for schools to "contribute

not only to students' academic performance but also to their character" (Benninga,

Berkowitz, Kuehn & Smith, 2006, p. 448). Haynes and Berkowitz (2007) believe that

"we need citizens who have the strength of character to uphold democratic freedom in the

face of unprecedented challenges at home and abroad" (Change is Coming, ¶ 3).

The school, as a social institution, is charged with "developing children who will

support and strengthen dominant civic and moral values" (Nisivoccia, 1998, p. 15). With

the decline in the influence of the family structure, the promotion of material gains by the

media, and the lack of virtuous role models available within the government and big

business, the schools are compelled to take on the task of educating Americans for

positive character traits (Cottom, 1996; Sanchez, 2004,). As indicated by the 2005 study

by Lickona and Davison and the 2005 study by Berkowitz and Bier, character education

is "the road map to building a more caring school culture, a safer, more nurturing

environment, and a more responsible and responsive student body, all of which lay the

foundation for improved academic performance" (Schwartz, Beatty & Dachnowicz,

2006, p. 30). The school is also a natural community "filled with human relationships"

and thus an appropriate place to learn values (Lickona, 1997, p. 25). To be effective,

"[character education] must take place in the context of a lived experience" (Elkind,

1998, p. 9). Assuming that character development does not "occur within a vacuum," the

school should take advantage of the opportunity for "explicit instruction about right and

wrong" within the many settings occurring naturally within the school environment

(Huffman, 2006, p. 58). With the amount of time and years that children in America

spend in the school setting, it would be implausible to think that their character and moral

values would not be affected by their experiences. In the "900 hours per year" that

American children spend in schools, there are so many issues that arise related to the

school experience and with connections to the greater society, schools should not ignore

these issues but use these safe opportunities to explicitly instruct children on dealing with

these real life situations (Schaeffer, 1998b, Obligation, ¶ 1). Children shape their sense of

community and purpose and their sense of connection or alienation based on their

experiences in school (Valde, 1999). Given that this is true, schools would be remiss to

not address this curriculum, be it intentional or hidden, with well researched and purposeful content material.

When debating whether public schools are the place for values education, Lasley and Biddle (1996) promote this thought, "when society's values are shaped and revised by the fashion of the marketplace, education's influence must grow outward from a core of integrity and confidence firmly rooted in humane goals that are currently lacking in most other institutions" (p. 160). Gooding (2004) goes so far as to say that "educational institutions are derelict when they fail to stress the importance of students increasing their abilities to get along and to be responsible, courteous, honest, and compassionate in every aspect of their lives" (Introduction, ¶ 2). As schools are a reflection of and must function as an extension of the greater society, a 1989 Gallup poll found that "79 percent of Americans favored traditional character education in the public schools" (Greenawalt, 1996, p. 7). Greenawalt (1996) also cites a 1990 meeting of business leaders as being concerned about the "crisis of character" that America's youth were facing and a 1993 survey by research organization Public Agenda found that 71 percent of Americans "believe it is more important for the schools to teach values than to teach academic subjects" (p. 7). Ryan and Bohlin (1999) reference similar surveys and conclude that "the voice of the people, added to the support provided by the wisdom of the past and our laws, should provide educators with the confidence and public trust they need to energetically engage in character education" (p. 22). Murphy (1998) quotes the Aspen Declaration, the founding document of what was to become the Character Counts Coalition, as stating, "People do not automatically develop good moral character,

therefore, conscientious efforts must be made to help young people develop the values

and abilities necessary for moral decision making and conduct" (p. 22). Lickona states

that "good character is not formed automatically, it is developed over time through a

sustained process of teaching, example, learning, and practice" (Haynes & Thomas, 2001,

p. 151). "Unless schools become more purposeful in the transmission of values," state

Lasley and Biddle (1996, p. 162), "…students will fill the vacuum with self-defined, self-

referential values." To abstain from purposefully teaching character "is merely to

abdicate control to chance or other influences" (Berkowitz & Fekula, 1999, p. 18;

Cottom, 1996). James Leming, contemporary character education proponent, believes, as

is cited by Lockwood (1997), that children need not be in a state of moral crisis in order

for character education to be appropriate and necessary. His perspective is that it is

"inconceivable that any generation would raise its children without transmitting to them

certain sorts of shared values" and that this teaching is a "natural part of development" (p.

26).

Schools transmit values through content and curriculum as well as through

routines, assumptions, policies and programs (Thomas, 1991). According to Lasley and

Biddle (1996), "whether teachers admit it or not, they are significant value transmitters

within the classroom context" (p. 158). Elkind (1998) states, "teachers – who are

competent, caring, and sensitive to children's needs – are the best purveyors of moral

values" (p. 9). It is also assumed that teachers do not have the choice as to whether to

teach values or not, for their every action is a teaching of values, intentional or not; so the

decision must be made as to how and when the intentional teaching will occur (Lasley &

Biddle, 1996). The Character Education Partnership professes that "there is no such thing as value-neutral schools or value-free education. Schools teach values every day, by design or default. When schools do not teach values, they are teaching that values are not important" (Prestwich, 2004; Starr, 1999, Is That Our Job, ¶ 4). Brewer (2007) cites character education advocates in saying that "teachers teach values in school, willingly or unwillingly, through the delivery of the curriculum, conflict resolution, discipline, and conversation" (Significance of the Problem, ¶ 1). No aspect of schooling is values free – from the curricula, pedagogy, climate, structures, and policies – all aspects of schooling promote a set of values which are impressed upon the children attending (Titus, 1994; Williams, 2000). Given that these aspects of schooling inevitably convey a message, schools may as well take the opportunity to make intentional choices regarding these educational facets to ensure that the message being conveyed is positive. Schools expect children to be able to "play nicely" with each other, make good choices regarding the use of their time, and to try hard at their school work. Educators have little right to expect these behaviors without explicitly teaching children how to proceed in this way (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999). With that, schools should recognize the opportunity to positively impact a child's perceptions and decision making skills in relation to their experiences (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999). The question is then not whether to do character education but instead how consciously, with what foci, and with what methods (Howard, Berkowitz, & Schaeffer, 2004; Lickona, 1997).

What Benefits Come from the Explicit Teaching of Character Education?

Character education does more than educate children for positive character traits and actions directly. Effective character education programs can change the climate of a school by affecting the attitudes and behaviors of the students. When properly executed, character education programs "positively influence school climate, thereby enhancing learning and academic performance" (Sherblom, Marshall & Sherblom, 2006, p. 19). According to Lickona, "schools are better places when they are civil and caring communities that promulgate, teach, celebrate and enforce the values on which good character is based" and "such an environment [is] far more conducive to teaching and learning" (Sanchez, 2004, The Challenge, ¶ 1). Goble and Brooks (1983) promote the following snowball scenario in defense of character education:

> Students benefit by acquiring positive attitudes and habits that enhance their self-esteem and make their lives happier and more productive. Teacher's work becomes easier and more satisfying when they achieve greater classroom discipline. Parents are pleased when their children learn to be more courteous, considerate and productive. School administrators welcome the improvements in discipline, attendance, scholarship, and student and teacher morale. (p. 111)

Character education programs which improve students' "interpersonal capacities" … "all foster an ability to get along with others and to be a responsible member of a group, whether a family, a classroom, or a school" (Sherblom, Marshall & Sherblom, 2006, p. 22). "Research into the effectiveness of values clarification and moral reasoning curricula indicates that both programs have some effect on student thinking" (Titus,

1994). Nisivoccia (1998) discussed that "comprehensive character education encourages students to think for themselves, test their assumptions, question others, and remain in dialogue" (p. 10). These activities develop the skills necessary for "autonomous and critical moral reasoning" (Nisivoccia, 1998, p. 10). Raymond (2001) cites the evidence that "students with good character …typically give academics a good try" (What is Known, ¶ 1). With the goal of every school-based endeavor being centered around academic achievement, simply moving students to try harder at academics is a step in the right direction toward improvement. Effective character education programs can cause changes in behavior and climate. Those changes will in turn affect academics. "Educators and parents hope that in schools with more positive and less disruptive behavior, students will achieve at a higher level" (Skaggs & Bodenhorn, 2006, p. 108). According to Thomas (1991), "improving the conduct of American youth through character-building programs will help to reverse the rise of a variety of social problems…as well as improve students' achievement test scores" (The Current Paradigm, ¶ 7). Character education in schools makes sense because schools are "more conducive to teaching and learning when they are civil and caring human communities that …hold students and staff accountable to the values on which good character is based" (Lickona, 1996, p. 93). Haynes and Berkowitz (2007) reference their research when they propose that "done well, character development enhances academic performance" (¶ 6).

Research – Behavioral Benefits from the Explicit Teaching of Character Education

Thomas Lickona, after extensive research on the California Child Development Project, reported that statistically significant differences occurred in the following areas for children in the experimental group of the study: classroom behavior, playground behavior, social problem-solving skills and commitment to democratic values. In addition, Lickona reported that "these gains have been achieved without any sacrifice in academic achievement" (Rusnak, 1998, p. 15). The development of positive social skills and relationships is linked to the reduction of negative behaviors, such as drug use, membership in gangs, juvenile delinquency and high school dropout which is in turn linked to increased student achievement (Brewer, 2007). Pro-social behavior and engagement along with academic engagement, and the degree of interest in learning, all of which can be positively affected by character education, is strongly correlated with academic achievement (Brewer, 2007). In the chapter entitled "Benefits of Character Education," Goble and Brooks (1983) cite the following specific benefits of using the Character Education Curriculum as cited by school personnel. Various administrators attribute improved classroom discipline, reduction in theft, vandalism and violence, improved attendance, and improved student attitudes to the Character Education Curriculum. Also attributed to the Character Education Curriculum is evidence of student's increased verbal skills, improved teacher morale, and increased community support toward public schools (Goble & Brooks, 1983). As is noted by Goble and Brooks (1983), "several educational studies have identified a positive correlation between discipline and academic performance" (p. 121). "Lack of discipline in American schools

leads to violence, vandalism, thefts, drugs, alcohol, and reduced academic achievement, and also deprives those students who want to study of a peaceful environment in which to do so" (Goble & Brooks, 1983, p 122). A study by James S. Coleman, cited by Goble and Brooks (1983), states that "schools with…less absenteeism and an orderly environment have higher achievement" (p. 122).

In a longitudinal study of the Weber County, UT character education program, "teachers in the program classrooms reported a statistically significant two-and-one-half-times reduction in problem behavior in students" (Leming, 1993, p. 68). In research based on the character education program Positive Action, the U.S. Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse found an improvement index of +14 percentile points in academics, which included retentions and absenteeism in the category, and +19 percentile point improvement index in behavior (United States Department of Education, 2009). In the Character Education Projects Schools of Excellence, incidents of vandalism, fighting, shoplifting, suspension, expulsion and drop out area all reduced (Haynes & Thomas, 2001; Schaeffer, 1999). The California Student Assistance Programs identified Positive Action as a program "effective for meeting their goals of reduced behavioral and disciplinary violations while improving attendance and academic performance" (Allred, 2008, p. 27). In a study of students exposed to the Positive Action program, students reports of increased feelings were as follows: 56% increase in feeling safe at school, 50% increase of meaningful participation, and 36% increase in school connectedness (Allred, 2008). Overall, research on the effects of children being exposed to the Positive Action character development program show a 90% drop in discipline referrals, 85% reduction

in violence / bullying, 37% reduction in drop out rates, 45% reduction in absenteeism,

80% drop in suspensions, and 13% drop in truancy (Allred, 2008). Sherblom, Marshall,

and Sherblom (2006) cite a growing body of evidence that suggests "that a positive

school climate may enhance student academic performance in significant ways" (p. 21).

Studies conducted by Lickona and Davidson in 2005 and Berkowitz and Bier also in

2005 fit together to advocate for character education. The Lickona and Davidson study

investigated character education initiatives which received recognition for excellence

while the Berkowitz and Bier study examined other research studies in order to provide

empirical evidence of what works in character education. Together, the studies provide

evidence that "effective character education not only improves school climate and student

behavior but can also lead to academic improvement" (Schwartz, Beatty & Dachnowicz,

2006, p. 26).

 "Programs that improve students interpersonal capacities …all foster an ability to

get along with others and to be a responsible member of a group, whether a family, a

classroom, or a school" (Sherblom, Marshall & Sherblom, 2006, p. 22). Marshall,

Pritchard, and Gunderson as cited by Sherblom, Marshall, and Sherblom (2006), support

the (positive) link between the environment and learning and the converse link between

climate and behavior problems. Bigler (2008) cites Berkowitz and Bier's research among

others which finds "(properly implemented) character education frequently…reduces risk

behaviors, increases desirable behaviors, and improves social-emotional and pro-social

competencies" in addition to "resulting in fewer discipline referrals" (p. 8). A

community school in the Cherry Creek district in Colorado noticed the following

statistics after creating and implementing a strategy to curb aggressive student

behavior: 50% decrease in verbal and physical harassment maintained over a four year

period and a 30% decrease in behavioral reports (Lundstrom, 1999). In another proposal

by Berkowitz and Bier (2004, p.75; Was, Woltz & Drew, 2006), they state that

demonstrated effects of character education include "academic motivation and

aspirations, academic achievement, pro-social behavior, bonding to school, pro-social

and democratic values, conflict resolution skills, moral reasoning maturity, responsibility,

respect, self-efficacy, self-control, self-esteem, social skills, and trust in and respect for

teachers." Garry Raymond (2001) cites several noted researchers in his statement that

there are "several references which indicate that the infusion of character education into a

schools' curriculum will result in a decreased number of discipline referrals, improved

student behavior in general and an increase in the daily attendance rate" (What is Known,

¶ 2).

At a middle school in rural / suburban Arnold, MO, administrators cite the

implementation of a home grown character education program as contributing to the rise

in academic performance, 70% decline in disciplinary referrals, reduction in student

failure rate, and improved attendance (Haynes & Berkowitz, 2007). A school in Dayton,

OH, developed their own values program in response to unflattering statistics and

behavior and reported a "slow but steady transformation" manifesting in a dramatic

reduction in discipline problems and a decline in absenteeism (Rusnak, 1998, p. 16).

Research conducted over 15 years by Victor Battistich of the University of Missouri – St.

Louis concludes that "comprehensive, high-quality character education can prevent a

wide range of problems, including aggressive and antisocial behaviors, drug use, precocious sexual activity, criminal activities academic underachievement and school failure" (Haynes & Berkowitz, 2007, A 'New' School, ¶ 7). Berkowitz and Bier (2004) have found effective character education can "reduce absenteeism, discipline referrals, pregnancy, school failure, suspensions, school anxiety and substance use" (p. 75). Thomas (1991) asserts that "character education has a direct and positive relationship to high standards of academic responsibility" (The Current Paradigm, ¶ 7). Howard, Berkowitz, and Schaeffer (2004) quote research findings in reference to the Child Development Project that this program "has been shown to promote pro-social behavior, reduce risky behaviors, stimulate academic motivation, create a positive school community, result in higher grades and foster democratic values" (p. 205). "Schools with character education produce students with better behavior, better academic performance and better morale. They have less tardiness, less truancy, and fewer discipline problems" (Toronto Star, 2002, p. A23). According to the Elaine Otten with the Social Studies Development Center at Indiana University (2000), "many schools with successful character education programs have observed fewer disciplinary referrals for misbehavior, improved school attendance, fewer student drop outs, and higher performance scores on standardized tests" (Divergent Points of View, ¶ 2). This group also proposes that when schools are "welcoming, supportive places for students, students are more likely to attend and stay on task…and student achievement is likely to improve" (Divergent Points of View, ¶ 2). The significance of improving student behavior may not immediately seem to be academically linked but the lineage is clear. When children disrupt class less often,

are suspended less, absent less, and have fewer troubles with the law, they are in

school. It is indisputable that children will learn more from school when they are in

school. In addition, when there are fewer disruptive students and teaching can commence

as planned, those students without regular disciplinary problems can more easily learn

and are more apt to stay in school (Seidman, 2005). When teachers need not stop class to

deal with disruptions and other students are not influenced by negative behaviors, the

learning environment improves for all leading to improved academic achievement.

Research – Academic Benefits from the Explicit Teaching of Character Education

Because character education programs have typically been seen as "a practice and

not a science" and often need to "fight for space in the curriculum," the need for research

based programs is necessary to substantiate the placement of a program into the schedule

and, like all other educational programs, prove that the program is "doing more good than

harm" (Berkowitz & Bier, 2004, p. 72; Lockwood, 1997, p. 30). Brewer, in his 2007

dissertation entitled *Effect of the Great Expectations Character Education Approach on*

Elementary Student Achievement, referenced the assertion by Fleming, Haggerty,

Catalano, Harachi, Mazza, and Gruman in their publication *Do Social and Behavioral*

Characteristics Targeted by Preventative Interventions Predict Standardized Test Scores

and Grades? that "positive social skills and emotions are linked to student achievement

in the classroom and increased standardized test scores" (Significance of the Problem, ¶

3). In research conducted on the Character Education Curriculum as referenced by Goble

and Brooks (1983), school administrators referenced improved scholarship as a specific

benefit attributed to the use of the program. Viadero, in her 2007 article, cites a "growing body of research in the field that suggests that character education programs, some of which are embedded in social studies or English classes, can boost students' academic skills as well as their social development" (p. 20). In an effort to substantiate the use of resources toward content which some do not believe enhances academic performance, Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn and Smith (2006) reference the following: "At a time when resources are scarce…our research suggests that school goals and activities associated with good character education programs are also associated with academic achievement" (p. 452). Studies cited by Carol Gerber Allred (2008) report that while all students exposed to the Positive Action program show improvement in behavior and academics, the low performing students improve more, closing the achievement gap. Sherblom, Marshall and Sherblom (2006) cite "one of the most promising recent developments regarding improving school based standardized test scores is the accumulating evidence that characteristics associated with character education can play a productive role in improving academic scores" (p. 19-20).

As is referenced by Stephen N. Elliott, Professor of Educational Psychology at the University of Wisconsin – Madison, studies suggest that "as you facilitate social development, you are concurrently, for many kids, advancing their academic function." Elliott cites a specific Italian study which proposed "children's positive social skills to be powerful predictors of academic achievement" and that "social skills that are part of character education programs may be 'academic enablers'" (Education Week, 2004, ¶ 12). Berkowitz and Bier (2004) have reported on a multitude of studies all indicating that

"quality character education results in academic gains for students" (p.78) and are cited by Bigler (2008) in stating that character education programs work in that they "frequently improve academic performance" (p. 45). Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn and Smith (2006) point to a "growing body of research [which] supports the notion that high quality character education can promote …and enhance…academic achievement" (p. 449). In one particular study conducted by Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn and Smith (2006), they summarized their findings by stating that "good quality character education was positively associated with academic achievement, both across academic domains and over time" (p. 450). Bristol University researchers "claim that teaching character education helps pupils to develop as learners and may also improve their academic achievement" (Creasy, 2008, ¶ 5). Research conducted on the effectiveness of the programs Peaceful Schools Project and the Responsive Classroom found that "students in implementing schools had significantly greater gains in standardized academic test scores than did students in comparison schools" (Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn & Smith, 2003, p. 21). The Child Development Project found positive follow up data when they studied the course grades and achievement test scores of middle school students who attended CDP elementary schools and found those scores to be higher for the exposed group then for comparison students. Corroborating results have come from similar longitudinal studies based on the Seattle Social Development Project. (Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn & Smith, 2003, 2006; Haynes & Thomas, 2001).

Although the Peaceful Schools Project has for its purpose to reduce disruptive behaviors, an evaluation "revealed significant gains for the implementing elementary

school on the Metropolitan Achievement Test compared with non-implementing

elementary school" (Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn & Smith, 2003, p. 20). Schools

designated as Schools of Excellence by the Character Education Partnership are showing

substantial gains in standardized test scores and an increased number of students making

the honor roll since character education was implemented (Schaeffer, 1999). Additional

data compiled by the Character Education Partnership tells of nationwide examples of

academic and behavioral improvements along with reductions in negative behaviors

(Schwartz, Beatty & Dachnowicz, 2006). Research on the Responsive Classroom

curriculum found in a series of studies that students who attended implementing schools

had "significantly greater gains in standardized academic test scores than did students in

comparison schools" (Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn & Smith, 2003, p. 20-21). A

character initiative in South Carolina, supported by the Department of Education's

Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Projects produced improvement in student

attitudes, behaviors, and academic performance (Haynes & Thomas, 2001; Nicholson,

2002). Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn and Smith (2003) found that schools "addressing the

character education of their students in a serious, well planned manner tended to also

have higher academic achievement scores" (p. 31). In a 2006 study conducted by Kariuki

and Williams entitled *The Relationship between Character Traits and Academic*

performance of AFJROTC High School Students, the researchers found that there was a

"significant correlation" "between character traits and academic performance" (p. 22).

The implication of this study being that if character traits positively correlate to academic

performance, then educators should make every effort to educate children for those

positive character traits. Although research on the effectiveness of character education

programs is difficult due to the various ways in which schools assign and interpret

behavioral infractions (Skaggs & Bodenhorn, 2006) and as mentioned in an earlier

section, how they interpret their character education initiatives, academic improvement is

quantifiable even with other variables included and those reports should not be

discounted even when strictly correlational in nature.

Federal and State Directives in Character Education

The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001,

commonly referred to as No Child Left Behind, calls for schools to "contribute not only

to students' academic performance but also to their character" (Benninga, Berkowitz,

Kuehn & Smith, 2006, p. 448). With this federal directive, many states took the initiative

to shore up their own educational requirements in regards to Character Development /

Citizenship. The State of Indiana makes her directives known in the form of Legislative

code. The applicable code is entitled IC 20-30-5-5, Morals Instruction, and IC 20-30-5-6,

Good Citizenship Instruction.

IC 20-30-5-5
Morals Instruction
(a) Each public school teacher and nonpublic school teacher who is employed to instruct
in the regular course of grades 1 through 12 shall present the teacher's instruction with
special emphasis on:
    (1) honesty;
    (2) morality;
    (3) courtesy;
    (4) obedience to law;
    (5) respect for the national flag and the Constitution of the State of Indiana and the
    Constitution of the United States;

(6) respect for parents and the home;

(7) the dignity and necessity of honest labor; and

(8) other lessons of a steadying influence that tend to promote and develop an upright and desirable citizenry.

(b)The state superintendent shall prepare outlines or materials for the instruction described in subsection (a) and incorporate the instruction in the regular course of grades 1 through 12.

IC 20-30-5-6

Good Citizenship Instruction

(a) This section applies only to public school.

(b) As used in this section, "good citizenship instruction" means integrating instruction into the current curriculum that stresses the nature and importance of the following:

    (1) Being honest and truthful.

    (2) Respecting authority.

    (3) Respecting the property of others.

    (4) Always doing the student's personal best.

    (5) Not stealing.

    (6) Possessing the skills (including methods of conflict resolution) necessary to live peaceably in society and not resorting to violence to settle disputes.

    (7) Taking personal responsibility for obligations to family and community.

    (8) Taking personal responsibility for earning a livelihood.

    (9) Treating others the way the student would want to be treated.

    (10) Respecting the national flag, the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Indiana.

    (11) Respecting the student's parents and home.

    (12) Respecting the student's self.

    (13) Respecting the rights of others to have their own views and religious beliefs

(c) The department shall:

    (1) Identify; and

    (2) Make available;

models of conflict resolution instruction to school corporations. The instruction may consist of a teacher education program that applies the techniques to the students in the classroom to assist school corporations in complying with this section.

As added by P.L.1-2005, SEC.14. Amended by P.L.246-2005, SEC.170.

The School Improvement Plan

The School Improvement Plan, is a document required by Indiana code for those

schools wishing to maintain accreditation within the State School system. Provided via

Indiana Code are the required members of the School Improvement Plan committee,

the requirements of the plan, and the components of the plan. Also provided via Indiana

Code are the General Requirements of the Strategic and Continuous School Improvement

and Achievement Plan:

IC 20-31-5-4
Requirements of plan
Sec. 4.
(a) A plan must:
    (1) state objectives for a three (3) year period; and
    (2) be annually reviewed and revised to accomplish the achievement objectives of
        the school.
(b) A plan must establish objectives for the school to achieve. These achievement
    objectives must be consistent with academic standards and include improvement in at
    least the following areas:
    (1) attendance rate.
    (2) The percentage of students meeting academic standards under the ISTEP
        program (IC 20-31-3 and IC 20-32-5).
    (3) For a secondary school, graduation rate.
(c) A plan must address the learning needs of all students, including programs and
    services for exceptional learners.
(d) A plan must specify how and to what extent the school expects to make continuous
    improvement in all areas of the education system where results are measured by
    setting benchmarks for progress on an individual school basis.
(e) A plan must note specific areas where improvement is needed immediately.
As added by P.L.1-2005, SEC.15

      Although there are Federal recommendations for the implementation of character

education programs which, in Indiana, are accompanied by state legislative code, it is still

ultimately the decision on the individual school building and school district how

purposefully and with how much fidelity they wish to pursue character education

curriculum for their students. By choosing to list "Character Development / Citizenship"

as one of three focus areas intended to affect academic improvement on their state

required School Improvement Plan, the schools chosen for this study were assumed to

have decided to implement their chosen character education program with a purposeful level of fidelity and rigor as they committed to be it being used as a one of a select few optional vehicles to reach the ultimate goal of improved academic achievement.

Summary

Character education has a long, rich history in public education. The exact methodology and curricular design varies from school to school, but it remains clear that public schools are the most appropriate place for the necessary character education that most citizens and educators agree is needed in order to propel forward and socially conscious and morally centered people. Although the verbiage has shifted and the purpose has varied, character education has been a consistent educational program with many years of documented benefits. Research indicates benefits of character education in behavioral and academic domains while not showing a detriment to either. Federal and state directives for character education indicate that our government finds this curriculum important and provides for implementation. Although it is up to individual schools and districts how and to what extent they endorse character education as part of their curriculum, it is clear that the curriculum is expected, necessary and beneficial.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

There were several interrelated purposes to this study. One purpose of this study

was to investigate the relationship between the existence of a Character Development /

Citizenship program and state standardized test score improvement. Data comparison was

based on those schools choosing to utilize a Character Development / Citizenship

program for the purpose of improving their academic achievement, as is the requirement

of the School Improvement Plan, and applicable years of ISTEP+ test scores.

A second purpose was to attempt to determine if the existence of a Character

Development / Citizenship program had a positive effect on the behavior of the

participating student body. Building level administrators were asked to report on their

experiences regarding this data point. An additional objective to the study included

determining the initial expectations and the perceived benefits from the implementation

of a Character Development / Citizenship program as determined by those building level

administrators responsible for the implementation. A final purpose of this study involved

determining the level of fidelity and rigor, as reported by the building level administrator,

with which Character Development / Citizenship programs were implemented upon being

chosen as a Focus Area designated for purposes of improving student achievement as is required by the Indiana School Improvement Plan.

Schools for data retrieval and comparison, those in the experimental group, were chosen based on their self reporting that they had chosen Character Development / Citizenship as a Focus Area in their required School Improvement Plan.

The overarching research questions were as follows:

Does the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program relate to higher levels of academic achievement as determined by ISTEP+ data for those schools which designate Character Development / Citizenship as an Improvement Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan?

Does the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program relate to reduced incidence of negative student behavioral issues as reported by building level administrators?

What academic and behavioral expectations do building level administrators have regarding the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program and the effect such a program will have on the student body?

With what level of fidelity and rigor do building level administrators implement Character Development / Citizenship programs upon declaring such programs as a Focus area intended to improve academic achievement as a part of their Indiana School Improvement Plan?

The Hypotheses for the study were as follows:

Hypothesis 1:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will show scores at or below state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Median Scale Score on the English / Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for third grade students for the year of the Character Development / Citizenship program implementation.

Null Hypothesis 1:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will not show scores at or below state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Median Scale Score on the English / Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for third grade students for the year of the Character Development / Citizenship program implementation.

Hypothesis 2:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will show scores above state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Median Scale Score on the English / Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for fourth grade students for the year following the Character Development / Citizenship program implementation.

Null Hypothesis 2:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will not show scores above state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Median Scale Score on the English / Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for fourth grade students for the year following the Character Development / Citizenship program implementation.

Hypothesis 3:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will show rates at or below the state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Total Percent Passing for the English /Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for third grade students for the year of program implementation.

Null Hypothesis 3:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will not show rates at or below the state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Total Percent Passing for the English /Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for third grade students for the year of program implementation.

Hypothesis 4:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will show rates above the state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Total Percent Passing for the English /Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for fourth grade students for the year after program implementation.

Null Hypothesis 4:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will not show rates above the state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Total Percent Passing for the English /Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for fourth grade students for the year after program implementation.

Hypothesis 5:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will report reduced incidence of negative student behavioral issues when compared to previous years as reported by the building level administrator for the year of the Character Development / Citizenship program implementation.

Null Hypothesis 5:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement

Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will not report reduced

incidence of negative student behavioral issues when compared to previous years as

reported by the building level administrator for the year of the Character Development /

Citizenship program implementation.

Research Design

The research design addressing the first research question and hypotheses one,

two, three and four of this study was a quantitative, ex post facto use of ISTEP+ data,

specifically Median Scale Score, Total Percent Passing and State Established Cut Score.

The research design addressing the remaining three research questions and hypothesis

five was also ex-post facto but of a qualitative nature. To address the questions of

incidence of negative student behaviors, comparison of expectations with results, and

levels of fidelity and rigor, administrators were asked open ended and multiple option

questions for data retrieval.

Data were complied ex post facto because the research questions centered around

finding whether programs and increased scores did relate. Only historic data were

appropriate because the dependent variable must have already occurred in order to

determine these potential relationships.

Scores to be evaluated for proof of improvement were chosen for the school year

of and immediately following the stated implementation year of a Character

Development / Citizenship program. Programs chosen as part of the yearly School Improvement Plan are to be declared in June and implemented beginning in August of that same year. This data retrieval design infers that the students would have one year of exposure to the Character Development / Citizenship program before the next episode of state standardized testing. At the time that the data were produced, ISTEP+ testing occurred in September of each school year.

Anecdotal and subjective data supplied by building level administrators were also requested after the events in order for the administrator to reflect on expectations, compile results and report on the actual, not intended levels of fidelity and rigor.

Due to the large number of variables that can and do affect the outcomes of standardized tests, there was no attempt to identify a causal relationship between the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program and academic improvement as related by the ISTEP+ data. If the implementation of the Character Development / Citizenship program were the only variable applied to the students during the year of testing and the year prior to testing, then a causal relationship could be determined. However, because schools simultaneously use a variety of interventions, both academic and non-academic in any given school year, and many other life events can affect a student's performance on a standardized test, an attempt to prove causality was not performed.

In order to measure the potential affect of the implementation of the Character Development / Citizenship program on test performance, data was taken in the following manner. For the year in which a school administrator reported that they implemented a

Character Development / Citizenship program, data from 3rd grade test takers was compiled in the areas of Median Scale Score for English / Language Arts and separately for Math as well as Total Percent Passing for English / Language Arts, Math and the Total Percent Passing for both areas combined. For the year following the implementation of the Character Development / Citizenship program, data from 4th grade test takers was compiled in the same score reporting areas. The cohort data were taken in order to most accurately compare scores from year to year. In addition to comparing scores of those schools implementing a Character Development / Citizenship program to the averages of other schools in the state, the CDC schools Median Scale Scores were also compared to the state established cut score for each test. All of these data are usual data housed and presented by the Indiana Department of Education and used to discuss performance on the ISTEP+ test.

Only test data from the state standardized ISTEP+ test were utilized as all accredited schools in Indiana are required to take the same test at the same time during the school year. The administration of this test is extremely formatted and scoring of the test is uniform statewide.

Using School Improvement Plan data was deemed appropriate because all accredited schools in Indiana must submit a yearly Plan. The Plan is due in June of each year to be implemented for the immediately upcoming school year. Schools have a limited selection of Focus Areas to choose from, thirty-five in total, all of which must be implmented in an effort to improve academic performance. These programming options are largely academic in nature, mainly focusing on specific subject areas, instructional

practice and content, professional development, assessment, and parental involvement. With these plan restrictions, by choosing schools which had determined that they would focus on Character Development / Citizenship as a means to academic improvement, one could extrapolate that the schools would choose appropriate programs and implement such programs with fidelity and rigor.

Instrument

The instrument used in this study was a 10 item survey with results collected via an Internet software service. The prompt to participate in the study survey was sent as an electronic link via email to principals of identified schools. The body of the email contained the cover letter which contained information identifying the overarching research questions, the information regarding the subject's rights as study participants, and a statement describing how the data would be used. The survey consisted of open ended and multiple option questions all relating to the overarching research questions for the study. The survey also requested the first year of program implementation for the Character Development / Citizenship program at the individual schools. The response to this question was the basis for the data retrieval and calculations regarding ISTEP+ data.

The schools to be included in the study were determined by data housed by the Indiana Department of Education. The identity of those schools which chose to include Character Development / Citizenship as a focus area in their School Improvement Plans was provided by the Indiana Department of Education but the years in which these schools intended to utilize these programs was unavailable, thus presenting the need for

the year of implementation confirmation question posed to all survey participants. The

ISTEP+ score data were retrieved by using the Indiana Department of Education website

database. Scores for all grade levels, all subgroups, and all test sections for all years that

the test has been utilized are housed by the Indiana Department of Education website

database and are considered public information. As individual student's scores were not a

data point for this study, individual student names were not used; only grade level groups

as a whole from schools which identified themselves, via their School Improvement

Plans, as utilizing Character Development / Citizenship programs in an effort to

positively affect academic achievement.

Validity and Reliability

The researcher interprets this study as generally being both valid and reliable

although there are potential threats to both. The internal validity may be subject to threat

because the researcher does not know the identity of all of the programs used by those

schools committing to Character Development / Citizenship as a method of improving

academic performance. The researcher also is relying on the subjective judgment of

building level administrators to report on the level of rigor and fidelity regarding the

implementation of the programs. In addition, the researcher did not ask the building level

administrators to reveal whether they were the administrator at the time of program

implementation. The lack of control of these variables does minimally affect the internal

validity. The external validity of the study may also be subject to threat because the

variety of potential variables may cause the results to not be extended to larger groups.

The implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program is but one of many potentially intervening variables which may affect performance on standardized tests. The statistical validity is sound because the researcher measured what she intended to measure. Four of the hypotheses intended to find relationships between the implementation of Character Development / Citizenship programs and standardized test achievement. The fifth hypothesis stated that there was a reduced incidence of negative behavioral issues for the implementation year of the program. This study was also deemed reliable because the statistical computations, if repeated, will produce the same results. Ex post facto studies produce reliable results because the experimentation has already occurred and the data, if collected in the same manner, cannot be further manipulated.

Population

The schools chosen for this study were selected due to their self reporting of implementing a Character Development / Citizenship program for the purpose of academic improvement through their School Improvement Plan. This study did not employ a sample population. All schools determined to be using a Character Development / Citizenship program were solicited for their contribution to this study. Those schools using a Character Development / Citizenship program are the experimental group. The control group consists of all remaining schools supplying test data as determined by the Indiana Department of Education database. The state averages were used for control group data. Those state averages were arrived upon by removing the

Character Development / Citizenship identified schools from the state data list. The

years of data used by this study were 2003 - 2008. The year of the submitted School

Improvement Plan, which included the Character Development / Citizenship

programming, was correlated to the ISTEP+ data for that year and for the following

school year. This method was chosen in order that the intended Focus Area of the School

Improvement Plan, in this case Character Development / Citizenship, was theoretically

utilized for an entire school year between those testing episodes which provided the data

for hypotheses one, two, three, and four. The ISTEP+ test data were then compared to

the next grade level of student test scores for the next year at that same school thus

establishing a cohort of students involved in the Character Development / Citizenship

programming and supplying the data for ISTEP+ results. For the behavioral data, the year

of program implementation was chosen as the year to be reflected on by administrators to

attempt to gauge a more immediate impact of the program on student behavior.

The ISTEP+ scores utilized were for the entire student body for the grade level

populations which were tested. Data subgroups were not considered which means that the

population of the student scores included all racial / ethnic groups, both genders, all

students labeled as ESL, all students who receive free or reduced priced lunch, and all

special education students. The choice to not use disaggregated data was made as these

subgroups can in some instances be so small that a few changes in members of the

subgroup could greatly skew the group's results. By using the entire population, the data

were less likely to be affected by slight changes in individual subgroups. In addition,

theoretically, a Character Development / Citizenship program would be administered to

the entire student body, not singling out any particular subgroup as being unable or

unwilling to participate in such programming. The test subject categories utilized for

investigation included the Math and English / Language Arts sections of the ISTEP+ test

only. The Science and Social Studies portions of the test were not included as not all

grade levels are subjected to tests in those categories making trending data inappropriate

to use for this study. Third and fourth grade student's scores were used for several

reasons. Primarily, nearly all elementary schools which identified themselves to the

Indiana Department of Education as using a Character Development / Citizenship

program as part of their School Improvement Plan housed third and fourth grade students

making the cohort sample design possible. In addition, not all elementary schools which

identified themselves to the Indiana Department of Education housed grades including

more than grades three and four. With that, as the upper elementary grades begin to break

off in to separate upper elementary or intermediate campuses, their feeder schools vary

and increase thereby not assuring one that all children in the prior grade level were

participants in a Character Development / Citizenship program. For this reason also,

middle and high schools which identified themselves as utilizing a Character

Development / Citizenship program for purposes of improving their academic

achievement were not chosen for the study. Only scores from the categories "Total

Percent Pass" and "Median Scale Score" were used. Total Percent Pass includes all

students who registered a score which was categorized as "Pass" or "Pass Plus." That

category of score was used to determine the percentage of students who passed the

ISTEP+ test and could be compared to the same category from other years. The Median

Scale Score category of data were used to determine the average score of the

participating school's test takers in comparison to the average score of all remaining

school's test takers in the state for the same year and grade level.

Data Collection

The ISTEP+ data were collected from the Indiana Department of Education

website, www.doe.state.in.us. The data list, including the chosen population of schools,

those schools which voluntarily chose "Character Development / Citizenship" as a Focus

Area on their School Improvement Plan, was retrieved from the Office of School

Accreditation and Awards, a division of the Indiana Department of Education. The

primary identifying information was the name of the schools chosen for the study due to

their self reporting of intended program implementation.

All identified school administrators were provided with a survey in order to

compile data. The survey asked what year the school initially chose to utilize a Character

Development / Citizenship program as a means to improve student achievement as

reported via the School Improvement Plan. This initial year was the basis for comparing

all ISTEP+ score data. The survey additionally asked building level administrators to rate

the level of negative student behavior incidence for the year of program implementation

and compare that level to prior year's incidence levels. Further, administrators were

asked to choose from several options regarding their expectations for the implementation

of a Character Development / Citizenship program and how the program performed in

relation to their expectations. Finally, administrators were asked to report their level of

actual fidelity and rigor regarding the implementation of the program and the type or

name of the program used to fulfill their commitment to a Character Development /

Citizenship program for purposes of improved student achievement.

Data Analysis

ISTEP+ scores were compiled using the mean of all control and experimental

groups schools scores. The mean of the Median Scale Score was used to determine the

average of the control and experimental groups Median Scale Scores. The mean was also

used to calculate and compare the experimental and control groups Total Percent Passing

rates. Data was investigated and conclusions were drawn strictly based on presentation

and comparisons. Improvement on the ISTEP+ test is discussed plainly in points and

percentages in published data. While further statistical analysis can be run on ISTEP+

scores, generally, advanced statistical analyses are not utilized to discuss scores and

performance. Data regarding student behavior, administrator expectations, and levels of

fidelity and rigor were compiled, analyzed and grouped by the researcher. All

quantitative responses were accounted for in the reporting and discussion of the findings.

Limitations of the Study

Several limitations were realized as part of the study. Schools were not randomly

selected. Schools were chosen based on their self reporting of their intent to implement a

Character Development / Citizenship program in an effort to improve their academic

performance as a part of their required School Improvement Plan. Cohort groups were

not exact in their participants. Because school's averages and percents were used as

listed in the Indiana Department of Education database, rather than those of individual

students, the makeup of the cohorts could not be verified. Given that the state average for

inter-district mobility for the years 2003-2008 averaged 3.72% (www.doe.state.in.us), the

researcher is confident that the mobility of any given school in the control group is

negligible. Administrators were asked to gauge and report their own interpretations

regarding student behavior, program expectations, and level of fidelity and rigor. Because

of this subjective interpretation to the questions and for the responses, the study provides

for quantitative limitations in these areas but does provide for more in-depth qualitative

responses than would be realized by using a strictly quantitative design.

Summary

In order to find the relationship between the implementation of a Character

Development / Citizenship program and improved academic achievement as measured by

scores gleaned from the ISTEP+ test, historical, quantitative data were used. In order to

find data concerning the incidence of negative student behavior, administrator

expectations and levels of rigor and fidelity in relation to the implementation of a

Character Development / Citizenship program, historical, qualitative data were used.

Schools self reported their intention to implement the Character Development /

Citizenship programming via their School Improvement Plan. The need for reflective

data provided the impetus for the ex post facto research design. Although several

limitations exist in this study, the researcher is confident that the methodology was sound

making the study a meaningful contribution to the literature on Character Development

/ Citizenship programming.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF DATA

Research Questions and Hypothesis

The following Research Questions guided this study:

Does the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program relate to higher levels of academic achievement as determined by ISTEP+ data for those schools which designate Character Development / Citizenship as an Improvement Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan?

Does the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program relate to reduced incidence of negative student behavioral issues as reported by building level administrators?

What academic and behavioral expectations do building level administrators have regarding the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program and the effect such a program will have on the student body?

With what level of fidelity and rigor do building level administrators implement Character Development / Citizenship programs upon declaring such programs as a Focus area intended to improve academic achievement as a part of their Indiana School Improvement Plan?

In addition, the following Hypotheses and Null Hypotheses guided this study:

Hypothesis 1:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement

Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will show scores at or below

state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Median Scale Score on the English /

Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for third grade students for the year

of the Character Development / Citizenship program implementation.

Null Hypothesis 1:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement

Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will not show scores at or

below state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Median Scale Score on the

English / Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for third grade students

for the year of the Character Development / Citizenship program implementation.

Hypothesis 2:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement

Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will show scores above state

average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Median Scale Score on the English /

Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for fourth grade students for the

year following the Character Development / Citizenship program implementation.

Null Hypothesis 2:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement

Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will not show scores above

state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Median Scale Score on the English /

Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for fourth grade students for the

year following the Character Development / Citizenship program implementation.

Hypothesis 3:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement

Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will show rates at or below

the state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Total Percent Passing for the

English /Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for third grade students

for the year of program implementation.

Null Hypothesis 3:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement

Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will not show rates at or

below the state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Total Percent Passing for the

English /Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for third grade students

for the year of program implementation.

Hypothesis 4:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement

Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will show rates above the

state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Total Percent Passing for the English

/Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for fourth grade students for the

year after program implementation.

Null Hypothesis 4:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement

Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will not show rates above

the state average on the ISTEP+ as determined by the Total Percent Passing for the

English /Language Arts and Math sections of the ISTEP+ tests for fourth grade students

for the year after program implementation.

Hypothesis 5:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement

Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will report reduced

incidence of negative student behavioral issues when compared to previous years as

reported by the building level administrator for the year of the Character Development /

Citizenship program implementation.

Null Hypothesis 5:

Schools which designate "Character Development / Citizenship" as an Improvement

Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan will not report reduced

incidence of negative student behavioral issues when compared to previous years as

reported by the building level administrator for the year of the Character Development /

Citizenship program implementation.

<center>Description of the Character Development / Citizenship Schools</center>

<center>and their Comparison to State Averages</center>

The total number of Character Development / Citizenship Schools, also known as

the experimental group schools, chosen for this study was 50 schools. The schools chosen

included grades three and four and identified themselves, per the Indiana Department of

Education Website, as having chosen "Character Development / Citizenship" as an

Improvement Focus Area on their state required School Improvement Plan. A total of 19

building level administrators responded to the survey request. Some of the data received

could not be used for this study. The reasons are listed below:

- Of the responding schools, eight provided a program implementation year which

  made ISTEP+ score comparisons impossible including the years of 2000, 2002,

  and 2008.

- Comparisons for implementation years 2000 and 2002 were not possible as in the

  years 2001 and 2003, fourth grade students in Indiana were not subjected to the

  ISTEP+ test making growth comparisons impossible.

 Data for test years 2008 and 2009 could not be used as in the 2008-2009 school

year, the ISTEP+ was administered in the fall and spring and in the 2009-2010

schools year, the test became exclusively a spring event. With all other test

administrations occurring in the fall of the school year, using spring test results

would have skewed the data when looking at the relationship between a Character

Development / Citizenship program and ISTEP+ scores which were implemented

and administered regularly in the fall of the given school year prior to 2009.

The researcher did not expect results stating that the Character Development /

Citizenship program implementation began outside of the years 2003-2007 as the

information from the Indiana Department of Education identifying particular schools

having chosen to implement a Character Development / Citizenship program as a Focus

Area on their individual School Improvement Plans was dated 2006 by the Indiana

Department of Education. Although the Indiana Department of Education webpage

listed a date of 2006, the year of program implementation was not provided by the State

thus providing the need for the survey question clarifying the start date of the

programming. With that date, the researcher expected program implementation dates to

fall within the range of useable scores from 2003-2008.

Of the eleven schools responding with useable data, three, 27%, are categorized

as being located in the Urban Fringe of a Mid-Sized City, which according to the Indiana

Department of Education means they are within the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)

of a mid-sized city (less than 250,000) and defined as urban by the Census Bureau. By

the same standards, three, 27%, are categorized as Urban Fringe of a Large City meaning

they are within the MSA of a large city (greater than 250,000). Three more, 27%, are

categorized as Rural, inside MSA meaning a place within an MSA defined as rural while

one, 9%, is Rural, outside MSA which places them in a place not within an MSA defined

as rural. One school, 9%, was categorized as being located within a Mid-sized City which

has a population of less than 250,000. State representation for geographic locale of

schools categorized as Elementary includes 8% Urban Fringe of a Mid-Sized City, 19%

Urban Fringe of a Large City, 21% Rural, inside MSA, 16% Rural, outside MSA, and

16% Mid-sized City. The three remaining categories which make up the state geographic

profiles were not represented by the responding CD/C schools and consist of 10% Large

City, 1% Large Town, and 9% Small Town.

      Other demographic information for the responding schools is as follows:

TABLE 1

Attendance Rates

Responding Schools (N=11)	Range	State Average
96.0%	94.0-97.3%	95.9%

For the year of program implementation, the responding schools reported an average attendance rate of 96.0% with a range of 94.0% to 97.3% as compared to the state attendance average for those same years of 95.9%. All percentages included in this chapter are rounded to the nearest applicable decimal point when discussing demographic or specific measures of ISTEP+ test data and to the nearest whole integer when discussing survey responses or other specific measures of ISTEP+ data.

TABLE 2

Ethnicity

Responding Schools (N=11)	Range	State Average
70.8% White	12.0-98.0%	78.6%

The responding schools averaged 70.8% of attendees categorized as white with a range of 12.0% to 98.0% white while the state averaged 78.6% white attendees during the implementation years.

TABLE 3

Free / Reduced Lunch

Responding Schools (N=11)	Range	State Average
35.5% F & R	12.0-80.0%	36.0%

The responding schools averaged 35.5% students eligible for free or reduced lunch prices with a range of 12.0% to 80.0% while the state averaged 36.0% of all students eligible for free of reduced lunch prices during the implementation years.

These data show that while as a group, the schools implementing Character Development / Citizenship programming had demographics very near those of the state average, some of the implementing schools were dealing with far higher percentages of minority students and those eligible for free or reduced lunch prices. Those two categories are used to disaggregate data for purposes of determining school wide achievement on the ISTEP+ test.

Research Findings

Hypothesis 1 and Null Hypothesis 1:

TABLE 4

3rd Grade CDC Schools Average LA and MA Median Scale Scores Compared to

State Average LA and MA Median Scale Scores (N=11)

Implementation Year 2003 / Test Data Year 2003

3rd grade CDC schools ave LA MSS	3rd grade state ave LA MSS	Over/under state average
452.86	438.76	+14.10

3rd grade CDC schools ave MA MSS	3rd grade state ave MA MSS	Over/under state average
431.12	424.07	+7.05

Implementation Year 2004 / Test Data Year 2004

3rd grade CDC schools ave LA MSS	3rd grade state ave LA MSS	Over/under state average
423.00	440.31	-17.31

3rd grade CDC schools ave MA MSS	3rd grade state ave MA MSS	Over/under state average
414.00	426.03	-12.03

TABLE 4 (continued)

3rd Grade CDC Schools Average LA and MA Median Scale Scores Compared to

State Average LA and MA Median Scale Scores (N=11)

Implementation Year 2005 / Test Data Year 2005

3rd grade CDC schools ave LA MSS	3rd grade state ave LA MSS	Over/under state average
436.83	439.25	-2.42

3rd grade CDC schools ave MA MSS	3rd grade state ave MA MSS	Over/under state average
421.96	425.72	-3.76

Implementation Year 2007 / Test Data year 2007

3rd grade CDC schools ave LA MSS	3rd grade state ave LA MSS	Over/under state average
412.85	439.87	-27.02

3rd grade CDC schools ave MA MSS	3rd grade state ave MS MSS	Over/under state average
388.25	421.46	-33.21

Average all Implementation Years

3rd grade CDC schools ave LA MSS	3rd grade state ave LA MSS	Over/under state average
431.38	439.54	-8.16

3rd grade CDC schools ave MA MSS	3rd grade state ave MA MSS	Over/under state average
413.83	424.32	-10.49

Table 4 shows that with the exception of Implementation year 2003, the

Character Development / Citizenship schools did show ISTEP+ Median Scale Scores

below those of the state average by an amount of 8.16 points below in Language Arts and

10.49 points below in Math for the year in which the Character Development /

Citizenship program was implemented.

Hypothesis 2 and Null Hypothesis 2:

TABLE 5

4th Grade CDC Schools Average LA and MA Median Scale Scores Compared to

State Average LA and MA Median Scale Scores (N=11)

Implementation Year 2003 / Test Data Year 2004

4th grade CDC schools ave LA MSS	4th grade state ave LA MSS	Over/under state average
477.54	460.60	+16.94

4th grade CDC schools ave MS MSS	4th grade state ave MA MSS	Over/under state average
464.14	446.91	+17.23

Implementation Year 2004 / Test Data Year 2005

4th grade CDC schools ave LA MSS	4th grade state ave LA MSS	Over/under state average
442.00	461.50	-19.50

4th grade CDC schools ave MS MSS	4th grade state ave MA MSS	Over/under state average
445.70	451.02	-5.32

Implementation Year 2005 / Test Data Year 2006

4th grade CDC schools ave LA MSS	4th grade state ave LA MSS	Over/under state average
457.50	462.71	-5.21

4th grade CDC schools ave MS MSS	4th grade state ave MA MSS	Over/under state average
440.50	450.61	-10.11

TABLE 5 (continued)

4th Grade CDC Schools Average LA and MA Median Scale Scores Compared to

State Average LA and MA Median Scale Scores (N=11)

Implementation Year 2007 / Test Data Year 2008

4th grade CDC schools ave LA MSS	4th grade state ave LA MSS	Over/under state average
434.05	460.66	-26.61

4th grade CDC schools ave MA MSS	4th grade state ave MA MSS	Over/under state average
421.65	448.41	-26.76

Average all Implementation Years

4th grade CDC schools ave LA MSS	4th grade state ave LA MSS	Over/under state average
452.77	461.36	-8.59

4th grade CDC schools ave MA MSS	4th grade state ave MA MSS	Over/under state average
442.99	449.23	-6.24

Table 5 shows that with the exception of Implementation Year 2003 / Test data Year 2004, the Character Development / Citizenship schools continued to show ISTEP+ Median Scale Scores below those of the state average by 8.59 points below in Language Arts and 6.24 points below in Math for the year following program implementation.

Summary of Hypotheses 1 and 2 and Null Hypotheses 1 and 2; Tables 4 and 5:

TABLE 6

Gain/loss in CDC Schools Average LA and MA Median Scale Scores Relative

to State Average LA and MA Median Scale Scores from 3rd Grade to 4th Grade (N=11)

CDC schools over/under state ave LA MSS 3rd grade	CDC schools over/under state ave LA MSS 4th grade	Gain/loss on state ave
-8.16	-8.59	Loss .43

CDC schools over/under state ave MA MSS 3rd grade	CDC schools over/under state ave MA MSS 4th grade	Gain/loss on state ave
-10.49	-6.24	Gain 4.25

Table 6 shows that Character Development / Citizenship schools scored 8.16 points below state average in Language Arts and 10.49 points below state average in Math for the year of program implementation. For the year following program implementation, Character Development / Citizenship schools scored 8.59 points below state average in Language Arts and 6.24 below state average in Math. These data calculate to showing that Character Development / Citizenship schools fell further behind state average in Language Arts from implementation year to the following year by .43 points while gaining on state average in Math by 4.25 points for the same time period.

Hypothesis 3 and Null Hypothesis 3:

TABLE 7

3rd Grade CDC Schools Average LA, MA and BOTH Total Percent Passing

Compared to State Average LA, MA and BOTH Total Percent Passing (N=11)

Implementation Year 2003 / Test Data Year 2003

3rd grade CDC schools ave LA TPP	3rd grade state ave LA TPP	Over/under state average
79	73	+6

3rd grade CDC schools ave MA TPP	3rd grade state ave MA TPP	Over/under state average
73	71	+2

3rd grade CDC schools ave TPP BOTH	3rd grade state ave TPP BOTH	Over/under state average
66	62	+4

Implementation Year 2004 / Test Data Year 2004

3rd grade CDC schools ave LA TPP	3rd grade state ave LA TPP	Over/under state average
61	75	-14

3rd grade CDC schools ave MA TPP	3rd grade state ave MA TPP	Over/under state average
67	72	-5

3rd grade CDC schools ave TPP BOTH	3rd grade state ave TPP BOTH	Over/under state average
53	64	-11

TABLE 7 (continued)

3rd Grade CDC Schools Average LA, MA and BOTH Total Percent Passing

Compared to State Average LA, MA and BOTH Total Percent Passing (N=11)

Implementation Year 2005 / Test Data Year 2005

3rd grade CDC schools ave LA TPP	3rd grade state ave LA TPP	Over/under state average
70	74	-4

3rd grade CDC schools ave MA TPP	3rd grade state ave MA TPP	Over/under state average
67	72	-5

3rd grade CDC schools ave TPP BOTH	3rd grade state ave TPP BOTH	Over/under state average
60	64	-4

Implementation Year 2007 / Test Data Year 2007

3rd grade CDC schools ave LA TPP	3rd grade state ave LA TPP	Over/under state average
60	75	-15

3rd grade CDC schools ave MA TPP	3rd grade state ave MA TPP	Over/under state average
47	69	-22

3rd grade CDC schools ave TPP BOTH	3rd grade state ave TPP BOTH	Over/under state average
43	62	-19

TABLE 7 (continued)

3rd Grade CDC Schools Average LA, MA and BOTH Total Percent Passing

Compared to State Average LA, MA and BOTH Total Percent Passing (N=11)

Average all Implementation Years

3rd grade CDC schools ave LA TPP	3rd grade state ave LA TPP	Over/under state average
67.50	74.25	-6.75

3rd grade CDC schools ave MA TPP	3rd grade state ave MA TPP	Over/under state average
63.50	71.00	-7.50

3rd grade CDC schools ave TPP BOTH	3rd grade state ave TPP BOTH	Over/under state average
55.50	63.00	-7.50

Table 7 shows that with the exception of Implementation Year 2003, the Character Development / Citizenship schools showed percentages below those of the state average for ISTEP+ Total Percent Passing with the average amounts of 6.75 percentage points below for Language Arts, 7.50 percentage points below in Math and 7.50 percentage points below for students passing both Language Arts and Math.

Hypothesis 4 and Null Hypothesis 4:

TABLE 8

4th Grade CDC Schools Average LA, MA and BOTH Total Percent Passing

Compared to State Average LA, MA and BOTH Total Percent Passing (N=11)

Implementation Year 2003 / Test Data Year 2004

4th grade CDC schools ave LA TPP	4th grade state ave LA TPP	Over/under state average
83	72	+11

4th grade CDC schools ave MA TPP	4th grade state ave MA TPP	Over/under state average
73	72	+1

4th grade CDC schools ave TPP BOTH	4th grade state ave TPP BOTH	Over/under state average
68	63	+5

Implementation Year 2004 / Test Data Year 2005

4th grade CDC schools ave LA TPP	4th grade state ave LA TPP	Over / under state average
69	72	-3

4th grade CDC schools ave MA TPP	4th grade state ave MA TPP	Over/under state average
68	74	-6

4th grade CDC schools ave TPP BOTH	4th grade state ave TPP BOTH	Over/under state average
56	65	-9

TABLE 8 (continued)

4th Grade CDC Schools Average LA, MA and BOTH Total Percent Passing

Compared to State Average LA, MA and BOTH Total Percent Passing (N=11)

Implementation Year 2005 / Test Data Year 2006

4th grade CDC schools ave LA TPP	4th grade state ave LA TPP	Over/under state average
68	73	-5

4th grade CDC schools ave MA TPP	4th grade state ave MA TPP	Over/under state average
62	73	-11

4th grade CDC schools ave TPP BOTH	4th grade state ave TPP BOTH	Over/under state average
57	65	-8

Implementation Year 2007 / Test Data Year 2008

4th grade CDC schools ave LA TPP	4th grade state ave LA TPP	Over/under state average
53	72	-19

4th grade CDC schools ave MA TPP	4th grade state ave MA TPP	Over/under state average
52	72	-20

4th grade CDC schools ave TPP BOTH	4th grade state ave TPP BOTH	Over/under state average
40	63	-23

TABLE 8 (continued)

4th Grade CDC Schools Average LA, MA and BOTH Total Percent Passing

Compared to State Average LA, MA and BOTH Total Percent Passing (N=11)

Average all Implementation Years

4th grade CDC schools ave LA TPP	4th grade state ave LA TPP	Over/under state average
68.25	72.25	-4.00

4th grade CDC schools ave MA TPP	4th grade state ave MA TPP	Over/under state average
63.75	72.75	-9.00

4th grade CDC schools ave TPP BOTH	4th grade state ave TPP BOTH	Over/under state average
55.25	64.00	-8.75

Table 8 shows that with the exception of Implementation Year 2003 / Test year 2004, the Character Development / Citizenship schools continued to perform below the state average in the category of Total Percent Passing in the ISTEP+ categories of Language Arts, Math and both Language Arts and Math. The Character Development / Citizenship Schools were below the state average of Total Percent Passing by 4.00 percentage points in Language Arts, 9.00 percentage points in Math and 8.75 percentage points in passing both Language Arts and Math.

Summary of Hypotheses 3 and 4 and Null Hypotheses 3 and 4; Tables 7 and 8:

TABLE 9

Gain/loss in CDC Schools Average LA, MA, and BOTH Total Percent Passing

Relative to State Average LA, MA, and BOTH Total Percent Passing from 3rd Grade to

4th Grade (N=11)

CDC schools over/under state ave LA TPP 3rd grade	CDC schools over/under state ave LA TPP 4th grade	Gain/loss on state ave
-6.75	-4.00	Gain 2.75

CDC schools over/under state ave MA TPP 3rd grade	CDC schools over/under state ave MA TPP 4th grade	Gain/loss on state ave
-7.50	-9.00	Loss 1.50

CDC schools over/under state ave TPP BOTH 3rd grade	CDC schools over/under state ave TPP BOTH 4th grade	Gain/loss on state ave
-7.50	-8.75	Loss 1.25

Table 9 shows that Character Development / Citizenship schools scored 6.75 points below state average for Total Percent Passing in Language Arts, 7.50 points below state average for Total Percent Passing for Math and 7.50 points below state average for Total Percent Passing Both for the year of program implementation. For the year following program implementation, Character Development / Citizenship schools scored 4.00 points below state average for Total Percent Passing in Language Arts, 9.00 points below state average for Total Percent Passing for Math and 8.75 points below state average for Total Percent Passing Both. These data calculate to show Character Development / Citizenship schools gaining on the state average from implementation

year to the following year in Language Arts Total Percent Passing by 2.75 points

while falling further behind state average in Math Total Percent Passing by 1.50 point

and in the Total Percent Passing Both category by 1.25 points.

Hypothesis 5 and Null Hypothesis 5 and Research Question 2:

TABLE 10

Survey Question 2: Decline in Negative Student Behavior for Year of Program

Implementation (N=11)

Percent realizing decline in negative student behavior	Range of decline	Average percent of decline
82%	10-50%	23%

Individual School Responses to Survey Question 2:

School	Realized Decline	Percentage of Decline
A	No	--
B	Yes	25%
C	Yes	No Percentage Given
D	Yes	15%
E	Unsure	--
F	Yes	15%
G	Yes	No Percentage Given
H	Yes	50%
I	Yes	10%
J	Yes	No Percentage Given
K	Yes	No Percentage Given

Of responding building level administrators, 82% did see a decline in negative student behaviors, listed as office referrals, suspensions, and/or expulsions, with an average of 23% decline. The actual percentages of decline in negative student behaviors ranged from 10-50%.

Research Question 1:

TABLE 11

CDC Schools MSS LA Relative to Cut Score 3rd Grade (N=11)

CDC school/test yr	Gr3 MSS LA	Cut score(pass)	Over/under
A 03	473.3	404	+69.3
B 03	458.0	404	+54.0
C 03	443.3	404	+39.3
D 03	436.0	404	+32.0
E 03	453.7	404	+49.7
F 04	423.0	404	+19.0
G 05	481.0	404	+77.0
H 05	424.0	404	+20.0
I 05	405.5	404	+1.5
J 07	422.0	404	+18.0
K 07	403.7	404	.0

Average = +34.5

Table 11 shows that those schools choosing to use a Character Development / Citizenship program as part of their School Improvement Plan averaged Language Arts Median Scale Scores of 34.5 points above the state established passing cut score for the year of program implementation. The Character Development / Citizenship schools LA Median Scale Scores ranged from .03 points below the cut score to 69.3 points above.

TABLE 12

CDC Schools MSS LA Relative to Cut Score 4th Grade (N=11)

CDC school/test yr	Gr4 MSS LA	Cut score(pass)	Over/under
A 04	494.0	429	+65.0
B 04	486.0	429	+57.0
C 04	466.0	429	+37.0
D 04	463.0	429	+34.0
E 04	478.7	429	+49.7
F 05	442.0	429	+13.0
G 06	495.5	429	+66.5
H 06	446.0	429	+17.0
I 06	431.0	429	+2.0
J 08	441.8	429	+12.8
K 08	426.3	429	-2.7

Average = +31.9

Table 12 shows that those schools choosing a Character Development /
Citizenship program as part of their School Improvement Plan registered Language Arts
Median Scale Scores on average of 31.9 points over the state established passing cut
score for the testing year following program implementation. The Character
Development / Citizenship schools LA Median Scale Scores ranged from 2.7 points
below the cut score to 65 points above.

TABLE 13

Gain/loss of CDC Schools MSS LA Relative to State Cut Score from 3rd Grade to

4th Grade (N=11)

Average over LA cut score 3rd grade	Average over LA cut score 4th grade	Gain/loss on LA cut score
+34.5	+31.9	Loss 2.60

Table 13 shows that Character Development / Citizenship schools averaged Median Scale Scores for Language Arts 34.5 points above the cut score for 3rd grade and 31.9 points above the cut score for 4th grade. This computes to a loss of distance over the cut score by 2.60 points from implementation year to the following year.

TABLE 14

CDC Schools MSS MA Relative to Cut Score 3ʳᵈ Grade (N=11)

CDC school/test yr	Gr3 MSS MA	Cut score(pass)	Over/under
A 03	449.3	393	+56.3
B 03	433.0	393	+40.0
C 03	424.8	393	+31.8
D 03	424.5	393	+31.5
E 03	424.0	393	+31.0
F 04	414.0	393	+21.0
G 05	468.3	393	+75.3
H 05	402.3	393	+9.3
I 05	395.3	393	+2.3
J 07	394.5	393	+1.5
K 07	382.0	393	-11.0

Average = +26.2

Table 14 shows the Math Median Scale Scores for those schools implementing a Character Development / Citizenship program as averaging 26.2 points above the state established passing cut score. The Character Development / Citizenship schools scores ranged from averaging 11 points below the passing cut score to 75.3 points above the passing cut score.

TABLE 15

CDC Schools MSS MA Relative to Cut Score 4th Grade (N=11)

CDC school/test yr	Gr4 MSS MA	Cut score(pass)	Over/under
A 04	472.0	415	+57.0
B 04	455.7	415	+40.7
C 04	450.0	415	+35.0
D 04	468.0	415	+53.0
E 04	475.0	415	+60.0
F 05	445.7	415	+30.7
G 06	488.0	415	+73.0
H 06	434.5	415	+19.5
I 06	399.0	415	-16.0
J 08	432.3	415	+17.3
K 08	411.0	415	-4.0

Average = +33.2

Table 15 shows that schools with a Character Development / Citizenship program in place as part of their School Improvement Plan bested the state established passing cut score by an average of 33.2 points for the testing year following implementation. The range of Median Scale Scores in relation to cut scores for Character Development / Citizenship schools was from 16 points below passing cut score to 73 points over passing cut score.

TABLE 16

Gain/loss of CDC Schools MSS MA Relative to State Cut Score from 3rd Grade to

4th Grade (N=11)

Average over MA cut score 3rd grade	Average over MA cut score 4th grade	Gain/loss on MA cut score
+26.2	+33.2	Gain 7.00

Table 16 shows that Character Development / Citizenship schools averaged Median Scale Scores for Math 26.2 points above the cut score for 3rd grade and 33.2 points above the cut score for 4th grade. This computes to a gain over the cut score by 7.00 points from implementation year to the following year.

TABLE 17

CDC Schools TPP LA Change from Grade 3, Implementation Year, to Grade 4, One

Year after Implementation (N=11)

CDC school	Grade 3 TPP LA	Grade 4 TPP LA	Change
A	88	93	+5
B	82	88	+6
C	77	70	-7
D	63	72	+9
E	87	94	+7
F	61	69	+8
G	93	84	-9
H	64	65	+1
I	53	54	+1
J	71	65	-6
K	49	42	-7

Average = +.72

Table 17 shows the change in percentage of children achieving a Pass or Pass Plus on the ISTEP+ Language Arts test from the year of program implementation to the year immediately following implementation. The total percent of children passing the test increased by .72 on average with the range of 9% fewer children passing to 9% more children passing. Seven of 11 reporting Character Development / Citizenship schools

realized in increase in the percentage of children passing the Language Arts ISTEP+

test from implementation year to the following year.

TABLE 18

CDC Schools TPP MA change from Grade 3, Implementation Year, to Grade 4, One Year after Implementation (N=11)

CDC school	Grade 3 TPP MA	Grade 4 TPP MA	Change
A	79	88	+11
B	87	87	0
C	70	66	-4
D	65	84	+19
E	64	42	-18
F	67	68	+1
G	92	83	-9
H	58	64	+6
I	52	39	-13
J	51	59	+8
K	43	46	<u>-3</u>

Average = -.18

Table 18 shows the change in percentage of children achieving a Pass or Pass Plus on the ISTEP+ Math test from the year of program implementation to the year immediately following implementation. The total percent of children passing the test decreased by .18 on average with the range of 18% fewer children passing to 19% more children passing. Five of 11 reporting Character Development / Citizenship schools

realized in increase in the percentage of children passing the Math ISTEP+ test from

implementation year to the following year.

TABLE 19

CDC Schools TPP BOTH change from Grade 3, Implementation Year, to Grade 4, One

Year after Implementation (N=11)

CDC school	Grade 3 TPP both	Grade 4 TPP both	Change
A	77	86	+9
B	75	83	+8
C	65	61	-4
D	51	70	+19
E	60	61	+1
F	53	56	+3
G	89	78	-11
H	50	55	+5
I	42	37	-5
J	46	51	+5
K	40	28	-12

Average = +1.63

Table 19 shows the change in percentage of children achieving a Pass or Pass Plus on the ISTEP+ Language Arts and Math tests from the year of program implementation to the year immediately following implementation. The total percent of children passing the both tests increased by 1.63 on average with the range of 12% fewer children passing to 19% more children passing. Seven of 11 reporting Character Development /

Citizenship schools realized an increase in the percentage of children passing both the

Language Arts and Math ISTEP+ test from implementation year to the following year.

Research Question 2:

Results are found with Hypothesis 5 and Null Hypothesis 5. Refer to page 102, Table 10.

Research Question 3:

TABLE 20

Survey Question 3: Expectations for Improvement of Building Level Administrators for

Program Implementation (N=11)

Academics / test scores	Behavior / discipline	Neither	Both
0%	36%	9%	55%

The responding building level administrators reported expectations regarding the implementation of their chosen Character Development / Citizenship program. None of the responding administrators reported expecting only Academic / Test Score improvement while 36% expected an improvement in Behavior / Discipline, and 55% expected an improvement in both categories. Only 9% of respondents reported expecting neither of the options areas to show improvement upon the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program.

TABLE 21

Survey Question 4: Realization of Improvement since Program Implementation (N=11)

Academics / test scores	Behavior / discipline	Other	Both
0%	45%	9%	45%

While building level administrators had specific expectations for improvement areas upon the implementation of a program, the results of the actual improvement were slightly different than expectations. Actual improvement from the implementation of a program showed that 45% of building level administrators realized an improvement in Behavior / Discipline while an equal 45% show an improvement in both areas of Behavior / Discipline and Academics / Test Scores. Only 9% realized an improvement in another area which was reported as "building climate."

Research Question 4:

TABLE 22

Survey Question 6: Optional Implementation of the Character Development / Citizenship

Program (N=11)

Program implementation optional   Program implementation Not optional

          9%   91%

      For responding building level administrators, 91% considered the Character

Development / Citizenship curriculum used at their school to be mandatory for teachers.

TABLE 23

Survey Question 7: Frequency of Character Development / Citizenship Curricula Usage

= Sessions per Week (N=11)

1-2 times / wk	3-4 times / wk	5 times / wk = daily
82%	0%	18%

For responding building level administrators, 82% of schools utilized the

Character Development / Citizenship programming 1-2 times per week and 18% utilized

the programming daily.

TABLE 24

Survey Question 8: Duration of Character Development / Citizenship Curricula Usage =

Minutes per Session (N=11)

<15 Min	15-30 Min	31-45 Min	>46 Min
45%	55%	0%	0%

For responding building level administrators, 45% reported utilizing Character

Development / Citizenship curriculum for less than 15 minutes per session while 55%

reported program sessions ranging from 15 to 30 minutes in duration.

TABLE 25

Survey Question 9: Length of Character Development / Citizenship Curricula Usage =

Portion of School Year (N=11)

One grading period	One semester	All year
0%	0%	100%

For responding building level administrators, 100% reported that the chosen

Character Development / Citizenship curriculum was to be utilized for the entire school

year.

TABLE 26

Survey Question 10: Range of Grade Levels Expected to Participate in Character

Development / Citizenship Programming (N=11)

All grades expected to participate	Not all grades expected to participate
100%	0%

For responding building level administrators, no grade levels were to be excluded from participating in the Character Development / Citizenship curriculum.

Summary

The data provided in this chapter were compiled from survey responses provided by building level administrators and from the Indiana Department of Education databases. Fifty building level administrators were asked to participate in the study based upon their identification by the Indiana Department of Education as having committed to a Character Development / Citizenship program as a Focus Area on their Indiana School Improvement Plan with the intent of improving the academic achievement of their students. For those building level administrators who provided Character Development / Citizenship program implementation years which corresponded with useable ISTEP+ data, the Median Scale Scores and percentages of students who passed the ISTEP+ test as recorded in the statistic Total Percent Passing were recorded and compared to state averages in order to find a relationship between the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program and increased achievement as shown by the ISTEP+. Median Scale Scores were also compared to the state established cut score in order to utilize a stationary data point for comparison. Along with achievement data, the survey was crafted to find existence of change in negative student behaviors, an approximate level of implementation and administrator expectations and realizations which went along with program placement.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

Statement of the Problem

American society is quickly losing its common dedication to civil behavior,

character, and personal values. Many statistics provide evidence that the youth of

America increasingly experience difficulty making appropriate decisions regarding their

conduct and behavior as is evident in the number of acts of school violence, truancy, and

incidence of high school drop out (Was, Woltz & Drew, 2006). While public schools may

appear to be the obvious place for the American society to influence its youngest

generation to understand and act with character, the pressure on schools is increasingly

academically oriented leaving little time for non-standardized-test related topics such as

Character Development and Citizenship. With a multitude of studies, the benefits of

Character Development / Citizenship programming have shown to reach from behavioral

to academic to social for a wide range of schools and students. With evidence supporting

the potential for academic gains realized by implementing Character Development /

Citizenship programming and the need for a continually improving personally conscious

society, the implementation of Character Development / Citizenship programming in

public schools should be pervasive.

Review of Methodology

In order to show the relationship between the use of a Character Development / Citizenship program and improved academic achievement, this study investigated the ISTEP+ scores for those Indiana third graders who were exposed to a Character Development / Citizenship program for the year of implementation and as fourth graders for the year immediately following program implementation. Average Median Scale Scores and average rates of Total Percent Passing were compared between those schools committing to a Character Development / Citizenship Plan as part of their School Improvement Plan and all other Indiana schools / third and fourth grade test takers in order to find evidence that the use of the Character Development / Citizenship program positively related to increased academic achievement according to these measures. In addition, Median Scale Scores for those schools committing to the use of a Character Development / Citizenship program were presented relative to the state established cut score for the applicable test subject areas. Building level administrators were asked to provide the year in which they first implemented a Character Development / Citizenship program with the belief that it would positively affect academic achievement, the incidence of negative student behavior for the year of program implementation as compared to previous years, their expectations regarding their chosen program and the level of fidelity and rigor with which their chosen program was implemented. The year of implementation provided by the building level administrators led the researcher to then locate and analyze the specific ISTEP+ test data from the Indiana Department of Education databases made available via the IDOE website.

Summary of Findings and Discussion

The data revealed interesting information which in some instances prove some hypotheses true and others not. Demographic comparison data showed that the responding CD/C schools were very close to state average in regards to attendance, ethnicity and rates of those students eligible for free or reduced lunch prices. Conversely, the geographic location data show that the responding CD/C schools were not representative of the overall state distribution. Although in general, the CD/C schools were very close to state average on these standard demographic comparisons, there were schools which fell well outside of the average range for ethnicity of attending students and those students eligible for free or reduced lunch prices. These statistics, in general, speak to the nature of challenges presented to these schools in regards to standardized test performance and academic achievement. As an example, the following are some 2003 ISTEP+ data: Seventy-four percent of all third graders passed the Language Arts ISTEP+ test while only 61% of those eligible for free or reduced lunch prices passed, and while 78% of all white third graders passed, only 54% of black third graders passed. Additionally, the average Median Scale Score for a third graders in 2003 was 440.7, while those eligible for free or reduced lunch prices averaged a Median Scale Score of 419.5, and black third graders averaged a Median Scale Score of 409.4. Similar data are provided for the Math portion of the ISTEP+ for 2003. These disparities show that some of the schools committing to a Character Development / Citizenship program as a means to improved academic achievement statistically had larger hills to climb in order to reach or exceed state averages and expectations.

Hypothesis one stated that the Character Development / Citizenship schools would show ISTEP+ Median Scale Scores at or below that of the state average Median Scale Score for the same year. This hypothesis was developed to find whether the schools choosing this particular program as part of their School Improvement Plan were average performing schools prior to this programming addition. Table 4 shows that the CD/C schools averaged 8.16 Median Scale Score points below state average Median Scale Score in Language Arts and 10.49 Median Scale Score points below state average Median Scale Scores for Math for the given program implementation year. Hypothesis two stated that after one year of exposure to a Character Development / Citizenship program, the same children whose scores made up the statistics for Hypothesis 1 would average Median Scale Scores above the state average Median Scale Scores. Table 5 shows that the CD/C schools still produced an average of Median Scale Scores below the state average of Median Scale Scores with 8.59 below points in Language Arts and 6.24 points below in Math. Hypothesis two was found to be untrue as evidenced by the two measures presented. Only one measure showed an improvement in Median Scale Scores as compared to the state average Median Scale Score for the year after program implementation. Table 6 shows that the CD/C schools declined by .43 points in Language Arts Median Scale Scores as compared to the state average. However, the CD/C schools gained on the state average in Math Median Scale Score performance by 4.25 points thereby showing improvement and closing the gap between their scores and the state average scores after one year of program implementation.

Hypotheses three and four were similar in nature to Hypotheses one and two in that Hypothesis three was developed to find whether CD/C schools had a lower than state average percentage of students attaining either Pass or Pass Plus scores in Language Arts, Math and LA / Math combined for the implementation year. Hypothesis four was then developed to find whether the CD/C schools produced total percentages of passing scores above the state average after one year of Character Development / Citizenship programming exposure. Table 7 shows that CD/C Schools Total Percent of students Passing was 6.75 percentage points below state average for Language Arts, 7.50 percentage points below state average for Math and 7.50 percentage points below state average for combined LA / Math for third graders testing the year of program implementation. Table 8 shows the CD/C schools still below state average of Total Percent Passing students with 4.00 percentage points below for Language Arts, 9.00 percentage points below for Math and 8.75 percentage points below for Combined LA / Math for the same students after one year of program exposure. Hypothesis four was found to be untrue overall, as shown in Table 9, in that of the three measures presented, two showed a decline in Total Percent Passing as compared to the state average of Total Percent Passing from implementation year to the following year. However, the CD/C schools did come closer to the state average for Total Percent Passing in the Language Arts category gaining 2.75 percentage points after one year of program implementation.

Hypothesis five and Research Question two were similar in nature and were both addressed by survey question two with results displayed in Table 10. The question asked building level administrators if their schools realized a reduction in the percentage of

negative student behaviors for the year in which the program was first implemented over previous years. Eighty-two percent of building level administrators realized a reduction in negative student behaviors on average of 23% and ranging from 10-50%. This data shows that for this population, hypothesis five was true and that there shows to be a positive relationship between the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program and reduced incidence of negative student behaviors. While on first glance, this data may not appear to be relative to the stated objective of improved academic achievement required of a School Improvement Plan, the researcher asserts with support in Chapter 2, that when children are in the classroom and not engaging in disruptive behavior, both those previously disruptive children and all other children in the classroom environment have an increased opportunity to learn. For many schools, this may be the main reason to implement a Character Development / Citizenship program as a means toward increased academic achievement in that when children are not in the office, suspended, or expelled, they can learn more. In addition to the many academic interventions in which schools engage in order to improve achievement, improving the percentage of time in the classroom is another way to approach the issue.

In addition to the specific nature of the hypotheses, Research Question one generally asked if the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program related to higher levels of academic achievement as determined by ISTEP+ data. Data available in various tables in Chapter 4 are presented in similar format to the Hypotheses data. Tables 11 and 14 show the relative Median Scale Scores for 3rd grade students in the CD/C schools in relation to the state established cut score for each test. Those students

achieving a score above the cut score fall into the categories of Pass and Pass Plus for each individual test. Tables 12 and 15 show the relative Median Scale Scores for 4th grade students in the CD/C schools in relation to the state established cut score for each test. Tables 11 and 12show that CD/C schools averaged Median Scale Scores of 34.5 points over the state cut score as 3rd graders and only 31.9 points over the state cut score as 4th graders for the Language Arts portion of the ISTEP+. Table 13 shows that while CD/C schools still averaged Median Scale Scores well above the state established cut score for both Language Arts, they did decline in their distance over the cut score by 2.60 points in the testing year following program implementation. Tables 14 and 15 show similar data in presenting that CD/C schools averaged Median Scale Scores of 26.2 points over the state cut score as 3rd graders and 33.2 points over the state cut score as 4th graders for the Math portion of the ISTEP+. Table 16 shows that as 4th graders the CD/C school students increased their distance over the state established cut score in Math by 7.00 points from their performance in 3rd grade. The data presented in these six tables speak to Research Question one and provide mixed results. While showing that the Median Scale Scores of the CD/C schools was, on average, suitable to exceed the state established cut scores for both the Language Arts and Math portions of the ISTEP+, only Math scores showed a gain in achievement from implementation year to the following year as reported by this measure.

The presentation of data in the form of Median Scale Score as compared to state established cut score was chosen because comparing the Median Scale Score of 3rd graders to the Median Scale Score of 4th graders would not have proven accurate. The

Lowest Obtainable Scale Score and Highest Obtainable Scale Score for the 3rd and 4th

grade tests are different. Thus, comparing Median Scale Scores to each other from those

years would not have shown the actual differences in scores as the scores varied in

overall scale. Comparing the Median Scale Scores to the state established cut score does,

however, provide a stable point of reference when discussing growth from year to year in

comparison to state determined expectations.

Research Question one was also referenced in Tables 17, 18, and 19. These tables

presented the Total Percent Passing of CD/C school students from the year of the

Character Development / Citizenship program implementation to the following year. The

purpose of the data presentation was to find whether exposure to a Character

Development / Citizenship program resulted in higher levels of Total Percent Passing in

4th grade CD/C school test takers than in the same students as 3rd grade CD/C school test

takers. Table 17 showed a .72 point average increase in the percentage of students who

passed the Language Arts test from 3rd grade to 4th grade for CDC Schools. With that,

63% of CD/C schools saw an increase in the percentage of students passing the Language

Arts section of the ISTEP+ from 3rd grade to 4th grade. Table 18 showed a .18 point

average decrease in the percentage of students who passed the Math test from 3rd grade to

4th grade for CD/C schools although 45% of CD/C schools saw a Total Percent Passing

increase from 3rd to 4th grades in Math. Table 19 showed a 1.63 point average increase in

the percentage of students who passed both the Language Arts and Math portions of the

ISTEP+ for CD/C schools from 3rd to 4th grade. In this data set, it is shown that 63% of

CD/C schools saw a Total Percent Pass increase from 3rd to 4th grades. As with the other

data sets, this is a mixed result showing that some Character Development /

Citizenship schools realized an increase in academic achievement from the year of

implementation to the year following implementation as is evident by this particular

measure. While several individual schools did show a decrease in the percentage of

students who passed the various portions of the ISTEP+ test, the average of the averages

shows an improvement for those schools implementing this intervention.

Research Question three was posed in an attempt to ascertain the expectations and

realizations of the building level administrators upon implementing a Character

Development / Citizenship program in their schools. Although, as a portion of the School

Improvement Plan, the Character Development / Citizenship program is to be utilized as

a means toward increased academic achievement, there are two schools of thought

regarding the approach when implementing such a seemingly non-academic intervention.

Some administrators may implement the program with the linear expectation of

improving academics, and some may implement the program with the more holistic

expectation that improved behavior and citizenship will lead to such behaviors as

increased effort at scholastic endeavors and improved behavior leading to increased seat

time. Because of these varying expectations, the study survey asked building level

administrators to quantify their expectations and the results of the program

implementation. Table 20 displays the survey results showing that none of the building

level administrators expected improvement only directly in Academics and Test Scores,

while 36% expected improvement in only Behavior and Discipline, and 55% expected

improvement in both areas simultaneously. Nine percent had expectations for

improvement that could not fall into either of the provided categories. Table 21 shows

that, according to survey responses, none of the building level administrators realized

improvement in only Academics and Test Scores, 45% realized improvement in Behavior

and Discipline, while 45% realized improvements in both. These survey results show that

building level administrators went into program implementation with reasonable

expectations which have largely been realized. Although varying by a few percentage

points, all building level administrators did report realizing improvement in their areas of

expectation from the implementation of the CD/C program and a full 45% realized what

they considered to be Academic / Test Score improvement.

Research Question four was posed in an attempt to understand the expectations

for usage of building level administrators upon implementing a program with expectation

of improved academic achievement as is required by programming included in the School

Improvement Plan. In other words, how often and with what intensity do building level

administrators implement a program when they expect academic improvement from its

usage? Tables 22, 23, 24, 25, and 26 provide data compiled from survey questions 6-10

in order to address this question. The responding building level administrators indicated

that for 90% of them, implementation was not optional for teachers and staff, and 100%

indicated that all grade levels were expected to participate. These data indicate that no

building level administrator believed that any student was too young or too old to benefit

from Character Development / Citizenship programming. Although the option of

implementation for teachers and staff was present, this question may have been answered

as optional for a variety of reasons. All responding building level administrators indicated

that the programming chosen for implementation was to be utilized for the entire

school year, and 82% chose programs that could be utilized 1-2 times per week. Eighteen

percent chose programs that were to be utilized on a daily basis. The data vary for

matching frequency of implementation and realizations of academic achievement. The

two schools reporting daily use expectations varied greatly in their relation of Median

Scale Score to Cut Score on all measures with one school showing a large gap over the

cut score in all four measures and the other showing a very minimal Median Scale Score

over cut score differential. In addition, those two schools both showed minimal growth of

Total Percent Pass from 3rd grade to 4th grade; however, one school started with a much

higher 3rd grade Total Percent Passing than the other. The final question referencing

fidelity and rigor of program implementation regarded the expected duration of each

Character Development / Citizenship curriculum session. Forty-five percent of

responding schools expected lessons to last less than 15 minutes, while 55% implemented

lessons with expected durations of 15-30 minutes per session. Interpreted from this data

is the belief that none of the implementing building level administrators expected their

chosen Character Development / Citizenship programming to dominate the existing

curriculum or to become a significant portion of the academic day. Instead, by the

frequency and duration expectations reported, one could interpret that the chosen

Character Development / Citizenship programming was to supplement the existing

academics and to be used in tandem with existing programming. Anything more than a

tandem, supplemental program would presumably be required more frequently and for

longer durations than the building level administrators reported was their expectation.

Survey question six asked building level administrators to indicate what kind of Character Development / Citizenship program they chose to implement, a commercially developed or locally produced program. The reason for this question was to attempt to discern a difference in academic achievement or student behavior in relation to the kind of programming being utilized. While 72% of responding schools indicated that they chose to utilize a commercially developed Character Development / Citizenship program, there was no indicated difference in academic achievement improvement measures or student behavior between those 72% and the other 28 % who chose to develop a program locally. The only conclusion that the researcher arrived at based on this information is that the use of a program with consistent fidelity and rigor, which was uniformly distributed among those commercial and local programs, was the variable in play, not the origination of the materials.

<div align="center">Conclusions</div>

The data present several areas for discussion in regards to the potential result of improved academic achievement from the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program. There are mixed results when looking at direct linkage between Character Development / Citizenship programming and standard measures of ISTEP+ performance. The majority of individual data points from Tables 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, and 19, 31 of 55 points or 56%, do show an improvement in the cohort of students after one year of exposure to a program. The data points showing improvement range from the miniscule, 0.5 points, to the large, 29 points. These data present evidence of an overall

positive relationship between the utilization of a Character Development / Citizenship program and improved academic achievement. Along with these data is the information displayed in Tables 1, 2, and 3 which show that the CDC schools have subcategory demographics very similar to state averages in the areas of free / reduced lunch eligible students, race and attendance making the results generalizable to the population in this aspect.

At the same time, the data from Tables 4 and 5, summarized in Table 6 and data from Tables 7 and 8, summarized in Table 9, show that three of these five data points present a lack of relative gain in nearing the state average scores for the categories discussed. These data presents no evidence of an overall positive relationship between the utilization of a Character Development / Citizenship program and improved academic achievement. In addition, Tables 13 and 16 which summarize the data in Tables 11, 12, 14, and 15, show that one data category compares to show improvement and one compares to show a decline. These data provide mixed results and are accompanied by the additional factors of a statistically insignificant number of responses with which to produce generalizable data and geographic labels of the CD/C schools not representative of state categories. These combined factors lead to the finding that the study was overall inconclusive with regard to the assertion that a positive relationship exists between the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program and increased academic achievement.

In addition to test data, building level administrators reported improvements in behavior and discipline during the initial program year implementation. As previously

discussed, although the School Improvement Plan does not specifically require programming focused on improving behavior and discipline, the less time children spend out of the classroom for disciplinary infractions, the more learning they can participate in. Forty-five percent of building level administrators also did report an improvement in Academics / Test Scores in addition to the behavioral improvements after one year of program exposure. While evidence of this may not directly display in ISTEP+ scores, many schools engage in a multitude of academic assessments including district and building created common assessments, NWEA, DIBELS, Terra Nova, and teacher created assessments. This report by the building level administrators could be in relation to these other achievement indicators.

Although this study does show many points of potential for defending the use of a Character Development / Citizenship program for purposes of increasing academic achievement and improving student behavior, the results are inconclusive and cannot be generalized to any given population. While the participating schools were chosen by the method of searching the Indiana Department of Education database for those schools using a Character Development / Citizenship program as a Focus Area in their School Improvement Plan, there likely were some problems with the reliability of that data. Because the query for self-identified schools presented with a publication date of 2006, the researcher assumed that using ISTEP+ data for third and fourth grade students would be appropriate. This publication date provided by the Indiana Department of Education influenced this decision because School Improvement Plans are submitted to the state every year with a three year plan. With this and the publication date of 2006, the

researcher reasonably projected that individual schools would report implementation

years between 2003 and 2007 which are the years containing useable ISTEP+ data as

made available by the Indiana Department of Education. The researcher also did not

employ a sample population for this study as the Indiana Department of Education

identified only 50 useable schools with the "Elementary" label as falling in to this

category. Therefore, the researcher chose to solicit information from all 50 schools for

the highest potential response. Solicitations for participation in the study survey via

electronic link, provided through individually addressed email requests, were produced

on three separate occasions in weekly intervals from January 31, 2010, to February 14,

2010. The final cut off for data retrieval was February 19, 2010. After these three

attempts, only 19 building level administrators responded to the study survey request. Of

those 19, eight responded with implementation years that fell outside of the presumed

implementation years and their data therefore could not be used as participating schools.

The year of implementation, which lead to the supply of ISTEP+ data, was the impetus

for including all remaining survey responses. Due to the low response rate and low

usability of responses, the results of this study do not meet the percentage requirements

for generalizable information.

  While the results of this study are mixed and generally inconclusive, one could

still use various data points in defense of the implementation of a Character Development

/ Citizenship program as part of a well-rounded package of interventions aimed at

improving academic achievement. As with many educational programming initiatives,

Character Development / Citizenship program is likely not often implemented

independent of other initiatives. Schools use a multitude of interventions, academic,

behavior, structural, and financial, simultaneously with varying degrees of fidelity and

rigor throughout any given school year. In conjunction with the variety of interventions

committed to by any given school as a whole, individual teachers or grade levels may

introduce various techniques and programming to their students throughout a school year

in attempts to gain insight into their student's learning and in order to make adjustments

to schedules, presentation styles, activities, and all of the other variables involved in the

teaching and learning process, with the intent of improving academic achievement. In

addition to the seemingly endless number of variables within the school structure,

students individually are subject to many other factors which can and do affect their

academic achievement from one school year to the next and even from one day to the

next. Many school aged children deal with personal and educational factors which change

frequently enough to cause disruption or difficulty in their learning and test performance.

Because of this fluid nature of educational interventions and situations and the inability

of researchers to isolate individual variables, rarely will the opportunity for truly

experimental research in education be realized.

Recommendations for Future Study

Research into the effectiveness of Character Development / Citizenship

programming should continue in order to bring more scientifically based, proven

effective programs to the field of education. In order to move past correlative studies,

more research of a quasi-experimental nature should be undertaken in order to prove the

widely held belief that students with an increased understanding of and respect for their personal growth and contributions to society will make a better attempt at learning and achieving to their highest ability. Future studies should include multiple program options and implementation configurations in order to find the combination that most often works best for various groups of children. In addition to more quasi-experimental, quantitative study, research should continue in the qualitative domain in order to better understand how Character Development / Citizenship programs impact children and affect their academic efforts. This qualitative design would also allow a researcher to move past the limited response and varied interpretation arena of survey research to a more reliable method of obtaining data via direct observation and questioning.

In addition to the variations of research available to future researchers, studies should also be conducted on a broader scale than this group therefore producing results which would be more generalizable to the population. The schools used for the population group in this study were identified as being participants in Character Development / Citizenship programming as part of their School Improvement Plan by the Indiana Department of Education. These schools made up the experimental population in order to investigate an assumed level of fidelity and rigor; however, other schools may implement similar plans with similar fidelity and rigor yet not include the program specifically as part of their School Improvement Plan Focus Area efforts. With that, a group of self-reported Character Development / Citizenship program implementers not engaging in the programming for purposes of the School Improvement Plan likely would provide a different population for study purposes. Additional questions of a qualitative

nature may also add insight into the decisions by building level administrators to utilize a Character Development / Citizenship program as a means to academic achievement.

Studies also could be conducted of a longitudinal nature in an attempt to determine the lasting effects of a Character Development / Citizenship program on the personality development of students. Long term studies could include both short and long term exposure groups in an attempt to determine the ideal length of exposure and the ideal age group for program beginning and ending. Building level administrators may also be asked to reflect on their decision to utilize a Character Development / Citizenship program as a means toward academic achievement and whether they would choose such programming again or in lieu of other programs.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program and increased achievement as determined by ISTEP+ data when the program was implemented with an assumed level of fidelity and rigor. The results for this portion of the study were determined to be inconclusive. An additional purpose of this study was to determine the level, if any, of reduced incidence of negative student behaviors during the implementation year of the Character Development / Citizenship program. The schools chosen to be members of the experimental population for this study committed to the implementation of their Character Development / Citizenship program as they indicated

their intent by listing their program as a Focus Area in their School Improvement Plan

according to the Indiana Department of Education. By committing to program

implementation via their School Improvement Plan, the schools indicated that, in part, the

use of their plan was to increase academic achievement as is a requirement of programs

included in the School Improvement Plan.

In addition to this study, many other configurations of research can be conducted

in order to determine the ideal fidelity and rigor of a Character Development / Citizenship

program in addition to determining the ideal program participant. While there remains

little doubt as to the need for consistent Character Development / Citizenship

programming in the public schools, schools are pressured to implement only researched

programs which they intend will lead to increased academic achievement. With that,

research must continue as to effective ways to make positive gains in academic

development while simultaneously improving school-aged children's levels of personal

and social responsibility.

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APPENDIX A

BALL STATE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

Institutional Review Board

DATE:	January 27, 2010
TO:	Diana Romito
FROM:	Ball State University IRB
RE:	IRB protocol # 147847-3
TITLE:	CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT / CITZENSHIP PROGRAMMING AS A SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN OPTION AND THE CORRELATION TO PERFORMANCE ON STATE STANDARDIZED TESTS AND REDUCED INCIDENCE OF NEGATIVE STUDENT BEHAVIORS
SUBMISSION TYPE:	Revision
ACTION:	APPROVED
DECISION DATE:	January 27, 2010
EXPIRATION DATE:	January 26, 2011
REVIEW TYPE:	Expedited Review

The Institutional Review Board has approved your Revision for the above protocol, effective January 27, 2010 through January 26, 2011. All research under this protocol must be conducted in accordance with the approved submission.

As a reminder, it is the responsibility of the P.I. and/or faculty sponsor to inform the IRB in a timely manner:

- when the project is completed,
- if the project is to be continued beyond the approved end date,
- if the project is to be modified,
- if the project encounters problems, or
- if the project is discontinued.

Any of the above notifications should be addressed in writing and submitted electronically to the IRB (http://www.bsu.edu/irb). Please reference the IRB protocol number given above in any communication to the IRB regarding this project. Be sure to allow sufficient time for review and approval of requests for modification or continuation. If you have questions, please contact Amy Boos at (765) 285-5034 or akboos@bsu.edu.

APPENDIX B

INTRODUCTORY LETTER FOR SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

Dear (Building Level Administrator),

I am writing to request your participation in a Dissertation research study entitled "Character Development / Citizenship Programming as a School Improvement Plan Option and the Correlation to Performance on State Standardized Tests and Reduced Incidence of Negative Student Behaviors." Your school was chosen to participate in the study because of self-reporting to the Indiana Department of Education your intent to include a Character Development / Citizenship program as an Improvement Focus Area of your Indiana School Improvement Plan. **Participation consists of completing a 10 question survey for which the link can be found below**.

The survey questions are designed to address these general research areas of interest:
1) a correlation between the implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship program and ISTEP+ test scores;
2) a change in student behavior upon implementation and application of a Character Development / Citizenship program;
3) the frequency of the chosen Character Development / Citizenship programs meeting the expectations of the administrator; and
4) the general level of fidelity and rigor with which the Character Development / Citizenship program was implemented.

Your participation is voluntary and confidential. Your name will not be used in published documents and your comments and data will not be individually linked to your school outside of the researcher's files. Your responses will be linked to your ISTEP+ results only in group data to show general trends in program effects and implementation efforts. Individual school data regarding student behavior, program implementation and administrator expectations will not be individually linked to ISTEP+ data but will be used to form data groups for purposes of drawing conclusions. Your individual school name will be used in a format listing the school as a participating experimental group school as this information is currently available on the Indiana Department of Education website. Your individual school data will not be linked to published information regarding negative student behavior, administrator expectations or program fidelity and rigor levels. All data will be housed as part of the researcher's files and will be provided to any individual providing a written request for the information for a period of two years following the publication of the study. Upon completion of the dissertation research, an email will be sent to you providing a link to the published document.

This research involves the potential for minimal risk to the participants as determined by the researcher. Data supplied by you, the building level administrator, will be confidential not anonymous, subsequently; there is risk of exposure linking your response to you as an individual. Individuals providing a written request to obtain research data may be provided such data however, the researcher will protect individual identities from being associated with data. Should

you as the participant find this potential for minimal risk unacceptable, <u>please do not participate in the study survey.</u>

As the building level administrator, person of authority over the requested information and the participant in this study, by participating in this study, you are giving permission for your responses to be utilized to formulate data. In lieu of a signed statement, by completing and submitting the online survey, you are agreeing to participate in the research study.

Your participation should take approximately 10 minutes and does not require any additional time, response or log on.

<u>Please click on the following link to access this 10 question survey via Survey Monkey</u>.

(link)

For questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact Office of Research Compliance, Sponsored Programs Office, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306, (765) 285-5070, irb@bsu.edu.

Thank you for your commitment to educating Indiana's children and your assistance in these research endeavors.

Sincerely,
Diana Romito
Doctoral Candidate
Department of Educational Leadership
Teachers College 918
Ball State University
Muncie, IN 47306

Diana Romito
13446 W. Rovey Ave.
Litchfield Park, AZ 85340

Dr. William Sharp
Professor, Doctoral Committee Chair
Department of Educational Leadership
Teachers College 918
Ball State University
Muncie, IN 47306
(765) 285-8488

APPENDIX C

BUILDING LEVEL ADMINISTRATOR SURVEY

Character Development / Citizenship survey for the Dissertation study entitled "Character Development / Citizenship Programming as a School Improvement Plan Option and the Correlation to Performance on State Standardized Tests and Reduced Incidence of Negative Student Behaviors."

1. Please list the **first** year that your school chose to include "Character Development / Citizenship" as an "Improvement Focus Area" on your Indiana School Improvement Plan.

2. Was there a reduction in the number of office referrals, suspensions, and /or expulsions for the year in which the Character Development / Citizenship program was implemented over previous years? (check that which applies)

            Yes   No

2a. If possible and if there was a reduction, please provide an approximate percentage or percentage range for the reduction in office referrals, suspensions, and /or expulsions during implementation year versus previous years.

_____

3. Which specific areas, if any, did you hope to improve by implementing a Character Development / Citizenship program? (check all that apply)

Academics / Test Scores   Behavior / Discipline   Both   Neither

Other: _____

4. In which areas have you seen improvement since the implementation of the Character Development / Citizenship program? (check all that apply)

Academics / Test Scores   Behavior / Discipline   Both   Neither

Other: _____

5. What kind of Character Development / Citizenship program did you implement? (check that which applies)

        Commercially Developed   Locally Produced

Other: _____

6. Was the implementation of the Character Development / Citizenship program at all optional for teachers and staff? (check that which applies)

        Yes   No

7. How often were the Character Development / Citizenship materials / curricula to be used for instruction in an average week? (check that which applies)

   1-2 times/wk   3-4 times/wk   5 times/wk = Daily

8. How many minutes per session was the average teacher expected to utilize the Character Development / Citizenship curriculum? (check that which applies)

   < 15 minutes   15-30 minutes   31-45 minutes   > 46 minutes

9. What was the intended length of the Character Development / Citizenship curriculum? (check that which applies)

   1 grading period   1 semester   All year

10. Were all grade levels in your building expected to participate in the Character Development / Citizenship programming? (circle that which applies)

        Yes   No

APPENDIX D

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN IMPROVEMENT EFFORT CATEGORY PAGE

AND LIST OF SCHOOLS IDENTIFIED BY THE INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF

EDUCATION AS USING A CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT / CITIZENSHIP

PROGRAM AS PART OF THEIR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

School Improvement Plan

An effective school improvement planning process allows Indiana schools to develop a strategic and continuous plan that focuses on quality education and high levels of student achievement. All Indiana public schools and those non-public schools that voluntarily seek accreditation are required to have a school improvement plan. The plan must be submitted to the department by June 30 of the school year prior to the year of implementation.

- What are the required components of an Indiana school improvement plan?
- What other information might be included in a school improvement plan?
- Is there an optional format for the school improvement plan?
- What school improvement models are acceptable and will they be reviewed by the Indiana Department of Education?

- **More Information**
    - Definition of Terms
- **Web Links**
    - Public Law 221
    - Strategic and Continuous School Improvement and Achievement Plan: Submittal Form

Find a list of schools that are working on related improvement efforts.

School Configuration	Public / Nonpublic	County
Elementary only	Public only	All Counties

Improvement Models

Click to Select

Improvement Focus Areas

Character Development/Citizenship

Improvement Strategies

Click to Select

▶ ▶ ▶ Submit ◀ ◀ ◀

Items can be de-selected by selecting a blank line(the first line) from the drop-down lists.

Compare Schools

Compare Schools   **Indiana Department of Educa**

School Type: Elementary Schools
public Schools
School Improvement Focus: Character Development/Citizenship
... 54 Schools Queried   ... Avg Percent Passing English/LA=76.10 Math=74.90

Check boxes and click "SUBMIT" to include schools in comparison
[Submit]   ☐ Select All Schools

M S D Southwest Allen County
☐ Deer Ridge Elementary   KG-05   1515 Scott Rd   Fort Wayne, IN 46814-9399   (260) 431-0701

Fort Wayne Community Schools
☐ Bloomingdale Elementary Sch   PK-05   1300 Orchard St   Fort Wayne, IN 46808-2790   (260) 467-6700
☐ Mabel K Holland Elem Sch   PK-05   7000 Red Haw Dr   Fort Wayne, IN 46825-4899   (260) 467-7075

Bartholomew Con School Corp
☐ Southside Elementary School   PK-06   1320 W 200 S   Columbus, IN 47201-9115   (812) 376-4423

Logansport Community Sch Corp
☐ Fairview Elementary School   PK-05   846 S Cicott St   Logansport, IN 46947-4627   (574) 722-5288
☐ Franklin Elementary School   KG-05   410 W Miami Ave   Logansport, IN 46947-2534   (574) 722-3200

Greater Clark County Schools
☐ Bridgepoint Elementary School PK-05   420 Ewing Ln   Jeffersonville, IN 47130-4898   (812) 288-4858
☐ Pleasant Ridge Elem School   KG-05   1250 Monroe St   Charlestown, IN 47111-1947   (812) 256-7286
☐ W E Wilson Elementary   PK-05   2915 Charlestown Pk   Jeffersonville, IN 47130-9327   (812) 288-4888

Delaware Community School Corp
☐ Albany Elementary School   KG-05   700 W State St   Albany, IN 47320-1399   (765) 789-6102

Yorktown Community Schools
☐ Pleasant View Elementary School KG-02 9101 W River Rd   Yorktown, IN 47396-1399   (765) 759-2800

Wa-Nee Community Schools
☐ Nappanee Elementary School   KG-05   755 E Van Buren St   Nappanee, IN 46550-1499   (574) 773-7421
☐ Wakarusa Elementary School   KG-05   400 N Washington St Box 408 Wakarusa, IN 46573-9549   (574) 862-2000
☐ Woodview Elementary School   KG-05   800 E Woodview Dr   Nappanee, IN 46550-1190   (574) 773-3117

New Albany-Floyd Co Con Sch
☐ Floyds Knobs Elementary School KG-05 4484 Scottsville Rd   Floyds Knobs, IN 47119-0000   (812) 923-8770

South Gibson School Corp
☐ Haubstadt Community School   KG-08   158 E 1025 S   Haubstadt, IN 47639-0158   (812) 768-6487
☐ Owensville Community School   KG-08   6569 S SR 65   Owensville, IN 47665-0158   (812) 724-3705

Eastbrook Community Sch Corp
☐ Upland Elementary School   PK-06   694 S 2nd St   Upland, IN 46989-   (765) 998-2550

White River Valley Sch Dist
☐ Worthington Elementary School KG-06   484 W Main St   Worthington, IN 47471-1525   (812) 875-3839

Westfield-Washington Schools
☐ Oak Trace Elementary Sch   PK-04   16504 Oak Ridge Rd   Westfield, IN 46074-9317   (317) 867-6400

Mt Vernon Community Sch Corp
☐ Fortville Elementary School   KG-04   1806 W SR 234   Fortville, IN 46040-9708   (317) 485-3180
☐ Mt Comfort Elementary School   KG-04   5694 W 300 N   Greenfield, IN 46140-8310   (317) 894-7667

Eastern Hancock Co Com Sch Corp

Compare Schools

☐ Eastern Hancock Elem School	KG-05	10450 E 250 N	Charlottesville, IN 46117-9725	(317) 936-5829

South Harrison Com Schools
| ☐ South Central Elementary | KG-06 | 6595 E Hwy 11 SE | Elizabeth, IN 47117-9426 | (812) 969-2973 |

North West Hendricks Schools
| ☐ Pittsboro School | KG-05 | 206 N Meridian St | Pittsboro, IN 46167-0279 | (317) 994-2000 |

Blue River Valley Schools
| ☐ Blue River Valley Elem School | KG-06 | Box 187 | Mount Summit, IN 47361-0187 | (765) 836-4851 |

Clark-Pleasant Com School Corp
| ☐ Break-O-Day Elementary School | 02-04 | 900 Sawmill Rd | New Whiteland, IN 46184-1199 | (317) 535-7536 |

River Forest Community Sch Corp
| ☐ John I Meister Elementary School | KG-05 | 3300 Jay St | Hobart, IN 46342-1299 | (219) 962-1103 |

Merrillville Community School
| ☐ Henry P Fieler Elem Sch | KG-04 | 407 W 61st Ave | Merrillville, IN 46410-2515 | (219) 650-5301 |
| ☐ Homer Iddings Elem Sch | KG-04 | 7249 VanBuren St | Merrillville, IN 46410-3857 | (219) 650-5302 |

Crown Point Community Sch Corp
| ☐ Dwight D Eisenhower Elem Sch | KG-05 | 1450 S Main St | Crown Point, IN 46307-8444 | (219) 663-8800 |
| ☐ Winfield Elementary School | KG-02 | 13128 Montgomery St | Crown Point, IN 46307-9259 | (219) 663-2287 |

School Town of Highland
| ☐ Allen J Warren Elem Sch | KG-06 | 2901 100th St | Highland, IN 46322-3362 | (219) 922-5660 |

Franklin Township Com Sch Corp
| ☐ Acton Elementary School | KG-04 | 8010 S Acton Rd | Acton, IN 46259-1599 | (317) 862-6108 |

M S D Wayne Township
| ☐ Chapel Glen Elementary School | PK-06 | 701 Lansdowne Rd | Indianapolis, IN 46234-2299 | (317) 243-5673 |

School Town of Speedway
| ☐ James A Allison Elem School 3 | KG-06 | 5240 W 22nd St | Speedway, IN 46224-5021 | (317) 244-9836 |

Monroe County Com Sch Corp
| ☐ Highland Park Elem Sch | KG-06 | 900 Park Square Dr | Bloomington, IN 47403-1726 | (812) 825-7673 |

Mooresville Con School Corp
| ☐ Waverly Elementary School | PK-06 | 8525 Waverly Rd | Martinsville, IN 46151-8367 | (317) 831-9218 |

North Putnam Community Schools
| ☐ Roachdale Elementary School | PK-05 | 305 S Indiana | Roachdale, IN 46172-0309 | (765) 522-1732 |

Cloverdale Community Schools
| ☐ Cloverdale Elementary School | PK-04 | 311 E Logan | Cloverdale, IN 46120-9803 | (765) 795-4339 |

Rush County Schools
| ☐ Arlington Elementary School | KG-06 | Box 31 | Arlington, IN 46104-0031 | (765) 663-2416 |

School City of Mishawaka
| ☐ Battell Elementary School | KG-06 | 715 E Broadway | Mishawaka, IN 46545-6793 | (574) 254-3900 |

South Bend Community Sch Corp
| ☐ Madison Primary Center | KG-04 | 832 N Lafayette Blvd | South Bend, IN 46601-1010 | (574) 283-8325 |

Lafayette School Corporation
| ☐ Amelia Earhart Elem Sch | KG-05 | 3280 S 9th St | Lafayette, IN 47909-2989 | (765) 772-4740 |

Vigo County School Corp
| ☐ Lost Creek Elementary School | PK-05 | 6701 Wabash Ave | Terre Haute, IN 47803-3998 | (812) 462-4456 |

Compare Schools

☐ <u>Riley Elementary School</u>　　　PK-05　PO Box 127 - 6050 S Canal　　Riley, IN 47871-0127　　(812) 462-4449

<u>Manchester Community Schools</u>
☐ <u>Manchester Intermediate School</u>　05-06　20 W Woodring Rd　　　Laketon, IN 46943-0234　　(260) 982-8685

<u>Richmond Community Schools</u>
☐ <u>Crestdale Elementary School</u>　　KG-06　701 Crestdale Dr　　　Richmond, IN 47374-1597　　(765) 973-3415
☐ <u>Paul C Garrison Elem Sch</u>　　　KG-06　4138 Niewoehner Rd　　Richmond, IN 47374-9639　　(765) 973-3431

<u>Northern Wells Com Schools</u>
☐ <u>Lancaster Central School</u>　　　PK-05　3240 E 300 N　　　　Bluffton, IN 46714-9211　　(260) 565-3135
☐ <u>Ossian Elementary</u>　　　　　PK-05　213 S Jefferson　　　Ossian, IN 46777-0305　　(260) 622-4179

<u>Frontier School Corporation</u>
☐ <u>Frontier Elementary</u>　　　　　KG-06　811 S Railroad　　　Brookston, IN 47923-0156　　(765) 563-3901

<u>Tri-County School Corp</u>
☐ <u>Tri-County Primary School</u>　　KG-02　Box 95　　　　　Remington, IN 47977-0000　　(219) 261-2214

<u>Whitley Co Cons Schools</u>
☐ <u>Mary Raber Elementary School</u>　PK-05　700 E Jackson St　　Columbia City, IN 46725-1999　　(260) 244-5857

[Submit]

Indiana Accountability System for Academic Progress
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APPENDIX E

SELECT PARTS OF A SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN WHICH INCLUDES

IMPLEMENTATION OF A CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT / CITIZENSHIP

PROGRAM

Select Parts of a School Improvement Plan which includes Implementation of a Character Development / Citizenship Program

School Improvement Team Meeting
A Elementary Library
October 6, 2008
5:15 pm

Present at the meeting:
    I. Vision Statement
Our current vision statement is more a belief statement than a vision (Learning gives us power to shape the future.) We would like to create a vision from that belief (Our children use the power of learning to shape their futures.) We will ask for feedback from students and parents, "Does this reflect the vision you have for yourself/your child at A Elementary?"
    II. Code of Student Attire
Feedback from students and parents will be sought for current beliefs about the Code of Student Attire with these choices: Satisfied with current Code, it needs to be less restrictive, or it needs to be more restrictive. In the latter two cases, provide examples.
    III. Subcommittees working on October 14th.

A. The Math Team will be planning for the upcoming Math Night (October 24th)
B. The Literacy Team will be brainstorming a list of ways teachers can provide Tier I in the classroom
C. The Climate Team will be brainstorming a list of ways we can intervene with students whose behavior gets in the way of learning for them and others.
D. The Technology Team will be brainstorming a list of ways we can use data for monitoring progress on TRI Tiers I and II as well as ways we can use technology to intervene with students.

A Elementary NCA Team Meeting Minutes
February 12, 2009
3:00 p.m.
Library

Climate NCA Team recommendations: Identify trigger words that would help students this of Second Steps lessons when they face similar situations. Have a collaboration session at the end of the year to discuss pros, cons, successes and struggles.

A Elementary Staff Meeting
A Elementary Library
May 12, 2009
2:00 pm

A Elementary teachers discussed adding three strategies to our NCA plan to include Positive Behavior Support, Response to Intervention and Curriculum Mapping. The NCA Team will meet on Thursday to place strategies in the professional development section of our plan, and add the necessary details.

A Elementary NCA Meeting
A Elementary Library
May 14, 2009
4:00 pm

Discussed were additions to the plan for Response to Intervention, Positive Behavior Support and Curriculum Mapping initiatives, in addition to how A Elementary attracts high-quality, highly qualified teachers to this school.

District Schools Goals, Benchmarks and Measures:

Goal: Continuous Improvement in Quality is Evident for Every Individual, Every School and the District
Students will be socially prepared to move to their next academic level.
    a. All students will demonstrate personal responsibility with good attendance and behavior choices.
        i. Percent of students with 95% or higher attendance rate
        ii. Percent of students with no office referrals
    b. All students will understand and use conflict resolution skills
        i. Percent of students with no suspensions

School Programs:
- Response to Intervention
- Literacy Collaborative
- Family Literacy Education
- Positive Behavior Support – A school wide initiative to model and teach what we expect from our students
- Project Wisdom – A daily read aloud inspiration to support our Constitution
- Accelerated Reader
- Second Steps – A Violence Prevention Curriculum
- Junior Achievement
- Easter Seals Disability Awareness
- BABES (Beginning Awareness Basic Education Studies)
- Peer Helpers
- Reading Is Fundamental – Book Giveaway
- The Jacy House Good Touch/Bad Touch
- Core 40
- 21st Century Scholars
- Protecting Me/Protecting You

School Stakeholder Summary:
The 91 parent survey responses continued to reflect the greatest parent concern in:
- new report card
- student respect of one another

Our staff continues to address student respect concerns with our SHRRP constitution. Second Step: A Violence Prevention Program, referrals to and classroom instruction by our school counselor, and parent meetings with our RTI team for individual behavior plans.

Teaching and Learning Standard: The school provides research-based curriculum and instructional methods that facilitate achievement for all students.

Impact Statement: A school is successful in meeting this standard when it implements a curriculum based on clear and measureable expectations for student learning that provides opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes. Teachers use proven instructional practices that actively engage students in the learning process. Teachers provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real world situations. Teachers give students feedback to improve their performance.

Focus Questions: Please respond to the following questions that focus on the processes that are in place to support the school's implementation of the practices outlined in the indicators rubric. Responses to these questions should support the school's self-assessment on the indicators rubric. Be thorough and concise in your answers focusing on quality and depth over quantity.

Question: In what ways does the school ensure the implementation of research-based instructional strategies, innovations, and activities that facilitate achievement for all students?

The following are practiced and evaluated for implementation conformity:
- Literacy Collaborative
- Everyday Math
- Second Steps
- GEI process
- PEC process
- Leveled Literacy Intervention
- Reading Recovery
- High Ability Learning
- FOSS Kits
- Positive Behavior Support

Question: How does the leadership ensure a safe and orderly environment for students and staff?
- High behavior expectations
- Enforced and reviewed school constitution
- Home school compact (identifies responsibilities of parent, student, teacher)
- Positive Behavior Support
- Office referrals
- Parent contacts, including home visit
- Dunn Counselor
- Second Step
- CPI training

PL221 Requirements:

Safe and Disciplined Learning Environment:

A Elementary's suspension rates have risen dramatically in the recent past. Our staff is currently implementing Positive Behavior Support and Second Step: A Violence Prevention Program and expect to see a reduction in suspensions for the current school year. Our suspensions for the 2007-08 school year showed a sizeable reduction from the prior three years.

Professional Development Plan
A Elementary School

Goal 1: All Students will improve comprehension skills across the curriculum.

Annual Benchmark:
Percent Passing Language Arts ISTEP

Interventions:
- Students will improve comprehension skills by thinking and responding to higher order questions.
- Students will improve comprehension skills by using vocabulary building techniques.
- Students will improve comprehension skills through writing in response to higher order thinking questions.
- Students will participate in Positive Behavior Support to increase time on task.
- Students will participate in Response to Intervention as indicated by frequent assessments.
- Student learning will be maximized by the consistency created by curriculum mapping.

Intervention #4: Students will participate in Positive Behavior Support to increase time in task.

Year 1: Teachers will create PBS action plan with specific goals. Support Staff will post expectations. Teachers will create specific lesson plans for behavior expectations. Principal will use data to target problematic behaviors.
Persons Responsible: Teachers, Support Staff, Principal
Timeline: Fall 2009-Spring 2010
Resource: Staff / Student survey, School Constitution, PowerSchool Discipline Data, Second Steps for Students and families
Progress Monitoring of Success: F&P Benchmarks, Running Records, Conferences during guided reading and writing workshop, Acuity and DIBELS, Discipline Data
Staff Development Activities: Ongoing – Literacy Collaborative Training - imbedded data monitoring once per month. Staff and NCA committee meetings once per month. PLC and/or grade level meetings once per month. Positive Behavior Support Meetings once per month.

Years 2 and 3: Teachers and Staff will continue to meet with Behavior Specialist for continuous improvement in student behavior.
Persons Responsible: Principal / Behavior Specialist
All other activities remain consistent.