Pepperdine University

Graduate School of Education and Psychology

INCARCERATED YOUTH: CHALLENGES MEASURING ACADEMIC PROGRESS IN A JUVENILE HALL SCHOOL

A dissertation proposal in partial satisfaction

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education in Learning Technologies

by

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my grandma, Mama Flor. She encouraged me, supported me whole-heartedly and believed in me at a young age. She was my model of a strong child of God. I miss and will always love you!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for giving me the needed power and strength to complete this dissertation. Thank you for listening to my prayers, Your Word, and the many evident blessings throughout this process. You give me great comfort and lift me up in times of trials and stress. You allow dreams to come true!

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VITA

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ABSTRACT

The ever-changing implementations of assessing our students have driven instruction to focus on measuring academic growth for school improvement. Now that most of our nation has adopted the common core state standards to educate and prepare our students for college and career, the challenges will be even greater for those who are currently struggling such as many of the incarcerated youth.

According to the Juvenile Court Schools (JCS) fact sheet (Los Angeles County Office of Education; LACOE, 2012), many of the incarcerated youth generally "have serious gaps in their education and poor academic skills" (JCS Facts, bullet No. 4). Taking academic assessments can be challenging without external factors, but add in the fact that the student may be facing a life sentence in prison, placement in a group home or foster care facility away from family, or dealing with mental health issues drives the challenge of academic growth sometimes out of reach while incarcerated. Furthermore, the short period of stay in the incarcerated juvenile facility adds an even greater challenge to success or growth in their academic progress.

This study examined the challenges of measuring academic growth of incarcerated youth in a juvenile hall school facility. Through the use of mixed methods, a review of available student assessment data - increased frequent formative assessments, utilizing components of the RISE Educational Services and Total Educational Systems Support (TESS) Focused Adaptable-Structure Teaching (F.A.S.T.) Framework within the teacher's delivery of direct instruction - along with an online survey of the teachers' ability to collaborate in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), and a focus group with those who spearheaded the implementation of the instructional method, teacher-leads and administrators, resulted in finding that a unique

instructional method is needed for those students attending school in an incarcerated juvenile facility to measure academic growth.

The qualitative and quantitative data measured what needed to be continued, what needed to be stopped and what should be implemented regarding the instructional delivery, along with pre/post assessments of students who attended the incarcerated juvenile school facility and the dimensions of PLCs.

Chapter 1: Problem and Purpose

Introduction

On July 2, 1966, the United States Commissioner of Education, Harold Howe II, submitted a report to the President of the United States, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House in response to Section 402 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (United States National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). The report, 700 pages long and titled "Equality of Educational Opportunity," was produced by the National Center for Educational Statistics of the U.S. Office of Education, assisted by outside consultants and contractors. The report became known as the "Coleman Report," as its chief architect was renowned American sociologist James Coleman of Johns Hopkins University.

The Coleman Report (United States National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) stated that standardized achievement assessments were put into place to measure the skills, English Language Arts (ELA) consisting of reading and writing, math, history, and science, that were the most important factors in obtaining a good job and future promotions. The assessments used by Coleman (United States National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) for the report showed a great disparity in scores compared to white students. The report also noted that these assessments were to "provide a good measure of the range of opportunities open to students as they finish school-a wide range of choice of jobs or colleges if the scores on the skills assessments were high" (p. 20). Opportunities that are critical to making a living and fully participating in society were and still are often not available to minority students in the United States as a result of substandard education.

The Coleman Report (United States National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) noted two significant factors in respect to minority students' achievement: The quality of a

student's teacher showed a stronger relationship to pupil achievement, and minority students placed in schools of different social composition had tended to achieve at different levels.

Although the Coleman Report (United States National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) did not offer any recommendations for programs and policies to be put into place to improve the nation's educational opportunities, it did state that the U.S. Office of Education would seek advice on how to enhance the educational opportunities for all citizens of the United States.

As noted above, the federal government has been assessing students' learning, as measured by their performance on standardized achievement tests, since 1966 (United States National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). Standardized achievement tests came about as a result of public sentiment in support of social and educational reform to fight poverty. Poverty and socio-economic status remain factors (Payne, 2005; Reeves, 2004) in student performance on standardized exams today, but they are not the only factors. Furthermore, while today's assessments are applied nationally, when student achievement among states, districts, and individual schools, which often varied considerably student background and school resources, were compared in the 1960's many educators opposed the comparisons, arguing that they were not made fairly (Alexander, James, Glaser, & National Academy of Education, 1987).

A Nation at Risk

In the early 1980's, the education system in the United States was again a focus of concern. In response to a widespread perception that the US education system was failing its students, the Secretary of Education, T.H. Bell, created and directed the National Commission on Excellence in Education in 1981 to examine the quality of education in the United States (Gardner, 1983). Education reform had been ongoing for many years, and Bell stated that he was establishing the Commission based on his "responsibility to provide leadership, constructive

criticism, and effective assistance to schools and universities" (Gardner, 1983, "Introduction," para. 2). The report stated:

> Part of what is at risk is the promise first made on this continent: All, regardless of race or class or economic status, are entitled to a fair chance and to the tools for developing their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost. This promise means that all children by virtue of their own efforts, competently guided, can hope to attain the mature and informed judgment needed to secure gainful employment, and to manage their own lives, thereby serving not only their own interests but also the progress of society itself. (Gardner, 1983, "A Nation At Risk," para. 1)

Disparities in educational achievement among ethnic groups and socio-economic classes in the United States, as well as the country's lagging behind in achievement when compared to other countries, remain concerns today. The need to make significant changes in the United States' educational system is urgent, with the No Child Left Behind act and the Race to the Top initiative one of the more recent efforts to "fix" what is wrong with K-12 education in the United States.

Background and History

Current concerns regarding education in the United States include using technology effectively, infrastructure problems as school The factors of concern in the educational system, during the 1980's, have changed in some ways as technology continues to play a major role in this nation, as well as worldwide. In conjunction to the assessments in the educational system being of concern, the factors of the postwar years are still of concern today- the need for adequate school buildings decay, decreased funding for public schools, and low salaries along with the uncertainty of future funding and the low salaries, which assist with recruitment into this career (Ravitch, 1983), educators are uncertain of their future as well as their students. Concerns about student achievement are relevant in all traditional educational settings, but an alternative

setting, such as juvenile hall incarcerated facilities, is faced with these concerns, along with many others that affect their students' academic progress.

Juvenile hall incarcerated facilities are locations where youth, generally between the ages of 12 and 18, both male and female, are held while their sentence is adjudicated. California Education Code, Chapter 6, Article 14.5, section 1900 (California Department of Education; CDE, n.d.) requires that incarcerated students be provided the opportunity to attend school while incarcerated, unless they have already graduated from an accredited high school and their diploma can be verified. Furthermore, county probation offices also require students to attend school during weekdays when they are incarcerated (LACOE, 2012). Because these youth must remain onsite 24 hours a day, they must attend school at the facility as mandated by the law.

The concerns plaguing an incarcerated juvenile hall school facility are far greater than what might be found in a traditional educational setting. To an even larger extent than for at-risk students in a traditional school, these students' academic progress is impeded by the social dynamics of the incarcerated facility itself, where students are only temporary members of a learning community and may focus their concerns on the transition from juvenile hall to a juvenile camp or placement rather than their classroom work. The student's emotional and mental issues affect their academic progress and tend to take precedence over educational concerns in this setting.

Many of the students attending school in a juvenile hall incarcerated facility come from low socio-economic backgrounds. In her research on children in poverty, Dr. Ruby Payne (2005) notes, "For our students to be successful, we must understand their hidden rules and teach them the rules that will make them successful at school and at work" (p. 6). In order to improve the academic progress of these students, instructional delivery in special settings, such as juvenile

hall facilities, must be re-evaluated. The traditional "one-size" fits all method of instruction has not been successful with the population of students incarcerated.

Progress Reports

As previously noted, incarcerated juvenile hall school facilities are required to meet the same standards for students' academic progress as traditional school districts (CDE, n.d.). Yet students in an incarcerated juvenile hall school facility do not remain in one location for a traditional school year but move around from location to location within the Juvenile Justice System (JJS), the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), or Residential Treatment Centers (RTCs). The fact that these institutions are held to the same guidelines (see Figure 1) as a traditional school, enforced by the California Department of Education (n.d.), compel the institutions to develop an unconventional instructional delivery method to assist the students with their academic skills to meet traditional guidelines. A major part of the delivery methods includes frequent formative assessments of students to see if they are learning material and to adjust the teaching approach if they are not learning. These frequent formative assessments would occur every ten to fourteen days, as many students may only be present for one complete instructional method. They would specifically focus on one strand of a larger standard and would commence with a pre-test. Furthermore, it would allow the teaching staff to gain insight to their instructional methods and the comprehension of the students regarding the specific strand being taught.

Therefore, in an incarcerated juvenile hall school facility, not only are formative assessments utilized in their traditional method of assessing student outcomes in order to assist with immediate feedback and modification of the instruction, these formative assessments are also used to assess the end of a process prior to moving onto the next level of instruction as the students' time of stay in an incarcerated juvenile hall school is on average 20 to 30 days.

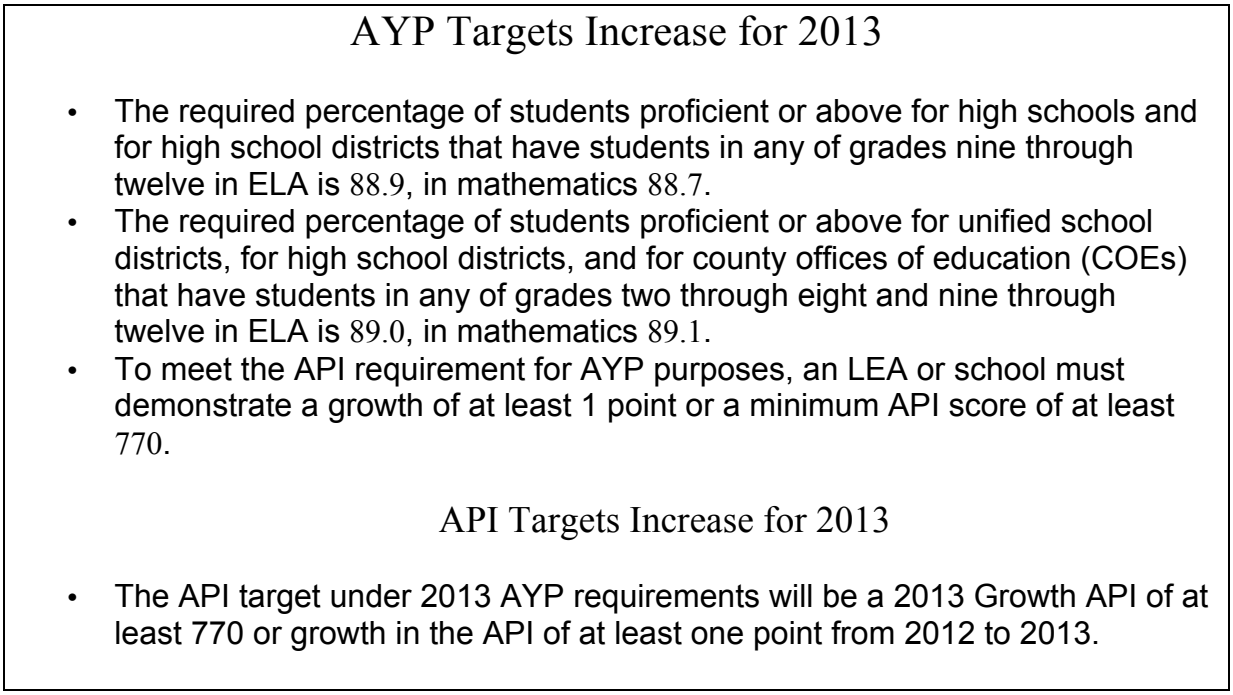

Figure 1. AYP and API targets increase for 2013.
Note: The information above was obtained from the California Department of Education; 2012–13 Academic Performance Index Reports Information Guide.

As of the 2012-2013 school year, incarcerated juvenile hall schools were being evaluated by the CDE based on the annual progress reports (APR), which included the state academic performance index (API) report, the federal adequate yearly progress (AYP) report, and the program improvement (PI) report. These reports had, and continue to have, significant meaning as to the progress of the students at the school and their proficiency levels. According to the CDE (n.d.), its primary goal is to "measure and report on the academic achievement of its hundreds of schools and the students enrolled in the local educational agencies" ("Accountability-*CalEdFacts*," para. 1). The AYP and API reports, which give detailed information on students' progress in meeting achievement targets, were requirements of both state and federal agencies (see Figure 1). However, it is unrealistic to use annual criteria to assess progress of students who are in a particular juvenile hall school facility for only 20-30 days. The API scores of a facility,

the results of annual testing of students in class on a certain day, cannot reflect learning progress made by a constantly changing student body.

Although traditional schools face the challenge of avoiding low-test scores, the incarcerated juvenile hall school facilities face even greater challenges in making AYP, as illustrated above. A traditional school has an entire year to work with its students to ensure academic progress that would then be reflected in APR scores. Teachers in traditional school setting have the time to make sure skills and strategies are taught and comprehended without the time constraint faced by teachers in a juvenile hall school facility. Additionally, the state exams administered in traditional school settings are more useful to teachers, as these results can be used to target groups of students that need assistance.

In contrast, an incarcerated juvenile hall school facility has, on average 20 to 30 days to teach a particular student and assess whether he or she learned the material. Thus, a juvenile facility's scores on something like the California Standardize Test (CST) are unlikely to reflect the abilities of the large number of students who pass through its school in a year. Although juvenile hall school facilities staff can look at a student's summative assessment, such as results from the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) or the CST to assist with instructing its students, the challenge is great because the majority of the students who are incarcerated "have serious gaps in their education and poor academic skills. Approximately forty percent read at or below a fourth grade level and are functionally illiterate, another thirty to forty percent are English learners, and at least one-third of the students have learning and other disabilities" (LACOE, 2012, bullet No. 4). Thus, instructing all students in order to ensure success passing the CAHSEE or CST, which ultimately affects the school's ranking in the overall APRs, is a daunting task.

In order to improve their API and AYP scores, many schools focus on teaching to the test, so that their students do well on the day the test is administered. However, incarcerated juvenile hall school facilities would not benefit from this approach due to the high turnover rate of its students and their low academic achievement. Furthermore, according to the research completed by Dr. Ruby Payne, (2005) students from poverty, which make-up a large number of the students in these facilities, do not possess the cognitive skills and/or structure to accept the instruction that they are expected to learn.

Thus, juvenile facilities face two related but separate challenges: Providing effective instruction to students during their often short stints in a particular classroom and scoring well enough on federal and stated mandated tests to avoid sanctions.

Therefore, a plan of action is needed to assist the students while in an incarcerated juvenile hall school facility setting for the benefit of all. In spite of the fact that "teaching to the test" would not completely work with the instruction delivered in the incarcerated juvenile hall school facility, at the minimum, the state standards are being emphasized and utilized within the instruction, which is a testament. Although, changes are lurking in the immediate years to come due to the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS), and the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP), which will replace the CSTs. The CAASPP along with the CCSS are a paradigm shift in instruction and no longer will "teaching to the test" be an option.

Instructional Delivery

Midway Juvenile Hall School (MJHS), an incarcerated juvenile hall school facility in California, is using a form of the Focused Adaptable-Structure Teaching (F.A.S.T) Framework as its instructional delivery system. This model is based on a few components working in collaboration. The consult group, RISE-TESS, created the concentric circles model in which

these components are represented. They can be pictured as planetary moon consisting of the core, the outer core, and the crust. Each level has a specific meaning that builds on the previous layer. In order for the instructional method to work successfully, these components need to be present, and properly functioning (see Figure 2).

Another essential component the framework also incorporates is the optimal windows for learning (OWL), a theory developed from brain research completed by Dr. David A. Sousa (2006), Dr. John J. Medina (2008), and Eric Jensen (2000). By utilizing these OWLs, the teacher can be more effective with his/her instruction. The OWLs are to assist the instructor to not overload the student or prolong the instruction to the students. They identify short windows, when the students tend to take in the instruction best. The OWLs plays a vital role in the delivery of instruction to all students, but is even more useful in teaching those students who are grade levels behind, have learning deficiencies, or face other difficulties. Instruction is organized to assist with student learning and continues to be rigorous. Students are expected to perform and comprehend skills or tasks that challenge and stimulate their minds (Riffel, 2010).

RISE educational services (2010), an educational service and consulting group that is approved by the District Assistance and Intervention Team (DAIT) in California, works with MJHS to support F.A.S.T. teaching methods at the school and has focused on the core beliefs such as fundamental learning principles, ensuring equity to the core curriculum, creating teaching plans, as well as assessments around the core beliefs, differentiating instruction, utilizing professional learning communities (PLCs), professional development, prioritizing, and planning (RISE, 2010). Using the F.A.S.T framework is not the sole solution to improving student learning or MJHS's API/AYP scores (RISE, 2010). Nevertheless, with PLCs, school leadership, teacher content knowledge, frequent formative assessment, and interpretation of data,

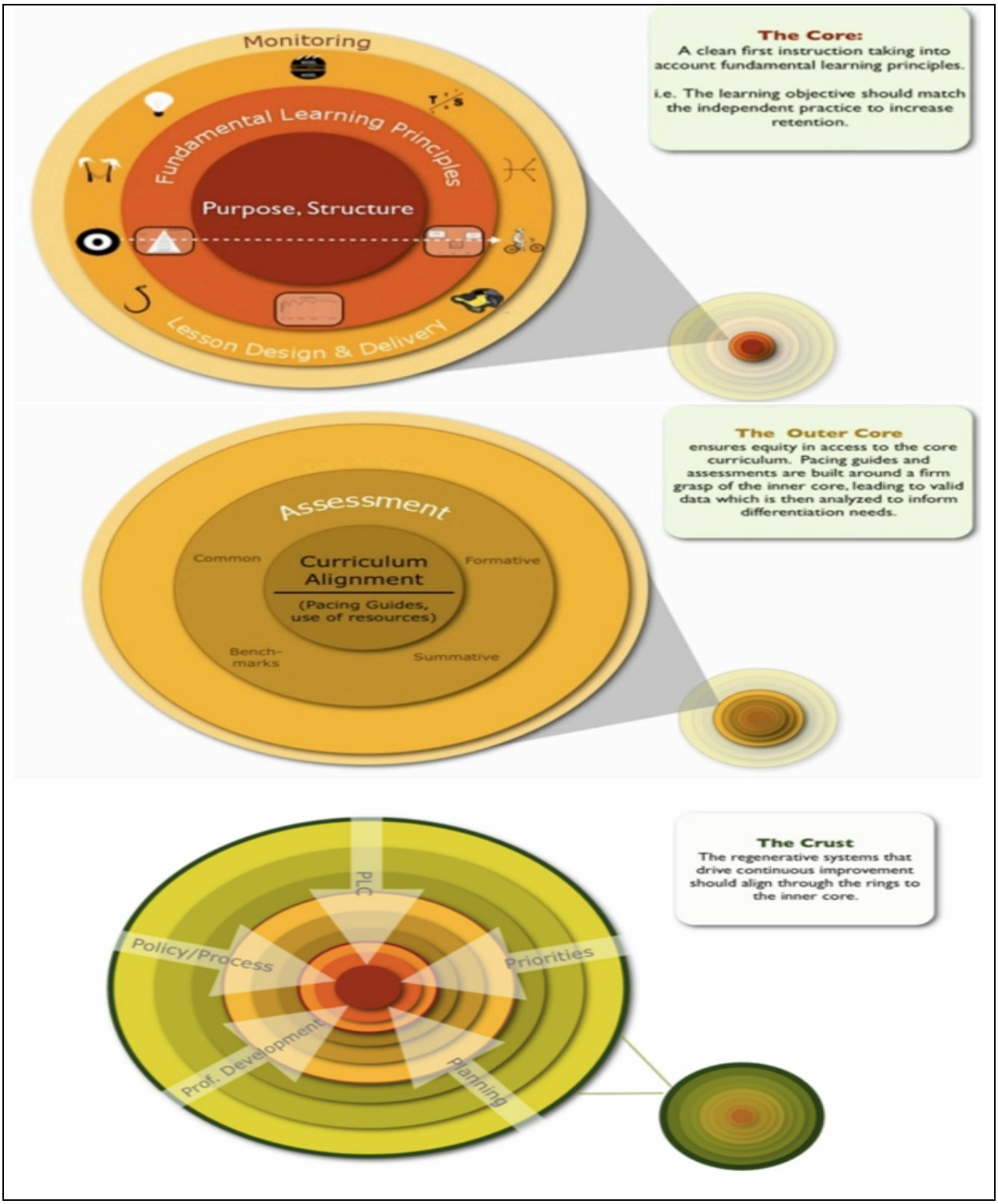

Figure 2. Concentric Circles: The Core, The Outer Core, and the Crust

Note. The visual description for the model that RISE-TESS created to represent each level of their framework. Each level has a specific meaning that builds on the previous layer. In order for the instructional method to work successfully, these components need to be present, and properly functioning when instructional delivery is completed. This digram was retrieved from http://www.riseedservices.com/RISEed/RISE_Educational_Services.html A Vimeo on Concentric Circles by (Nelson, nd).

school reform is expected to occur and ultimately result in improved instruction.

Statement of Problem

Implementing an instructional method that will increase student achievement and reflect in MJHS's AYP scores is an urgent need. Student achievement will only improve with retention of instruction, and given the unsettling environment the students are in, instructional delivery must be modified to meet their special needs. Traditional summative assessments, such as annual testing, will not accurately measure student comprehension, due to the uncommon length of stay within this type of school setting. Therefore, reliability in more frequent formative assessments is much more genuine and functional, and is more in line with the new state assessment system, CAASPP.

Students in an MJHS classroom differ from a typical classroom population in three ways: First, many have received a substandard education and are several grade levels below where they should be. Second, most spend an average of only 20 to 30 days in the facility, rendering many instructional approaches ineffectual and measurement methods inappropriate. Third, because the students are juveniles within the juvenile system, their activities are closely monitored by Detention Service Officers (DSOs) who discourage typical classroom activities such as group discussions and collaboration. DSOs are in the classroom at all times, and students are unable to

freely interact, move around, or collaborate like they would in a more traditional educational setting. Against these odds, they must receive instruction and have its results confirmed within a very short window of time.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this research is to examine whether increased frequent formative assessments, using components of the RISE-TESS framework within the teacher's delivery of direct instruction, are effectively increasing students' achievement and their comprehension of the state standards at MJHS. Little research has been completed with the population at MJHS - at-risk/juvenile incarcerated youth -regarding the issue of assessments at a juvenile hall detention school. Through review of available student assessment data, an online survey of teachers, and a focus group, this research will seek to determine whether increasing the frequency of formative assessments and using main components of the RISE-TESS framework, along with the components from the concentric circles have improved learning outcomes for students at MJHS.

Measurement of data from formative assessments taken by MJHS students who participated in both pre and post exams will be used to determine how effective the implementation of the RISE-TESS program was along with the various factors associated with it, specifically the online assessments. The pre and post exams that were utilized were completed in the Online Assessments Reporting System (OARS). In the previous year, pencil and paper exams were utilized and manually scanned into the OARS and used by the staff at MJHS. The online assessments proved to be more efficient and less time consuming, which assisted with the turnaround timeframe that allowed the teachers to utilize the data to modify their instruction.

In addition, this study hopes to delineate a direct instructional model that educators at juvenile incarcerated facilities can use to successfully instruct their challenged students. Prior to working with RISE-TESS, teachers had no relevant or effective instructional model to use in

MJHS's unique setting, a major source of frustration. This study will also discuss the need for PLCs, data teams, and effective school leadership in cultivating a successful program. Although this study looks at only one facility, MJHS, the results should be of interest to programs in other juvenile hall institutions and/or juvenile camp settings.

This study will look at the use of increased frequent formative assessments, a part of the current teaching approach, within an incarcerated juvenile hall school facility setting to determine its impact on student achievement and growth. Additionally, the results should reflect in the school's AYP score. These increased frequent formative assessments will be given every ten to fourteen days, as opposed to the quarter benchmarks previously utilized. The increased frequent formative assessments are derived from the direct instruction model that the teachers are utilizing in their instructional delivery. The teachers' instruction entails key components of a framework, obtained from RISE-TESS, in successful teaching. The purpose of this brain-based direct instruction model is to teach the students skills that will assist them in the present and future by utilizing formative assessments more frequently. This concern is due to the high student turnover rate in the incarcerated juvenile hall school facilities as average time of stay is twenty to thirty days.

Research Questions

The objective of this mixed methods study is to answer the following research questions:

1. Are the data from the increased frequent formative assessments showing improvement in student comprehension of the standards and sub-strands being taught?
2. How are the data being utilized to improve instruction in the classroom by the instructional staff?

3. Are there correlations from the pre/post assessment with the main components of the TESS framework for the learning environment/student population? How are the main components of the TESS framework being utilized as an instructional method?
4. How are knowledge and support of the administration concerning the implementation and development of the program shown/present? Are they in-line with the main components of the TESS framework, which are in place to assist the school teaching staff with utilizing the frequent formative assessments and improving instruction being implemented?

Significance

Practical significance. The practical significance of this study is to conduct an inquiry into increased frequent formative assessments and if they are assisting in student achievement and understanding of the state standards and sub-standards. Furthermore, it is to understand if the implementation of the RISE-TESS framework, data collection and use of it, as well as PLCs are improving the student's learning and assisting the teachers with their instruction. As noted in the Comprehensive Educational Reform Recommendations put forth by the superintendent of Southern Angels County Office of Education (SACOE) as recommended by the County of Southern Angels Board of Supervisors, this study will delineate whether the TESS-RISE program and OARS used in conjunction with the direct instruction techniques are applicable in improving student measured performance.

Methodological significance. The data obtained from this study will be used to assess the effectiveness of the RISE/TESS framework and its components in improving classroom instruction by determining whether student achievement has increased, decreased, or remained the same in MJHS classrooms. Additionally, input from the teachers participating in the PLCs

will provide information on whether this instructional method has any impact on student learning and understanding, as well as teacher instruction.

Theoretical significance. The theoretical significance of this study is its usefulness in providing insight into a method used to instruct incarcerated youth in an environment with a high turnover rate. There is a dearth of research related to the effectiveness of student assessments that are utilized in juvenile incarcerated school facilities. Therefore, this study will offer valuable insights and data for institutional settings similar to MJHS by documenting whether increased frequency of formative assessments can improve student learning at the facility studied as well as whether the teaching methods used are effective and how they can be improved.

Assumptions

According to a national study by Gagnon, Barber, Van Loan, and Leone (2009), it may be assumed that the majority of the students attending an incarcerated juvenile hall school are given instructional materials that are "somewhat, very little, or not at all aligned with state assessments" (p. 688).

Another assumption made by the researcher and others (Foley, 2001; Krezmien, Mulcahy, & Leone, 2008) is that educators at an incarcerated juvenile hall school facility tend to believe that the students are not at grade level and that they need immediate intervention in both reading and mathematics. In conjunction with the aforementioned assumption, the overall hope is that by utilizing the direct instruction model, and the frequent formative assessments, it will benefit the students when taking their yearly assessments required by the state, or in attempting the CAHSEE, as well as with their overall understanding of the instruction.

A third assumption, made by the researcher regarding some of the educators who work within the Division of Student Programs DSP at the various incarcerated camps and juvenile hall

school facilities, would be that they may not believe adequate improvement can be made by the students who come in and out of these incarcerated facilities.

In addition, many individuals believe that the CAHSEE, and particularly, the CST, will no longer be required once the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are implemented. However, legislation currently does not address the issue, and CAHSEE will be required until further notification.

Delimitations of the Study

This study will be delimited to the teachers and administrators at the MJHS. It will also be delimited to other teachers, administrators, directors, and upper management of local educational agency (LEA), which supervises other incarcerated juvenile facilities within the DSP.

Limitations of the Study

The quantitative sample will be limited to youth attending school while incarcerated at MJHS, an incarcerated juvenile hall facility in the County of Southern Angels, specifically the South Central Southern Angels region. Each student will be identified by a random numeric value to protect privacy. The non-traditional instructional setting for those attending school at the facility may influence the outcome or the willingness of students to participate, which may or may not affect the data collection.

As noted above, incarcerated youth generally range in age from 11 to 18, with academic levels from first grade to college ready. Assessing research data for such a disparate group may be difficult and come with some limitations due to their length of stay at the incarcerated facility. The length of stay varies for each student, but the average stay is twenty to thirty days. Furthermore, such a diverse group of students, often including special education students as well, are often assigned to one classroom with one teacher, who faces a daunting task in trying to educate each student in the class with materials appropriate to his or her age and grade level.

Finally, many teachers at the school may not be proficient in using on-line assessments or the technology to conduct the on-line assessments is a limitation to this study. Furthermore, students in an incarcerated juvenile hall school tend to be limited in their use of technology due to the lack of exposure to technology.

The qualitative data will be collected online and through a focus group. Limitations could also arise if some individuals are unwilling to participate or provide honest feedback in either the questionnaire or focus group, which is essential to the value of the qualitative approach.

Timeline of the Study

The timeline of this study is from September 2012 through May 2014. The timeline has been selected due to the pre-existing data that will be utilized in chapter three's methodology. The data are quantitative in nature and deals with measuring student pre/post assessments given within a ten to fourteen day window during the 2012-2013 school year.

Definitions

The following definitions of terms are used in this study:

Administrator refers to individual(s) responsible for managing and leading the school setting.

Agency refers to an organization providing a particular service in conjunction with the school, such as probation or mental health.

Assessment(s) refers to the evaluation of the instruction given by the teachers to the incarcerated students in the juvenile hall school.

At-Risk Student refers to a student who is in danger of failing or is behind in academic credits. Furthermore, these students tend to have issues with behavior and attendance. For the purposes of this study, at-risk youth will refer specifically to those individuals who are able to return to a traditional school setting upon release from detention at juvenile hall.

API refers to academic performance index. It is a single number, ranging from a low of 200 to a high of 1000, which reflects a school's, an LEA's, or a student group's performance level, based on the results of statewide testing. Its purpose is to measure the academic performance and growth of schools (CDE, n.d.).

AYP refers to annual yearly progress, a series of annual academic performance goals established for each school, LEA, and states. Schools, LEAs, and the states are determined to have made AYP if they meet or exceed each year's goals (CDE, n.d.).

California Education Code refers to a series of regulations codified into law that provides for the governance of schools throughout the state of California and specifies the delivery of educational services to all children in the state regardless of race, religion, creed, national origin, or socio-economic status.

Comprehensive Educational Reform Recommendations refers to the recommendations report put forth by the Southern Angeles County Office of Education's Superintendent as directed by the County of Southern Angels Board of Supervisors on November 29, 2011 (Memo, dated November 30, 2012).

Community Day School refers to a non-traditional school where the settings are much smaller than a typical school and most students attending are either behind on credits, on probation, or have been expelled from their local school district.

DAIT refers to the District Assistance and Intervention Team. "California *Education Code* Section 52055.57 allows the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, with the approval of the State Board of Education, to require a local educational agency in Program Improvement Year 3 to contract with a DAIT" (CDE, n.d., "Executive Summary" p. 2).

DSP refers to the Division of Student Programs (A division of the Southern Angels County Department of Education).

Focus Group refers to a demographically diverse group of individuals from the Southern Angels County Department of Education who assisted in leading the implementation of the frequent formative assessments combined with the TESS program, for the purpose of this study.

Formative assessments refer to activities completed by students during instructional lessons that provide feedback, for teachers, designed to modify teaching and learning activities.

Incarcerated youth refers to those students/minors who are detained in the juvenile hall, camps, or California Youth Authority.

Juvenile Delinquent refers to youth in violation of the California State Penal Code.

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Plan refers to a document written by the county office of education (SACOE) as part of a requirement for receiving federal funding sub grants for No Child Left Behind programs.

Minors refer to the title probation staff uses to refer to students in the incarcerated juvenile hall school facility.

MJHS refers to Midway Juvenile Hall School, the site for this study.

OARS refers to the Online Assessment Reporting System utilized by TESS and RISE to house all the assessments developed by MJHS when utilizing the services of the consulting group.

OWL refers to the optimal windows for learning used as part of the brain research finding and applied to the FAST framework.

PAU refers to a Principal Area Unit, part of the Division of Student Programs within SACOE.

PI refers to program improvement. This particular status determines a school's or district's Title I funding based on its AYP.

PLC refers to professional learning communities that are developed within a school setting to assist the culture, with change. PLCs are put into place for substantive school improvement by

developing the capacity of the school personnel to function as a professional learning community (PLC).

Probation Department refers to the Southern Angels County Department of Probation with specific emphasis on the Juvenile Hall Institutions- Detention Service Bureau.

RISE Educational Services refers to the partner of TESS consulting group that provides the coaching and support for direct instruction to be implemented into the classrooms.

Stop, Start, Continue refers to the review process used with the focus group to evaluate the program implementation.

Summative assessments are formal assessments completed at the end of an instructional unit.

Total Education Systems Support (TESS) refers to a consulting group working in partnership with RISE. Both TESS and RISE are CDE-approved DAIT lead programs in providing comprehensive school reform consulting services.

Traditional Educational Setting refers to a regular comprehensive school setting, or not located in an incarcerated juvenile hall school facility.

Chapter 2: Review of Related Literature and Research

Introduction

In recent years, growing accountability demands have required schools to collect and analyze data in an effort to improve instruction and raise student achievement (Boudett, City, & Murnane, 2005; Marzano, 2010; Noyce & Hickey, 2011). Many districts and schools are learning that data can be a powerful tool for educators seeking to improve instruction (Boudett, City, & Murnane, 2005; Marzano, 2010; Noyce & Hickey, 2011). Moreover, positive change is being created by this reform, and assisting in increasing student academic achievement as well as teacher effectiveness (Lachat & Smith, 2005).

This literature review will examine the use of formative assessment to educate incarcerated youth in the East Southern Angels area. The literature review includes a brief history of school reform, assessment accountability required by California's educational code, and California state standards. It will also examine the circumstances of incarcerated youth and the environment of an incarcerated school classroom as well as the impact of both formative and summative assessments; highly qualified teachers; PLCs, and school leadership on these settings. Ultimately, it will review the effect of utilizing and reviewing data on a school's assessment accountability.

Schools are increasingly using data to affect the decision-making process, especially when it comes to student achievement. To understand more clearly how an incarcerated juvenile hall school facility, specifically MJHS, uses data to drive its decision-making regarding instruction, this literature review will examine the factors necessary for these decisions to be effective.

Brief History of School Reform

In 1983, a warning came about in the form of a report from the Secretary of Education, Terrell H. Bell, entitled *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Education Reform* (Hawkins, 1991). This report alerted the country that no longer was the United States of America at the forefront of education, but rather that it had been falling behind in all core content areas, especially mathematics and sciences (Hawkins, 1991). Furthermore, technology was ever increasing and employers were expressing concern regarding deficiencies in education and skill levels of employees entering the job market.

President Clinton had taken office in 1993, and approximately ten years had passed since the release of *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Education Reform* (Hawkins, 1991), which brought about the awareness that the nation's education was lacking. Although little had been accomplished or changed as a result of the released report, American education was continuing to struggle in redefine itself. Improving education was at the top of the nation's domestic agenda (Riley, 2002). The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 1994 was progress for school reform (Hickok, 2010; Ravitch, 2011; Riley, 2002), but it soon gave way to the battle over the existence of the U.S. Department of Education.

A fierce battle was led by the Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich (R-GA.), along with his followers to vigorously pursue the elimination of the Department of Education. The move forward with school reform had been superseded by the effort of the Speaker of the House and his followers, which consequently took away time and resources to improve teaching, as well as learning for all students. Rather than being eliminated, the U.S. Department of Education became the recipient of bipartisan congressional support, which resulted in new and increased funding (Riley, 2002).

Clinton's re-election in 1996 reinforced the need, expectation, and demand for an ongoing national role in improving education in America (Riley, 2002). The mid 1990s and the Clinton era brought about Goals 2000: Educate America Act. This act, previously a proposed bill titled, "America 2000" during the George H.W. Bush era, increased from the six (6) original goals that were in place prior to the Clinton administration, and improved to included two additional goals when signed in March, 1997 by Congress (Donohue, 2000; Educational Resources Information Center (U.S.), 1994; Heise, 1994). The purpose of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act was to provide a framework to meet the National Education Goals by way of national tests and absolute standards that were going to increase rigor for American students and create a new set of expectations for the 21st century (Ohanian, 2000; Riley, 2002;). Furthermore, the focus on increasing skills by the year 2000 was not solely placed upon students, but on teaching staff as well. Efforts to improve teaching and support professional development for teacher content knowledge increased.

Having reauthorized ESEA in 1994, the Clinton administration included basic elements, which required states to set rigorous and challenging content standards for all students, as well as to develop assessments aligned with the standards that would measure student progress (National Academy of Education; NAEd, 2009). The expectations that teachers and other relevant school personnel would make efforts to find ways to improve student achievement fell short, and lacked an understanding as well as the capacity of the changes that were required to make them effective.

In 2001, President George W. Bush continued school reform, yet with an intensity that insured improvement for all students with The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. Having strategized The NCLB Act for political attention, the Bush administration had succeeded in making a significant change in the political economy of education in the United States (Parkison,

2009). The NCLB Act prevailed with accountability of standards-based instruction, which was much different than previous reform. The Bush administration also set forth incentives for change through test-based accountability. It focused on two main areas of concentration (a) disaggregation of data and (b) the requirement that all students attain a certain standard of performance level by 2014 (NAEd, 2009). The Bush administration sought to ensure that not only did all children have a fair and equal opportunity to obtain a high-quality education, but that they would reach proficient or advanced status, as defined by California, on the state academic achievement standards and assessments given to them (Hickock, 2010; McCabe, 2010; Nygren, 2009). The expectation was that all states would assist 100% of their students to achieve proficiency in ELA and math by 2013–14, with specific targets along the way *(*see Figure 3*)*.

Furthermore, each state was to set a target, with the approval of the federal government, and determine what tests to use to measure whether their schools have made AYP toward those proficiency goals. California uses the California Standards Tests (CSTs), which are part of the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) tests given each spring, and the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) for high schools. These tests are aligned to the state's standards, which are what every student is supposed to learn, according to the State Board of Education.

Relevant Accountability Systems

The federal NCLB requires all schools to make SYP based on four criteria: participation rate, percent proficient (also known as Annual Measurable Objectives), API, and graduation rate if applicable. Schools that failed to make AYP for two consecutive years enter the Program Improvement (PI) process. In California, the CDE (2011) uses the API as an indicator for state intervention programs for schools. Both the API and AYP are part of the APR system, which "provides an integrated approach to reporting results for state and federal accountability requirements" (CDE, 2011). California's schools must demonstrate consistent academic

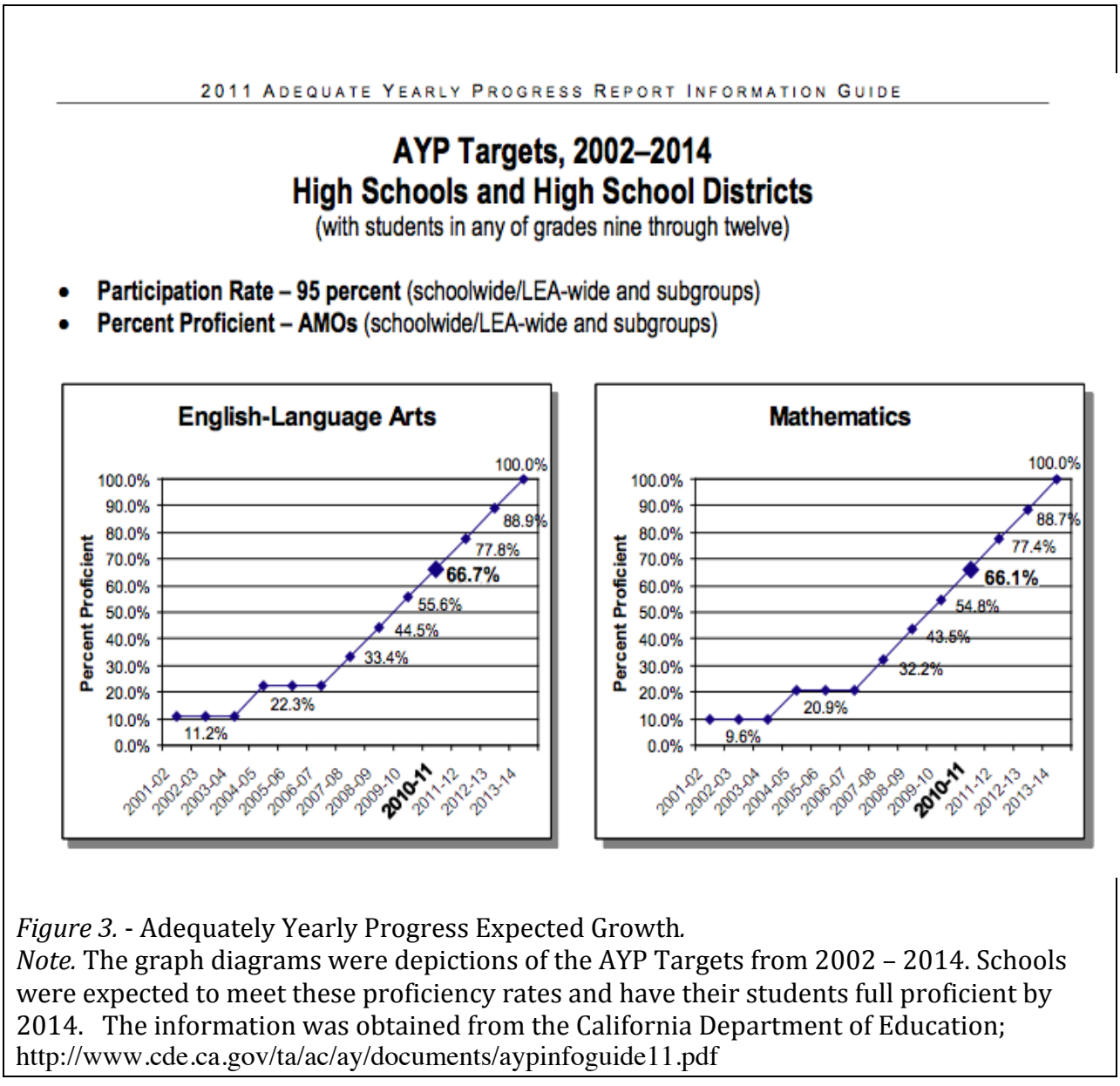

Figure 3. - Adequately Yearly Progress Expected Growth.
Note. The graph diagrams were depictions of the AYP Targets from 2002 – 2014. Schools were expected to meet these proficiency rates and have their students full proficient by 2014. The information was obtained from the California Department of Education; http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ay/documents/aypinfoguide11.pdf

achievement growth every year as measured by the state's API. API also measures a school's academic achievement growth over time and allows for a statewide accountability system.

AYP, on the other hand, is a federal requirement of The NCLB Act. The NCLB Act mandates that a statewide accountability system ensure that all schools and districts of each state

make AYP. The annual statewide progress objectives were established so that all groups of students will reach proficiency within 12 years. Assessment results are disaggregated by socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, disability, and limited English proficiency, to make certain that no group is left behind (see Figure 4).

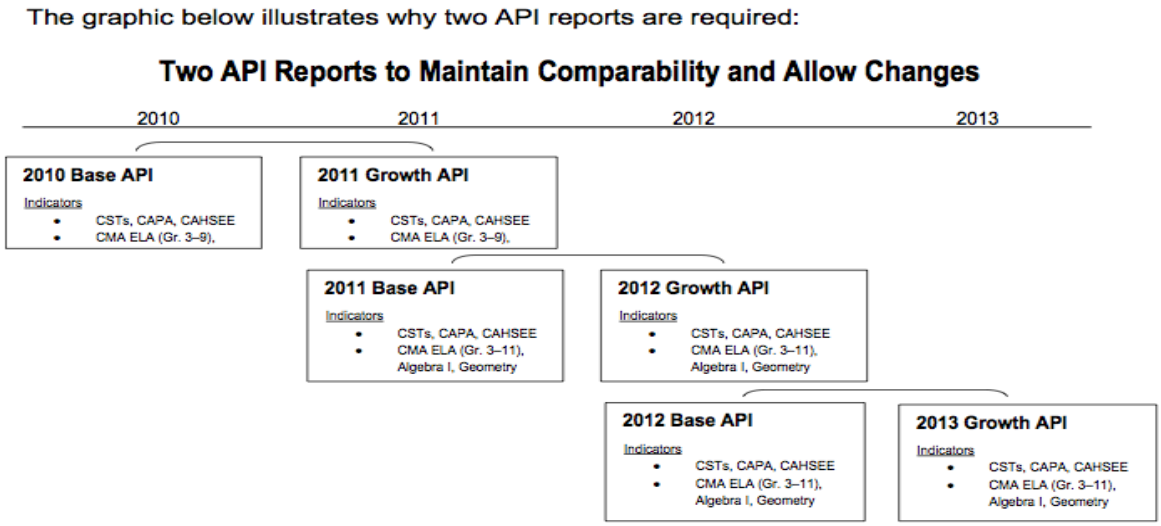

Figure 4. The API Base/Growth Chart. State API growth targets are set for each school as a whole and for each numerically significant student group in the school. The annual API growth target for a school or student group is five percent of the difference between the school's API and the statewide performance target of 800 with a five-point minimum. Schools or student groups that meet or exceed an 800 API are expected to maintain that level of achievement and to continue working to improve the academic performance of all students. This information was obtained from the California Department of Education; http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ap/documents/apiexecsummary.pdf

Under NCLB, schools and districts that receive Title I funding face a number of different sanctions if their students fail to make continual improvement, as Title I funding is specifically allocated for the academic achievement of disadvantaged students. PI schools face increasingly harsher penalties under the NCLB Act. In California, if a school does not make its AYP for two consecutive years, the school is formally placed on PI. The schools not making progress must

take corrective actions by providing supplemental services, such as free tutoring or after-school assistance. The only manner in which a school can exit PI status is to meet the goal that is set for the next year. The AYP must be met for two consecutive years. With the new CCSS, school that were in PI in the year 2012-2013 will remain in this status until NCLB is reauthorized or some sort of legislation is written stating otherwise.

At-Risk and Incarcerated Youth

The Southern Angels County Probation Department has a juvenile justice division that provides services for approximately 1,700 youth at any one time (Los Angeles County Office of Education, 2012).

Many of these minors are detained and awaiting their petition, adjudication, or post disposition from the juvenile court system; others are minors who have been tried in adult court. A juvenile who is adjudicated and whose petition is sustained (tried and convicted) in a juvenile court can be placed on probation in the community, placed in a foster care or group home, incarcerated in the county's juvenile ranch or camp, or sent to the California Youth Authority as a ward of the state.

These incarcerated minors have committed a detainable offense, a Part I index crime that warrants them to be detained in an incarcerated juvenile detention facility. Part I index crimes are violent and property crimes such as aggravated assault, forcible rape, murder, and robbery, which are classified as violent. While arson, burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft are classified as property crimes. Due to their incarceration, these minors are now considered students of the county provided school that is located inside the incarcerated juvenile detention facility.

According to Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), youth who are incarcerated have the right to a high-quality education. U.S. Code section 6301 states, "To ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments" (Bahena, Cooc, Currie-Rubin, Kuttner, & Ng, 2012). Additionally, each state educational agency (SEA) that receives Title I Part D funds must "ensure that youth in juvenile institutions or facilities have the same opportunities to achieve as such children would have if such children were in the school of local educational agencies in that State" (State Plan and State Agency Applications, 2002).

The CDE (n.d.) requires that juvenile court schools provide educational placement for those youth who are under the jurisdiction of, and are incarcerated by, the juvenile court system. Unlike traditional school settings, juvenile court schools are only closed during specified weekdays adopted by the County Board of Education to serve as school holidays or set aside by the board to allow for in-service/professional development (CDE, n.d.). Thus, classroom instruction is given throughout the entire calendar year, as opposed to a traditional school year. The juvenile court schools provide public education, and must proctor all educational tests required by the state. Each facility must offer students courses that may lead to a high school diploma. These schools, under the protection or authority of the juvenile court system, provide an educational program that meets the needs of students who have been incarcerated in juvenile halls because of a status offense or other infraction or behavior governed by the Welfare and Institution Code (WIC) or California Education Code (EC). County boards of education administer and operate the Juvenile Court Schools authorized by EC sections 48645-48645.6. A minimum school day for Juvenile Court Schools is 240 minutes (Juvenile Court School, 1990).

Many incarcerated youth, whose adjudication deemed them "unfit," generally attain the majority of their education within an incarcerated juvenile hall school facility, and may graduate while incarcerated. An "unfit" status would place the juvenile's case into the adult court, but allow the student to remain in the juvenile system until a verdict is met. This individual will most likely not return to a traditional school setting, but will still receive educational services while incarcerated in a juvenile justice facility. This individual may not be released from an incarcerated juvenile justice facility until after the age of 18. Whereas, the at-risk youth will gain some of their educational services while housed in a detention center, but will most likely return to a traditional or community day school setting to complete their schooling. According to the research, approximately 21% of youth who enter juvenile correctional facilities generally have not been enrolled in public school, and at least 60% of students who were enrolled in school were either suspended or expelled from their public school at the time of their detention (Sedlak & McPherson, 2010).

Furthermore, research divulges a relationship between factors of a student being suspended or expelled to disciplinary actions that may result in a student, especially minority males, being a statistic of the juvenile justice system (Bahena et al., 2012). This could result in the students being incarcerated in a juvenile hall school facility such as MJHS (Fabelo, 2011). Additionally, students who were suspended or expelled were more likely to be behind in grade level content or even drop out of school winding up in an incarcerated juvenile detention facility.

Typically, educators who work with at-risk youth in an incarcerated juvenile school facility have no specialized training that equips them to service these students (Ashcroft, Price, & McNair, 1992; Price, 2009). Understanding that there is a need to create effective assessments that are consistent and used throughout the DSP that would assist with the advancement of increase student achievement during the limited housing confinement of a student, frequent

formative assessments would provide information regarding the students being serviced as to their current levels of achievement. Furthermore, the assessment would serve the teacher with purposeful information to allow proper instruction and individual planning. The usages of frequent formative assessments, which are currently being utilized at MJHS, are such that can be evaluated throughout, while the data are continuously being collected.

Yet, research suggests that educational programming provided in most juvenile correction facilities is very substandard and characterized by significant shortcomings (Boundy & Karger, 2011). According to a 2009 national survey of juvenile corrections facilities' principals, approximately a third reported that instructional materials used by teachers at their facilities were "somewhat, very little, or not at all aligned with state assessments" (Gagnon et al., 2009, p. 676). Moreover, the curriculum in an incarcerated juvenile school facility if often not aligned to the students' grade-level standards, and instruction is generally geared toward low-level skills rather than higher order thinking and assessments (Gagnon et al., 2009).

In trying to improve juvenile court schools, the Southern Angels County Court Schools, part of the Division of Student Programs (DSP), are implementing programs with continuity and rigor, including the Brain Based Direction Instruction methods coupled with frequent formative assessments held in OARS.

The CAHSEE and CST are two summative exams mandated by the state to be given yearly within DSP. Yet, assessment exam data are not reflective of the school site as the students who take these exams are generally not educated for the entire school year at that particular facility. Summative assessments are applied at the end of an instructional component (Marzano, 2010). Most of the time, students who take their CST or CAHSEE at an incarcerated juvenile hall school facility have left the facility by the time the results are posted. Similarly, students

who are at a facility when the results are available have usually taken their CST and/or CAHSEE at a different location from the incarcerated juvenile hall school.

Classroom Environment

The classroom environment within an incarcerated juvenile hall school facility is different from a traditional school setting and somewhat different from a juvenile camp setting. Students tend to reside in the juvenile camps for a minimum stay of three, generally six months, but can sometimes be just shy of a year. Safety and security are the priorities, and a detention service officer (DSO) is likely to be present in a classroom at all times. The DSO generally does not engage with the lesson being taught or the students but monitors non-verbal and verbal language that might escalate into a potential issue. As the DSOs also work with the students in their living units, they are generally aware of any tension among students or gangs that could turn into a physical altercation or gang riot. In many juvenile hall detention facilities, students are assigned to classes according to gang affiliation and/or sophistication, for perceived safety concerns, regardless of his or her age and/or academic level (Vaught, 2011).

The age range in a classroom can sometimes be as large as five years (Donna, Skiba, Blackmon, Esposito, Hart, Mambrino, Richie, & Grigorenko, 2010) posing a distinct challenge for the classroom teacher. Additionally, most youth in juvenile hall detention facilities tend to function at varying academic levels even if they are the same age, with many being largely deficient in reading and mathematics (Foley, 2001; Krezmien, Mulcahy, & Leone, 2008). The classroom in a juvenile hall detention facility may resemble a one-room schoolhouse, and the teacher must have access to an array of multi-level curriculum materials in order to properly service each student (Florida Legislature, 1998). Teachers are expected to instruct various grade levels and core academic content areas in one 50-minute period. This is unrealistic, as most educators who teach in incarcerated juvenile hall school facilities are not credentialed in a single

subject matter (Bahena et al., 2012; Price, 2009). Furthermore, teachers of special education students can have multiple subjects to teach, as well as various grade levels, in one class period.

As noted above, teachers in these facilities face a number of restrictions. Because of security concerns, use of normal classroom items such as pens, protractors, rulers, and staplers are restricted. DSOs are in the classroom at all times, closely monitoring behavior and discouraging students' movement and conversations, something that teaching staff would encourage in a more normal setting. Seating arrangements in most classrooms are non-traditional; students are seated at square tables, four to a table, and are generally expected not to engage with their peers, making collaboration impossible. Given the restrictions imposed by the DSOs, teachers may be discouraged to have their students engage in meaningful academic conversation due to safety and security reasons.

Recently, classroom technology use has increased tremendously at MJHS by way of mobile labs-laptops or iPads™ -that are removable for safety and security reasons. Research has shown that there are benefits associated with using technology in the classrooms in juvenile hall detention facilities (Bahena et al., 2012). Moreover, materials presented digitally have the potential to be highly engaging for incarcerated youth (Hall, Meyer, & Strangman, 2005). There have also been positive findings by Bewley (1999) and other researchers regarding the association between multimedia tools and the attitudes, motivation, and participation of incarcerated youth (Coffey, Gemignani & Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquent Prevention, 1994). Nevertheless, despite research documenting the benefits of using technology at some juvenile hall detention facilities, many other facilities are hesitant to provide computer usage or other technology due to perceived safety concerns, specifically, students using the internet to inquire about rival gangs (McIntyre, Tong, & Perez, 2001).

Assessments

As previously noted, most students in an incarcerated juvenile hall school facility remain at their housing location for 20 to 30 days. Thus, students' understanding and progress must be evaluated frequently in order to teach them effectively. That said, ongoing evaluation and restructuring of the instructor's delivery is not easy in any setting, much less an incarcerated juvenile hall school facility where students move in and out of the classroom daily. Formative assessments allow the instructor to provide immediate feedback to the student for a clearer understanding of a problem or issue (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Heritage, 2012; Marzano, 2010; Noyce & Hickey 2011; Sadler, 1998). Tailored comments, rather than grades or marks, should be part of the feedback as the students need to know specifically what they must focus on to improve (Sadler, 1998). Furthermore, the formative assessments help instructors recognize deficiencies in their instruction along with comprehension of the instruction by the students, which in turn allows for modifications to the their teaching (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Heritage, 2012; Marzano, 2010; Popham, 2001). To be most useful, formative assessments should be fined tuned to a specific content area rather than use a generic approach (Noyce & Hickey, 2011).

It is imperative that effective immediate feedback be given to the students; otherwise, they may become conditioned to inconsistent patterns and not grasp the purpose of formative assessments or benefit in their learning. The research finds that feedback regarding task, process, and self-regulation is generally more effective than feedback consisting only of praise. The praise may be received, but does not enhance the learning or achievement (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Additionally, students must know what to do with the feedback given to them. Thus, the students should know how to interpret feedback, and be able to implement it so that they can improve their work (Marzano 2010; Sadler, 1998). Teachers often provide feedback and reliable judgments about the quality of a student's work, but this does not mean that improvement will

follow. Therefore, teachers should have continuity amongst themselves to reinforce behaviors of adequate feedback, and enhance the learning environment.

When a professional learning community (PLC) at an incarcerated juvenile hall school facility focuses on formative assessments, it is focusing on the needs of specific content domains. This allows the instructors to give their students tailored comments rather than generic grades or marks that do not go into depth and allow students what they need to improve.

An example of a formative assessment is checking for understanding. When direct instruction lessons are completed, and the use of a key component from the FAST Framework is modeled, gradual release, the instructor immediately has an idea of which student(s) comprehend the instruction and those who do not. The gradual release process allows the learning process to transfer from the teacher to the students with specific modeling and checking for understanding, which may be conducted in verbal, written, or performance form. Formative assessments can also be just a few questions that enable the instructor to make adjustments and modifications in his/her delivery of the lesson. The most common form of feedback is from an assessment, and it is noted "student achievement benefits when assessments are given relatively frequent as opposed to infrequently" (Marzano, 2010, p. 9).

Marzano (2010) notes in *Formative Assessments & Standards-Based Grading* "designing assessments, using them purposefully, and incorporating them into a system of overall grading take insight and practice" (p. 1). However effective assessment is made difficult when instructors lack the depth of content knowledge required to accurately evaluate where the student is deficient or to understand the student's reasoning. Thus, the feedback and insight into what the student is lacking may not be fully developed or explained due to the instructor's limited content knowledge.

Many researchers, including Black & Wiliam (1998), Marzano (2010), and Sadler (1998) have noted that the quality of feedback is a crucial issue. Although that may place an assumption that instructors at MJHS would have in depth knowledge in the academic area they teach, which would allow students to be taught effectively as they should be. Unfortunately, this is a challenge at MJHS, as not all teachers are proficient in their content areas. Changes in California state standards, as well as most of the nation, will require schools to change dramatically to meet new rigor and technology requirements.

Highly Qualified Teachers

Poor teaching due to the lack of good teachers has harmed many students academically, especially poor and minority student populations in the United States (NAEd, 2009). Attracting and retaining highly qualified teachers, specifically for particular subject areas, has been a major challenge, especially in high-minority, high-poverty, and urban areas. Despite the federal law designed to provide all children equal educational opportunity, public school teachers in the poorest communities continue to be less qualified than those in wealthier communities (Hess, Rotherham, & Walsh, 2004; King, 2006; Ravitch, 2011). Former California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell (2006) stated, "The most important factor in student success is a well-trained teacher, and the most important thing we can do to improve student achievement is to make sure there is excellent instruction in every classroom" ("Introduction" para. 1).

As previously noted, formative assessments allow the instructor to provide immediate feedback to the student for a clearer understanding of a problem or issue (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Heritage, 2012; Marzano, 2010; Noyce & Hickey 2011; Sadler, 1998), and ideally, the teacher adjusts the instruction so that each student learns the required content. But if the instructor is deficient in the content area being taught, the formative assessment may have limited effects.

One of the focal points of The NCLB Act was to address the issue of teacher quality, based on research indicating that the quality of a teacher is a powerful predictor of student achievement. Although this continues to be an ongoing concern in education reform, much discussion and many recommendations have been put forth. The NCLB Act specified that a highly qualified teacher must have passed the state's licensing exam and/or have full state certification through a certified teacher preparation program. The three NCLB requirements for highly qualified teachers are that they (a) have a bachelor's degree, (b) have full certification, and (c) demonstrate adequate content knowledge in each subject they teach. The first two requirements were incorporated with ease by all states, but meeting the third requirement has been more challenging, as variations in state requirements raised questions about the appropriateness of some states' definitions of highly qualified teachers (Stecher, Vernez, Steinberg, & Rand Education (Institute), 2010). Among teachers considered highly qualified, those in high-poverty schools have less experience and are less likely to have a degree in the subject area they are teaching.

The struggle to provide *highly qualified* teachers since the enactment of The NCLB Act has challenged both traditional and alternative educational settings. Hess et al. (2004) explain that many states circumvent the requirements of NCLB by labeling teachers still in the process of completing their certification as "qualified" or use the term "intern" for those individuals who would previously be classified as working with an emergency credential. Others maintained that licenses, degrees, and certification commonly referred to as "paper qualifications," in no circumstances can predict if a teacher will be good (Ravitch, 2011). Rather, it is only after "a couple of years" that the difference between "stronger teachers, and weaker teachers" prevails. Additionally, the research also shows that the consistency of a "good teacher" is generally not

identified before 3 to 5 consecutive years of teaching (Gordon, Kane & Staiger, 2006; Izumi & Evers, 2002; Ravitch, 2011).

So the debate continues as to whether the teacher is the key to closing the achievement gap, or if the most effective teachers need not have paper credentials or teacher preparation education. The most significant problems continue to lie within three key instructional areas: math, science, and bilingual education (Costigan & Crocco, 2004), in which retention of qualified teachers is a problem due to organizational gaps (Ingersoll, 2003). Add the issues noted earlier about the deficiencies of incarcerated students, as well as the fact that most of these students are also dealing simultaneously with legal, behavioral, social-emotional, psychological, and instructional challenges, which they are unable to *multitask* while attending school as they are incarcerated (Ashcroft et al., 1992).

Furthermore, educators that teach in alternative, incarcerated, and correctional environments are not required to have specialized training. They are expected to instruct students as if they were in a traditional school environment in a setting that is in no way traditional. As previously noted, most students enter the incarcerated juvenile hall schools with serious gaps in their education and poor academic skills: Approximately 40 percent are reading at or below the fourth grade level and are functionally illiterate (LACOE, 2012). Traditional teacher preparation courses and programs do not prepare educators to deal with such these circumstances. The result is inadequate instruction.

California State Standards

Although federal standardized testing has been in place since the mid 1960s, it was not until 1995 that the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program became law in California (California Assessment of Academic Achievement, n.d.). Educational leaders in California selected the Stanford 9 (SAT-9) assessment, which was first given in California in

1998, as the statewide test. STAR developed a custom assessment in 2001 to measure California standards, which is called the California Standards Test (CST). The custom CSTs are designed to measure student learning of the state's academic standards: ELA, including reading and writing; math; history; and science and formed the basis for the state's school accountability program. All schools in the United States are responsible for teaching to these subject areas, as they are held accountable for student learning (United States National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) by many individuals and agencies, in particular state and federal government agencies, as they provide funding.

Standardized test generally refer to objective tests, criterion-referenced tests, and/or norm-referenced tests. Objective tests can be fill-in-the-blank assessments or multiple-choice assessments. Criterion-referenced tests are used to determine whether the student has learned a specific body of material. Norm-referenced tests refer to the process of comparing one test taker to his/her peers to determine whether the test taker scored better or worse than the other test takers.

Common Core State Standards. In mid-2010, the CDE adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) along with 44 other states. The new CCSS were developed to be clear, consistent, and rigorous (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2013; CDE, n.d.), as well as research based. The standards are internationally referenced to top-performing nations to make certain that United States students are globally competitive.

These new CCSS summative assessments were piloted beginning in Spring 2013 and will be piloted through Spring 2014. The pilot program will require that all students in California field-test either the ELA or math exam during the 2013-2014 school year. By the 2014-2015 school year, all of California's public schools will be required to administer the new CCSS summative assessments.

The assessments are being developed as on-line assessments, but will be provided in paper and pencil form initially during the transition. By using on-line assessments, students will incorporate and utilize their skills in technology. Additionally, the CCSS places an emphasis on developing literacy in history, science, and technical subjects, as well as focusing on applying mathematical ways of thinking to real world challenges. Furthermore, the CCSS require a great amount of student collaboration, fluency with multimedia and technology, the development of complex reasoning, problem solving, and communication skills (CDE, n.d.).

The transition to the new CCSS has been somewhat delayed for a majority of Southern California school districts in part because the purpose of the CCSS assessments has changed from measuring individual academic achievement for students to modeling and promoting high-quality coaching and learning activities (M. Perry, personal communication, November 1, 2013; Assessment Development and Administration Division District, School and Innovation Branch, 2013). This paradigm shift will require that educators be given much professional development, as they will need to move away from the mindset of individual academic achievement for students, to modeling and promoting high-quality coaching and learning activities. Measurement of student learning will come by way of field tests during 2013- 2014. New assessments, known as the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP), will be given focusing on English language arts and mathematics (CDE, n.d.).

The new Education Code 60602.5 has basically replaced the old Education Code 60602, which mainly focused on the STAR program. This new Education Code, 60602.5, comes as a result of AB484, which amends Education Code 60602. According to California's Education Code, which captures the legislative counsel's summation, an obvious change in Education Code 60602 is the following:

> Existing law, the Leroy Greene California Assessment of Academic Achievement Act, requires the Superintendent to design and implement a statewide pupil assessment program, and requires school districts, charter schools, and county offices of education to administer to each of its pupils in grades 2 to 11, inclusive, certain achievement tests, including a standards-based achievement test pursuant to the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program and the California Standards Tests. Existing law makes the Leroy Greene California Assessment of Academic Achievement Act inoperative on July 1, 2014, and repeals it on January 1, 2015. (CDE, n.d., "Testing & Accountability- Assembly Bill 484 Questions and Answers" 1st question)

This new Education Code is a result of Assembly Bill 484 (AB484). AB484 would also "authorize the Superintendent to not provide an API score to a school or school district, for the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years, due to a determination by the Superintendent that a transition to new standards-based assessments would compromise comparability of results across schools or school districts," this will be based on the approval of the state board (CDE, n.d., "Testing & Accountability- Assembly Bill 484 Questions and Answers" 1st question).

As previously noted, the new Education Code's focus is on the newly established assessment system, California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP; (CDE, n.d.). This assembly bill was signed into law on October 2, 2013, and its primary purpose as previously noted is "to assist teachers, administrators, and pupils and their parents by promoting high-quality teaching and learning through the use of a variety of assessment approaches and item types" (CDE, n.d., p. 18). According to the CDE (n.d.), the transition to the newly established assessment system and its tools may take several years.

As the transition takes place, an assumption made and stated by many individuals and addressed by the CDE (n.d.) regarding the CAHSEE is that AB484 does not address the CAHSEE, nor will it have any impact on the requirements of the CAHSEE, although this does not preclude new legislation from being introduced and passed, changing the existing requirements of the CAHSEE. Many continued changes will be ongoing through the transition period (M. Perry, personal communication, November 1, 2013).

Professional Learning Communities

Beginning with the end in mind (Greenleaf & Spears, 1998), PLCs seek to transform schools with results. As noted by DuFour and Eaker (1998), PLCs utilize the following characteristics: (a) shared mission, vision, and values; (b) collective inquiry; (c) collaborative teams; (d) action orientated and experimentation; (e) continuous improvement; and (f) results oriented. Seeking school reform and improvement, many scholars understand the value of using PLCs (DuFour & Eaker, 1998).

DuFour, Eaker, & DuFour (2005) described PLCs as teams working collaboratively and interdependently to achieve common goals that are connected to the shared purpose of the organization.

In attempting to implement school improvement, PLCs provide a framework to build the organizational capacity necessary. Beginning to break down the traditional educational barrier of teacher isolation, PLCs' collective and collaborative efforts foster a unique perspective that assists with school improvement. Educational leaders who nurture PLCs provide a diversity of perspectives and ideas, which will lead to much needed creativity and innovation in the school improvement process.

A PLC is not a program; it is a complex change in a school's culture from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning. PLC literature (Chapman et al., 2000; DuFour et al., 2004; Hipp & Huffman, 2003) provides many case studies demonstrating the abundant advantages for schools operating as PLCs, including increased student achievement, improved staff morale, a collaborative culture, common language, collective accountability, and collective responsibility.

In contrast to federal efforts to increase accountability, an alternative approach would create a collaborative culture, in which "a school must transcend its dependence on a single

leader and develop a culture that sustains improvement despite the departure of key individuals" (DuFour et al., 2005, p. 24; Wiseman, 2008). Some researchers (DuFour et al., 2005; Harvey & Drolet, 2003; Kouzes & Posner, 2002) have argued that sustained organizational excellence has not resulted solely from captivating leaders, but rather from individuals who allow others within the organization to demonstrate their leadership capabilities. It is only through the collaboration and joint efforts of education's diverse stakeholders that the necessary innovations can occur (Wiseman, 2008).

The research notes that in both past and present literature (DuFour et al., 2004; Eaker et al., 2002; Fullan, 2001; Hord, 1997; Hipp & Huffman, 2003; Schmoker, 2006), a school improvement model that fosters a collaborative culture where teamwork thrives is the PLC. In theory, creating a culture of collaboration is an intricate undertaking that might be impossible without distinctive attention to teamwork, which is essential in a PLC (Wiseman, 2008).

DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, and Many (2006) argue, "Professional learning communities do not merely require teams—they call for collaborative teams" (p. 98). They also add, "The driving engine of the collaborative culture of a PLC is the team" (p. 5). The indicative difference of a successful program is generally the team effort, not one individual's effort.

In the research completed DuFour et al. (2006) "members of a professional learning community recognize they cannot accomplish their fundamental purpose of high levels of learning for all students unless they work collaboratively" (p. 89). This is vital to the use of formative assessments, as well as the feedback given by the educators to their students, so that continuity is present.

Data Teams

Keeping the idea of student learning and results driven practice as the central goals, data teams are designed for structured collaboration (McNulty & Besser, 2011; Boudett et al., 2005).

As collaboration and inquiry are essential to PLCs, so are they necessary to data teams. Yet, according to McNulty and Besser (2011), data teams *enhance PLCs by providing data-driven structure that leads to results*. DuFour, DuFour, and Eaker's (1998) research on PLCs emphasize *learning by doing* as well as *commitments* to continuous improvement. Data teams look at a number of things, such as student results, teaching strategies, feedback, effective use of data, and leadership support (Boudett et al., 2005; McNulty & Besser, 2011; Reeves, 2004). Many benefits result following the implementation of PLCs within schools. Additionally, gains in student outcomes dramatically increase when data teams infuse the processes of improving teaching, learning, leadership, and student performance (McNulty & Besser, 2011).

According to White (2005), there are three essential principles of a systematic data-driven process: "antecedents, accountability, and collaboration," (p. 102) which are fixed into the process of the data team (McNulty & Besser, 2011).

School Leadership

Principals' practices, as well as how they perceive their leadership role, have a major impact on the academic achievement of students (Davis, 2012). The support principals provide affects their staff and develops their school culture. School leaders can support their teachers by providing them with the resources needed to implement the plan of action developed (Boudett et al., 2005). Such resources may include textbooks, technological training, multi-media equipment, and curriculum materials.

Moreover, the support that an administrator imparts by providing ongoing professional development in learning and perfecting an instructional method is indicative of an educational and transformative leader who will strive to be successful in executing a plan of action.

Just as there is an ample amount of research outlining what effective school leadership should look like, and what leaders need to know as well as do to be effective leaders in

traditional school settings, there is a dearth of research completed on what leaders of alternative educational programs need to know and do (Price, 2009). Most higher education programs that prepare educators for school leadership focus on the traditional education setting, while higher educational programs that focus on school leadership with an emphasis on alternative education are mostly non-existent (Price, 2009).

Leaders of alternative and incarcerated juvenile school facilities have unique challenges to understand, deal with, and remedy. Therefore, they also need different training, skills, and comprehension in order to be successful as an alternative school leader (Price & Doney, 2009). There is little research completed regarding the specific training necessary to help leaders of alternative and incarcerated juvenile school facilities to be successful school leaders. The fact that neither school districts nor universities adequately prepare school leaders to improve learning for at-risk and incarcerated youth, leads to Price's (2009) call for redesigning existing administrator programs to better prepare school leaders in the WHAT and HOW of leadership in alternative schools.

In research completed by Price and Doney (2009), it is noted that leaders and teachers must have the capacity, skill sets, and abilities to reach at-risk or alternative students, as the students' success in such settings are dependent on these important components. Furthermore, appropriate options or solutions should be provided to students who are at-risk, in alternative educational setting, or in an incarcerated juvenile school facility. Otherwise, these students are more likely to drop out of school, and most likely never to return, unless incarcerated again. The impact of these students becoming dropouts negatively affects not only the student, but also fellow students, school staff, entire communities, and the school leader, making specialized training for a school leader in an alternative educational setting imperative.

One way school leaders in alternative educational settings can lead their staff to motivate and equip their students with skills, confidence, attitude, and belief that they can be successful is by continuing to foster the collaboration, growth and team effort of their staff. Leadership in our schools has changed dramatically. Therefore, the job of leaders must be understood to support the learning roles of every child (Price and Doney, 2009).

Chapter 3: Methodology

Overview of Research Design

This chapter explains the research design and procedures that was used during this study. In addition, the discussion covered the methods for selecting subjects, data collection techniques, and tools that was used.

As noted in Chapters 1 and 2, little research has been completed on the student population in incarcerated juvenile facilities specifically focusing on their educational environment, or the instructional instruments that work in that environment. According to Creswell (2009), a mixed methods study that will attempt to confirm, cross-validate, or corroborate findings used by this researcher will assist to develop a detailed view of issues that need to be addressed to improve educational outcomes for the individuals who are being taught in an incarcerated juvenile hall school, as well as to generalize the research finding for this type of population and educational environment to a broader audience (Creswell, 2009; Mertens, 2005).

Research Design and Rationale

This researcher has selected a mixed methods study to evaluate the efficacy of a frequent formative assessments program that was used in an incarcerated juvenile hall school facility in order to enhance student learning. The instructional method used components of the RISE-TESS framework that focused upon the teacher's delivery of instruction, which in turn would have a positive outcome on the students' achievement and comprehension of the state standards that were taught at MJHS. As noted by Creswell (2009) in *Research Design,* and Mertens (2005), in *Research and Evaluation in Education and Psychology*, the most appropriate way to increase clarity of understanding and gain more insight into the complexity of a study was to combine both qualitative and quantitative research rather than to use either form alone.

This program evaluation can be of assistance to the DSP, which is responsible for incarcerated juvenile hall school facilities, as it has been noted that there is little existing research on the population and educational environment studied here. Furthermore, was an objective of the DSP-Comprehensive Educational Reform recommendations report (LACOE DSP-CER Report, 2012) requested by the County Board of Supervisors to "develop, implement, and continuously improve performance measurement systems to establish accountability for all participants in the educational system for youth in the juvenile halls" (recommendation No. 7). Additionally, it can assist in capitalizing on integrated use of instructional minutes and delivering instruction in a comprehensive, coordinated and collaborative manner to utilize the school day effectively.

Creswell (2009) denotes that "strategies of inquiry are types of methods design that provide specific direction for the procedures in the research design" (p. 11). In recent years, the numbers of strategies have grown, due to technology and the ability to analyze complex models. Increased strategies, as well as new procedures in social science research (Creswell, 2009; Mertens, 2005), are now available to the researcher.

Creswell (2009) delineates four factors that help develop the procedures of a mixed methods study. They are timing, weight, mixing, and theorizing. The timing of the collection of the data can either be completed concurrently or in phases. For the purpose of this study, the data collection was completed in phases. Where a portion of the quantitative data exists, and the other portion of quantitative data was completed next, followed up with the collection of the qualitative data to expand the research further. Depending upon the emphasis of the data presented first, weight occurs in a mixed methods study through such strategies. Often, a researcher would intentionally use a form of data in a more supportive role giving either the quantitative or qualitative data more weight. Mixing the data can be a difficult task, and

considerations need to be taken. Such considerations may be when to mix the data? Is the mixing completed during data collection only or during the analysis or the interpretation, or during all three phases? Finally, the theories help to shape the types of questions that were asked in the study.

Furthermore, Creswell (2009) goes onto present six major strategies for researchers to select from when they are designing their research proposal. Three are sequential, which means the data was collect in a chronological order or time period, and the other three are concurrent in which the data, both qualitative and quantitative, are collected simultaneously. The concurrent strategies allow for the data to be collected simultaneously, which in turn permits the study to be completed at a more rapid pace. A researcher must decipher which strategy leans best to their needs. In doing so, the researcher must take into account the following factors: priority, integration, implementation of the method, and theoretical prospective (Creswell, 2009). Thus, the concurrent *triangulation* strategy (see Figure 5), as noted by Creswell, would be the most effective for this particular program evaluation, due to the data collections methods and collection time period.

According to Creswell (2009), a concurrent triangulation strategy is selected when a researcher collects two different types of data, qualitative and quantitative, concurrently and "then compares the two databases to determine if there is convergence, differences, or some combination" (p. 213). This comparison method is also referred to as "*confirmation, disconfirmation, cross-validation,* or *corroboration*" (Creswell, 2009, p. 213). This model can help offset the weakness of one method with the strengths of the other method (Creswell 2009; Mertens, 2005).

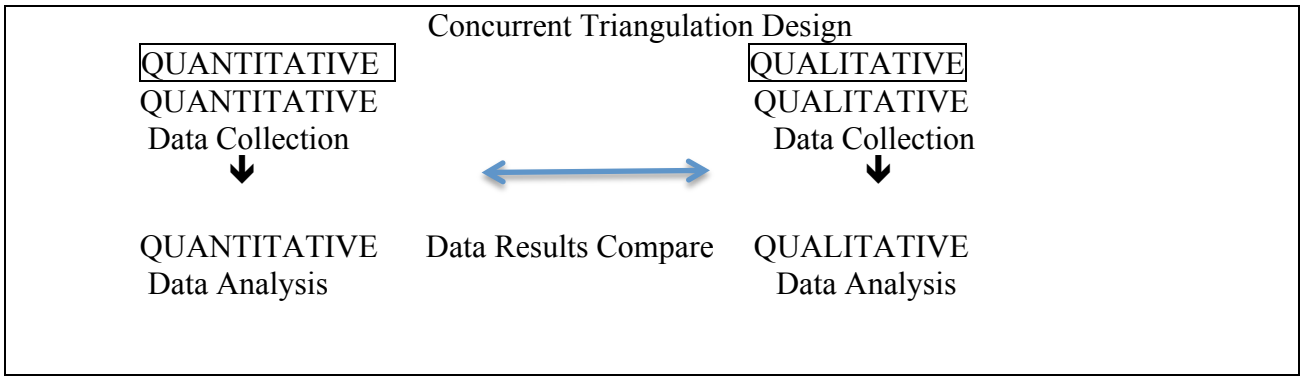

Figure 5. Concurrent triangulation design.
Note. The concurrent triangulation design compares the data results of quantitative and qualitative data collection.

Restatement of the Research Questions

The objective of this mixed methods study was to answer the following research questions:

1. Are the data from the increased frequent formative assessments showing improvement in student comprehension of the standards and sub-strands being taught?
2. How are the data being utilized to improve instruction in the classroom by the instructional staff?
3. Are there correlations from the pre/post assessments with the main components of the TESS framework for the learning environment/student population? How are the main components of the TESS framework being utilized as an instructional method?
4. How are knowledge and support of the administration, concerning the implementation and development of the program, shown/present? Are they in-line with the main components of the TESS framework, which are in place to assist the school teaching staff with utilizing the frequent formative assessments and improving instruction being implemented?

Population and Sample

Quantitative data. This researcher used existing data from formative assessments given in ELA over a 10-month period during the 2012–2013 school year at an incarcerated juvenile hall school facility. This study used structured record reviews of school information consisting of pre/post formative exams that were used to improve student instruction. This data has been collected at the incarcerated juvenile hall school facility over the past school year and was available for use in this study to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

The data were collected online using OARS. Students logged in using numbers to identify themselves, so the anonymity and confidentiality of the students have been preserved. Specific characteristics for this population were that each student, male or female, were incarcerated in a juvenile hall detention facility, enrolled in 9th or 10th grade English language arts, and were in attendance for both the pre and post exam given.

In addition, an online descriptive analysis questionnaire was emailed to approximately 22 teachers who implemented frequent formative assessments in either math or English language arts, participated in the PLCs, received professional development, and were directed by the school leadership team made up of teacher leads and administrators. The professional development focused on utilizing the components of the TESS framework to assist with instruction and development of the formative assessments.

The questionnaire gathered insight from respondents regarding the PLCs, because the formative assessments were developed and discussed in these groups. The questionnaire focused on the five dimensions of a PLC (Blacklock, 2009; DuFour et al., 2004; Wiseman, 2008) by asking about values and vision, collective learning and application, shared personal practices, supportive conditions, and leadership. The researcher also collected and analyzed the feedback

from the questionnaire. The willingness of the participants to be open and honest with their feedback, in the questionnaire was essential to the value of the quantitative approach.

Qualitative data. The study's qualitative data was gathered from a focus group consisting of the PLC leads, literacy specialist teachers (LSTs), and administrators of MJHS who participated in utilizing the concentric circles components- PLCs, school leadership, teacher content knowledge, frequent formative assessment, and interpretation of data (RISE, 2010). The focus group was used to elicit teacher opinions on the efficacy of the assessments utilized to improve instruction in terms of what should be continued, discontinued, or introduced in the assessments. Focus group members were also asked about their views on the use of professional development, PLCs, direct instruction lesson planning, and the leadership provided by the lead teachers, as well as the administrators.

This information helped to answer the research questions and to evaluate the overall program implementation, which was to assist with increasing student learning. It assisted in clarifying whether the use of frequent formative assessments increased student performance and which components, if any, of the entire process were significant in making these changes.

In addition, the group utilized the *Stop, Start, Continue* review process to evaluate the program implementation. Utilizing the *Stop, Start, Continue* model with the focus group allowed them to focus on the performance of the program, rather than the individuals. For example,

1. What isn't working with the implementation of the program? (Something we should STOP)
2. What should be put in place to improve the program? (Something we should START)
3. What is working well? (Something we should CONTINUE)

This gave the lead team, and others who chose to review the implementation of the process, feedback as to what worked, and what should be continued, as well as what did not work, and what needs to be discontinued.

The researcher collected the evaluation, analyzed by the participants in the focus group, as noted in their feedback. As with the quantitative data, the willingness of the participants to be open and honest with their feedback was equally essential to the value of the qualitative approach.

Selection of site. Midway Juvenile Hall School, an incarcerated juvenile detention facility, is one of a few incarcerated juvenile hall schools within the County of Southern Angels. The site being focused upon is located eight minutes East of Downtown Southern Angels, in a lower socioeconomic area. It can house from 100 to 500 students. Recently, the average population has ranged from 250 to 350 students. Various factors affect the number of incarcerated students. Such factors include probation's staffing ratio; economic factors such as budget cuts; and the time of the year- Spring, Summer, Winter or Fall. This site was designed to be a temporary housing facility while students are awaiting their adjudication to either camp, residential treatment center, placement, house arrest or simply released home.

Sampling method. Participant's results for this study were identified through OARS data, quantitative existing data from the school, and quantitative data from a descriptive analysis questionnaire, as well as qualitative data from a focus group.

The student subjects of the quantitative OARS data were given identification numbers during pre/post assessments so that the data remained anonymous. This allowed for random sampling within a confined setting. This data was existent data and was gathered from the OARS database for school year 2012-2013. The manner in which these subjects participated was dependent on the date of the given formative assessment. As noted above, many students were in

the school for short periods of time, making it difficult to gather pre- and post- instruction data. All the students who took both pre and post assessments were enrolled and were in attendance for the entire length of time that the particular assessment focused on. Students who were in the classroom for only the pre-assessment or the post assessment were not included in the measured scores.

The approximately 25 instructor subjects for the descriptive analysis quantitative data (gathered via online questionnaire) were a nonprobability sample that taught at the facility and both used the formative assessment data to assist with their instruction and participated in the PLCs to develop direct instruction lessons.

The subjects for the qualitative data, completed through a focus group, consisted of the PLC lead teachers, LSTs, and administrators. The focus group was conducted to give insight regarding the efficacy of the program by using the *Stop, Start, Continue* feedback process.

Descriptions of Collection Strategies

The data collected for this study was completed in three parts: collecting existing quantitative data from the OARS database, gathering quantitative data from instructors through an online questionnaire frequently used in education, and collecting qualitative data through a focus group.

As the OARS database was licensed to the RISE/TESS consultant group who allowed MJHS to utilize it so that students became more familiar and comfortable with online assessments, permission to utilize the online data has been obtained from Dr. Frank Rodriguez, President of RISE Educational Services. A letter authorizes access to the ELA pre/post formative assessments used at MJHS (see Appendix A).

The online questionnaire was created utilizing a secure online website service called Novi System. The questionnaire asked the same questions of all participants and focused on the

activities of the PLCs. As noted above, direct instruction lessons were created and discussed, the data review was completed, the collective learning and application along with the shared personal practices, as well as the values and vision with the support were demonstrated in the PLCs.

The online questionnaire was disseminated through the Internet. Assigning each response a coded number rather than a name ensured the privacy of the participants.

An initial email invitation (see Appendix B) was sent to all teachers who taught at MJHS, approximately twenty-five, and who both used the formative assessment data to assist with their instruction and participated in a PLC during the 2012-2013 school year. Permission to email the teachers through their work email was obtained from the assistant superintended of the county (see Appendix C). A letter of informed consent was included in the email so that respondents could review it, sign it and send back to the researcher before beginning the questionnaire. Respondents were assured that they could discontinue their participation in the study for any reason or at any time.

The qualitative data was collected through a focus group, with the same questions addressed to all participants. The focus group utilized the *Stop, Start, Continue* review process. An initial email was sent to the proposed members of the focus group-PLC lead teachers, LSTs, and administrators-inviting them to participate. The email included an explanation of the study and privacy measures to be taken, the date and location of the focus group meeting, and the researcher's, as well as the chairperson's contact information.

Individuals who agreed to participate in the focus group received a letter of informed consent (see Appendix D) via email. It was collected at the focus group meeting prior to commencement of the 5 steps. Copies of the informed consent were also available at the meeting

in case someone forgot their letter. As with questionnaire respondents, participants were assured that they could discontinue their participation in the study for any reason or at any time.

To minimize risk to the participants, this study was conducted in accordance with the guidelines set out by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Pepperdine University outlined below. The emphasis of this study is educational research and was considered as non-invasive to the participants. This study did not inflict personal or physical injury of any kind to the subjects. No coercion of any kind was employed to garner study participation.

All participants were informed and assured that only the researcher or supervising faculty member will have access to their responses. The online survey included no identifying questions, such as name, address, and workplace. The respondent indicated his/her agreement to participate by accessing the survey and completing the questions or by participating in the focus group. The respondent was able to stop participation in the study, at will, by choosing not to complete or submit the survey, or by not participating in the focus group.

Description of Data Collection Tools

The instruments used to gather quantitative data for the study was through the OARS and an online descriptive analysis questionnaire via the Internet. Qualitative data was gathered in a focus group using the *Stop, Start Continue* review process. As noted in Creswell's (2009) *Research Design,* selection of the data collection method(s) was dependent on the desired outcome of the study. The desired outcome here was to obtain answers the research questions in order to evaluate the program being utilized at MJHS.

The archived data from OARS was placed into an Excel spread sheet and a paired T test will be completed to determine if any growth in student achievement has occurred. Due to the small sample size, the Wilcoxon matched pairs test was used (see Appendix E). This data was

collected during the 2012-13 school year at MJHS, and permission to utilize the data has been obtained (see Appendix A).

Questions for the online questionnaire were entered into the web-based survey tool "Novi Survey." Novi Survey, online survey software, has been in operation since 2006, and offered a reliable and secure online survey site where this researcher could provide a location for participants to access and respond to the questionnaire provided.

The questionnaire (see Appendix F), was based on Hipp and Huffman's (2003) "Professional Learning Community Assessment," but has been modified to focus solely on the use of formative assessments, referred to as OARS in the questionnaire, and the use of the TESS components, discussed in Chapter 1. The survey had forty-five questions divided into six factors and the approximate time to complete the survey would take the participants up to thirty minutes. The following items were aligned with the following factors:

- Shared and Supportive Leadership (10 questions)
    1. The staff is consistently involved in discussing and making decisions about most school issues.
    2. The principal incorporates advice from the staff to make decisions.
    3. The staff have accessibility to key information.
    4. The principal is proactive and addresses areas where support is needed.
    5. Opportunities are provided for staff to initiate change.
    6. The principal shares responsibility and rewards for innovative actions.
    7. The principal participates democratically with staff sharing power and authority.
    8. Leadership is promoted and nurtured among staff.
    9. Decision-making takes place through committees and communication across grade and subject areas.

10. Stakeholders assume shared responsibility and accountability for student learning without evidence of imposed power and authority.

- Shared Values and Vision (8 questions)
    1. A collaborative process exists for developing a shared sense of values among staff.
    2. Shared values support norms of behavior that guide decisions about teaching and learning.
    3. The staff share visions for school improvement that have an undeviating focus on student learning.
    4. Decisions are made in alignment with the school's values and vision.
    5. A collaborative process exists for developing a shared vision among staff.
    6. School goals focus on student learning beyond test scores and grades.
    7. Policies and programs are aligned to the school's vision.
    8. Stakeholders are actively involved in creating high expectations that serve to increase student achievement.
- Collective Learning and Application (8 questions)
    1. The staff work together to seek knowledge, skills and strategies and apply this new learning to their work.
    2. Collegial relationships exist among staff that reflect commitment to school improvement efforts.
    3. The staff plan and work together to search for solutions to address diverse student needs.
    4. A variety of opportunities and structures exist for collective learning through open dialogue.

5. The staff engage in dialogue that reflects a respect for diverse ideas that lead to continued inquiry.
6. Professional development focuses on teaching and learning.
7. School staff and stakeholders learn together and apply new knowledge to solve problems.
8. School staff is committed to program that enhance learning.

- Shared Person Practice (6 questions)
    1. Opportunities exist for staff to observe peers and offer encouragement.
    2. The staff provide feedback to peers related to instructional practices.
    3. The staff informally share ideas and suggestions for improving student learning.
    4. The staff collaboratively review student work to share and improve instructional practices.
    5. Opportunities exist for coaching and mentoring.
    6. Individuals and teams have the opportunity to apply learning and share the results of their practices.
- Supportive Conditions – Relationships (4 questions)
    1. Caring relationships exist among staff and students that are built on trust and respect.
    2. A culture of trust and respect exists for taking risks.
    3. Outstanding achievement is recognized and celebrated regularity in our school.
    4. School staff and stakeholders exhibit a sustained and unified effort to embed change into the culture of the school.
- Supportive Conditions – Structures (9 questions)
    1. Time is provided to facilitate collaborative work.

2. The school schedule promotes collective learning and shared practice.
3. Fiscal resources are available for professional development.
4. Appropriate technology and instructional materials are available to staff.
5. Resource people provide expertise and support for continuous learning.
6. The school facility is clean, attractive and inviting.
7. The proximity of grade level and department personnel allows for ease in collaborating with colleagues.
8. Communication systems promote a flow of information among staff.
9. Communications systems promote a flow of information across the entire school community including: central office personnel, parents/guardians, and community members.

Most of the questions asked about the Crust of the *Concentric Circles Model* used by RISE-TESS (See p. 9, Figure 2), which suggested that to properly implement direct instruction and formative assessments to improve student instruction, continuous improvement by way of the regenerative systems should be in place. The regenerative systems that were being referred to were PLCs, professional development, process, priorities, and planning (RISE, 2010); therefore, the use of Hipp and Huffman's (2003) "Professional Learning Community Assessment," was to focus on the majority of the work centered on the PLCs.

According to Creswell (2009), an online survey offered the researcher advantages, compared to other techniques, such as quick response, and easy follow-up. The survey was designed to be as short as possible to achieve the maximum response rate from the subjects.

The focus group used the *Stop, Start, Continue* review process, which allowed the focus group members to communicate among themselves regarding which areas of concentration- *Stop, Start or Continue*-needed improvement and which were identified as areas of strength.

Using the feedback from the focus group, MJHS and any other incarcerated juvenile hall or camp school that would chose to use this program, could grasp what the effectiveness, productivity, quality and satisfaction of the program was rated.

The focus group used five steps in the *Stop, Start, Continue* review process (See Table 1). These steps allowed the focus group to rate the program and give feedback to the researcher.

Validity

Every study faces threats to its validity, and it is the researcher's responsibility to reduce these threats to ensure the creditability of the study's conclusions. Thus, the appropriateness of the data collection tool was determined by its reliability and the quality of the data collected (Creswell, 2009; Mertens 2005). Potential threats were identified and addressed prior to data collection to delineate them.

Therefore, the manner in which the testing procedures were administered, and the content of the items being used for measurement, did not show any bias so that the measurement tool was valid. The following gives a brief explanation of the types of validity threats that can come about, internal or external (Creswell, 2009; Mertens 2005).

Internal validity threats. These can arise in the experimental procedures due to a number of issues such as inconsistencies in procedures, experiences or treatment (Creswell, 2009). To assist in addressing these issues, the selection of the student participants were only those who had taken both the pre/post assessment.

As for the existing data, the researcher only used data for individuals who took both the pre and post assessment to ensure no possible internal validity threat. Additionally, the frequent formative assessments that were given to the students had all the same questions on each test but in varied formats so to prevent any errors. This type of reliability was categorized as test-retest.

Test-retest is a test that determines reliability if the results of the repeated administration of the assessments, in the case of the formative assessments, were differentiated during the administration of the two, pre/post, assessments but consistently given to the same students.

Table 1
Stop, Start, Continue -Focus Group Steps

Focus Group 			
Step 1	Break group up into pairs or triads.	Provide 15 min. to answer questions.	Stop, Start, Continue
Step 2	Have each pair or triad write its answers on the posters.	This will allow for the walk-around.	Note answers from Stop, Start, Continue program review.
Step 3	Have each pair or triad complete its walk-around and submit any additional questions.	During the walk-around a transcriber will list all the answers into a word doc. as a list.	Add additional questions or comments to the list.
Step 4	From the list, the participants will select their top three choices (Rate the answers).	This will be completed as an individual function to keep anonymity.	Be specific as to the instructions for the rating process.
Step 5	From the list, tally the results and complete the data analysis.	Give the group the results from their feedback.	

Test-retest is a test that determines reliability if the results of the repeated administration of the assessments, in the case of the formative assessments, were differentiated during the administration of the two, pre/post, assessments but consistently given to the same students.

Regarding the online questionnaire to the teachers, all teachers who participated in giving the frequent formative assessments at MJHS during the 2012-13 school year were given the

opportunity to participate in the study. Thus, leaving no room for inconsistencies in procedures, and assisting the researcher's ability to adequately infer from the data collected regarding the population of the experiment, which was critical to the validity of the data (Creswell, 2009).

It could be noted that "selection bias" could occur with the online questionnaire to the teachers who participated in giving the frequent formative assessments and those who chose to reply to the questionnaire. If some teachers did not select to participate because they felt the program was not appropriate or assisted in measuring student progress then it could be inferred that bias was shown on the part of those teachers who chose to participate.

External validity threats. These were also possible and needed to be identified to minimize any external threats. According to Creswell (2009), such threats occur when the researcher "incorrectly infers from the sample data to other persons, settings and past or future situations" (p. 162). External validity threats could result from the characteristics of the individuals selected to participate in the sample, the uniqueness of the setting, or the timing of the experiment. An example of such a possible threat to this study could have been the interaction of history and treatment. The description of such an external validity threat, according to Creswell (2009), comes about when the results of an experiment are time bound. An action that could be taken to eliminate such a threat would be to suggest that the study be replicated at a later time, to determine if the actual results will occur again as in the earlier experiment (Creswell, 2009).

Statistical conclusion validity threats. These can occur when the researcher makes an incorrect inference due to inadequate statistical formula(s) used to generate the statistics. In order to reduce this threat, a statistical program such as SPSS, was utilized to generate the quantitative statistics for this study.

Construct validity threats. These may occur when investigators "use inadequate definitions and measures of variables" (Creswell, 2009, p. 164). To reduce such threats, definitions and descriptions have been given earlier in the study, and continuity of the verbiage as well as consistency, have been utilized throughout this study.

Description of Data Analysis

Both the quantitative and qualitative data were used to analyze the research questions (see Table 2). As noted by Creswell (2009) in his description of the concurrent triangulation strategy, this would be the most effective for this particular program evaluation. It allowed for the data to be compared and assist in determining the program evaluation.

Table 2
Data Analysis Table

Research Question Questionnaire	OARS Assessment Results (Quant.)	Teacher Descriptive Analysis (Quant.)	Focus Group (Qual.)
1. Are the data from the increased frequent formative assessments showing significant improvement in student comprehension of the standards and sub-strands being taught?	The assessment results from the OARS regarding ELA pre/post assessments were utilized.	None of the descriptive analysis questions were applicable in showing significant improvement in student comprehension.	None of the Focus Group information was applicable in showing significant improvement in student comprehension.

(Continued)

Research Question Questionnaire	OARS Assessment Results (Quant.)	Teacher Descriptive Analysis (Quant.)	Focus Group (Qual.)
2. How are the data being utilized to improve instruction in the classroom by the instructional staff?	The assessment results from the OARS regarding ELA pre/post assessments assisted in describing how classroom instruction was improving by the staff's use of the data.	The data from the descriptive analysis questions described how classroom instruction was improved.	The data from the Focus Group described how classroom instruction was improved.
3. Are there correlations from the pre/post assessments with the main components of the TESS framework for the learning environment/ student population? How are the main components of the TESS framework being utilized as an instructional method?	The assessment results from the OARS regarding ELA pre/post assessments assisted in describing how effective the TESS components assisted with the learning environment.	The data from the descriptive analysis questions explained how effective the TESS components were for the learning environment and used as an instructional method.	The data from the Focus Group explained how effective the TESS components were for the learning environment and used as an instructional method.
4. How does the knowledge and support of the administration concerning the implementation and development of the program, as well as the main components of the TESS framework, assist the school teaching staff with utilizing the frequent formative assessments and improving instruction?	None of the data from the OARS frequent formative assessments were utilized.	The data from the descriptive analysis explained how the administrator's knowledge and support of the TESS framework, as well as the OARS data assisted the teaching staff with improving instruction.	The data from the Focus Group explained how the administrator's knowledge and support of the TESS framework, as well as the OARS data assisted the teaching staff with improving instruction.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this study was to enquire if a direct instructional method, which encompassed frequent formative assessments, utilized in an incarcerated juvenile hall school, where the average student stay is twenty to thirty days, was effective in measuring student growth by use of frequent formative assessments and teacher instruction. Various components contributed to the implementation of the instructional method. Three main components looked at were the pre/post assessments that students took during the 2012-2013 school year, teacher participation in PLCs and their feedback, as well as the feedback from a focus group conducted with the leadership team who drove the implementation of the instructional method with the school staff.

Quantitative Data

The quantitative data from existing data was gathered and complied by using the Wilcoxon Matched Pairs Test. Quantitative data from an online survey was also collected from teachers who taught at MJHS during the 2012-2013 school year. Finally, qualitative data from a focus group of teacher leads and the school administrators from MJHS were also collected. All were used to address the following research questions:

1. Are the data from the increased frequent formative assessments showing improvement in student comprehension of the standards and sub-strands being taught?
2. How are the data being utilized to improve instruction in the classroom by the instructional staff?
3. Are there correlations from the pre/post assessments with the main components of the TESS framework for the learning environment/student population? How are the main components of the TESS framework being utilized as an instructional method?

4. How are knowledge and support of the administration, concerning the implementation and development of the program, shown/present? Are they in-line with the main components of the TESS framework, which are in place to assist the school teaching staff with utilizing the frequent formative assessments and improving instruction being implemented?

Summary of pre/post assessments. This researcher used existing data from formative assessments given in ELA class over a 10-month period during the 2012–2013 school year at MJHS, an incarcerated juvenile hall school facility. This data was collected at the incarcerated juvenile hall school facility over the past school year and was available for use in this study to evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional program using the RISE-TESS framework.

The data were collected online using OARS. Students logged in using numbers to identify themselves, so the anonymity and confidentiality of the students have been preserved. Specific characteristics for this population were that each student, male or female, were incarcerated in a juvenile hall detention facility, enrolled in 9th or 10th grade English language arts, and were in attendance for both the pre and post exam given. Therefore, a lower number of student participants were disseminated due to the high turnover rate of students in the incarcerated juvenile hall detention facility and their short period of stay. The average class size was fifteen to eighteen students, but the number of students who were present for both the pre/post assessments were only two to four at times.

Table 3 displays the pre-assessment to post-assessment comparisons for the six ELA strand scores. These comparisons utilized Wilcoxon matched pairs tests due to the small sample sizes (see Appendix E). The scores were based on the number of correct answers on a 10 answer

Table 3
Comparison of Pre-Assessment and Post Assessment Scores for ELA. Wilcoxon Matched Pairs Tests

Strand	Time	*n*	*M*	*SD*	Low	High	*z*	*p*
One							2.86	.004
	Pre	27	2.44	1.50	0	5		
	Post	27	3.22	1.42	0	6		
Two							0.99	.32
	Pre	23	2.87	1.63	0	6		
	Post	23	2.48	1.38	0	5		
Three							1.42	.16
	Pre	30	3.23	1.30	0	6		
	Post	30	2.70	1.34	0	5		
Four							2.77	.006
	Pre	24	3.38	1.31	1	6		
	Post	24	2.54	1.18	0	5		
Five							1.45	.15
	Pre	23	2.91	1.35	0	6		
	Post	23	2.39	2.02	0	6		
Six							3.58	.001
	Pre	31	2.58	1.41	0	5		
	Post	31	3.61	1.50	0	6		

Note. Scores are based on the number of correct answers on a 10 question test.

test. Inspection of the table found no significant differences from pretest to posttest for three of the six strands. Significant pretests to posttest gains were found for strand one (p = .004) and strand six (p = .001). For strand four, posttest scores were significantly lower than pretest scores (p = .006; see Table 3).

Table 4 displays the gain scores for the six ELA strands. Gains scores were calculated by subtracting the student's pre-assessment score from their post assessment score. For four of six strands, negative mean gains were noted (see Table 4).

Table 4

Gain Scores for the ELA Strands

Strand	*n*	*M*	*SD*	Low	High
One	27	0.78	1.28	-1.00	4.00
Two	23	-0.39	1.80	-4.00	3.00
Three	30	-0.53	1.91	-4.00	3.00
Four	24	-0.83	1.20	-3.00	3.00
Five	23	-0.52	1.86	-3.00	4.00
Six	31	1.03	1.20	-2.00	3.00

Note. Gain score = Post Assessment minus pre-assessment.

Summary of teacher responses. An online descriptive analysis questionnaire was emailed to approximately 22 teachers who implemented frequent formative assessments in either math or English language arts, participated in the PLCs, received professional development, and were directed by the school leadership team made up of teacher leads and administrators. The

professional development focused on utilizing the components of the TESS framework to assist with instruction and development of the formative assessments.

The questionnaire gathered insight from respondents regarding the PLCs (see Appendix F), because the formative assessments were developed and discussed in these groups. The questionnaire focused on the six scales from the five dimensions of a PLC (Blacklock, 2009; DuFour et al., 2004; Wiseman, 2008) by asking about values and vision, collective learning and application, shared personal practices, supportive conditions, and leadership.

Table 3 displays the psychometric characteristics for the six teacher scale score ratings from the professional learning community assessment. Scores were based on a 4-point scale (1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 4 = *Strongly Agree*). The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients ranged in size from $\alpha = .78$ to $\alpha = .95$ with the median sized coefficient being $\alpha = .88$. This suggested that all scales had adequate levels of internal reliability (Creswell, 2009).

A repeated measures ANOVA test was used to compare six mean scores to each other. The overall F test was significant ($p = .001$). Bonferroni post hoc tests found the ratings for Scale 4 "Shared Person Practice ($M = 2.82$)" to be significantly lower than the ratings for four of the other five scale scores (see Table 5).

Appendix G displays the ratings for the 45 individual professional learning community items that were sorted by the highest mean. These ratings were based on a 4-point scale (1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 4 = *Strongly Agree*). Thirty-six of the 45 ratings had a mean rating of at least three on the 4-point scale. Highest levels of agreement were for Item 24, "Professional development focuses on teaching and learning ($M = 3.48$)" and for Item 2, "The principal incorporates advice from the staff to make decisions ($M = 3.43$)." The lowest levels of agreement were for Item 27, "Opportunities exist for staff to observe peers and offer encouragement ($M = 2.43$)" and for Item 45, "Communications systems promote a flow of

information across the entire school community including: central office personnel, parents/guardians, and community members ($M = 2.43$)" (see Appendix G).

Table 5
Comparison of the Teacher's Scale Score Ratings for the Professional Learning Community Assessment

Scale	Number of Items	*M*	*SD*	Low	High	α
1. Shared and Supportive Leadership	10	3.18	0.58	2.10	4.00	.95
2. Shared Values and Vision	8	3.18	0.54	2.00	4.00	.95
3. Collective Learning and Application	8	3.17	0.51	2.25	4.00	.88
4. Shared Person Practice	6	2.82	0.48	2.00	3.67	.78
5. Supportive Conditions – Relationships	4	2.98	0.66	1.75	4.00	.88
6. Supportive Conditions – Structures	9	3.03	0.45	2.11	3.78	.83

Note. Repeated Measures ANOVA: F (1, 20) = 18.99, p = .001., $N = 21$.
Bonferroni Post Hoc Tests: 4 < 1, 2, 3 and 6 ($p < .05$); all other pairs had no significant differences. Scores were based on a 4-point scale: 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 4 = *Strongly Agree*.

Qualitative Data

Focus group data. There was one focus group that was conducted as part of the research. The subjects for the focus group consisted of three PLC lead teachers, three LSTs, and two administrators. The focus group was conducted to give insight regarding the efficacy of the program by using the *Stop, Start, Continue* feedback process. The objective of the focus group was to gain insight into what was working, what was not working and what should continue to be used in the instructional method being implemented at MJHS including PLCs, administrative involvement and knowledge, and use of the OARS assessments. According to Krueger and

Casey (2009), a focus group could assist the researcher collect data that was of interest to the study, and the data was gained through open-ended questions. Additionally, the underlying purpose for conducting the focus group was to gain insight as to how the data from the frequent formative assessment were being utilized to improve instruction in the classroom by the instructional staff, to inquire as to how effective the main components of the TESS framework worked for the learning environment, as well as to gain insight to the support and knowledge of the administrator regarding the TESS framework and OARS data with support to the teaching staff and improved instruction. As noted in chapter one, Figure 2 (p. 9), the consult group, RISE-TESS, created the concentric circles model in which these components are represented. They could be pictured as planetary moon consisting of the core, the outer core, and the crust. Each level has a specific meaning that builds on the previous layer. In order for the instructional method to work successfully, these components need to be present, and properly functioning. Essentially, the model is based on a few components working in collaboration. Therefore, there was a need for the focus group to center their attention on RISE-TESS procedures and instructional methods the teachers utilized, OARS pre/post assessments, and PLCs.

Steps 1 and 2. As the focus group followed a 5 step protocol to complete the tasks of determining the top three recommendations of what should be *Stop, Started and Continued* with the program implementation, the fist and second step allowed the larger group to pair off into partners and create a list of items. Four pairs resulted from the participants, and they collaborated to complete the 5 steps given to them.

The lists of items to be stopped (see Figure 6) were not as extensive as the other two areas of focus. As a few focus group participants noted, “most of what was not working was immediately stopped during the program.” Collectively, the focus group produced items of the program implementation that needed to be *Stopped*, and the following were the most prevalent:

RISE-TESS	OARS	PLCs
In the lesson plan – Overlapping of independent practice and final outcome	-Length of the pre/post assessments -The use of banked questions	-The size of the groups (make smaller) -Mixing of content areas (Science & Math/Eng. & History) -No administrators present -Interruptions during meetings (implement norms)

Figure 6. Items identified by the Focus Group as needing to be *Stopped*

RISE-TESS	OARS	PLCs
-Add an EL component -Include Para-eds and Substitute teachers in in-depth PDs -Hold specific teachers accountable -Language Objective -More time for review and reteach	-Prior to the assessments: explain to the student the importance of the assessments being given -Shorter pre/post assessments -Science and History assessments -New bank of questions specifically for History and Science	- Smaller PLCs and content areas for History and Science - Use smart goals -Teacher developed accountability -PLCs for SPED - Teacher accountability regarding current data and student samples to discuss

Figure 7. Items identified by the Focus Group as needing to be *Started*

The pairs from the focus group then produced items of the program implementation that needed to be *Started* and those that were the most common were noted in Figure 7. To complete the first two steps of the *Stopped, Start, Continue – Focus Group Steps*, the pairs within the focus group produced items of the program implementation that needed to be *Continued*. The results are depicted in Figure 8.

RISE-TESS	OARS	PLCs
-Using structured lesson plans (including the OWL from the TESS framework) - Use results to guide instruction -Preview pre-test data with students	-Re-teaching questions that the students did poorly on - Validate the students by sharing the data with them immediately after the assessment - Teachers create pre/post assessments - Correlation of questions based on standards - Use of online assessments - 10 to 14 day cycle -Point person to monitor assessment process	-Reviewing the data weekly - Use of Smart goals - Use of norms during PLCs - Follow up on academic goals - Administrators be present and give input - Use results to guide instruction

Figure 8. Items identified by the Focus Group as needing to be *Continued*

Steps 3 and 4. As the participants from the focus group walked around to view the postings of what should be *Stop, Started and Continued*, they noticed many of the responses were duplicated. The conversation was positive and focused upon the success of the program from their view, and noticeable school culture change that brought about discussion rather than complaints. "We truly had great discussion during our PLCs and change was made," was a comment made from one of the focus group participants. After each individual selected their top three items from each group the results in Figure 9 were present to them.

Step 5. The group was pleased with the outcome and felt inclined to rate the top three from 1 to 3 (see Figure 10), with 1 being their top choice and 3 being their third choice. The the final results of the focus group are depicted in Figure 10.

Stopped	*Started*	*Continued*
-Size of the PLCs -Interruptions during meetings (implement Norms) -No administrators present	-Hold specific teachers accountable -More time for review and reteach -Add an EL component	- Validate the students by sharing the data with them immediately after the assessment -Reviewing the data weekly - Use results to guide instruction

Figure 9. List of top three items that need to be *Stopped, Started and Continued* as identified by the Focus Group

Stopped	*Started*	*Continued*
1. Size of the PLCs 2. No administrators present 3. Interruptions during meetings (implement Norms)	1. Hold specific teachers accountable 2. More time for review and reteach 3. Add an EL component	1. Use results to guide instruction 2. Reviewing the data weekly 3. Validate the students by sharing the data with them immediately after the assessment

Figure 10. List of top three items that need to be *Stopped, Started and Continued* as identified by the Focus Group in order of greatest importance

There was one consistent complaint that resulted from the focus group. The complaint was regarding the displeasure of the new administration being unaware of the process and their unwillingness to become familiar with it. This became one of the top items in the "What needs to be *Stopped?"* column. Although, from the responses in the online survey in the aforementioned qualitative data section, teachers rated the administrative input very high, as they did not directly work with administrators in the capacity that the leadership team did. The

administrators were simply participants of the PLCs, as to have equal input from all stakeholders during the development and discussion periods.

Summary

Overall, the findings did show that student achievement grew but not in astronomical numbers. The use of the RISE-TESS components may have played a factor into the increase of student achievement, but more research needs to be completed to specifically identify the exact amount of effect they had. Finally, the PLCs developed greatly over the school year, creating a strong school culture and desire to implement change. Although, with the change in administration, the need to get the new administrators up to speed with the reset of the staff is of vital to maintain the momentum of the strong school culture, according to the leadership team.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine if the increased frequent formative assessments given to incarcerated youth, within a juvenile hall school, assisted in measuring their academic growth and increased their learning. The formative assessments were part of an instructional method, which was implemented with the coaching assistance from RISE consultants at MJHS. Other important factors that were focused upon in addition to the instructional method were the PLCs, leadership, and instructional delivery by the teaching staff utilizing the FAST framework provided by RISE and discussed in chapter one.

As previously noted in this study, students in MJHS generally remain at the school for a very brief period of time. Thus, the need to implement an effective instructional method that would assist the educators and staff in effectively teaching the students they are obligated to serve. The study focused on existing data from ELA formative assessments given to students who were enrolled at the school during any of the pre/post assessment periods scheduled during the 2012-2013 school year. There were six different pre/post exams given throughout the school year. The study also surveyed the teachers who participated in the coaching assistance and implementation of the FAST framework, using the main components of this framework. Furthermore, the teachers' participation in PLCs was critical to the proper implementation and comprehension of the data gained from the OARS. Finally, the leadership team from MJHS who lead the charge of planning and maintaining the implementation of the instructional methods along with the facilitation of the PLCs, and who collaborated with the site administrators to see the process through, were interviewed as a focus group to gather their insight as to what worked, what did not work, and what still needed to be implemented into the program to make the instructional method effective for the learning environment.

Conclusions/Review of Findings

Analysis of the findings lead to the following conclusions: (a) the student results from the pre/post test did show some growth in a few of the assessments given during the 2012-2013 school year at MJHS but not significant grow (b) the use of assessment results to guide instruction may have assisted with increasing instructional focus having some effect on the improvement of assessment achievement, but enhanced changes such as individual content area focus, might assist with greater improvement (c) including the students in the data attained through the assessments and sharing it immediately would allow validation of the students growth to be developed (d) various factors such as mental health concerns, social emotional concerns, consequences of their delinquent actions resulting them to be incarcerated and possible drug abuse of the incarcerated student may have an impact on the appropriate attention put forth by the student during the assessment period (e) the ability of the teachers to learn from their colleagues best practices may have been limited (f) the size of the PLCs could have decreased and been separated into all core content areas to assist with greater instructional delivery (g) continuity of accountability regarding teacher participation, teacher content knowledge, and use of assessment data to reteach (h) the cohesiveness of the school culture was present and allowed for the implementation of the program to grow and move forward (i) the administrators support was key to effectively implementing the instructional method and coaching process.

Pre/post scores (RQ1). Results from the pre/post existing data did show growth in a few of the assessments, overall there was no significant growth that is noteworthy as the sample size was small-scale. The average score ranged from 3 out of 10 and the highest score overall was a 6. This calls to question if the assessments were appropriate for the setting. One may also question, if the delivery of the instruction was appropriate or if the state of the student's mind was preoccupied with external concerns pertaining to his/her detention in the incarcerated facility.

Also, the testing environment for which the students took the assessments may not have been appropriate for the students. Thus, the reduction of outside factors may have an impact on the outcome of the assessments given to the students.

Although, reviewing the data results from the Wilcoxon matched pairs tests, significant improvement in student comprehension was not attained, a small improvement for the few students who were present for both the pre and post assessment did show increase. Due to the numbers noted in the existing data, the ceiling and floor effect can be called to question in regards to the assessments given to the students. Thus, contributions of the students' skills do not necessarily mean that the scores were solely reflective of the amount of English language arts comprehension or mastery that contributed to either the pre/post assessments. Further research would have to be completed to identify if outside factors, while incarcerated, had an effect on the student's motivation in taking the assessment.

Data to improve instruction (RQ2). Noted in the focus group discussion, the practice of sharing the assessment data with the students and including them in the process of improving instruction for their benefit has been occurring and will continue. This process generally occurs the day after a pre/post assessment is given and the classroom teacher has examined the results of the assessment. The teacher will share the results of the assessments with the students and focus upon the questions that the majority of the students in the classroom answered incorrectly to assist with clarity and comprehension. As the process was completed, it was found that the mere verbiage of a question was merely misunderstood and the reason why the majority of the students answered it incorrectly. Therefore, the importance of reviewing the data with the students assisted the teacher to find out their prior knowledge.

Furthermore, the use of the assessment results to guide instruction was acknowledged as something that was working and should continue to be utilized. The one major factor brought to

light in the focus group discussion was the size of the PLCs. The two PLC groups had approximately twenty to twenty five individuals per group. The focus group noted that the ELA and math groups should have been broken down further to include science and history. A small sized group of no more than ten individuals would have been ideal for a more productive and inclusive discussion. Many individuals were not heard due to the size of the groups, the smaller groups would allow for participants of the PLCs to give more input. As noted by Watts and Castle (1993) the lack of time has been a key factor faced by school districts that are attempting to work collegially for the betterment of the school. The amount of time allotted to teacher at MJHS was one hour per week. With larger groups, not everyone was able to express their opinions due to time limitations; thus, the desire for smaller PLCs.

Finally, the results from the PLC online survey (see Appendix G) denotes the highest levels of agreement were for Item 24, *Professional development focuses on teaching and learning* ($M = 3.48$). As noted by Rosenholtz (1989), teacher workplace factors are key in the area of teaching quality and support for ongoing learning that allowed for better practices. Additionally, Rosenholtz (1989) found that those teachers who were supported with ongoing PD regarding teaching and learning were more committed and effect than those who were not. Fullan (1991) supported Rosenholtz's claim with his workplace recommendation of redesign for innovation and improvement built into teacher's daily activities. Staff input in using the assessment data to improve instructional methods and delivery was somewhat effective as noted by the increase in assessment results for three out of the six pre/post assessments ran utilizing the Wilcoxon matched pairs tests. From the results of the online survey (see Appendix G), the teaching staff felt supported in their focus on teaching and learning, yet the results from the existing data did not show significant improvement, which can lead an individual to focus on various factors. Such factors could include the following: students attending the juvenile

incarcerated school facility face a multitude of pressing issues such as mental health concerns, social emotional factors, literacy deficiencies, and cognitive ability skills.

Effectiveness of TESS framework (RQ3). Very little information was gained from the pre/post assessment regarding the effectiveness of the TESS framework, as there was not major significant growth. As for the PLC online survey (see Appendix G), four of the scales- Shared and Supportive Leadership, Shared Values and Vision, Collective Learning and Application, and Supportive Conditions – Structures - had significant differences over Shared personal practices and can be implied that the TESS framework was discussed and put into application effectively during PLCs. This was confirmed by the discussions and items noted using the *Stop, Start, Continue* format. One significant comment that supported the use of the TESS framework was that there continues to be an overlap of independent practice and final outcomes. The redundancy of these two items should be condensed to one, as noted by one pair during the focus group. Another other comment regarding the TESS framework focused upon the PLCs discussion of the OWL within the FAST framework. The use and knowledge of the FAST framework's main components – hook, main idea, gradual release, and independent practice-were effective and essential to the instruction given to the students.

Per some of the items noted during the focus group, a top rating to continue using the TESS structure of lesson planning the main components were especially noted. Also, discussed in the focus group discussion was the notion of more time for review and re-teaching. Due to the amount of information that needed to be covered in the instruction, and to keep within the ten to fourteen day window, teachers would have benefited from more time focused upon one strand than a few strands. According to the consensus in the focus group discussion, more students may have participated in the pre/post assessment if few strands of a larger standard were focused upon. The results from the pre/post assessments correlated to this factor, as some students did

improve, but others did not. Thus, more time to possibly reteach one or two strands effectively may have resulted in greater improvement and understanding of the instruction. Furthermore, two of the three top ratings for what should be *Continued*, was the ability to use the results of the assessments to guide instruction, and looking at the data weekly to influence a school culture of re-teaching as part of the instructional method.

Additionally, accountability regarding teacher participation, as well as teacher content knowledge would assist with the implementation of the program to grow and move forward. These items were also brought about during the discussion of the focus group. Yet, a noteworthy aspect to tie into these factors that came about from the PLC online survey were the two scales that did not have significant difference - Shared Person Practice and Supportive Conditions – Relationships. The Shared Person Practice scale had six significant questions that lend to instructional method. They are:

- Opportunities exist for staff to observe peers and offer encouragement.
- The staff provide feedback to peers related to instructional practices.
- The staff informally share ideas and suggestions for improving student learning.
- The staff collaboratively review student work to share and improve instructional practices.
- Opportunities exist for coaching and mentoring.
- Individuals and teams have the opportunity to apply learning and share the results of their practices.

The aforementioned scale is an area where focus of improvement should and needs to be addressed to better implement an effective instructional method. These components of Shared Person Practice allow for peer mentoring and coaching to occur, which may then result in changes to the instructional delivery due to the knowledge of best practices.

Leadership (RQ4). The data from the PLC online survey conveyed that the administrative support was evident. The scale, Shared and Supportive Leadership, in the PLC online survey was rated amongst the highest of the six scales, along with Shared Values and Vision scale. Additionally, the Collective Learning and Application scales came in a close third to the top two scales. All three scales imply that support, collaboration, leadership, vision and values were made a priority and understood. But even more, these areas were practiced within the school culture, which is a testament to the administrative leadership.

Furthermore, in the focus group discussion it was noted that leadership, administrative presence, was needed continually for the continuity of the instructional method implementation. Rsearch by Kleine-Kracht (1993) has suggested that administrators, as well as teachers, must be learners: "questioning, investigating, and seeking solutions" (p. 393) in order to effectively implement school improvement (Hord, 1997). With the new common core state standards being implemented, all stakeholders will need to be active learners and participants in the PLCs in order to make effective change at their school site. As the paradigm shift from assessing the academic achievement of individual pupils throughout the California educational system moves to modeling and promoting high-quality teaching and learning activities across the curriculum and assessing student achievement, the school leadership must grow into better instructional leaders, and commandeer the staff toward working to the same goal of improving school reform. Additionally, according to Hord (1997) and others who have focused their research on PLCs, "transforming schools into learning communities must be completed with the leaders' nurturing and approval of the staff's development as a community" (p. 6).

The school culture and implementation of the RISE-TESS framework did not just occur overnight, but rather it took a minimum of two and a half years to get to the point of implementing somewhat effective PLCs and carving out ongoing time for the staff to participate.

As noted in the comments by the focus group, the PLCs could have been smaller to allow for participation of all. Furthermore, as reflected in the online survey taken by the teachers, the lowest rated question was Item 27, *Opportunities exist for staff to observe peers and offer encouragement* ($M = 2.43$; see Appendix G). These are areas that should be focused upon to increase the effectiveness of the PLCs and school reform. According to Richard Elmore (2000), from his work on *Building a New Structure for School Leadership*, "the school administrator needs to concentrate or be connected to leading the school in improving instruction and student performance" (pp. 13-15).

Suggestions for Future Research

Frequency. As previously stated, the purpose of this study was to determine if the increased frequent formative assessments given to incarcerated youth, within a juvenile hall school in an incarcerated setting, assisted in measuring their academic growth and increased their learning. The data in the study denotes that students do benefit from the use of frequent formative assessments, but it is only applicable to a very small number. Perhaps if the assessments were to be given even more frequently, and only one or two strands of a standard were focused on, then possibly a greater number of students would be present for both the pre/post assessments. This may show greater increase in students' academic growth and understanding of the instruction. As very little research has been completed on incarcerated youth and their high turnover rate or short stay within the school system, it is recommended that future research be completed as to the effects.

Common core state standards. The common core state standards has incorporated much technology, and the research noted by Bewley (1999) as well as other researchers regarding the association between multimedia tools and the attitudes, motivation, and participation of incarcerated youth (Coffey, Gemignani & Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquent Prevention,

1994), the use of online assessments might possibly factor into the increase of student achievement. More research would need to be completed. Although, despite research documenting the benefits of using technology at some juvenile hall detention facilities (McIntyre, Tong, & Perez, 2001), teacher usage of technology while instructing the students may fall short. Thus, the need for ongoing teacher training for the usage of technology in the specific environment is encouraged. Even teachers

Additionally, the common core state standards serves as a basis for modeling and promoting high-quality teaching and learning activities across the curriculum with interim assessments being completed throughout the school year and performance tasks, as well as end of year adaptive assessments; as opposed to the California standards test which the basis was to assess the academic achievement of individual students, schools and districts in the California educational system as a whole (M. Perry, personal communication, November 1, 2013). These adaptive assessments are being vetted through two different consortia, Smart Balanced Assessment System and Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers. A digital library (see Figure 11) that will include a formative assessments process has been created and will be available to all schools. With MJHS having utilized online formative assessments in their unique environment, an uncomplicated change over to the CCSS assessments should be straightforward and become very common to the students whether they are in an incarcerated facility or comprehensive school environment.

A future study examining the transition for the staff at MJHS is recommended and may be valuable to all juvenile incarcerated school facilities.

Testing environment. As noted by Sadler (1998) and Marzano (2010) in the literature review of this study, the students should know how to interpret feedback, and be able to

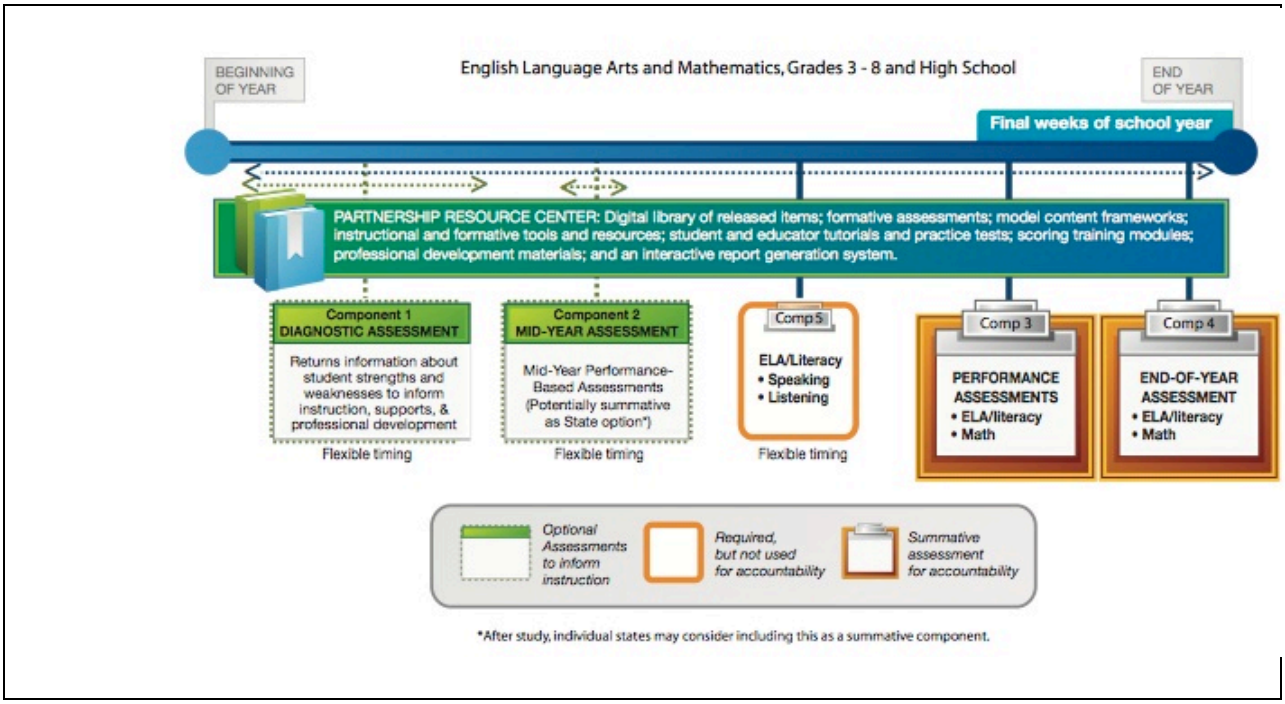

Figure 11. Assessment process –interim and end of year adaptive assessment
Note. The interim and end of year assessment process for the newly implemented California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP). The information was obtained from a presentation by Marci Perry, November 2013.

implement it so that they can improve their work. Prior to the feedback, the testing environment for the student can be a key factor into the results of the pre/post assessment results. As the pre assessments are given to obtain a greater understanding of the students' prior knowledge, the post assessments are given to check for understanding and comprehension of the instruction presented to the students. Further research into testing environment for assessing students while incarcerated is suggested, along with the factor of the students' mindset and motivation while incarcerated. Many factors plaguing the student may be present while the students are asked to be active participants in their educational growth, such as outcomes that can greatly effective their livelihood.

Summary

As the paradigm is shifting once again regarding the assessment of our students in the United States, challenges are even greater for those students who are attending school in an incarcerated juvenile detention facility. Many of these students already struggle in school and to add in factors that the student may be facing a life sentence in prison, placement in a group home or foster care facility away from family, or dealing with mental health issues sometimes drives the challenge of academic growth out of reach while incarcerated. Exploring an instructional method that would be the most effective in such a facility where the student stay is extremely short, twenty to thirty days on average, the challenge is great. What has been implemented at MJHS appears to have made some progress, but all factors as noted in the *Concentric Circles: The Core, The Outer Core, and the Crust* (Nelson, nd; see Figure 2*),* must be in place and working cohesively.

The supports from administration, leadership, and ongoing PD, as well as PLCs are vital to the success of implementing an eminent instructional method within the incarcerated juvenile hall school facility. These factors build the school culture and allow for school reform to occur. This in turn allows for an instructional method unique to the student environment, short stay in the school setting, to become successful and useful to the students as well as the instructional staff. There will be ongoing challenges and changes, but the framework of what is feasible will already be in place. This is very important with the new changes in state standards and the newly implemented CAASPP.

Recommendations for further research include a review of this study focusing on the new common core state standards being utilized. Another recommended research study would be to determine if outside factors effect the testing environment or mindset of the incarcerated student was also recommended. Thus, testing environment in an incarcerated juvenile hall school facility

would be the area of focus. And a final suggested research study would look at the frequency of assessing in the incarcerated juvenile school facility as students enter and exit at a very high rate. The timeframe in which assessments are given may need to be shortened to no more than ten days to be able to attain more data. This would allow for more participants to be assessed in both the pre and post assessments, which would give greater input as to if the instructional method is effective.

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Appendix A

Permission to Use Existing Data

RISE
INSTRUCTIONAL SYSTEMS
a TESS Consulting Group partner

December 9, 2013

Chairperson, GPS IRB
Graduate School of Education & Psychology
Pepperdine University
6100 Center Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90045

Dear GPS IRB Chairperson:

Rebecca Robertson has been given approval to use the existing ELA data collected during the 2012-2013 school year at Central Juvenile Hall School in the Online Assessments Reporting System (OARS), which was licensed to RISE Educational Services who was contracted by Central Juvenile Hall School at the time.

This is an unobtrusive study that utilizes existing student data. There are no potential risks to the students who participated in the online assessments. As a numeric code was used for each student, it is ensured that his or her identity will not be compromised.

The collection of the archived data was from September 2012, through June 2013. For this study, the students were not asked to do anything different from their normal routine. The curriculum, instruction, textbooks, materials and learning environment were not altered by any means for this study.

Given the fact the Rebecca will closely adhere to the preceding guidelines in accessing and using the existing data, she is granted full permission to use the data in her study to measure the challenges with incarcerated youth and their academic progress.

Please contact me at 661-607-1693 if you would like further clarification or any additional information regarding this research project.

With regard,

Francisco Rodriguez, Ed.D
President- RISE Educational Services

661 607-1693 fax: 661 254-7639
26320 Diamond Place, #150
Santa Clarita, CA 91350
Riseedservices.com

Appendix B

Email to Inform Teachers About the Research and the Online Survey

From: Robertson_Rebecca
Sent: Monday, March 03, 2014 3:40 PM
Subject: RE: Your assistance with my dissertation

Good afternoon...I am emailing you to ask for your assistance with my dissertation. As you may be aware, I have been working on achieving a doctorate from Pepperdine University in Educational Technology. For my dissertation, I have chosen to study the Challenges Measuring Academic Progress of Incarcerated Youth in a Juvenile Hall School.

The data collection instrument for my research will be an online survey. You will be allowed to access the survey once the Informed Consent form has been signed, dated and returned to me. At which time, I will send you an invite from NoviSystems where you will be able to access the link to the survey. My hope is that all teachers will have completed the online survey on or before Friday - March 14, 2014. Should you decide to participate you will want to give yourself at approximately 25 - 30 minutes to complete the survey. Although your participation in the research is purely voluntary, please keep in mind that the more teachers who complete the survey, the more accurate the research data will be.
I thank you in advance for your assistance in helping me complete this monumental task of compiling and organizing data into a meaningful document that may inevitably you have any questions or have any trouble accessing the survey, please contact me.

Once again, upon receipt of your signed informed consent form, I will send you an invite to the online survey. Thank you again for your assistance with my dissertation journey.

Respectfully,
Mrs. Robertson
Doctoral Candidate - Pepperdine University

Incarcerated Youth: Challenges Measuring Academic Progress in a Juvenile Hall School

The following information is provided to help you decide whether you wish to participate in a research study. Please take your time to read the induration below and fell free to ask any questions before signing this document.

My name is Rebecca Robertson, and I am a Doctoral student in the Education Learning Technologies program at Pepperdine University. The professor supervising my study is Dr. Barner. The title of my research study is *Incarcerated Youth: Challenges Measuring Academic Progress in a Juvenile Hall School* and is being done as partial requirement for my Doctoral degree.

Purpose of Research Study: The purpose of the study is to examine whether increased frequent formative assessments, using components of the RISE-TESS framework within the teacher's delivery of direct instruction, had any effect on increasing students' achievement and their comprehension of the state standards at the juvenile hall school.

Procedures: If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete an on-line survey focusing on Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) using formative assessments to measure academic growth in students who are incarcerated in a juvenile hall school. There will be six areas of focus. These areas of focus will include: Shared and Supportive Leadership, Shared Values and Vision, Collective Learning and Application, Shared Personal Practice, Supportive Conditions- Relationships, and Supportive Conditions- Structures,

Potential Risks: Subjects participating in this study may experience boredom due to similar or repetitive questions in the various sections. If you become bored and decide not to complete the survey, you may request to not submit your answers or ask to remove your responses even after you submit your online questionnaire.

Potential Benefit: You will not directly benefit from participating in this research study.

Voluntary/ right to deny or withdraw from participation: Your participation in the research study is completely voluntary, and you have the right to deny, withdraw or refuse to participate at any time, with no negative consequences to you.

Confidentiality: Data obtained for this research study, including your response to the survey will be kept confidential. The confidentiality of my records will be maintained in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. Under California law, there are exceptions to confidentiality, including suspicion that a child, elder, or dependent adult is being abused, or if an individual discloses an intent to harm him/herself or others.

Reasonable safeguards will be in place to protect the subjects identities such as random numeric codes that are password protected for those participating in the online survey, and only recorded identification of these numeric codes will be kept by me, the primary investigator, under lock and key in my home office in a locked cabinet. Only myself, my chair, and any committee members, if requested, will have access to these documents if deemed necessary. After five years,

these records will be shredded and discarded in an appropriate manner to ensure safety and identity of the participants.

The results of this research study will be summarized as a whole, as so no persons will identify you.

Contact information for questions or concerns: If you have further questions regarding this research, you may contact me, the primary investigator, Rebecca Robertson at: Rebecca.robertson@pepperdine.edu, 714-809-3261, or my faculty supervisor at Dr. Barner at Robert.barner@pepperdine.edu, 310-568-5600. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact Kevin Collins, Manager of the GPS IRB at Pepperdine University at gpsirb@pepperdine.edu or 310-568-2389.

Consent to participate in research:

I understand that this research study has been reviewed by the Graduate and Professional Schools (GPS) Institutional Review Board, Pepperdine University. For research problems or questions regarding participants' rights, I may contact Kevin Collins, Manager of the GPS IRB at Pepperdine University at gpsirb@pepperdine.edu, 310-568-5753.

I have read and understand the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this consent form.

By signing this document, I consent to participate in this study.

_____
Research Participant's Full Name (Print)

_____ _____
Research Participant's Signature Date

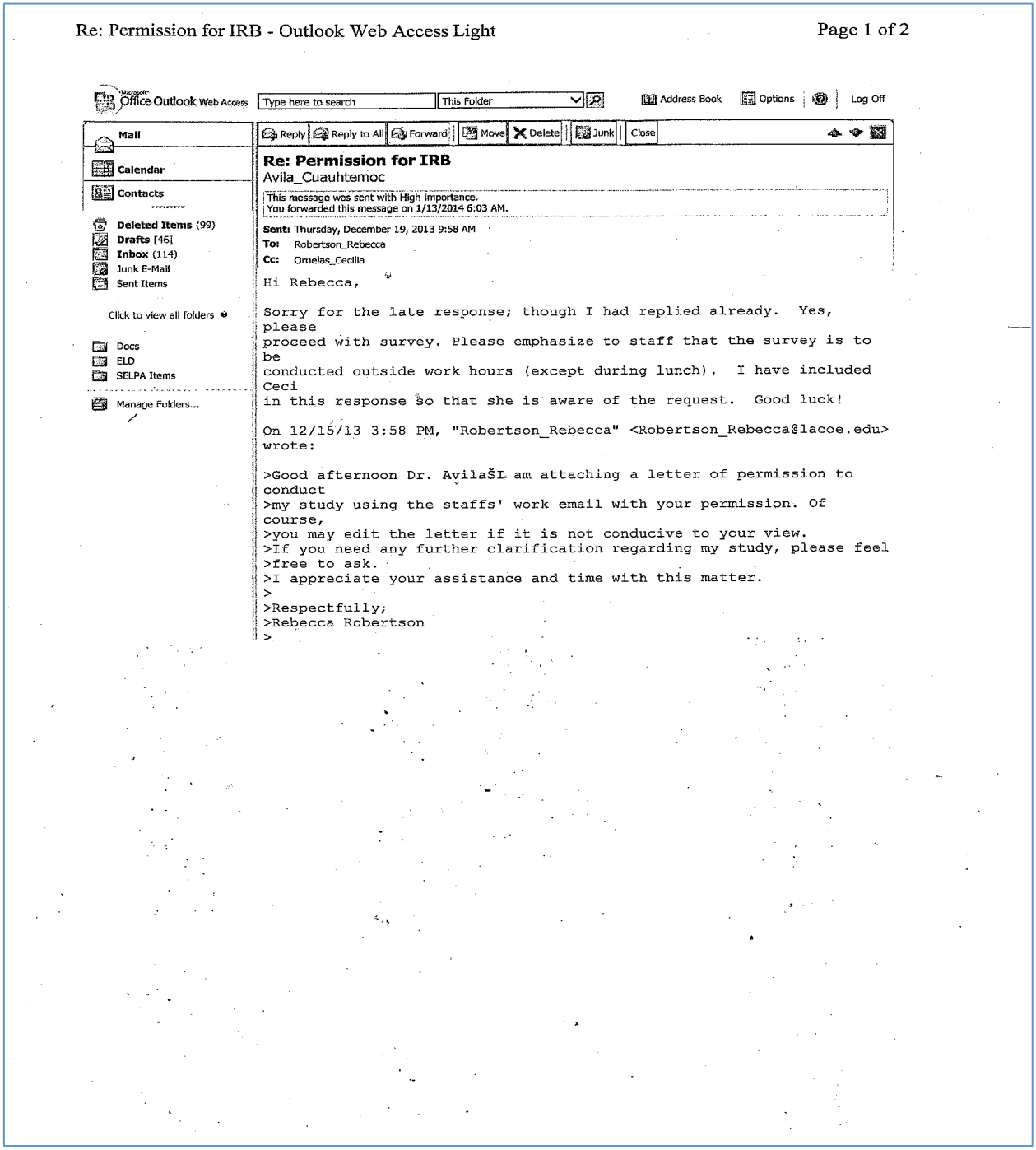
I have explained and defined in detail the research procedure in which the subject has consented to participate. Having explained this and answered any questions, I am cosigning this form and accepting this person's consent.

_____
Principal Investigator Full Name (Print)

_____ _____
Principal Investigator Signature Date

Appendix C

Permission to Use Work Email



Re: Permission for IRB - Outlook Web Access Light Page 1 of 2

Office Outlook Web Access | Type here to search | This Folder | Address Book | Options | Log Off

Mail
Calendar
Contacts
Deleted Items (99)
Drafts [46]
Inbox (114)
Junk E-Mail
Sent Items
Click to view all folders
Docs
ELD
SELPA Items
Manage Folders...

Reply | Reply to All | Forward | Move | Delete | Junk | Close

Re: Permission for IRB
Avila_Cuauhtemoc

This message was sent with High importance.
You forwarded this message on 1/13/2014 6:03 AM.

Sent: Thursday, December 19, 2013 9:58 AM
To: Robertson_Rebecca
Cc: Ornelas_Cecilia

Hi Rebecca,

Sorry for the late response; though I had replied already. Yes, please
proceed with survey. Please emphasize to staff that the survey is to be
conducted outside work hours (except during lunch). I have included Ceci
in this response so that she is aware of the request. Good luck!

On 12/15/13 3:58 PM, "Robertson_Rebecca" <Robertson_Rebecca@lacoe.edu> wrote:

>Good afternoon Dr. AvilaŠI am attaching a letter of permission to conduct
>my study using the staffs' work email with your permission. Of course,
>you may edit the letter if it is not conducive to your view.
>If you need any further clarification regarding my study, please feel
>free to ask.
>I appreciate your assistance and time with this matter.
>
>Respectfully,
>Rebecca Robertson
>

Appendix D

Letter to Inform Focus Group

Focus Group

Purpose of the Research Study: The purpose of the study is to examine whether increased frequent formative assessments, using components of the RISE-TESS framework within the teacher's delivery of direct instruction, had any effect on increasing students' achievement and their comprehension of the state standards at the juvenile hall school.

Purpose of the Focus Group: The focus group will rate the overall implementation of the RISE-TESS framework, OARS, and PLCs using five steps in the *Stop, Start, Continue* review process (*See Table 1 below*). These steps will allow the focus group to give feedback.

Table 1- *Stop, Start, Continue*

Focus Group 			
Step 1	Break group up into pairs or triads.	Provide 15 min. to answer questions.	Stop, Start, Continue
Step 2	Have each pair or triad write its answers on the posters.	This will allow for the walk-around.	Note answers from Stop, Start, Continue program review.
Step 3	Have each pair or triad complete its walk-around and submit any additional questions.	During the walk-around a transcriber will list all the answers into a word doc. as a list.	Add, additional questions or comments to the list.
Step 4	From the list, the participants will select their top three choices (Rate the answers).	This will be completed as an individual function to keep anonymity.	Be specific as to the instructions for the rating process.
Step 5	From the list, tally the results and complete the data analysis.	Give the group the results from their feedback.	

Incarcerated Youth: Challenges Measuring Academic Progress in a Juvenile Hall School

The following information is provided to help you decide whether you wish to participate in a research study. Please take your time to read the induration below and fell free to ask any questions before signing this document.

My name is Rebecca Robertson, and I am a Doctoral student in the Education Learning Technologies program at Pepperdine University. The professor supervising my study is Dr. Barner. The title of my research study is *Incarcerated Youth: Challenges Measuring Academic Progress in a Juvenile Hall School* and is being done as partial requirement for my Doctoral degree.

Purpose of Research Study: The purpose of the study is to examine whether increased frequent formative assessments, using components of the RISE-TESS framework within the teacher's delivery of direct instruction, had any effect on increasing students' achievement and their comprehension of the state standards at the juvenile hall school.

Procedures: If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in a focus group using five steps in the *Stop, Start, Continue* review process (*See Table 1 below*). These steps will allow the focus group to rate the program and give feedback.

Potential Risks: Subjects participating in this study may experience boredom or fatigue due to repetitive responses by other participants. If you become bored or fatigued and decide not to complete your participation in the focus group, you may request to have your responses removed.

Potential Benefit: You will not directly benefit from participating in this research study.

Voluntary/ right to deny or withdraw from participation: Your participation in the research study is completely voluntary, and you have the right to deny, withdraw or refuse to participate at any time, with no negative consequences to you.

Confidentiality: Data obtained for this research study, including your response to the survey will be kept confidential. The confidentiality of my records will be maintained in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. Under California law, there are exceptions to confidentiality, including suspicion that a child, elder, or dependent adult is being abused, or if an individual discloses an intent to harm him/herself or others.

Reasonable safeguards will be in place to protect the subjects identities such as random numeric codes that are password protected for those participating in the online survey, and only recorded identification of these numeric codes will be kept by me, the primary investigator, under lock and key in my home office in a locked cabinet. Only my chair, if requested, and myself will have

access to these documents if deemed necessary. After five years, these records will be shredded and discarded in an appropriate manner to ensure safety and identity of the participants.

The results of this research study will be summarized as a whole, as so no persons will identify you.

Contact information for questions or concerns: If you have further questions regarding this research, you may contact me, the primary investigator, Rebecca Robertson at: Rebecca.robertson@pepperdine.edu, 714-809-3261, or my faculty supervisor at Dr. Robert Barner at Robert.barner@pepperdine.edu, 310-568-5600. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact Kevin Collins, Manager of the GPS IRB at Pepperdine University at gpsirb@pepperdine.edu or 310-568-2389.

Consent to participate in research:

I understand that the Graduate and Professional Schools (GPS) Institutional Review Board, Pepperdine University have reviewed this research study. For research problems or questions regarding participants' rights, I may contact Kevin Collins, Manager of the GPS IRB at Pepperdine University at gpsirb@pepperdine.edu, 310-568-5753.

I have read and understand the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this consent form.

By signing this document, I consent to participate in this study.

_____
Research Participant's Full Name (Print)

_____ _____
Research Participant's Signature Date

I have explained and defined in detail the research procedure in which the subject has consented to participate. Having explained this and answered any questions, I am cosigning this form and accepting this person's consent.

_____
Principal Investigator Full Name (Print)

_____ _____
Principal Investigator Signature Date

Appendix E

Wilcoxon Test Results

Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

Test Statistics[a]

	Post1 - Pre1	Post2 - Pre2	Post3 - Pre3	Post4 - Pre4	Post5 - Pre5	Post6 - Pre6
Z	-2.864[b]	-.988[c]	-1.421[c]	-2.771[c]	-1.450[c]	-3.584[b]
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.323	.155	.006	.147	.000

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

b. Based on negative ranks.

c. Based on positive ranks.

Appendix F

PLC Questionnaire Survey

Professional Learning Communities Assessment

Directions:
This questionnaire assesses your perceptions about your principal, staff, and stakeholders based on the five dimensions of a professional learning community (PLC) and related attributes. There are no right or wrong responses. This questionnaire contains a number of statements about practices, which occur in some schools. Read each statement and then use the scale below to select the scale point that best reflects your personal degree of agreement with the statement. Shade the appropriate oval provided to the right of each statement. Be certain to select only one response for each statement.

Key Terms:
- # Principal = Principal, not Associate or Assistant Principal
- # Staff = All adult staff directly associated with curriculum, instruction, and assessment of students
- # Stakeholders = Parents and community members

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)
2 = Disagree (D)
3 = Agree (A)
4 = Strongly Agree (SA)

	STATEMENTS	SCALE			
	Shared and Supportive Leadership	SD	D		SA
1.	The staff is consistently involved in discussing and making decisions about most school issues.	0	0	0	0
2.	The principal incorporates advice from staff to make decisions.	0	0	0	0
3.	The staff have accessibility to key information.	0	0	0	0
4	The principal is proactive and addresses areas where support is needed.	0	0	0	0
5.	Opportunities are provided for staff to initiate change.	0	0	0	0
6.	The principal shares responsibility and rewards for innovative actions.	0	0	0	0
7.	The principal participates democratically with staff sharing power and authority.	0	0	0	0
8.	Leadership is promoted and nurtured among staff.	0	0	0	0
9.	Decision-making takes place through committees and communication across grade and subject areas.	0	0	0	0
10.	Stakeholders assume shared responsibility and accountability for student learning without evidence of imposed power and authority.	0	0	0	0

	STATEMENTS	SCALE			
	Shared Values and Vision	**SD**	**D**	**A**	**SA**
11.	A collaborative process exists for developing a shared sense of values among staff.	0	0	0	0
12.	Shared values support norms of behavior that guide decisions about teaching and learning.	0	0	0	0
13.	The staff share visions for school improvement that have an undeviating focus on student learning.	0	0	0	0
14.	Decisions are made in alignment with the school=s values and vision.	0	0	0	0
15.	A collaborative process exists for developing a shared vision among staff.	0	0	0	0
16.	School goals focus on student learning beyond test scores and grades.	0	0	0	0
17.	Policies and programs are aligned to the school=s vision.	0	0	0	0
18.	Stakeholders are actively involved in creating high expectations that serve to increase student achievement.	0	0	0	0
	Collective Learning and Application	**SD**	**D**	**A**	**SA**
19.	The staff work together to seek knowledge, skills and strategies and apply this new learning to their work.	0	0	0	0
20.	Collegial relationships exist among staff that reflect commitment to school improvement efforts.	0	0	0	0
21.	The staff plan and work together to search for solutions to address diverse student needs.	0	0	0	0
22.	A variety of opportunities and structures exist for collective learning through open dialogue.	0	0	0	0
23.	The staff engage in dialogue that reflects a respect for diverse ideas that lead to continued inquiry.	0	0	0	0
24.	Professional development focuses on teaching and learning.	0	0	0	0
25.	School staff and stakeholders learn together and apply new knowledge to solve problems.	0	0	0	0
26.	School staff is committed to programs that enhance learning.	0	0	0	0
	Shared Personal Practice	**SD**	**D**	**A**	**SA**
27.	Opportunities exist for staff to observe peers and offer encouragement.	0	0	0	0
28.	The staff provide feedback to peers related to instructional practices.	0	0	0	0
29.	The staff informally share ideas and suggestions for improving student learning.	0	0	0	0

	STATEMENTS	SCALE			
		SD	D	A	SA
30.	The staff collaboratively review student work to share and improve instructional practices.	0	0	0	0
31.	Opportunities exist for coaching and mentoring.	0	0	0	0
32.	Individuals and teams have the opportunity to apply learning and share the results of their practices.	0	0	0	0
	Supportive Conditions - Relationships	**SD**	**D**	**A**	**SA**
33.	Caring relationships exist among staff and students that are built on trust and respect.	0	0	0	0
34.	A culture of trust and respect exists for taking risks.	0	0	0	0
35.	Outstanding achievement is recognized and celebrated regularly in our school.	0	0	0	0
36.	School staff and stakeholders exhibit a sustained and unified effort to embed change into the culture of the school.	0	0	0	0
	Supportive Conditions - Structures	**SD**	**D**	**A**	**SA**
37.	Time is provided to facilitate collaborative work.	0	0	0	0
38.	The school schedule promotes collective learning and shared practice.	0	0	0	0
39.	Fiscal resources are available for professional development.	0	0	0	0
40.	Appropriate technology and instructional materials are available to staff.	0	0	0	0
41.	Resource people provide expertise and support for continuous learning.	0	0	0	0
42.	The school facility is clean, attractive and inviting.	0	0	0	0
43.	The proximity of grade level and department personnel allows for ease in collaborating with colleagues.	0	0	0	0
44.	Communication systems promote a flow of information among staff.	0	0	0	0
45.	Communication systems promote a flow of information across the entire school community including: central office personnel, parents, and community members.	0	0	0	0

Olivier, D. F., Hipp, K. K., & Huffman, J. B. (2003). Professional learning community assessment.

CA 032829

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Kristine Kiefer Hipp	Kristine Kiefer Hipp/Associate Professor/Dr
Organization/Address: Cardinal Stritch University 6801 N. Yates Rd., Box 103B Milwaukee, WI. 53217	Telephone: 414-410-4346 Fax: 414-410-4377
	E-mail Address: kahipp@stritch.edu Date: 11/3/03

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Appendix G

PLC Teacher Ratings

Teacher Ratings for Individual Items of the Professional Learning Assessment Scale (N = 21)

Item	*M*	*SD*
24. Professional development focuses on teaching and learning.	3.48	0.68
2. The principal incorporates advice from the staff to make decisions.	3.43	0.51
40. Appropriate technology and instructional materials are available to staff.	3.38	0.74
14. Decisions are made in alignment with the school's values and vision.	3.29	0.64
41. Resource people provide expertise and support for continuous learning.	3.29	0.64
1. The staff is consistently involved in discussing and making decisions about most school issues.	3.29	0.64
8. Leadership is promoted and nurtured among staff.	3.24	0.62
4. The principal is proactive and addresses areas where support is needed.	3.24	0.77
11. A collaborative process exists for developing a shared sense of values among staff.	3.24	0.54
22. A variety of opportunities and structures exist for collective learning through open dialogue.	3.24	0.83
7. The principal participates democratically with staff sharing power and authority.	3.19	0.75
26. School staff is committed to program that enhance learning.	3.19	0.68

Note. Scores were based on a 4-point scale: 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 4 = *Strongly Agree*.

Item	*M*	*SD*
12. Shared values support norms of behavior that guide decisions about teaching and learning.	3.19	0.60
44. Communication systems promote a flow of information among staff.	3.19	0.60
23. The staff engages in dialogue that reflects a respect for diverse ideas that lead to continued inquiry.	3.19	0.60
16. School goals focus on student learning beyond test scores and grades.	3.19	0.68
15. A collaborative process exists for developing a shared vision among staff.	3.19	0.60
37. Time is provided to facilitate collaborative work.	3.14	0.73
32. Individuals and teams have the opportunity to apply learning and share the results of their practices.	3.14	0.65
25. School staff and stakeholders learn together and apply new knowledge to solve problems.	3.14	0.65
9. Decision-making takes place through committees and communication across grade and subject areas.	3.14	0.85
6. The principal shares responsibility and rewards for innovative actions.	3.14	0.65
5. Opportunities are provided for staff to initiate change.	3.14	0.73
17. Policies and programs are aligned to the school's vision.	3.14	0.65

Note. Scores were based on a 4-point scale: 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 4 = *Strongly Agree*.

Item	*M*	*SD*
13. The staff shares visions for school improvement that have an undeviating focus on student learning.	3.14	0.65
39. Fiscal resources are available for professional development.	3.10	0.77
29. The staff informally shares ideas and suggestions for improving student learning.	3.10	0.54
36. School staff and stakeholders exhibit a sustained and unified effort to embed change into the culture of the school.	3.05	0.80
3. The staff has accessibility to key information.	3.05	0.67
20. Collegial relationships exist among staff that reflects commitment to school improvement efforts.	3.05	0.50
35. Outstanding achievement is recognized and celebrated regularity in our school.	3.05	0.92
19. The staff work together to seek knowledge, skills and strategies and apply this new learning to their work.	3.05	0.74
18. Stakeholders are actively involved in creating high expectations that serve to increase student achievement.	3.05	0.67
21. The staff plan and work together to search for solutions to address diverse student needs.	3.05	0.80

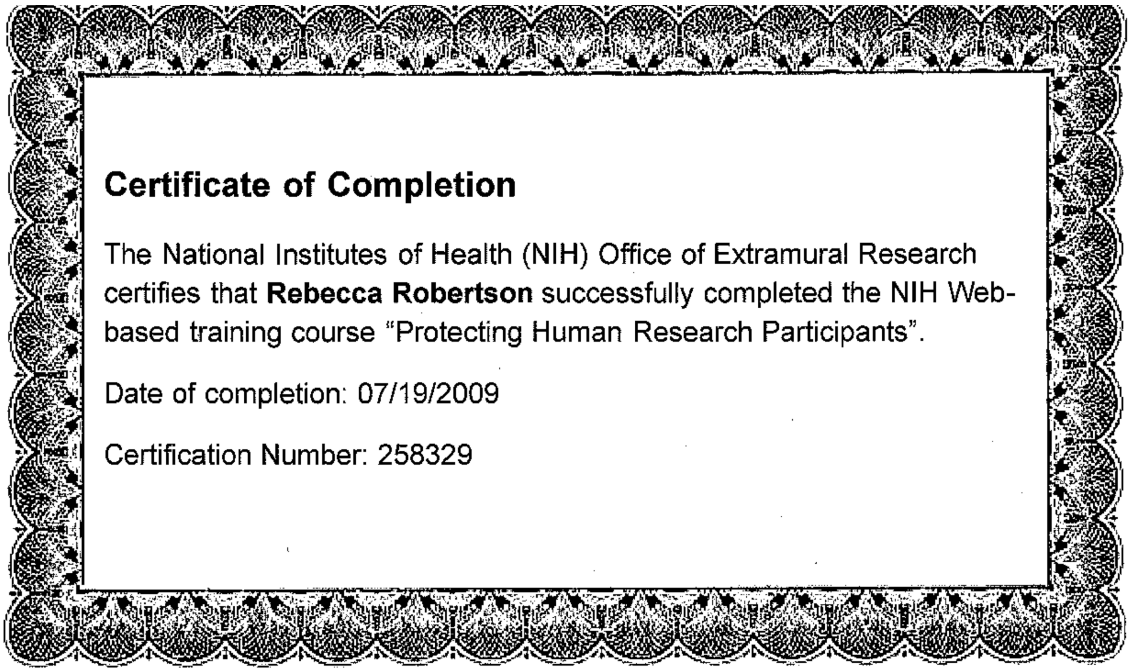
Note. Scores were based on a 4-point scale: 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 4 = *Strongly Agree*.

Item	*M*	*SD*
38. The school schedule promotes collective learning and shared practice.	3.00	0.77
33. Caring relationships exist among staff and students that are built on trust and respect.	3.00	0.63
43. The proximity of grade level and department personnel allows for ease in collaborating with colleagues.	2.95	0.59
10. Stakeholders assume shared responsibility and accountability for student learning without evidence of imposed power and authority.	2.95	0.74
31. Opportunities exist for coaching and mentoring.	2.90	0.89
34. A culture of trust and respect exists for taking risks.	2.81	0.68
28. The staff provides feedback to peers related to instructional practices.	2.81	0.68
42. The school facility is clean, attractive and inviting.	2.76	0.44
30. The staff collaboratively reviews student work to share and improve instructional practices.	2.52	0.75
45. Communications systems promote a flow of information across the entire school community including: central office personnel, parents/guardians, and community members.	2.43	0.81
27. Opportunities exist for staff to observe peers and offer encouragement.	2.43	0.60

Note. Scores were based on a 4-point scale: 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 4 = *Strongly Agree*.

Appendix H

Certificate of Completion – Human Research Participants



Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that **Rebecca Robertson** successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".

Date of completion: 07/19/2009

Certification Number: 258329

Appendix I

IRB Approval Notice

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board

February 27, 2014

Rebecca Robertson
[redacted]

Protocol **#:** E0214D01
Project Title: Incarcerated Youth: Challenges Measuring Academic Progress in a Juvenile Hall School

Dear Ms. Robertson:

Thank you for submitting your application, *Incarcerated Youth: Challenges Measuring Academic Progress in a Juvenile Hall School,* for exempt review to Pepperdine University's Graduate and Professional Schools Institutional Review Board (GPS IRB). The IRB appreciates the work you and your faculty advisor, Dr. Barner, have done on the proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. Upon review, the IRB has determined that the above entitled project meets the requirements for exemption under the federal regulations (45 CFR 46 - http://www.nihtraining.com/ohsrsite/guidelines/45cfr46.html) that govern the protections of human subjects. Specifically, section 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) states:

> (b) Unless otherwise required by Department or Agency heads, research activities in which the only involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the following categories are exempt from this policy:
>
> **Category (2) of 45 CFR 46.101**, research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: a) Information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and b) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

In addition, your application to waive documentation of consent, as indicated in your **Application for Waiver of Informed Consent Procedures** form has been **approved**.

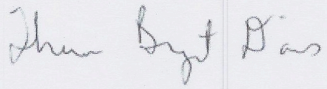
Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit a **Request for Modification Form** to the GPS IRB. Because your study falls under exemption, there is no requirement for continuing IRB review of your project. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for exemption from 45 CFR 46.101 and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the GPS IRB.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite our best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the GPS IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete explanation of the event and your response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the GPS IRB and the appropriate form to be used to report this information can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* (see link to "policy material" at http://www.pepperdine.edu/irb/graduate/).

6100 Center Drive, Los Angeles, California 90045 ▪ 310-568-5600

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all further communication or correspondence related to this approval. Should you have additional questions, please contact Kevin Collins, Manager of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at gpsirb@peppderdine.edu. On behalf of the GPS IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,



Thema Bryant-Davis, Ph.D.
Chair, Graduate and Professional Schools IRB

cc: Dr. Lee Kats, Vice Provost for Research and Strategic Initiatives
Mr. Brett Leach, Compliance Attorney
Dr. Robert Barner, Faculty Advisor