

## CHAPTER 5

### **Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations, and Implications for Further Research**

This chapter contains a summary, conclusions, and recommendations from an evaluation study of the attendance policy and attendance program of Newport News Public Schools. The study addressed the overall research question: Is the new attendance policy and attendance program of Newport News Public Schools effective as indicated by statistical analyses of attendance, data, students', parents', and teachers' perceptions, and programmatic data after one year of implementation at the school level. The attendance program was identified as Saturday Redemptive School. Chapter four includes a summary of study, conclusions, recommendations resulting from the study, and finally implications for further research.

#### Summary of the Study

This study compared the attendance of high school students from the 1995-1996 school year to the attendance of high school students from the 1996-1997 school year to

determine if a newly adopted attendance policy and attendance program effected high school attendance after one year of implementation. Gender and grade levels were used as variables to determine if the attendance policy and attendance program improved high school students' attendance after one year of implementation. The subjects were 4,236 male and female high school students from school year 1995-1996 and school year 1996-1997. The subjects were drawn from three high school levels: ninth (1,621), tenth (1,431), and eleventh (1,202).

An Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) test was performed to compare the means from students in grades 9, 10, and 11 during year 1995-1996 to students in grades 10, 11, and 12 during 1996-1997. To control for previous student attendance in school year 1995-1996, the attendance for school year 1995-1996 was used as a covariate. The Statistical package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for all calculations. A pre-established alpha level of .05 was selected as the level of significance.

A descriptive report was used to describe the results of a survey used in this study. The survey instrument was revised and redesigned by the researcher for use in this study. Surveys were administered to a total sample of

1,800 high school students, parents, and teachers. The survey were used to describe respondents perceptions of the attendance policy and attendance program (Saturday Redemptive School). The researcher selected a stratified random sample of subjects to have a good representation of males' and females' perceptions. The surveys were collected and analyzed to determine students', parents', and teachers' perceptions of the attendance policy and attendance program (Saturday Redemptive School).

To measure male and female high school participants pass/fail rate in the Saturday Redemptive School, a Chi-square test was used. Saturday Redemptive School data were collected and analyzed for 549 high school participants. The total sample of students consisted of males and females. A pre-established alpha level of .05 was selected to determine significance.

### Conclusions

Based on the analysis of covariance results on the attendance data, the following conclusions of the first research question were reached.

Research question one: Is there a statistically

significant interaction between grade levels (9, 10, 11 for year 1995-1996) and gender (male, female) with respect to year 1996-1997 high school attendance after adjusting for initial differences on the 1995-1996 high school attendance? For instance, do grade level and gender of students affect their attendance after adjusting for initial differences in the 1995-1996 attendance? It was found that grade level and gender of high school students in combination do not affect high school students attendance.

Grade level of high school students significantly affected their attendance after adjusting for initial differences in the 1995-1996 student attendance. It is clear that ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade students had better attendance in 1996-1997 than the previous school year. An analysis of high school student attendance indicated an appearance that as students move through the different grade levels their attendance in school increase. It is important to note that there was only a significant difference in the attendance between ninth and eleventh.

The gender of high school students significantly affected their attendance. An analysis of data showed that male high school students' attendance was higher than

female high school attendance at each grade level. Rood (1989), Levanto (1975), & Hegner (1987) also identified gender to have an effect on absenteeism. Specifically, they found that in the first three years of high school, females had significantly higher rates of absenteeism than males.

Research question two: What are the perceptions of students, parents, and teachers regarding the new attendance policy and attendance program after one year of implementation?

Generally, students, parents, and teachers perceived that the new attendance policy was necessary and needed. However, they disagreed that the new policy resulted in the reduction of the number of days students were absent. There was an overall disagreement that the five unexcused absence rule was keeping students in school.

The respondents to the survey felt the Saturday Redemptive School did not meet the needs of high school students and is not an effective intervention for the attendance policy. It is clear from the results of the survey that the respondents felt Saturday Redemptive School should be changed or revised. Teachers felt they kept

accurate attendance records and distributed the attendance policy to students.

Research question three: Is the Saturday Redemptive School affecting the pass rate of participants after one year of implementation?

The results of the Chi-square test indicated that there was no significant differences between male and female participants pass rate. However, there was a practical difference in the number of male and female participants who pass due SRS. The number of male students who passed due to SRS was slightly higher than female students.

#### Recommendations

The attendance policy is now in the second year of implementation as well as the Saturday Redemptive School. It would be interesting to review and analyze the attendance data of the students governed by the attendance policy to see if their attendance continues to improve. Additional research needs to be conducted to examine the effects of the attendance policy on African-American students. This study presented evidence to support a change in the attendance of high school students after only

one year of implementation. Further research needs to be done involving middle and elementary students.

The data from this study would suggest that changes in the attendance policy and Saturday Redemptive School are needed to meet the overall needs of high school students.

#### Implications for Further Research

The lack of research demonstrates a need for additional study of attendance policy and its effects on school attendance starting with pre-school and ending at the completion of high school. The process for writing attendance policies has been explored by numerous authors however much is needed in the area connecting the attendance policy to the procedures for collecting the attendance data. An investigation into the affects of attendance data collection procedures on teacher implementation of public school attendance policy may be a good avenue for research.

With increased importance placed on attendance of students in urban settings, it would seem beneficial for additional research to be conducted in urban school settings and communities to determine the effects of urban environmental factors on student attendance.

The limitations of the study, such as one school community, stratified random sample of students, parents, and teachers, the number of days students were required to attend school, reallocation of funds, and lack of computer technology to effectively track individual class attendance, could possibly prompt further investigation of the attendance policy and attendance program. The researcher was aware of the external environmental variables that may have effected the study. The effects of environmental variables alone may be an avenue for further study.