

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Student achievement; student attendance; and student, teacher, and parent satisfaction were the criteria for evaluating the 1999 Extended School Year Program at L. Douglas Wilder Middle School. The student subjects were rising sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. The adult subjects were teachers and parents of participating students.

Results are reported by research questions. Both quantitative and qualitative data are reported in tables.

Results of the Analyses by Research Question

The research questions for this study guided the analysis. The first four research questions relied on pretest and posttest scores in the content areas to determine whether gains were made while students participated in the Extended School Year Program. The four areas were math, science, English-social studies six, and English-social studies seven. The math and science tests consisted of 20 questions related to fifth, sixth, and seventh grade Standard of Learning objectives. The math test had five concept areas while the science test contained four different concept areas. The sixth grade English-social studies test consisted of 30 questions related to fifth and sixth grade Standard of Learning objectives in seven concept areas. The seventh grade English-social studies test consisted of 30 questions related to fifth, sixth, and seventh grade Standard of Learning objectives in five different content areas.

Achievement in the Core Subjects

Differences between pretests and posttests in the four core subjects were reported using descriptive statistics (see Table 29). Gains were reported in all four subject areas. The largest mean score was reported in English-social studies seven. The smallest mean score was reported in science.

Attendance

Student attendance was the fifth criterion used to evaluate the Extended School Year Program. Daily attendance for every child in the program was recorded. Attendance data were recorded to maintain a record of daily attendance as well as overall attendance for the program. The average daily attendance (ADA) during the 1999 Extended School Year Program is reported along with the 1998-1999 ADA of the middle school participating in this study and for all middle schools in the school division (see Table 30). Attendance was lowest for students in the Extended School Year Program and highest in the school division.

Table 30

Attendance of 1999 Extended School Year Students Compared to Attendance of Middle School Students and Students Division-wide in 1998-99

Group	ADA ^a
Extended School Year	88.7%
Wilder Middle School	93.5%
School Division	94.8%

^a ADA = Average Daily Attendance.

Student Satisfaction with the Extended School Year Program

Student satisfaction was the sixth criterion used to evaluate the Extended School Year Program. Satisfaction was measured in seven domains: schedule, instruction, transportation, discipline, teachers, general satisfaction, and technology. From the survey responses, students were most satisfied with the teacher domain and least satisfied with the schedule domain. The mean and standard deviation for each domain and question are reported in Table 31.

Table 31

Student Satisfaction with the Extended School Year Program by Item and Domain

<u>Domain/item</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>M^a</u>	<u>SD</u>
Schedule			
3. I would like more time for English (R) ^b	61	2.19	.95
4. I would like more time for math (R)	61	2.00	.86
5. I would like more time for science (R)	61	2.35	.95
9. I think the program should be longer than six weeks (R)	61	2.78	1.03
29. I would rather attend classes in the afternoon (R)	59	2.75	1.07
30. I would rather attend classes in the evening (R)	60	2.94	.95
Total schedule domain	6	2.50	.97
Instruction			
10. I enjoyed the math activities	62	2.94	.81
11. My parents were happy with what I learned	62	3.35	.58
12. I think I learned a lot in English	62	3.03	.72
13. I think I learned a lot in science	62	2.97	.75
14. I think I learned a lot in math	62	3.13	.84
24. I now have more interest in science	61	2.52	1.01
25. I now have more interest in math	61	2.72	.95
31. I enjoyed the English activities	60	2.88	.96
32. I enjoyed the social studies activities	60	2.70	1.06
34. I enjoyed the science activities	60	3.02	.87
Total instructional domain	10	2.92	.86
Transportation			
2. The transportation made it easy for me to attend	61	3.31	.90
6. It was easier for my parents to drive me to school (R)	62	2.94	1.08
7. I liked riding the bus during the summer	62	3.01	1.06
8. The bus ride gave me a chance to talk with my friends	62	3.24	.90
36. The bus stops were close enough to my house	59	2.62	1.12
42. The bus transportation was better than the regular year	61	2.37	1.05
Total transportation domain	6	2.75	1.02
Discipline			
15. There were few classroom disruptions	62	2.82	.91
16. We seldom had to stop class for someone acting up	61	2.62	1.00
17. I felt safe being in school during the summer	62	2.98	.97
39. During the summer program students behaved in class	61	2.54	.92
40. Students who misbehaved were disciplined	61	2.95	.94
41. Student behavior during the summer was better	61	3.00	1.05
Total discipline domain	6	2.81	.96

(table continues)

Table 31 (continued)

<u>Domain/item</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>M^a</u>	<u>SD</u>
Teachers			
18. Teachers seemed to like working with us	62	3.05	.91
19. The English teacher knew the subject well	62	3.37	.81
20. The science teacher knew the subject well	62	3.35	.73
21. The math teacher knew the subject well	62	3.50	.70
22. I liked how the teachers taught during the program	61	3.00	.77
33. The teachers during the summer program were better	60	2.50	1.08
Total teachers domain	6	3.12	.83
General satisfaction			
37. I would sign-up for the program next year	61	2.82	.92
38. The program was more fun than regular school	59	3.10	1.01
Total general satisfaction domain	2	2.96	.97
Technology			
1. Technology was available to use during the program	60	2.77	.77
23. I became more familiar with the computer	61	2.64	1.03
26. I improved my computer skills during the program	61	2.95	1.02
27. I had to do class work on the computer	60	2.55	.98
28. The computer helped me with my work	60	2.57	1.05
35. The program allowed me to use more technology	61	2.34	.91
Total technology domain	6	2.63	.97

Note. Many items have been abbreviated. The full wording of items is in Appendix E.

^a The scale was 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree.

^b R = reverse scored item: 1 = 4, 2 = 3, 3 = 2, 4 = 1.

Parent Satisfaction with the Extended School Year Program

Parent satisfaction was the seventh criterion used to evaluate the Extended School Year Program. Satisfaction was measured in six domains: schedule, communication, instruction, transportation, general satisfaction, and cost. From the survey responses, the general satisfaction question had the highest score. However, since the general satisfaction domain included one question, other domains with which parents were satisfied are also listed. After the general satisfaction domain, parents were equally satisfied with transportation and cost. Parents were least satisfied with the communication. The mean and standard deviation for each domain and question are in Table 32. The parent satisfaction survey also included a section for parents to write

additional comments. Since only a few comments were recorded, no analysis was performed. The additional comments are included in Appendix N.

Table 32

Parent Satisfaction with the Extended School Year Program by Item and Domain

<u>Domain/item</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>M^a</u>	<u>SD</u>
Schedule			
4. I prefer my child have the afternoon off (R) ^b	23	2.52	1.00
5. The length of the program...child still had summer	23	3.14	.65
8. I would prefer fewer days in the week (R)	23	1.95	.66
9. I think the program should be longer (R)	23	2.19	.65
10. I think classes should be all day (R)	22	2.04	.81
11. I would rather the program start in the afternoon (R)	23	1.42	.67
Total schedule domain ^c	6	2.21	.76
Communication			
16. I would like more information about the class work (R)	23	3.52	.59
18. I would like to know about the activities (R)	23	3.39	.50
19. A weekly schedule of activities should be sent home (R)	23	3.35	.71
20. I received information about my child's progress	23	2.09	.95
22. I would like to receive information...child's progress (R)	23	3.48	.51
23. I would like more contact with teacher	23	3.00	.74
Total communication domain	6	3.27	.76
Instruction			
17. My child enjoyed the summer more	22	2.77	.75
21. My child enjoyed the math activities	22	2.95	.65
24. My child enjoyed the English activities	23	2.87	.55
25. My child enjoyed the science activities	23	2.87	.69
26. My child enjoyed the social studies activities	23	2.78	.67
31. The teacher helped my child understand science	23	2.57	.73
32. The teacher helped my child understand social studies	23	2.48	.73
33. The teacher helped my child understand reading	23	2.52	.59
34. The teacher helped my child understand math	23	2.52	.59
35. My child better understands what he reads	23	2.43	.73
36. My child better understands math	22	2.50	.60
Total instruction domain	11	2.66	.66
Transportation			
1. The bus stops were convenient for me	23	2.91	1.08
2. The transportation made it easy for my child to attend	22	3.32	1.04
12. The bus stops were too far from my house(R)	21	2.38	1.12
13. I felt safe dropping my kid off at the bus stop	21	2.67	.97
14. It was easier to take my child to school (R)	23	1.83	.83

(table continues)

Table 32 (continued)

<u>Domain/item</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>M^a</u>	<u>SD</u>
15. The transportation made it easy for my child to attend	22	3.41	.96
Total transportation domain	6	2.77	1.00
Satisfaction			
7. I would encourage my child to participate next year	23	3.00	.81
Total general satisfaction domain	1	3.00	.81
Cost			
3. My child attended because the program was free	23	2.65	1.11
6. My child would have participated regardless of cost	23	2.52	.99
27. I would pay for my child's reading material	22	2.82	.80
28. I would pay for field trips	23	3.13	.69
29. I would pay for science materials	22	2.86	.83
30. I would pay for my child's lunch	23	2.65	.93
Total cost domain	6	2.77	.90

Note. Many items have been abbreviated. The full wording of items is in Appendix K.

^a The scale was 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree.

^b R = reverse scored item: 1 = 4, 2 = 3, 3 = 2, 4 = 1.

^c This is not a meaningful scale score because of negative correlation among the items.

Teacher Satisfaction with the Extended School Year Program

Teacher satisfaction was the eighth criterion used to evaluate the Extended School Year Program. Satisfaction was assessed through a focus group interview. The interview was conducted during the final week of the 1999 Extended School Year Program.

After reviewing responses to focus group questions, the researcher divided each domain into categories and identified themes. The domains are (a) schedule, (b) training, (c) student attendance, (d) material availability, (e) working conditions, and (f) relationships. The domains, categories, and themes are in Table 33. A data matrix of teacher responses is in Appendix O. Each domain is discussed along with categories and themes that emerged from the focus group responses.

Table 33

Teacher Satisfaction With the Extended School Year Program: Categories and Themes
by Domain

<u>Domain</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>Theme</u>	
Schedule	Daily schedule	Earlier breaks were better for students Liked the daily schedule (2) ^a	
	Shorter term	Lasted too long (2) ^a	
Training	Math	Training should address the needs of at-risk students (2) ^a Material was too advance Trainers assumed all students mastered basic skills Lessons were provided	
		Science	Allowed for teacher input Science material provided a starting point
		English History	Don't prescribe Felt limited coming up with reading comprehension material for history
	Curriculum	Provide concept without being prescriptive Tailor training to school based upon past performance	
	Student Attendance	Incentive	No commitment because program is free Summer camp mentality No commitment because no grades were involved Nothing compels students to attend
Convenience Communication		Transportation impacted attendance (2) ^a Students assumed the program ended prior to the ending date	
Material Availability	Usefulness	Good supplemental math materials and ideas for classroom activities The "hands-on" material was fun for the students participating in the program There was ample material available for seventh grade English teachers Good supplemental science materials	
	Technology	Technology was available during the program	
Working Conditions	Compensation	Teachers should receive their normal pay	
		Daily rate of pay preferred over summer school rate	

(table continues)

Table 33 (continued)

<u>Domain</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>Theme</u>
		Prefer the same rate of pay as regular school year Teachers are being paid less in the summer to perform similar duties Pay was okay
	Class size	Prefer smaller classes because of the population being served Prefer small class
	Student comfort	Cold facility (3) ^a
Relationships	Teacher-student rapport Communication	Once settled, students were working well Frequent communication from one parent helped her child complete his work Better communication would have increased parents' knowledge of the program Provide parents with information about who would teach their child Provide information about the program Let parents know more about expectations for participating students
Student assessment	Communication	Send evaluations at transition
	Instrumentation	Revamp report card

^aNumber to times repeated

Daily Schedule

Within the satisfaction with the schedule domain, two categories emerged from the focus group responses: daily schedule and shorter terms. Compared to the previous year's all-day schedule, most teachers preferred the half-day format used during the 1999 Extended School Year Program. According to one teacher, "Last year, kids were arriving at school at 8 a.m. and going from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. before their first break. I think this [year's schedule] has really made a difference (see Appendix O, Schedule)."

While teachers were happier with the daily schedule of the 1999 program, opposite views existed regarding the length of the program. Several teachers expressed concern about the length of the program from start to finish. They felt that students attending the program should be given an opportunity for a summer break. With the program lasting longer, students attending the Extended School Year Program lose a

good portion of their summer break. One stated, “I think our attendance reflected that six weeks was a little too long. I think that’s why we are losing students because the kids need a break (see Appendix O, Schedule).”

Training

Within the satisfaction with the training domain, five categories emerged: math, science, English, history, and curriculum. Teacher responses varied based on the subject area discussed. While teacher comments about the overall training were limited, they readily commented on the training within their specific subjects.

Math teachers felt the staff development was too general and did not take into account the individual needs of the school. They felt lesson plans needed revamping because “kids weren’t there yet” or “some of the stuff we were given to teach appeared to be at a high school level when many of our students did not have basic math skills (see Appendix O, Training).”

Science teachers felt that the training allowed for teacher input. They were provided with resources and suggestions on how to use materials based on the skill levels of their students. One science teacher explained, “It was like if your kids need this, here are some ideas. If your kids are more advanced, you can start later on. There was more freedom. There were a lot of things we could do (see Appendix O, Training).”

Although English and history were taught together, teachers within these areas expressed different opinions on the training received. English teachers preferred using their own expertise to create lessons from the material received during training. One English teacher stated, “I saw a big difference in what English teachers were given. Nothing was prescribed for us – no day-to-day plans. I liked that because we were treated like professionals (see Appendix O, Training).” Another supported that statement indicating that she felt as though “there was a lot of freedom (see Appendix O, Training).” A history teacher expressed frustration with having to create reading comprehension material in the area of history. She stated, “I had to come up with the history aspect, and I don’t regularly teach history so that made it more difficult for me as a new teacher (see Appendix O, Training).”

In the curriculum category, most teachers wanted consistency with other teachers within the same subject without a prescription for what they were to teach. One teacher

stated, “I think you can be consistent by spelling out ... the concepts or ... objectives [and stating] here are some possibilities. I have a problem anyway with people who prescribe to this is what you do first, second, etc. (see Appendix O, Training).” Teachers also felt strongly about tailoring the training to the needs of the school based on past performance. The training should also address school and student weakness based on achievement data. One teacher responded, “I wonder if the training shouldn’t be tailored specifically to certain areas in the Standard of Learning and tailored specifically to certain schools. If our schools performed poorly then training should be based on the Standard of Learning where we performed poorly. Conversely, we do not need to spend much time on the Standard of Learning where our students performed well (see Appendix O, Training).”

Student Attendance

Within the satisfaction with student attendance domain, three categories emerged from the focus group interview: incentives, convenience, and communication. Teachers felt that there was a lack of organizational incentives like tuition, grading, and field trips. They felt that this contributed to poor student attitudes about attending. With proper incentives students or parents would have possessed a greater commitment toward attending the program every day. One teacher observed, “There is no commitment to fully participate. Families will still decide to go on vacation (see Appendix O, Student Attendance).” Another stated, “There is nothing to compel students to attend regularly. That is the one missing piece that I saw last year and this year. There is no incentive for them to try to do their best (see appendix O, Student Attendance).”

Teachers also related convenience to student attendance. When discussing convenience, teachers talked specifically about transportation. Teachers felt that changing the location of the stops from major intersections used the previous year to the elementary feeder school format employed in 1999 negatively impacted student attendance. Teachers felt as though this created a dilemma for parents who were concerned enough about their child’s whereabouts to put them in a summer program. Because the bus stops were located at feeder schools, many parents were concerned about their child’s safety to and from the bus stop locations. “A lot of parents were very concerned with the kids being dropped off at the elementary schools. They are concerned

enough about their child's safety, they would not want their kids walking a couple of miles every day (see Appendix O, Student Attendance)."

Teachers indicated that better communication would have eliminated some confusion, particularly the confusion related to the program's ending date. They felt students and their parents would have had a better understanding of what was going on if school representatives had communicated program expectations and objectives better. According to one teacher, "On the day they took the posttest [for the first session] students were saying it was the last day and actually thought they did not have to return. Perhaps better communication from us would have alleviated this problem (see Appendix O, Student Attendance)."

Material Availability

Within the satisfaction with the material availability domain, usefulness and technology emerged as the two categories discussed. Regardless of the subject, the teachers felt as though they were provided with plenty of good materials that assisted them with teaching their students. Not only were the materials useful, but teachers felt as though the materials were developed to promote active learning. One teacher stated, "Well for math I think there were a lot of materials available. They had color tiles and other ideas for games that could be done with the kids where they would not even realize that they were learning math (see Appendix O, Material Availability)." Another teacher responded, "The seventh grade English teachers had ample materials (see Appendix O, Material Availability)."

Technology was another category that emerged within this domain. The teachers liked having the same technology available during the summer that was available during the year but wanted their students to have access to their personal folders on the school's network. One teacher replied, "The technology was basically the same during the school year so we had access to the labs and classroom computers. The only thing the kids weren't able to do was to save to their personal folders on the network which many were used to using during the regular school year (see Appendix O, Material Availability)."

Working Conditions

Within the satisfaction with working conditions domain, compensation, class size, and student comfort emerged from the focus group interview. Teachers were most vocal

about the rate-of-pay received during the 1999 program (summer school rate) versus the rate-of-pay received during the 1998 program (daily rate). Newer teachers thought the pay was adequate. One stated, “For me, compared to a regular summer job like childcare or summer camp, the pay for this is okay (see Appendix O, Working Conditions).”

Conversely, most veteran teachers felt they should have received their daily rate-of-pay. One indicated that “They are asking all of us to work for less then we work for during the school year to do the same job (see Appendix O, Working Conditions).”

Regarding class size, teachers indicated that they preferred the smaller classes like those associated with the Extended School Year Program because of the large percentage of at-risk students being served. One teacher noted: “If enrollment had stayed up like it was originally, it would have been horrible. If you had a regular school year with high numbers and with kids who are low functioning, it would be difficult to impact student performance (see Appendix O, Working Conditions).”

Several teachers expressed concern with how cold the building was during the Extended School Year Program. Teachers felt that the temperature in the building created an unnecessary distraction for students. One teacher responded, “The child is easily distracted already and shouldn’t have to worry about being cold (see Appendix O, Working Conditions).” This statement was supported by another teacher who flatly stated, “The facility was too cold (see Appendix O, Working Conditions).”

Relationships

Within the satisfaction with relationships domain, teacher-student rapport, communication, and assessment emerged as categories. Teachers felt as though it was important to establish relationships with the students with whom they were working. This rapport helped students settle into the program’s routine. The teachers felt that once students settled into a routine, they began to see progress. One teacher stated, “The first week (of the second session) I really saw the difference between kids we had just let go and the ones we were getting in. They [second session kids] did not know how to do anything. After three weeks with the [first session] kids, they were coming back hugging us saying, ‘we miss you.’ It was a good feeling (see Appendix O, Relationships).”

All the teachers felt as though more communication could have been beneficial in establishing better relationships with parents. They felt parents did not have enough

information about the objectives or organization of the program. With more informed parents, teachers felt their students would have been more serious about their attendance and performance on the pretest and posttest. Teachers indicated that they thought communication about the program -- before, during, and after -- would have dramatically increased student motivation and performance. One teacher stated, "I think it might have been helpful if they [parents] received correspondence about the program because the program is evolving. It is not what it was last year (see Appendix O, Relationships)." Another teacher suggested, "Because they [parents] don't know what we are expecting from the kids, they don't know about homework or other assignments. I think more communication would be helpful (see Appendix O, Relationships)."

Student Assessment

Within the satisfaction with student assessment domain, two categories emerged: communication and instrumentation. Teachers indicated that assessment needed to be done more regularly so parents could get a sense of their children's strengths and weaknesses. Without assessment, teachers felt that parents and students did not take the program seriously. Teachers also criticized the assessment instrument used because it dealt primarily with English. According to one teacher, "the report card needs to be revamped because it deals primarily with English things, and there is nothing for the math teacher to really talk about (see Appendix O, Student Assessment)."

Summary

Regarding student achievement, gains (measured by the difference of the pretests and posttests) were recorded in all four math, science, English-Social Studies 6, and English-Social Studies 7. Attendance data revealed that the ADA for the Extended School Year Program was lower than the previous year ADA at the same school. Students were satisfied with their teachers and the Extended School Year Program. They were moderately satisfied with instruction, transportation, discipline, and technology. Students were least satisfied with the program schedule. Parents were satisfied with the program in general and satisfied with the cost. Parents were moderately satisfied with the instruction and transportation. They were least satisfied with the schedule and communication about the program. Teacher satisfaction with the program was harder to gauge because of the inconsistencies in their responses to focus group questions.

Reviewing response frequency, teachers were most satisfied with the daily schedule and least satisfied with the lack of communication about the program and student attendance.