THE EFFECTS OF A LOOPING CLASSROOM AMONG THIRD GRADE STUDENTS IN AN URBAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

A DISSERTATION IN
Education

Presented to the Faculty of the University
of Missouri-Kansas City in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

by
ANGELA JEAN DANLEY

B.S., Avila University, 1996
M.A.T, Webster University, 1998
Ed.S., University of Central Missouri, 2009

Kansas City, Missouri
2012

THE EFFECTS OF A LOOPING CLASSROOM AMONG THIRD GRADE STUDENTS IN AN URBAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Angela Jean Danley, Candidate for Doctor of Education Degree

University of Missouri-Kansas City, 2012

ABSTRACT

This quantitative study compared the AIMSweb academic achievement in the area of reading and mathematics of third grade students assigned to looping classrooms and non-looping classrooms in one urban school district. Further, the study examined the parent perceptions of their students' academic and affective experiences in the looping classrooms and non-looping classrooms. Parents of the third grade looping classrooms and non-looping classroom were invited to participate in a survey of Likert-scale items to communicate their perceptions of academic and affective outcomes in these classrooms. The results for this survey indicated academic and affective experiences were not rated significantly higher by parents of the third grade looping classrooms than those parents of the third grade non-looping classrooms. The AIMSweb Reading Curriculum Based Measure (R-CBM) data and the Mathematics Concepts and Applications (M-CAP) Assessment data from the 2009-2010 school year were analyzed. AIMSweb achievement scores of third grade students assigned to looping

classrooms were compared to the third grade students assigned to the non-looping classrooms using an independent samples t-test. Analysis of the AIMSweb reading and mathematics data indicated that all third grade students assigned to the looping classrooms did not perform significantly higher when compared to all the third grade students assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

APPROVAL PAGE

The faculty listed below, appointed by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, have examined a dissertation titled "The Effects of a Looping Classroom Among Third Grade Students in a Looping Classroom," presented by Angela Jean Danley, candidate for the Doctor of Education Degree, and certify that in their opinion is worthy of acceptance.

Supervisory Committee

Donna Davis, Ph.D.
Department of Educational Leadership, Policy and Foundations

Jennifer Friend, Ph.D.
Department of Educational Leadership, Policy and Foundations

Gus Jacobs, Ed.D.
Department of Educational Leadership, Policy and Foundations

Dianne Smith, Ph.D., Committee Chair
Department of Educational Leadership, Policy and Foundations

CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure Page

TABLES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the Lord for His grace, seeing me through the challenging times, and celebrating with me. I would like to thank my husband, Robert for believing in me and supporting me every step of the way while I embarked on this journey. I am grateful for my two daughters, Abigail and Elizabeth for their patience and their many sacrifices they made while I was pursuing the Doctor of Education Degree and the writing of this dissertation study. I would like to thank my mother, Ardie Fisher and my in-laws, Robert, Sr. and Ruth Ann Danley for their support by taking care of my daughters while I was attending classes and writing this research study. Special thanks to my research committee members: Dr. Dianne Smith, Dr. Donna Davis, Dr. Jennifer Friend, and Dr. Gus Jacob for their support and guidance during the completion of this dissertation study. I would also like to thank Dr. Loyce Caruthers for her support and words of encouragement during the completion of the Ed.D. coursework. I am indebted to Dr. Annie Conway and Mr. William White for their assistance and guidance in collecting of the archived achievement data and the administering of the parent surveys for this dissertation study. I am grateful for my husband's grandmother, Dr. Gladys Turner. She wrote her dissertation in 1979 entitled *Oral Reading Errors of Fifth Grade Students.* She was my inspiration to achieving Doctor of Education. My cousin, Dr. Chad Harms, associate teaching professor at the University of Notre Dame also inspired me to achieve my goal. Finally, I know my Grandma and Grandpa Harms are rejoicing with me in Heaven as they look down and see me achieve my dream.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION ON LOOPING CLASSROOMS

Looping is a relatively simple concept. In the looping classroom, a teacher stays with the classroom of children for two years or even three years (Grant, Johnson, & Richardson, 1996). Looping classrooms are considered an alternative placement to the traditional method of grouping students. Looping is not a new concept in the United States and other countries including Germany, Italy, and China. In fact, looping classrooms have been around since the one-room schoolhouse. During the days of the one room schoolhouse, there was only one teacher who taught all of the students over a period of several years (Salvetti, 1997).

Public education should ideally provide a solid foundation for students to prosper and become productive, contributing members of society (Swanson, 1999). For this to occur, students need to develop competency in many areas: reading, writing, math, technology, and social interaction. Unfortunately, some students do not meet the basic standards in core academic subjects while others are not able to read at grade level, write comprehensibly, or solve basic math problems. In 2009, 67% of fourth grade students were reading at a basic level and this resulted in no measurable gains between 2007 and 2009 in fourth grade reading achievement (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011).

Though the reading achievement scores of the White, Hispanic, and Black population have increased since 1992, the score gaps were not measurably different in 2009. Whites in fourth grade scored twenty-six points higher in reading than Blacks and twenty-five points higher than Hispanics. The National Center for Education Statistics also stated that 82% of the fourth grade population in the United States performs at a basic level in mathematics

performance while 73% of eighth graders nationwide were performing at a basic level on mathematics performance (2011). The fourth grade Black population in 2009, scored 26 points lower than the White population and was not measurably different from the scores in 2007. There was a 21 point achievement gap between Whites and Hispanics in 2009 and this was not measurably different from the gap in 2007. Additionally, the National Center for Education Statistics (2007) reported that there have been gains with the achievement gap narrowing in the area of eighth grade writing from 1998 to 2007. The results indicated that 885 of the students are performing at or above the basic level in writing. However, eighteen states showed no significant change in writing achievement scores between 2002 and 2007. As of 2007, more than half (57%) of the nation's eighth graders are performing at the basic level in writing (National Center for Education Statistics, 2007).

Many factors may influence the academic success of students including parental involvement in school, instructional strategies, and student accountability. The public school system is responsible for educating the vast majority of the children in the United States and must improve to meet the ever changing needs of the students entering the schools (Swanson, 1999). Educators must find innovative techniques that raise students' academic achievement and support successful learning. One such technique is the concept of looping, a placement method where students remain with the same teacher for at least two or three years.

The underlying philosophy of looping allows teachers and students "the gift of time" (Mazzuchi & Brooke, 1992, p. 60). If students are looped with their teacher, then a period of one to two months of instructional time is gained because the getting to know you period is eliminated (Hitz, Somers, & Jenlink, 2007). The looping classroom allows teachers the opportunity to accommodate differences in young children's rate of development and

readiness by having a better understanding of the students' strengths and weaknesses while also supporting the emotional and social systems (Chirichello & Chirichello, 2001).

During the early 1990s in Attleboro School District, Dr. Joseph Rappa (Grant et al., 1996) a former superintendent in Attleboro, Massachusetts provided multi-year teaching assignments for the first grade students through eighth grade students. Strong evidence on the looping classrooms supports this alternative teaching method. The attendance in second grade through eighth grade increased from 92% average daily attendance to 97% average daily attendance. Retention rates decreased over 43% for second through eighth grade students. In grades fifth through eighth, discipline declined significantly. Special education referrals decreased by over 55%. Staff attendance improved from an average of seven day absences per staff to less than three absences per staff (Grant et al., 1996).

These data are representative of the interests regarding looping classrooms by professional educators and administrators over the past eighteen years. There has been limited research focused on looping classrooms and there is a need for further research on this topic. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (2004), 21.4% of American public schools implemented looping in 2004-2005. Ozment (2005) reported that teachers were leaving the looping program due to high stakes assessments. The reason for leaving the looping program was due to learning two sets of grade level standards and the pressure of achieving annual progress due to No Child Left Behind. The United States Department of Education states that No Child Left Behind requires states to provide state academic achievement awards to schools that close achievement gaps between groups of students or that exceed academic achievement goals (2003). States may also use Title I funds to financially reward teachers in schools that receive academic achievement awards. In

addition, states must designate as distinguished schools those that have made the greatest gains in closing the achievement gap or in exceeding achievement goals (United States Department of Education, 2003).

A review of literature in regards to looping is presented throughout the dissertation along with a theory behind looping and the connection with Maslow's (1954) Hierarchy of Needs. Throughout the review of literature the history behind looping, examples of one-room schoolhouses, and international examples of looping classrooms are included. The review of literature presents the advantages and the disadvantages of looping. A looping system in the urban schools is provided along with leadership theory and recommendations for school officials examining the looping classroom.

Further, the need for additional research on looping as a placement option will add to the existing literature. Therefore, the research study will be conducted in a large urban school district located in the Southeastern part of the United States, which has implemented looping classrooms in phases since 2009. Data will be collected focusing on reading and math achievement in the looping classrooms and non-looping classrooms to determine if the there is a statistically significant difference in achievement in the looping classroom. Additionally, parent surveys will be distributed to the parents of the looping classroom and parents of the non-looping classroom to determine if there is a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of the looping classroom.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate and determine if looping is an effective placement technique to increase student achievement through analyzing data in the area of reading achievement scores and mathematics achievement scores using AIMSweb, which

assesses reading fluency, reading comprehension, and mathematics competency. Perception surveys were distributed to approximately 106 parents of students in the third grade looping classrooms and 120 parents of students in the third grade non-looping classrooms to determine if parents perceived the academic and affective experiences differently in the looping classroom compared to those parents of the non-looping classrooms. This quantitative study adds to the existing literature on looping classrooms. This study was completed to inform building administrators, teachers, and school administration if looping should be considered as a placement option to increase student achievement. This study also adds to existing literature since there is not a significant amount of research studies conducted on looping classrooms in kindergarten through third grade

The study took place in a large urban school district located in the Southeastern part of the United States. This large urban school district has 187 schools grades pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade with a population of 103, 593 students and 6, 991 teachers (Tennessee Department of Education, 2010). The student demographics are made up of five groups with African American students making up 85% of the student population. According to the report from the Tennessee Department of Education (2010), the white population is 7.1%, the Hispanic population is 6.5%, the Asian population is 1.3%, and the Native American is .1%. The selection was made based on the looping classrooms that were put into place in August 2009. Further demographics reveal 87.2% of the students served are economically disadvantaged. Since 2009, this large school district has added additional classrooms to the K-3 looping program. By August 2012, the school district's goal is to have a district wide K-3 looping program.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to explore the differences in parents' perceptions and the differences in reading and math achievement scores for third grade looping and non-looping classrooms throughout a sampling of classrooms in the school district. The overall research questions guiding this study were:

1. What are the parents perceptions of academic and affective experiences regarding parents of third grade looping classrooms compared to the parent perceptions regarding third grade non-looping classrooms?

2. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb reading achievement scores between students participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to students in the third grade non-looping classrooms?

3. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb reading achievement scores between boys participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to boys in the third grade non-looping classrooms?

4. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb reading achievement scores between girls participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to girls in the third grade non-looping classrooms?

5. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb mathematics achievement scores between students participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to students in the third grade non-looping classrooms?

6. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb mathematics achievement scores between boys participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to boys in the third grade non-looping classrooms?

7. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb mathematics achievement scores between girls participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to girls in the third grade non-looping classroom?

Research Hypotheses

H1. Parents of third grade students assigned to the third grade looping classrooms rated their students' academic and affective experiences significantly higher than parents of students in the third grade non-looping classrooms.

H2. Third grade students assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb reading achievement assessment than third grade students assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

H3. Third grade boys assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb reading achievement assessment than third grade boys assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

H4. Third grade girls assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb reading achievement assessment than third grade girls assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

H5. Third grade students assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb mathematics achievement assessment than third grade students assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

H6. Third grade boys assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb mathematics achievement assessment than third grade boys assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

H7. Third grade girls assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb mathematics achievement assessment than third grade girls assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

Gravetter and Wallnau (2005) defines statistical significance [significantly higher, significant] as a number that expresses the probability that the result of a given experiment or study could not have occurred purely by chance. For the purpose of this study, statistical significance was at the <.05 level.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

School teachers have many objectives to cover in a year's time and short-term relationships may not allow this to happen. Students are coming to school with home situations such as divorce, lack of parental support, and basic needs not met. Perhaps one way to increase the meaningful relationships students may be lacking is looping. Administrators and teachers at Fritsche Middle School in the Milwaukee Public Schools suggested looping in a document for the school's rationale in adopting block scheduling. Block scheduling along with looping allows for the teachers to work with the students for longer periods of time and the same group of students for two or more years. This placement option does not maintain the status quo. The middle school believes looping along with block scheduling benefits the students and teachers (http://www.middleweb.com/Fritsche1.html). Perhaps challenging the status quo is necessary to provide our students the opportunity to form relationships and open the door for academic achievement.

Looping classrooms is an approach to provide stability in the often unstable lives of children (Lincoln, 1997). Teachers who stay with the same group of students for more than one year are given more time for instruction, which allows the students to succeed (Rasmussen, 1998). Vann (1997) wrote, "For the many children coming to school from fragile homes, looping teachers provide familiar and welcome "significant others" in their lives, giving them a greater sense of security" (p. 52). The continuity of a looping classroom leads to many benefits for the students (Grant et al., 1996). The students enjoy school more

and in return students have fewer discipline concerns, higher attendance rate, higher academic achievement, and reduction in special education referrals (Grant et al., 1996).

Theory Behind Looping

"A review of Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs reveals a strong support for the practice of looping" (Little & Little, 2001, p. 11). The basic needs of some students that enter the classroom are not met at home or are only slightly fulfilled at home. For these children, the looping classroom may be beneficial because the teacher can compensate for what is lacking in the home. For instance, children whose needs for safety and security are not fulfilled in the home may have the needs for safety and security met in school. Little and Little state, "They may feel even more safe and secure in a classroom that is practicing looping because of the continuity, familiarity, and stability of their surroundings" (p. 11).

The looping classroom focuses on building relationships within a group that will interact for two or more years. According to Abraham Maslow's theory, once the individual has developed interaction with a group, a higher need begins to transpire (1954). Self-confidence begins to develop as the individual emerges as a leader in a certain area (Huitt). For some students, the self-confidence or esteem will be academics, athletics, social skills, behavior, or organizational skills. It does not matter where the proficiency lies as long as the proficiency is recognized and valued within the classroom (Little & Little, 2001). Some students may not develop self-confidence like the other students in the classroom.

When a looping teacher knows the classroom and the needs in the classroom behavior may positively increase. In the looping classroom, the teacher is able to straighten the behavior, before it becomes a problem (Little & Little, 2001). Little and Little wrote if the individual cannot fulfill the need for respect through positive actions; it is nearly unavoidable

that the child will resort to disruptive behaviors. The looping teacher knows the student and the strengths and weaknesses of the student. Little and Little (2001) wrote, "The looping teacher becomes a master at building the strength of the group by fostering the maturation and development of each individual" (p. 12).

History of the Looping Classroom

Looping dates back to the early 1900's in Germany where an Australian educator, named Rudolf Steiner, founded the Waldorf Schools. The Waldorf Schools educated the children whose parents worked in cigarette factories in Stuttgart, Germany just after World War I. In the Waldorf Schools, the children stayed with the same teacher for the first through eighth grades (Mays & Nordwall, 2006).

In 2004, there were about 870 Waldorf schools in 60 countries with approximately 150 of the Waldorf schools functioning in North America (Mays & Nordwall, 2006). The Waldorf movement has been one of the fastest growing independent school movements in the world (Mays & Nordwall, 2006). Waldorf education focused on the whole child and based on the understanding of human development that addresses the needs of the growing child. During the primary school years, the students have a teacher who stays with the same class for the first eight years of their schooling (Mays & Nordwall, 2006). The students and teacher come to know each other very well. By having the students for this timeframe, the teacher is able to find the best ways of helping individual children in their schooling. The teacher also becomes like an additional family member for most of the families in the classroom. Steiner felt that the teacher should follow the students throughout the elementary grades much like a “third parent” (1972). Rudolf Steiner, speaking in Oxford in 1922, defined three golden rules for teachers which are to receive the child in grace from the world

it comes from; to educate the child with affection; and to lead the child into the true liberty which belongs to man.

Dr. Maria Montessori is known for Montessori Education, which is a method of observing and supporting the natural development of children. In January 1907, Montessori began her career as an educator working with a group of fifty children aged three-to-five. (Montessori, 1964). Montessori identified stages of growth called Planes of Development that occur in approximately six-year intervals and that are further subdivided into two three-year segments (1964). These planes of development are the basis for the three-year age groupings found in Montessori schools: ages 3 to 6, ages 6 to 9, ages 9 to 12, and ages 12 to 18 (1964). Montessori education still exists in other countries and in the United States. In essence, the Montessori Method is a form of looping and multi-age education. North America Montessori Teacher's Association website estimates that there are about 4,000 Montessori schools in the United States and about 7,000 worldwide. Approximately 200 public schools in the United States and Canada offer Montessori programs. As written in 1917 in *Spontaneous Activity in Education,* Montessori stated, "Our care of the child should be governed, not be the desire to make him learn things, but by the endeavor to always keep burning within him that light which is called intelligence" (http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/24727).

For more than fifty years, African-Americans attended Kent County's one-room Worton Point Colored School No. 2. Even though it did not have plumbing or running water, former students state it was the best education they received (Zajac, 2010). One room school houses were a fundamental part of the African-American educational experience on the Eastern Shore in the late nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century (Zajac,

2010). In 1927, records show that there were sixteen colored public schools in Kent County (Zajac, 2010). Worton Point School served grades 1-6 and students then attended the all-black Garnett High School in Chestertown. School days for these students at Kent County had a consistent routine. They recited the Lord's Prayer and also recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Discipline was instilled from the beginning. Punishments would range from being hit with a stick that the students would obtain themselves (Zajac, 2010). What was most clear about the conversations with former students is that in the "era of segregation, this closed, intimate, community of the classroom was a boon, rather than a burden" (Zajac 2010, p. 2).

When the students from Worton Point moved to Garnett High School, the students shared that it was nice to go to school where there was running water and indoor bathroom. However, it meant larger class sizes and less attention from the teachers. Airlee Johnson, a former student from Worton Point, as cited in the article written by Zajac (2010), states, "When I see other classmates that were here, it's like [seeing] an old family member…..It's like our own little private school—with a lot of love" (p. 3).

Historically in 1896, the *Plessy v. Ferguson*, Supreme Courts ruled separate but equal schools. The assumption was that public facilities would be separate but equal on all counts. In education, it was common practice to have separate schools for African Americans, Mexican Americans, and Caucasian Americans (Regua, 2007). Regua (2007) writes, "The *Mendez v. Westminster School District* case (1947) was a monumental step forward to end segregation of Mexican American school children in California" (para 1).

At the turn of the century, Mexican American children were separated from Anglos in the Southwest and segregated into Mexican schools. The Mexican schools were typically

"shacks or barns rather than equal institutional structures to that of Anglo schools" (Regua, 2007, para 2). Regua (2007) also states that the Mexican schools were unequal and often had text books that were damaged from the Anglo schools.

Examples of One-Room Schoolhouses Existing in the United States

The concept of looping dates back to the one-room schoolhouse where teachers and students progressed together for several years. Locating where the one room school houses existed in the United States was a challenge. There are two prime examples of one-room school houses located in the United States. In South Egremont, Maryland, a one- room schoolhouse exists. The schoolhouse has one teacher and a paraprofessional. The students are in grades kindergarten through first. The multi-age Kindergarten/Grade 1 in South Egremont, Maryland aims to provide an environment "which recognizes the uniqueness of each child, stimulates the fullest development of a child's potential and encourages pride in achievement. "Students are helped to acquire skills needed to become purposeful and effective members of this ever changing society and to understand the scope of their responsibilities" (www.sbrsd.org/southegremont.html, 2008).

In Pine, Idaho, a head teacher instructs kindergarten through eighth grade. The teacher, De'Borah Snoderly, wrote in the welcoming message on the school's webpage for the 2008-2009 school year, "Your child's school success is highly dependent upon the relationship that exists between parent, teacher, and child. On-going collaboration between the home and school is essential to both your child's academic and social success" (http://www.mtnhomesd.org/pine/welcome_message.htm, para 3).

A nineteenth century school that served Prince William County's African American population, reopened February 2008 in honor of Black History of Month (Buske, 2009). This one room school was the only one in the country side for African Americans (Buske, 2009). The school was built in 1885 and served children grades first through sixth until 1926 (Buske, 2009). Robert Orrison, the historical site manager, for the county stated the school had a single instructor to serve twenty to twenty-five students each year (Buske, 2009). Orrison also stated that the school was filled with benches and no desks and chalkboards were made of plywood and painted black (Buske, 2009). This school reopened for tours and lessons to the public to provide a piece of history for the community.

International Examples of Looping Classrooms

The practice of keeping students together for more than one year in North American schools happens infrequently and therefore, is still considered innovative (Hume, 1997). However, several examples exist internationally. Students in Waldorf schools stay with the same teacher for eight years. Preschoolers in Italy stay with the same teacher for three years. In some German schools, teachers have students in the same classroom for as long as six (Hume). Looping structures exist in Israel, Sweden, China, and Jamaica (Pecanic, 2003).

In German schools, the multi-year method allows teachers to become familiar with the students' prior knowledge, learning styles, behavior and interests (Pecancic, 2003). Heterogeneous groups are formed in first grade and the students remain together for at least four years (Pecanic). Pecanic stated, German educators believe that this type of classroom structure "facilitates the social construction of knowledge" (p. 2). "Long-term relationships result in an emotional and intellectual climate that encourages thinking, risk taking, and involvement" (Zahorik & Dichanz, 1994, p. 75).

Another form of looping found in Germany is the West- German Koln-Holweide Education System. This system implements a "Team-Small-Group-Plan" in which 85-90 students are instructed by a team of six to eight teachers for six years (Huse, 1995). This structure has been around since 1968. The Koln-Holweide school has a representative mix of socioeconomic backgrounds and a minority population of one-third Turkish students, 60 percent of its students scored well enough on exams to be admitted to a four- year college, compared to the national average of 27 percent (Ratzki 1988; Ratzki & Fisher, 1990). Only one percent of the students drop out, compared to the national average of sixteen percent; there is virtually no truancy, teacher absenteeism, and only minor discipline problems (Ratzki,1998; Ratzki & Fisher, 1990)

In some Asian countries, elementary teachers stay with their classes for two or more years (Liu, 1997). Public school teachers in Japan earn high societal respect and relatively high salaries, but the teachers also work twelve-hour days (Schwartz, 2007). Japanese teachers serve as role models and guidance counselors for their students; the teachers communicate with students and families inside and outside school. To help preserve these trusting relationships, teachers often "loop" with students for the junior and senior high school years (Schwartz, 2007). The same group of high school students may have the same instructor for algebra, geometry and other advanced mathematic courses (Nichols & Nichols, 2002). According to the Japanese educational philosophy, the relationship between student and teacher is more important for placement decisions than the specialization of the teacher in one grade or topic (Schwartz, 2007).

Schools in a number of countries utilize this approach to instruction. In Italy, preschools are organized so the children and teachers remain together for three years, and

parents are highly encouraged to be actively involved in the child's education (Reynolds, Barnhart, & Martin, 1999). Jamaican elementary schools are organized into divisions and the students remain with the same teacher and group of students throughout the elementary school years (Wynne & Walberg, 1994). In China, the bonding from students to other students and teachers to students are enhanced because of the structure of the school system (Liu, 1997). In the Chinese schools, the students are divided into groups at the beginning of first grade and stay together until sixth grade and the same grouping is executed in junior high and high school (Liu). "Years of learning together help students form lasting relationships with many of their classmates" (Liu, para 3).

Advantages of Looping

Much of the literature available on looping indicated that stability, persistence, and intimacy are the supporting characteristics of looping classrooms (Rasmussen, 1998; Wynne & Walberg, 1994). Students involved in a looping classroom setting have positive attitudes about learning (Little & Dacus, 1998). The students display higher academic achievement gains than non-looping students (Liu, 1997).

In addition, the looping teacher has the opportunity to form closer relationships with the students' parents over the years (Rasmussen, 1998). "The trusting relationship developed between parent and teacher makes it possible for both to reflect on growth and change over a greater time period and to discuss and direct long-range goals for their children" (Nichols & Nichols, 2002, p. 19). These authors found the structure of multi-year teaching provides an avenue by which the parents and students have a sense of belonging.

Some studies indicated that parental involvement in the child's education increases in a looping classroom (Horton, 2005). Teachers and parents at Langly Park-McCormick

Elementary School in Hyattsville, Maryland made written agreements to "formalize the active role each participant has in the child's global performance…home visits are an integral part of our program" (Kelly, Brown, Butler, Pelah, Taylor, & Zeller, 1998). Looping is regarded as an instrument toward achieving the goal of increasing the bond between school and parents (Horton).

Tolland Middle School in Connecticut surveyed parents following a looping program. Fourteen out of eighteen parents suggested that the looping program contributed to enhance parent and teacher communication (Lincoln, 2000). Seventeen of the nineteen parents indicated recommending the looping program to other parents (Lincoln, 2000). At Sierra Elementary School in Placer County, parents were randomly selected whose children were part of the looping program. Parents were then asked to rate the overall effectiveness of the looping program using a Likert-type scale from zero to six (Elliot & Capp, 2003). Elliot and Capp reported the results yielded a mean of 5.783. Elliot and Capp (2003) stated:

Several of the parents marking a "6" and whose children were in the second year of a loop or completing a second looping experience said that they held quiet reservations in the first year, but had now found the looping design to be better than anything they had ever experienced in terms of maximizing learning outcomes (p. 36).

The results from a 455 parent survey in a study completed by Nichols and Nichols (2002) indicated parents of multi-year classrooms had "significantly more positive attitudes toward their child's teacher and school and had more positive perceptions of their child's behavior at school than did parents of children with non-looping and first year looping backgrounds" (Nichols & Nichols, p. 21). The survey results indicated that parents of female students responded more favorably than did the parents of male students. The research did

not show significant differences of single parent homes and non-single parent homes. Analysis of variance results indicated no significant differences relating to socio-economic status of multi-year looping and non-looping. The results of Nichols' and Nichols' study indicated that a student remaining with the same teacher and group of students may have several outcomes which are positive for both the students and the teacher.

At a university child care center in the southeast, the practice of looping was implemented (Hedge & Cassidy, 2004). This qualitative study focused on interviews with parents and teachers. Nine themes were addressed when conducting the interviews. The interviews were conducted at the facility in a closed room to ensure confidentiality of parent responses. The results indicated that there were advantages of looping (Hedge & Cassidy, 2004). There was stability of care, easier transition, children's needs were anticipated, and parent friendships were increased (Hedge & Cassidy, 2004).

In a survey of teachers in Attleboro, Massachusetts, where looping was implemented, teachers concurred that the children were less anxious about beginning a new school year (Hanson, 1995). "Multi-year assignment is increasingly vital to the countless children whose lives are riddled with change- change of residence, change in family structure, change of economic status" (p. 43). Hanson reported that the children benefited from having a teacher as a "role model, mentor, and friend" (p. 43). The looping project appeared to be a support system for children who come from challenging home environments.

In an action research project completed in 2000, Alex Shneyderman from the Miami-Dade County Public Schools, indicated advantages of the multi-year teaching assignment. In 1999-2000, looping was used as a form of placement in the twenty-six elementary schools within Miami-Dade County Public Schools (Shneyderman, 2000). A study was conducted to

investigate the benefits and disadvantages of looping in Miami-Dade, Florida. The Looping and Matching Sample for two groups of 612 students in the second through fifth grades were compared (Shneyderman, 2000). Students in the Looping Sample were a part of the looping classroom during 1998-1999 and 1999-2000. Students in the Matching Sample were placed in a traditional classroom setting. Eighteen principals and sixty teachers that were involved in the looping project were surveyed. Alex Shneyderman had four evaluation questions guiding the action research:

- Does the participation in looping increase student academic achievement?
- Does participation in looping improve student attendance?
- Does participation in looping decrease student retention?
- How do principals and teachers perceive the practice of looping?

Students in the Looping Sample performed "significantly higher on reading comprehension and mathematics applications of the 2000 Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) than did students in the Matching Sample" (Shneyderman, 2000, p. 2-3). Students in the Looping Sample also performed at a high academic level in reading and mathematics across all grade levels represented in the two student groups (Shneyderman, 2000). Shneyderman wrote, "These findings indicate that looping improves student achievement" (para 3).

In Shneyderman's action research, the attendance rate of the Looping Sample increased between 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 while the student of the Matching Sample increased the number of days absent during 1998-1999 and 1999-2000. The Looping Sample decreased the number of days absent between one or two days. Shneyderman aptly states, "This finding appears to indicate that looping has a positive effect on student attendance"

(2000, para 4). Shneyderman's study (2000) also indicated that the Looping Sample had lower retention numbers. One student in grade two and one student in grade four were retained for the 1999-2000 school year. The Matching Sample had five students retained in grade two and two students retained in grade four. "This result suggests that looping reduces student retention" (para 5). The majority of the people involved in the action research who were surveyed indicated that looping did improve the relationship between teachers and students (Shneyderman, 2000). The respondents acknowledged that looping provided more time for the students who struggled with basic skills, increased instructional time, and raised the overall success of classroom instruction. Shneyderman (2000) recommended to continue the practice of looping in elementary schools and to consider expanding the practice of looping in the Miami-Dade County School District.

Quantitative data are limited where there was evidence of increased academic achievement when implementing a looping program. Tolland Middle School did report an increased average, especially in math, on the Connecticut Mastery Test (Lincoln, 2000). As reported in Lincoln's study, sixty percent of students responded positively to the multi-year placement. In another study at Langley Park-McCormick, students show empathy and respect for one another and social growth increased as a result of the looping structure (Kelly et al., 1998).

In Jane Skinner's dissertation (1998) on looping versus non-looping of the second grade, a parent of a disabled student was appreciative of the looping program because other parents and students were supportive of having children in special education in the classroom. Another parent indicated her daughter had a problem in math but the child's teacher helped her daughter overcome that problem because of the looping classroom.

Skinner's study (1998) also indicated a significant difference in reading achievement on the Missouri Mastery Achievement Test (MMAT). The 36 looped students had a standard deviation of 76.31 and a mean score of 389.52 on the language arts section of the MMAT. The 35 non-looped students had a standard deviation of 64.76 and a mean of 328.80 on the language arts section of the MMAT. These scores indicated a significant positive impact advantage of looping on students' academic achievement.

Jankoski (1996) evaluated the effectiveness of looping in as perceived by the students using a small sample size. Jankoski's study was limited to three classes; two within the same school, and the third in a second school. The Basic Self-Report of Personality – C (BASC), a parent questionnaire, and interview was implemented for the Jankoski's study. The results of this study indicated the majority of those involved in the looping program agreed that the looping program was effective in regards to providing a secure learning environment. This secure environment promoted cognitive development and social development. In Jankoski's study, 100% of the respondents in fourth and fifth grade expressed favorable attitudes toward the school and the teacher (1996).

In McIntyre's (2000) study, parents were given a seventeen item survey based on having the same teacher for two simultaneous years. A total of 101 out of 115 parents returned the survey. In the study, 98% of the parents agreed with the statement, "This has been a positive experience for my child" (p. 60). In addition, 95% of the parents agreed that their children liked being with the same teacher for two years. A positive response of 95% of the parents agreed their child had made continuous progress over the past two years. Overall, the parents in this study perceived looping as positive experience for their children.

Bellis (1999) listed opportunities of the looping classroom.

- Looping provides "freedom to expand the curriculum vertically and horizontally" over the two year time frame.
- The teacher is able to observe each child's progress and monitor each child's progress over the two year period.
- A teacher's "familiarity" with the children "contributes to fostering a family-like atmosphere in the classroom.
- Teachers can begin the curriculum earlier in the year because the children know the expectations of the teacher.
- Looping allows for more individualized instruction because the teacher is more familiar with each child's strengths and weaknesses.
- Looping provides stability in a child's life.
- By changing grade levels each year, looping allows the teacher an opportunity for professional growth and development because of the change of curriculum. (p. 72)

Forsten, Grant and Richardson (1999) asserted that a core benefit of a multi-year teaching assignment is the power to be able to teach to the students' strengths, while looping back to help their weaknesses. Grant et al. (1996) aptly state, "Sometimes you can only work so long on a topic before you realize that a certain child has had enough, and if you push it, you're going to lose him. With looping you have time to go on to other things, and then loop back and address the child's needs later" (p. 27).

Disadvantages of Looping

In a study at the Fort Wayne Indiana Community School (FWCS) in 1997, results did indicate disadvantages to looping. Teachers reported that "looping was demanding" (Simel, 1998, p. 334). Teachers must always find new ways to motivate and encourage students while preserving the positive facets of a looping classroom. In Simel's report, one teacher summarized the challenge this way, " I'm the type of teacher that I always want them (students) to be thrilled, excited, enjoy what I'm doing…I put a lot of pressure on myself to make sure that they were happy and they were excited to come. That was hard!" (p. 334).

Another teacher reported she was tired and that the "extra burden is on you" (p. 334). The burdens are an implication of the lack of teacher experience.

A looping teacher can use the same materials for a limited time each year to get the students started, but eventually different materials will need to be used in the classroom. A new teacher would have a difficult time looping the first few years because new teachers typically do not have the resources veteran teachers have access to during the day. The looping design requires strong administrative support from principals who are dedicated to the concept of multi-year teaching (Forsten et al., 1999).

Teachers in Simel's report indicated that the looping experience could be enhanced by the giving of funds for additional supplies such as textbooks and classroom decorations for two grade levels. Teachers also indicated the need for professional development on looping classrooms (Simel, 1998). “A provision for extra planning time due to the extra work involved in maintaining a looped classroom” was also suggested by the teachers in Simel’s findings (p. 336). In addition to the extra work time put on the teachers, Simel (1998) conveyed some students had difficulty leaving the looping classroom and transitioning to another classroom the following year. The teachers of the looping classroom also testified to having difficulty when students left the looping structure. Simel appropriately stated that teachers anticipated or had "experienced a deep sense of loss" when the students went to a new grade level (p. 335).

Hanson (1995) pertinently stated that looping does not come without imperfections. Teachers surveyed in Attleboro, Massachusetts "warned that the particular makeup of the class might adversely affect the group's potential to learn" (p. 43). Teachers need to be sensitive to the needs of new students that enter the looping classroom. The teachers in

Attleboro also expressed feelings of anxiety and the huge responsibility of student performance in terms of standardized assessments. Teachers also documented in the survey that it becomes difficult to leave at the end of the looping school year.

Parents may express "fear of their child being locked in for two years with in an ineffective teacher" (Hitz et al., 2007, p. 84). Another potential problem of the looping classroom could be a teacher and child personality conflict (Hitz et al., 2007). A child may not get along with another child and a teacher may not get along with the child. School administrators need to have procedures in place if these concerns develop in the looping classroom (Hitz et al., 2007; McCown, & Sherman, 2002). Additional studies suggested that looping or multi-age placement should be an option for all involved (Delviscio & Muffs, 2007).

A study completed by Murphy (2002) indicated the results did not show significant gains on either the Iowa Test of Basic Skills achievement test or on the Culture-Free Self Esteem Inventories Second Edition. The purpose of this looping classroom was to provide a stable classroom environment that would enhance and advance the academic and emotional development of students (p. 51).

Murphy (2002) used the statistical technique referred to as multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). An alpha level of.05 was used for all statistical tests. The MANOVA allows the researcher to evaluate the mean difference on two or more dependent criterion variables simultaneously (p. 49). If this test indicates a significant difference then a follow-up test is given. For this study, MANOVA results of Λ (2, 43) =.967, F = .724, p = < .49 revealed there was no significant difference in academic achievement or in academic self-esteem for students who looped or did not loop (p. 50). Statistical analysis did not support

Murphy's (2002) hypothesis that second grade students who participated in a looping program in kindergarten and first grade would score higher in the Iowa Test of Basic Skills than second graders who did not loop in first grade.

Murphy' findings indicated the non-looping student did slightly better on the measurement than the looping group students although it was not statistically significant. Murphy (2002) explains,

> The fact that the study conducted for this research project did not show significant gains for the experimental group on the criterion variables of academic achievement and academic self-esteem may have been due to several of these variables that were uncontrolled in the classroom setting. Further research may help to determine whether there are variables that are significantly affected by the organizational pattern of looping with young students (p. 62).

Summary of Major Premises

Since the early 1900s, looping has been an effective form of classroom placement. Looping has been implemented in several countries including Italy, China, Germany, Japan, Jamaica, and the United States. However, a common form of placement in the United States is moving the child to a different teacher each year.

The review of literature indicated that looping was a beneficial technique as a form of classroom placement (Burke, 1999; Lincoln, 1997; Swanson, 1999). Multi-year teaching has many benefits, which include:

- Increased instructional time at the beginning of the second year of the looping classroom
- Increased knowledge of the students' individual learning needs
- Long-term student-teacher relationships
- Increased parent support
- Decrease in behavior problems
- Decrease in special education referrals
- Increase in attendance rate
- Increase in achievement scores

The benefits of looping contribute to a students' academic and social success (Swanson, 1999). As Swanson properly wrote, "Creating a stable learning environment which increases instructional time allows students to gain academic achievements at their own pace" (p. 20).

Before implementing looping, administrators and teachers need to research the topic. Negative aspects of looping may occur, which include:

- Personality clash between teacher and student or between teacher and parent
- The make-up of the class may adversely affect the potential for learning to take place
- A weak teacher may teach the same class for two or more years
- A teacher may overlook a significant learning problem and not refer to the special education team
- A new student may feel like and outsider and not welcomed to the class
- The teacher, students, and/or parents may experience separation at the end of the looping cycle. (Swanson, 1999)

Checkley (1995) wrote, "Still despite the apparent longevity and prevalence of multi-year programs in public education, there is not significant data to support what any educators contend: That multi-year teaching programs have a profound impact both socially and instructionally" (p. 3). Hanson (1995) found that the lack of documentation about an effective teaching strategy has hindered its implementation because little long-term research existed to support findings of probable advantages.

Urban Leadership and Looping

Much of the looping research provided evidence that looping is an effective classroom placement to increase academic achievement. Research also indicated that looping is an effective placement for student and teacher relationships and parent and teacher relationships. Research also provided evidence that looping does not necessarily increase academic achievement. As Murphy (2002) wrote, "Much of the literature discusses the

advantages of looping and mentions strengthened relationships as major keys to success in looping programs" (p. 67). The teacher and student relationships are the primary focus of these discussions, but also mentioned is the parent-teacher relationship and the parent-school relationship.

Although many variables could account for the increased achievement scores in the looping classrooms, a positive aspect of looping classrooms is the extra time a teacher has to focus on instruction and learning (Mazzuchi & Brooks, 1992). At the beginning of the second year, the looping teacher has already established structures with the students. Behavior management is predictable, classroom procedures are in place, and instructional expectations are established. According to Swanson (1999), the additional instructional time allows the teacher to provide a challenging curriculum, as the teacher does not need to review the basic facts and establish a common knowledge at the beginning of the second year together. According to Rasmussen (1998), the teacher can immediately teach curricular topics. The bond created with parents and students during the first year also increases instructional time as all three groups work collaboratively to enhance learning and academic achievement (Grant et al., 1996).

A Looping System in Urban Schools

Perhaps looping classrooms in the urban schools would benefit the students and the entire school community since much of the literature states that looping increases student and parent relationships. Marshall and Olivia (2010) state, "Educational leaders should look at whether their schools are structured in such ways as to reflect and replicate the social stratification that exists in the broader society" (p. 56). Administrators in the urban settings

should consider looping as it builds those critical relationships with students and parents the first year and the second year those relationships are already in place.

McDermott and Rothenberg (2000) wrote that it is widely known that low-income urban parents are hesitant to be involved in their children's education. McDermott and Rothenberg stated:

> Social relationships are what drive parents' perceptions of their children's school. There are already so many social barriers between the school and the families due to differences in skin color, ethnicity, culture, and language that the parents are highly sensitive to whether teachers respect their children. (p. 10)

McDermott and Rothenberg (2000) also stated that urban parents are more likely to participate in school activities when they feel they are respected. One method that McDermott and Rothenberg (2000) suggest is the use of looping.

In Chicago, Illinois at Erie Elementary Charter School (EECS), the school does implement the classroom placement of looping. At EECS, the staff believes that, "Keeping students and teachers together creates more meaningful relationships and contributes to a sense of comfort in the classroom, which ultimately has a positive impact on student achievement" (http://eriecharterschool.org/curriculum).

Genesee Charter School in Rochester, New York is another example of how the staff loops with the classrooms. There are thirty to thirty-two students in each grade with two teachers and a teacher assistant. The teachers loop with the students to build strong classroom cultures, instructional stability, and the teacher to student relationships. (http://www.gccschool.org/classrooms).

In a document titled *In the Loop* by Grant, Richardson, and Forsten, Texas educator Ruby Payne, noted for her work with students of poverty, stressed the importance of teachers

and administrators as role models (2000). Ruby Payne recommends that "schools establish schedules and instructional arrangements that allow students to stay with the same teachers for three or more years" (2005).

Grant, Richardson, and Forsten (2000), also state that looping has potential for positive outcomes to happen. Looping does not create the positive outcomes. What the teacher does with the time spent with children create the positive outcomes. Grant, et al., (2000) also appropriately wrote:

> In addition to expanding student/teacher relationships, a teacher who keeps his or her students for a second year will extend relationships with the students' families. The parents of some students have had negative school experiences and are reluctant who participate in school activities and engage their child's teacher. Looping enables reluctant parents to participate in school activities with a consistent school contact, and it allows the teacher two full years to engage families and help them support their children and their education (p. 3).

Grant, et al. (2000) support looping but emphasize the importance of an effective teacher. An effective teacher and support from the administrators is necessary for looping to be effective. James P. Comer (1995), who runs the School Development Program at Yale University as cited in Grant et al. (2000) aptly, writes:

> No significant learning occurs without a significant relationship. One of the core beliefs of the School Development Program, which has succeeded with inner-city and at-risk youth, is that children's most meaningful learning occurs through positive and supportive relationships with caring and nurturing adults (p. 2).

In Memphis City Schools, the school leaders sent home a newsletter in October of 2009 to all the parents who had students in looping classrooms. The newsletter listed the

expected outcomes of the looping classrooms (2009). The expected outcomes are:

- Builds strong relationships between parent, teacher, and student
- Less time spent on rules, procedures, and relationships building results in increase instructional time during year two
- Increased teacher awareness of students' academic and social strengths and needs
- Summer enrichment activities (i.e. reading list)
- Reduced apprehension for year two
- Builds on previous year's learning
- Improved attendance for teachers and students
- Decreased disciplinary referrals
- Increased academic achievement

The sixteen schools in the Memphis City School system that loop are involved in Responsive Classroom practices. The practices are:

- Morning meetings
- Rule Creation (with students' input)
- Interactive modeling (by teachers)
- Positive Teacher Language
- Logical consequences
- Classroom organization
- Guided discovery
- Academic Choice
- Working with families
- Collaborative problem solving

In the sixteen schools, parent involvement is a core component. The administration and teachers expect to involve parents to support the children in the educational process. As cited in the Memphis newsletter (2009), Jubert states, "The greatest benefits of looping include the close knit family and the additional month of learning at the beginning of year two" (p. 2).

According to the National Middle School Association (NMSA), there are three advantages of looping (2009). These can be categorized into three categories:

- Time
- Relationships
- Student Support and Engagement

The sense of community and belonging during the looping years enables teachers, students, and the family to engage in the learning process (NMSA). Cooper (2009) affirmed that students need school leaders who are "prepared to be cultural change agents- educators are armed with the knowledge, strategies, support, and courage to make curriculum instruction, student engagement, and family partnerships culturally responsive" (p. 695). Looping in schools where the need is higher may be a way leaders in the schools can build culturally responsive schools. This placement method of looping students allows the teachers to meet the basic needs of the children and build strong relationships and build a sense of trust with family members.

Summary

The review of literature indicated looping has a positive impact on the social and emotional aspects of the learning environment. Perhaps one contributing factor in having looping classrooms in the urban setting would be the extra time the teacher has to spend with the children. This would support Mazzuchi and Brooks (1992) who noted one of the most positive aspects of the looping classroom is the extra time the teacher has to focus on instruction and learning. The looping teacher already has formed relationships with the students and gains extra instructional time at the beginning of the school year. The looping

teacher can begin instruction immediately because routines and expectations have been established (Rasmussen, 1998).

Leadership Theory and Recommendations

As Cooper, Allen, and Bettez (2009) affirmed, students need school leaders who are prepared to be culturally responsive. This is supported by the reading in the *Jossey-Bass Reader on Educational Leadership* in the section focused on understanding change. Fullan (2007) points out, structure does make a difference, but it is not the main factor in achievement. The main objective is transforming the culture. Transforming culture is reculturing the current system. If school leaders are addressing what is in the best interest of students in regards to relationships, then looping is one way of addressing the relationships between the students and the teacher. In the *Educational Leadership* text, Goleman (2000) wrote one leadership style is affiliative or putting people first. Looping classrooms does put the best interest on the people. The students are thought of first and like the schools in Memphis, looping can create a family community.

When considering looping as a way of fostering relationships among students and staff, the leader needs to be trustworthy leader. Looping classrooms is not just something a teacher will do; there will need to be collaborative conversations with the looping teachers. As Tschannen-Moran (2004) believes, school leaders need to build trust with teachers. Tschannen-Moran (2004) avows, "Caring fuels the enormous effort needed to sustain a positive school environment" (p. 4). As teachers participate there can be some level of stress as indicated in the review of literature. For instance, teachers will be expected to know two grade level standards and objectives. Teachers need trust to cope with stress on the changing expectations (Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

Trust not only needs to be with the leaders and the teachers in the building, but also with the students and parents. Looping allows for bonds to be created with the students and parents. Meier (2002) wrote that students need trust to engage productively with the learning environment at school. Schools also need the trust of parents. In the *Educational Leadership* text, Tschannen-Moran believes in order to foster relationships, schools need the parents to be active in the education process (2007).

This research on looping classrooms and perhaps as a way of placing students in the urban school setting has left many implications for teachers, administrators, and school officials. As stated previously, administrators and school officials need to consider the effects of the looping classroom. Davies (2009) lists several ideas to focus on learning centered leadership such as examining data about student learning and use it for planning, collaborate with others to set goals for the learning environment, and share learning with others. The recommendations for school leaders support the ideas of the Davies' text are as follows:

1. School leaders need to examine the academic and social impact for all students who participate in a looping classroom.

2. If current looping classrooms are in school districts, school leaders need to analyze the data compared to non-looping classrooms to determine if the effects of a looping classroom have a positive impact on student achievement.

3. Administrators and school officials must be committed to providing professional development on looping classrooms focusing on instructional strategies, assessment, child development, grade level standards and expectations for the two grade levels, and student relationships.

4. Administrators and school officials need to provide release time for looping teachers to collaborate with one another to discuss concerns and strategies for the looping classroom.

5. With the focus on student achievement due to high stakes assessments and the importance of positive relationships, administrators need to make decisions that are in the best interest of the student learners.

Looping teachers must realize positive relationships are essential and meeting the emotional needs of the child is essential, but the achievement success of a child is important to prepare the child to become a lifelong learner, as well. Teachers who are considering looping should read literature about the advantages and disadvantages of looping. There are some unexpected outcomes involved in looping that a teacher must consider. The following are some unexpected outcomes:

- The teacher must know two curriculums and grade level standards
- Some students may not benefit from the looping classroom because of a personality conflict/clash
- Students may get too comfortable and behavior concerns may arise the second year
- Some states may have certification requirements to teach another grade level and additional certification may be required
- Separation anxiety may occur after two years of teaching with the same group of students
- High stakes testing in certain grade levels may create a sense of pressure

In summary, administrators need to be involved in the looping classroom and support the classroom placement option. Administrators must analyze the achievement data and make necessary changes when needed to meet the needs of the children. When considering any placement option for children, educators should read literature and investigate if the option has a positive effect on meeting the needs of the students. Ongoing evaluation and improvements are key to success. Checkley (1995) wrote, "Some educators are already convinced that looping can make a positive impact with or without the conclusive data" (p. 5). For looping to be successful, further research is needed to determine the academic

effects of the looping classroom. However, as a means of establishing critical relationships, it may be worth trying the placement method in urban schools.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Public education should ideally provide a solid foundation for students to prosper and become productive, contributive members of society (Swanson, 1999). For this to occur, students need to develop competency in many areas: reading, writing, math, technology, and social interaction. Unfortunately, some students do not meet the basic standards in core academic subjects while others are not able to read at grade level, write comprehensibly, or solve basic math problems (Swanson, 1999). Many factors may influence the academic success of students including parental involvement in school, instructional strategies, and student accountability. The public school system is responsible for educating the vast majority of the children in the United States and must improve to meet the ever changing needs of the students entering schools (Swanson, 1999). Educators must find innovative techniques that raise students' academic achievement and support successful learning. One such technique is concept of looping, a placement method where students remain with the same teacher for at least two or three years.

Statement of the Problem

Burke (1999) pointed out that research on school effectiveness suggests that student performance is improved by the long-term relationship between teacher and student.

However, the need for more looping data is essential as Nichols and Nichols (2002) appropriately state:

> The majority of these earlier explorations have been limited to qualitative and case study reports. Although these results are important to the educational research community, guarded support of looping should be noted due to the lack of solid empirical evidence for the majority of studies that have focused on looping classroom environments. (p. 19)

Therefore, this study on the effects of the looping classroom will add to the quantitative research and add to the empirical evidence.

Purpose of the Study

Quantitative research is synonymous with the positivist research. Trochim (2006) states, "The positivist believed in *empiricism* -- the idea that observation and measurement was the core of the scientific endeavor. The key approach of the scientific method is the experiment, the attempt to discern natural laws through direct manipulation and observation" (para 4). Quantitative methodology as defined by Gall, Gall, and Borg (2007) is to illustrate the features that "the social environment constitutes an objective reality by collecting numerical data on observable behaviors of samples and by subjecting these data to statistical analysis" (p. 650). Further, quantitative researchers attempt to discover something about a large number of individuals by studying a smaller group (Gall et al., 2007). One way to draw a sample of individuals is to target the accessible population, which is typically in the same geographical location as the researcher. Another way is target a population, which is a group of individuals in a specific area which can "represent a large group scattered over a wide geographical area or a smaller group concentrated in a single area" (Gall et al., 2007, p. 167). When researchers conduct a quantitative research study, the goal is to determine the

relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable in a population (Hopkins, 2000). Additionally, quantitative studies can be either descriptive or experimental in nature. For the purpose of this study, the research is considered experimental because the researcher is using a control group (non-looping students) and the experimental group (the looping students).

The purpose of this study was to explore differences in parents' perceptions and in reading and math achievement scores for third grade looping and non-looping classrooms through a sampling of classrooms in the school district. The overall research questions guiding this study were:

1. What is the parent perceptions of academic and affective experiences regarding parents of third grade looping classrooms compared to the parent perceptions regarding third grade non-looping classrooms?

2. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb reading achievement scores between students participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to students in the third grade non-looping classrooms?

3. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb reading achievement scores between boys participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to boys in the third grade non-looping classrooms?

4. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb reading achievement scores between girls participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to girls in the third grade non-looping classrooms?

5. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb math achievement scores between students participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to students in the third grade non-looping classrooms?

6. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb math achievement scores between boys participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to boys in the third grade non-looping classrooms?

7. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb math achievement scores between girls participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to girls in the third grade non-looping classroom?

Research Hypotheses

H1. Parents of third grade students assigned to the third grade looping classrooms rated their students' academic and affective experiences significantly higher than parents of students in the third grade non-looping classrooms.

H2. Third grade students assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb reading achievement assessment than third grade students assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

H3. Third grade boys assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb reading achievement assessment than third grade boys assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

H4. Third grade girls assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb reading achievement assessment than third grade girls assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

H5. Third grade students assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb mathematics achievement assessment than third grade students assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

H6. Third grade boys assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb mathematics achievement assessment than third grade boys assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

H7. Third grade girls assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb mathematics achievement assessment than third grade girls assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

Furthermore, for each of the hypotheses, the statistical significance level is <.05. Gravetter and Wallnau (2005) defines statistical significance [significantly higher, significance] as a number that expresses the probability that the result of a given experiment or study could not have occurred purely by chance.

Site Selection

The large urban school district located in the Southeastern region has implemented a kindergarten through third grade looping classrooms in phases. In August 2009, the school district began a three year plan to ensure all schools will participate in the looping program. In 2009, sixteen elementary schools were looping. In the fall of 2010, twenty-four schools were added. In the fall of 2011, thirty-two schools were added and by 2012, all elementary schools will be added.

When looking at the demographic area of this large urban school district, this information was obtained from the school district located in the Southeastern region of the United States. This information was taken from the school district's webpage.

- The 23rd largest district in the nation
- Approximately 105,000 students in K-12.
- Student demographics – 86 percent African-American, 8 percent white and 6 percent other races/nationalities.
- The number of students served by ESL/ELL (English as a Second Language/English Language Learners) has more than doubled since the 2000-01 school year, going from 2,096 to 4,728 in 2006-07. Forty-two different languages are represented.
- Average class size is twenty in grades K–3, twenty-five in grades 4–6, and thirty in grades 7 through 12.

This school district was selected because it has a large number of schools that loop in what is called "K-3 in the Loop." This large urban school district has a high percentage of free and reduced lunch rates, which is approximately 75%. This school district was also

selected because of the large accessible population for both looping and non-looping classrooms. In addition, selection was made based on similar demographics, such as the high number of free and reduced lunch rate for both the looping and non-looping classrooms. Selection was also made because it was encouraged in the doctoral program at UMKC that the emphasis is on an urban area since the program has an emphasis in urban education.

Participants

The research data was gathered from a large urban school district located in Southeastern part of the United States to compare the reading achievement scores and the mathematics achievement scores from AIMSweb which included the third grade looping population in the sixteen schools that house looping classrooms and the third grade non-looping population of the sixteen schools with the looping classrooms. Permission to collect AIMSweb reading and mathematics achievement archived data for the 2009-2010 school year was approved by the research and assessment department in the school district. The permission to conduct and collect research is located in Appendix A. The research department in the school district provided the data in an Excel spreadsheet which included the sixteen schools, which housed looping classrooms in the school district. Further, permission to conduct research was obtained from the SSIRB through UMKC. The permission document is placed in Appendix F. To ensure the confidentiality of each student, the assessment results were coded by the research and assessment department of the school district.

In addition, 106 parents of students in the third grade looping classrooms and 120 parents of students in the third grade non-looping classroom were participants of the study.

The data was gathered to compare parent perceptions of the looping classrooms compared to the parent perceptions of the non-looping classroom. Permission was also obtained from the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) SSIRB to use the survey. The permission document is included in Appendix A, which is the original document with the amendment for changes in the study in Appendix B. Permission was obtained by the school district located in Southeastern part of the United States to distribute the survey to the parents. The permission document is located in Appendix C. The research proposal form from the school district is located in Appendix D. The researcher will work with research and assessment department in the school district to distribute the surveys to the teachers of the looping classrooms and non-looping classroom. Parents will be given an informed consent letter, which is located in Appendix E. Further, the parent survey cover letter is located in Appendix F. The parent survey is included in Appendix G. These documents are included to provide the necessary documentation in ensuring the researcher followed protocol to conduct a research study.

Data Collection

There were three sources of data as part of this research study. Two forms of data were derived from standardized assessments that were administered to all third grade students three times during the academic year. The standardized assessments used were AIMSWEB, which assesses reading comprehension and fluency, and mathematics concepts and applications. Perception of parents was gathered using a research based instrumentation method, a Likert scale (Trochem, 2006).

When considering the type of survey to gather parent perceptions and determine if the there are significant differences in perceptions of parents in the looping classroom compared to those parent perceptions in the non-looping classroom a Likert scale was used. A Likert

scale was selected because it is considered a measurement of attitude (Gall et al., 2007). A Likert scale asks "individuals to rate their level of agreement (e.g. strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, or strongly disagree) with various statements" (Gall et al., 2007). Further, an independent samples t-test was conducted when analyzing the parent perceptions of the looping classrooms and non-looping classrooms.

For this study, the classroom teachers were responsible for collecting the student achievement data. Since the assessments are part of the data collection process for the school district, there was no incentive offered. I was not asking the school district to collect additional data. In addition, parents of the students in the third grade looping classrooms and non-looping classrooms were used in this study. The parents were given an option to complete a parent survey in regards to their students' academic and affective experiences of the looping classroom and the non-looping classroom. The research and assessment department distributed surveys to the schools involved in the study and the teachers collected the consent forms and surveys by placing them in a sealed envelope to ensure confidentiality.

Measures

When analyzing reading and mathematics achievement in the school located in Tennessee, the AIMSweb reading and math assessments were used. AIMSweb is a web-based assessment and data management system targeted for Response to Intervention (RtI). The AIMSweb program, which is created The Assessment and Information group of Pearson received the received the highest possible rating in June of 2009 for predicative validity and reliability by the National Center on Response to Intervention (NCRTI). The president and general manager, Carol Watson, of Clinical Assessment North America stated, "NCRTI's independent rating is another proof point that AIMSweb is a leading RTI tool, providing

effective, valid and reliable assessments in early literacy, reading and math that can positively impact student achievement" (2009).

AIMSweb is considered a universal screening curriculum based measure (CBM), which assesses reading fluency and accuracy. There have been numerous studies on the validity of CBMs. In one study as cited in the AIMSweb Training Workbook written by Shinn and Shinn (2002), Good and Jefferson (1998) wrote that in CBM reading that multiple validity coefficients are available for each grade level. In reading CBMs, the validity coefficients are in the .60-.80 range, which supports the "construct validity" of reading CBMs (Good & Jefferson as cited in Shinn & Shinn, 2002).

Concerning the validity of math curriculum based measures (M-CBM), there is less known about the technical adequacy (Thurber, Shinn, & Smolkowlski, 2002). Marston (1989) stated that validity studies have focuses on concurrent validity. Messick (1990) claims that that there is some criterion-related evidence has been provided for math CBMs. Messick (1990) also stated that this is not sufficient. In the study conducted by Thurber et al., in the two factor model, "the median factor loading of M-CBM on the computation construct was .64 providing moderate evidence of its validity as a measure of mathematics computation" (p. 509). Skiba, Magnusson, Marston, and Erickson (1986) wrote that validity coefficients of math measures were improved when reading competence were included.

Permission to collect AIMSweb reading and mathematics achievement data for this research study using archived data from 2009-2012 school years for the fall, winter, and spring was obtained by the school in Tennessee by the research and assessment department. The permission to conduct and collect research is located in Appendix A. The research department in the school district provided the researcher with the data, which included the

sixteen elementary schools with third grade looping classrooms. The district filtered and coded the data from the sixteen schools by providing the students who looped and did not loop for the 2009-2010 school year. Permission was obtained from the SSIRB through UMKC. The permission document is placed in Appendix F. To ensure the confidentiality of each student, the assessment results were coded by the research and assessment department of the school district.

When surveying the parents of the looping classrooms and the parents of the non-looping classrooms, a Likert Scale (Trochim, 2006) was used to measure the parent perceptions in regards to the academic and affective experiences of the looping classrooms and the non-looping classrooms. A five- point type scale was used for this study on the effects of looping because of its value and reputation of the survey research (Trochim, 2006). When responding to the survey, parents will respond to items identifying their level of agreement: strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree, and unsure. The survey questions are as follows:

1. My child looks forward to coming to school each day.
2. My child has improved in the area of reading this school year.
3. My child has improved in the area of math this school year.
4. I have developed a positive relationship with my child's teacher this school year.
5. My child gets along well with other children.
6. My child's teacher was able to meet and serve my child's academic needs this school year.
7. I did not develop a positive relationship with my child's teacher this year.
8. I have not had any concerns about my child's behavior in the classroom this year.

9. Expectations for behavior were clearly communicated to my child by the classroom teacher this year.

10. My child seemed happy during the school year.

11. I support my child's education by participating in activities at school and helping them at home.

This survey was written by the researcher and a committee chair at the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Education in 2011 and then revised and finalized by the research department of the school district in Memphis, Tennessee prior to distributing the survey in the spring 2012. Permission to distribute the survey was approved by the Social Science IRB at the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Data Analysis

For the purpose of the parent survey, analysis was conducted using an independent samples t-test in order to make a comparison between the two sets of data. Further, an independent sample t-test was used for both the academic achievement data and parent survey data. When calculating a t-test, there are two assumptions that are necessary according to Gravetter and Wallnau (2005). First, "the values in the sample must consist of independent observations" (p. 229). The second assumption necessary is that "the population must be normal" (p. 229). Knowing the distribution of the test statistic under the null hypothesis allows for an accurate calculation of p-values (Math Works, Inc., 2010).

When analyzing the results of the parent surveys, the researcher looked for the level of statistical significance of the observed difference among sample means by using an independent sample t-test. When the results were interpreted, the researcher determined if there was a statistically significant difference in the parent perceptions regarding the academic and affective relationships of the looping classrooms when compared to those

parent perceptions of the non-looping classrooms and therefore, the two tailed significance value of < .05 was considered a statistically significant difference. Data was analyzed to present summarized data and relationships. The standard deviation is included in the table to describe how variable or spread out the scores are in the distribution (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005). The standard error mean is included to show the amount of difference between the sample and population (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005). Written descriptions and graphs were utilized to present the results of the survey.

The independent samples t-test was used because the achievement assessments for the looping classrooms will constitute an independent sample and the same holds same for the non-looping classrooms when making comparisons between the two groups. When interpreting the results for the academic data, the researcher determined if there was a statistically significant difference in the achievement of students in the third grade looping classrooms versus those in the third grade non-looping classrooms. Therefore, the two tailed significance value of < .05 was considered a statistically significant difference. Data were analyzed to present summarized data and relationships. The standard deviation is included in the tables to describe how variable or spread out the scores are in the distribution (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005). The standard error mean is also included in the tables to show the amount of difference between the sample and population (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005). Written descriptions and graphs were utilized to present the results of the study for both reading and mathematics achievement.

Methodological Assumptions

It is assumed the teachers in the non-looping classrooms and the teachers in the looping classrooms have followed procedures in assessing students according to district

policy. It is further assumed that the instruments used to assess the variables of achievement have been administered under similar conditions using the instructions provided by the author.

Limitations of the Study

The study involved a sample n=57 parents of students of the third grade looping classrooms and n=52 parents of the students of the third grade non-looping classrooms. The study is limited based on the completion and the response rate of the survey. While efforts were made to ensure validation of the survey, n=106 parents were surveyed in the third grade looping classrooms and n=120 parents were surveyed in the third grade non-looping classrooms. This study did not include all the parents from the sixteen schools that house looping classrooms. The research department distributed the survey to a random sample of schools with third grade looping classrooms.

The study was limited to a set of mathematics and reading scores comparing the looping classrooms to the non- looping classrooms. The mathematics data are limited to AIMSweb mathematics, which is a measurement for response to intervention that assesses mathematical concepts and applications. The reading data was limited to the AIMSweb reading assessment for reading comprehension and reading fluency used for response to intervention.

Ethical Considerations

When considering the ethical considerations, conflict of interest should be handled according to the Joint Committee on Program Evaluation Standards (Sanders, 2007), "openly and honestly, so that it does not compromise the evaluation processes and results" (p. 115). When considering where the researcher would conduct research for the dissertation

study, the researcher wanted to instill a professional relationship. The researcher did not have friends or connections with teachers in the school district located in Tennessee. An evaluator's personal friendships with clients could possibly influence the research and results of the study. Reporting the results of the study with truthfulness is also imperative when communicating the findings with the school district officials and university.

Obtaining a written agreement on permission to conduct the study was also necessary. This written agreement contained the necessary timelines and procedures of the study. The agreement included the evaluator's roles and the participants' roles as stated in Propriety Standard: Disclosure of Findings (Sanders, 1997, p. 6).

The evaluation was a complete and fair assessment. One way a complete and fair assessment was ensured, was providing an informed consent to the parents who completed the survey. Permission from parents was obtained for human subjects purposes. Informing the parents of why the survey was being conducted was necessary to allow for people to withdraw or to cooperate in the study (Gall et al., 2007). The informed consent was the participant's rights during the study.

The research study kept student names confidential because there was no reason for the researcher to know student names. The scores of the reading and mathematics assessments were given to the researcher in coded forms through student numbers. While gathering the necessary data, the researcher had open communication with the school district to ensure student confidentiality. When considering the ethical considerations, the researcher referred back to the Interstate School Leaders Consortium standards (ISLLC). As an aspiring school administrator, the researcher must embrace ISLLC standard five, which is acting with

integrity, fairness, and in ethical manner. This applies not only in work and in life, but also while completing this research study.

Summary

This study, which was conducted in a large urban school district located in the Southeastern region, has implemented a kindergarten through third grade looping classrooms in phases. In August 2010, the school district began a three year plan to ensure all schools would participate in the looping program. In 2009, sixteen elementary schools are looping. In the fall of 2010, twenty-four schools were added to the looping classrooms. In the fall of 2011, additional classrooms will be added to the looping population.

This research study on looping classrooms provided quantitative data on the parent perceptions of the looping classrooms and non-looping classroom using a Likert survey consisting of eleven questions, which was distributed the spring 2012. An independent samples t-test was conducted when analyzing the surveys. The study investigated and determined if looping was an effective placement technique to increase academic achievement by comparing the students from the third grade looping classrooms to those students of the third grade non-looping classrooms in the sixteen schools by conducting an independent samples-test. The reading and mathematics achievement scores were collected through the standardized assessment AIMSweb. Additionally, the research department in the urban school district was responsible for providing the achievement data from the sixteen schools that housed looping classrooms.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

In this chapter, a summary of the research method and analysis of the results are described. The purpose of this study was to compare reading and mathematics achievement scores from students in the third grade looping classrooms to those students who were in the non-looping classrooms using the Reading Curriculum Based Measure (R-CBM) and the Mathematics Concepts and Applications (M-CAP) test. These measurements are given in the fall, winter, and spring. Further, the study also provided parents perceptions of the looping classrooms compared to the parent perceptions of the non-looping classrooms.

Research Questions

The overall research questions guiding this study were:

1. What are the parent perceptions of academic and affective experiences regarding parents of third grade looping classrooms compared to the parent perceptions regarding third grade non-looping classrooms?

2. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb reading achievement scores between students participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to students in the third grade non-looping classrooms?

3. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb reading achievement scores between boys participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to boys in the third grade non-looping classrooms?

4. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb reading achievement scores between girls participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to girls in the third grade non-looping classrooms?

5. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb mathematics achievement scores between students participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to students in the third grade non-looping classrooms?

6. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb mathematics achievement scores between boys participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to boys in the third grade non-looping classrooms?

7. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb mathematics achievement scores between girls participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to girls in the third grade non-looping classroom?

Research Hypotheses

H1. Parents of third grade students assigned to the third grade looping classrooms rated their students' academic and affective experiences significantly higher than parents of students in the third grade non-looping classrooms.

H2. Third grade students assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb reading achievement assessment than third grade students assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

H3. Third grade boys assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb reading achievement assessment than third grade boys assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

H4. Third grade girls assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb reading achievement assessment than third grade girls assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

H5. Third grade students assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb mathematics achievement assessment than third grade students assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

H6. Third grade boys assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb mathematics achievement assessment than third grade boys assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

H7. Third grade girls assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb mathematics achievement assessment than third grade girls assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

Statistical significance was at the < .05 level. Statistical significance [significantly higher, significance] is defined by Gravetter and Wallnau (2005) as a number that expresses the probability that the result of a given experiment or study could not have occurred purely by chance.

Data Collection

The data collection included a parent survey, which was distributed in the spring of 2012. This survey used a Likert scale format to the parents of the third grade looping classrooms and to the parents of the third grade non-looping classrooms in order to compare the parent perceptions of the two groups. An independent samples t-test was calculated providing a means for the researcher to compare the results of the survey. Further, the data collection included AIMSweb reading and mathematics archived scores from the fall, winter, and spring of the 2009-2010 school year. The 2009-2010 school year marked the first round of looping classrooms in sixteen elementary schools in the large urban school district. An independent samples t-test was calculated for the looping classrooms and the non-looping classrooms, which allowed the researcher to compare academic achievement within the two groups. This study was descriptive and quantitative in nature.

Parent Perceptions

Surveys were sent home to parents of third grade looping classrooms and parents of third grade non-looping classrooms in the spring 2012. The survey was voluntary and was used to determine if parent perceptions of the looping classrooms differ from the parent

perceptions of non-looping classrooms. There were 106 surveys sent home to the parents of the third grade looping classrooms and the response rate was 53% (57 of 106). There were 120 surveys sent home to the parents of the third grade non looping classroom and the response rate was 43% (52 of 120). The total response rate for the surveys was 48% (109 of 226). The surveys were distributed to a random selection of schools with third grade looping classrooms. One of the surveys sent back by a parent of the third grade non-looping classrooms returned the survey incomplete.

The mean score was calculated for each question comparing the parent perceptions of the third grade looping classrooms and the parent perceptions of the third grade non-looping classrooms. The standard deviation is included in the table to describe how variable or spread out the scores are in the distribution (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005). Additionally, the standard error mean is included to show the amount of difference between the sample and population (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005). Further, an independent samples t-test was calculated to determine if there was significant difference when comparing the parent perceptions of the third grade looping classrooms to the parent perceptions of the third grade non-looping classrooms. When conducting the independent t-test, the researcher must first observe the Levene's Test for Equality of Variances. If the significance level is higher than .05, the researcher must observe equal variances assumed and if lower than .05 the researcher must observe equal variances not assumed. This allows the researcher to determine which 2-tailed significance value to observe. The independent t-test results table is located in Appendix H.

The first question on the survey read: *My child looks forward to coming to school each* day had a M=1.70 for the looping classrooms and a M=1.46 for the non-looping classrooms. When analyzing this question, equal variances were assumed because the

significance level was .252 and the two tailed significance value was .089. The mean difference was .240. This indicated that parents of third grade students assigned to the third grade looping classrooms did not rate their students' academic and affective experiences significantly higher than parents of the third grade non-looping classrooms.

The second question of the survey stated the following: *My child has improved in reading this school year.* The results indicated M=1.74 for the looping classrooms and M=1.81 for the non-looping classrooms. When observing the independent t-test, equal variances were assumed because the significance level was .483 and the two tailed significance value was .614 and a mean difference of -.071. The third question read as: *My child has improved in math this school year.* The results indicated M=1.82 for the looping classrooms and M=1.81 for the non-looping classrooms. Further, equal variances were assumed in this independent samples t-test because the significance level was .066. The two tailed significance value was .904 and a mean difference of .017. These two questions indicated that parents of third grade student assigned to the third grade looping classrooms did not rate their students' academic and affective experience significantly higher than parents of the third grade non-looping classrooms.

The fourth question of the survey was in regards to the relationship the parent developed with the teacher. It read as: *I have developed a positive relationship with my child's teacher this school year.* When comparing the mean scores the looping classrooms revealed M=1.63 for the looping classrooms and M=1.56 for the non-looping classrooms. The independent samples t-test revealed a significance level of .647 and therefore equal variance were assumed. The two tailed significance was .630 and a mean difference of .074. Question number seven read: *I did not develop a positive relationship with my child's*

teacher this year. This question had an M=3.35 for the looping classrooms and an M=3.54 for the non-looping classrooms. Equal variances were assumed because the significance level was .570 and revealed a two tailed significance level of .283. The results from these two questions indicated that parents of third grade students assigned to the third grade looping classrooms did not rate their students' academic and affective experience significantly higher than parents of the third grade non-looping classrooms.

The fifth question of the survey was in regards to getting along with peers. This question read as: *My child gets along well with others.* The results of the question indicated M=1.84 for the looping classrooms and M=1.61 for the non-looping classrooms. Equal variances were assumed in this independent samples t-test, which revealed a significance level of .460. The two tailed significant level was .189 and a mean difference of .234. This significance level is higher than .05 and these results indicated that parents of third grade student assigned to the third grade looping classrooms did not rate their students' academic and affective experience significantly higher than parents of the third grade non-looping classrooms.

When analyzing the results of the sixth question that read: *My child's teacher was able to meet and serve my child's academic needs this school year* had M=1.67 for the looping classrooms and M=1.48 for the non-looping classrooms. The independent t-test revealed a significance level of .668 and therefore, equal variances were assumed. The independent t-test revealed a significance level of .281 and a mean difference of .186. These results indicated that parents of third grade students assigned to the third grade looping classrooms did not rate their students' academic and affective experience significantly higher than parents of the third grade non-looping classrooms.

The eighth question posed a question in reference to the child's behavior in the classroom. It read as: *I have not had any concerns about my child's behavior in the classroom this year.* The looping classrooms had an M=2.28 and the non-looping classrooms had an M=2.00. The independent samples t-test revealed a significance level of .299. Therefore, equal variances were assumed. The t-test revealed a two tailed significance level of .162 and a mean difference of .281. The results indicated parents of third grade student assigned to the third grade looping classrooms did not rate their students' academic and affective experience significantly higher than parents of the third grade non-looping classrooms.

The ninth question on the survey read as: *Expectations for behavior were clearly communicated to my child by the classroom teacher this year.* The looping classrooms revealed an M=1.53 and the non-looping classrooms revealed an M=1.42. The independent samples t-test revealed a significance level of .664, which means equal variances were assumed. The two-tailed significance value was .510 and a mean difference of .103. This question indicated that parents of third grade student assigned to the third grade looping classrooms did not rate their students' academic and affective experience significantly higher than parents of the third grade non-looping classrooms.

Question number ten read as: *My child seemed happy during the school year.* When calculating the mean, the results indicated M=1.74 for the looping classrooms and M=1.48 for the non-looping classrooms. The independent samples t-test revealed a significance level of .036. This was lower than .05. Therefore, equal variances were not assumed. The two tailed significance level was .067 and a mean difference of .256. The results for this question indicated that parents of third grade students assigned to the third grade looping classrooms

did not rate their students' academic and affective experience significantly higher than parents of the third grade non-looping classrooms.

The final question of the survey read as: *I support my child's education by participating in activities at school and helping them at home.* When calculating the mean, the results indicated M=1.47 for the looping classrooms and M=1.25 for the non-looping classrooms. Further, the independent samples t-test revealed a significance level of .001. Therefore, equal variances were not assumed. The two tailed significance level was .028 and a mean difference of .224. The results for this question do indicate that parents of third grade students assigned to the third grade looping classrooms rated their students' academic and affective experience significantly higher than parents of the third grade non-looping classrooms.

Overall, the parent perception surveys indicated that parents of third grade students assigned to the third grade looping classrooms did not rate their students' academic and affective experience significantly higher than parents of the third grade non-looping classrooms. Hypothesis 1 which read, parents of third grade students assigned to the third grade looping classrooms rated their students' academic and affective experiences significantly higher than parents of students in the third grade non-looping classrooms was rejected for each question of the survey with the exception of the last question, which was in regards to parental involvement. Table 1 provides the comparison of the mean results for the parent perception survey and Figure 1 displays the mean results of the parent perception survey in graph form labeled Q1 through Q11. Figure 2 provides the mean difference between the looping classrooms and non-looping classrooms for each parent perception survey question labeled Q1 through Q11.

Table 1

Comparison of the Mean Results for Parent Perception Survey

	Looping	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Looks Forward To School	Y	57	1.70	.823	.109
	N	52	1.46	.609	.084
Improved in Reading	Y	57	1.74	.613	.081
	N	52	1.81	.841	.117
Improved in Math	Y	57	1.82	.571	.076
	N	52	1.81	.864	.120
Parent Developed Positive Relationship With Teacher	Y	57	1.63	.747	.099
	N	52	1.56	.850	.118
Child Gets Along With Others	Y	57	1.84	1.014	.134
	N	51	1.61	.802	.112
Teacher Served Child's Academic Needs	Y	57	1.67	.913	.121
	N	52	1.48	.874	.121
Parent Did Not Develop Positive Relationship	Y	57	3.35	.916	.121
	N	52	3.54	.896	.124
No Concerns About Child's Behavior	Y	57	2.28	1.082	.143
	N	52	2.00	.990	.137
Expectations Were Clearly Communicated	Y	57	1.53	.710	.094
	N	52	1.42	.915	.127
Child Was Happy	Y	57	1.74	.897	.119
	N	52	1.48	.505	.070
Parent Supports Child's Education	Y	57	1.47	.601	.080
	N	52	1.25	.437	.061

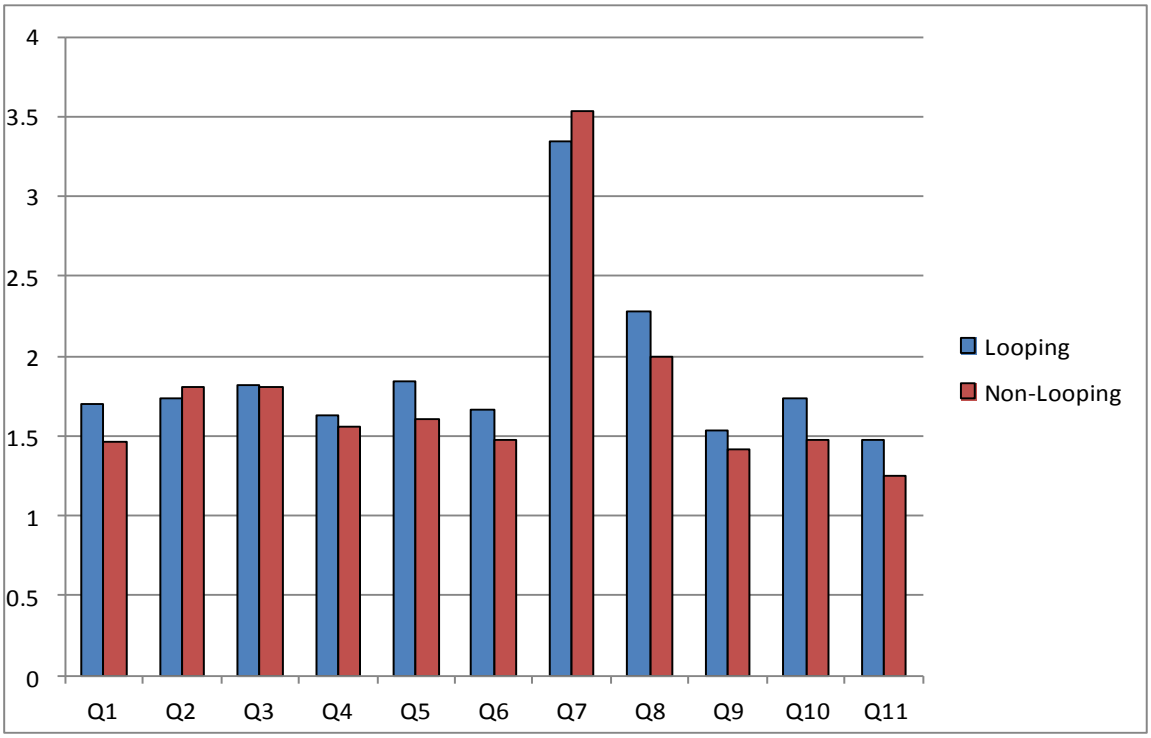

Figure 1. *Comparison of Mean Scores for the Parent Perception Survey*

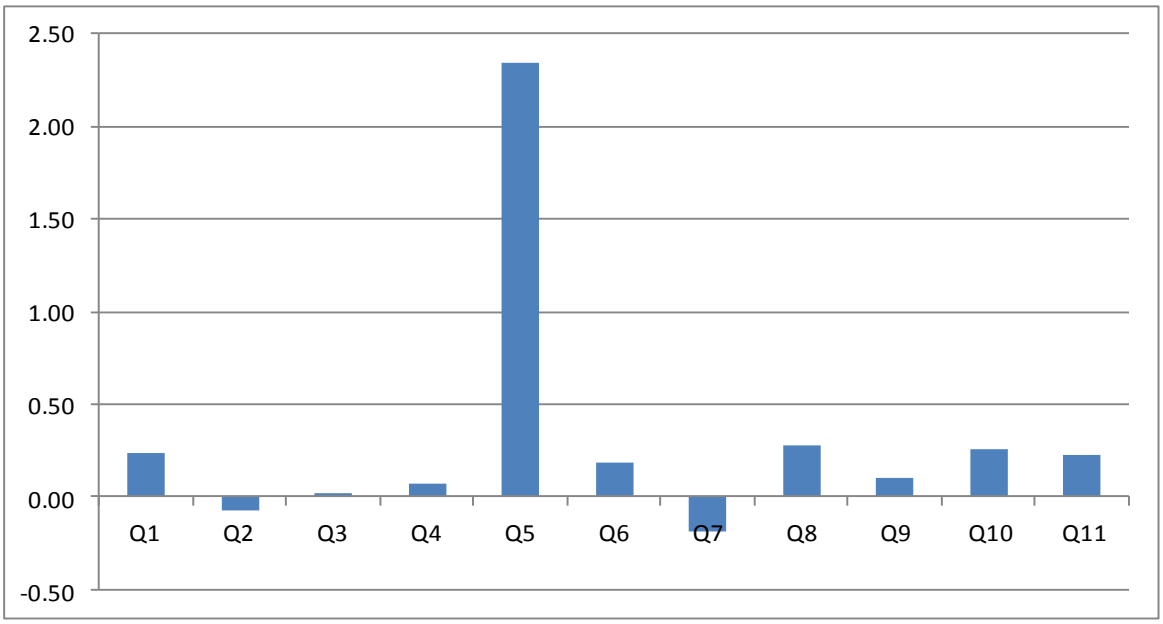

Figure 2. *The Mean Difference Between the Looping Classrooms and Non-looping Classrooms from the Parent Perception Surveys*

Reading Achievement

The Reading Curriculum Based Measure (R-CBM) is a standardized individual reading fluency assessment given by the teacher three times per school year to track student progress. The R-CBM has been "demonstrated to be a valid general outcome for reading, including comprehension for most students" (Shinn & Shinn, p. 7, 2002). The teacher is responsible for administering the assessment and each assessment is the in the same font style and does not include pictures (Shinn & Shinn, 2002). The teacher is responsible for scoring the assessments and by recording the words read correctly per minute.

Data results were recorded for the Reading Curriculum Based Measure (R-CBM) for fall, winter, spring, and the change in scores from the fall (beginning of year) to the spring (end of the year). An independent samples t-test was conducted. When conducting the independent samples t-test, the researcher must first observe the Levene's Test for Equality of Variances. If the significance level is higher than .05, the researcher must observe equal variances assumed and if lower than .05 the researcher must observe equal variances not assumed. This allows the researcher to determine which 2-tailed significance value to observe. The standard deviation is included in the tables to describe how variable or spread out the scores are in the distribution (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005). The standard error mean is included to show the amount of difference between the sample and population (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005).

Data results indicated the third grade looping students increase averaged M= 36.85 from the fall test score to the spring test score with SD=18.800 and SE=1.561. Data results indicated the non-looping students increase averaged M=34.22 with SD= 18.761 and SE= .632. There was a positive mean difference, M=2.63. The Levene's Test for Equality of

Variances revealed a significance level of .841. Therefore, equal variances were assumed. The independent samples t-test revealed a two tailed significance value of .119. This significance value is above .05 and the researcher rejected Hypothesis 2, third grade students assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb reading achievement assessment than third grade students assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

Table 2 displays the group statistics for the R-CBM for fall, winter, spring, and the change from fall to spring. The table provides the number of students who were in the looping classroom and the non-looping classroom along with the mean, standard deviation and standard error mean. Figure 3 displays the mean scores for each testing period and the overall change from fall to spring for the looping classrooms and non-looping classrooms. The tables and graphs include the results from each testing period to display the academic gains in the looping classrooms compared to the academic gains in the non-looping classrooms. Figure 4 displays the mean differences between the looping classrooms and the non-looping classrooms. The independent t-test results for the overall change from fall to spring is located in Appendix I.

Table 2

Comparison of the Results for Fall, Winter, Spring, and the Overall Change from Fall to Spring on Looping Classrooms and Non-Looping Classrooms Using the Reading Curriculum Based Measure

	Loop Student	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
RCBM Fall	Y	158	70.11	35.416	2.818
	N	886	67.33	34.714	1.166
RCBM Winter	Y	151	91.05	38.359	3.122
	N	884	86.60	37.267	1.253
RCBM Spring	Y	146	107.71	37.943	3.140
	N	887	101.19	39.203	1.316
RCBM-Change from Fall to Spring	Y	145	36.85	18.800	1.561
	N	880	34.22	18.761	.632

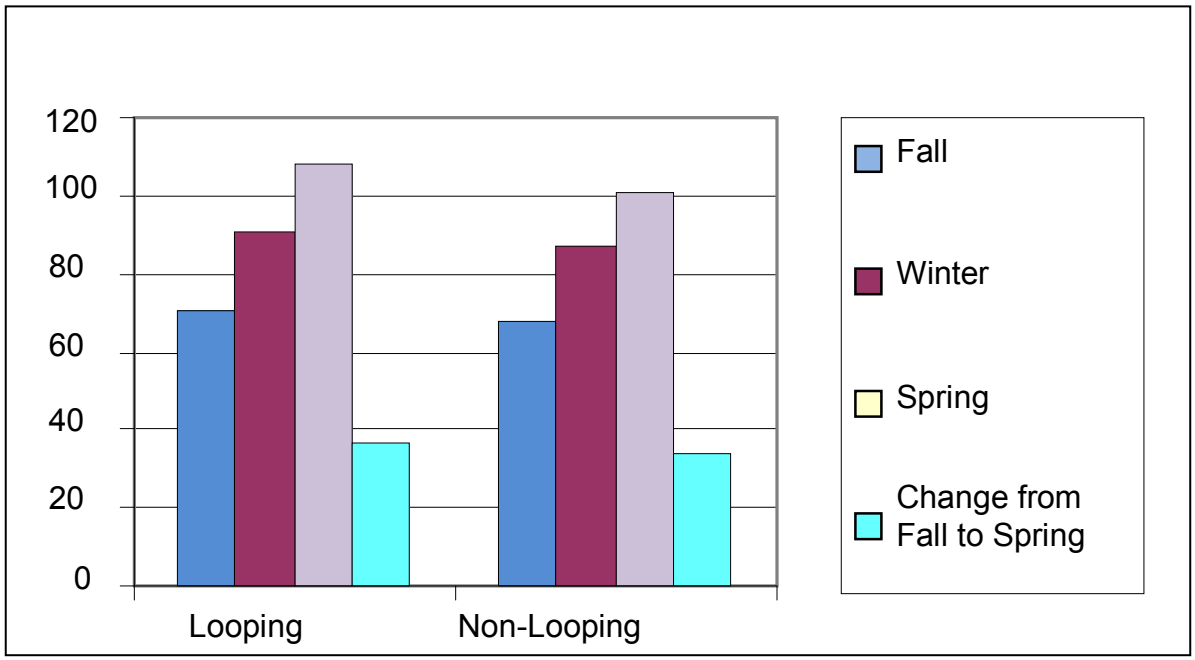

Figure 3. *Comparison of Mean Scores for the AIMSweb R-CBM*

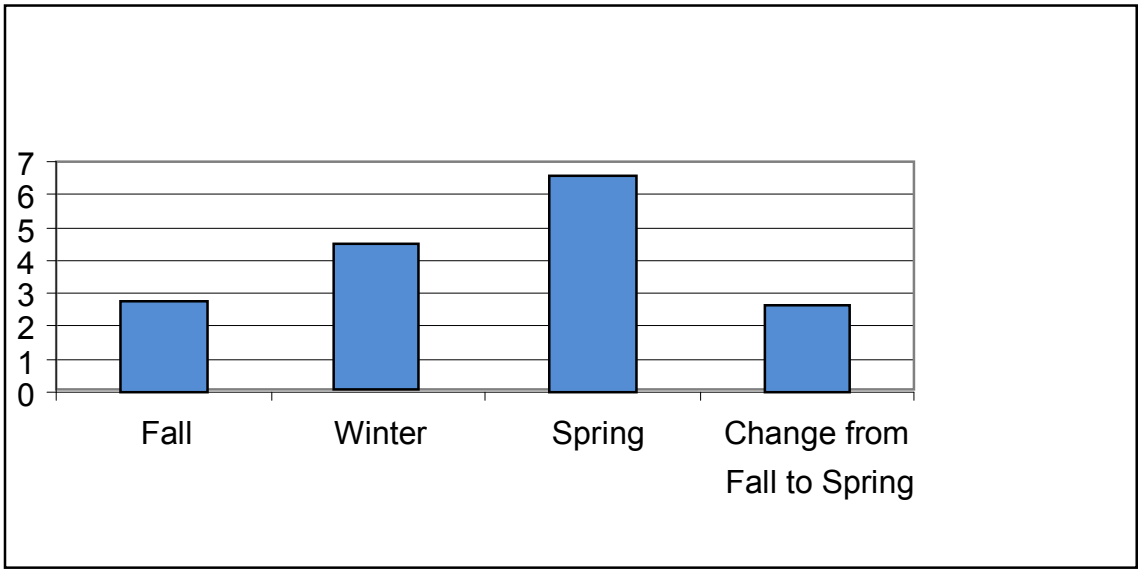

Figure 4. *The Mean Difference Between the Looping Classrooms and Non-looping Classrooms for AIMSweb R-CBM*

When determining if there was a statistically significant difference between the third grade boys in the looping classrooms compared to the third grade boys in the non-looping classrooms, an independent samples t-test was conducted when analyzing the AIMSweb Reading Curriculum Based Measure (R-CBM). Data results indicated the boys in the looping classroom increase averaged M=37.85 from the fall test score to the spring test score with SD=20.032 and SE=2.377. The results from the boys in the non-looping classrooms increased averaged M=34.18 with 19.295 and SE= .904. There was a positive mean difference of M=3.677 from fall to spring between the boys of the third grade looping classrooms and the boys of the third grade non-looping classrooms The Levene's Test for Equality of Variances revealed a significance value of .532 and therefore, equal variances were assumed. The two tailed significance value was .139, which is above .05. The researcher rejected Hypothesis 3, third grade boys assigned to the looping classrooms

performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb reading achievement assessment than third grade boys assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

Table 3 provides the information for the group statistics when comparing the third grade boys of the looping classrooms to the third grade boys of the non-looping classroom. The table provides the number of students who were in the looping classroom and the non-looping classroom along with the mean, standard deviation and standard error mean. Figure 5 displays the mean scores for each testing period and the overall change from fall to spring for the boys in looping classrooms and boys in non-looping classrooms. The tables and graphs include the results from each testing period to display the academic gains in the looping classrooms compared to the academic gains in the non-looping classrooms. Figure 6 displays the mean difference in scores of boys in the looping classrooms and boys in the non-looping classrooms. The independent t-tests for the overall change from fall to spring is located in Appendix J.

Table 3

Comparison of the Results for Fall, Winter, Spring, and the Overall Change from Fall to Spring on Boys in the Looping Classrooms and Boys in the Non-Looping Classrooms Using the Reading Curriculum Based Measure

	Loop Student	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
RCBM Fall	Y	77	67.61	33.581	3.827
	N	459	63.42	33.910	1.583
RCBM Winter	Y	74	89.04	37.134	4.317
	N	455	82.89	37.126	1.740
RCBM Spring	Y	72	105.78	37.642	4.436
	N	461	97.15	39.845	1.856
RCBM Change from Fall to Spring	Y	71	37.85	20.032	2.377
	N	456	34.18	19.295	.904

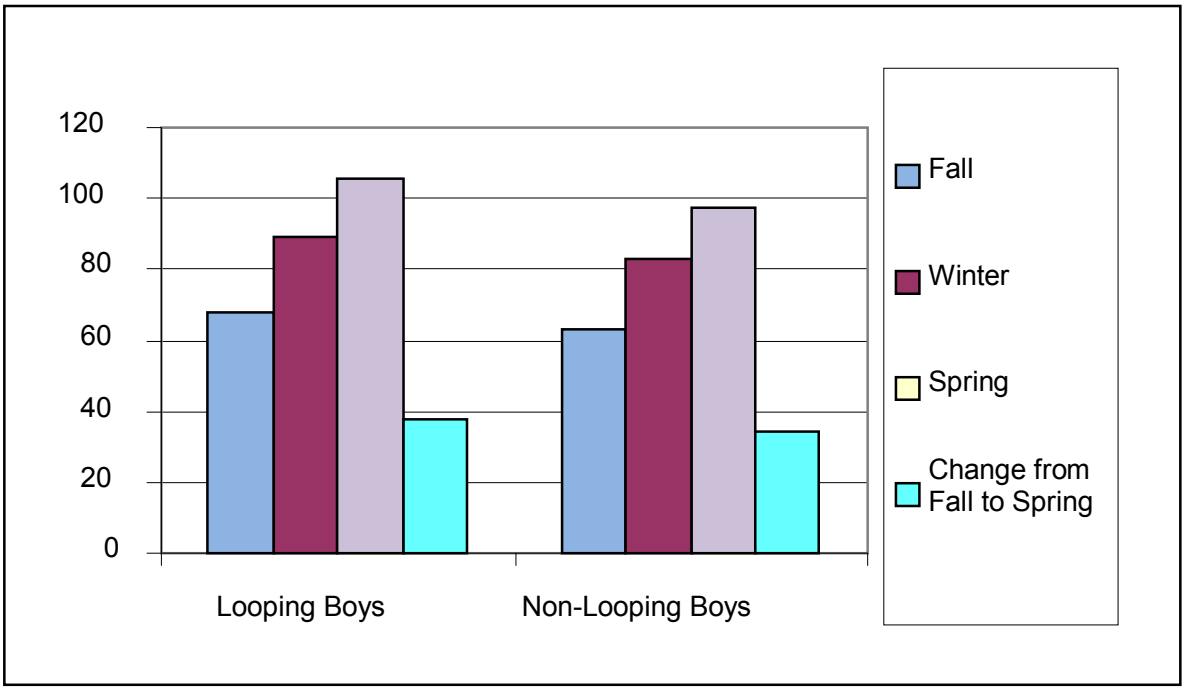

Figure 5. The Comparison of Mean Scores of the Boys in Looping Classrooms and the Boys in Non-Looping Classrooms for the AIMSweb R-CBM

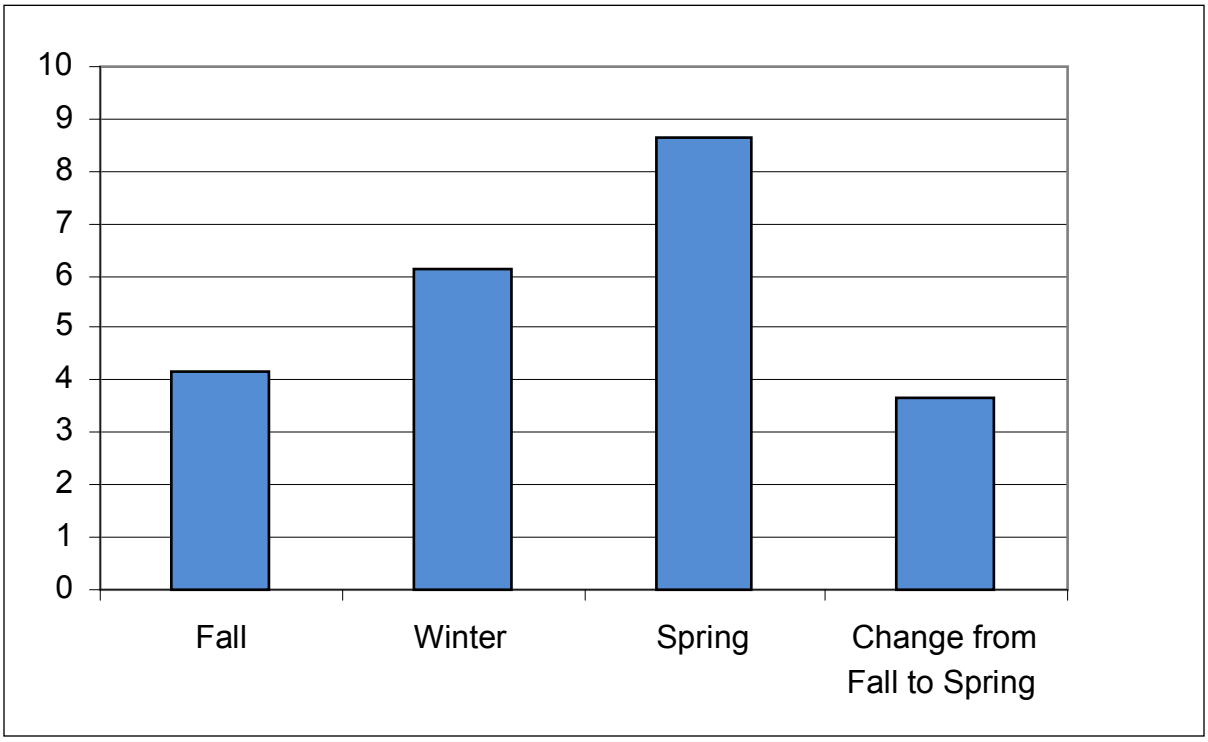

Figure 6. *The Mean Difference Between the Boys in the Looping Classrooms and the Boys in the Non-looping Classrooms for the AIMSweb R-CBM*

An independent samples t-test was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the third grade girls in the looping classrooms compared to the third grade girls in the non-looping classrooms by analyzing the AIMSweb Reading Curriculum Based Measure (R-CBM). Data results indicated the girls in the looping classroom increase averaged M=35.89 from the fall test score to the spring test score with SD=17.620 and SE=2.048. The results from the girls in the non-looping classroom averaged M=34.27 with SD=18.193 and SE= .884. There was a positive mean difference, M=1.625 between the girls of the looping classrooms and the girls in the third grade non-looping classrooms from fall to spring. The Levene's Test for Equality of Variances revealed a significance value of .797 and therefore, equal variances were assumed. The two tailed

independent samples t-test revealed a significance value of .477. This significance value is above .05 and the researcher rejected Hypothesis 4, third grade girls assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb reading achievement assessment than third grade girls assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

Table 4 provides the group statistics when comparing the third grade girls of the looping classrooms to the third grade girls in the non-looping classrooms. The table provides the number of students who were in the looping classroom and the non-looping classroom along with the mean, standard deviation and standard error mean. Figure 7 displays the comparison of the mean scores between the girls in the looping classrooms and the girls in the non-looping classrooms. The tables and charts include the results from each testing period to display the academic gains from the looping classrooms in comparison to the academic gains of the non-loping classroom. Figure 8 displays the mean difference between the girls in the looping classrooms and the girls in the non-looping classrooms. The independent t-tests for each testing period and the overall change from fall to spring are located in Appendix K.

Table 4

Comparison of the Results for Fall, Winter, Spring, and the Overall Change from Fall to Spring on Girls in the Looping Classrooms and Girls in the Non-Looping Classrooms Using the Reading Curriculum Based Measure

	Loop Student	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
RCBM Fall	Y	81	72.49	37.128	4.125
	N	427	71.54	35.115	1.699
RCBM Winter	Y	77	92.97	39.647	4.518
	N	429	90.55	37.054	1.789
RCBM Spring	Y	74	109.59	38.396	4.463
	N	426	105.56	38.061	1.844
RCBM Change from Fall to Spring	Y	74	35.89	17.620	2.048
	N	424	34.27	18.193	.884

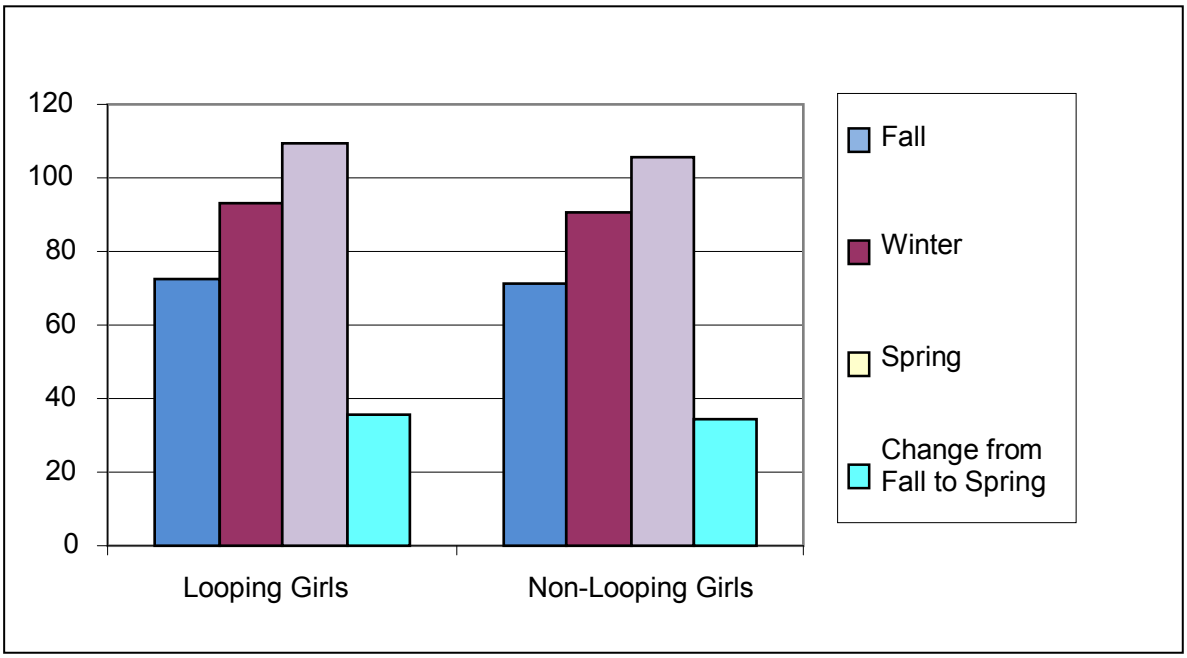

Figure 7. *The Comparison of Mean Scores of the Girls in Looping Classrooms and Girls in Non-Looping Classrooms for the AIMSweb R-CBM*

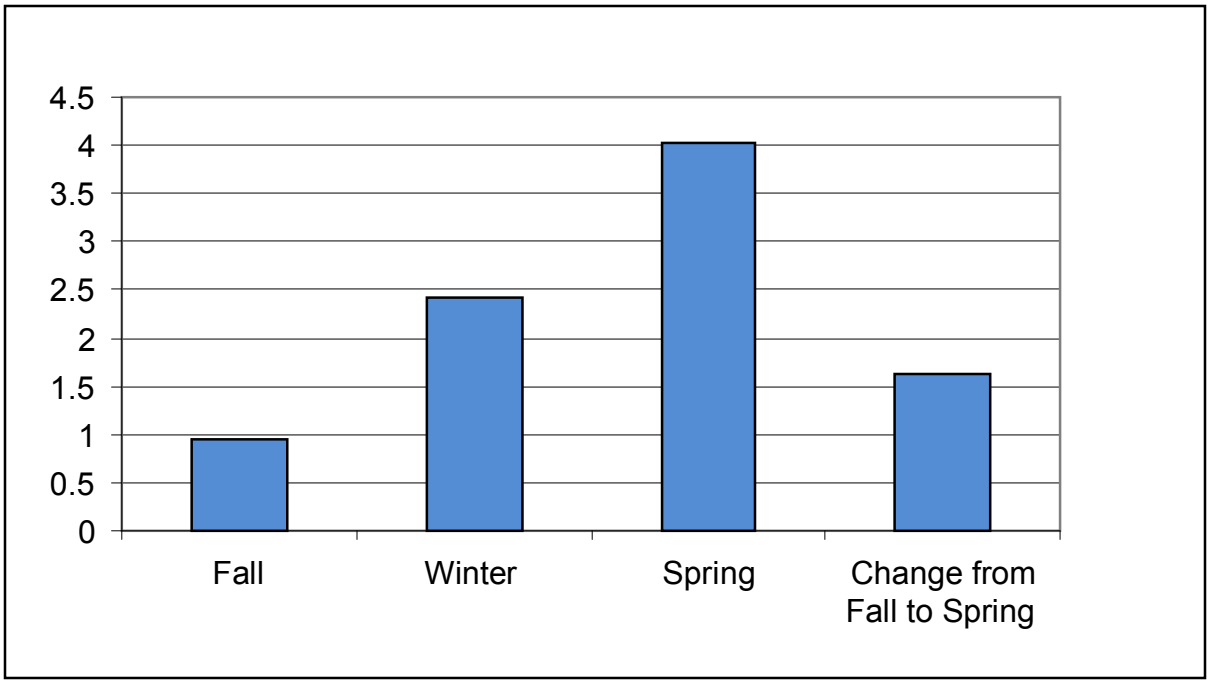

Figure 8. *The Mean Difference Between the Girls in the Looping Classrooms and the Girls in the Non-looping Classrooms for the AIMSweb R-CBM*

Summary of Reading Achievement

Upon analysis of the data of the third grade students assigned to the looping classrooms, though there were academic gains, the significance values of the independent samples t-tests concluded that Hypothesis 2, third grade students assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb reading achievement assessment than third grade students assigned to the non-looping classrooms was rejected. Further, when conducting an independent samples t-test to determine if third grade boys in assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb reading achievement assessment than third grade boys assigned to the non-looping classrooms, Hypothesis 3 was rejected. In addition, Hypothesis 4, third grade girls assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb reading achievement assessment than third

grade girls assigned to the non-looping classrooms, was rejected based on the results of the independent samples t-test.

Mathematics Achievement

For the purpose of this study, the AIMSweb Mathematics Concepts and Applications (M-CAP) Assessment was used when comparing achievement gains between the boys in the third grade looping classrooms and the third grade boys in the non-looping classrooms. The M-CAP is a short duration of an assessment which typically takes eight to ten minutes. It is used to assess the general mathematics problem solving skills expected in grades second through sixth grade (www.aimsweb.com, 2010). The M-CAP is used by educators to quickly screen and monitor mathematics progress (www.aimsweb.com, 2010). In third grade, the skills assessed are number sense, operations, patterns and relationships, measurement, data and probability, and geometry. Further, "the innovative scoring that enhances the sensitivity of each probe maximizes the technical adequacy and scientific properties that support the scoring process" (www.aimsweb.com, 2010). The assessment contains 33 probes per grade level and additional 30 probes for monitoring instruction and success of interventions (www.aimsweb.com, 2010). The M-CAP minimizes skipping problems and makes the scoring simple for teachers.

Data results for the Mathematics Concepts and Applications (M-CAP) Assessment were recorded for fall, winter, spring, and the change in scores from the fall (beginning of year) to the spring (end of year). An independent samples t-test was conducted. When conducting the independent samples t-test, the researcher must first observe the Levene's Test for Equality of Variances. If the significance level is higher than .05, the researcher must observe equal variances assumed and if lower than .05 the researcher must observe equal

variances not assumed. This allows the researcher to determine which 2-tailed significance value to observe. The standard deviation is included in the tables to describe how variable or spread out the scores are in the distribution (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005). The standard error mean is included to show the amount of difference between the sample and population (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005).

Data results indicated the looping students increase averaged M=8.22 from the fall test score to the spring test score with SD=7.408 and SE=.617. Data results indicated the non-looping students increase averaged M=7.29 with SD=5.86 and SE=.210. There was a positive mean difference of M=.93. The Levene's Test for Equality of Variances the significance value was .015 and this indicated equal variances were not assumed. The two tailed independent samples t-test revealed a significance level of .158. This significance value is above .05 and the researcher rejected Hypothesis 5, third grade students assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb mathematics achievement assessment than third grade students assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

Table 5 displays the group statistics for the M-CAP for fall, winter, spring, and the change from fall to spring. The table provides the number of students who were in the looping classroom and the non-looping classroom. Figure 9 displays the mean scores for each testing period and the overall change from fall to spring for the looping classrooms and non-looping classrooms. The tables and charts display the academic data from each testing period to display the academic gains from the looping classrooms in comparison to the academic gains of the non-looping classrooms. Figure 10 displays the mean differences between the looping classrooms and non-looping classrooms. The independent t-tests for overall change from fall to spring are located in Appendix L.

Table 5

Comparison of the Results for Fall, Winter, Spring, and the Overall Change from Fall to Spring on Looping Classrooms and Non-Looping Classrooms Using the Mathematics Concepts and Applications Assessment

	Loop Student	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
M-CAP Fall	Y	155	6.20	3.976	.319
	N	840	5.62	3.910	.135
M-CAP Winter	Y	152	10.33	5.948	.482
	N	830	9.13	5.858	.203
M-CAP Spring	Y	146	14.42	8.105	.671
	N	830	12.91	7.137	.248
M-CAP Change from Fall to Spring	Y	144	8.22	7.408	.617
	N	781	7.29	5.861	.210

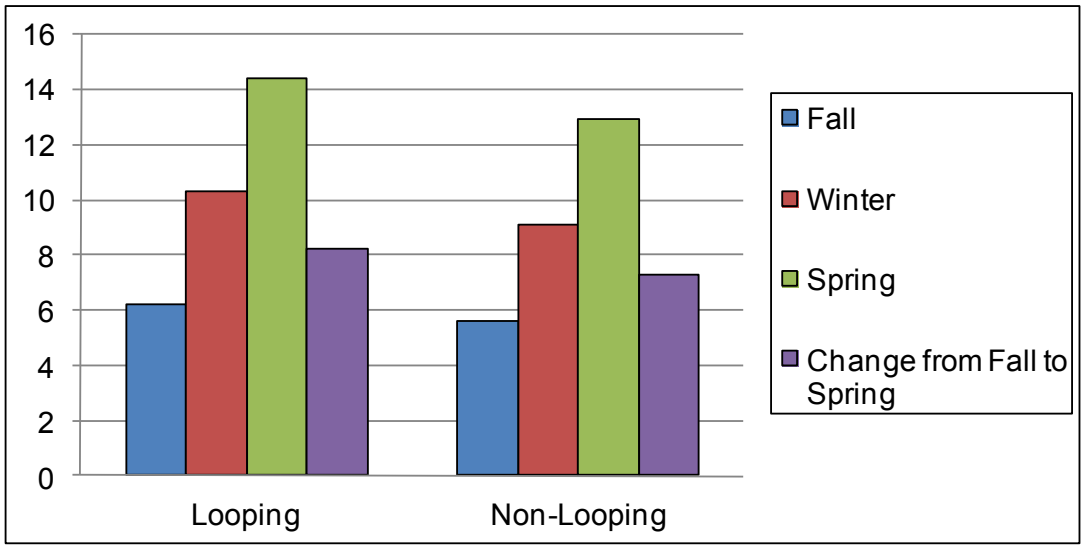

Figure 9. Comparison of Mean Scores for the AIMSweb M-CAP

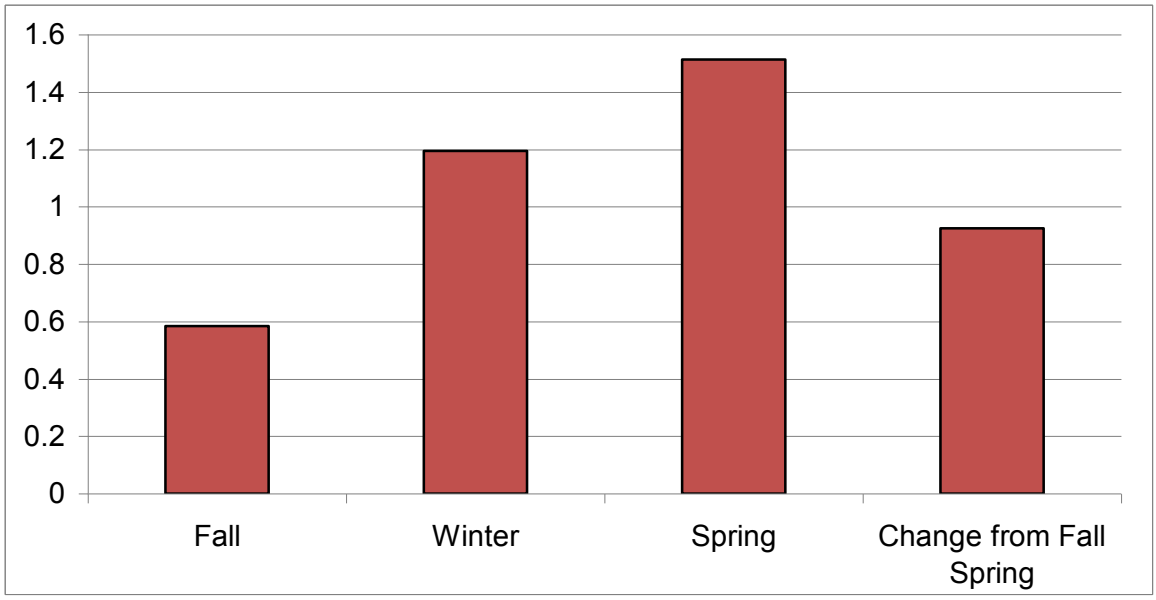

Figure 10. *The Mean Difference Between the Looping Classrooms and the Non-looping Classrooms for the AIMSweb M-CAP*

When determining if there was a statistically significant difference between the third grade boys in the looping classrooms compared to the third grade boys in the non-looping classrooms, and an independent samples t-test was conducted when analyzing the AIMSweb Mathematics Concepts and Applications (M-CAP) Assessment. Data results indicated the boys in the looping classrooms increase averaged M= 8.88 from the fall test score to the spring test score with SD=8.231 and SE=. 970. Data results indicated the boys in the non-looping classrooms increase averaged M=7.01 with SD=6.029 and SE=.301. There was a positive mean difference, M=1.87. The Levene's Test for Equality of Variances revealed a significance value of .010 and therefore, equal variances were not assumed. The two tailed independent samples t-test revealed a significance value of .070. This significance value is above .05 and the researcher rejected Hypothesis 6, third grade boys assigned to the looping

classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb mathematics achievement assessment than third grade boys assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

Table 6 provides the information for the group statistics when comparing the third grade boys of the looping classrooms to the third grade boys of the non-looping classroom. Figure 11 displays the mean scores for each of the three testing periods and the overall change from fall to spring for the boys in looping classrooms and boys in non-looping classrooms. The tables and charts provide the results from each testing period to display the academic gains from the looping classrooms compared to the academic gains of the non-looping classrooms. Figure 12 displays the mean difference in scores of boys in the looping classrooms and boys in the non-looping classrooms. The independent t-tests for the overall change from fall to spring is located in Appendix M.

Table 6

Comparison of the Results for Fall, Winter, Spring, and the Overall Change from Fall to Spring on Boys in the Looping Classrooms and Boys in the Non-Looping Classrooms Using the Mathematics Concepts and Applications Assessment

	Loop Student	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MCAP Fall	Y	76	5.72	3.769	.432
	N	429	5.72	4.142	.200
MCAP Winter	Y	76	10.36	6.256	.718
	N	424	9.04	6.046	.294
MCAP Spring	Y	73	15.05	8.865	1.038
	N	432	12.71	7.362	.354
MCAP Change from Fall to Spring	Y	72	8.88	8.231	.970
	N	400	7.01	6.029	.301

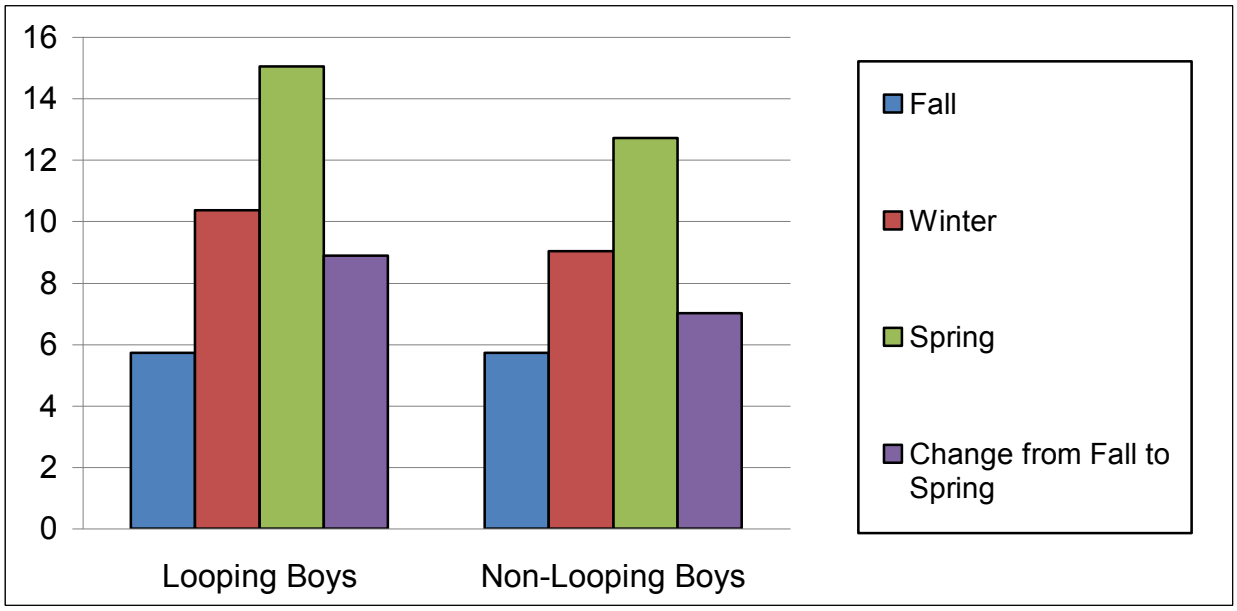

Figure 11. *The Comparison of Mean Scores of the Boys in Looping Classrooms and Boys in Non-Looping Classrooms for the AIMSweb for M-CAP*

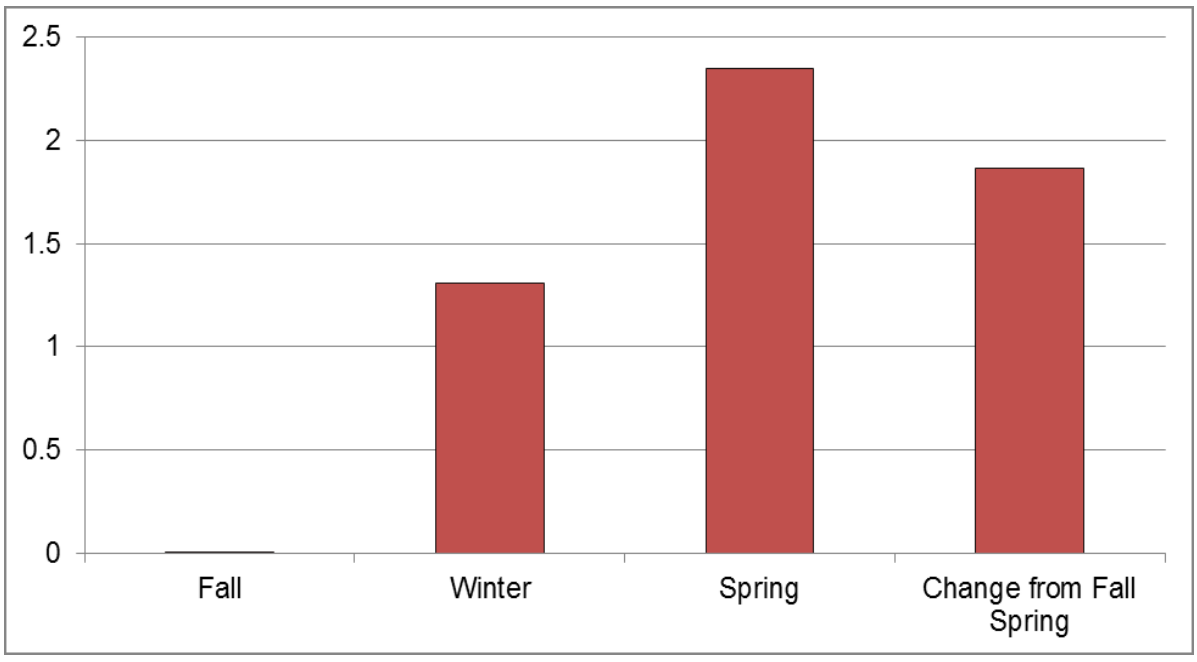

Figure 12. *The Mean Difference Between the Boys in the Looping Classrooms and the Boys in the Non-looping Classrooms for the AIMSweb M-CAP*

An independent samples t-test was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the third grade girls in the looping classrooms compared to the third grade girls in the non-looping classrooms by analyzing the AIMSweb Mathematics Concepts and Applications (M-CAP) Assessment. Data results indicated the girls in the looping classrooms increase averaged M=7.56 from the fall test scores to the spring test scores with SD=6.474 and SE=.763. Data from the fall test scores to the spring test scores indicated the girls in the non-looping classrooms increase averaged M=7.58 with SD=5.673 and SE=.291. There was a negative mean difference, which revealed, M= -.027. The Levene's Test for Equality of Variances revealed a significance value of .409 and therefore, equal variances were assumed. The two tailed independent samples t-test revealed a significance value of .971. This significance value is above .05 and the researcher rejected Hypothesis7, third grade girls assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb mathematics achievement assessment than third grade girls assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

Table 7 provides the information for the group statistics when comparing the third grade girls of the looping classrooms to the third grade girls of the non-looping classroom. Figure 13 displays the mean scores for each testing period and the overall change from fall to spring for the girls in looping classrooms and the girls in non-looping classrooms. The tables and charts provide the results from each of the three testing periods to display the academic gains from the looping classrooms compared to the academic gains of the non-looping classrooms. Figure 14 displays the mean difference in scores of girls in the looping classrooms and girls in the non-looping classrooms. The independent t-tests for the overall change from fall to spring are located in Appendix N.

Table 7

Comparison of the Results for Fall, Winter, Spring, and the Overall Change from Fall to Spring on Girls in the Looping Classrooms and Girls in the Non-Looping Classrooms Using the Mathematics Concepts and Applications Assessment

	Loop Student	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MCAP Fall	Y	79	6.66	4.138	.466
	N	411	5.51	3.655	.180
MCAP Winter	Y	76	10.30	5.664	.650
	N	406	9.23	5.661	.281
MCAP Spring	Y	73	13.78	7.273	.851
	N	398	13.12	6.887	.345
MCAP-Change from Fall to Spring	Y	72	7.56	6.474	.763
	N	381	7.58	5.673	.291

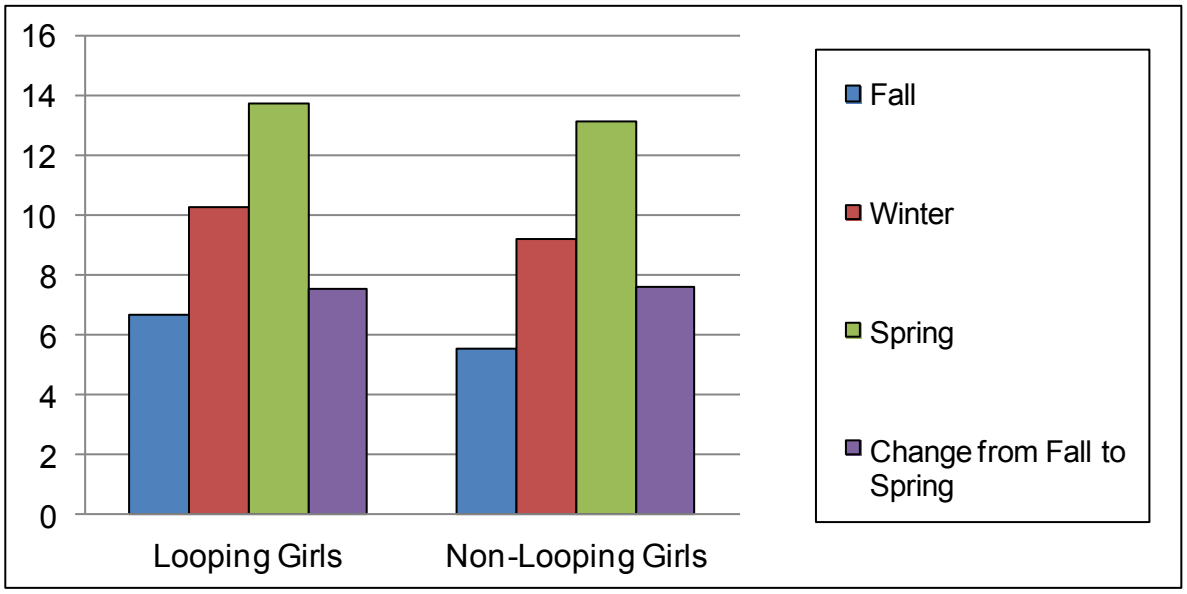

Figure 13. *The Comparison of Mean Scores of the Girls in Looping Classrooms and Girls in Non-Looping Classrooms for the AIMSweb for M-CAP*

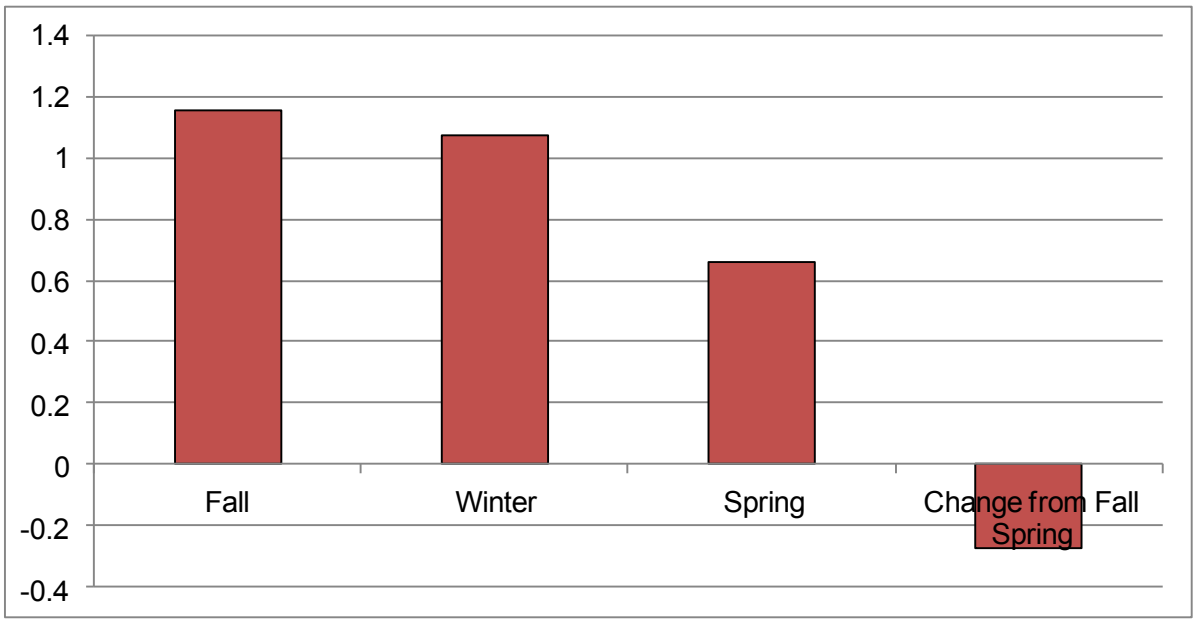

Figure 14. *The Mean Difference Between the Girls in the Looping Classrooms and the Girls in the Non-looping Classrooms for the AIMSweb M-CAP*

Summary of Mathematics Achievement

Upon analysis of the data of the third grade students assigned to the looping classrooms, though there were academic gains, the significance values of the independent samples t-test concluded that Hypothesis 5, third grade students assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb mathematics achievement assessment than third grade students assigned to the non-looping classrooms was rejected. Further, when conducting an independent samples t-test to determine if boys in the looping classrooms performed higher on the M-CAP Assessment than boys in the non-looping classrooms, the researcher rejected Hypothesis 6, third grade boys assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb mathematics achievement

assessment than third grade boys assigned to the non-looping classrooms. In addition, the data revealed a negative mean difference when comparing third girls in the looping classrooms to third grade girls in the non-looping classrooms. Further, the researcher rejected Hypothesis 7, third grade girls assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb mathematics achievement assessment than third grade girls assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

Summary

The parent survey put forth eleven questions. The survey results indicated a positive mean difference for all the questions with the exception of number two, which resulted in a mean difference of -.07. The parent perception survey results indicated that parents of the third grade looping classrooms rated the academic and affective experiences very similar to those results of the non-looping classrooms. The parents either rated questions as strongly agreeing or agreeing. There was one question, which read: *I support my child's education by participating in activities at school and helping them at home* was significantly higher when compared to the parents of the third grade non-looping classrooms. However, upon analysis of the result, Hypothesis 1, parents of third grade students assigned to the third grade looping classrooms rated their students' academic and affective experiences significantly higher than parents of students in the third grade non-looping classrooms was rejected for ten of the eleven questions.

It is the researcher's findings that the third grade students assigned to the looping classrooms did not perform significantly higher than the third grade students in the non-looping classrooms. The results could account for other variables such as classroom environment, student motivation, instructional strategies, and teacher-student relationships.

This study supports Murphy (2002), who stated, "Further research may help to determine whether there are variables that are significantly affected by the organizational pattern of looping with young students" (p. 62). This study did not conclusively prove that third grade students assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher when compared to the third grade students of the non-looping classrooms. This study supported Checkley (1995) who wrote there is not sufficient data to support that multi-year placements have an extreme impact instructionally. This quantitative study leaves the door open for further research on looping as a placement option in an urban school district.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Introduction

Looping classrooms are considered an alternative placement to traditional method of grouping students. In the looping classroom, a teacher stays with the classroom of children for two years or even three years (Grant et al., 1996). The purpose of the study was to investigate and determine if looping is an effective placement technique to increase student achievement and if the parents' perceptions were rated higher in the looping classrooms than those parent perceptions of the non-looping classrooms. Burke (1996) used qualitative measures to determine that teachers who stayed with the same students for three years and who collected work samples from their students over a period of months during the second year of the loop, noticed vast improvements in student's writing from when they began to work with those students.

Statement of the Problem

The research study collected data to determine the parent perceptions of the looping classroom. Academic achievement data were also compared to determine if looping is an effective classroom placement. The need for more looping data is essential as Nichols and Nichols (2002) appropriately state:

> The majority of these earlier explorations have been limited to qualitative and case study reports. Although these results are important to the educational research community, guarded support of looping should be noted due to the lack of solid empirical evidence for the majority of studies that have focused on looping classroom environments. (p. 19)

Research Questions

The research questions guiding the study were:

1. What is the parent perceptions of academic and affective experiences regarding parents of third grade looping classrooms compared to the parent perceptions regarding third grade non-looping classrooms?

2. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb reading achievement scores between students participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to students in the third grade non-looping classrooms?

3. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb reading achievement scores between boys participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to boys in the third grade non-looping classrooms?

4. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb reading achievement scores between girls participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to girls in the third grade non-looping classrooms?

5. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb mathematics achievement scores between students participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to students in the third grade non-looping classrooms?

6. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb mathematics achievement scores between boys participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to boys in the third grade non-looping classrooms?

7. What are the differences in the results of the AIMSweb mathematics achievement scores between girls participating in the third grade looping classrooms compared to girls in the third grade non-looping classroom?

Research Hypotheses

For each of the hypotheses, the statistical significance level was determined at the <.05.

H1. Parents of third grade students assigned to the third grade looping classrooms rated their students' academic and affective experiences significantly higher than parents of students in the third grade non-looping classrooms.

H2. Third grade students assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb reading achievement assessment than third grade students assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

H3. Third grade boys assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb reading achievement assessment than third grade boys assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

H4. Third grade girls assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb reading achievement assessment than third grade girls assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

H5. Third grade students assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb mathematics achievement assessment than third grade students assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

H6. Third grade boys assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb mathematics achievement assessment than third grade boys assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

H7. Third grade girls assigned to the looping classrooms performed significantly higher on the AIMSweb mathematics achievement assessment than third grade girls assigned to the non-looping classrooms.

Methodology

The research included a survey to collect parent perceptions on the effects of the third grade looping classroom compared to the parent perceptions of the third grade non looping classrooms. Surveys were sent home to 106 parents of students in the third grade looping classrooms and to 120 parents of students in the third grade non-looping classrooms in the

spring 2012. The archived reading and mathematics achievement data from 2009-2010, included the students from sixteen elementary schools that house both looping classrooms and non-looping classrooms. The achievement data included were the AIMSweb Reading Curriculum Based Measure (R-CBM) and the Mathematics Concepts and Applications (M-CAP), which was used to determine if looping had a statistically significant positive impact on student achievement.

Conclusions

The survey put forth eleven questions to collect parent perception data on the effects of the looping classroom compared to those parent perceptions of the non-looping classrooms. The response rate of the survey was 109 of 226 surveys sent home. Of the 109 surveys returned, 57 of the surveys were from the parents of the looping classrooms and 52 were from the parents of the non-looping classrooms. The results of the survey indicated parents of third grade students assigned to the third grade looping classrooms did not rate their students' academic and affective experiences significantly higher than parents of students in the third grade non-looping classrooms with the exception of the last question of the survey. The last question of the survey which was related parents being involved in school activities and helping with their children at home was rated significantly higher. Question number five of the survey was in regards to parents' children getting along with others. This question had a higher mean score from the parents of the looping classrooms when compared to those parents of the non-looping classrooms, which was the most significant observation made in analyzing the study. Overall, the survey was not rated significantly higher by the parents of the third grade looping classrooms when compared to the parent of the third grade looping classrooms. The researcher concluded by rejecting

Hypothesis 1, parents of third grade students assigned to the third grade looping classrooms rated their students' academic and affective experiences significantly higher than parents of students in the third grade non-looping classrooms. The M-CAP data revealed academic achievement gains for both the looping classrooms and non-looping classrooms. The hypothesis was rejected that the third grade looping students performed significantly higher when compared to the third grade non-looping students.

The AIMSweb R-CBM data in itself showed academic achievement gains for both the looping classrooms and non-looping classrooms. However, based on the independent samples t-test results, the hypothesis was rejected that the third grade looping students performed significantly higher when compared to the third grade non-looping students. Further, the data revealed boys of the third grade looping classrooms did not perform significantly higher when compared to the boys of the third grade non-looping classrooms. Additionally, data revealed that girls of the looping classrooms did not perform significantly higher when compared to the girls of the non-looping classrooms. Overall, the hypotheses were rejected in all three analyses of the data that third grade students in the looping classrooms performed significantly higher than third grade students in the non-looping classrooms on the Reading Curriculum Based Measure.

The M-CAP data revealed academic achievement gains for both the looping classrooms and non-looping classrooms. Further, the data revealed boys in the looping classrooms did not perform significantly higher when compared to third grade boys in the non-looping classrooms. The same holds when comparing the third grade girls of the looping classrooms to the girls of the third grade non-looping classrooms. The data results revealed that girls in the third grade looping classrooms did not perform significantly higher

when compared to girls of the third grade non-looping classrooms. Overall, the hypotheses were rejected in all three analyses of the data that third grade students in the looping classrooms performed significantly higher than third grade students in the non-looping classrooms on the Mathematics Concepts and Applications Assessment.

In closing, the parent perception surveys yielded positive mean differences for nine of the eleven questions. However, the analysis of the data revealed that parents of the third grade looping classrooms did not rate the academic and affective experiences significantly higher when compared to those parents of the third grade non-looping classrooms with the exception of the question related to supporting the child's education. The results of the AIMSweb R-CBM and AIMSweb M-CAP did not definitively prove that looping is an effective placement option, though there were academic gains that were revealed. Therefore, further quantitative research is needed on the effects of a looping classroom.

Recommendations

The findings for this study have implications for teachers, administrators, and school officials. Administrators and school officials should consider the effects of the looping classroom. Educators should examine the professional literature about the academic effects of the looping classroom, as well before considering looping. If school officials currently have looping classrooms, the achievement data needs to be analyzed and examined by comparing the scores with non-looping classrooms to determine if the effects of a looping classroom have a positive impact on student achievement. Haycock (2005) states that one way to use the data are to identify and learn from the most effective teachers and teams.

Parents need to be given a choice if they would like their elementary child involved in the looping classroom because looping may not be appropriate for every child. Epstein (1995)

states that when parents and staff work together in partnerships, a caring community forms around students. Parents should be given an opportunity to reflect on some questions about looping before agreeing to the concept. Questions to consider could be:

- Will looping limit my child's friendships?
- Will looping have a positive effect on my child's learning?
- Does my child have a positive relationship with his/her teacher?
- Does the teacher provide a learning environment which is innovative and challenging to meet the needs of my child?

Administrators and school officials must be committed to providing professional development for looping teachers. Implementation should occur after careful consideration and review of literature has been completed. Further, professional development in instructional strategies, assessment, child development, and student relationships would be beneficial for all teachers. Focusing on these areas is imperative to understand the expectations and grade level standards of two grade levels. Administrators and school officials should provide release time for looping teachers to collaborate with one another to discuss concerns and strategies for the looping classroom. With the focus on student achievement due to high stakes assessments and the importance of positive relationships, administrators need to make decisions that are in the best interest of the student learners.

Looping teachers must realize positive relationships and meeting the emotional needs of the child is essential. In addition, looping teachers must also realize the achievement success of a child is important to prepare the child to become a lifelong learner, as well. Teachers who are considering looping should read literature about the advantages and

disadvantages of looping. There are some hidden consequences involved in looping that a teacher must consider. The following are some hidden consequences:

- Teacher must know two curriculums and grade level standards
- Some students may not benefit from the looping classroom because of a personality conflict/clash
- Students may get too comfortable and behavior concerns may arise the second year
- Some states may have certification requirements to teach another grade level and additional certification may be required
- Separation anxiety may occur after two years of teaching with the same group of students
- High stakes testing in certain grade levels may create a sense of pressure

Additionally, administrators need to be involved in the looping classroom and support the classroom placement option. Administrators must analyze the achievement data and make necessary changes when needed to meet the needs of the children. When considering any placement option for children, educators should read literature and investigate if the option has a positive effect on meeting the needs of the students. Ongoing evaluation and improvements are key to success. Checkley (1995) wrote, "Some educators are already convinced that looping can make a positive impact with or without the conclusive data" (p. 5). For looping to be successful, teachers need to be involved in ongoing collaborative conversations with the administrator, other classroom teachers who loop to ensure academic achievement gains are being made and instruction is tailored to reach the needs of the students in the classroom.

When considering looping classrooms, the need to focus on the involving parents in activities in the school is crucial for increased academic performance. Dougherty (2006)

aptly states that having a parent liaison in schools is essential for increasing parent involvement. Further, Dougherty writes that if a parent feels comfortable in a school environment and is given opportunities for participation then the more likely they will want to be involved (2006). Perhaps one solution to increase opportunities for families to be actively involved is to have a family resource center. Dougherty (2006) wrote that the family resource center is to provide support services for the students at schools as well as for their families. The resource centers can encourage families to become involved with their child's education (Dougherty, 2006). Schneider and Hollennczer (2006) wrote that administrators and teachers who are wishing to increase parent involvement should initially focus on getting the parent to volunteer in the school. Once the school can get the parents to volunteer, the school needs to make sure the volunteers are appreciated. Schneider and Hollenczer (2006) also point out that communication is necessary. Teachers need to communicate heavily through the use of notes, memos, phone calls, and newsletters to increase communication and to keep parents and caregivers informed. When considering looping classrooms, the area of parental involvement is important in order to maintain positive relationships with the parents and caregivers.

Further research on looping classrooms in the urban schools need to be considered. One possible research study is tracking the academic achievement of students who were in looping classrooms into the next grade level. Additionally, a longitudinal study on looping classrooms compared to the non-looping classrooms to understand how long-term relationships effect student achievement would be beneficial. Caauwe (2009) wrote, "Educators want to give all racial and socio economic groups of students and equal opportunity to succeed academically" (p. 93). Looping may be an alternative placement

option to the traditional one year classroom assignments because of the relationships built with the students and family members over the two year period. Looping as a placement option may strengthen the school to home partnerships in order to reach the students and move them towards increased academic achievement. Additionally, looping in the urban school setting may not only increase academic achievement, but foster the meaningful relationships that are necessary in order to meet the needs of the students. This study will hopefully contribute to the existing looping research and add a quantitative perspective to the literature on looping classrooms. Furthermore, it is desirous that this study not only contributes to the ongoing evaluation of the school district studied, but also to other school administrators and officials considering whether looping may be beneficial for students in an urban classroom setting.

APPENDIX A

RESEARCH APPROVAL EMAIL FROM UMKC

From: robinsonand@umkc.edu [robinsonand@umkc.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, November 16, 2011 10:57 AM
To: Smith, Dianne
Cc: Robinson, Andrea L.; Robinson, Andrea L.; Danley, Angela (UMKC-Student)
Subject: Study SS11-162X: The Effects of a Looping Classroom Among Second Grade Students in an Urban School District

November 16, 2011

Dianne Smith, Ph.D.
UMKC - School of Education
5100 Rockhill Rd.
Kansas City, MO 64110

Determination Date: 11/16/2011
Review Type: Exempt, Category 1

RE: SSIRB Protocol #: SS11-162X, entitled: "The Effects of a Looping Classroom Among Second Grade Students in an Urban School District"

Dear Dr. Smith,

The above referenced study was reviewed and determined to be exempt in accordance with the Federal Guidelines 45 CFR Part 46 as follows: (1) Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as (i) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or (ii) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.

You are required to submit a progress report on or before 11/15/2012 to prevent withdrawal of the exempt determination for your study. If your project is completed before the anniversary of the study determination date, a final report is required.

Please contact the administrative office of the SSIRB (email: umkcssirb@umkc.edu; phone: 816-235-5927) if you have questions.

Thank you,

SSIRB Administrative Office

PLEASE NOTE:
If a signed copy of this letter is needed, please contact a member of the IRB staff.

APPENDIX B

RESEARCH AMENDMENT EMAIL FROM UMKC

From: robinsonand@umkc.edu [robinsonand@umkc.edu]
Sent: Monday, April 09, 2012 9:32 PM
To: Smith, Dianne
Cc: Robinson, Andrea L.; Robinson, Andrea L.; Danley, Angela (UMKC-Student)
Subject: Study SS11-162X: The Effects of a Looping Classroom Among Second Grade Students in an Urban School District

April 9, 2012

Dianne Smith, Ph.D.
UMKC - School of Education
5100 Rockhill Rd. Room 328
Kansas City, MO 64110

Amendment Approval Date: 4/9/2012
Expiration Date: 11/15/2012

Dear Dr. Smith,

Your Amendment dated, 4/9/2012, to research protocol IRB #SS11-162X entitled, "The Effects of a Looping Classroom Among Third Grade Students in an Urban School District" was reviewed by a Compliance Officer of the UMKC Research Compliance Office.

You are granted permission to conduct your study #SS11-162X, as revised, dated 4/9/2012. The study retains its exempt status and the date for biennial review remains unchanged at 11/15/2012, unless closed before that date.

The approval includes the following:
- Change in title
- Change of population to third grade students from second grade students
- Increase in recruitment number
- Grammatical corrections to consent form and cover letter
- Minor revisions to survey

Any further changes to the study must be promptly reported and approved. Please contact the administrative office of the SSIRB (email: umkcssirb@umkc.edu; phone: 816-235-5927) if you have questions.

Thank you,

SSIRB Administrative Office

PLEASE NOTE:
If a signed copy of this letter is needed, please contact a member of the IRB staff.

APPENDIX C

APPROVAL MEMPHIS CITY SCHOOLS

Memphis City Schools

Research, Evaluation & Assessment

Every Child. Every Day. College Bound.

Reply to the office of:
John R. Barker, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Phone (901) 416-5533
FAX (901) 416-7635
BarkerJohnR@mcsk12.net

December 6, 2010

Angela Danley
University of Missouri-Kansas City
Ad6mm.mail.umkc.edu

Ms. Danley,

After consideration of your proposal, *The Effects of a Looping Classroom in the Primary Grades*, we have approved your request to conduct a research study in the Memphis City Schools. You should use this letter as official notification of approval for your study.

I look forward to working with you in the completion of this project.

Please direct any inquiries to me via email at barkerjohnr@mcsk12.net.

Regards,

John R. Barker

John R. Barker, Ph.D.
Executive Director

APPENDIX D

PROPOSAL FORM MEMPHIS CITY SCHOOLS

Memphis City Schools Research Proposal Form

Updated 3-2-07

RECEIVED OCT 2 1 2010

1. Applicant's name and institution	Angela Jean Danley University of Missouri-Kansas City
2. Title of your project:	The Effects of a Looping Classroom in the Primary Grades
3. Name, email, and phone number of your advisor (if applicable):	Angela Danley Ad6mm@mail.umkc.edu or angela.danley@leesummit.k12.mo.us Dr. Shirley McArthur *phone: 816 235-2451*
4. Your deadline (when you would like to have everything done):	May of 2012 **Note to graduate students – please seek approval in a semester prior to the one in which you intend to graduate!**

Memphis City Schools Research Proposal Form

Updated 3-2-07

5. A brief description of your project:	Whom will you survey/study: I would like to survey parents of the looping 2nd grade classrooms in the district. I would also like to compare looping and non-looping classrooms in regards to reading achievement scores and also math achievement. I would also be interested in archived data, as well. What are your guiding questions or goals for this study: 1. What are the parent perceptions of the looping classrooms? 2. What are the differences in the yearly reading achievement gains of students in a 2nd grade looping classroom compared to the non-looping 2nd grade classrooms? 3. What are the differences in the yearly math achievement gains of students in a 2nd grade looping classroom compared to the non-looping 2nd grade classrooms? When will you do this: The survey will be given in the 2nd semester of the 2011-2012 school year. If collecting data for the 2011-2012 school year, I would like Fall, Winter, and Spring academic achievement scores of Students who have completed a K-1 loop? How will your project improve academic achievement in Memphis City Schools: The results of the study will benefit the Memphis Schools by providing a research study on the effects of the looping classroom. This study will add to the data that has already been collected by the Memphis schools, as well. A research study will be done from a non-district employee, which will take out the likelihood of any biases. How will you use your findings: I will use my findings for my dissertation requirements for UMKC. I will also use the findings to communicate with Memphis Schools the results of the study. I would also like to compose a journal article in the future on this study.

MCS supports looping K-1 and/or 2-3

if you focus on 2nd grade it should be limited to students who participated in the K-1 loop for two years.

data

what data will be used

Memphis City Schools Research Proposal Form

Updated 3-2-07

6. Number of students to be studied:	120 looping students and 120 non-looping students (approximately 6 classes per group)	7. Number of teachers, staff or parents to be studied:	I would like to survey the parents of the looping classrooms (approximately: 120 parents)
8. Please list all of the schools (or the types of schools – e.g., Title I Schools with 75% or more free/reduced lunch students) you plan to involve in this study: *After reviewing your list, we may need to contact you for revisions. The REA office will contact principals for their consent.*	I would like to use the schools that loop and schools that do not loop with similar demographics, such as a high free and reduced lunch rate.		

9. Describe your research methodology (if using a survey, please attach the questions; if you'll mine existing data, what variables do you need; etc.)

I have attached the parent survey for the parents of the students in the looping classroom. I have used this survey before for my Education Specialist Degree in 2009.

I would like to use current data for reading achievement scores and math achievement scores for the Fall, Winter, and Spring of the 2011-2012 school year. I would like to use any archived data that has been collected on the looping classrooms that has been used to inform parents of the looping classroom.

10. How can we get in contact with you? Please list phone numbers, email, address, etc.

I can be reached at ad6mm.mail.umkc.edu or 816-804-5599

Memphis City Schools Research Proposal Form

Updated 3-2-07

11. Internal Processing

I have reviewed this Proposal Brief and confirm the following (*please check all that apply*):

- ☒ This proposal is appropriate for our district and its goals, and will add to the knowledge base.
- ☐ This proposal is returned to the person designated in #1 above for revision and resubmission based on the following criteria: _____
- ☐ This proposal is declined because it does not fit the district's goals.
- ☐ This proposal is declined because _____

John Barker — 12/6/10

Executive Director of REA — Date

Provided contact is made with Dr. Annie Conway and her noted comments are addressed.

JB

APPENDIX E

CONSENT FORM

Consent Form

Date: _____

Dear Parent.

Below you will find the consent form requesting your participation in the survey on parent perceptions on your child's classroom experience.

Identification of Researcher: This research is being done by Angela Danley, a doctoral student in the School of Education at the University of Missouri –Kansas City

Purpose of the study: The purpose of this study is to gather parent perceptions about their children's classroom experience.

Request for Participation: You are invited to participate in this study on parent perceptions. You and your child will not be penalized in any way if you decide not to participate. If you do not wish to answer any of the questions, you may skip them. You may withdraw your responses at the end of the study. If you wish to do this, please contact me at (816) 804-5599. Parents and children will not be identified on this survey.

Exclusion: You must be at least 18 years of age to participate.

Description of the Research Method: The research involves completing a short survey. The survey indicates questions on how parents perceive the classroom. The survey should be completed within 10 minutes. You will be asked to complete the survey without indicating your name or the name of your student. The survey will be sent home _____, 2012 and returned _____, 2012

Explanation of Risks: The risks to this study are similar to the risks of everyday life.

Questions About Your Rights: If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the IRB Administrator of UMKC's Social Sciences Institutional Review Board at 816-235-5927.

Although it is not the University's policy to compensate or provide medical treatment for persons who participate in studies, if you think you have been harmed as a result of participating in this study, please call the IRB Administrator of UMKC's Social Sciences Institutional Review Board at 816-235-5927.

Your participation in this research survey constitutes your consent.

I have read this form and agree to participate.

Initials: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX F

SURVEY COVER LETTER

Survey Cover Letter

_____, 2012

Dear Parent or Guardian,

My name is Angela Danley and as a part of the requirements for my Education Doctorate Degree at the School of Education, University of Missouri-Kansas City, I am completing a research study and am gathering parent perceptions related to the classroom.

Your assistance with this effort would be greatly appreciated. If you are able to assist, please complete the attached survey and return it to your child's classroom teacher by _____.

The return of the completed survey indicates your consent to participate in the study as indicated in the consent form attached to this cover letter. Results of this survey will be reported in a way that ensures your protection as a participant. Your name is not required on this survey nor is your child's name required on the survey. Your participation is voluntary and you may choose to discontinue your participation at anytime.

Please feel free to contact me at if you questions regarding the survey. I can be reached at (816) 804-5599 (cell).

I know you have daily priorities and daily responsibilities; therefore, I appreciate your willingness to assist in this parent survey.

Sincerely,

Angela Danley
Ad6mm@mail.umkc.edu

Research Advisor:
Dr. Dianne Smith
School of Education
University of Missouri-Kansas City
5100 Rockhill Road
Kansas City, MO 64110
Smithdia@umkc.edu
816.235.2458

APPENDIX G

PARENT SURVEY

Parent Survey

Completing this survey constitutes your voluntary consent.
Directions: Please indicate your thoughts on the following survey by circling the statement that describes you level of agreement.

1. My child looks forward to coming to school each day.

a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree e. Not sure

2. My child has improved in the area of reading this school year.

a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree e. Not sure

3. My child has improved in the area of math this school year.

a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree e. Not sure

4. I have developed a positive relationship with my child's teacher this school year.

a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree e. Not sure

5. My child gets along well with other children.

a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree e. Not sure

6. My child's teacher was able to meet and serve my child's academic needs this school year.

a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree e. Not sure

7. I did not develop a positive relationship with my child's teacher this year.

a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree e. Not sure

8. I have not had any concerns about my child's behavior in the classroom this year.

a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree e. Not sure

9. Expectations for behavior were clearly communicated to my child by the classroom teacher this year.

a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree e. Not sure

10. My child seemed happy during the school year.

a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree e. Not sure

11. I support my child's education by participating in activities at school and helping them at home.

a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree e. Not sure

APPENDIX H

COMPARISON OF THE INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST RESULTS FOR THE PARENT PERCEPTION SURVEY

Independent Samples T-Test Results for the Parent Perception Survey

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Looks Forward To School	Equal variances assumed	1.325	.252	1.718	107	.089	.240	.140	-.037	.517
	Equal variances not assumed			1.742	102.760	.085	.240	.138	-.033	.514
Improve in Reading	Equal variances assumed	.495	.483	-.506	107	.614	-.071	.140	-.349	.207
	Equal variances not assumed			-.499	92.614	.619	-.071	.142	-.353	.211
Improved in Math	Equal variances assumed	3.458	.066	.121	107	.904	.017	.139	-.259	.293
	Equal variances not assumed			.119	87.116	.905	.017	.142	-.265	.298
Parent Developed Positive Relationship With Teacher	Equal variances assumed	.211	.647	.483	107	.630	.074	.153	-.229	.377
	Equal variances not assumed			.480	102.070	.632	.074	.154	-.231	.379

Child Gets Along With Others	Equal variances assumed	.549	.460	1.321	106	.189	.234	.177	-.117	.586
	Equal variances not assumed			1.338	104.478	.184	.234	.175	-.113	.581
Teacher Served Child's Academic Needs	Equal variances assumed	.185	.668	1.084	107	.281	.186	.172	-.154	.526
	Equal variances not assumed			1.086	106.739	.280	.186	.171	-.154	.525
Parent Did Not Develop Positive Relationship	Equal variances assumed	.324	.570	1.079	107	.283	-.188	.174	-.532	.157
	Equal variances not assumed			1.080	106.472	.282	-.188	.174	-.532	.157
No Concerns About Child's Behavior	Equal variances assumed	1.087	.299	1.409	107	.162	.281	.199	-.114	.676
	Equal variances not assumed			1.415	106.998	.160	.281	.198	-.113	.674
Expectations Were Clearly Communicated	Equal variances assumed	.189	.664	.661	107	.510	.103	.156	-.206	.413
	Equal variances not assumed			.654	96.014	.515	.103	.158	-.210	.417

Child Was Happy	Equal variances assumed	4.506	.036	1.813	107	.073	.256	.141	-.024	.536
	Equal variances not assumed			1.857	89.727	.067	.256	.138	-.018	.530
Parent Supports Child's Education	Equal variances assumed	10.972	.001	2.204	107	.030	.224	.101	.023	.425
	Equal Variances not assumed			2.236	102.111	.028	.224	.100	.025	.422

APPENDIX I

INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST RESULTS FOR THE OVERALL CHANGE FROM FALL TO SPRING ON LOOPING CLASSROOMS AND NON-LOOPING CLASSROOMS USING THE READING CURRICULUM BASED MEASURE

Independent Samples T-Test Results for Overall Change from Fall to Spring on Looping Classrooms and Non-Looping Classrooms Using the Reading Curriculum Based Measure

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
RCBM Change from Fall to Spring	Equal variances assumed	.040	.841	1.562	1023	.119	2.628	1.682	-.673	5.928
	Equal variances not assumed			1.560	194.284	.120	2.628	1.684	-.694	5.950

APPENDIX J

INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST RESULTS FOR THE OVERALL CHANGE FROM FALL TO SPRING ON BOYS IN THE LOOPING CLASS-ROOMS AND BOYS IN THE NON-LOOPING CLASSROOMS USING THE READING CURRICULUM BASED MEASURE

Independent Samples T-Test Results for the Overall Change from Fall to Spring on Boys in the Looping Classrooms and Boys in the Non-Looping Classrooms Using the Reading Curriculum Based Measure

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
RCBM Change from Fall to Spring	Equal variances assumed	.391	.532	1.482	525	.139	3.667	2.474	-1.194	8.529
	Equal variances not assumed			1.442	91.392	.153	3.667	2.543	-1.384	8.719

APPENDIX K

INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST RESULTS FOR THE OVERALL CHANGE FROM FALL TO SPRING ON GIRLS IN THE LOOPING CLASSROOMS AND GIRLS IN THE NON-LOOPING CLASS-ROOMS USING THE READING CURRICULUMBASED MEASURE

Independent Samples T-Test Results for the Overall Change from Fall to Spring on Girls in the Looping Classrooms and Girls in the Non-Looping Classrooms Using the Reading Curriculum Based Measure

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
RCBM Change from Fall to Spring	Equal variances assumed	.066	.797	.712	496	.477	1.625	2.282	-2.857	6.108
	Equal variances not assumed			.729	102.080	.468	1.625	2.231	-2.799	6.050

APPENDIX L

INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST RESULTS FOR THE OVERALL CHANGE FALL TO SPRING ON LOOPING CLASSROOMS AND NON-LOOPING CLASSROOMS USING THE MATHEMATICS CONCEPTS AND APPLICATIONS ASSESSMENT

Independent Samples T-Test Results for the Overall Change from Fall to Spring on Looping Classrooms and Non-Looping Classrooms Using the Mathematics Concepts and Applications Assessment

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
MCAP-Change from Fall to Spring	Equal variances assumed	5.890	.015	1.664	923	.096	.925	.556	-.166	2.015
	Equal variances not assumed			1.418	177.477	.158	.925	.652	-.362	2.211

APPENDIX M

INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST RESULTS FOR THE OVERALL CHANGE FROM FALL TO SPRING ON BOYS IN THE LOOPING CLASSROOMS AND BOYS IN THE NON-LOOPING CLASSROOMS USING THE MATHEMATICS CONCEPTS AND APPLICATIONS ASSESSMENT

Independent Samples T-Test Results for the Overall Change from Fall to Spring on Boys in the Looping Classrooms and Boys in the Non-Looping Classrooms Using the Mathematics Concepts and Applications Assessment

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
MCAP Change from Fall to Spring	Equal variances assumed	6.661	.010	2.270	470	.024	1.863	.821	.250	3.475
	Equal variances not assumed			1.834	85.235	.070	1.863	1.016	-.157	3.882

APPENDIX N

INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST RESULTS FOR THE OVERALL CHANGE FROM FALL TO SPRING ON GIRLS IN THE LOOPING CLASS-ROOMS AND GIRLS IN THE NON-LOOPINGCLASSROOMS USING THE MATHEMATICS CONCEPTS AND APPLICATIONS ASSESSMENT

Independent Samples T-Test Results for the Overall Change from Fall to Spring on Girls in the Looping Classrooms and Girls in the Non-Looping Classrooms Using the Mathematics Concepts and Applications Assessment

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
MCAP-Change from Fall to Spring	Equal variances assumed	.684	.409	-.036	451	.971	-.027	.746	-1.493	1.439
	Equal variances not assumed			-.033	92.734	.974	-.027	.816	-1.648	1.594

REFERENCES

Belcher, M.H. (n.d.). A descriptive study of loopers in four schools. Unpublished doctoral dissertation Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Retrieved December 22, 2008, from http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/theses/available/etd-2012001-212825/unrestricted/etd.pdf.

Bellis, M. (1999). Look before you loop. *Young Children, 54*(3), 70-73.

Burke, D.L. (1999). Looping: Adding time, strengthening relationships. *Of Primary Interest*, *7*(1), 3-6.

Buske, J. (2009). In black history month, one-room school opens to offer lessons. *The Washington Post.* Retrieved February 18, 2010 from http://ww.washingtonpost.com/wp-yn/content/article/2009/01/30/R2009013004084.html.

Caauwe, C.M. (2009). *The impact of looping practices on student achievement at a Minnesota inner city elementary school*. Doctoral dissertation, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota. Retrieved November 3, 2011 from http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED512646.pdf.

Checkley, K. (1995). Multi-year education reaping the benefits of "looping". *Education Update, 37*(8), 1-6.

Chirichello, M. & Chirichello, C. (2001). A standing ovation for looping: The critics respond. *Childhood Education*, *78*(1), 2-9.

Cooper, C. W., Allen, R., & Bettez, S. (2009). Forming culturally responsive learning communities in demographically changing schools. In C. A. Mullen (Ed.), *The handbook of leadership and professional learning communities* (pp. 103-114). England: Palgrave.

Davies. B. (2009). *The essentials of school leadership.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Ltd.

Delviscio, J.J., & Muffs, M.L. (2007). Regrouping students. *School Administrator, 64*(8), 26-30.

Dougherty, S.E. (2006). Parental involvement in urban schools: The case of a family resource center in Hartford. Retrieved April 20, 2012 from http://eric.ed.gov/PDFS/EJ932201.pdf.

Erie Elementarty Charter School. (2009). Retrieved February 18, 2010 from http://eriecharterschool.org/curriculum.

Elliot, D.C., & Capp, R. (2003). The gift of time. *Leadership 33*(2), 34-36.

Epstein, J.L. (1995). School/family/community parternships: Caring for the children we Share. *Phi Delta Kappan, 76*(9). 701-712

Faul, F., Erdfelder, E., Buchner, A., & Lang, A.G. (2009). Statistical power analyses using G*Power 3.1: Tests for correlation and regression analyses. *Behavior Research Methods, 41*(4), 1149-1160.

Forsten, C., Grant, J., & Richardson, I. (1999). *The looping evaluation handbook*. Peterborough, NH: Crystal Spring Books.

Fritsche Middle School. (n.d). Retrieved January15, 2012 from http://www.middleweb.com/ Fritsche1.html.

Fullan, M. (2007). *Leading in a culture of change*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Gall, M.D., Gall, J.P, & Borg, W.R. (2007). *Educational research: An introduction* (8th ed). Boston, MA: Pearson Inc.

Genese Community Charter School. (2009). Retrieved February 19, 2010 from http://www.gccschool.org/classrooms.

Grant, J., Johnson, B., & Richardson, I. (1996). *The looping handbook*: *Teacher and students progressing together.* Peterborough, NH: Crystal Springs Books.

Grant, J., Richardson, I., & Forsten, C. (2000). *In the loop.* Retrieved February 21, 2010 from http://www.williston.k12.vt.us/QuickLinks/Frameworks/Research/ InTheLoop.pdf.

Gravetter, F. & Walnau, L. (2005). *Essentials of statistics for the behavioral science* (5th ed). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publication Company.

Hanson, B. (1995). Getting to know you: Multi-year teaching. *Educational Leadership, 53*(3), 42-43.

Haycock, K. (2005). Improving academic achievement and closing gaps between groups and the middle grades. Retrieved April 1, 2012 from http://www.2.edtrust.org/Ed Trust/Product+Catalog/archievesII.htm.

Hedge, V.A., & Cassidy, J.D. (2004). Teachers and parent perspectives on looping. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 32*(2), 133-138.

Hitz, M.M., Somers, M.C., & Jenlink, C.L. (2007). The looping classroom: Benefits for children, families, and teachers. *Young Children, 62*(2), 80-84.

Hopkins. W.G. (2000). *Quantitative research design*. Retrieved July 29, 2011 from http://www.sportsci.org/jour/0001/wghdesign.html.

Horton, C. (2005). *Parent, student, and teacher responses to looping implementation*. Retrieved April 23, 2008, from http://home.twcny.rr.com/caseyhorton/litreview.html.

Huitt, W. (2004). Maslow's heirarchy of needs. *Educational Psychology Interactive*. Retrieved June 20, 2008, from htttp://chiron.vladosta.edu/whuitt/col/regsys/maslow.html.

Hume, K. (2007). Academic looping: Problem or solution? *Education Canada, 47*(2)*, 63.*

Huse, D. (1995). Restructuring and the physical context: Designing learning environments. *Children's Environments*, *12*(3), 10-42. Retrieved September 6, 2008, from http://www.colorado.edu/journals/cye/.

ISLLC, Council of Chief State School Officers (1996). *Interstate school leaders licensure consortium: Standards for school leaders*. Washington, DC: Author.

Jankoski, E. (1996). *Perceptions of the effect of looping on classroom relationships and continuity in learning*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Sarasota, FL.

Jossey-Bass Reader (2007). *Educational Leadership.* San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Kelly, P.A., Brown, S., Butler, A., Pelah, G., & Taylor, C., Zeller, P. (1998). A place to hang our hats. *Educational Leadership, 56*(1), 62-64. Retrieved April 23, 2008, from Eric Database.

Lincoln, R. (1997). Multi-year instruction: Establishing student-teacher relationships. *Schools in the Middle, 6*(3) 50-52.

Lincoln, R.D. (2000). Looping at the middle school level: Implementation and effects. *ERS Spectrum, 18*(3), 19-24.

Little, T.S., & Dacus, N.B. (1999). Looping: Moving up with the class. *Educational Leadership, 57*(1). Retrieved June 2, 2008, from Eric Database.

Liu, J. (1997). The emotional bond between teachers and students. *Phi Delta Kappan, 79*(2), 1-4.

Marshall, C. & Olvia, M. (2010). *Leadership for social justice.* Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon, Pearson Education, Inc.

Marston, D.B. (1989). A curriculum-based measurement approach to assessing academic performance: What it is and why do it. In M. R. Shinn (Ed.), *Curriculum based measurement: Assessing special children*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Maslow, A.H. (1954). *Motivation and personality*. New York, NY: Harper and Row.

Math Works, Inc (2010). Retrieved November 4, 2010 from http://www.mathworks.com/.

Mays, R., & Nordwall, S. (2006). *Waldorf answers on the philosophy and practice of Waldorf education*. Retrieved from http://www.waldorfanswers.org/index.htm.

Mazzuchi, D., & Brooks, N. (1992). The gift of time. *Teaching Pre K-8, 22*(5), 60-62.

McCown, C. & Sherman, S. (2002). Looping for better performance in the middle grades. *Middle School Journal, 33*(4), 17-21.

McDermott, P. & Rothenberg, J. (2000). Why urban parents resist involvement in their children's elementary education. *The Qualitative Report, 5*(3/4), 1-14. Retrieved February 18, 2010 from http//:www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR5-3/mcdermott.html.

McGuire, T. (2008). *South egremont school*. Retrieved November 2, 2008 from http://www.sbrsd.org/southegremont.html.

McIntyre, P.H. (2000). *Students' and parents' perceptions on their experiences with the looping process*. Doctoral dissertation, George Washington University, 2000.

Memphis City Schools. (2009). *K-3 in the loop.* Retrieved February 25, 2010 from http://www.mcsk12.net/forms/8.5x11%20K-3LoopLR.pdf.

Memphis City Schools Webpage. (2010). Retrieved October 10, 2010 from http://www.mcsk12.net/.

Messick, S. (1990). Test validity and the ethics of assessment. *American Psychologist, 35,* 1012-1027.

Montessori, M. (1917). *Spontaneous activity in education.* Retrieved October 30, 2008 from http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/24727.

Montessori, M. (1964). *The Montessori method*. New York, NY: Shocken Books.

Murphy, D. (2002). *The effects of the kindergarten-first grade looping program on academic achievement and self-esteem.* Doctoral dissertation, University of North Texas, 2002. Retrieved May 3, 2009 from http://www.library.unt.edu/theses/open/20023/murphy_doris/dissertation.pdf.

National Center for Education Statistcs. (2004). *Percent of schools that used various methods to organize classes or student groups*. Retrieved June 22, 2008 from http://nces.ed.gov/.

National Center for Education. (2007). *The nation's report card: Writing 2007*. Retrieved July 24, 2011 from http://nces.ed.gov.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2011). *The condition of education*. Retrieved July 24, 2011 from http://nces.ed.gov.

National Middle Schools Association. (2009). *Looping.* Retrieved February18, 2010 from http://www.nmsa.org/Research/ResearchSummaries/Looping/tabid/2009/Default.aspx.

Nichols, J.D., & Nichols, G.W. (2002). The impact of looping classroom environments on parental attitudes. *Preventing School Failure, 47*(1), 18-25.

Ozment, K. (2005). Smart answers. *Boston Magazine*. Retrieved June 20, 2008 from http://www.bostonmagazine.com/articles/smart_answers/Perceptions.

Payne, R. (2005). *A framework for understanding poverty.* Highlands, TX: aha! Process, Inc.

PRWeb. (2009). *Pearson's AIMSweb receives highest possible rating for predictive validity and reliability from NCRTI.* Retrieved October 22, 2010 from http://www.prweb.com/releases/2009/06/prweb2556504.htm.

Rappa, J.B. (1994). *Presentation to the national education commission on time and learning*. Cambridge, MA.

Rasmussen, K. (1998). Looping: Discovering the benefits of multi-year teaching.[Association for supervision and curriculum development.]. *Education Update, 40*(2). Retrieved June 22, 2008, from http://www.ascd.org.

Ratzki, A. (1988). Creating a school community. *American Educator, 12*(1), 10-43.

Ratzki, A., & Fisher, A. (1990). Life in a restructured school. *Educational Leadership, 47*(4), 46-51.

Reynolds, J.C., Barnhart, B.C., & Martin, B.N. (1999). Looping: A solution to the retention vs. social promotion dilemma. *ERS Spectrum, 17*(2), 16-20.

Regua, N. (2007). *Mendez v. Wesminster case*. Retrieved June 10, 2010 from http://mendezwestminstercase.blogspot.com/.

Salvetti, E. (1997). *Looping: Supporting student learning through long-term relationships* (1-13).[Electronic version]. Providence, RI: LAB at Brown University. Retrieved June 20, 2008, from www.alliance.brown.edu/pubs/ic/looping/looping.pdf.

Sanders, J.R. (2007). *The joint committee on evaluation standards, 2nd ed.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Schneider, E.J., & Hollenczer, L.L. (2006). *The principal's guide to managing communication.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Schwartz, S. (2007). Educating the heart. *Educational Leadership, 64*(7), 76-78.

Shinn, M.R., & Shinn, M. (2002). *AIMSweb training workbook: Administration and scoring of curriculum-based measurement (r-cbm) for use in general outcomes measurement*. Eden Prairie, MN: Edformation, Inc. Retrieved October 22, 2010 from http://www.kunaschools.org/resources/documents/AdminandScoringR-CBM09292005.pdf.

Shneyderman, A. (2000). *Evaluation of looping*. 1-22. Retrieved September 4, 2008, from http://oer.dadeschools.net/looping.pdf.

Simel, D. (1998). Education for building: Teacher attitudes toward looping. *International Journal of Educational Reform, 7*(4), 330-336.

Skiba, R., Magnusson, D., Marston, D., & Erickson, K. (1986). *The assessment of mathematics performance in special education: Achievement tests, proficiency tests, or formative evaluation?* Minneapolis, MN: Special Services, Minneapolis Public Schools.

Skinner, J.S. (1998). *Looping versus nonlooping second grade classrooms: Student achievement and student attitudes*. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Missouri-Columbia.

Snoderly, D. (2008). *Pine Idaho school*. Retrieved November 2, 2008 from http://www.mtnhomesd.org/pine/welcomemessage.htm.

Steiner, R. (1972). *Curative education*. London, ENG: Rudolf Steiner Press.

Swanson, B.R. (1999). *Multi-year teaching effects on student achievement*. Doctoral dissertation, California State University.

Tennessee Department of Education. (2010). Retrieved June 15, 2010 from http://tn.gov/education.

The Jossey-Bass Reader. (2007). *Educational leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Thurber, R.S., Shinn, M.R., & Smolkowski, K. (2002). What is measured in mathematics tests? Construct validity of curriculum-based mathematics measures. *School Psychology Review, 31*(4), 498-513. Retrieved October 22, 2010 from http://www.aimsweb.com/uploads/news/id30/thurber_et_al.pdf.

Trochim, W.M.K. (2006). *Likert scaling*. Retrieved October 23, 2010 from http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/scallik.php.

Tschannen-Moran, M. (2004). *Trust matters: Leadership for successful schools*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

United States Department of Education. (2003). *Questions and answers on no child left behind*. Retrieved July 23, 2011 from http://www2.ed.gov/nclb/accountability/schools/ accountability.html.

Vann, A. (1997). Leveling about looping. *The Education Digest*, *63*, 52-53.

Wynne, E., & Walberg, H. (1994). Persisting groups: An overlooked force for learning. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *75*(7), 527-530.

Zahorik, J.A., & Dichanz, H. (1997). Teaching for understanding in German schools. *Educational Leadership, 51*(5), 75-77.

Zajac, M. (2010). Kent County's African American schoolhouse museum: Former students recall days spent in a historic one-room schoolhouse. *Chesapeake Life Magazine.* Retrieved February 17, 2010 from http://www.chesapeakelifemag.com/index.php/cl/article/8866/.

VITA

Angela Jean Danley was born on February 25, 1973 in Mason City, Iowa. She moved to Kansas City, MO at the age of three with her family. She was raised in Grandview, MO and attended the Grandview C-4 School District from kindergarten through twelfth grade. She graduated from Grandview Senior High School in 1991. She received an academic scholarship and music scholarship to attend Avila College, a private Catholic college in Kansas City, MO. Angela graduated cum laude from Avila College in 1996 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Special Education.

During her first year of teaching special education at Trails West State School for the Severely Handicapped, she began her master's program at Webster University at the Kansas City extension. She was awarded the Masters of Arts in Teaching the summer of 1998.

Angela Danley worked as a teacher of special education in the Center School District from 1997-1998. She taught 9th grade through 12th grade cross categorical special education. In 1998, she went to the Lee's Summit R-7 School District and served thirteen years at Prairie View Elementary, where she taught special education from 1998-2001 and second grade from 2001-2011. During her tenure at Lee's Summit School District, Angela served on various leadership teams and pursued her Education Specialist Degree in School Administration from the University of Central Missouri in 2007. During her coursework, Angela wrote her five chapter research study titled *Togther Again: The Effects of a Looming Classroom in an Elementary Setting*. In 2009, Angela was awarded the Education Specialist Degree in the summer of 2009. In January 2010, she began her work toward her Doctorate Degree in School Administration at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Further, Angela

was awarded the Excellence in Teaching Award from the Lee's Summit R-7 School District in May 2011.

In the summer of 2011, Angela was offered a position as an instructional coach in the Grandview C-4 School District. During the fall of 2011, Angela received a grant for a set of iPads for the building where she serves.

Upon the completion of her degree requirements, Angela will serve as summer school assistant principal in Grandview C-4. She will continue to seek a position in school administration and pursue research interests related to education.

Angela Danley is a member of the National Education Association, Missouri Association for Elementary School Principals, Kansas City Network for Women in School Administration, Kansas City Association for Elementary School Principals, Delta Kappa Gamma – Lee's Summit Chapter, Parent Teacher Association in Grandview C-4, and the Parent Teacher Association in the Blue Springs R-7 School District. She has served as an assistant coach for Girls on the Run in Kansas City, where she helps girls in 3rd grade through 5th grade develop a positive self esteem while training for a 5K.