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The Relationship Between Political Affiliation and Student Achievement in the Areas of Reading and Mathematics, with Respect to Black Students

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The Relationship Between Political Affiliation and Student Achievement in the Areas of Reading and Mathematics, with Respect to Black Students

by

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by

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Declaration of Originality

I do hereby declare and attest to the fact that this is an original study based solely upon my own scholarly work here at Lindenwood University and that I have not submitted it for any other college or university course or degree here or elsewhere.

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To my wife and children whom I love so much; you have been so patient with me.

Abstract

The role of politicians is integral within the public school system. Politician influence directly the policies that impact student achievement. The impact could be based on ideologies. These ideologies could influence a significant difference in Black student achievement. In preparing for this study, the researcher was unable to find investigations of the potential influence political affiliations of state and local officials may have on student achievement, and specifically on Black student achievement.

This exploratory, correlational study analyzed the potential relationship between political party affiliation and student achievement of fourth and eighth grade students in the areas of mathematics and reading, located in the large cities of Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, Cleveland, District of Columbia, Hillsborough County, Jefferson County, and Milwaukee. The large urban areas were chosen to allow a diversity of ethnicity among the secondary achievement data analyzed. The purpose was to investigate the potential relationships of political party affiliations for the state and local offices of Governor, Speaker of the House, and Mayor/City Planner to student achievement of Black students in comparison to other ethnicities in large metropolitan school districts in United States.

Following analysis of secondary mathematics and reading data generated by the NAEP assessments for the years 2007 through 2015, the study did not find a statistically significant relationship between political party affiliations of those politicians who influence local educational policy and student achievement. The research did establish, once again, that the United States does still generate evidence of an achievement gap between Black students and other ethnicities.

The researcher concluded politics should not be a factor in educational reform. Factors that take precedence include helping students succeed. Helping students succeed goes beyond making policies or selecting the right candidate to receive the right amount of funding. We educators have a concern for the success of the child and the future state our society. If the child succeeds, society should progress.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction

For over 50 years previous to this writing, politicians tried to make education equitable (Downey & Condron, 2016). Two major educational acts of the 21st century were implemented to make educators accountable for student outcomes (Sparks, 2016). No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was implemented during the tenure of President George Bush and required states to analyze test results and report aggregated data of various subgroups (as cited in Jorgensen, 2003). NCLB required all student sub groups to make predetermined Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) on state academic assessments (Jorgensen, 2003). The second educational act was introduced by President Barack Obama as Race to the Top (Rogers-Chapman, 2015). This act introduced the nation to Common Core curriculum and made teachers accountable for student outcomes on standardized tests (Jochim & McGuinn, 2016). Although one purpose of these acts was to narrow the achievement gap, Black students still lagged behind.

At the time of this writing, our nation was using standardized tests to measure student performance (Demauro, 2015). State tests measured the performance of school districts to determine whether they met AYP (Linden, 2007). The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) measured student performance on a national level (Jago, 2009). NAEP provided scores for urban districts. Every student took the same test, across the country (Jago, 2009). The result of the NAEP assessment was the generation of a report card of the status of education in the nation (Jago, 2009).

When assessing the NAEP results, there was an indication that Black students were lagging behind. At the time of this writing, a wide gap still existed between Blacks

and Whites (Kena et al., 2015). In addition, Asian American students were surpassing Black students by large margins (Kena et al., 2015).

The 2015 Nation's Report Card indicated a 32% gap between Blacks and Whites in fourth-grade math, 30% gap between Blacks and Whites in eighth-grade math, 46% gap between Blacks and Asians in fourth-grade math, and a 48% gap between Blacks and Asians in eighth-grade math, for the 2013-2014 academic year (p. 1).

Results for reading indicated a 32% gap between Blacks and Whites in fourth grade, 28% gap between Blacks and Whites in eighth-grade reading, 39% gap between Blacks and Asians in fourth-grade reading, and a 38% gap between Blacks and Asians in eighth-grade reading (The Nation's Report Card, 2015).

Some studies suggested that socioeconomic differences were the reason Black students were lagging behind (Benner, Boyle, & Sadler, 2016). Research stated that large numbers of Black students came from poor households, where parents were not able to effectively monitor school performance, either because of their own lack of education or there was only one parent working multiple jobs (Lopez-Tamayo, LaVome-Robinson, Lambert, Jason, & Ialongo, 2016). Additionally, unemployment was extremely high (Lopez-Tamayo et al., 2016). Some researchers argued that socioeconomic status was not a reason for Black students failing in school (McWhorter, 2000; Whitmore, 2012), since some researchers stated that other minorities in similar conditions were succeeding (McWhorter, 2000).

Other studies suggested that Blacks were failing or lagging behind, because they attended poorer school systems (Galston, n.d.). In a *Fiscal Times* report, "New numbers show how American schools are failing Black students" (Misra, 2015, p. 1), Black

students were lacking experience in equity (Rich, 2015). Reports also indicated Black students were more likely to receive out of school suspensions (Rich, 2015). Urban schools were less likely to have teachers who were highly qualified. In addition, these schools often lacked adequate resources (Rich, 2015).

Other studies suggested that teachers were responsible for Black students lagging behind (Gershenson, 2015). Some teachers had low expectations of Black students, impacting student outcomes (Gershenson, 2015). Teachers tended to place negative labels on students (Okonofua & Eberhardt, 2015; Thegrio, 2015). Students expressed those labels by teachers, causing them to be perceived as having lower abilities, which led to low performance (Van Laar, 2000).

During the 2016 Presidential Campaign, Presidential Candidate Donald Trump shifted blame to Democrat controlled cities. Trump stated, "Democrats trapped millions of African-American and Hispanic youth in failing government schools" (as cited in Morrongiello, 2016, para. 2). Trump stated Black students were entangled in public school systems that did not allow them to be successful (Morrongiello, 2016). He blamed this on the failing policies of Democrats that had run cities for years (Morrongiello, 2016).

Democrats controlled some urban areas for several years (Discover the Networks, 2015; Rosenbaum, 2016). Most major cities controlled by Democrats were labeled as failing because of high dropout rate, low attendance, and poor performance on standardized tests (Ahlert, 2013d; Dwyer, 2013; Kerkstra, 2014). These districts were highly populated with Black students. Many reports contended the Democrats were failing these students (Gelernter, 2015). Some reports contended that failure of these

students was the result of failing policies voted into place by Democrats (Gelernter, 2015). Other reports contended that Democrats followed the lead of teacher unions as policies adopted from the agenda of the teachers, rather than based on students' needs (Mehta, 2012).

According to Bascia (2016), teacher unions were protection agents for the teachers. Collective bargaining was a process between the board of education and the teacher union (Bascia, 2016). Reports indicated that the collective bargaining process had a negative impact on student achievement (Hall, Lacombe, & Pruitt, 2017). According to some, teacher unions were responsible for bad teachers remaining in the classroom (Chiaramonte & Ellis, 2014).

Many Republican governors were moving to take over failing local school districts previously run by Democrats (Layton, 2016). However, studies showed that state takeover had no impact on student performance (McGuire, Dunn, Shaw, & Adam, 2016). Some reports indicated that students' performance on standardized tests had worsened, and there was a pattern of mismanagement of funds (McGuire et al., 2016).

Politics had a hand in education since the beginning of the United States (Mendez, Yoo, & Rury, 2017). Federal, state, and local governments all had input in the public school system (Mendez et al., 2017). Decisions were made, based on ideological beliefs, often based on political party affiliation; although few studies compared party affiliation with student achievement.

Stakeholders should comprehend the impact of political party affiliation and begin the process of effectively creating a reform that could meet the needs of Black students.

Reform efforts may exist from outside the walls of academia. With information on political party affiliation's impact, educators may discover why the racial gap exists.

Rationale of the Study

Goldberg (2010) pointed to the failure of school systems, because of idealized concepts. A series of articles by *Front Page*, recent to this writing, stated that under Democratic control, Blacks were failing academically (Ahlert, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c, 2013d; Perazzo, 2013). Historically, cities with a large affiliation with the Democratic political party also had large Democratically-run school districts, predominately populated by Black students. In those large cities, Black students had the highest dropout rates, and a large number could not reach the proficient level on the NAEP test.

Purpose of Study

To alleviate these discussed situations and address some of the political party affiliation claims, what needed to be determined was whether policies implemented were failing students, or were those who were in control the reason for the decline of schools and the cause of students failing. This study explores political party involvement in the educational system. The research compares the political party affiliation of each state's governor, speaker of the house and the city's mayor, to determine what combination of political party affiliations impacted student achievement. This study provides information for stakeholders to utilize as they examine their decision-making, regarding education. For example, what political party had the most impact on student academic achievement?

The researcher examined scores from NAEP to determine the depth of the achievement gap between subgroups of 10 different cities. Achievement gap was the

primary problem among Black students in all large cities. The focus of this study was to investigate the potential relationship of political party affiliation to achievement of Black students in large metropolitan school districts in the United States.

As covered in the news during the 2016 campaign for U.S. President, Donald Trump made a statement about the Democratic Party failing to support the success of its school systems, particularly for the Black population (Politico Staff, 2016). That statement provided the rationale for this study: Is there a relationship between political party affiliation and school district success in educating students and meeting AYP?

To investigate the potential relationship between political party affiliation and the success of school districts, this study first established whether there is a difference between Black and overall achievement in reading and mathematics, then established whether Black achievement was different than White and Asian achievement, and finally compared their scores to district success in meeting AYP and to which party affiliation was associated with academic success or nonsuccess.

Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question 1: Is there a relationship between political party affiliation and school district success in educating students and meeting Adequate Yearly Progress?

Research Question 2: What are the major characteristics of exemplary, prominently Black populated, high schools in the United States, (represented by five districts recognized nationally as exemplary)?

Hypothesis 1: Over the years 2007 to 2015, there will be a difference between NAEP achievement in mathematics for Black students and other ethnicities, between the

years and between ethnicities within each year, when comparing percentage of proficient and advanced students.

Hypothesis 2: Over the years 2007 to 2015, there will be a difference between NAEP achievement in reading for Black students and other ethnicities, between the years and between ethnicities within each year, when comparing percentage of proficient and advanced students.

Hypothesis 3: Over the years 2007 to 2015, there will be a relationship between NAEP student achievement in reading and mathematics, and achievement of Adequate Yearly Progress, and political party affiliations defined by Democratic, Republican, and Other, measured by affiliation designated by sitting city mayor/administrator, state governor, and speaker of the house.

Independent variable – large cities. In this study, all data were obtained from the NAEP assessment. The independent variable was the city from which the data were obtained: Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, Cleveland, District of Columbia, Hillsborough County, FL, Jefferson County, KY, Milwaukee, and Philadelphia.

Dependent variable. Reading NAEP scores, the relationship between reading scores collected from the NAEP at proficient and advanced levels, and demographic characteristics of the independent variable allowed analysis of the study hypotheses. Mathematics NAEP score, the relationship between mathematics scores collected from NAEP at proficient and advanced levels, and demographic characteristics of the independent variable allowed analysis of the study hypotheses.

Study Limitations

Grade level. The main NAEP assessment usually occurred at grade levels four and eight; and publicly available scores were collected from public schools in the urban cities representing the independent variable (NAEP, n.d.). Use of only grades four and eight may limit the generalization of results of the study. To gain a large enough data set to represent the ethnicities studied, large urban cities were chosen for data gathering. This choice may not accurately represent rural areas of the nation.

Selected city. By federal law, all participation in NAEP assessment was totally voluntarily; however, districts that received Title services were required to participate in testing.

Subject. Only large cities collected data for both mathematics and reading, with regard to the NAEP. Advanced and proficient levels were usually used to determine the target score students were meeting.

Location. This study was completed with data gathered only from urban areas. Urban areas had a larger population of Black students than suburban and rural parts of the nation.

Definition of Terms

Advanced. One of three NAEP achievement levels denoting superior performance at each grade assessed. The NAEP website provided detailed descriptions of what students should know and be able to do for Reading and Mathematics at grade four, eight, and 12. The cut scores determining each level of proficient or advanced were available with the descriptions of the assessments (Kena et al., 2016).

Democratic political party - referred to as "the Party of the People," attracting immigrants, blue-collar workers, women, and minorities. Democrats tended to take a more liberal stand on important issues, such as funding. They believed that the Federal government should take a more active role in people's lives, particularly those who were in need (Witcover, 2003, p. 1)

Large city. Area inside an urbanized region and within a single city with a population of 250,000 or more. NAEP used large city as a comparison group for the Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA). When comparing TUDAs and large cities, the NAEP large city jurisdiction included portions of the participating urban districts that fell outside of the city limits. Large city was not synonymous with the term inner city (Lutkus, Grigg, & Dion, 2007).

The National Assessment of Educational Progress - referred to as "the Nation's Report Card," was the only representative and continuing assessment since 1969 of America's students' knowledge and skills in various subject areas, including mathematics, reading, science, writing, U.S. history, geography, civics, the arts, and other subjects (as cited in Bourque, 2009, p. 1).

No Child Left Behind Act - passed Congress with overwhelming bipartisan support in 2001 and was signed into law by President George W. Bush, on January 8, 2002, and was the name for the most recent, at the time of this writing, update to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. The NCLB law grew out of concern that the American education system was no longer internationally competitive and significantly increased the federal role in holding schools responsible for the academic progress of all students (Jorgensen, 2003).

Political affiliation. An association with a set of ideas, principals and morals of a political party (Pew Research Center, 2015).

Political group. Could either mean one who shares the same views or one is registered with a party (Pew Research Center, 2015).

Proficient. NAEP achievement level below Advanced, representing solid academic performance for grade four, eight, or 12. Students performing at this level demonstrated competency in subject-matter knowledge, application to real-world situations, and analytical skills appropriate to each subject. The NAEP website for Reading and Mathematics provided detailed descriptions of what students should demonstrate. The cut scores determining each level were available in the subject areas (Lutkus et al., 2007).

Race to the Top (R2T, RTTT, or RTT), was a $4.35 billion U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) competitive grant created to spur and reward innovation and reforms in state and local district K-12 education. It was funded by the Educational Recovery Act, as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, and was announced by President Obama and Secretary of Education Duncan, on July 25, 2009. States were awarded points for satisfying certain educational policies (McGuinn, 2012).

Republican political party - tended to take a more conservative stand on issues than the Democratic party. The members of the party believed that the federal government should not play a big role in people's lives. Most Republicans favored lower taxes and less government spending on social programs. They believed in less government intervention in business and the economy (Richardson, 2014).

Socioeconomic status. Combination of social and economic factors used as indicators of household income. Eligibility for the Department of Agriculture's National School Lunch Program (NSLP) was used as a measure of socioeconomic status for NAEP.

Student group. Groups of the student population identified by specific demographic or background characteristics, such as those defined by students' gender, race or ethnicity, highest level of parental education, and type of school (public or nonpublic).

Trial Urban District Assessment. In 2002, this term was used to describe a few large urban districts in participating states for NAEP. TUDA allowed reporting of NAEP results for large urban school districts and allowed the NAEP program to evaluate the usefulness of data to cities of varying sizes and demographic compositions (Lutkus et al., 2007).

Summary

The achievement gap was identified in 1966 (Berliner, 2009). This study intended to investigate whether there was a correlation between political party affiliation of entities in charge of school districts and student achievement. The investigator examined data from NAEP test results of students from major cities to check the potential connection to political party affiliation with local and state officials.

Exploring the correlation between political party afflation and student achievement may provide insight to policy makers' impact of policies to student academic performance. Examining the differences between cities could shed light on

best practices in various school districts. Identifying best practices could possibly enhance academic achievement among failing school districts.

In education reform, many educators and state leaders were searching for the solution to the educational crisis surrounding the lack of measured achievement among various study populations in the United States. In addition, many policymakers were trying to close the achievement gap in education. Solutions may be found in the political dialog that dominated the education system during the study timeline, 2007 through 2015.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

In Chapter One, key concepts and background information were provided to understand the issues facing Black students in major cities across the United States. Chapter Two aims to review the federal government's role in education over the 50 years previous to this writing, and how those building blocks supported (or failed to support) today's students.

The federal government took a major role in education in the 1960s. President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law the Elementary and Secondary Education Schools Act (ESEA). The purpose of this act was to assist the poorest children in America. The writing of this bill guaranteed that money would be filtered down to districts and schools to provide needed resources. Many districts were elated to receive funds, but many were unsure what route the federal government was taking. Many Republicans and conservatives contended that the bill would lead to more government involvement.

To ease the concerns of those who felt there was too much government involvement, funds were limited to those schools that had an extra need. Schools that had adequate resources were not given anything from the government under ESEA. During this era, government did not involve itself with curriculum development. The government's sole purpose was to provide resources to increase student achievement (Davies, 2007).

One criticism of the ESEA was the lack of guidelines on how the funds would be allocated. Cohen and Moffitt (2009) reasoned, by his approach, that President Johnson carefully did not include in the bill guidelines, because he did not want the appearance of

the federal government dictating to the states. But, because there were no guidelines, the likelihood of funding achieving its goal was very slim.

In 1970 President Richard Nixon (1991) introduced the Experimental School Program (ESP) and the National Institute of Education (NIE). ESP allowed schools to apply for federal funds provided that they created a comprehensive school curricular that would create and meet needs across all grade level. NIE was used to connect research to the classroom. During the years of 1970 to 1975, $50 million dollars in funding was provided. In comments from the Coleman project on Equality of Educational Opportunity, Coleman stated that policies of the past had no positive impact on the disadvantaged (Coleman, 1966; Gutek, 2000).

Nixon (1991) shared his rationale about what students should have learned, instead of the politically correct education of the 1960s:

> My views may not be the conventional wisdom, but because I feel so fortunate to have had a good education, I want to share them with others. Each student should leave 12th grade reading English at a 12th grade level or better. He should know algebra, geometry, and pre-calculus and the fundamentals of biology, chemistry, and physics. Our students' persistent weakness in these subjects is our educational system's greatest failure. A student should know the rudiments of a foreign language, can recognize at least a few of the great works of Western music, and understand the tenets of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, and the world's other great religion, Marxism-Leninism. He should have spent some time playing a competitive sport. He should know the history of his country, and something about the history of the world. (pp. 112-113)

During this time period, under President Nixon (1991), students were given tests to find out where student learning was lacking. From these tests, teachers created lesson plans to meet the academic needs of the students. During the decade of the 1970s, Jimmy Carter entered office as president. Under his administration, the USDOE was created. The Honorable Hufstedler was the first Secretary of Education. The goals were to first establish a partnership between the state and federal government, secondly, eliminate federal bureaucracy, and finally speak to the concern of equity in education. None of the goals were met, because President Carter lost re-election in 1980 (O'Neill, 1980).

In 1980, President Ronald Reagan ran for president on a platform that said he would eliminate the USDOE. Once entering the office of president however, he discovered that the department was needed. At a state dinner, President Reagan stood up and delivered a report called *A Nation at Risk*. This report gave alarming results of the quality of education at the time (Gardner, 1983). The report found that many students had low test scores, teacher salaries were not competitive enough to maintain good teachers and recruit qualified teachers, and teachers did not receive professional development. These issues led to the beginning of educational reform (Graham, 2013).

The issue of education moved to the top of the nation's agenda in the 1980s. The focal points of the new policies were student achievement, a better teacher pay scale, and making education equal for minorities and those in lower SES groups. All stakeholders discovered, for the country to be successful our schools must be successful (Graham, 2013).

However, the *Nation at Risk* commission had opposing views when the committee became bipartisan. As the decade ended, there was a renewed concern that there would

be no solution for the educational crisis of the time (Graham, 2013; Ravitch, 1990). One part of the commission argued that the United States was on an educational decline, based on data from NAEP, college achievement tests, and international exam. The crisis was that other countries would surpass the United States economically, due to the country's poor educational system. Educators claimed that the commission should only view data with a clear picture and then make the report, *Nation at Risk,* inaccurate. These educators claimed that, if the nation was at risk, why was the economy booming toward end of decade (Ravitch, 2003)?

In 1989, President George H. W. Bush began to closely examine the educational system and contemplated the quality of education coming into the new century. President Bush assembled well known experts to discuss how to set up educational goals for the New Millennium. President Bill Clinton then entered office and piggy backed President Bush' s concept of goals for the New Millennium and signed into law the Goals 2000, also known as the Educate America Act (H.R. 1804, n.d.). This was the initial involvement in education for the federal government. Prior to the enactment of H.R. 1804, only state and local governments were involved in education. With Goals 2000, school districts must commit to establishing these goals in their schools (Schwartz & Robinson, 2000). The goals were

> By the Year 2000 . . .
>
> - All children in America will start school ready to learn. (Goals 2000, 2017, p. 1)
> - The high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent. (Goals 2000, 2017, p. 1)

- All students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, the arts, history, and geography, and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our nation's modern economy. (Goals 2000, 2017, p. 1)
- United States students will be first in the world in mathematics and science achievement. (Goals 2000, 2017, p. 1)
- Every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. (Goals 2000, 2017, p. 1)
- Every school in the United States will be free of drugs, violence, the unauthorized presence of firearms and alcohol and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning. (Goals 2000, 2017, p. 1)
- The nation's teaching force will have access to programs for the continued improvement of their professional skills and the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to instruct and prepare all American students for the next century. (Goals 2000, 2017, p. 1)
- Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children. (H.R. 1804, n.d., p. 1)

Although many goals were not met, Goals 2000 made an impact on education.

In 2002 George W. Bush signed into law a bill called *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB). He received bipartisan support. The bill mandated, regardless of ethnicity and economic status, all groups would make adequately yearly process (AYP). States would create their own tests and report the results to the government, and they would determine whether schools and districts were making AYP. Students were given achievement levels as targets for progress. Achievement levels were Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, and Advanced. Under this law, the federal government expanded its involvement in education. The prior year, the federal government was a 9% funding source and then became instrumental in curriculum development for K-12 (Jorgensen, 2003).

President Obama's goal went beyond just making progress. He stated, "To make sure folks keep earning higher wages down the road, we have to do more to help Americans upgrade their skills" (The White House, 2015, p. 1). He also said, "By the end of this decade, 2 in 3 job openings will require some higher education" (The White House, 2015, p. 1).

President Obama enacted a grant called *Race to the Top* (RTTT). This grant was a component of the federal government's Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and contained the following key areas: 1) Creating and executing a strict standard and high-quality assessment, 2) Making American classrooms attractive and sustainable to school leaders and teachers, 3) Use technology to retrieve data and make data driven decisions to improve education, 4) Using creative and productive approaches to change struggling schools for the better, and 5) show and maintain educational reform. Common Standards were created, based on what students should know for college and grade expectation for K-12 (Mulcahy & Mulcahy, 2014).

The United States had a half century of policies and legislation to reform education. The educational system still was not equitable. The achievement gap became wider for Black students. Establishing legislation was not the method to improve education, the way President Johnson intended. His purpose was to give funds to school districts to acquire resources to improve student achievement. At the time of this writing, the federal government was fully involved in education. The involvement of federal Government was more a detriment then a benefit to education. Students were subjected to failing policies (Zelizer, 2015).

Thomas (2012) in the article, "Politics and Education Don't Mix," gave some insight into our failing school system. Failure was the product of system bureaucracy. Leadership ideology was the driver of our public-school system. Decision-making processes were led by stake holders who had little or no experience. Thomas (2012) also pointed out that the mistake was trying to implement a top-down effect policy from non-educators, who possessed scholarly knowledge but did not have experience. Most importantly, having the expectation that the mandate would be carried out successfully did not mean it would be implemented.

Hess (2015) contributed to this conversation by stating

> While public policy can make people do things, it cannot make people do those things well. This is especially salient in education for two reasons. First, state and Federal policy makers do not run schools; they merely write laws and regulations telling school districts what principals and teachers ought to do. And second, schooling is a complex, highly personal endeavor, which means that what happens at the individual level—the level of the teacher and the student—is the

> most crucial factor in separating failure from success. In education, there is often a vast distance between policy. (Hess, 2015, p. 1)

Petrilli declared policy changes were not a panacea for educational problems. Educational Policy would not lead the United States in the direction for schools to achieve success and be fair for all. In order to understand the involvement of policy change, educators must understand the causes of policy changes (as cited in Hess, 2015).. The next section discusses the causes of policy change.

Impact of Education Policies

Education policy was fundamental and federal rules governed education. These rules were generated by cultural ideas and concepts resulting from contributions of many different stakeholders who believed they could improve education. Policies often changed because of culture change (Taylor, 1997; Trowler, 2003).

The many changes in educational policies often led groups into debate. Parents were debating with legislators about their right of school choice. Federal, state, and local governments debated who should control public education. Teacher unions and school administrators debated on the rights of the teacher. The winner of each of these debates boiled down to who had the most influence (Education Week, 2007).

Influence on education had primarily been eradicated from local decision-making processes. Businesses, entrepreneurs, and the elite, such as the Ford or Bill & Melinda Gates foundations, had more influence than superintendents and administrators. Local school districts were subject to bargaining with the teacher unions. In addition, administrators were fighting with the influence of competing and increasing enrollment of charter schools. The public viewed the local district as the power to be dealt with;

however, the local districts' power slowly eroded. These other groups gained their influence based on public distrust with student academic performance (Sawchuk, 2009, 2012).

The influence of state and federal policies was initiated with the entrance of school programs, such as special education classes (USDOE, 2016). Policies enacted by the government often dominated the classroom and day-to-day operation of the teacher (Fabian, 2015; Find Law, 2017). The involvement of the federal Government was not the original intent of the bill signed by President Johnson in 1965 (Klein, 2015).

Education policies were implemented to reform education. Reforming education was needed when there was a deficiency with the then-current system. Reform was needed to obtain excellence in education for U.S. students to achieve. However, the motivation to reform education was often not because of children, but to seek reform because of the large expense of education (Vinovskis, 2015).

Federal government advanced to be more involved in education for over 40 years. The involvement came though making educational policies for public schools. The legislature drafted many reform bills influenced by stakeholder and interest groups. These interest groups were encouraged to give input to make more transparent to the public the nature of the academic performance of students.

Kingdon (2003) gave some explanations of the development of educational policies (as cited in Young, Shepley, & Song, 2010). Kingdon stated the first stage of policy process was agenda setting. The process had three streams: problem, policy and politics (Young, Shepley, & Song, 2010). This was the process by which elected officials developed policies.

An example of policy development was student performance. Student scores were declining at a rapid rate. In this stage, the problem was identified and selected by elected officials and stakeholders (Young, Shepley, & Song, 2010). The problem became explicit when there was a solution to the problem. This led to the next step in the policy stream. This was when stakeholders and elected officials gave the resources to push the solution for approval (Young, Shepley, & Song, 2010). The last step in the stream, political stream, involved political culture. This step involved elected officials with opposing views stating their positions. Kingdon's Process Stream is displayed in Figure 1 (Young, Shepley, & Song, 2010).

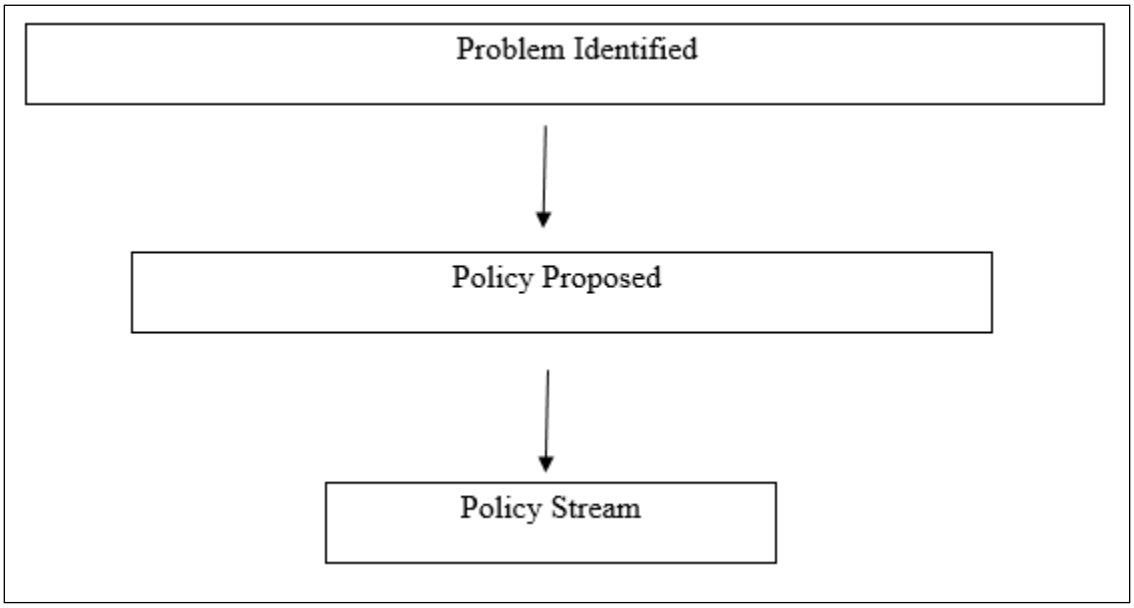

Figure 1. Kingdon's process stream.

When policy was enacted into law, it usually came from the party of the elected official at the then-current time. In case of NCLB, policy was enacted during the term of Republican President George W. Bush (Gay, 2007). During the presidency of Democrat Barack Obama, the Race to the Top bill was signed (Fabian, 2015). Two distinct bills,

however, both had goals to impact education and student performance positively. Many researchers argued whether those bills were beneficial to education and student achievement (Fabian, 2015; Gay, 2007). The next section deals with the benefit and harm of the then-current bills in this study.

Impact of Policy

This section explores the impact of NCLB and RTTT. The NCLB goal was that by 2014 all students would be performing at, or above, the proficient level on state-designed academic assessments. RTTT required goal-centered curriculum that placed the student on track for college readiness. There were many criticisms from higher education and government officials of NCLB and RTTT. One topic of concern was the use of standardized tests (Goslin, 1967; Morgan, 2016; USDOE, 2015). Another concern was about teacher quality (Martin Center, 2013). These concerns impacted minority students.

Supporters of NCLB stated that test scores improved since the enactment of NCLB, based on the reporting of state data (National Education Association [NEA], n.d.). However, NAEP was a better indicator of the progress of student, under the requirements of NCLB. NAEP, notably known as the *Nation's Report Card* at one time, determined student achievement levels (as cited in Stoneberg, 2009). Research from NCLB for pre- and post-NCLB assessments indicated there was rapid progress for fourth and eighth grades prior to NCLB (Stoneberg, 2009). This pattern existed among subgroups, including Blacks, English language learners (ELLs), and students with disabilities (Stoneberg, 2009). Since NCLB, the achievement gap showed there was no difference. In some cases, the gap became worse than recorded in 1998 and 1990. In fourth grade there was slow progress in mathematics (Lee & Orfield, 2006). Overall, the

pace was slow in meeting the target, and all student proficiency by 2014 was very unlikely (Lee & Orfield, 2006).

Supporters of Common Core and RTTT claimed test scores were higher (Murray, 2016). However, reports from NAEP stated that there was a decline in mathematics scores, since the implementation of Common Core (as cited in Heitin, 2015). Test results indicated there was decrease in fourth grade by 1.3 points and 2.4 points in eighth graders (Kane, 2015, p. 1) . These scores were the lowest in 25 years (Toppo, 2015). In addition, the State of Kentucky reported that the achievement gap was worse than prior to Common Core (Ostashevsky, 2016).

Supporters of NCLB maintained requiring teachers to be highly qualified was a means of enhancing academic achievement (Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002; Schultz, 2014). A highly qualified teacher was described by NCLB as one who had a bachelor's degree and was certified by the state in the core subject area (Strong, 2011). Critics explained that highly qualified teachers did not work in areas where it benefitted students the most (Schultz, 2014). Many highly qualified teachers worked in areas that were low poverty (Schultz, 2014). In addition, a report by the American Federation of Teachers indicated that highly qualified teachers worked in areas where there was a high pay scale (Prince, 2002). There was demand for teachers to have higher pay scales to attract highly qualified teachers (Prince, 2002).

Another criticism about teacher quality was the assumption of validating teacher credentials as a means of measuring teacher effectiveness. According to research, having teachers who were certified and degreed did not impact student achievement (Goe, 2007; Palardy & Rumberger, 2008). A study by Palardy and Rumberger (2008) gave insight to

certification and student achievement. Their findings indicated there was an increase in scores for reading with teachers who had full accreditation; however, there was no increase in mathematics achievement. Studies additionally said the increase in reading scores could possibly result from teaching strategies (Palardy & Rumberger, 2008). The study concluded that connecting highly qualified teachers to student achievement was not a good method to determine student success.

RTTT went further than highly qualified teachers. The RTTT bill gave high scores to those states who connected teacher evaluation to student achievement (Rogers-Chapman, 2015). Researchers felt that this would motivate teachers to place more emphasis on enhancing their strategies to improve student achievement and encourage them to seek professional development (Beerens, 2000). Guisband and Neill (2004) argued that grading teacher job performance based on student scores limited focus on curriculum and teachers tended to focus more on teaching the test. Coulter (2013) surveyed teachers and principals with 84% reporting an adverse impact on the learning environment. In addition, relating teacher evaluations to test scores turned excellent teachers away from teaching disadvantaged students, because of the possibility of having poor test scores.

In addition, others contended teachers would only work with students that would increase their test scores. The study showed that using teacher evaluations did work to improve students' performance on standardized test (Baker et al., 2010).

Supporters of NCLB asserted that funding would be available to students who needed additional educational services. On the completion of the first year of NCLB, concerns mounted about the lack of funding. Many different states argued that the

amount of money appropriated was not enough to do what was needed to implement NCLB. Houston, Executive Director of the American Association of School Administrators stated, “The administration likes to talk about the soft bigotry of low expectations and how this law fights that. But what about the hard bigotry of high expectations without adequate resources?” (as cited in Duncombe, Lukemeyer, & Yinger, 2008, p. xx); Fair Test (2005) found states that had low standards where student could meet goals were sufficiently funded. However, states that had high standards were penalized, but did not receive a sufficient amount of funding.

Supporters of RTTT had financial resources in the amount of $4.35 billion for which states could compete. States qualified, based on set criteria. Supporters proposed that competition would enhance creativity and force states to reform their educational practices (Viteritti, 2011). Critics argued monies should be used for competition, but should be filtered to where it was needed the most (Freedberg, 2010; Schott Foundation, 2010). Civil rights leaders argued that states with large numbers of students of color would be lagging behind on any competition. Yet, they would not benefit from high quality environments (Freedberg, 2010). Civil right leaders contended this would be the reverse of what was gained the 1965 act (Schott Foundation, 2010).

Supporters of NCLB claimed that accountability systems were an effective means to narrow the achievement gap (Jennings & Rentner, 2006). They predicted that having a target of all students being proficient would motivate teachers to make improvements to instruction (Jennings & Rentner, 2006). Educators could help each group make progress (Jennings & Rentner, 2006). In addition, having states make a report card of AYP was considered a strong idea. Critics examining the NCLB found that AYP was impractical

and that it promotes a strategy not congruent to high quality instruction (Guisbond & Neill, 2004). The repercussion of not meeting AYP was detrimental to both the school and the teacher (Gay, 2007). Many teachers left the profession, because of the high consequence not meeting AYP (Grissom, Nicholson-Crotty, & Harrington, 2011). Schools were forced to close because of not meeting AYP (Chen, 2015). Research stated that restructured schools by closing and reopening did not improve student achievement (Gewertz, 2009). Some districts were taken over by the state, because of not making progress. In addition, other critics identified that in accurate data with cross-sectional analysis did indicate any growth pattern by evaluating last year's student growth with then-current growth as an accurate picture of overall growth. Most preferred a growth model of students from year-to-year (Fisanick, 2008).

Supporters of the RTTT data accountability system said it demonstrated a competitive environment where states could create a culture of educators being innovators and a system of reforming. According to Former Assistant Secretary Ravitch, there was no empirical data that suggested competitiveness was effective (Bowen, 2010; Ravitch, 2010). Critics stated the system of RTTT was subjective more than objective (Bowen, 2010). The selection really was not a true merit system. The American Enterprise Institute released a report in September 2010, finding discrepancy in Race to the Top scores versus the education reform track records and ratings of states from outside of independent sources. This report found that states' political circumstances may have influenced states' final scores (as cited in Bowen, 2010).

Mayoral versus Gubernatorial Control of Schools

History told educators that school governance issues go back to 1647. The Constitution gave citizens some insight into how school control was created, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, to local boards nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people" (United States, n.d., p. xx). Most people looked at this as meaning that states had power to delegate authority for public schools. Control differed from state-to-state. Some states had complete control, then they delegated power to the local governments.

In the latter part of the 20th century, local school boards received a great deal of criticism. There was very limited research on academic achievement connected to local school boards. Many critics suggested some of the attacks on public education were the result of inadequate school boards. Some cited the problem of large turnaround of superintendents in local boards. Miller (2008) stated in *The Atlantic,* We should "First, Kill All the Boards" (p. 1).

There was major support for mayoral control of school districts (Associated Press, 2009). The first rationale behind support of mayoral control of school districts was that during unpopular elections low voter turnout for the school board indicated no real checks and balances on critical issues (Hess, 2007). Finn and Keegan (2004) contributed to the conversation by adding a comment concerning school districts under mayoral control,

> There is now a single, publicly accountable official in charge, rather than nine wannabe mayors immobilizing the school system with their petty squabbles, power grabs, and turf protecting. If citizens are unhappy with the schools, they

> can now vote the mayor out of office. This does not eliminate Democratic control over the schools; it re-channels (and strengthens) it. (p. 16)

If citizens were not pleased with the how the school district was being run, they could vote him or her out of office. Former CEO Chicago Public School and Secretary Duncan supported mayoral control of school. In addition, he was open to assisting any mayor who encouraged cities for sole leadership (Duncan, 2010).

Another rationale for mayoral support was more permanent leadership. Superintendents were not known to sustain more than a year in a school district (Duncan, 2010). In addition, there was often a high turnover of school board members (Duncan, 2010). In cities that were under mayoral control, superintendents had more stability (Wong & Shen, 2003). Wong and Shen (2003) emphasized more educational issues, which in theory improved student achievement and eliminated mismanagement of funds The Boston public school system cited mayor control as "engendered continuity in leadership and a new focus on learning" (Viteritti, 2009, p. 4). Mayoral Control had three different variations: 1) mayor appoints majority of the board, 2) mayor appoints all board members, or 3) mayor has full authority to appoint.

In a report on Mayoral Governance and Student Achievement Wong & Shen (2003) supported mayoral control in large city school districts. They conducted a study focused on student achievement, based on standardized tests. Secondly, they did statistical analysis of educational outcomes over several years. The sample included large cities and their own schools. Their findings suggested under mayoral control the success factors were: 1) the mayor's well-thought out the plan for distributing funds; 2) achieved improved academic achievement for the past 10 years; 3) of the 11 districts

which had some type of mayoral control, five successfully improved the achievement gap; and 4) for example, New York City made positive gain for test for fourth and eighth grade.

Bulkley (2013) argued that the report on Mayoral Governance and Student Achievement student achievement supported mayoral control. The report underscored positive impacts of student achievement. The report failed to mention cities that were under mayoral control that did not make any gains. Reports lacked any information about gains of cities that are not under mayoral control. The report did not give statistical measurements on their claims of academic gains,

Research cited two major problems of mayoral control. The first problem was it put the Democratic system in danger. Critics were concerned that the public would not have any voice in decisions regarding public education (Wong, Shen, Anagnostopoulos, & Rutledge, 2007). Hess (2009) stated, "Some voices are likely to be silenced or marginalized under an appointed board" (p. 1). The second major problem was the absence of transparency to the public by having boards appointed by a mayor (Hess, 2009).

A two-year study conducted by the Institute of Education Law and Policy at Rutgers University examined the improvement of nine public schools' mayoral governance (as cited in Moscovitch et al., 2010). They assessed the NAEP scores of the nine cities. Their findings indicated no proven evidence that mayor control impacted student achievement; however, the study revealed the more involved the mayor was in student achievement, the better the performance of the students (Moscovitch et al., 2010).

Most large cities had Democrats as mayors (Burns, 2010). Critics said that the reason for the failure of public school systems was because of Democratic control (Discover the Networks, 2015). There was a debate on what was needed for improvement. Democrats believed there was a lack of funding in education, whereas Republicans believed that too much was spent with no positive outcomes (Discover the Networks, 2015).

President Trump concurred with other Republicans that systems spent too much per capita for students. Trump said in Cleveland on September 8, 2016:

> That's an average of about $12,296 dollars for every student enrolled in our elementary and secondary public schools. The Federal government pays for about 10 percent of the K-12 costs. The other roughly $560 billion dollars spent on K - 12 education comes from the states themselves. We spend more per student than almost any other major country in the world. And we're doing very poorly in terms of A-list. (Trump, 2016, p. xx)

President Trump contended that urban areas controlled by Democrat policy "entangle in a failing system" (Morrongiello, 2016, p. xx).

Front Page Magazine gave evidence that supported the argument that urban schools were failing. *Front Page* reported on failing school districts in large cities. These large cities had large budgets, yet also had failing school districts.

- In Detroit, according to the NAEP only 7% of eighth graders are reading proficient and 4% of eighth graders are proficient in math (Ahlert, 2013b, p. 1)

- In Washington, D.C. they have lowered their expectations. NAEP test results barely 9% of students passed the civics test. Washington, DC public schools eliminate the requirement for civics (Perazzo, 2013, p. 1).
- In Chicago, 79% of the eighth graders are not at grade proficient in reading and 80% not proficient in math (Ahlert, 2013a, p. 1).
- In Philadelphia the National Center in Education Statistics reported a 22% gap between White and Black students (Ahlert, 2013c, p. 1).
- In Atlanta, based on NAEP students less than 25% are proficient and 90% lacked proficiency. Atlanta students are 1-2 years behind the national average (Ahlert, 2013d, p. 1).

Most states were governed by Republican governors (Phillips, 2014). Some Republican governors were led toward take-over of local public schools (Layton, 2016). Ohio Governor Kasich, a Republican Governor, took control of Youngtown public school (Layton, 2016). Kasich stated, “If you’re a school district that’s failed year after year after year, someone’s going to come riding to the rescue of kids” (Layton, 2016, p.1). Illinois Republican Governor Rauner launched an effort take over Chicago Public Schools. Rauner stated the mayor of Chicago, who was a Democrat, had failed (Layton, 2016). The move to take over the Chicago school district was symbolic to what was going across the country (Layton, 2016). Eleven states, mostly led by Republican governors were creating proposals or legislation to take over school districts (Layton, 2016). However, research stated takeovers did not positively impact student achievement. In fact, research indicated they negatively impacted student achievement.

Klonsky and Klonsky (2008) gave two reasons why the U.S. should no longer continue with mayoral control. They based this reasoning on the poorly controlled school districts in Chicago by Mayor Daley of Chicago and New York by Mayor Bloomberg. They cited Daley's failed reform agenda and financial management was one reason schools district control was taken out of the hand of mayors. Their second reason was based on the actions of Mayor Bloomberg of New York, whose selection constantly selected turnaround corporations (Klonsky & Klonsky, 2008) placed unqualified chancellors in positions of leadership; and to not have applications to determine the most qualified to help improve student achievement was considered a wrongful process.

In Louisiana, the state established Recovery School District (RSD) in 2003 (RSD, 2014). The state had control of this district that was composed of 62 charter schools in New Orleans, East Baton Rouge, and Caddo Parishes, which impacted well over 32,000 students. According to an RSD 2015 report, under state control, the percentage of failing schools decreased from 44% in 2011 to 19% in 2015 (RSD, 2015, p. 4). In addition, the RSD 2014 annual report stated that in academic achievement for students moving from basic level to above gained 29 percentage points (RSD, 2014, p. 7).

In Tennessee, the state established Achievement School District in 2010. The goal was to move the top 5% of schools to 25%. It reported that elementary and middle schools in the state improved on the student growth scale (Kim, Field, & Hargrave, 2015). In addition, the requirement for proficiency priority school for grades three and eight increased 16.7% in 2012 to 26.0% in 2015 (Kim et al., 2015).

Although there was a vast move to take over school districts, research suggested that state takeovers did not meet their goals in reforming education. *Education Week*

stated that state takeovers deserved a failing grade (McGuire et al., 2016). The report, "State Takeover of Low-Performing Schools," indicated

1) Children have seen negligible improvement—or even dramatic setbacks—in their educational performance.
2) State takeover districts have created a breeding ground for fraud and mismanagement at the public's expense.
3) Staff faces high turnover and instability, creating a disrupted learning environment for children.
4) Students of color and those with special needs face harsh disciplinary measures and discriminatory practices that further entrench a two-tiered educational system (Center for Popular Democracy, 2016, p. 5).

A study of Louisiana RSD analyzed student achievement under state control. This was a longitudinal, study over a ten-year period, examining state test scores. The method used a three-level hierarchical linear model run to account for measuring of the data. The finding indicated minority and low SES performed poorly (The Center for Popular Democracy, 2016).

Although these reports show gains in state takeovers, other reports show a different view. According to the report of state takeover of low performing schools on RSD's achievement school district found "no recipe for success" (The Center for Popular Democracy, 2016, p. 5).

Although Recovery Schools touted success, Louisiana lowered their standards, which caused the percentage of failing schools to decrease 43.7% to 33.3%. In addition, RSDs were exempt from any kind of grading system resulting in a lower number of

failing schools. What was most alarming was the report that students were hand-picked for entrance into the charter schools. During that process, a "creaming" process took place (Center for Popular Democracy, 2016, p. 5). In Tennessee, many praised formal gains in achievement in school districts. Although there were gains in mathematics, reading scores did not reach proficient achievement levels. Achievement School did reach its goal of bottom 5% to 25% by the end of 2013-2014. Six out of 17 were taken out of the bottom percentile (Center for Popular Democracy, 2016, p. 8). Most reported schools that remained under local control were doing better than under state control. Scores had been consistently lower since the state takeover of school districts (Center for Popular Democracy, 2016).

The report, *Out of Control*, suggested this impacted Black students. The report looked at the states of Louisiana, Michigan, and Tennessee. Those states had approximately 44,000 students and 96% were Blacks or Latino. It appeared districts that were taken over by the state had large populations of Blacks (The Alliance to Reclaim Our School, 2015).

Failing Schools

At the time of this writing, schools which were not meeting a particular standard usually were labeled as failing. Historically, the term became popular between 1990 and 2008. The rise of the term failing school existed at the turn of the 21st century. Researchers were unsure of the reason for the rise in the use of the term (Kosar, 2011).

The concept of failing began to surface more toward the NCLB era. Failing school related to "Needs improvement" and "Low performance," in reference to the accountability system of NCLB. When a school fell into the category of failing, it

indicated that the school did not meet AYP during two consecutive school years. Safe Harbors were schools that had an increase in achievement for a subgroup during that period (Bracey, 2009).

According to Ravitch (2012):

- A failing school is one with low test scores and low graduation rates.
- A failing school enrolls large numbers of students who are eligible for free or move reduced price lunch (i.e., poverty).
- A failing school enrolls large numbers of Black and Hispanic students.
- A failing school enrolls large numbers of students who are English language learners and new immigrants.
- Safe Harbor: A failing school has disproportionate numbers of students with disabilities. (p. 1)

Researchers found problems with defining schools as failing. Yet, Rizga (2016) said labeling schools a failure did not give a clear picture of what was going on in the classroom. Rizga (2016) observed several classrooms in a school labeled as failing. The observation of student performance did not match test scores. Students were highly engaged in the classroom activities.

There was a consensus among educators, policy, and public that there should be some consistency in how to label a school that had been a failing school. For an example, a school was labeled failing when one subgroup did not meet the target level in mathematics and language arts. This put a school that had a large group of minorities at a disadvantage, if the subgroup did not meet the target (Guisbond, Neill, & Schaeffer, 2012). These schools were failing.

Some researchers maintained that schools were unfairly being labeled as failing. These researchers cited two factors for the unfairness (Guisbond et al., 2012). One factor was that schools placed emphasis on achievement levels, not on growth over a period time. For example, a study by Berler (2013) that examined a failing school found that a fifth grader who was reading at a second grade level at the beginning of the school, if at the end was reading at the fourth-grade level, it was not credited as improved.

Other critics contended the U.S. was unfairly labeling schools as failing based on one subgroup not meeting the proficient standard. "It penalizes schools with kids from groups that have historically low achievement, as the proficiency rate measures are highly correlated with the percentage of kids in poverty" (McEachin & Polikoff, 2012, p. xx). Researchers suggested failing schools should be determined by not just achievement, but also the growth pattern (McEachin & Polikoff, 2012). They further stated, when the middle schools were measured by achievement levels separate from low socioeconomic groups, minorities sunk to the bottom. However, when measures addressed growth, only a small number were in the bottom achievement level.

Education Secretary Duncan (2010) stated that by 2011, 82% of schools in America would be failing under NCLB law (p. 1). He called for change in how we labeled schools. Duncan (2010) contended that the assumption of NCLB was, all can succeed with the same resources. The Obama administration introduced a blue print to reform NCLB. Obama's proposal would reward schools based on progress and growth. Instead of labeling schools as failing the New ESEA Law was flexible to establish improvement plans for failing schools (United States Department of Education [USDOE], 2011). Low performing schools in the lowest 5% percent for all students were

identified as a Priority School (USDOE, 2012, p. 1). Schools that had the largest gap among subgroups were called Focus Schools (USDOE, 2012).

In addition, another critic contended it was the excessive amount of interest on standardized tests that was the concern. Berler (2013) observed Brookside Elementary. He noticed after Christmas teachers taught mathematics and reading geared towards preparing students to pass the standardized tests. Moreover, he saw teachers focus only on the students who could past the test. Those students who could not pass did not receive services from the teachers (Berler, 2013). These children had no way to improve and were cast aside.

After examining the definition of failing schools, conceptually, the United States needed to look at the possible causes of these failing schools. While examining the reason for failing schools, it was possible to determine where there was need for intervention.

One major reason could be that Black students were impacted disproportionally. It was reported that America was failing Black students (Misra, 2015). She reported that minority students were still at a disadvantage. Most cities were not making any academic gains (Misra, 2015), especially those cities that had a majority of Black students (DeArmond, Denice, Gross, Hernandez, & Jochim, 2015). Across 50 states it was unlikely that Blacks would attend high performing schools (DeArmond et al., 2015). The performance difference between minority and low income students was about 14 points, indicating there must be some major reform (DeArmond et al., 2015, p. 36).

However, many reforms ultimately hurt Blacks (Carr, 2013). Many city schools were labeled as failing and closed, resulting in students attending schools long distances

from home. Most of these schools were located in Black student neighborhoods (Cohen, 2016). The data indicated that 80% of Black students in Chicago were impacted by school closings (Carr, 2013; Cohen, 2016). In Philadelphia, 81% of students were impacted (Cohen, 2016, p. 1). These findings were similar throughout the country.

It was reported in the *American Renaissance* that failing labels were placed only on schools with a majority of Black students. The report identified of 37,000 students in failing schools, 34,000 were Black (Stephens, 2016, p. 1). All schools in Alabama labeled as failing were majority Black or low SES schools.

Secondly, the socioeconomic factor was considered. Many lawmakers failed to connect poverty to low achievement, resulting in schools failing, which led to schools closing. There were greater factors to consider. Researchers argued that there were more outside factors that were nonrelated to schools (Rothstein, Jacobsen, & Wilder, 2008). Rothstein et al. (2008) continued on to say that a consequence of school failures stemmed from these factors. Families were constantly changing geographical location and students were poorly nourished (Rothstein et al., 2008). Stress levels were high due to unemployment and under employment of the parent(s). Health was not maintained properly. In addition, researchers claimed there would always be differences between socioeconomic groups and closing the achievement gap between these groups was worth striving for, if not difficult (Rothstein et al., 2008).

Whitmore (2012) stated poverty was not the only factor contributing to failing schools. Effective teaching played a major role in the progress of students (Whitmore, 2012). In observing several districts, he found charter schools' high poverty students did as well as more affluent school districts (Whitmore, 2012). As President Obama stated,

"The single most important factor in determining [student] achievement is not the color of their skin or where they come from. It's not who their parents are or how much money they have — it's who their teacher is" (as cited in Winters, 2012, p. 8).

Many factors were important when it came to student achievement. Research argued, when it came to the school setting the contributing factor for student achievement was the teacher (Stronge, 2013). Based on mathematics and reading scores, teachers impacted student achievement more than school buildings, service, and school leadership (Stronge, 2013). Moreover, research said not years of experience, but how they performed in the classroom, made them effective.

An empirical study by Rockoff (2004) suggested teacher quality impacted student outcomes. Teachers who had similar credentials did not have similar positive results. Rockoff (2004) used panel teachers from New Jersey school districts. Results showed one standard deviation difference between teacher quality and teacher experience. Studies showed that there were gains in reading and mathematics, .20 and .24 respectively; in reading, teacher experience caused significant gains (Rockoff, 2004, p. 247). Even though teacher experience did always support teacher quality, there were not always consequences for experienced teachers who did not have improving student academic performance.

Experienced teachers were protected by legal contracts (Sawchuk, 2014). Many teachers who were proven to be ineffective were difficult to terminate (Sawchuk, 2014). Moreover, most school districts were hesitant to terminate teachers because it was so expensive (Eltman, 2008). In New York, the cost to fire a poorly performing teacher was

estimated at $250,000 (Eltman, 2008). This presented a problem and a cost that was detrimental to the learning of U.S. students.

What was most important was that principals played a significant role in a low performing school. Research stated that highly effective principals could impact standardized test scores by 10 percentage points over a year (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). In addition, highly effective principals of low SES and minority status had a great impact on school academic challenges (Branch, Hanushek, & Rivkin, 2013; Marzano et al., 2005).

A study measuring the impact of effective principal developed in part by University of Texas at Dallas working collaboration with Texas Education Agency (Branch et al., 2013). The database included information on the school teacher, administrator, staff, and students.

They determined the results by utilizing three different methods (Branch et al., 2013). One method looked at mathematics achievement with a principal who remained in a position for three years (Branch et al., 2013). Another method looked at mathematics student achievement of students under principals under different leadership at same school (Branch et al., 2013). The third method focused on fluctuation in mathematics student achievement not specifically relating to principal quality (Branch et al., 2013).

Result of different leadership year-to-year yielded 8 percentage points for students under different leaderships (Branch et al., 2013, p. 62). Results that represented principals who remained principals at the school for the first three years (Branch et al., 2013) resulted in variable fluctuation not directly related to principal quality; again of 4 percentage points (Branch et al., 2013, p. 64). The researchers concluded that principals

who remained in one school for long periods of time had the best performance (Branch et al., 2013). Also results led to the discovery that high turnover of principals negatively impacted student achievement (Branch et al., 2013).

Researchers conducted a study in large urban areas (Béteille, Kalogrides, & Loeb, 2012). They used longitudinal data to determine the correlation between principal turnover and student outcome (Béteille et al., 2012). Their findings suggested that principal turnover harmed student achievement. The study showed little improvement in test scores (Béteille et al., 2012). In addition, they found that new principals, after their brief experience with minorities and low SES schools, soon requested transfers to high performing schools (Béteille et al., 2012).

Successful Schools

When describing a successful school one must look at the opposite of a failing school. Failing schools were considered those schools who did not reach target levels on standardized tests. One could assume that a successful school would be a school that had large number of students proficient and advanced on standardized tests. However, researchers argued that determining a successful school should be limited to test scores (Calderon, 2015). Other researchers contended that there should be a consideration of personal growth of students (NEA, 2009).

According to the NCLB regulation, schools that reach a target of 100% proficient for all students by 2014 are considered successful (Kamenetz, 2014). NAEP recorded that all minority groups fell below 50% in reading and mathematics for fourth and eighth grade, excluding Asians with a higher percentage between 51% and 64%. The White subgroup scored 54%, only in mathematics (The Nation's Report Card, 2013, p. 1).

Under ESEA, a school identified would be labeled as a reward school. The reward must fit in a category of high performing schools and there were a limited number of high progress schools. All Title I schools were to meet AYP for all groups, including subgroups, in addition to not having a wide achievement gap among any sub groups. A high progress school must fit the category of landing among the top 10% and improve performance, in addition to not having wide achievement gap among all sub groups (USDOE, 2012).

There was a great deal of research on the characteristics of successful schools (Bowles, Ganhi, Casanto, & Carney, 2010). However, there was also much debate on the elements of successful schools (Bowles et al., 2010). One group of researchers for McGraw-Hill developed the following elements that were widely known as the Five Factor Theory" (Sadker et al., 2012).

- The first factor is *quality leadership*. In other words, students perform better where the principal provides strong leadership. Effective leaders are visible, able to successfully convey the school's goals and visions, collaborate with teachers to enhance their skills, and are involved in the discovery of and solutions to problems.
- The second factor is having *high expectations* of students, as well as teachers. High expectations of students have repeatedly been shown to have a positive impact on students' performance. More attention should be paid to high expectations of teachers. In other words, teachers who are expected to teach at high levels of effectiveness are able to reach the level of expectations,

particularly when teacher evaluations and teacher professional development is geared toward improving instructional quality.

- The third characteristic of a successful school is the *ongoing screening of student performance and development.* Schools should use assessment data to compare their students with others from across the country. Effective use of assessment data allows schools to identify problematic areas of learning at the classroom and school levels, so that solutions can be generated as to how to best address the problems.
- The fourth characteristic of a successful school is the existence of *goals and direction*. Administration should actively construct goals and then effectively communicate them to appropriate individuals (i.e., students, teachers, community-at-large). School principals must also be open and willing to incorporate innovation into goals for school processes and practices. It is important to invite input from all stakeholders in the process of developing school goals. Student performance has been shown to improve in schools where all in the school community work toward goals that are communicated and shared among all in the learning environment.
- The fifth and final factor of a successful school is the extent to which the school is *secure and organized.* For maximum learning to occur, students need to feel secure. Respect is a quality that is promoted and is a fundamental aspect of a safe school. There are also a number of trained staff and programs, such as social workers, who work with problem students before situations get out of hand. (Lynch, 2016, p. 1)

Sadker, Zittleman, and Sadker (2012) concluded that these elements encouraged academic achievement and enhanced the quality of education.

Another study, conducted by Dobbie and Fryer (2013), differed in the elements of successful schools. In this empirical study, the researchers collected common characteristics of 35 charter schools (Dobbie & Fryer, 2013). The common elements were quality leadership, high expectations of students, teacher ongoing assessment of student performance and development, having goals, and direction, and security (Dobbie & Fryer, 2013). These results were highly concentrated with three different models for wrap-around service, model for teacher selection, and the No Excuse model (Dobbie & Fryer, 2013). Data were collected through principals, teacher and student surveys, sample teacher evaluations, lesson plans, homework, and video productions (Dobbie & Fryer, 2013). The study indicated these elements were represented within 50% of successful schools.

Fryer (2014) incorporated some best practice strategies from highly successful schools into a low performing school with a high minority presence, in Houston, Texas. He found more time was devoted to teaching, teachers and principals who could positively impact students, ongoing data assessment, and an environment of high expectation. Results indicated increased mathematics achievement, but little impact on reading. In addition, Fryer (2014) found similar results in Denver and Chicago.

A case study conducted by Kimmons (2012) provided insights on attributes of successful schools for Black students. Kimmons (2012) conducted an assessment of Franklin Elementary School test data to determine if teachers were successful in providing quality instruction. Kimmons (2012) collected data and scrutinized the data

analysis by utilizing SPSS. She used interviews, documentation, and survey. Her findings correlated with Perry (2010), who wrote *Theory of Practice for African American School Achievement.* Black students achieved in an environment with those who had similar achievement goals (Kimmons, 2012). One question addressed by such studies was whether most large districts could arrange the level of support needed in order to develop these students academically and behaviorally (Kimmons, 2012).

These models represented success for a single school. Researchers contended some schools were doing an excellent job in educating students (Snipes, Doolittle, & Herlihy, 2002). But research also showed that processes in place were not properly educating most student (Snipes, Doolittle, & Herlihy, 2002). It was reported that urban schools were not making the grade of giving quality education to students in the urban area, which were highly populated with low income and Black students. A team of researchers examined research and data across the country to locate those schools' identities. The team interviewed a focus group of teachers, school leaders, parents, union leaders, and community leaders. They concluded two major reasons for successful schools were school leaders were the managers of the school and the school was held accountable for positive results (Snipes et al., 2002).

Reported key elements in urban school district success. Snipes et al. (2002) did a case study on three urban school districts and a portion of a fourth district. They made a comparison to other districts who had seen some changes. The researchers visited and interviewed several key players, such as politicians, school leaders, and teachers. In addition, the researcher viewed several documents indicating that successful schools were based on consistency with politicians and with school leaders. Moreover, the decisions

and instructional practices were conducted through data-driven processes (Snipes et al., 2002).

Findings from a database of studies over several years unlocked key elements in successful urban schools, to include: 1) powerful school leaders with as strong an interest in instruction as their other duties, 2) congenial relations with parents and engaged in community, 3) having a culture of professionalism and embracing the belief that change can happen, along with a high quality professional development program, 4) a learning environment that is safe, inviting and provoking an interest in all students, 5) having good command and direction for instruction (Snipes et al., 2002). To examine successful schools, educators and other stakeholders must look at Black students who are lagging behind. Black students were lagging behind all other subgroups, except Latinos. In the following section, the cause of Black students lagging behind other sub groups is addressed.

Minority Gap

Historically, there was an achievement gap between Blacks and Whites (McWhorter, 2000). This continual gap represented a gap between a majority and a minority group. However, there was another fast-growing minority in Asian Americans (McWhorter, 2000). Research showed that there was a wider gap between Asian Americans and Blacks than the already existing gap between Blacks and Whites. Factors associated with the difference between Blacks and Asian Americans were due to cultural characteristics (McWhorter, 2000).

Cultural difference was an integral part of student achievement. There were major cultural differences between Blacks and Asian Americans (McWhorter, 2000).

These differences were shown through attitude toward education, family structure and parental involvement (McWhorter, 2000). These differences were thought to possibly give some explanation to the academic gap. Black students viewed excelling in education as acting White (Solomon, 2009). Studies showed Black students were influenced by their peers. Students possibly may hide their true academic abilities due to pressure from their peers (Gutman, Sameroff, & Eccles, 2002), unlike Asian American students who thought education was a pathway to success (Breitenstein, 2013); they believed education was the key to higher paying jobs and a better life. Attitude can render positive or negative academic outcomes (Breitenstein, 2013).

Another cultural difference was family structure. Blacks had 72% of children born out of wedlock, as opposed to Asian Americans, with 17% of children born out of wedlock (Clegg, 2013, p. 1). In addition, 66% of Black children lived in single parent homes, opposed to 17% of Asian American students who lived in single parent homes (National KIDS COUNT, 2015, p. 1). According to the USDOE (2011) there was a correlation between family academic achievement and student academic achievement.

How teachers perceived students was also an area that impacted student achievement. Research stated that teachers perceived Asian Americans with strong cognitive abilities as hard-working students (Lee, 2015), unlike Black students, who were perceived as students who lacked motivation and interest in learning (Gershenson, Holt, & Papageorge, 2016). Some researchers contended that was one of the sources of the achievement gap, because of low expectations of Black students (Peterson, Rubie-Davies, Osborne, & Sibley, 2016).

Summary

A review of literature did not reveal a direct relationship between party affiliation and academic achievement. However, there were some salient factors that gave possible reasoning to why Black students were lagging behind their other-ethnicity peers. Some studies suggested that large population of Blacks lived in low SES communities. Other studies suggested negative influence of peer pressure. Another researcher suggested that some Black student households were not supportive of educational progress.

An additional salient discovery in the literature was how schools were labeled as failing. Schools were label as failing, due to poor performance on standardized tests. Because of poor performance on the tests, schools were faced with dire consequences. Schools were closed, due to poor performances. Some schools were subject to funds being cut, due to poor performance on test scores. These consequences had a major impact on Black students. The goal was to make school leaders and teachers accountable for the progress of the students. However, views of reforming education and closing the achievement gap differed between political parties. Review of literature findings suggested neither of the laws enacted by the U.S. Presidents in the 21st century, NCLB and RTTT, translated into academic gains, especially for Black students. In some tested areas achievement levels decreased.

This study searched to establish a correlation between political parties and student achievement. Donald Trump stated the failure was due to the policies of local Democratic government. His statement gave rationale for further exploration of the potential connection between political party affiliation and student achievement. The next chapter will delineate how the research into that possible connection was conducted.

Chapter Three: Research Method and Design

This explanatory correlational study analyzed the potential relationship between political party affiliation and student achievement of fourth and eighth grade students in large cities of Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, Cleveland, District of Columbia, Hillsborough County, Jefferson County, and Milwaukee. The purpose was to investigate the potential relationship of political party affiliation to student achievement of Black students in large metropolitan school districts in the United States. Additionally, the study re-established the existence of the Black student versus other ethnicities achievement gap in the areas of reading and mathematics.

Claims were made during the U.S. 2016 presidential campaign that not only were U.S. schools failing in producing positive Black student academic outcomes; but that the Democratic political party was at fault. Establishing an explanation of the potential relationship of political party affiliation to the student achievement gap, with regard to the achievement of Black students in large metropolitan school districts in the United States, could lead to one more strategy in narrowing the achievement gap. An explanation of a correlation with political party affiliation could lead to understanding the impact of educational policies to student achievement. Information is provided concerning factors involved in the academic success rate for Black students. This study provides an analysis to support why large metropolitan cities have high failure rates with Black students.

Students all over the United States participated in the NAEP study, which tested student academic performance, primarily in the areas of mathematics and reading. Since there was potential for all students in participating districts to participate in the NAEP

assessment, scores for the majority of each ethnicity represented were available for mathematics and reading. The scores and recorded percentages of students achieving the proficient and advanced levels should provide an effective tool to determine achievement levels of the chosen population. The NAEP measured student progress in mathematics and reading over a large age range, with included 9, 13, and 17.

This exploratory correlational study also analyzed the relationship of political party affiliation to student achievement of Black students in large metropolitan school districts in the United States. The purpose was to determine relationships between political party affiliation and school district success in educating students and meeting AYP.

NAEP (n.d.) reported the academic performance of students in the United States. The NAEP reported result of student performance for districts and states, as well as for the nation. TUDA operated in the same format; but, the difference was TUDA provided individual scores. TUDA examined data over a period of time for fourth and eighth graders. TUDA also made a comparison of scores between large school districts.

Assembling information on trends in the relationship between political party affiliation and academic achievement required examination of various large city school districts. TUDA provided information from large cities. This researcher utilized scores from NAEP and collected fourth and eighth-grade reading and mathematics scores for Overall, Black, White, and Asian American students enrolled in school districts in large cities. To investigate the relationship, the researcher first established whether there were differences between Black and Overall achievement, then compared Black performance with that of White and Asian American students.

This report compared large school district success in meeting AYP, or targets defined by NCLB and RTTT. This report provides information on political party affiliation connected to the success of the sample of large school district. This research provides information for stakeholders to use to examine practices and policies enacted by political parties, related to student outcomes.

Independent variable – large cities. In this study, all data were obtained from the NAEP assessment. The independent variable was the city from which the data were obtained: Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, Cleveland, District of Columbia, Hillsborough County, FL, Jefferson County, KY, Milwaukee, and Philadelphia.

Dependent variable. Reading NAEP scores, the relationship between reading scores collected from the NAEP at proficient and advanced levels and demographic characteristics of the independent variable allowed analysis of the study hypotheses. Mathematics NAEP score; the relationship between mathematics scores collected from NAEP at proficient and advanced levels and demographic characteristics of the independent variable allowed analysis of the study hypotheses.

Questions and Null Hypotheses

Research Question 1: Is there a relationship between political party affiliation and school district success in educating students and meeting Adequate Yearly Progress?

Research Question 2: What are the major characteristics of exemplary, prominently Black populated, high schools in the United States, (represented by five districts recognized nationally as exemplary)?

Null Hypothesis 1: Over the years 2007 to 2015, there will be no difference between NAEP achievement in mathematics for Black students and other ethnicities,

between the years and between ethnicities within each year, when comparing percentage of proficient and advanced students.

Null Hypothesis 2: Over the years 2007 to 2015, there will be no difference between NAEP achievement in reading for Black students and other ethnicities, between the years and between ethnicities within each year, when comparing percentage of proficient and advanced students.

Null Hypothesis 3: Over the years 2007 to 2015, there will be no relationship between NAEP student achievement in reading and mathematics, and achievement of Adequate Yearly Progress, and political party affiliations defined by Democratic, Republican, and Other, measured by affiliation designated by sitting city mayor/administrator, state governor, and speaker of the house.

Data Samples

The sample population for this study was chosen by the researcher from publicly available secondary data provided by NAEP, with regard to fourth and eighth-grade mathematics and reading assessments. From the urban cities exhibiting a large enough Black population for the years of 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, eligibility was determined by the percent of enrolled Blacks and Hispanics and qualification for the NSLP. The demographic percentages for ethnicity in each city included in the study sample are displayed in Table 1. Urban areas were chosen because of the larger population of minority groups present. Smaller samples of the existing populations in each city were represented in the study data. NAEP chose its own study samples for assessment from those districts willing to volunteer their study and faculty time to the assessment endeavor.

Table 1

Percent of Ethnicity Representation in Cities Included in Study Sample

	Racial Demographics		
School District	White	Black	Asian
Atlanta	65.1	27.1	4.2
Austin	81	8.9	6.2
Boston	63	24.5	8.7
Charlotte	59.2	32.2	5.5
Chicago	45	32.9	5.5
Cleveland	64.6	30.2	2.9
District of Columbia (DCPS)	8.37	74.6	1.41
Hillsborough County (FL)	75	17	4.1
Jefferson County (KY)	73.1	21.6	2.7
Milwaukee	65.1	27.1	4.2

Demographic percentages for ethnicity in the fourth and eighth-grade populations assessed for mathematics for the urban cities are found in the Table 2 through Table 5, for the years 2007 and 2009.

Table 2 indicates a large fourth-grade sample of Blacks assessed in Atlanta in 2007, at 73% of the population. A large number of White students were represented in Charlotte with 36 % assessed in reading and 36% assessed in mathematics. Asians had the highest number of students assessed in mathematics in Boston with 9% assessed in reading and 8% assessed in mathematics. Reading and mathematics were not assessed in Hillsborough County for 2007.

Table 3 indicates a large eighth-grade sample of Blacks assessed in Atlanta in 2007, at 88% of the population.

Table 2

Demographic Percentage of Students Assessed: 4th Grade

	2007		
	Mathematics		
Large Cities	White	Black	Asian
Atlanta	13	73	1
Austin	25	11	3
Boston	14	39	8
Charlotte	36	39	5
Chicago	9	45	4
Cleveland	15	68	1
District of Columbia	9	77	2
Hillsborough County			
Jefferson County	53	36	3
Milwaukee	13	56	5

A large number of White students were represented in Charlotte; 35% assessed in reading and 34% assessed in mathematics. Asians had the highest number of students represented in Boston with 11% assessed in reading and 10% assessed in mathematics. Hillsborough County was not assessed in eighth-grade mathematics for 2007 (Table 3).

Table 3

Demographic Percentage of Students Assessed: 8th Grade

	2007		
	Mathematics		
Large Cities	White	Black	Asian
Atlanta	7	88	4
Austin	31	11	3
Boston	14	40	11
Charlotte	32	46	4
Chicago	9	48	3
Cleveland	15	71	1
District of Columbia	5	82	2
Hillsborough County			
Jefferson County	55	36	3
Milwaukee	11	62	4

For fourth grade in 2009, a large number of Blacks were assessed in Atlanta in mathematics at 73% and in reading at 80%. A large number of White students were represented in Charlotte with 37% assessed in reading and 36% assessed in mathematics. Asians had the highest number of students represented in Boston with 7% assessed in reading and 8% assessed in mathematics. Hillsborough County was not assessed in mathematics for 2009 (Table 4).

Table 4

Demographic Percentage of Students Assessed: 4th Grade

	2009		
	Mathematics		
Large Cities	White	Black	Asian
Atlanta	13	73	1
Austin	25	11	3
Boston	14	39	8
Charlotte	36	39	5
Chicago	9	45	4
Cleveland	15	68	1
District of Columbia	9	77	2
Hillsborough County			
Jefferson County	53	36	3
Milwaukee	13	56	5

For eighth grade in 2009, a large number of Black students were assessed in Atlanta mathematics at 88% and reading at 89%. A large number of White students were in Charlotte with 32% assessed in reading and 32% assessed in math. Asians had the highest number of students represented in Boston with 11% assessed in reading and 11% assessed in mathematics. Hillsborough County was not assessed for mathematics in 2009 (Table 5).

Table 5

Demographic Percentage of Students Assessed: 8th Grade

	2009		
	Mathematics		
Large Cities	White	Black	Asian
Atlanta	7	88	4
Austin	31	11	3
Boston	14	40	11
Charlotte	32	46	4
Chicago	9	48	3
Cleveland	15	71	1
District of Columbia	5	82	2
Hillsborough County			
Jefferson County	55	36	3
Milwaukee	11	62	4

Table 6 through Table 11 display the sample percentages contributing to the secondary data for this study, for both reading and mathematics in the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, respectively.

Table 6

Demographic Percentage of Students Assessed: 4th Grade

	2011					
	Reading			Mathematics		
Large Cities	White	Black	Asian	White	Black	Asian
Atlanta	15	77	1	15	76	1
Austin	29	8	3	26	8	3
Boston	12	35	8	12	34	8
Charlotte	35	38	5	35	38	5
Chicago	9	42	4	8	41	5
Cleveland	15	67	1	15	67	1
District of Columbia	10	72	2	11	72	2
Hillsborough County	37	20	3	37	20	3
Jefferson County	54	36	3	53	35	3
Milwaukee	16	51	7	15	51	7

As indicated on Table 6, for fourth grade in 2011, a large number of Blacks were assessed in Atlanta mathematics at 76% and reading at 77%. A large number of White students were represented in Hillsborough County with 37% assessed in reading and 37% assessed in mathematics. Asians had the highest number of students assessed in Boston at 8% in reading and 8% in mathematics.

Also, in 2011 for eighth grade, a large number of Blacks were assessed in Atlanta with mathematics at 86% and reading at 86%. A large number of White students were represented in Hillsborough County with 43% assessed in reading and 43% assessed in mathematics. Asians had the highest number of students assessed in Boston with 10% in reading and 11% in mathematics (Table 7).

Table 7

Demographic Percentage of Students Assessed: 8th Grade

	2011					
	Reading			Mathematics		
Large Cities	White	Black	Asian	White	Black	Asian
Atlanta	8	86	1	8	86	#
Austin	26	9	4	27	9	3
Boston	15	38	10	15	37	11
Charlotte	33	44	5	33	44	5
Chicago	9	44	5	9	43	5
Cleveland	18	65	1	17	66	1
District of Columbia	7	79	1	6	78	2
Hillsborough County	43	19	3	43	19	3
Jefferson County	55	37	2	54	37	3
Milwaukee	13	57	7	12	57	7

For fourth grade, a large number of Blacks were assessed in Atlanta in mathematics at 71% and in reading at 71%. A large number of White students were assessed in Hillsborough County with 36 % in reading and 36% in mathematics. Asians

had the highest number of students represented in Boston with 8% assessed in reading and 8% assessed in mathematics, in 2013 (Table 8).

Table 8

Demographic Percentage of Students Assessed: 4th Grade

	2013					
	Reading			Mathematics		
Large Cities	White	Black	Asian	White	Black	Asian
Atlanta	19	71	1	18	71	1
Austin	26	7	3	26	7	3
Boston	13	33	8	13	34	8
Charlotte	32	37	6	33	38	10
Chicago	9	40	4	9	39	4
Cleveland	15	66	1	15	66	1
District of Columbia	13	67	2	13	67	2
Hillsborough County	36	20	1	36	20	4
Jefferson County	51	37	3	50	37	3
Milwaukee	15	49	7	15	50	7

Table 9

Demographic Percentage of Students Assessed: 8th Grade

	2013					
	Reading			Mathematics		
Large Cities	White	Black	Asian	White	Black	Asian
Atlanta	11	82	1	10	82	1
Austin	26	9	3	26	9	3
Boston	15	38	10	15	38	10
Charlotte	32	42	5	32	42	5
Chicago	9	44	4	9	44	4
Cleveland	15	66	1	14	67	1
District of Columbia	8	74	2	7	74	2
Hillsborough County	38	21	3	38	21	3
Jefferson County	52	37	3	52	37	3
Milwaukee	13	59	3	12	59	3

As indicated on Table 9, for eighth grade, a large number of Blacks were assessed in Atlanta in mathematics at 82% and in reading at 82%. A large number of White students were assessed in Hillsborough County with 38% in reading and 38% in mathematics. Asians had the highest number of students assessed in Boston with 10% in reading and 10% in mathematics, in 2013.

Table 10

Demographic Percentage of Students Assessed: 4th Grade

	2015					
	Reading			Mathematics		
Large Cities	White	Black	Asian	White	Black	Asian
Atlanta	18	72	1	18	72	1
Austin	26	7	4	27	7	4
Boston	15	31	9	15	31	8
Charlotte	28	42	6	28	41	6
Chicago	12	41	5	12	40	4
Cleveland	15	64	1	15	64	1
District of Columbia	16	64	2	16	64	2
Hillsborough County	38	20	4	38	20	4
Jefferson County	49	35	3	48	35	4
Milwaukee						

Table 10 indicates, for fourth grade in 2015, a large number of Blacks were assessed in Atlanta in mathematics at 72% and in reading at 72%. A large number of White students were assessed in Hillsborough County with 38 % in reading and 38% in math. Asians had the highest number of students assessed in Boston with 9% in reading and 8% in mathematics. Milwaukee students were not assessed in fourth grade, for the year 2015.

Also in 2015, for eighth grade, a large number of Blacks were assessed in Atlanta in mathematics at 81% and in reading at 80%. A large number of White students were assessed in Hillsborough County with 34% in reading and 34% in mathematics. Asians had the highest number of students assessed in Boston with 11% in reading and 8% in mathematics. Milwaukee students were not assessed in eighth grade, for the year 2015 (Table 11).

Table 11

Demographic Percentage of Students Assessed: 8th Grade

	2015					
	Reading			Mathematics		
Large Cities	White	Black	Asian	White	Black	Asian
Atlanta	11	80	1	11	81	1
Austin	27	8	4	27	7	4
Boston	14	35	11	15	31	8
Charlotte	30	40	5	31	40	5
Chicago	9	43	3	9	43	9
Cleveland	13	67	1	13	67	1
District of Columbia	10	72	1	9	72	2
Hillsborough County	34	22	4	34	23	4
Jefferson County	50	36	4	49	36	4
Milwaukee						

Tables 12 and 13 display the number of students assessed in the cities chosen for the gathering of the secondary sample data utilized for this study, for reading in the years 2011, 2013, and 2015.

In the year 2011, fourth-grade reading had the highest number of participants with 17,200, and 2015 had the lowest with 11,000 (Table 12). The number of fourth-grade students assessed are displayed on Table 12 and correspond to the percentage of the total population represented in the sample percentages previously discussed in the chapter.

Table 12

Total Number of Students Accessed: 4th Grade, Reading

	Reading		
Large Cities	2011	2013	2015
Atlanta	1900	1,900	1,200
Austin	1600	1,600	1,100
Boston	1700	1,900	1,100
Charlotte	1800	1,600	1,200
Chicago	2500	2,400	1,800
Cleveland	1300	1,300	1,000
District of Columbia	1500	1,500	1,400
Hillsborough County	1700	1,600	1,100
Jefferson County	1800	1,700	1,200
Milwaukee	1400	1,400	
Total	17200	16900	11100

In the 2013, eighth-grade reading had the highest number of participants with 14,400, and 2015 had the lowest with 10,400 (Table 13).

Table 13

Total Number of Students Accessed: 8th Grade, Reading

	Reading		
Large Cities	2011	2013	2015
Atlanta	1300	1,400	1,300
Austin	1400	1,400	1,100
Boston	1100	1,600	1,100
Charlotte	1400	1,400	1,100
Chicago	1900	2,100	1,600
Cleveland	1000	1,300	1,000
District of Columbia	1300	1,000	1,000
Hillsborough County	1400	1,400	1,100
Jefferson County	1300	1,500	1,100
Milwaukee	1100	1,300	—
Total	13200	14400	10400

The number of eighth-grade students assessed are displayed on Table 13 and correspond to the percentage of the total population represented in the sample percentages previously discussed in the chapter.

Tables 14 and 15 display the number of students assessed in the cities chosen for the gathering of the secondary sample data utilized for this study, for mathematics in the years 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015.

In the year 2011, fourth-grade mathematics had the highest number of participants with 17,300, and 2015 had the lowest with 1,100.

Table 14

Total Number of Students Accessed: 4th Grade, Mathematics

	Mathematics				
Large Cities	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Atlanta	1500	1200	1900	1,800	1,200
Austin	1900	1500	1800	1,500	1,100
Boston	1300	1100	1700	1,800	1,100
Charlotte	1700	1500	1700	1,500	1,200
Chicago	2300	1900	2400	2,300	1,800
Cleveland	1100	900	1300	1,300	1,000
District of Columbia	1900	1300	1400	1,400	1,400
Hillsborough County			1900	1,600	1,100
Jefferson County		1400	1900	1,600	1,100
Milwaukee		1300	1300	1,300	—
Total	11700	12100	17300	16100	11000

In the year 2013, eighth-grade mathematics had the highest number of participants with 14,000, and 2007 had the lowest with 9,400.

Table 15

Total Number of Students Accessed: 8th Grade, Mathematics

	Mathematics				
Large Cities	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Atlanta	900	900	1300	1,300	1,400
Austin	1500	1300	1500	1,400	1,200
Boston	1100	1100	1200	1,600	1,100
Charlotte	1300	1300	1500	1,300	1,200
Chicago	1700	1800	2000	2,100	1,600
Cleveland	1100	900	1000	1,200	1,100
District of Columbia	1800	900	1300	1,000	1,000
Hillsborough County			1400	1,400	1,200
Jefferson County		1400	1400	1,400	1,200
Milwaukee		1000	1200	1,300	—
Total	9400	10600	13800	14000	11000

This study applied a *z*-test for difference in proportions, following application of ANOVA, to analyze the differences among group percentages of proficiency, advanced performance, and a combination of those two categories. In addition, data were discussed in terms of potential relationships between percentages and measured frequencies of political party affiliations, with reference to Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC).

In the fall of 2016, the researcher collected and analyzed NAEP data from the publicly available website, with respect to reading and mathematics assessments for the years 2007 through 2015. To verify reliability, data were collected from the NAEP website for advanced and proficient achievements, in the form of percentages, and with respect to Black, White, and Asian ethnicities represented in selected large city school districts. Since there were three or more means being compared, to determine the potential difference of NAEP data in this study, an Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was

performed on data representing the population and samples of all large city schools. ANOVA was more flexible and could simultaneously analyze multiple independent variables. When using the statistical tests, the following questions were asked: 'How often would we get a difference this big between samples if there were no difference between populations from which the samples were drawn?' If it is not very likely then *p*-value will be small and the results are statistically significant (Bluman, 2010). In essence, if the null hypothesis was true, the difference between control and experimental groups should be close to zero; if the null hypothesis was not true, the difference should be far from zero (Bluman, 2010)

There were many variations of ANOVA statistical designs. The researcher used the single factor ANOVA design to test the statistical significance of the findings. The researcher considered one independent variable that allowed examination of data for four different subgroups' overall scores: Whites, Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians. In single factor ANOVA, there was only one dependent variable. The hypothesis was formed about means of the group on the dependent variable. The dependent variable showed the potential differences in the group.

To examine the null hypotheses, a *z-t*est for difference in proportion was applied. The *z-t*est was selected because it best fit finding the extent of the differences of two proportions between test scores of Black students compared to Whites, Asians, and Overall scores for fourth and eighth-grade mathematics and reading. Rejection of the null hypothesis would give a test value less than an alpha of .05, or when test results concluded that calculated *z-t*est value was greater than the critical z-value, and thus indicate a significant difference in proportion.

To investigate the null hypothesis of relationship between political party affiliation and NAEP scores, a PPMCC analysis was applied. A positive correlation coefficient indicated a direct relationship indicating one variable increased as the other variable also increased. Negative correlation variable indicated that while one variable increased, the other variable decreased in value.

Cohen standards were used to assess the correlation coefficient, where 0.10 to 0.29 represented a weak association between the two variables, 0.30 to 0.49 represented a moderate association, and 0.50 or larger represented a strong association; however the relationship was significant only when exceeding the appropriate critical value (Bluman, 2010).

The researcher gathered data from the public access database maintained by NAEP. The NAEP served as a secondary source for the collection and analysis of data for the study. NAEP was the largest provider of test results of public school assessment nationwide.

The NAEP provided the researcher with data retrieval and comparison found through use of the website-provided NAEP Data Explorer (NAEP, n.d.). The Data Explorer allowed the researcher to filter data using a multi-step selection process, based upon pre-selected criteria. TUDA could be explored for large cities. First, the researcher selected specific subject areas, reading and mathematics in fourth and eighth grades. Once the subject was chosen, the researcher selected specific achievement levels and testing years. Finally, the researcher selected the cities that were then used for the study, based on the availability of large percentage samples of Black, White, Hispanic, and Asian ethnicities.

The specific measurement chosen with in use of data tool for all aspects of the research were overall mathematics and reading for large cities measured from 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015. Then the researcher chose the achievement level of proficient and advanced, for use in comparison of achievement levels between ethnicities and potentially related to frequency of political party affiliation through the study years, by the study sites chosen.

Reliability and Measurement

The instruments for measurement used in this study were applied to secondary data already gathered through the NAEP assessments. Reliability and validity of NAEP were addressed by the NAEP. Reliability was defined as "consistency of either measurement or design" (Vogt, 2007, p. 114).

The purpose of reliability was several measures could be applied by a different researcher with the same investigation, and come up with the same results. The significance of reliability was that it determined accuracy in measurement (Vogt, 2007).

NAEP verified the validity of NAEP scores used. NAEP demonstrated confidence, based on its own item scoring process. The multiple-choice items scanned and processed electronically, with quality control and validity checks performed on the outcomes. Constructed response items scanned, with responses scored by qualified and trained scorers using an electronic image processing and scoring system (Jago, 2009).

Threat to Validity

Threat to Validity meant, "things that could go wrong without a research design" (Vogt, 2007, p.121). Internal validity factors that affect internal validity were history, maturation, testing, instrumentation, statistical regression, research reactivity, selection

biases, and attrition and experimental mortality (Vogt, 2007). Threats to internal validity should be considered for correlation and for explanatory study (Vogt, 2007).

NAEP is limited to public school, or regular school. Exemption from sampling of all students could be a threat to validity. Schools that provided services for the blind, correctional facilities and home school were absent from the study. NAEP allow this inaccuracy because it does detract from the purpose of mainstreaming and the excluded group is a very small percentage (Daro, Stancavage, Ortega, DeStefano, & Linn, 2007; Jago, 2009).

Another threat was the voluntary participation of local school districts. The fact that testing was optional meant that those who did not participate may have scored differently from those who did participate. Selecting an alternate school was decided upon with prudence. States that did not meet the requirement of 70% participation, and 85% after replacement, were eliminated from the reporting (Daro et al., 2007).

Based on federal law, data must be kept confidential. NAEP provided data for states and local schools. School districts did not report names of the students who participated in the original, primary data collection process. The confidentiality of the original study results was protected under the National Assessment of Educational Progress Authorization (National Assessment Governing Board, 2002 [Public Law 107-279 III, Section 303]).

Summary

The methodology of this study utilized data available through the National Center for Education Statistics and made use of the agency's research tool known as the Data Explorer. The purpose was to investigate the potential relationship of political party

affiliation to student achievement of Black students in large metropolitan school districts in the United States. The researcher applied an ANOVA followed by a *z-t*est for difference in proportions to multiple pairings of data to determine if two proportions of test scores compared between Black, White, Asian, and Overall scores for fourth and eighth-grade mathematics and reading yielded differences in any pairing of categories. Finally, to investigate the null hypothesis of a relationship between political party affiliation and NAEP achievement measured by proficiency and advanced achievement in reading and mathematics, PMCC was applied to proficiency, advanced, and combined achievement percentages, as well as frequency of party affiliations for the offices of Mayor/City Administrator, Governor, and Speaker of the House, during the study timeline. If the correlation coefficient exceeded the critical value for the sample, a positive correlation coefficient indicated a direct relationship, indicating one variable increased as the other variable increased. Inversely a negative correlation indicated that when one variable increased, the measured of the other variable decreased.

Chapter Three provides a description of the study sample populations, the measuring instruments used to gather the secondary data used, and a discussion of the threats to validity for the study. Chapter Four continues with discussion by providing results of the hypothesis testing used to make the conclusions explained in Chapter Five.

Chapter Four: Analysis

This study analyzed the potential relationship between political party affiliation of local and state government officials and student achievement with respect to Black students in the areas of reading and mathematics. To investigate the potential relationship between political party affiliation and the success of school districts in these areas, this study first established whether there was a difference between Black students' achievement and achievement in reading and mathematics by the Overall population of students. The target ages were fourth and eighth-grade students. Additionally, the year-to-year progress of all ethnicities represented in the study was examined to check for improvement from the beginning to the end of the study timeline. The study additionally established whether Black achievement was different than White and Asian achievement, comparing scores to district success in meeting AYP and which political party affiliation was associated with academic success or nonsuccess.

Null Hypotheses

Null Hypothesis 1a: Over the years 2007 to 2015, there will be no difference between NAEP achievement in mathematics when comparing Black percentage of proficient and advanced students to Overall student achievement percentage of proficient and advanced students.

Null Hypothesis 1b: Over the years 2007 to 2015, there will be no difference between NAEP achievement in mathematics when comparing Black percentage of proficient and advanced students to White student achievement percentage of proficient and advanced students.

Null Hypothesis 1c: Over the years 2007 to 2015, there will be no difference between NAEP achievement in mathematics when comparing Black percentage of proficient and advanced students to Asian student achievement percentage of proficient and advanced students.

Null Hypothesis 2a: Over the years 2007 to 2015, there will be no difference between NAEP achievement in reading when comparing Black percentage of proficient and advanced students to Overall student achievement percentage of proficient and advanced students.

Null Hypothesis 2b: Over the years 2007 to 2015, there will be no difference between NAEP achievement in reading when comparing Black percentage of proficient and advanced students to White student achievement percentage of proficient and advanced students.

Null Hypothesis 2c: Over the years 2007 to 2015, there will be no difference between NAEP achievement in reading when comparing Black percentage of proficient and advanced students to Asian student achievement percentage of proficient and advanced students.

Null Hypothesis 3: Over the years 2007 to 2015, there will be no relationship between NAEP student achievement in reading and mathematics, achievement of Adequate Yearly Progress, and political party affiliations defined by Democratic, Republican, and Other, measured by affiliation designated by sitting city mayor/administrator, state governor, and speaker of the house.

Large cities Chicago, Cleveland, Charlotte, Jefferson County**,** Austin, Atlanta, Boston, District of Columbia, Milwaukee, and Hills Borough County were the

independent variable in the study. The dependent variables were Reading NAEP scores and Mathematics NAEP scores. The relationships between reading scores and mathematics scores collected from NAEP as percent proficient, percent advanced, and the combined percent of both proficient and advanced were examined.

The population for this study was invited by NAEP to participate in the evaluation process to determine the school district eligibility. The criteria for participation in the NAEP assessments were that the district enrolled a minimum of 50% Blacks and Hispanics and qualified for the NSLP.

Null Hypothesis 1a: Over the years 2007 to 2015, there will be no difference between NAEP achievement in mathematics when comparing Black percentage of proficient and advanced students to Overall student achievement percentage of proficient and advanced students.

Eighth Grade: Mathematics

To begin examination of student achievement in the area of eighth-grade mathematics, the researcher applied an ANOVA to data representing the percent of students who achieved at the advanced level, the proficient level, and the success rate level, defined for this study as the sum of the advanced and proficient percentages.

Table 16 displays average percentages for success rate for each of the ethnicity groups represented in the NAEP assessments for the years 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015. This is followed by the ANOVA results, which helped the researcher determine whether any subgroups assessed improved in academic achievement throughout the study timeline, as well as whether there was continued evidence of an achievement gap with

respect to Black students, when compared to the Overall population and individual ethnicities.

Table 16

Eighth Grade Mathematics Success Rate - Proficient plus Advanced: ANOVA Results

	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Black	9.78	10.76	11.79	12.53	11.71
Asian/Pacific	79.74	64.86	61.21	82.15	89.78
White	54.53	50.04	61.76	67.18	71.6
Overall	24.19	24.29	28.62	29.94	32.34

ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F crit*
Between Groups	503.39	4	125.847	0.139	0.964	3.0556
Within Groups	13515.79	15	901.0527			
Total	14019.18	19				

The ANOVA displayed in Table 16 revealed no significant difference in achievement from year-to-year for the ethnicities of Black, Asian/Pacific, White, and Overall population. The null hypothesis, which sought no difference among achievement from year-to-year, was not rejected (p-value = 0.964; α = .05; F-value = 0.139; F-critical = 3.055). The year 2013 was specifically identified as observably different from 2011, with respect to the Asian/Pacific group, which moved from a 61.21% success rate to an 82.15% from 2011 to 2013.

Table 17 indicates eighth-grade percentages of students proficient on the NAEP mathematics assessments for each of the years in the study timeline, followed by ANOVA results from a comparison of mathematics achievement between the ethnicities. The null hypothesis, which sought no difference among the ethnicities, was rejected (p-value = 5.24E-11; α = .05; F-value = 113.90; F-critical = 3.238). Specifically, for each

year of the study there was a large gap between the Asian/Pacific student achievement in mathematics, when compared to the other groups. Notably, the Black performance on the assessment was lowest for all five years.

Table 17

Eighth Grade Mathematics - Proficient: ANOVA Results

	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Black	8.81	8.89	10.66	11.15	10.22
Asian/Pacific	56.46	49.9	45.23	57.46	61.36
White	43.63	39.39	46.91	48.89	52.12
Overall	19.01	19.5	23.14	24.01	25.19

ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F-crit*
Between Groups	6335.56	3	2111.85	113.904	5.24118E-11	3.2388
Within Groups	296.65	16	18.5407			
Total	6632.21	19				

Table 18 indicates eighth-grade percentages of students advanced on the NAEP mathematics assessments for each of the years in the study timeline, followed by ANOVA results from a comparison of mathematics achievement between the ethnicities. The null hypothesis, which sought no difference among the ethnicities, was rejected (p-value = 5.52E-07; α = .05; F-value = 33.899; F-critical = 3.238). Specifically, and once again, for each year of the study there was a large gap between the Asian/Pacific student achievement in mathematics, when compared to the other groups. And, once again and notably, the Black performance on the assessment was lowest for all five years.

To support the findings of the ANOVA, a series of z-tests for difference in proportion were applied, to identify further significant differences, less obvious than those seen by these Asian/Pacific and Black ethnicity performances.

Table 18

Eighth Grade Mathematics – Advanced: ANOVA Results

	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Black	0.97	1.87	1.13	1.38	1.49
Asian/Pacific	23.28	14.96	15.98	24.69	28.42
White	10.9	10.65	14.85	18.29	19.48
Overall	5.18	4.79	5.48	5.93	7.15

ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F-crit*
Between Groups	1224.7	3	408.234	31.8991	5.52816E-07	3.2388
Within Groups	204.763	16	12.7977			
Total	1429.47	19				

Eighth Grade: Mathematics, Black versus Overall

Advanced category. For the years 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the mathematics NAEP between eighth-grade Black students and the eighth-grade Overall population in the advanced category resulted in rejection of the null hypothesis for the year 2015 (*z*-*t*est value = 1.969; *z*-critical = 1.96). In the year 2015, eighth-grade Black students scored significantly lower than the eighth-grade Overall population, in the advanced category of mathematics.

Each of the other years, 2007, 2009, 2011, and 2013, were found to have no significant differences in the comparison (*z*-*t*est values = 1.720, 1.151, 1.721, and 1.715, respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96), in the advanced category. In each case, for the years 2007, 2009, 2011, and 2013, eighth-grade Black students scored observably lower than the eighth-grade Overall population, in the advanced category of mathematics.

Table 19

Eighth Grade Mathematics, Advanced, Black versus Overall Students' Scores

	Black 0.334 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2007 to 2015					Overall 0.232 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2007 to 2015				
P	0.97	1.87	1.33	1.38	1.49	5.18	4.79	5.48	5.93	7.15
S	4	3	9	9	9	6	9	11	11	10
Y	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2007	1.700	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Overall
2009	1.151	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Overall
2011	1.721	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Overall
2013	1.715	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Overall
2015	1.969	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Overall

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

Proficient category. For the years 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the mathematics NAEP between eighth-grade Black students and the eighth-grade Overall population in the proficient category resulted in rejection of the null hypothesis for each of the years (*z*-test value = 2.084, 2.150, 2.355, 2.389, 2.773, respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96).

Table 20

Eighth Grade Mathematics, Proficient, Black versus Overall Students' Scores

	Black 0.340 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2007 to 2015					Overall 1.053 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2007 to 2015				
P	8.81	8.89	10.66	11.15	10.22	19.00	19.50	23.14	24.01	25.19
S	6	10	11	11	10	7	10	11	11	10
Y	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2007	-2.084	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Overall
2009	-2.150	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Overall
2011	-2.355	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Overall
2013	-2.389	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Overall
2015	-2.733	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Overall

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

In each of the years, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, eighth-grade Black students scored significantly lower than the eighth-grade Overall population, in the proficient category of mathematics.

Fourth Grade: Mathematics

To begin examination of student achievement in the area of fourth-grade mathematics, the researcher applied an ANOVA to data representing the percent of students who achieved at the advanced level, the proficient level, and the success rate level, defined for this study as the sum of the advanced and proficient percentages.

Table 21 displays average percentages for success rate for each of the ethnicity groups represented in the NAEP assessments for the years 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015. This is followed by the ANOVA results, which helped the researcher determine whether any subgroups assessed improved in academic achievement throughout the study timeline, as well as whether there was continued evidence of an achievement gap with respect to Black students, when compared to the Overall population and individual ethnicities.

The ANOVA displayed in Table 21 revealed no significant difference in achievement from year-to-year for the ethnicities of Black, Asian/Pacific, White, and Overall population. The null hypothesis, which sought no difference among achievement from year-to-year, was not rejected (p-value = 0.980; α = .05; F-value = 0.101; F-critical = 3.055). Though improvement was seen across the years, the increment of improvement was small and steady; only observable, yet not significant.

Table 21

Fourth Grade Mathematics Success Rate - Proficient Plus Advanced: ANOVA Results

	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Black	13.99	12.93	15.59	18.06	19.19
Asian/Pacific	78.59	64.57	70.48	73.81	88.36
White	75.58	67.96	73.51	78.51	79.96
Overall	28.71	28.53	33.98	36.85	38.93

ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F-crit*
Between Groups	369.6	4	92.400	0.101	0.980	3.0555
Within Groups	13648.475	15	909.898			
Total	14018.07	19				

Table 22 indicates fourth-grade percentages of students advanced on the NAEP mathematics assessments for each of the years in the study timeline, followed by ANOVA results from a comparison of mathematics achievement between the ethnicities.

Table 22

Fourth Grade Mathematics - Advanced: ANOVA Results

	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Black	1.11	0.79	0.99	1.52	1.76
Asian/Pacific	10.44	13.52	14.04	16.34	21.59
White	14.77	13.74	14.48	17.01	18.04
Overall	4.23	4.31	5.35	5.54	6.52

ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F-crit*
Between Groups	781.94	3	260.647	48.1875	3.10E-08	3.2388
Within Groups	86.54	16	5.409			
Total	868.48	19				

The null hypothesis, which sought no difference among the ethnicities, was rejected (p-value = 3.10E-08; α = .05; F-value = 48.18; F-critical = 3.238). Specifically, for each year of the study there was a large gap between both the Asian/Pacific and White

student achievement in mathematics, when compared to the other groups. Notably, the Black performance on the assessment was lowest for all five years.

Table 23 indicates fourth-grade percentages of students proficient on the NAEP mathematics assessments for each of the years in the study timeline, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, followed by ANOVA results from a comparison of mathematics achievement between the ethnicities. The null hypothesis, which sought no difference among the ethnicities, was rejected (p-value = 2.14E-11; α = .05; F-value = 126.081; F-critical = 3.238). Once again, for each year of the study there was a large gap between both the Asian/Pacific and White student achievement in mathematics, when compared to the other groups. Notably, the Black performance on the assessment was lowest for all five years.

Table 23

Fourth Grade Mathematics - Proficient: ANOVA Results

	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Black	12.88	12.14	14.6	16.54	17.43
Asian/Pacific	68.15	51.05	56.44	57.47	66.77
White	60.81	54.22	59.03	61.5	61.92
Overall	24.48	24.22	28.63	31.31	32.41

ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F crit*
Between Groups	7779.39	3	2593.13	126.081	2.4E-11	3.2388
Within Groups	329.07	16	20.567			
Total	8108.46	19				

To support the findings of the ANOVA, a series of z-tests for difference in proportion were applied, to identify further significant differences, less obvious than those seen by these Asian/Pacific and Black ethnicity performances.

Fourth Grade: Mathematics, Black versus Overall

Advanced category. For the years 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the mathematics NAEP between fourth-grade Black students and the fourth-grade Overall population in the advanced category resulted in no rejection of the null hypothesis for each of the years (*z*-test value = 1.370, 1.479, 1.760, 1.540, and 1.690 respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96). In each of the years, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, fourth-grade Black students showed no significant difference when compared with the fourth-grade Overall population. The fourth-grade Black population was holding its own in comparison to the fourth-grade Overall population, in the advanced category of mathematics.

Table 24

Fourth Grade Mathematics, Advanced, Black versus Overall Students' Scores

	Black 0.389 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2007 to 2015					Overall 0.718 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2007 to 2015				
P	1.11	0.79	0.99	1.52	1.76	4.23	4.31	5.35	5.54	6.52
S	3	4	8	8	7	6	9	9	11	10
Y	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2007	-1.370	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Overall
2009	-1.479	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Overall
2011	-1.760	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Overall
2013	-1.540	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Overall
2015	-1.690	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Overall

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

However, in each of the years, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, fourth-grade Black students scored observably lower than the fourth-grade Overall population, in the advanced category of mathematics.

Proficient category. For the years 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the mathematics NAEP between fourth-grade Black students and the fourth-grade Overall population in the proficient category resulted in rejection of the null hypothesis for each of the years (*z-t*est value = 2.110, 2.215, 2.410, 2.448, and 2.449 respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96). In each of the years, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, fourth-grade Black students showed significant difference when compared with the fourth-grade Overall population. In each of the years, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, fourth-grade Black students scored significantly lower than the fourth-grade Overall population, in the proficient category of mathematics.

Table 25

Fourth Grade Mathematics, Proficient, Black versus Overall Students' Scores

			Black 0.204					Overall 1.092		
			No significant change.					No significant change.		
			Pre-to-Post -- 2007 to 2015					Pre-to-Post -- 2007 to 2015		
P	12.88	12.14	14.60	16.54	17.43	24.48	24.22	28.63	31.31	32.41
S	7	10	11	11	10	7	10	11	11	10
Y	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2007	-2.110	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Overall
2009	-2.215	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Overall
2011	-2.410	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Overall
2013	-2.448	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Overall
2015	-2.449	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Overall

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

Null Hypothesis 1b: Over the years 2007 to 2015, there will be no difference between NAEP achievement in mathematics when comparing Black percentage of proficient and advanced students to White student achievement percentage of proficient and advanced students.

Eighth Grade: Mathematics, Black versus White

Advanced category. For the years 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the mathematics NAEP between eighth-grade Black students and the eighth-grade White population in the advanced category resulted in rejection of the null hypothesis for the year 2015 (*z-t*est value = 1.969; *z*-critical = 1.96).

Table 26

Eighth Grade Mathematics, Advanced, Black versus White

			White 1.690 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2007 to 2015					Black 0.334 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2007 to 2015		
P	10.90	10.65	14.85	18.29	19.48	0.97	1.87	1.33	1.38	1.49
S	5	7	11	10	10	4	3	9	9	9
Y	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2007	-2.970	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2009	-2.563	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2011	-2.578	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2013	-4.015	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2015	-4.152	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

Each of the other years, 2007, 2009, 2011, and 2013, were also found to have significant differences in the comparison (*z-t*est values = -2.97, -2.563, -3.578, -4.015 and -4.152, respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96), in the advanced category. In each case, for the years

2007, 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2015 eighth-grade Black students scored significantly lower than the eighth-grade White population, in the advanced category of mathematics.

Proficient category. For the years 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the mathematics NAEP between eighth-grade Black students and the eighth-grade White population in the proficient category resulted in rejection of the null hypothesis for each of the years (*z*-test value = -5.598, -5.04, -5.661, -5.822, -6.396, respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96). In each of the years 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, eighth-grade Black students scored significantly lower than the eighth-grade White population, in the proficient category of mathematics.

Table 27

Eighth Grade Mathematics, Proficient, Black versus White

			White 0.746					Black 0.340		
			No significant change.					No significant change.		
			Pre-to-Post -- 2007 to 2015					Pre-to-Post -- 2007 to 2015		
P	43.63	39.39	46.91	48.89	52.12	8.81	8.89	10.66	11.15	10.22
S	4	7	11	11	10	6	10	11	11	10
Y	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2007	-5.598	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2009	-5.040	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2011	-5.661	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2013	-5.822	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2015	-6.396	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

Fourth Grade: Mathematics, Black versus White

Advanced category. For the years 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the mathematics NAEP between fourth-grade Black students and the fourth-grade White population in the advanced category resulted in rejection of the null hypothesis for each of the years (*z*-test value = -3.57, -3.528, -3.571, -3.778 and -3.854 respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96). In each of the years, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, fourth-grade Black students showed significant difference when compared with the fourth-grade White population.

Table 28

Fourth Grade Mathematics, Advanced, Black versus White

	White -0.624 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2007 to 2015					Black -0.386 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2007 to 2015				
P	14.77	13.74	14.48	17.01	18.04	1.11	0.79	0.99	1.52	1.76
S	7	10	11	10	11	3	4	8	8	7
Y	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2007	-3.570	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2009	-3.528	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2011	-3.571	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2013	-3.728	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2015	-3.854	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

However, in each of the years 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, fourth-grade Black students scored significantly lower than the fourth-grade White population, in the advanced category of mathematics.

Proficient category. For the years 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the mathematics NAEP between fourth-grade Black students and the fourth-grade White population in the proficient category resulted in rejection of the null hypothesis for each of the years (*z-t*est value = -7.03, -6.319, -6.514,6.517 and -6.43 respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96). In each of the years 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, fourth-grade Black students showed significant difference when compared with the fourth-grade White population. In each of the years 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, fourth-grade Black students scored significantly lower than the eighth-grade White population, in the proficient category of mathematics.

Table 29

Fourth Grade Mathematics, Proficient, Black versus White

			White 0.161					Black 0.897		
			No significant change.					No significant change.		
			Pre-to-Post -- 2007 to 2015					Pre-to-Post -- 2007 to 2015		
P	60.81	54.22	59.03	61.50	61.92	12.88	12.14	14.60	16.54	17.43
S	7	10	11	11	10	7	10	11	11	10
Y	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2007	-7.030	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2009	-6.319	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2011	-6.514	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2013	-6.517	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2015	-6.430	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

Null Hypothesis 1c: Over the years 2007 to 2015, there will be no difference between NAEP achievement in mathematics when comparing Black percentage of

proficient and advanced students to Asian student achievement percentage of proficient and advanced students.

Eighth Grade: Mathematics, Black versus Asian

Advanced category. For the years 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the mathematics NAEP between eighth-grade Black students and the eighth-grade Asian population in the advanced category resulted in rejection of the null hypothesis for the year 2015 (*z-t*est value = 1.969; *z*-critical = 1.96). In the year 2015, eighth-grade Black students scored significantly lower than the eighth-grade Asian population, in the advanced category of mathematics.

Table 30

Eighth Grade Mathematics, Advanced, Black versus Asian/Pacific

			Black 0.334					Asian/Pacific 0.830		
			No significant change.					No significant change.		
			Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015					Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015		
P	0.97	1.87	1.33	1.38	1.49	23.28	14.96	15.98	24.69	28.42
S	4	3	9	9	9	1	2	4	3	2
Y	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2007	-2.590	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2009	-3.334	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2011	-3.754	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2013	-4.896	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2015	-5.340	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

Each of the other years 2007, 2009, 2011, and 2013, were also found to have significant differences in the comparison (z-test values = -2.55, -3.334, -3.754, -4.896 and -5.34, respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96), in the advanced category. In each case, for the

years 2007, 2009, 2011, and 2013, eighth-grade Black students scored significantly lower than the eighth-grade Asian population, in the advanced category of mathematics.

Proficient category. For the years 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the mathematics NAEP between eighth-grade Black students and the eighth-grade Asian population in the proficient category resulted in rejection of the null hypothesis for each of the years (z-test value = -7.186, -6.365, -5,448, -6.898, -7.543, respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96). In each of the years 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, eighth-grade Black students scored significantly lower than the eighth-grade Asian population, in the proficient category of mathematics.

Table 31

Eighth Grade Mathematics, Proficient, Black versus Asian/Pacific

	Black 0.340 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015					Asian/Pacific 0.704 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015				
P	8.81	8.89	10.66	11.15	10.22	56.46	49.90	45.23	57.46	61.36
S	6	10	11	11	10	1	2	4	3	2
Y	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2007	-7.186	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2009	-6.365	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2011	-5.448	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2013	-6.898	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2015	-7.543	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

Fourth Grade: Mathematics, Black versus Asian

Advanced category. For the years 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the mathematics NAEP between fourth-grade Black students and the fourth-grade Asian population in the advanced category resulted in rejection of the null hypothesis for the year 2015 (z-test value = 1.969; *z*-critical = 1.96). In the year 2015, fourth-grade Black students scored significantly lower than the eighth-grade Asian population, in the advanced category of mathematics.

Table 32

Fourth Grade Mathematics, Advanced, Black versus Asian/Pacific

			Black 0.386					Asian/Pacific 2.150		
			No significant change.					No significant change.		
			Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015					Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015		
P	1.11	0.79	0.99	1.52	1.76	5.18	4.79	5.48	5.93	7.15
S	3	4	8	8	7	7	5	6	6	4
Y	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2007	-2.830	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2009	-3.492	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2011	-3.500	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2013	-3.675	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2015	-4.358	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

Each of the other years 2007, 2009, 2011, and 2013, were also found to have significant differences in the comparison (z-test values -2.83, 3.482, -3.5-3.675 and -4.358, respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96), in the advanced category. In each case, for the years 2007, 2009, 2011, and 2013and 2015 fourth-grade Black students scored

significantly lower than the fourth-grade Asian population, in the advanced category of mathematics.

Proficient category. For the years 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the mathematics NAEP between fourth-grade Black students and the fourth-grade Asian population in the proficient category resulted in rejection of the null hypothesis for each of the years (z-test value = -7.96, -5.198, -6.054, -5.994, -7.066, respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96). In each of the years, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, fourth-grade Black students scored significantly lower than the fourth-grade Asian population, in the proficient category of mathematics.

Table 33

Fourth Grade Mathematics, Proficient, Black versus Asian/Pacific

			Black 0.897					Asian/Pacific -0.208		
			No significant change.					No significant change.		
			Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015					Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015		
P	12.88	12.14	14.60	16.54	17.43	68.15	51.05	55.44	57.47	66.77
S	7	10	11	11	10	4	5	6	6	4
Y	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2007	-7.960	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2009	-5.198	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2011	-6.054	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2013	-5.994	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2015	-7.066	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

Null Hypothesis 2a: Over the years 2011 to 2015, there will be no difference between NAEP achievement in reading when comparing Black percentage of proficient

and advanced students to Overall student achievement percentage of proficient and advanced students.

Eighth Grade: Reading

To begin examination of student achievement in the area of eighth-grade reading, the researcher applied an ANOVA to data representing the percent of students who achieved at the advanced level, the proficient level, and the success rate level, defined for this study as the sum of the advanced and proficient percentages.

Table 34 displays average percentages for success rate for each of the ethnicity groups represented in the NAEP assessments for the years 2011, 2013, and 2015. This is followed by the ANOVA results, which helped the researcher determine whether any subgroups assessed improved in academic achievement throughout the study timeline, as well as whether there was continued evidence of an achievement gap with respect to Black students, when compared to the Overall population and individual ethnicities.

Table 34

Eighth Grade Reading Success Rate - Proficient Plus Advanced: ANOVA Results

	2011	2013	2015
White	41	39	38
Black	29	31	29
Asian	18	16	13
Hispanic	29	33	39
Overall	40	41	39

ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F crit*
Between Groups	0.93	2	0.4667	0.0045	0.9955	3.8853
Within Groups	1248.40	12	104.0333			
Total	1249.33	14				

The ANOVA displayed in Table 34 revealed no significant difference in achievement from year-to-year for the ethnicities of Black, Asian/Pacific, White, Hispanic, and Overall population. The null hypothesis, which sought no difference among achievement from year-to-year, was not rejected (p-value = 0.9955; α = .05; F-value = 0.0045; F-critical = 3.885).

Table 35 indicates eighth-grade percentages of students proficient on the NAEP reading assessments for each of the years in the study timeline, followed by ANOVA results from a comparison of reading achievement between the ethnicities. The null hypothesis, which sought no difference among the ethnicities, was rejected (p-value = 0.0000; α = .05; F-value = 82.0938; F-critical = 3.478). Specifically, for each year of the study there was a large gap between the Asian/Pacific student achievement in reading, when compared to the other groups. Notably, the Asian/Pacific performance on the assessment was lowest for all five years.

Table 35

Eighth Grade Reading - Proficient: ANOVA Results

	2011	2013	2015
White	21	20	19
Black	21	21	20
Asian	10	9	7
Hispanic	19	21	21
Overall	22	22	21

ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F-crit*
Between Groups	350.27	4	87.5667	82.0938	0.0000	3.4780
Within Groups	10.67	10	1.0667			
Total	360.93	14				

Table 36 indicates eighth-grade percentages of students advanced on the NAEP reading assessments for each of the years in the study timeline, followed by ANOVA results from a comparison of reading achievement between the ethnicities. The null hypothesis, which sought no difference among the ethnicities, was rejected (*p*-value = 0.0001; $\alpha = .05$; *F*-value = 22.475; *F*-critical = 3.478). Specifically, and once again, for each year of the study there was a large gap between the Asian/Pacific student achievement in reading, when compared to the other groups. And, once again and notably, the Asian/Pacific performance on the assessment was lowest for all five years.

To support the findings of the ANOVA, a series of *z*-tests for difference in proportion were applied, to identify further significant differences, less obvious than those seen by these Asian/Pacific and Black ethnicity performances.

Table 36

Eighth Grade Reading – Advanced: ANOVA Results

	2011	2013	2015
White	20	19	19
Black	8	10	9
Asian	8	7	6
Hispanic	10	12	18
Overall	18	19	18

ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F-crit*
Between Groups	359.60	4	89.9000	22.4750	0.0001	3.4780
Within Groups	40.00	10	4.0000			
Total	399.60	14				

Eighth Grade: Reading, Black versus Overall

Advanced category. For the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the reading NAEP between eighth-grade Black students and the eighth-

grade Overall population in the advanced category resulted in no rejection of the null hypothesis for each of the years (z-test value = 0.229, 0.789 and 0.889 respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96). In each of the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, eighth-grade Black students showed no significant difference when compared with the eighth-grade Overall population. The eighth-grade Black population was holding its own in comparison to the eighth-grade Overall population, in the advanced category of reading.

However, in each of the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, eighth-grade Black students scored observably lower than the eighth-grade Overall population, in the advanced category of reading.

Table 37

Eighth Grade Reading, Advanced, Black versus Overall Students' Scores

	Black 0.334 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015			Overall 0.779 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015		
P	0.77	0.88	0.91	1.81	2.27	2.55
S	8	10	9	16	19	18
Y	2011	2013	2015	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2011	0.229	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Overall
2013	0.789	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Overall
2015	0.889	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Overall

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

Proficient category. For the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the reading NAEP between eighth-grade Black students and the eighth-grade Overall population in the proficient category resulted in no rejection of the null hypothesis for each of the years (z-test value = 1.442, 1.41 and 1.46 respectively; *z*-

critical = 1.96). In each of the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, eighth-grade Black students showed no significant difference when compared with the eighth-grade Overall population. The eighth-grade Black population was holding its own in comparison to the eighth-grade Overall population, in the proficient category of reading.

Table 38

Eighth Grade Reading, Proficient, Black versus Overall Students' Scores

	Black 0.334 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015			Overall 0.260 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015		
P	10.49	11.53	11.56	17.57	18.67	18.99
S	21	21	20	22	22	21
Y	2011	2013	2015	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2011	1.442	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Overall
2013	1.410	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Overall
2015	1.460	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Overall

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

However, in each of the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, eighth-grade Black students scored observably lower than the eighth-grade Overall population, in the proficient category of reading.

Fourth Grade: Reading

To begin examination of student achievement in the area of fourth-grade reading, the researcher applied an ANOVA to data representing the percent of students who achieved at the advanced level, the proficient level, and the success rate level, defined for this study as the sum of the advanced and proficient percentages.

Table 39 displays average percentages for success rate for each of the ethnicity groups represented in the NAEP assessments for the years 2011, 2013, and 2015. This is followed by the ANOVA results, which helped the researcher determine whether any subgroups assessed improved in academic achievement throughout the study timeline, as well as whether there was continued evidence of an achievement gap with respect to Black students, when compared to the Overall population and individual ethnicities.

Table 39

Fourth Grade Reading Success Rate - Proficient Plus Advanced: ANOVA Results

	2011	2013	2015
White	40	40	40
Black	37	40	35
Asian	22	22	16
Hispanic	40	40	41
Overall	42	42	41

ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F-crit*
Between Groups	12.93	2	6.467	0.078	0.926	3.885
Within Groups	998.80	12	83.233			
Total	1011.73	14				

The ANOVA displayed in Table 39 revealed no significant difference in achievement from year-to-year for the ethnicities of Black, Asian/Pacific, White, Hispanic, and Overall population. The null hypothesis, which sought no difference among achievement from year-to-year, was not rejected (p-value = 0.926; α = .05; F-value = 0.078; F-critical = 3.885).

Table 40 indicates fourth-grade percentages of students advanced on the NAEP reading assessments for each of the years in the study timeline, followed by ANOVA results from a comparison of reading achievement between the ethnicities. The null

hypothesis, which sought no difference among the ethnicities, was rejected (*p*-value = 0.000; α = .05; *F*-value = 38.4783; *F*-critical = 3.478). Specifically, for each year of the study Asian/Pacific student achievement in reading was lowest.

Table 40

Fourth Grade Reading - Advanced: ANOVA Results

	2011	2013	2015
White	20	20	20
Black	17	20	16
Asian	11	11	8
Hispanic	20	20	20
Overall	21	21	20

ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F-crit*
Between Groups	236.00	4	59.0000	38.4783	0.0000	3.4780
Within Groups	15.33	10	1.5333			
Total	251.33	14				

Table 41 indicates fourth-grade percentages of students proficient on the NAEP reading assessments for each of the years in the study timeline, followed by ANOVA results from a comparison of reading achievement between the ethnicities. The null hypothesis, which sought no difference among the ethnicities, was rejected (*p*-value = 0.0000; α = .05; *F*-value = 86.9545; *F*-critical = 3.478). Once again, for each year of the study Asian/Pacific student achievement in reading was lowest, when compared to the other groups.

To support the findings of the ANOVA, a series of *z*-tests for difference in proportion were applied, to identify further significant differences, less obvious than those seen by these Asian/Pacific and Black ethnicity performances.

Table 41

Fourth Grade Reading - Proficient: ANOVA Results

	2011	2013	2015
White	20	20	20
Black	20	20	19
Asian	11	11	8
Hispanic	20	20	21
Overall	21	21	21

ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F crit*
Between Groups	255.07	4	63.7667	86.9545	0.0000	3.4780
Within Groups	7.33	10	0.7333			
Total	262.40	14				

Fourth Grade: Reading, Black versus Overall

Advanced category. For the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the reading NAEP between fourth-grade Black students and the fourth-grade Overall population in the advanced category resulted in no rejection of the null hypothesis for each of the years (z-test value = 1.236, 1.393 and 1.200 respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96). In each of the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, fourth-grade Black students showed no significant difference when compared with the fourth-grade Overall population. The fourth-grade Black population was holding its own in comparison to the fourth-grade Overall population, in the advanced category of reading. However, in each of the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, fourth-grade Black students scored observably lower than the fourth-grade Overall population, in the advanced category of reading.

Table 42

Fourth Grade Reading, Advanced, Black versus Overall Students' Scores

	Black 0.362			Overall 0.316		
	No significant change.			No significant change.		
	Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015			Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015		
P	1.82	1.72	2.57	4.99	5.36	6.01
S	17	20	15	21	21	20
Y	2011	2013	2015	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2011	1.236	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Overall
2013	1.393	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Overall
2015	1.200	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Overall

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

Proficient category. For the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the reading NAEP between fourth-grade Black students and the fourth-grade Overall population in the proficient category resulted in no rejection of the null hypothesis for each of the years (z-test value = 1.024, 1.208 and 1.224 respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96). In each of the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, fourth-grade Black students showed no significant difference when compared with the fourth-grade Overall population. The fourth-grade Black population was holding its own in comparison to the fourth-grade Overall population, in the proficient category of reading. However, in each of the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, fourth-grade Black students scored observably lower than the fourth-grade Overall population, in the proficient category of reading.

Table 43

Fourth Grade Reading, Proficient, Black versus Overall Students' Scores

	Black 0.204 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015			Overall 0.406 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015		
P	12.23	12.11	13.19	17.17	18.24	19.60
S	20	20	19	21	21	21
Y	2011	2013	2015	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2011	1.024	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Overall
2013	1.208	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Overall
2015	1.224	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Overall

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

Null Hypothesis 2b: Over the years 2011 to 2015, there will be no difference between NAEP achievement in reading when comparing Black percentage of proficient and advanced students to White student achievement percentage of proficient and advanced students.

Eighth Grade: Reading, Black versus White

Advanced category. For the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the reading NAEP between eighth-grade Black students and the eighth-grade White population in the advanced category resulted in no rejection of the null hypothesis for 2011 and rejection of the null hypothesis for each of the years 2013 and 2015 (z-test value = -1.799, -2.301 and -2.266 respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96). In each of the years, 2013, and 2015, eighth-grade Black students showed significant difference when compared with the eighth-grade White population. The eighth-grade Black

population was holding its own in comparison to the eighth-grade White population, in the advanced category of Reading.

Table 44

Eighth Grade Reading, Advanced, Black versus White

	White 0.673 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015			Black 0.108 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015		
P	4.97	7.34	7.25	0.77	0.88	0.91
S	20	19	19	8	10	9
Y	2011	2013	2015	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2011	-1.799	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than White
2013	-2.301	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2015	-2.266	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

However, in each of the years 2013, and 2015, eighth grade Black students scored significantly lower than the eighth-grade White population, in the advanced category of reading.

Proficient category. For the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the reading NAEP between eighth-grade Black students and the eighth-grade White population in the proficient category resulted in rejection of the null hypothesis for each of the years of 2013 and 2015. In the year 2011, eighth-grade Black students scored significantly lower than the eighth-grade White population, in the advanced category of reading (z-test value = -4.439, -4.335 and -4.353 respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96). In each of the years, 2013, and 2015, eighth-grade Black students also showed significant difference when compared with the eighth-grade White population.

However, in each of the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, eighth-grade Black students scored significantly lower than the eighth-grade White population, in the proficient category of reading.

Table 45

Eighth Grade Reading, Proficient, Black versus White

	White 0.134 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015			Black 0.242 No significant change. Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015		
P	37.25	32.98	38.17	10.49	11.53	11.56
S	21	20	19	21	21	20
Y	2011	2013	2015	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2011	-4.439	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2013	-4.335	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2015	-4.353	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

Fourth Grade: Reading, Black versus White

Advanced category. For the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the reading NAEP between fourth-grade Black students and the fourth-grade White population in the advanced category resulted in rejection of the null hypothesis for each of the years (z-test value = 3.400, 3.557 and 3.380 respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96). In each of the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, fourth-grade Black students showed significant difference when compared with the fourth-grade White population. However, in each of the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, fourth-grade Black students scored significantly lower than the fourth-grade White population, in the advanced category of reading.

Table 46

Fourth Grade Reading, Advanced, Black versus White

	White 0.270			Black -0.362		
	No significant change.			No significant change.		
	Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015			Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015		
P	15.26	16.02	16.66	1.82	1.72	2.57
S	20	20	20	17	20	15
Y	2011	2013	2015	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2011	3.400	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2013	3.557	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2015	3.380	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

Proficient category. For the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the reading NAEP between fourth-grade Black students and the fourth-grade White population in the proficient category resulted in rejection of the null hypothesis for each of the years (z-test value = 3.535, 3.695 and 3.734 respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96). In each of the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, fourth-grade Black students showed significant difference when compared with the fourth-grade White population. However, in each of the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, fourth-grade Black students scored significantly lower than the fourth-grade White population, in the proficient category of reading.

Table 47

Fourth Grade Reading, Proficient, Black versus White

	White 0.161			Black 0.897		
	No significant change.			No significant change.		
	Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015			Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015		
P	33.17	34.14	35.92	12.23	12.11	13.19
S	20	20	20	20	20	19
Y	2011	2013	2015	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2011	3.535	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2013	3.695	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White
2015	3.764	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than White

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

Null Hypothesis 2c: Over the years 2007 to 2015, there will be no difference between NAEP achievement in reading when comparing Black percentage of proficient and advanced students to Asian student achievement percentage of proficient and advanced students.

Eighth Grade: Reading, Black versus Asian

Advanced category. For the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the reading NAEP between eighth-grade Black students and the eighth-grade Asian population in the advanced category resulted in no rejection of the null hypothesis for each of the year 2011 and rejection of the null hypothesis for 2013 and 2015 (z-test value = -1.515, 2,141 and 1.993 respectively; z-critical = 1.96). In each of the years 2013, and 2015, eighth-grade Black students showed significant difference when compared with the eighth-grade Asian population.

Table 48

Eighth Grade Reading, Advanced, Black versus Asian/Pacific

	Black 0.108			Asian/Pacific 0.654		
	No significant change.			No significant change.		
	Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015			Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015		
P	0.77	0.88	0.91	4.06	6.64	6.09
S	8	10	9	8	7	6
Y	2011	2013	2015	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2011	1.515	±1.96	Do Not Reject	Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2013	2.141	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2015	1.993	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

However, in each of the years, 2013, and 2015, eighth-grade Black students scored lower than the eighth-grade Asian population, in the advanced category of reading.

Proficient category. For the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the reading NAEP between eighth-grade Black students and the eighth-grade Asian population in the proficient category resulted in rejection of the null hypothesis for each of the years (*z*-test value = -3.045, 3.464 and 3.205 respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96). In each of the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, eighth-grade Black students showed significant difference when compared with the eighth-grade Asian population. However, in each of the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, eighth-grade Black students scored significantly lower than the eighth-grade Asian population, in the proficient category of reading.

Table 49

Eighth Grade Reading, Proficient, Black versus Asian/Pacific

	Black 0.242			Asian/Pacific 0.830		
	No significant change.			No significant change.		
	Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015			Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015		
P	10.49	11.53	11.56	27.36	31.69	29.94
S	21	21	20	10	9	7
Y	2011	2013	2015	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2011	3.045	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2013	3.464	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2015	3.205	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

Fourth Grade: Reading, Black versus Asian

Advanced category. For the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the reading NAEP between fourth-grade Black students and the fourth-grade Asian population in the advanced category resulted in rejection of the null hypothesis for each of the years (*z*-test value = 2.999, 3.012 and 2.913 respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96). In each of the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, fourth-grade Black students showed significant difference when compared with the fourth-grade Asian population. However, in each of the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, fourth-grade Black students scored significantly lower than the fourth-grade Asian population, in the advanced category of reading.

Table 50

Fourth Grade Reading, Advanced, Black versus Asian/Pacific

	Black 0.362			Asian/Pacific 0.208		
	No significant change.			No significant change.		
	Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015			Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015		
P	1.82	1.72	2.57	12.89	12.79	13.89
S	17	20	15	11	11	8
Y	2011	2013	2015	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2011	2.999	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2013	3.012	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2015	2.913	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

Proficient category. For the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, a comparison of the achievement on the reading NAEP between fourth-grade Black students and the fourth-grade Asian population in the proficient category resulted in no rejection of the null hypothesis for each of the years (*z*-test value = 2.750, 3.044 and 3.025 respectively; *z*-critical = 1.96). In each of the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, fourth-grade Black students showed significant difference when compared with the fourth-grade Asian population. However, in each of the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, fourth-grade Black students scored significantly lower than the fourth-grade Asian population, in the proficient category of reading.

Table 51

Fourth Grade Reading, Proficient, Black versus Asian/Pacific

	Black 0.204			Asian/Pacific -0.488		
	No significant change.			No significant change.		
	Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015			Pre-to-Post -- 2011 to 2015		
P	12.23	12.11	13.19	27.29	29.60	30.93
S	20	20	19	11	11	8
Y	2011	2013	2015	2011	2013	2015

Year	Test Value	Critical Value	Decision	Result
2011	2.750	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2013	3.044	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific
2015	3.025	±1.96	*Reject	*Black scores lower than Asian/Pacific

Note: P – Population % for the assessment; S – Sample: # cities/counties represented; Y – Year.
*Significant result.

Null Hypothesis 3: Over the years 2007 to 2015, there will be no relationship between NAEP student achievement in reading and mathematics, and achievement of Adequate Yearly Progress, and political party affiliations defined by Democratic, Republican, and Other, measured by affiliation designated by sitting city mayor/administrator, state governor, and speaker of the house.

Party affiliation. Table 52 displays each city whose data contributed to the sample for analysis during this study. For each data collection year, the political party affiliation is displayed for the Mayor, Governor, and Speaker of the House for the city and state where the schools assessed were located. More specific information is found in Table A1 (in the appendix). In these cities chosen for sample for this study, the number of Democrats in office was larger than the number of Republicans for the study timeline,

which is in alignment with Trump's claim that Democrats had run these cities for years (Morrongiello, 2016).

Table 53 displays the combined Proficient and Advanced percentages earned by the students in those cities and recorded by NAEP for each of the study years. The combined percentages indicate fairly level results in Proficient and Advanced achievement except in the year 2011 for fourth grade mathematics. Chicago fourth grade mathematics rose noticeably between 2011 and 2013.

Table 54 displays the results of a logistic analysis of the potential relationships between the dominant political parties in office during the timeline of this study. Party affiliation of the city Mayor or city administrator had no significant relationship to party affiliation of the Governor nor with the Speaker of the House. The number of Republicans represented across the five-year span of this study had a significant inverse relationship with the party affiliation of the Governor (r = -0.769; -0.769; -0.577; -0.454), except for 2015, and with the Speaker of the House (r = -0.893; -0.907; -0.893; -0.893; -0.893), for each of the study years. The number of Democrats represented across the five-year span had a significant positive relationship with the party affiliation of the Governor (r = 0.769; 0.769; 0.577; 0.454) and the Speaker of the House (r = 0.893; 0.907; 0.893; 0.893; 0.893) for each of the study years, except 2015.

Table 52

Party Affiliation in Data Collection Cities During Study Timeline

	2007 M	2007 G	2007 S	2009 M	2009 G	2009 S	2011 M	2011 G	2011 S	2013 M	2013 G	2013 S	2015 M	2015 G	2015 S	#D	#R
Austin	D	R	R	D	R	R	D	R	R	D	R	R	D	D	R	6	9
Boston	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	15	0
Charlotte	R	D	R	D	D	R	D	D	R	D	D	R	D	R	R	8	7
Chicago	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	R	D	14	1
Hillsborough County (FL)	D	R	R	D	R	R	D	R	R	D	R	R	D	R	R	5	10
Jefferson County (KY)	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	R	D	D	D	D	14	1
Philadelphia	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	R	D	D	R	D	D	R	D	12	3

Note: M: mayor; G: governor; S: speaker of house; D: Democrat; R: Republican. Proficient & advanced %s combined.

Table 53

Combined Proficient & Advanced Percentages During Study Timeline

	2007 MW4	2009 MW4	2011 MW4	2013 MW4	2015 MW4	2011 all4Rd	2013 all4Rd	2015 all4Rd	2011 allRd8	2013 allRd8	2015 allRd8
Austin	76.1	74.5	79.6	77.1	81.0	36.5	36.3	35.2	30.3	31.2	32.6
Boston	51.8	51.7	62.8	63.5	58.1	26.5	25.8	29.0	24.2	27.5	28.0
Charlotte	71.6	72.3	76.2	76.1	76.0	36.0	40.4	38.7	33.7	35.8	33.1
Chicago	47.0	43.8	52.2	67.6	71.9	17.6	20.3	26.8	20.6	20.7	23.9
Hillsborough County (FL)	76.1	70.6	67.7	70.8	76.5	43.8	39.7	40.6	32.2	34.9	28.9
Jefferson County (KY)	49.7	45.4	45.1	61.5	50.8	34.5	33.1	35.6	27.3	29.1	31.0
Philadelphia	59.0	62.5	66.2	70.6	60.6	13.4	14.2	13.9	16.4	16.3	16.0

Table 54

Party Affiliations of Study Cites During Study Timeline

	2007			2009		2011		2013		2015		Total	
	Mayor	Governor	Speaker	Governor	Speaker	Governor	Speaker	Governor	Speaker	Governor	Speaker	#D	#R
Mayor													
Governor	-0.218												
Speaker	0.272	0.535											
Governor	-0.218	1.000	0.535										
Speaker	0.333	0.655	0.816	0.655									
Governor	-0.272	0.802	0.250	0.802	0.408								
Speaker	0.272	0.535	1.000	0.535	0.816	0.250							
Governor	-0.509	0.429	0.356	0.429	0.218	0.535	0.356						
Speaker	0.272	0.535	1.000	0.535	0.816	0.250	1.000	0.356					
Governor	0.272	0.089	0.167	0.089	0.408	0.250	0.167	-0.089	0.167				
Speaker	0.272	0.535	1.000	0.535	0.816	0.250	1.000	0.356	1.000	0.167			
#D	0.214	0.769	0.893	0.769	0.907	0.577	0.893	0.454	0.893	0.349	0.893		
#R	-0.214	-0.769	-0.893	-0.769	-0.907	-0.577	-0.893	-0.454	-0.893	-0.349	-0.893	-1	1

Note: critical value = 0.349.

As displayed in Table 56, and more specifically in Table 55, calculation of the PPMCC for relationships between political party affiliation and student performance on mathematics and reading assessments showed the number of Democrats in office of Mayor, Governor, and Speaker of the House, among the locations of the sampled school districts had a significant inverse relationship to performance of White Mathematics for fourth graders in 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015 (r = .685, .662, .599, .467, .492, respectively).

The number of Democrats in office of Mayor, Governor, Speaker of the House, among the locations of the sampled school districts had a significant inverse relationship to performance of White Mathematics for eighth graders in 2011 and 2013 (r = .624, .605, respectively).

Table 55

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Values

	#D	#R	2007M	2011MW8
2007MW4	-0.686	0.482	-0.219	
2009MW4	-0.663	0.363	-0.219	
2011MW4	-0.599	0.274	-0.237	
2013MW4	-0.467	0.106	-0.170	
2015MW4	-0.493	0.180	-0.202	
2011all4Rd	-0.239	0.351	-0.319	
2013all4Rd	-0.318	0.352	-0.448	
2011MW8	-0.624	0.145	-0.328	1.000
2013MW8	-0.606	0.224	-0.373	0.953
2011RdgW8	-0.445	0.124	-0.235	0.846
2013RdgW8	-0.469	0.042	-0.191	0.877
2011Mall8	0.016	0.165	-0.462	0.337
2013Mall8	0.005	0.160	-0.545	0.335

Note: critical value = 0.349; M: mathematics; Rd: reading; W: White; All: total sample population.

The number of Democrats in office of Mayor, Governor, Speaker of the House, among the locations of the sampled school districts had a significant inverse relationship to performance of White Reading for eighth graders in 2011 and 2013 (r = .445, .469, respectively).

The number of Republicans in office of Mayor, Governor, Speaker of the House, among the locations of the sampled school districts had a significant positive relationship to performance of White Mathematics for fourth graders in 2007 and 2009 (r = .482, .363, respectively).

The number of Republicans in office of Mayor, Governor, Speaker of the House, among the locations of the sampled school districts had a significant positive relationship to performance of All Reading for fourth graders in 2011 and 2013 (r = .351, .352, respectively)

Table 56 provides a wide, general look at PPMCC values to support potential relationships between party affiliation and student achievement between the years of 2007 and 2015. The 2007 Democratic office of Mayor party affiliation in office of Mayor, among the locations of the sampled school districts had a significant inverse relationship to performance of All Reading for fourth graders in 2013 (r = .448), and with Overall Mathematics for eighth graders in 2011 and 2013 (r =.462, .545, respectively).

Some data provided through NAEP included missing years for some ethnicities. A closer look at potential relationships through calculation of the PPMCC was provided through removal of the less complete data sets.

Table 56

Pearson Product Moment Corelation Coefficient Values

	#D	#R	2007M	2007G	2007S	2009G	2009S	2011G	2011S	2013G	2013S	2015G	2015S
#D	1.000												
#R	-1.000	1.000											
2007M	0.273	-0.273	1.000										
2007G	0.833	-0.833	-0.258	1.000									
2007S	0.954	-0.954	0.471	0.730	1.000								
2009G	0.833	-0.833	-0.258	1.000	0.730	1.000							
2009S	0.954	-0.954	0.471	0.730	1.000	0.730	1.000						
2011G	0.654	-0.654	-0.354	0.730	0.417	0.730	0.417	1.000					
2011S	0.954	-0.954	0.471	0.730	1.000	0.730	1.000	0.417	1.000				
2013G	0.396	-0.396	-0.471	0.548	0.167	0.548	0.167	0.750	0.167	1.000			
2013S	0.954	-0.954	0.471	0.730	1.000	0.730	1.000	0.417	1.000	0.167	1.000		
2015G	0.246	-0.246	0.354	-0.091	0.167	-0.091	0.167	0.167	0.167	-0.167	0.167	1.000	
2015S	0.954	-0.954	0.471	0.730	1.000	0.730	1.000	0.417	1.000	0.167	1.000	0.167	1.000
2007MW4	-0.976	0.976	-0.344	-0.775	-0.951	-0.775	-0.951	-0.645	-0.951	-0.353	-0.951	-0.177	-0.951
2009MW4	-0.908	0.908	-0.411	-0.651	-0.885	-0.651	-0.885	-0.650	-0.885	-0.300	-0.885	-0.209	-0.885
2011MW4	-0.752	0.752	-0.428	-0.522	-0.779	-0.522	-0.779	-0.525	-0.779	-0.039	-0.779	-0.133	-0.779
2013MW4	-0.804	0.804	-0.485	-0.507	-0.805	-0.507	-0.805	-0.517	-0.805	-0.087	-0.805	-0.355	-0.805
2015MW4	-0.804	0.804	-0.318	-0.657	-0.825	-0.657	-0.825	-0.400	-0.825	0.069	-0.825	-0.376	-0.825
2011all4Rd	-0.683	0.683	-0.251	-0.642	-0.763	-0.642	-0.763	-0.123	-0.763	-0.259	-0.763	0.232	-0.763
2013all4Rd	-0.688	0.688	-0.455	-0.543	-0.817	-0.543	-0.817	-0.009	-0.817	-0.106	-0.817	0.163	-0.817
2015all4Rd	-0.545	0.545	-0.352	-0.485	-0.692	-0.485	-0.692	0.153	-0.692	0.010	-0.692	0.191	-0.692
2011allRd8	-0.694	0.694	-0.508	-0.524	-0.838	-0.524	-0.838	0.012	-0.838	-0.033	-0.838	0.130	-0.838
2013allRd8	-0.632	0.632	-0.481	-0.488	-0.786	-0.488	-0.786	0.059	-0.786	0.009	-0.786	0.176	-0.786
2015allRd8	-0.397	0.397	-0.403	-0.349	-0.603	-0.349	-0.603	0.286	-0.603	0.112	-0.603	0.449	-0.603

Note : critical value = 0.349; M: mathematics; Rd: reading; W: White; All: total sample population.

Mathematics and Reading without Atlanta, Cleveland, and Milwaukee. The number of Democrats in office of Mayor, Governor, Speaker of the House, among the locations of the sampled school districts had a significant inverse relationship to performance of White Mathematics for fourth graders in 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015 (r = .959, .932, .820, .832, .857, respectively).

The number of Democrats in office of Mayor, Governor, Speaker of the House, among the locations of the sampled school districts had a significant inverse relationship to performance of All Reading for fourth graders in 2011, 2013, and 2015 (r = .393, .480, .437 respectively).

The number of Republicans in office of Mayor, Governor, Speaker of the House, among the locations of the sampled school districts had a significant positive relationship to performance of White Mathematics for fourth graders in 2007, 2009, and 2015 (r = .726, .519, .433 respectively).

The number of Republicans in office of Mayor, Governor, Speaker of the House, among the locations of the sampled school districts had a significant positive relationship to performance of All Reading for fourth graders in 2011, 2013, and 2015 (r = .719, .697, .524, respectively).

The number of Republicans in office of Mayor, Governor, Speaker of the House, among the locations of the sampled school districts had a significant positive relationship to performance of All Reading for eighth graders in 2011, 2013, and 2015 (r = .743, .694, .504, respectively).

Table 57

Pearson Product Moment Corelation Coefficient Values

	#D	#R	2007M	2007MW4	2009MW4	2011MW4	2013MW4	2015MW4
2007M	0.157	-0.304	1.000					
2007MW4	-0.960	0.726	-0.273	1.000				
2009MW4	-0.933	0.519	-0.272	0.955	1.000			
2011MW4	-0.821	0.380	-0.278	0.858	0.950	1.000		
2013MW4	-0.833	0.169	-0.187	0.748	0.876	0.890	1.000	
2015MW4	-0.858	0.433	-0.192	0.780	0.789	0.804	0.869	1.000
2011all4Rd	-0.394	0.719	-0.280	0.486	0.245	0.079	-0.098	0.135
2013all4Rd	-0.481	0.697	-0.469	0.561	0.355	0.215	0.075	0.282
2015all4Rd	-0.437	0.525	-0.356	0.448	0.248	0.122	0.070	0.309
2011allRd8	-0.207	0.744	-0.497	0.355	0.112	0.002	-0.224	0.060
2013allRd8	-0.226	0.694	-0.486	0.369	0.137	0.033	-0.205	0.060
2015allRd8	-0.048	0.504	-0.418	0.168	-0.046	-0.093	-0.276	-0.022

Note : critical value = 0.381; M: mathematics; Rd: reading; W: White; All: total sample population.

When considering potential relationships exhibited between the party of affiliation of Governor and student performance in academics among the schools sampled for reading and mathematics performance, with the Democratic party represented the majority of the time, there was no relationship in 2013, and significant inverse relationships present in 2007, 2009, 2011, and 2015 (r = .008, - .353, .488, - .775, .348, - .775, .133, - .448, respectively).

There was no relationship between Republican party affiliation of the specific offices represented in this sampling and student performance; however, the number of Republicans holding office held a significant positive relationship with White Mathematics in fourth grade for the years of 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015 (r = .975, .907, .751, .804, .804, respectively). This held true for all Reading for fourth grade and All Reading for eighth grade for the years of 2011, 2013, and 2015 (r = .683, .688, .584); and (r = .693, .632, .397, respectively). Additionally, the relationship held for all

Reading for eighth grade for the years of 2011, 2013, and 2015 (r = .693, .632, .397, respectively).

Summary

Chapter Four presented the results of the analysis to determine whether there was a relationship between political party affiliation and school district success in educating students and meeting AYP. The analysis of the relationship between political party affiliation and student achievement of Black students led to a major finding of the study. There was a significant difference in reading and mathematics of fourth and eighth grade students' scores between Blacks, the Overall population, Whites, and Asians. Based on this study, regardless of the political party in control there was a significant difference in student achievement.

Chapter Five: Discussion

This correlational study was designed to find the relationship between political party affiliation and U.S. student achievement in reading and mathematics measured by the NAEP, with a focus on Black student achievement. The researcher compared NAEP percentage of proficient and advanced achievement levels of Black students to the percentages achieved by the Overall population, Whites, and Asians. The independent variables were selected cities included on the NAEP website section called TUDA. Existing data for achievement level scores were gathered from the NAEP website, which represented the dependent variable. Encompassed in Chapter Five is a detailed summary of the findings, implications to educational leaders, and recommendations.

Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question 1: Is there a relationship between political party affiliation and school district success in educating students and meeting adequate yearly progress?

Research Question 2: What are the major characteristics of exemplary, prominently Black populated, high schools in the United States, (represented by five districts recognized nationally as exemplary)?

Hypothesis 1: Over the years 2007 to 2015, there will be a difference between NAEP achievement in mathematics for Black students and other ethnicities, between the years and between ethnicities within each year, when comparing percentage of proficient and advanced students.

Hypothesis 2: Over the years 2007 to 2015, there will be a difference between NAEP achievement in reading for Black students and other ethnicities, between the years

and between ethnicities within each year, when comparing percentage of proficient and advanced students.

Hypothesis 3: Over the years 2007 to 2015, there will be a relationship between NAEP student achievement in reading and mathematics, and achievement of Adequate Yearly Progress, and political party affiliations defined by Democratic, Republican, and Other, measured by affiliation designated by sitting city mayor/administrator, state governor, and speaker of the house.

Summary of Findings

Hypothesis 1

Eighth Grade: Mathematics. Comparison of eighth-grade Black student achievement to other ethnicities in the advanced level resulted in identification of significant differences with the Overall sample population in 2015; Black achievement performance at the advanced level was lower than Overall. Each of the years, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, found significant differences between Black student achievement and Overall sample performance at the proficient level; Black achievement performance at the proficient level was lower than Overall.

A comparison of eighth-grade mathematics achievement at the advanced level between Black students and White students resulted in significant findings for each of the years, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015; Black student achievement was significantly lower than White student achievement at the advanced level. A comparison of eighth-grade mathematics achievement at the proficient level between Black students and White students also resulted in significant findings for each of the years, 2007, 2009, 2011,

2013, and 2015; Black student achievement was significantly lower than White student achievement at the proficient level.

A comparison of eighth-grade mathematics achievement at the advanced level between Black students and Asian/Pacific students resulted in significant findings for each of the years, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015; Black student achievement was significantly lower than Asian/Pacific student achievement at the advanced level. A comparison of eighth-grade mathematics achievement at the proficient level between Black students and Asian/Pacific students also resulted in significant findings for each of the years, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015; Black student achievement was significantly lower than Asian/Pacific student achievement at the proficient level.

Fourth Grade: Mathematics. Comparison of fourth-grade Black student achievement to other ethnicities in the advanced level resulted in identification of no significant differences with the Overall sample population across the years of 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015; Black achievement performance at the advanced level was only observably lower than Overall. However, each of the years, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015, found significant differences between Black student achievement and Overall sample performance at the proficient level; Black achievement performance at the proficient level was lower than Overall.

A comparison of fourth-grade mathematics achievement at the advanced level between Black students and White students resulted in significant findings for each of the years, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015; Black student achievement was significantly lower than White student achievement at the advanced level. A comparison of fourth-grade mathematics achievement at the proficient level between Black students and White

students also resulted in significant findings for each of the years, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015; Black student achievement was significantly lower than White student achievement at the proficient level.

A comparison of fourth-grade mathematics achievement at the advanced level between Black students and Asian/Pacific students resulted in significant findings for each of the years, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015; Black student achievement was significantly lower than Asian/Pacific student achievement at the advanced level. A comparison of fourth-grade mathematics achievement at the proficient level between Black students and Asian/Pacific students also resulted in significant findings for each of the years, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015; Black student achievement was significantly lower than Asian/Pacific student achievement at the proficient level.

Hypothesis 2

Eighth Grade: Reading. Comparison of eighth-grade Black student achievement to other ethnicities in the advanced level resulted in identification of no significant differences with the Overall sample population; Black achievement performance at the advanced level was only observably lower than Overall for each of the years, 2011, 2013, and 2015. Similarly, for the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, for eighth-grade reading at the proficient level, no significant differences between Black student achievement and Overall sample performance were found; Black achievement performance at the proficient level was only observably lower than Overall.

A comparison of eighth-grade reading achievement at the advanced level between Black students and White students resulted in no significant findings for the year 2011, with Black students achieving observably lower than White students. However, for the

years 2013 and 2015, significant differences were found at the advanced level; Black student achievement was significantly lower than White student achievement at the advanced level. A comparison of eighth-grade reading achievement at the proficient level between Black students and White students resulted in significant findings for each of the years, 2011, 2013, and 2015; Black student achievement was significantly lower than White student achievement at the proficient level.

A comparison of eighth-grade reading achievement at the advanced level between Black students and Asian/Pacific students resulted in no significant findings for the year 2011; however, each of the years, 2013 and 2015 found significant differences; Asian/Pacific student achievement was significantly lower than Black student achievement at the advanced level. A comparison of eighth-grade reading achievement at the proficient level between Black and Asian Pacific students resulted in significant findings for each of the years, 2011, 2013, and 2015; Asian Pacific student achievement was significantly lower than Black student achievement at the proficient level.

Fourth Grade: Reading. Comparison of fourth-grade Black student achievement to other ethnicities in the advanced level resulted in identification of no significant differences with the Overall sample population; Black achievement performance at the advanced level was only observably lower than Overall for each of the years, 2011, 2013, and 2015. Similarly, for the years 2011, 2013, and 2015, for fourth-grade reading at the proficient level, no significant differences between Black student achievement and Overall sample performance were found; Black achievement performance at the proficient level was only observably lower than Overall.

A comparison of fourth-grade reading achievement at the advanced level between Black and White students resulted in significant findings for the years 2011, 2013, and 2015; Black student achievement was significantly lower than White student achievement at the advanced level. A comparison of fourth-grade reading achievement at the proficient level between Black and White students also resulted in significant findings for the years 2011, 2013, and 2015; Black student achievement was significantly lower than White student achievement at the proficient level.

A comparison of fourth-grade reading achievement at the advanced level between Black and Asian/Pacific students resulted in significant findings for the years 2011, 2013, and 2015; Asian/Pacific student achievement was significantly lower than Black student achievement at the advanced level. A comparison of fourth-grade reading achievement at the proficient level between Black and Asian Pacific students resulted in significant findings for each of the years, 2011, 2013, and 2015; Asian Pacific student achievement was significantly lower than Black student achievement at the proficient level.

Hypothesis 3

Political party affiliation. During the study timeline, and considering the three political offices polled, Democrats represented 74 of the 105 seats counted, or 70.5%. So, there is truth in the statement that Democrats in office had opportunity to influence processes that could affect academic outcomes for U.S. students.

Some significant positive relationships were established. Using samples with complete data sets only, the number of Republicans in office of Mayor, Governor, Speaker of the House, had a significant positive relationship to performance of White mathematics for fourth graders in 2007, 2009, and 2015. And, the number of

Republicans in office of Mayor, Governor, Speaker of the House had a significant positive relationship to performance of Overall reading for fourth graders in 2011, 2013, and 2015. Additionally, the number of Republicans in office of Mayor, Governor, Speaker of the House had a significant positive relationship to performance of Overall reading for eighth graders in 2011, 2013, and 2015.

Some significant inverse relationships were established. Using samples with complete data sets only, the number of Democrats in office of Mayor, Governor, Speaker of the House had a significant inverse relationship to the performance of White Mathematics for fourth graders in 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015 and performance of Overall reading for fourth graders in 2011, 2013, and 2015.

Implications

This study supports the review of literature, which stated that Black students continued lagging behind with Whites and Asian students. Data in this study highlights the problem of how Black students were performing in large major cities. Analysis of data can be examined on a national scale to look at trends among large cities to determine the rationale behind Black students lagging behind.

The establishment of trends of low achievement of Black students can lead to further investigate for solutions to the low academic achievement of Black students. Examining the demographics of Blacks who are not having academic success can determine if there is any correlation between demographics and low achievement as a continuing trend. In addition, schools can narrow in and determine what the percentage is of low achievement in various schools. A refresher of the continuing trend, as shown by these study results, indicates that, at the time of this writing, the United States has still

not found the remedy for the achievement gap. Information can tell us if it is demographic failure or school failure. This study attempted to verify a connection between political party affiliation and student achievement, as declared to be a part of the problem during the 2016 presidential campaign.

Data did support the fact that year-to-year growth in U.S. reading and mathematics achievement was not making significant improvements during the study timeline from 2007 through 2015. Also, data supported a continued gap in Black student academic performance in comparison to other ethnicities. And finally, the data indicated that the Democratic party filled a large majority of political offices of Mayor, state Governor, and state Speaker of the House throughout the study timeline.

Data will provide school districts with information to provide a basis to create supplementary activities customized for Black students. Data should be utilized to continue to look at the success rates among large cites for Black students, to inform school leaders on the need to continually develop best practices in education. These best practices can be passed on to other cities.

Recommendations

Despite verification of a lack of significant growth in year-to-year academic achievement in reading and mathematics, the continued existence of a Black-White achievement gap, and domination of one political party in office throughout the study timeline, results of this study indicated no correlation between political party affiliation and student achievement for Black students. However, increasing student achievement for Black students should be the primary goal, since these students are lagging behind other subgroups in achievement. Therefore, it is recommended that educational leaders

should examine this problem more closely to see how widespread the problem actually is. Educational leaders should gather data from other grade levels to assess and see if this problem is unique to fourth and eighth grade, since these two grades have been the source of large-scale assessment in the United States for a long time. Educational leaders should devise tests that will assess specifically where the academic gap begins and see if it is consistent with despite political policy changes.

Action research should be done at the building level to ensure success inside the classroom. Educators should examine whether success in the classroom is displayed on the standardized tests. Educational leaders can determine what factors bring success in the classroom that are not mirrored on standardized tests. Educational leaders should understand fundamental principles in test preparation. However, this researcher does not suggest that the classroom should teach to the test, but that it should take knowledge learned and use it to show how to successfully complete a test.

There should be professional development to understand the impact of other variables that effect Black student achievement, since the achievement gap continues to exist and educators collectively have not been able to identify the biggest contributors. Included in this workshop community, leaders, parents and students should give their views on how these factors impact academic achievement. Moreover, there should be an exchange of ideas with educational leaders, to come up with a strategy to combat the variables that hinder student achievement.

Consistent throughout this study was that teacher quality impacted student achievement. Educational leaders should develop a plan of action, not just to recruit quality teachers, but also to create programs that enhance then-current teachers in their

districts. Often, educators spend so much time on recruiting, yet do not spend quality time on developing marginal teachers. Educational leaders should develop high-quality workshops that are ongoing and connected to educational standards. The workshops should be sustainable throughout teacher tenure. In addition, an ongoing constant assessment and evaluation to measure project outcomes in areas needing improvement should be implemented.

The Policy Maker

While creating policies to reform education, leaders receive input from all stakeholders. Politicians are responsible for creating policies to enhance student achievement. Major players in obtaining student achievement are teachers and school leaders. Politicians often heavily depend on non-educators to aid in reforming education, yet those in the trenches tend be the last consulted. Those who make decisions are not in the classroom day-to-day; so, they do not have the best insight on the most effective practices in education. In addition, policy makers often look at only one dimension for student achievement; they do not include other variables that impact outcomes, such as family structure, low SES, and lack of sufficient resources.

The demographics of this study included cities and school districts with a large population of minorities and low SES. Many studies suggested that these areas lacked funding or strategies to make successful changes in student achievement. There was conflicting research on the impact of increasing funding. Some researchers felt increased funding would help increase test scores. However, others said there was no impact on academic achievement by increasing funding. This researcher's recommendation is not to just give more money, but for legislatures to invest in programs that are successful,

based on research. Money should be distributed with an accountability system. Moreover, funds should be distributed proportionately, among all districts. School districts that have a large tax base seem to have more funding to accomplish their goals. There should be an even playing field when it comes to education. Districts that have a large population of minorities and low SES get the short end of the stick. Lack of resources hinders the ability of schools to attack the problem for Black students. Funding can provide for supplemental programs for students to increase student achievement.

Teacher input should be at every level of government. Politicians should have committees exclusively for teachers. These teachers could assist in developing policies that are more doable and effective for classroom teachers. These teacher committees should be formed at the national, state, and local levels. In addition, there should be conversations as to why there are disparities with the academic outcomes of Black students. Teachers from each level should discuss how test items are framed and how they relate to teaching strategies.

Discussion

This researcher agrees with the scholars that there was too much emphasis on tests. One of the reasons that tests dominated classrooms was teacher accountability. Learning should take place; not teaching to the test. Teaching to the test hurt Black students. Teachers were focusing on students who could enhance test data. Students who were not capable of raising test scores were neglected. Tests caused teachers and schools to avoid other subjects and place major emphasis on tested areas.

Secondly, tests have become high stakes. At the time of this writing, a great deal rides on how well students do on the test. Students were not held accountable; however,

school districts were subject to losing funding and school closings, as well as teachers and principals being terminated over test results. Accountability of children was not taken into consideration in achievement, and students were promoted while performing below academic performance. This researcher believes the problem was not the quality of teaching and within the school system, but with children not being held accountable to perform at their maximum levels.

President Trump stated, Black students were failing under local Democratic policies. However, when Republicans took over, the problem still existed. Let us look beyond policies. Examine other variables that could increase student achievement. Often funding was not available, and if not, concerned citizens should look at other means to break down barriers that were failing Black students. Why not have a mentor program with mentors that have similar backgrounds as the Black students. Have mentors establish relationships and share their experiences of success and the importance of being successful. We educators must continue to find solutions until the goal of getting Black students caught up with other subgroups when it comes to academic achievement is accomplished.

Conclusion

This study paints a picture of how Black students were academically lacking. As a retired teacher who taught in the inner city, this researcher witnessed the obstacles of teachers educating Black students. This researcher saw evidence of some Black students succeeding, while others were failing. Yet, to see evidence of failure on a large scale would give one reason to despair. Yet, with proper guidance, initiative, and resources there is still hope. If all stakeholders work together to find a bipartisan solution, a

difference can be made. U.S. society must minimize the importance of success on standardized tests. This researcher observed in the classroom those students who performed well, yet did poorly on standardized tests. Society must find multiple means to determine whether students are successful academically.

Politics should not be a factor in educational reform. Factors that take precedence include helping students succeed. Helping students succeed goes beyond making policies or selecting the right candidate to receive the right amount of funding. We educators have a concern for the success of the child and the future state our society. If the child succeeds, society should progress.

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Appendix A

Table A1

Office of Mayor in Sample Cities from 2007 through 2015

	Mayors				
Large Cities	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Atlanta	Shirly Franklin (D)	Shirly Franklin (D)	Kasim Reed(D)	Kasim Reed(D)	Kasim Reed(D)
Austin	Will Wynn(D)	Lee Leffingell(D)	Lee Leffingell(D)	Lee Leffingell(D)	Steve Adler(D)
Boston	Thomas Menino(D)	Thomas Menino(D)	Thomas Menino(D)	Thomas Menino(D)	Martin Walsh(D)
Charlotte	Pat McCroy(R)	Anthony Foxx(D)	Anthony Foxx(D)	Patrick Cannon(D)	Jennifer Roberts(D)
Chicago	Richard M. Daley(D)	Richard M. Daley(D)	Rahm M. ImanuelD)	Rahm M. ImanuelD)	Rahm M. ImanuelD)
Cleveland	Frank G.Jackson(D)	Frank G.Jackson(D)	Frank G.Jackson(D)	Frank G.Jackson(D)	Frank G.Jackson(D)
District of Columbia (DCPS)	Andrian Fenty(D)	Andrian Fenty(D)	Vincent C Gray(D)	Vincent C Gray(D)	Muriel Bowser(D)
Hillsborough County (FL)	Pam Iorio(D)	Pam Iorio(D)	Bob Buckhorn(D)	Bob Buckhorn(D)	Bob Buckhorn(D)
Jefferson County (KY)	Jerry Abramson(D)	Jerry Abramson(D)	Greg Fisher(D)	Greg Fisher(D)	Greg Fisher(D)
Milwaukee	Tom Barrett(D)	Tom Barrett(D)	Tom Barrett(D)	Tom Barrett(D)	Tom Barrett(D)

Table A2

Office of Governor in States of Sample Cities from 2007 through 2015

	Governors				
Large Cities	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Atlanta,GA	George E.Perdue(R)	George E.Perdue(R)	Nathan Deal(R)	Nathan Deal(R)	Nathan Deal(R)
Austin,TX	Rick Perry(R)	Rick Perry(R)	Rick Perry(R)	Rick Perry(R)	Greg Abbott(D)
Boston,MA	Deval Patrick(D)	Deval Patrick(D)	Deval Patrick(D)	Deval Patrick(D)	Karyn Polito®
Charlotte,NC	Mike Easley(D)	Beverly Perdue(D)	Beverly Perdue(D)	Pat McCroy(R)	Pat McCroy(R)
Chicago,Ill	Rad Blagojevich(D)	Pat Quinn(D)	Pat Quinn(D)	Pat Quinn(D)	Bruce Rauner®
Cleveland,OH	Ted Strickland(D)	Ted Strickland(D)	John Kasich(R)	John Kasich(R)	John Kasich(R)
District of Columbia (DCPS)					
Hillsborough County (FL)	Charlie Crist(R)	Charlie Crist(R)	Rick Scot(R)	Rick Scot(R)	Rick Scot(R)
Jefferson County (KY)	Steve Beshear(D)	Steve Beshear(D)	Steve Beshear(D)	Steve Beshear(D)	Matt Bevin®
Milwaukee,WI	Jim Doyle(D)	Jim Doyle(D)	Jim Doyle(D)	Scott Walker(R)	Scott Walker(R)

Table A3

Office of Speaker of the House in States of Sample Cities from 2007 through 2015

	Speaker of House				
Large Cities	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Atlanta,GA	Terry Coleman(R)	Terry Coleman (R)	David Ralston(R)	David Ralston(R)	David Ralston(R)
Austin,TX	Tom Craddick(R)	Joe Straus(R)	Joe Straus(R)	Joe Straus(R)	Joe Straus(R)
Boston,MA	Salvatore DiMasi(D)	Robert Deleo(D)	Robert Deleo(D)	Robert Deleo(D)	Robert Deleo(D)
Charlotte,NC	Joe Hackney	Joe Hackney	Thomas Tillis®	Thomas Tillis®	Timothy Moore®
Chicago,Ill	Michael Madigan(D)	Michael Madigan(D)	Michael Madigan(D)	Michael Madigan(D)	Michael Madigan(D)
Cleveland,OH	Jon A.Husted(R)	Armond Budish(D)	William G.Batcher(R)	William G.Batcher(R)	Cliff Rosenberger(R)
District of Columbia (DCPS)					
Hillsborough County (FL)	Marco Rubio(R)	Ray Sanson(R)	Dean Cannon(R)	William Weatherford(R)	Steve Crisafulli(R)
Jefferson County (KY)	Jody Richards(D)	Gregory Stumbo(D)	Gregory Stumbo(D)	Gregory Stumbo(D)	Gregory Stumbo(D)
Milwaukee,WI	Michael Huebsch (R)	Michael Sheridan(D)	Jeff Fitzgerald(R)	Robin Vos(R)	Robin Vos(R)

Vitae

STEVEN M. SMITH

EDUCATION

LINDENWOOD UNIVERSITY □ St. Charles, MO
$ *Ed.D. in Educational Administration* □ *Expected Graduation 2017*
Dissertation: The relationship between political affiliation and student achievement, with respect to African American students in the area of reading and mathematics
LINDENWOOD UNIVERSITY □ St. Charles, MO
$ *M.A. in Educational Administration* □ *2006*
LESLEY UNIVERSITY □ Cambridge, MA
$ *M.Ed. in Educational Technology* □ *2004*
HARRIS STOWE STATE COLLEGE □ St. Louis, MO
$ *B.A. in Education* □ *1985*
Areas of Concentration: Elementary and Middle School
Minor: Mathematics and General Science

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2015 - Present **COMPUTER VILLAGE□ St. Louis, MO**
2006 - Present **HARRIS STOWE STATE UNIVERSITY □ St. Louis, MO**
1986 - Retired **ST. LOUIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS □ St. Louis, MO**
2008 – Retired *Carr Lane Middle School, Science Teacher*
2008 - 2008 *Yeatmen-Liddell Junior High, Computer Instructor*
2006 - 2008 *Blewett Middle School, Computer Instructor/Technology Coordinator*
1995 - 2006 *Gateway Middle School, Science Teacher/Science Department Chair*
1993 - 1995 *Carr Lane Middle School, Science Teacher*
1986 - 1993 *Williams Middle School, Science Lab Teacher*

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2003 - 2009 **ST. LOUIS UNIVERSITY □ St. Louis, MO**
Teacher/Coordinator for MIND Program
Summer 2009 *Coordinator of High School Summer Enrichment Program*
Summer 2009 *Coordinator of Summer Research Apprenticeship*
Summer
2010 - present Began as teacher for MASH/BrainLink program.
2003 - 2009 *Program Coordinator for MASH and BrainLink Programs also Teacher* 2001 - 2002
St. Louis University Chemistry Department, Coordinator of Gateway Middle Research Program Partnership.
2002 - 2006 *School liaison/Educational Consultant Washington University*
2002 - 2004 *Lesley University, Site Coordinator/Technology Coordinator*
Site Coordinator
Technology Coordinator
2002 - 2006 *Coordinator SEMAA (Science, Engineering, Mathematics and Aerospace Academy) Afterschool Program*
Summer 96 - 97 *University of Missouri*.
1993 *Prentice Hall Publishing Company- Consultant*
1992-1993 *Monsanto Chemical - Teacher Trainer*
1988-1990 *Monsanto Chemical -Curriculum Developer*

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATES

$ National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) Member
$ Association for Multicultural Science Education Past Board Member
$ Missouri Academy of Science
$ Science Teachers of Missouri (STOM) Member

RECOGNITION/AWARDS

- Monsanto Award for Writing Contributions for Biotechnology Curriculum Unit for 6th Grade students, 1998
- Monsanto Award for Teacher Trainer in Biotechnology Education, 1992
- St. Louis Science Center Loab Award - Certificate of Excellence in Teaching, 2000
- Defense Mapping Agency Award for Outstanding Service in Education, 2004

CONDUCTED TRAINING

- Inquiry Science
- Constructivist
- Technology Integration
- Engineering in the Middle School
- Microsoft Office Suite

RESEARCH PROJECTS

- A Nonlinear Dynamic Earthquake analysis by ABAQUS@
  Advisor: Dr. Kevin Z. Truman, Washington University
- The Effect of Boron on Different Materials@
  Advisor: Dr. Charles Granger, University of Missouri St