

Local School Boards and “No Child Left Behind”

Randi Burke Richards

Thesis submitted to the faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
In
Political Science

Karen M. Hult, Ph.D.
Charles E. Walcott, Ph.D.
Craig L. Brians, Ph.D.

May 13, 2008
Blacksburg, Virginia

Keywords: school boards, No Child Left Behind, education policy

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ABSTRACT

“No Child Left Behind” (NCLB) has generated considerable attention within the education world. The purpose of this thesis is to question how local governments, i.e., local Boards of Education, have reacted to the current involvement and demands of the federal government. NCLB has only started to have an impact on local schools in the last few years as they have begun to fall into various categories of being “in need of improvement” based on failing to meet established goals. School boards are put in a position to rethink their programs and reevaluate their own efforts as they attempt to insure students are meeting the benchmarks established by the federal and state governments and that Highly Qualified Teachers are in every child’s classroom. This thesis looks at the actions of six districts in southern New Jersey that are not meeting these mandates and the actions of the Boards of Education towards student achievement and hiring teachers. Demands and requirements of federal and state legislation and policies are narrowing the areas in which school boards can take action. Those actions that are being taken appear to be led by the district Superintendent. This lack of leadership by the elected officials may eventually lead to school boards that are more and more community advisory boards and less and less governing bodies.

DEDICATION

To my best friend and supporter, my husband, Larry. Thank you for encouraging me during the last few years as I hid in my upstairs office. You have made this possible and I will be forever grateful.

Thank you to my parents who provided the love of learning right from the beginning of my life. My parents were adamant that my sisters, brother and I go as far in our life as we could – to college, to establish ourselves in a career, and to be good people. I hope I have succeeded.

To my “angel,” Dr. Robert T. Hawkes, Jr., my first mentor who pushed me to be more; who believed in me when I didn’t, and whose counsel I will miss dearly. I wish you were here to share this with me.

To my chairperson and guide, Dr. Karen M. Hult. Thank you for your insight, suggestions and guidance. Your always professional and positive comments enhanced this wondrous learning opportunity.

“If the children...are untaught, their ignorance and vices will in future life cost us much dearer in their consequences, that it would have done, in their correction, by a good education.”

...Thomas Jefferson

“In the first place, God made idiots. That was for practice. Then he made school boards.”

...Mark Twain

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Abbreviations/Symbols

AYP	Adequate Yearly Progress
BOE	Board of Education
DFG	District Factor Grouping
DOE	Department of Education
HQT	Highly Qualified Teacher
LEA	Local Education Agency
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
SES	Socioeconomic Status
SpEd	Special Education

CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

“No Child Left Behind” has generated tremendous attention within the education world. Assessments, accountability, teacher quality, achievement gaps, Adequate Yearly Progress, and disaggregated scores have become the new lingo in classrooms and Board of Education (BOE) meetings across the nation. This thesis is aimed at how this law and associated policies are being dealt with by local governing bodies. “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB) was proposed in the United States Congress and signed into law by the President, then delegated to the states to implement; states then passed the responsibility down to the local level. Efforts to improve annual student assessment scores and staffing of classrooms with Highly Qualified Teachers (HQTs) are two mandates of NCLB that are controllable at the local level. This research will look at the actions of six different school boards of districts of similar economic status as they struggle toward meeting the mandates.

In January 2002, President George W. Bush signed into law the bill known as “No Child Left Behind” and changed the relationship of public schools, and local, state and federal governments. What had always been the responsibility of state and local governments became a national concern when the federal government became involved. The purpose of this thesis is to question how local governments, i.e., local Boards of Education, have reacted to the current involvement and demands of the federal government. How have local politics and practices effected the implementation of federal policies? Are there differences between communities? How well do these local governments understand the policies? Are they prepared to implement these policies to their fullest? How do local Boards of Education (BOE) balance the desires of the community with the needs of the “No Child Left Behind” legislation?

The U.S. Constitution makes no mention of education or operating schools, leaving that responsibility to the states under the 10th Amendment. All 50 state constitutions contain provisions that require the states to maintain responsibility for education.(Sutton, 2003) (Sutton, 2003) Historically, local school boards composed of citizens from the community have governed the operation of their public schools. (Land, 2002) This tradition, however, began to change during the Civil Rights era when the federal government became involved in the local school governance. The landmark Supreme Court decision in *Brown vs. Board of Education*, which mandated desegregation of public schools, was one of the early instances of federal involvement. (Land, 2002; P. J. McGuinn, 2006) Although it would take another decade and additional federal action to enforce the rulings in *Brown* , this case symbolizes the national government's willingness to involve itself in local government actions when necessary to protect the rights of citizens. The justification for this involvement was to guarantee the civil rights of minority children, and it would continue with federal court involvement in issues such as bussing and affirmative action. (P. J. McGuinn, 2006) This early example of federal judicial involvement was followed by Congressional action with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 1965. The interest in public schools would continue over the next several decades as the federal government enticed local schools to conform to federal regulations by offering, or denying, federal grants-in-aid. (DeBray, McDermott, & Wohlstetter, 2005) The promise of federal monies in exchange for conforming to federal regulations is a difficult offer to turn down for financially strapped school districts. And so, over the years, local governments have become accustomed to complying

with federal regulations; freely giving up some of their local control in exchange for federal funds.

Federal mandates, which had been limited to civil rights issues such as desegregation, changed in 1965 when the Congress enacted the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Continuing with the protection of civil rights, but this time broadening the scope beyond that of race, the ESEA required that students with learning disabilities be given an education in the “least restrictive environment” – in most cases meaning in the public school system with regular education students. Federal monies were available under ESEA to enable schools to create smaller classes and hire the additional staff necessary to meet this mandate. But ESEA was more than just legislation that dealt with special education students; an important provision of this legislation, known as Title I, allotted federal monies to school districts based on the number of disadvantaged children serviced. Disadvantaged students were identified as “low-achieving students in high poverty schools, limited English proficiency students, migratory children, Native American children, neglected or delinquent children, and young children in need of reading assistance.” (Kim & Sunderman, 2004; US Department of Education) Title I monies “represents the largest source of federal funding to K-12 schools.” (Kim & Sunderman, 2004) The aid was used to augment local spending and provide “compensatory education” for these children. (P. McGuinn, 2005)

Initially ESEA was intended to provide additional resources to disadvantaged students with little federal involvement as to how the resources were utilized by state and local education authorities. Overtime, however, federal legislative enactments, bureaucratic regulations, and court mandates in education became increasingly numerous and prescriptive, and federal influence over schools grew significantly. As a result, the political debate shifted from whether the federal government had an obligation to promote educational opportunity to making these efforts more effective and/or less intrusive.(McGuinn, 2006 pg. 25)

Regulations were developed by states Departments of Education and passed on to local school districts requiring their adherence. Local school boards had to modify curricula and policies to abide by the laws in order to implement the state programs and state policies to the best of their ability. Title I provided federal funds to assist schools in this endeavor, and schools became dependent upon these funds to operate.

The philosophical shift away from questioning the right of the federal government to be involved in education to acceptance of its authority eventually led to bipartisan support of “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB). (DeBray, McDermott, & Wohlstetter, 2005) This legislation managed to balance the conservative Republican demands for state and local control and Democratic demands for increased federal funding. (McDermott & Jensen, 2005)

“No Child Left Behind” introduced school accountability into the federal legislation. How well schools were able to accomplish this task of educating would now be public information as students’ annual assessment scores would be available for all to see. NCLB, however, asked for accountability not just for students classified as Special Education, but for all students, and required schools to disaggregate scores for specific subgroups. This action would focus attention on those groups initially identified under Title I as students who had historically not been successful in the American education system: minorities, economically disadvantaged and limited English proficient (LEP) students, as well as Special Education classified students. (P. J. McGuinn, 2006) NCLB also imposed sanctions on those schools and districts that failed to meet the goals; districts and schools could face a loss of funding, reorganization, and even state takeover if students failed to achieve. (P. McGuinn, 2005)

Facing this new approach, how would the local boards of education and local school superintendents interpret and implement the mandates of NCLB? How would the views of the community impinge upon the implementation of the requisite programs?

Much has been written about the development of policies at the federal level and even how those policies are implemented across the states. The purpose of this research is to compare various school districts and their implementation of a federal policy to determine what kinds of differences exist and begin to explain any variations. The research focuses on three questions: *To what extent has a sample of New Jersey public schools met selected NCLB objectives? Why or why not? What is the influence of the elected governing body in implementing the programs to meet the objectives?* Specifically, I looked at school districts performance on two objectives: 1) federal mandated yearly assessments, and 2) the requirement that all teachers be Highly Qualified by the end of the 2006-2007 school year. Although the thesis briefly discusses other objectives in NCLB, these two allow local discretion in their implementation. While the state sets the yearly benchmarks for achievement on the annual tests, the school district determines the methods to be implemented in the classroom to achieve those benchmarks. The federal government has established the requirement to have Highly Qualified Teachers and broadly defined a Highly Qualified Teacher, but the school district determines the numbers and types of teachers needed based on the curriculum the Board of Education have established. The school district also determines salaries, benefits, and retention programs to hire and maintain a staff of Highly Qualified Teachers. To study the effect of local governing body decisions on NCLB requires that the dependent variables be those that can be controlled by that local governing body.

States and local districts had a relatively short period of time to respond to and implement the requirements of NCLB. Signed in January of 2002, schools were to begin testing students at least once in elementary, middle and high school in reading and math and Title I teachers were to be Highly Qualified by the upcoming 2002-03 school year. In the spring of that year, states had to submit benchmarks and dates to the federal government. By the next school year states had to provide baseline data and targets for achieving 100% HQT in all schools. By the end of the 2005-06 school year all teachers were to be Highly Qualified; this was later amended to the end of the next school year. Within eleven years of its signing, NCLB required that all students achieve 100% on state assessments. Below is a TimeLine for NCLB Implementation with specific information for the state of New Jersey (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1: Timeline – NCLB Implementation at National, State and Local Levels

January , 2002	Legislation signed into law by President George W. Bush
Summer 2002	States are to establish baseline scores for AYP
2002-2003	States are to begin testing at least once in elementary, middle and high school in reading and math School choice must be made available to students enrolled in schools identified as “needing improvement” or “persistently dangerous” All new Title I teachers of core academic subjects must meet Highly Qualified standards
May 2003	States must submit academic curriculum standards for reading and math States must submit final AYP workbook to the US Department of Education which includes a single state accountability standard NJ Field tests assessment tests for grades 3 & 4
Summer 2003	States must establish HOUSE for currently employed teachers
2003-2004	States must provide baseline data and targets for achieving 100% HQT in all schools NJ implements assessments in March for elementary, middle and high school

Table 1.1: Timeline – NCLB Implementation at National, State and Local Levels (continued)

2004-2005	NJ begins to identify schools “in need of improvement”
2005-2006	States are to begin administering annual tests in grades 3 to 8 and once in high school is reading and math States must develop science standards
2005-2006	All core subject teachers must be Highly Qualified Postponed to beginning of 2006-2007 school year
2006-2007	NJ field tested science assessment to establish baseline
2007-2008	States must begin science testing once in elementary, middle and high school & implement science academic achievement standards
2013-2014	Ensure all students are proficient in reading/language arts, math and science

Significance

NCLB is a relatively new law and limited research has been done at the school board level. Much, however, has been written about this legislation and its impact at the federal and state levels. My hope is that this research will highlight some of the concerns of local education agencies and some of the actions they have taken. Policies are only as good as their implementation. The most well-thought-out policy will produce unfavorable results if there is a failure during the implementation phase. The NCLB legislation and the policies established by the federal government has garnered significant national attention, yet it must all be implemented at the local level. “We have learned that policy success depends critically on two broad factors: local capacity and will.” (McLaughlin, 1987) The very fact that NCLB is national in scope and new in implementation, gives researchers the unique opportunity to see how “local capacity and will” impact its implementation.

NCLB has only truly begun to make an impact on the local schools in the last few years as schools have begun to fall into various categories of being “in need of improvement” based on failing to meet the established goals. This has forced school districts to begin to take serious action and make some difficult decisions regarding the direction of their schools. NCLB has caused school districts to rethink their programs and reevaluate their own efforts as they attempt to meet the benchmarks established by the federal and state governments. No longer can districts continue to operate the way “they always have” if those methods are not good enough to insure that children are achieving. The nation’s schools are in a period of great change – not only in how they operate, but in how they think about education. This research looks at the delivery level and the impact of this landmark education. According to Deborah Land in a report she issued in 2002, little empirical research has examined the “role and effectiveness of local school boards, specifically with respect to school boards’ influence on students’ academic achievement.” (Land, 2002) This thesis takes a small look at a few districts in the state of New Jersey to view the effectiveness of Board actions toward meeting the mandates of NCLB.

This chapter provided the general history and background information of the legislation. Chapter Two provides information on other research that has been completed on this piece of legislation. Chapter Three explains my research design and the following chapter presents my findings. In the last chapter you will find my thoughts on the implementation of “No Child Left Behind” and suggestions for additional research.

CHAPTER TWO RESEARCH AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Researchers have looked into the accountability requirement of the law, the impact of HQT teachers on students, differences in state actions, and whether or not the law is effective. Most research has focused on the actions of the federal government or the state government or the school. Left out has been research into the political entity responsible for implementing the legislation and governing the schools; no real research has been done on the actions of the local school boards in response to this national legislation. What follows is a brief discussion of the areas of research that have been done.

Since its signing in 2002, NCLB has spawned hundreds of research projects attempting to identify whether or not this approach to education is successful. The U.S. Department of Education touts the success of NCLB stating that it has “led to higher standards and greater accountability throughout the Nation’s school systems.”¹ Holding individual schools accountable for the success of their students on state assessments represents a significant change from earlier educational legislation. In addition, NCLB required that all classrooms be staffed with teachers defined as Highly Qualified; Supplemental Educational Services be offered to students from schools “In Need of Improvement” for more than 2 years; and allowed parents to transfer their child to another school within the district if the school is failing to achieve. The goal of this legislation was to insure that every child receives a quality education and that “no child be left behind.” (US Department of Education, 2008)

As the key, and perhaps most controversial, component of NCLB, accountability is the focus of much of the research. The law requires that all students be tested in grades 3 through 8

¹ <http://www.ed.gov/print/nclb/overview/intro/parents/parentfacts.html>

and once in high school to identify the percentage of students who have achieved “proficiency.” One-hundred percent of students are expected to be proficient by the year 2014. No exceptions are made under the law for Special Education students, limited English proficient students, or economically disadvantaged students.(Hess, 2005; Hill & DePascale, 2003; R. L. Linn, 2004; Lockwood, 2005; W. J. Mathis, 2004) The assessment process is supposed to determine the effectiveness of schools, their curricula and their teachers. An “effective” school is one in which all students can meet the benchmarks established by the state in the core curriculum areas of Math, Language Arts and Science. Those schools in which students have not met the annual goals are labeled as “In Need of Improvement.” The longer the school is “In Need of Improvement” the more severe the consequences which must be levied, up to and including state takeover. Obviously, this part of the law has also generated tremendous interest. McDermott found that there is a “great deal of variation” in accountability policies between the states “despite their being situated within a common framework of federal requirements.” (McDermott, 2003) Some research focuses on the types of assessment tools being used, (Colardarci, 2003; Hill & DePascale, 2003; R. Linn, 2005; Lockwood, 2005; McDermott, 2003) others focus on the groups being tested (Colardarci, 2003; R. L. Linn, Baker, & Betebenner, 2002; Lockwood, 2005; W. J. Mathis, 2004); still others question a “one-size-fits-all” philosophy of assessment (Hess, 2005; Hill & DePascale, 2003; Matthews, 2006) and finally, others question the use of assessment at all. (Giroux & Schmidt, 2004) Most agree that the “snap-shot” accountability tool being used does not accurately reflect the growth of student knowledge and improvement. Instead it presents a single picture on a single day of a group of students test scores. (R. L. Linn, 2004; W. J. Mathis, 2004) Many educators are calling for a change to a “growth model” that will

enable schools to demonstrate the growth of students over time, rather than a one-day snap shot of scores. (Hill & DePascale, 2003)

Teachers, and how to measure teacher quality, are another aspect of NCLB that has received attention (Plecki, Smylie). Plecki and Loeb discussed the work done by the Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy in which teacher quality was divided into two areas: quality of the teacher (credentials, test scores, subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and experience) and Quality of Teaching (quality of classroom instruction and student interaction, curriculum and instructional materials). (Plecki & Loeb, 2004) Much of the attention, however, focuses on attracting and retaining Highly Qualified Teachers, especially in small districts, rural districts and urban districts (Blank, 2003; Schwartzbeck, Prince, Redfield, Morris, & Hammer, 2003). Attempts are made to determine reasons for high turnover, what policy changes can be made to encourage more teachers to work in these special needs districts, and how these districts can retain the teachers that they have, while still striving to improve student scores.(Center for Education Policy, 2003; GAO, 2006; National School Boards Association, 2003)

NCLB permits states certain flexibility in implementation and there are a number of studies that compare the actions of different states. (Manna, 2003) For example, the law allows states to set the academic standards, define “proficiency,” and select the accountability tool. The concern appears that some states set higher standards than others (Lockwood, 2005; Matthews, 2006), yet none seems to set the same standards as the National Assessment of Education Programs (NAEP); a national standardized test given in each state to selected school districts every two years.. (Matthews, 2006) Plucker remarks that the inconsistency between states in implementation is the “most important structural flaw” (Plucker, 2005). Arguments for national standards and curriculum are beginning to grow as researchers are demonstrating the variations

between states under this national legislation. Researchers have found that states with the fewest number of schools “In Need of Improvement” are those that score the lowest on the NAEP. Those states who score highest on the NAEP are those that have the greatest number of schools failing to make AYP.(Plucker, 2005) This appears contradictory, but it supports the notion that state standards do not reflect student achievement equally across the nation. By allowing states a free hand in establishing levels of proficiency and AYP without regard to NAEP, this inconsistency is created.

This leads to the research on the cause of variations by the states. (Goertz; Goertz; Sunderman & Orfield, 2006) Though the federal government’s role in education has grown over the years, many members of Congress are concerned about the invasive aspects of this bill. Congressional sponsors of NCLB were able to garner support and insure passage by allowing states to control important components of the law. This assuaged the concerns of the more conservative members of Congress who balked at national education legislation by permitting states to set curriculum standards and define proficiency. (Dahmus, 2003; DeBray, McDermott, & Wohlstetter, 2005) It helped that a Republican president, George W. Bush who ran as the “Education President,” championed NCLB, as his first major legislative effort. (DeBray, McDermott, & Wohlstetter, 2005; P. J. McGuinn, 2006) Pushing for bipartisan support, both Republicans and Democrats compromised on key issues such as accountability and funding. (McDermott & Jensen, 2005) Key to the passage was the right of states to maintain control over educational standards and testing. (P. J. McGuinn, 2006)

Shifting from NCLB, I found that studies on Boards of Education have focused on how a school board works, the effectiveness of school boards in today’s environment where the national government is encroaching on the turf of local governments. Deborah Land prepared a

literature review on the “role and effectiveness of local school boards.” (Land, 2002) While her focus is on the school boards influence on students academic achievement, she took a broad view to include what makes a school board effective and actions of school boards. Ilg and Tieman also focused on how boards can influence academic achievement finding there is little evidence in the literature to show a direct link between policy and achievement, but that achievement can be influenced by other actions of the board, such as “coordinated board policies and active involvement in statewide reform efforts.” (Ilg & Tieman, 2006) The Institute for Education leadership put together a report on the findings of a pre-NCLB national study of local school boards. (Carol et al., 1986) My own survey was based on the information from this 1985 study.

The success of NCLB is a more recent focus of researchers. The complete implementation of NCLB was phased in over a three-year period beginning in the fall of 2002. Major portions of the legislation were not required to be in effect until the 2005-2006 school year; as a result, it has only been in the last few years that researchers have begun to look into the effectiveness of the law. Has it achieved what it set out to achieve: are all students “achieving” so that “no child is left behind?” (Goertz; W. Mathis, 2003; Sunderman, Tracey, Kim, & Orfield, 2004) Despite numerous complaints from the states, including several law suits², states have complied with the requirements of NCLB. U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spelling, in a speech to the Education Writers Association on March 5, 2005, stated that “all 50 states...have laid the foundation for continuous school improvement and real student achievement.” (Plucker, 2005) During the next few years we should expect to see many more reports on the effectiveness of this law in improving student achievement.

² Utah, Connecticut, Texas, Vermont and Michigan sued the U.S. Department of Education over various issues including unfunded mandate and violation of state sovereignty.

The most substantial research of this legislation has been done by The Civil Rights Project of Harvard University which has published numerous reports on the effects of NCLB. The Civil Rights Project produced research in state efforts to meet NCLB requirements and the effect on minority and low-income students. (Sunderman, Kim, & Orfield, 2005) They have nearly 20 different projects covering everything from state implementation to teacher qualifications to drop-out rates. Their research provides an excellent starting point for other researchers interested in the implementation of NCLB and the effectiveness of this legislation in improving school and student performance. They have not, however, published any research in the area of school boards and NCLB.

The 2007-08 school year is the fifth full year schools have operated under some regulations of NCLB. While researchers have looked at this legislation from a number of different angles during the last five years, none, however, has turned their attention to the local school board and how that body has dealt with the implementation of this law.

CHAPTER THREE

STUDY DESIGN

To complete this research I chose to limit my focus to the actions of the Boards of Education of six New Jersey public school districts and more specifically, on the scores of the New Jersey Assessment of Skill and Knowledge (NJASK8)³ that is administered to all eighth grade students each spring, and the percentage of teachers who meet the Highly Qualified requirement. This chapter explains the research done and presents an analysis of the information and data obtained. The first section identifies the districts I have selected for my research and the selection process. The second section focuses on the nature of school boards in New Jersey, their make up and legal parameters. In the third section the topic is Highly Qualified Teachers in the state as well as in the selected districts. Annual student assessments is the issue in the fourth section of this chapter. This includes a discussion of the disaggregated groups and school scores. The chapter ends with a brief description of the survey and a discussion of the limitations of my research.

Overall Study Design

The local school board is the elected leadership for the district. The board members are charged with providing the direction for the school administration to achieve the goals established by NCLB. The National School Boards Association identified eight “key actions” of school boards to improve leadership for student learning. They are: vision, standards, assessment, accountability, alignment, learning environment, collaborative partnerships and continuous improvement. (Usdan, McCloud, Podmostko, & Cuban, 2001) In

³ Formerly known as Grade Eight Performance Assessment (GEPA); name change in 2007.

earlier studies, the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL), surveyed school boards in what IEL identified as “core areas of governing responsibilities” which include: “leadership, planning and goal setting, policy oversight, involving parents and community, relating to and influencing others (local government, state government, etc.), board operations and board development.” (Danzberger, 1994) Using these indicators, I looked at the actions that school boards take that directly impact the two dependent variables of my thesis, Highly Qualified Teachers and student achievement on state assessments: 1) policies and budgets approved by the board; 2) goal setting for HQT and student achievement; 3) board actions regarding standards, assessment and accountability.

My research focused on two areas of Boards of Education action taken to improve student achievement to enable the school to meet the state AYP benchmarks; and actions taken to fill teaching positions with teachers who meet the HQT requirements. What policies have the BOEs adopted to attract new teachers? What policies have been adopted to insure retention of HQTs and prevent their loss to other districts, especially in those areas in which there is a shortage of applicants. Research has shown that salary, benefits, student discipline and school safety are the key factors in attracting and retaining teachers. (CEP, 2003) What actions have the Boards of Education taken to address these key areas? What resources are available to the teaching staff to improve student performance? Has the curriculum been changed? Have district-wide student assessments been implemented? Are there support services are being provided to those students who fall behind?

To measure the effectiveness of school board actions towards meeting the state benchmarks for student testing and having a Highly Qualified Teacher in every classroom it was necessary to:

1. Collect data on each school's grade 8 assessment test for the last eight years and compare year-to-year, group-to-group to identify trends or changes in performance.
2. Identify the percentage of HQT in each school using the most recent data from the New Jersey Department of Education
3. Develop and distribute a survey for members of Boards of Education to gather information on board beliefs and goals. .
4. Review Board Minutes for official information on policies/decisions regarding staffing and student achievement issues. This objective measure of Board actions will serve to measure the number of and type of actions taken to improve student scores and properly staff the districts.
5. Review Annual School Budgets for the last 3-4 years to identify how funds have been allocated.⁴

3.1 School Districts

In limiting the thesis to New Jersey schools I am holding constant state level influences on the dependent variables. NCLB allows each state to set benchmarks to determine which schools are successful and which are not. Different states may have different benchmarks which may have an influence on Board actions; i.e., a state with a higher standard may assign resources differently than a state with lower benchmarks. The authority of the district Boards of Education may differ from state to state, thereby impacting the ability of the BOE to influence the dependent variables. By remaining within the same state, these outside influences are eliminated.

⁴ Assuming the budget is a political document that reflects the decisions made as to the importance of various categories, this document should reflect Board actions.

In selecting from the nearly 600 school districts, I established certain criteria to insure that the districts were similar in size and had similar socioeconomic characteristics. I wanted to control for other possible influences on test scores and teacher qualifications. By carefully selecting criteria to create a pool of school districts as similar as possible, I was then able to narrow the available school districts in southern New Jersey to six districts. The criteria for selection included District Configuration, Enrollment, District Factor Grouping, and Student Subgroups.

District configuration: All six districts selected are PreK-12 districts, that is, their student population includes children from the age of four (Pre-K) through high school seniors. New Jersey has a number of districts that are considered Elementary Districts which include Pre-K to Grade 6 or 8. Students are then sent to another district that includes a middle school and high school. Districts with the entire range of grades are more likely to have the administrative resources available to develop curriculum and policies in response to student assessment scores and staffing.

Enrollment: All six districts have a student population of 3,000 or more. These are the highest population districts as grouped by New Jersey. Again, size is generally going to equate to more available resources. In addition, a larger population creates the opportunity for more diversity which is important when reviewing the disaggregated test scores.

District Factor Group: New Jersey groups its school districts into eight different categories based on demographic factors that represent “an approximate measure of a community’s relative socioeconomic status (SES).”⁵ The variables are:

- a. Percent of adults with no high school diploma
- b. Percent of adults with some college education

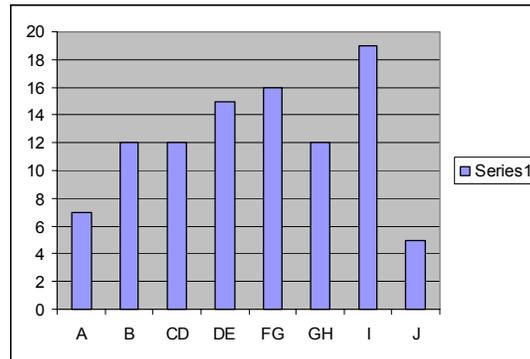
⁵ Executive Summary: District Factor Grouping, State of New Jersey, Department of Education

- c. Occupational status
- d. Unemployment rate
- e. Percent of individuals in poverty
- f. Median family income

Data from the 2000 census were used to assign a district to its District Factor Group (DFG) based on the variables listed above. Figure 3.1 provides a breakdown of all NJ districts by DFG and the percentage each group represents of the total population of school districts in New Jersey:

Figure 3.1: District Factor Grouping – Number and Percentage of School Districts in Each Group

<u># of Operating Districts</u>	<u>% of Total Number of School Districts</u>	<u>DFG</u>
39	7%	A
67	12%	B
67	12%	CD
83	15%	DE
89	16%	FG
76	14%	GH
103	19%	I
25	5%	J
TOTAL	549	100%



Districts with a DFG of “A” are the lowest SES category and “J” is the highest category. I chose to use the schools in the “CD” category. In addition to being the category of the school district in which I work, it represents the districts that contain a significant number of lower socioeconomic students who, as a group, find it more difficult to meet the NCLB benchmarks.

This means that district actions would be necessary to support these students to help them achieve the assessment standards.

Thirty-one of New Jersey's poorest districts receive additional state funding under what are known as the *Abbott* decisions handed down by the state Supreme Court in the 1980s. The state Supreme Court ruled that those districts, most of which are classified as "A" or "B" under the DFG, receive state aid "that is calculated to provide them with the same per-pupil operating budget as would be found in New Jersey's wealthiest school districts." (NJ Department of Education, 2007) These funds are used to implement programs to allow students to master the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards at the same level as wealthier districts. Initially I chose not to include any Abbott districts in the survey because of the additional state aid they receive, instead focusing my research on districts that have a high level of disadvantaged students, but no additional state aid. However, to expand my survey and for the sake of comparison, I included one such district (Pemberton).

Student Subgroups: NCLB requires that annual test scores be disaggregated by specific racial/ethnic groups, and I wanted to insure that the districts I selected had a representation of the different racial/ethnic groups identified in NCLB. Schools with a high number of subgroups increase the probability that at least one subgroup will not make AYP. (R. L. Linn, 2003) It also means these schools must act quickly to improve student performance enough to achieve AYP and escape the label of a failing school. The subcategories are: white, African American, Asian/Pacific Island Islander, Native American, Hispanic, and other. Table 3.1 provides information on the districts I have chosen for my research:⁶

⁶ Data come from NJ Department of Education website and school annual Report Cards. www.nj.doe.gov

Table 3.1: Student Enrollment Totals by District and NCLB Subgroups

	<i>Deptford</i>	<i>Egg Harbor</i>	<i>Monroe</i>	<i>Pemberton</i>	<i>Pennsauken</i>	<i>Winslow</i>
Total #	4304	7484	5985	5226	5746	6278
% White	73%	62%	77%	55%	25%	40%
% Black	20%	13%	18%	30%	38%	52%
% Hispanic	3%	13%	4%	11%	28%	7%
% Asian	2%	11%	1%	3%	8%	1%
% Native American	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
% Other	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
% Econ. Disadvantaged	31%	27%	24%	33%	49%	31%

While all these school districts are in the same DFG, there are some differences among them in regards to the percentages of race/ethnic diversity. I was concerned, however, about limiting my research districts too much further by concentrating on only those districts with similar ratios. Ultimately, the differences did not appear to impact the actions taken by the various Boards of Education toward implementation of NCLB.

The education literature reports that one of the factors that effect test scores is the economic level of the student and family. Those students who come from lower economic levels tend to score lower than those from higher income levels. To validate its groupings of schools by SES into the various DFG the state of New Jersey compared test scores among the different groups. What it found was that “without exception, the average student performance increases as one progresses through the DFG classes.” (NJ Department of Education)

Socioeconomic status also has an effect on staffing. Studies have shown that districts serving low-income families and minority students have more difficulty hiring and retaining teachers. (US Department of Education, 2006)

Individual School Scores and Subgroups For the purposes of this research I am collecting data for only six of the twelve disaggregated groups under NCLB. (Appendix D) In some instances, the numbers of students in a subgroup were so small as to not be included in test reporting⁷; and only these six groups were consistently represented in the six districts in the study. The six groups include: General Education students, Special Education students, White Students, African American students, Hispanic students and Economically Disadvantaged students. It is quite possible for a student to fall under more than one category. For example, an Hispanic student might also be Special Education classified and fall into the Economically Disadvantaged category. In this situation, her scores would be reported under each of the three groups.

The demographics of the six districts I have chosen include a varying degree of minority populations, but all fall within the same District Factor Grouping, which is economically based. NCLB requires that annual test scores be disaggregated by specific racial/ethnic groups and I wanted to ensure that the districts selected had a representation of the different groups identified in NCLB. Of the six districts, Pennsauken has the highest minority population (74%) and Monroe has the lowest (23%). The same schools also have the highest and lowest Economically Disadvantaged population. However, despite the variance in minority and Economically Disadvantaged populations, all six schools fall within the same District Factor Group for the state of New Jersey. (Refer to Table 3.1 on page 21)

3.2 NCLB and Local School Boards

While NCLB is perhaps the most intrusive education legislation ever passed by the federal government (DeBray, McDermott, & Wohlstetter, 2005; Kober, Pinkerton, Scott, &

⁷ In NJ groups of less than 40 are not publicly reported to protect the identities of the students.

Buell, 2003; P. J. McGuinn, 2006) it does leave a number of important decisions up to the states. The states, in turn, delegate some of those decisions to the local governing body. For example, NCLB requires that all students be tested annually in grades 3-8 and once in high school. Individual states select the test to be used. NCLB requires that all students be 100% proficient by 2014. Individual states determine what “proficient” means. NCLB requires that all teachers be “highly qualified” by the end of the 2006-2007 school year. Individual states determine the requirements for state certification and the criteria for state-developed teacher tests. The federal government has established areas of accountability, but allowed the different states to determine what is “passing” and what is “failing,” which results in consistency within the state but not among states.

At the local level, the state of New Jersey has given direction to the local boards of education, but allows the districts to develop many of their own programs. For example, the NJ State Education Regulations states that:

District boards of education shall ensure that curriculum and instruction are designed and delivered in such a way that all students are able to demonstrate the knowledge and skills specified by the Core Curriculum Content Standards and shall ensure that appropriate instructional adaptations are designed and delivered for students with disabilities, for students with limited English proficiency, and for students who are gifted and talented.⁸

Local boards of education have the leeway to develop curriculum and programs within their district, as long as they meet the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS).⁹ The amount of time spent in each content area and the resources allotted are determined by the district board of education. School boards have the authority to create a budget and allocate

⁸ NJ State DOE Rules, Subchapter 3: 6A:8-3.1(a)

⁹ As a result of earlier federal legislation, the 1994 Improving America’s School Act (IASA), states were required to develop standards for student learning and assessments. New Jersey was one of the states that moved forward and developed a series of Core Content Standards to be implemented over a series of years. Students were then to be tested based on the implementation of the various standards.

funds to meet district needs. Boards have the responsibility to set district goals and create policies that will enable the administration to achieve those goals. Achieving 100% proficiency by the year 2014 and having an entire staff of Highly Qualified Teachers by the end of the 2006-2007 school year are two requirements of NCLB that school boards must achieve. Through their actions in leadership, policy making and budgetary actions, school boards are expected to accomplish the mandates of NCLB.

School board experts have identified the following characteristics as belonging to effective school boards(Land, 2002):

- Focus on students' academic achievement and policy rather than administration
- Have good relations with the superintendent
- Have good relations with other community agencies
- Have good relations with state and local government
- Have good relations with the public
- Have good relations with other board members
- Practice policy-making, leadership and budgeting
- Engage in evaluation
- Undertake in training and development

While I am not trying to identify whether or not the different BOEs are “effective,” school boards with these characteristics should be making effective decisions resulting in more effective schools. I looked for evidence on these dimensions to explain any variation among boards and the performance indicators.

New Jersey School Boards New Jersey has 2,430 public schools governed by 593 school districts¹⁰, each has an elected school board.¹¹ Almost all New Jersey School Boards consist of

¹⁰ Some districts have no schools, functioning strictly as a sending district; students in the community attend schools in neighboring communities and the sending district pays “tuition” for each student. Sending districts are not represented on the receiving district’s Board of Education.

nine elected members. Each member serves a three-year term. Non-partisan elections are held on or about the 15th of April each year, with three of the nine Board Members up for election. There are no term-limits for Board members. Seats vacated during the term are filled by appointment by the existing Board and the new member serves until the next Board election when that seat is placed on the ballot for the time remaining.

American school boards have their history in the beginnings of our country. Early colonies relied on these citizens to decide what should be taught, who should teach, and what expectations were to be set for the classroom. As years passed, and communities grew, there began to be a separation between the governance of the community and the governance of the schools. (Land, 2002; Owen & Burris, 2006; Shannon, 1994) However, this board of citizens continued to be the governing body. In modern day school districts, especially large districts, expectations are that this group will hire the best qualified chief executive officer (superintendent) to manage and operate the day-to-day business of the schools based on the goals and policies the Board has established for the district. Americans, and citizens of New Jersey are no exception, love their “home rule.” The hundreds of school boards and districts in the state are sacrosanct. Despite years of public complaint about the rising cost of education, very few communities are willing to give up their community school district to regionalize for the sake of cutting costs. (Guenther, 2008)

“No Child Left Behind” put pressure on school boards across the nation to insure that “their” schools were effective in providing the appropriate education for the children in their community. Schools whose students failed to meet the state-created benchmarks were labeled as “In Need of Improvement” which many took as a fancy way of saying “Failing.” If a school was

¹¹ <http://www.state.nj.us/njded/data/fact.htm>

“failing” communities looked to the School Board to take the action necessary to fix the problem. My research was designed to find out how school boards were responding to the demands that NCLB placed on education. It is important to note that NJ School Board members do not receive pay for their service. There are no requirements for a professional background in education or childhood learning; the only educational experience Board members have in common is that at one point in their lives they were all students. My survey revealed that only 12% of the Board members in my study have a background in education.

Serving on a Board of Education can be time consuming and requires a commitment to the community. New Jersey statute requires that each Board meet at least once every two months; nevertheless, the districts in my study met a minimum of two times each month to discuss issues and make decisions. While some people have used their service on the Board as a stepping stone in local government, there are others who have chosen to remain active Board members for a number of years. In my own research, one half of the Board members have served for more than 10 years, and an equal number plan on seeking another term. Service on the Board and to the community is not just a means to “take care” of one’s children, either, it seems; 80% of the respondents to my survey currently have no children in the district.

New Jersey statutes set forth the duties and responsibilities of the local boards of education. Under Title 18A, local boards are responsible to: “Make, amend and repeal rules ... for its own government and the transaction of its business and for the management and management of the public schools and public school property of the district and for the employment, regulation of conduct and discharge of its employees...” (New Jersey Title 18A:11-1) They cannot, under law, manage the schools. In fact, they are required to abide by a Code of Ethics under which each member promises to “confine my board action to policy

making, planning, and appraisal, and I will help to frame policies and plans only after the board has consulted those who will be effected by them” and to “carry out my responsibility, not to administer the schools, but, together with my fellow board members, to see that they are well run.” (Title 18A:12-24.1, item c. and d.) To carry out their duty, the Board has the authority to appoint a superintendent of schools, and other such personnel, whose task is the day-to-day operation of the district. New Jersey also requires all Board members to attend training programs offered by the New Jersey School Boards Association during their first year on the job. The purpose of the training is to present information regarding the “skills and knowledge necessary to serve as a local school board member.” (Title 18A: 13a) Training continues in the second and third year of the Board members first term and if the member is re-elected additional advanced training is required. (Title 18A:13b). This elected board of citizens is the governing body for the local school district and the group to whom the education of future generations is entrusted.

3.3 Highly Qualified Teachers

NCLB requires that all teachers be “highly qualified” based on the belief that teachers who are knowledgeable in their subject area are more effective than teachers who do not have subject matter expertise. The federal law allows each state to define what it means to be “highly qualified.” According to the NJ Department of Education’s report, “The New Jersey Model for Identifying Highly Qualified Teachers” highly qualified is generally defined as someone who holds a degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education and holds a valid NJ teaching certificate. There are variations in what specifically is required for an elementary teacher, a secondary teacher, and a Special Education teacher. The New Jersey Department of

Education states that elementary teachers are required to hold a college degree, an Elementary Education teaching certificate and pass a state test in Elementary Education. Secondary teachers are required to hold a degree, a subject area teaching certificate and demonstrate their “content preparation/expertise for each core academic subject they teach” by passing a state test and holding a college degree in that subject area (or 30 college credits). Special Education teachers requirements are based on the type of Special Education teaching job they hold. If they teach students who are not subject to the regular state assessment because of the severity of the students disability, Highly Qualified means they meet the same requirements as elementary teachers. Special Education teachers at the secondary level must be highly qualified in math, science or language arts at the time of hire and then have two years to demonstrate content expertise in the remaining core subject areas which they teach. This is done through either passing tests or meeting the HOUSE (High Objective Universal Standard of Evaluation) standards. If the Special Education teacher is functioning as an in-class support teacher then the only requirement is state certification as a Special Education teacher, no subject-area expertise is required.

HOUSE standards are based on a matrix of education, testing, and professional experience. Appendix A is the NJ HOUSE Matrix used to determine whether or not a teacher is highly qualified. A teacher who does not hold a degree in a subject area can still be considered Highly Qualified if he/she completes course work in the subject area, has experience teaching the subject, and has worked in content area professional activities. When the NCLB Highly Qualified Teacher requirement was first implemented many veteran middle school teachers held only Elementary education certifications, and the HOUSE Matrix permitted these teachers to be classified as Highly Qualified.

If a teacher is not Highly Qualified, Title I schools are required to notify the parents that their child is being taught by a teacher who has not yet met the Highly Qualified standards. There are, however, to be “no consequences to teachers in terms of job loss if teachers have not yet met the definition of a Highly Qualified Teacher.”(NJ Department of Education, 2005-2006 Edition) It is the state’s and district’s responsibility to “support and monitor” teacher progress toward the Highly Qualified goals.

As of October 15, 2006, New Jersey had 110,964 full-time classroom teachers.¹² School districts are responsible for insuring that all of their teachers meet the Highly Qualified standards. This is done through hiring practices and professional development opportunities. In New Jersey, as in many states, the most difficult positions to fill are math, science and secondary Special Education. District personnel officers find themselves struggling to find teachers who can fill those critical positions. They also find themselves competing with other districts for the same limited number of teachers. The NJ Department of Education reported that across the state, in all classrooms, 4.1% of classes are not taught by Highly Qualified teachers. In high-poverty schools the percent is 9.3% and in low-poverty schools 2.3% of the classes are not taught by Highly Qualified Teachers. Breaking it down further into subject areas in the middle schools, the greatest percentage of teachers who are not Highly Qualified are found in Special Education classes followed by Basic Skills Math classes. Special Education students and remedial studies in Basic Skills classes are the students who have historically failed to achieve. The question I sought to answer was: what policies have been adopted by Boards of Education to attract and retain Highly Qualified Teachers?

¹²<http://www.state.nj.us/njded/data/fact.htm>

3.4 Annual Student Assessments

The state of New Jersey has reported individual school standardized test scores since 1998; they can be found on the NJ Department of Education website. Prior to NCLB, the scores were used by schools to place students into the appropriate classes (basic skills, regular education, or honors) for the up-coming school year. Students in grade 11 were required to pass the test in order to graduate from high school. The state-published Report Cards were used by schools as a way to compare themselves to other districts/schools and to focus curriculum; there were no benchmarks and no applied consequences – other than bragging rights – for student scores. With the arrival of NCLB and the state-established benchmarks, the Report Cards became critical in determining if schools met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) goals.

Prior to NCLB, the state was not required to report student scores by the same subgroups required by NCLB; therefore, it is not possible to compare individual subgroups pre- and post-NCLB. The information available before the implementation of NCLB is disaggregated by “general education,” “Special Education” and “economically disadvantaged” students. Post-NCLB, the few years available are too soon to establish a significant trend. Unfortunately, despite the limited information, this is the same information that the states and national government must use to plan, including deciding on reauthorization of NCLB at the national level in 2007-08.

Students across the state participate in testing during a three week period in the spring of each year. Every student in grade 3 through 6 will take the NJ ASK (New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge) one week and another week every grade 7 and 8 student will take the NJ ASK test. Grade 11 students take the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) in the fall and again, if necessary, in the spring. (Passing HSPA is required for students to graduate from

high school. If a student fails the first time, he/she has the opportunity to take the test two more times.) Student scores are reported by subgroup and then by Proficiency levels: Partial Proficiency, Proficient, and Advanced Proficient. Students whose test scores are below 199 are placed in the Partial Proficient category. Students whose scores are between 200 and 250 are placed in the Proficient Category and those students who score over 250 are considered Advanced Proficient. For a school to be considered as meeting AYP all subgroups must achieve Proficiency or above. Students in the Partial Proficiency are considered to have “failed” the annual assessment.

Even if the benchmark has not been met, schools and districts can meet AYP through what is known as “Safe Harbor.” According to the NJ State Department of Education, if the school has decreased the percentage of students who are partially proficient by 10% from the previous year they can make AYP. For example, if Economically Disadvantaged students in the previous year recorded a Partially Proficient percentage of 54% and the next year the percentage dropped by 10% to 49%, that is considered “Safe Harbor” and would make the school eligible for AYP, as long as all other subgroups achieved Proficiency or Safe Harbor.

I focused on the 8th grade test because it has been in place the longest, and there are public records going back to 1998 on test scores for the districts. There are four years of scores *before* NCLB and four years since NCLB was passed. I also selected the 8th grade assessment because, unlike the 11th grade assessment in which passing is required to graduate from high school, there are no extrinsic motivating factors for the students to pass this test.

In analyzing the state assessment results of the six districts in this survey I looked first at the overall scores for each year to attempt to determine whether or not the schools are meeting the benchmarks established by the state and any trends within the schools. Did scores go up each

year, go down each year, or stay the same? What were the differences between the math and language arts scores? How much did the district progress (or not) during the time period in which AYP was calculated and NCLB was in effect? The legislation expects 100% of the students to achieve Proficient/Advanced Proficient by the 2014 school year. NCLB permits states to develop any timeline or series of benchmarks they choose, so long as all students achieve proficiency by 2014. Some states have established equal incremental increases until 2014; others have back-loaded the increases, starting out with small increases from year to year and ending with large jumps at the end. (Some educators believe this back-loading is based on the states belief that NCLB goals will be changed or the method of achieving AYP will be changed, thereby relieving these states of the necessity of achieving what appears to be tremendous increases in student performance at the end of the federal timeline.) New Jersey has chosen to establish a timeline with benchmark changes in 2004, 2007, 2010 and 2013. (Appendix C) One would expect scores to be improving each year as schools attempt to achieve the benchmarks established by the state and the NCLB legislation. Finally, are there any similarities between districts?

It is important to note that the scores are “snapshots” of different groups of students. That is, they are scores of tests taken over a three day period during the spring of the year. They do not represent a picture of the growth of student knowledge over the course of their schooling. This is an issue when attempting to compare one year to another because you are not comparing student progress or growth, just different group of students taking a similar test. Many educators argue that this format does not accurately portray the school’s effectiveness, nor does it help identify student growth. For example, if we take a group of students who scored at 55% Proficient, below the 66% required to “pass,” the school is perceived as “In Need of

Improvement.” However, if we look at the same group’s previous year score when only 40% scored Proficient, we can see a huge improvement, and it seems unreasonable to flag the school as a failure. A model, known as the growth model, allowing educators to compare the same group of students from grades 3 through 8 and again in grade 11 when determining AYP, is one of the recommendations being made for the reauthorization of NCLB in 2008.

Subgroups For Assessment A key point in the NCLB legislation is the focus on subgroups. Rather than evaluate a school’s performance on the total student population, the emphasis is now on those groups that have traditionally done poorly. This “achievement gap” is significant for minority students and lower-income students. (Kim & Sunderman, 2004) As a result, NCLB requires that schools disaggregate their assessment scores into the multiple subgroups and each subgroup must achieve the state benchmarks for the school to achieve AYP. Should any one subgroup fail to achieve, then the whole school fails to achieve.

The required subgroups are: racial/ethnic groups, students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, and economically disadvantaged students. Racial/Ethnic groups are defined as: African American, Asian & Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Hispanic and “Other.” Economically Disadvantaged (ED) are those students who are eligible to receive free or reduced price meals at the school. Those students who are identified as “economically disadvantaged” have a history of generally doing less well than middle- or upper-income students. (Kim & Sunderman, 2004) Research has shown that there are a number of factors that can be attributed to lower-income students doing poorly: poor nutrition, lack of health care, substandard housing, parents with low levels of educational attainment, lack of resources such as books, computers, etc. Lack of parental involvement and support of education can negatively impact the child’s achievement. (Kober, Pinkerton, Scott, & Buell, 2003)

NCLB turns the focus to the previously unreported groups to unmask the failures of schools in helping these students achieve. NJ has reported eighth grade assessment scores by General Education students and Special Education students since 1998; prior to 2002 schools were not required to disaggregate their scores into the numerous subgroups.

Federal regulations allow students for whom English is not their primary language (LEP) to be exempt from taking the language arts portion of the state assessment during their first twelve months in a US school. They are NOT exempt, however, from participating in the mathematics section.¹³ States have the flexibility to establish the length of time a student is considered LEP for assessment purposes. In New Jersey, LEP students can continue in this category for two years after they have “demonstrated English proficiency and exited an LEP Program.”(Librera, 2004)

3.5 Survey

To gather data from Board members I created a three-page, seventy-three question survey, approved by the University IRB. (Appendix H) Each Board President was mailed a package containing a letter explaining my research and the purpose of the survey, copies of surveys for each Board member, a self-addressed stamped envelope attached to each survey, and 3x5 cards to be returned by those members who wished a copy of my completed thesis. (Appendix G) The target population was limited to the nine serving Board members of the six different districts in my study. Two weeks after sending the initial package a follow-up letter was sent to the Board president reminding him/her of the survey and requesting their assistance in encouraging the Board members to respond as soon as possible. Two weeks after that I sent

¹³ Federal Register, Part VI Department of Education, 34 CFR Part 200, Title I – Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged; Final Rule; Wednesday, September 13, 2006.

an email to the Board president or the Board Secretary (an administrator in the district) with copies of the coded surveys attached. After each attempt I received several responses.

Unfortunately, I did not receive enough responses from each of the districts to allow me to do any valid comparisons between the districts. Two districts returned four surveys, three returned two surveys and one district returned only one survey. However, out of 54 distributed surveys, I did receive a total of 15 surveys which represents a 27.8% response rate. This is a small percentage, but I was able to identify certain tendencies in the responses. This, of course, is a limitation to my study. Given more time, it might have been possible to obtain additional responses to clarify some of my findings. As a result of this limitation, unless there is a response that is significantly different from others, I have chosen to combine responses. For example, of the four choices “Major Concern,” “Moderate Concern,” “Mild Concern,” and “Not a Concern” it made more sense to combine the first two when necessary and explain that Board members had a Moderate/Major Concern for that issue. In a few circumstances I found near unanimity in the responses which made it more reasonable to identify those individually.

3.6 Limitations

This thesis focuses on a small number of districts within the state of New Jersey. The findings can only be seen as a beginning look into whether and how school boards have an effect on student achievement through meeting testing benchmarks and staffing by HQTs. The results cannot be generalized to all districts within New Jersey or across the United States. The selected districts have only one school within the district giving the 8th grade state assessment, eliminating any comparison of how the same board’s actions may impact a different group of students in a different school within the same district. It also is not possible to account for how

school administrators may affect the actions of the BOE. We all know that individual managers, given the same directive, can influence its outcome by their implementation. While limiting this study to only New Jersey eliminates state-level influences, it also limits its current information to school districts in New Jersey. Other states with different policies may have different findings.

My original plan included a review of School Board Minutes to establish what actions were taken in regards to student achievement, curriculum changes, professional development and issues surrounding the hiring and retaining of Highly Qualified Teachers. Unfortunately, I was unable to find any useful information. Board Minutes consisted of a series of approvals to pay bills or approvals on personnel issues such as hirings, retirements, transfers and leaves of absence. It was initially surprising to find that all of the Boards tended to approve similar policies, until I researched the New Jersey School Board Association website (www.njsba.org). One of the responsibilities of this professional organization is to prepare draft policies, compliant with recent changes in laws and court cases, and then distribute them to the local membership. It was here that I found the source of many of the policies on which the different local Boards of Education were acting. The bottom line, however, is that although the Board Minutes provided outcomes, they did not include the interactions and discussions that would have been helpful to my study.

I purposely excluded the role of the Superintendent because my focus was on the actions of the elected governing body, not the appointed executive officer. This decision is both a limitation and an area for future research. Board meetings follow an agenda that is prepared by the Superintendent and the Board Secretary/Business Administrator (also an appointed position). An interesting comparison might be to the weak council-strong manager form of city government. The amount and kind of influence wielded by the Superintendent, who is

responsible for the day-to-day operation of the district, certainly has an impact on student achievement and the hiring and retention of teachers. Future research should focus on the relationship between the School Board and the Superintendent and how that relationship affects policy implementation.

An additional limitation, coming late in the research, was the lack of response by Board members to the survey. With only 27% responding, it is difficult to expand that information too far. I cannot compare one district to another due to the limited responses from some districts. However, by using the aggregate survey responses it is possible to identify trends. That the topic of the survey was controversial might be considered a cause for the low response. The six districts in this study have a long history of failing to achieve AYP, and BOE members may be sensitive to requests for information about the district's lack of achievement.

The survey design also may have limited response. It was a long survey, consisting of 73 questions. Moreover, after looking more closely at the survey and the responses, it is difficult to know what the Board members meant, an issue of measurement validity. For example, question #20 asks about the amount of concern Board members had about school violence. The problem is the word "concern." It could mean school violence is a significant problem in the school on a daily basis, or it could mean that a single recent incident has brought school violence to the level of being a concern. This problem should have been resolved by a series of factual questions regarding the amount and kind of school violence followed by a "concern" question.

And, lastly, though probably of minor importance, was a glaring typographical error on the survey. Instead of using the proper word "effect" the word "affect" was used when asking for responses. This error can only be attributed to my own glaring lapse in spelling.

CHAPTER FOUR FINDINGS

What follows is a description of each school's test scores and my findings. The first section presents the scores of the grade 8 state test (NJASK) for the six different districts over the last four years. The second section is a look into the situation regarding Highly Qualified Teachers in the six districts of my thesis. Section three then turns to a look into the budgets adopted by the six districts over the last few years. Interspersed throughout the sections are the results of the surveys completed by the Board of Education members.

4.1 Student Achievement

This component, of all the different parts of NCLB, seems to be the one that most attract the public's attention. As required by the legislation, the state publishes "Report Cards" on each of the districts and schools which is then published on the state Department of Education website. *The Philadelphia Inquirer* and *The Courier-Post*, two local newspapers, publish Report Cards each year to inform the public providing the test results for each school, whether or not the school has made AYP, and comparisons of school scores to state averages, by DFG. The 2002-2003 school year was the first year that test results would be considered under NCLB. New Jersey had been using state assessments for 4 years prior to 2002-2003, but there were few applied consequences for schools failing to achieve. (Appendix B provides the eight years of scores for each school for the grade 8 assessment.)

None of the schools met AYP in all Subgroups during the four years of NCLB in either the Mathematics or Language Arts tests. There were, however, subgroups that were able to achieve the state Benchmark for Proficiency/Advanced Proficiency. Students categorized as General Education students tended to fall into the Proficiency/Advanced Proficiency category

and White students met the Benchmarks. On the other hand, Special Education students never met the LAL Benchmarks and neither did students categorized as Economically Disadvantaged.

TABLE 4.1: Grade 8 GEPA/NJ ASK Scores with Benchmarks by District (LAL and Math)¹⁴

DEPTFORD TOWNSHIP

<i>Language Arts Scores</i>					<i>Math Scores</i>					
Benchmark	58	66	66	66		Benchmark	39	49	49	49
<i>Year</i>	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06		<i>Year</i>	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06
Gen Ed	81.1	85.7	75.2	80.2		Gen Ed	45.9	54.3	55.7	58.0
SpEd	19.3	20.5	24.2	17.1		SpEd	7.3	11.1	11.1	11.7
White	69.5	79.4	78.0	70.7		White	37.7	52.1	52.4	52.4
Black	51.4	60.6	63.6	50.7		Black	21.6	28.7	35.8	31.4
Hispanic	61.5	**	**	58.3		Hispanic	23.1	**	**	25.0
ED	51.8	52.9	61.3	54.4		ED	29.8	21.1	28.4	34.8

EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP

<i>Language Arts Scores</i>					<i>Math Scores</i>					
Benchmark	58	66	66	66		Benchmark	39	49	49	49
<i>Year</i>	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06		<i>Year</i>	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06
Gen Ed	84.8	81.0	76.8	83.8		Gen Ed	58.6	68.5	69.6	73.7
SpEd	24.1	20.0	8.7	25.0		SpEd	4.5	4.8	10.4	21.2
White	78.7	75.4	71.9	82.5		White	56.5	65.8	67.8	73.7
Black	64.4	63.3	36.4	61.6		Black	21.4	35.1	32.7	44.3
Hispanic	54.2	50.9	43.9	57.9		Hispanic	33.9	32.7	29.9	52.7
ED	46.9	54.0	41.2	56.3		ED	23.1	34.6	36.3	48.2

MONROE TOWNSHIP

<i>Language Arts Scores</i>					<i>Math Scores</i>					
Benchmark	58	66	66	66		Benchmark	39	49	49	49
<i>Year</i>	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06		<i>Year</i>	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06
Gen Ed	59.7	90.2	78.2	89.5		Gen Ed	87.2	66.9	62.0	65.6
SpEd	14.3	30.5	37.9	35.6		SpEd	42.4	10.8	31.0	17.9
White	56.9	81.6	82.2	80.5		White	82.7	59.7	68.8	60.5
Black	29.5	64.9	65.1	68.8		Black	62.2	38.7	36.1	34.8
Hispanic	35.7	56.3	61.5	64.3		Hispanic	64.3	56.3	61.5	35.7
ED	18.9	59.8		60.0		ED	56.0	42.0		37.5

¹⁴ ** indicate too few students in the population group to report. States are permitted to select the size of a group; NJ indicated groups with 40 or less would not be reported to protect student identity.

PEMBERTON TOWNSHIP

<i>Language Arts Scores</i>					<i>Math Scores</i>					
Benchmark	58	66	66	66		Benchmark	39	49	49	49
<i>Year</i>	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06		<i>Year</i>	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06
Gen Ed	84.9	77.8	63.3	76.9		Gen Ed	47.1	58.0	42.9	51.3
SpEd	21.7	18.5	23	8.2		SpEd	9.8	5.6	17.9	4.9
White	67.8	67.8	68.4	61.4		White	41.7	50.4	50.8	43.3
Black	63.2	50.0	54.8	58.8		Black	24.1	29.1	28.4	31.2
Hispanic	67.4	63.4	63.4	59.0		Hispanic	29.5	40.4	42.9	25.6
ED	55.4	53.3	53.4	51.1		ED	22.7	34.0	29.1	23.1

PENNSAUKEN

<i>Language Arts Scores</i>					<i>Math Scores</i>					
Benchmark	58	66	66	66		Benchmark	39	49	49	49
<i>Year</i>	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06		<i>Year</i>	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06
Gen Ed	75.4	66.7	64.1	74.4		Gen Ed	38.4	53.4	57.3	67.7
SpEd	8.9	12.4	10.9	7.2		SpEd	5.0	7.4	9.9	7.8
White	76.4	61.5	65.8	75.0		White	50.3	55.4	63.5	73.8
Black	51.6	55.7	52.3	51.5		Black	16.3	36.5	46.5	44.8
Hispanic	43.9	45.9	50.0	56.1		Hispanic	16.9	35	43.5	47
ED	51.0	44.5	46.5	52.2		ED	24.7	35.3	40.8	48.6

WINSLOW TOWNSHIP

<i>Language Arts Scores</i>					<i>Math Scores</i>					
Benchmark	58	66	66	66		Benchmark	39	49	49	49
<i>Year</i>	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06		<i>Year</i>	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06
Gen Ed	73.0	74.7	45.4	72.6		Gen Ed	36.2	48.7	70.1	50.0
SpEd	14.3	7.7	8.3	18.8		SpEd	3.6	6.4	9.5	9.4
White	48.4	76.5	62.6	70.7		White	47.9	62.2	54.8	60.5
Black	46.9	51.4	48.6	56.4		Black	15.4	22.1	29.4	28.9
Hispanic	52.4	35.7	70.4	73.3		Hispanic	18.2	14.2	40.7	56.6
ED	42.5	47.1	26.9	50.8		ED	18.2	25.7	48.3	27.4

In this group of six middle schools, African American and Hispanic students met state

Benchmarks only on rare occasions

State Benchmarks are calculated to rise every three years until the year 2014 when 100% of the students are expected to achieve Proficiency in all state assessment tests. The first year of NCLB testing the LAL benchmark was 58% of the students achieving Proficiency. The next three years the LAL Benchmark was 66%. In 2007-08 the LAL Benchmark rises to by 10 points

to 76%. It would not be beyond reason to suggest that similar poor results would be expected from this year's tests.

Math scores generally followed a similar pattern. Special Education students failed to achieve state benchmarks in all schools and all years, with the exception of the Monroe Township school district in 2002-03. White students generally met benchmarks across all districts and all years, except for 2005-06 when Pemberton Township and Pennsauken Township fell below. Minority student scores (African American and Hispanic) were more mixed. Monroe Township's Hispanic students made the benchmark in three out of four years, but African American students only met the mark in one out of four years. During the fourth year of my study, Egg Harbor Township and Winslow Township Hispanic students did make AYP. The 2007-08 school year will see the Math benchmark rise from requiring 49% of the students achieving proficiency to 62% of the students achieving proficiency for a school to be considered meeting AYP. These results follow the pattern found in most schools across the nation. That is, those students classified as Minority or Economically Disadvantaged fall behind. The "achievement gap" is alive and well.

Benchmarks for student achievement have risen and will continue to rise until 2014 when 100% of the students will be expected to score as Proficient or Advanced Proficient on the yearly NJASK test. Looking at test scores of these six districts you will find that generally the percentage of students who meet the annual benchmarks does not change significantly from year to year. While there is some up-and-down movement, there does not appear to be a steady improvement. Whatever actions are being taken to improve student scores are not having the required effect. There's an old saying that the definition of madness is to doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. While I am certainly not accusing the

district leadership of insanity, it appears as though it is time for these Boards of Education to make some changes to the way things are being done. The question is, what do the Board members think?

Board members were asked in the survey to rate their concern for issues as “Major,” “Moderate,” “Mild” or “Not a Concern.” Ninety-three percent indicated that student achievement was a Major Concern. When asked what they thought were the causes of eighth grade students failing to achieve AYP over two-thirds felt that the lack of skills was the cause; 67% said it was poor reading skills, and 75% responded it was poor math skills. Fifty-nine percent indicated that the failure was due to inadequate preparation for the state assessments. However, board members did not see a lack of school resources as a cause; 75% said that it was a “Mild” to “Not a Cause.” A lack of student motivation was seen by 67% as only a “Mild Cause.” In a study completed by The Civil Rights Project, teachers in schools both achieving AYP and “In Need of Improvement” were surveyed regarding their belief that their school had an “achievement-oriented culture.” (Sunderman, 2004) The teachers were asked to respond to three statements: (1) Teachers are committed to improving student achievement; (2) Teachers provide a high quality of instruction; and (3) Students work hard in this school. In schools with students who were achieving, the majority of teachers believed that students worked hard; in those schools needed improving approximately one-third believed students worked hard. (Sunderman, 2004) Which means, of course, that those teachers believed that nearly 66% of their students do not work hard. Note that teachers believe by an almost equal percentage that student motivation is a problem, and the Board members believe it is only a “Mild Cause.” Teachers in both school groups strongly believed that they and their colleagues provided quality

instruction (77%-87%) and were committed to improving student achievement (81%-91%) (Sunderman, 2004, pg 23)

A lack of school leadership was seen by 25% as a “Major” to “Moderate Cause”; another 25% responded that it was a “Mild Cause” and the remaining 50% indicated it was “Not a Cause.” Board members placed considerable blame on Ineffective Teachers as a “Mild” to “Major Cause” of student failure (83%), 17% responded that Ineffective Teachers were “Not a Cause.”

In responding to other possible causes for failure, Board members indicated that Teacher Turnover was not a cause (83%), Large class sizes were considered a “Major Cause” by 17% of the respondents, and 75% believed they were only a Mild Cause to Not a Cause. Curriculum that does not match state assessments was considered by nearly 50% as a “Mild” to “Major Cause” of failure to achieve, but the other 50% believed such curriculum mismatch was “Not a Cause.”

Board members were asked to identify how NCLB has affected various programs in the school district. Table 4.2 displays in numerical sequence the programs the Board members identified as being most effected:

Table 4.2 Programs Most Affected by NCLB According to Board Members

Program	% Effected by NCLB
High School Programs	92
Middle School Programs	91
Basic Skills program	91
Special Education Programs*	75
Elementary Education programs	58
Fine Arts programs	42
Graduation Rates	34
Community Relations	33
Vocational Education	33
Sports	17

*Special Education: The total of Major Effect + Moderate Effect was 75% placing it fourth overall; however Special Education programs scored the highest Major Effect: 50% of the Board members believed that NCLB has had a Major Effect on Special Education programs.

Schools are scrambling to figure out ways to meet the AYP benchmarks; especially those schools labeled as “In Need of Improvement.” Almost all the Board members surveyed responded that high school programs, middle school programs and Basic Skills (remedial) programs had been affected by NCLB. (Table 4.2) Additional research needs to be done to identify what specific programs and how those programs have been affected.

The state of New Jersey has a clear set of Core Content Curriculum Standards (NJCCCS) on which it bases the annual assessments given to all public education students. Curriculum, the courses and content taught, is the major driving force of what happens in the classroom. Individual schools are free to develop educational programs and curriculum as they see fit as long as the NJCCCS are met. When surveyed, the Board members believed the primary responsibility for developing curriculum falls on the Superintendent first, then on the District administration and School Administration. Thirty-three percent believed that the school principal has Major Responsibility in developing curriculum. Those with the least responsibility for developing curriculum include the Teachers, the Board of Education, and the State Department of Education.

And finally, Board members were given a list of actions and asked which the Board had taken to improve student achievement. Seventy-five percent had indicated that during their tenure on the Board the time spent on student achievement issues had increased; 25% felt it had decreased. In order of the highest responses to the lowest, Table 4.3 shows the actions that the Board members indicate have been taken during their tenure:

Table 4.3: Actions Taken by Boards of Education to Improve Student Achievement

Action Taken %	Actions taken by Board to Improve Student Achievement
100%	Establish district-wide instructional goals stated in terms of student outcome
93%	Created a district-wide assessment program to identify progress in reaching district goals
87%	Approved funds for teachers to attend out-of-district professional development programs
80%	Approved a district-wide staff development program concentrating on creating effective schools
73%	Created staff time to develop plans and set goals
67%	Implemented a district-wide assessment program to identify progress in reaching district goals
67%	Implemented a district-wide staff development program concentrating on effective schools
47%	Revised promotion policies to insure they are in line with state standards
47%	Established teams consisting of BOE members, administrators, teachers and community members to focus on improving student achievement
43%	Participated in regular school visits of Board members in support of achievement
40%	Increased seat-time students spend in class

4.2 District HQT

Of the six districts in my study, only Monroe Township reported 100% of its teachers met the HQT requirements during the 2006 survey. The previous year, 98.2% of its teachers were considered Highly Qualified. Similar to statewide numbers, the remaining five districts reported a lack of HQT in Special Education, Science, and Math. Only Winslow reported an additional shortage of HQTs in Language Arts/Literacy.

Table 4.4: % of Highly Qualified Teachers (from the NJ Department of Education)

	<i>Deptford Township</i>		<i>Egg Harbor Township</i>		<i>Monroe Township</i>		<i>Pemberton Township</i>		<i>Pennsauken Township</i>		<i>Winslow Township</i>	
YEAR	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006
# of Teachers	254	257	450	459	333	355	440	457	375	382	439	472
% HQT	97.6	97.7	95.3	99.3	98.2	100	99.1	93.2	94.9	94.2	95.4	96.8
By Subject:												
LAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	90	95.9
MATH	100	100	96.4	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	67.2	76.3
SCIENCE	91.7	86.8	96.4	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	93.6	94.6
SpEd Resource	100	97.1	78.8	97	100	100	100	100	100	64.5	**	100
SpEd Self Contained	93.2	100	93.4	100	91.7	100	97.4	98.3	69.6	100	100	98.7
BSI – LAL	60.7	73.1	100	100	100	100	100	82.1	100	100	100	100
BSI – Math	77.8	81.8	100	100	100	100	100	100	92.8	100	**	**
ALL CORE*	94.8	94.6	93.7	99.1	97.7	100	99.2	96.7	94.5	92.8	93.7	95

*Core Subjects = Math, Science, LAL, Social Studies

**No information reported to state

In 2006, two of the six districts fell below the state average of 95.9% of the classes being taught by HQT. Pemberton reported 93.2% and Pennsauken reported 92.8% of its teachers were Highly Qualified. All the districts are faring better than the highest poverty districts (DFG of A or B) where 90.7% of the teachers fail to meet the HQT criteria. Three of the districts, Deptford

Township, Egg Harbor Township and Monroe Township, exceed the average for the low poverty districts with over 97.7% of their teachers meeting the HQT criteria.

The critical areas of Science, Math and Special Education show mixed results for these districts. Deptford Township, Pemberton Township, Pennsauken Township and Winslow Township all report teachers that are not Highly Qualified teaching Special Education classes. Regular education classes of Science, Math and LAL all have HQT except in Winslow Township where there is a shortage of 5.4%

Many districts across the nation are facing the same concerns as these six districts and other districts in New Jersey. (Dillon, 2007) When Board members were asked if Teacher Shortages were a concern, only 20% indicated it was Not a Concern while 79% indicated that it was a Mild to Major Concern. Sixty-seven percent of the surveyed Board members believe the cause of this shortage is a “lack of HQT in the subject-area” a Mild to Major Effect. As mentioned earlier, salary, benefits, school location, school discipline and school violence are all factors in teacher retention.(Center for Education Policy, 2003) School districts across the nation have had to be creative in their attempts to attract, hire and retain teachers. Some districts in the country have turned to using “signing bonuses” of up to \$10,000 for those teachers willing to teach in low-performing schools, others have included a housing incentive to encourage new teachers to move to the district. (Dillon, 2007) While none of the six districts in my study have resorted to such extreme measures; when asked what affects the districts ability to meet the requirement of having a HQT in every classroom, 33% of my respondents reported that “low salaries” has a Moderate Effect. Winslow Township recently changed its pay scale in an attempt

to attract candidates to the district.¹⁵ However, 58% said that “low salaries” had no effect at all. What my respondents blame is the lack of a pool of teachers with certification in the areas needed. When asked the amount of concern the Board member had on “Teacher Quality,” 60% indicated a Major Concern, 20% indicated it was a Moderate Concern and 13% indicated it was a Mild Concern. No one indicated that Teacher Quality was “Not a Concern.” Regarding issues that effect staffing, as mentioned earlier, Discipline is a Major to Modern Concern to 80% of the Board members; 20% indicated it was a Mild Concern; none reported discipline as Not a Concern. School violence is of Major to Moderate Concern for 60% of the Board members, yet 40% consider it only a Mild Concern.

The state expects that “as many as one third of New Jersey’s teachers may retire in the next ten years.” (NJ Department of Education, 2008b) The state of New Jersey Department of Education web site has created a “Teacher Recruitment” page that provides districts links to various resources for hiring new teachers. This website provides links to recruitment companies, on-line resume sources, colleges, and Job Fairs. However, despite the prediction by the state that there is to be a major shortage of teachers, Board members were nearly unanimous (92%) in their belief that “Poor Recruitment Efforts” had only a Mild Effect to No Effect on the ability to meet the requirement to have a HQT in every classroom.

4.3 Board of Education Minutes

Initially my plan included a review of Board Minutes to identify the actions taken by the various districts. What I found, unfortunately, was in almost all cases, little action was reflected in the Minutes. Most action taken by the different Boards included approval of expenditures,

¹⁵ I was a participant in the Contract Negotiations between the teachers union and the Winslow Township School Board for the 2006-2007, 2007-2010 Contracts. The Board stated their interest in raising starting salaries to attract new teachers.

approval of field trips, approval of personnel issues (hirings, retirements, leaves of absence, etc.), and approval of new district policies covering such things as Dress Code, Nepotism, Harassment Definitions, etc. Some Board minutes indicated approval for various Professional Development activities for the teaching staff. As a whole, however, I did not find much action by the Boards that directly impacted student achievement. This lack of information forced me to look elsewhere to find objective information regarding Board actions. If the information is not available in Board Minutes, perhaps it could be found in the school budget. That is, if the Board is concerned about improve student achievement, it should be reflected in how they budget their money. Money spent for student achievement should be reflected in a low student to teacher ratio, and funding for support services and supplies.

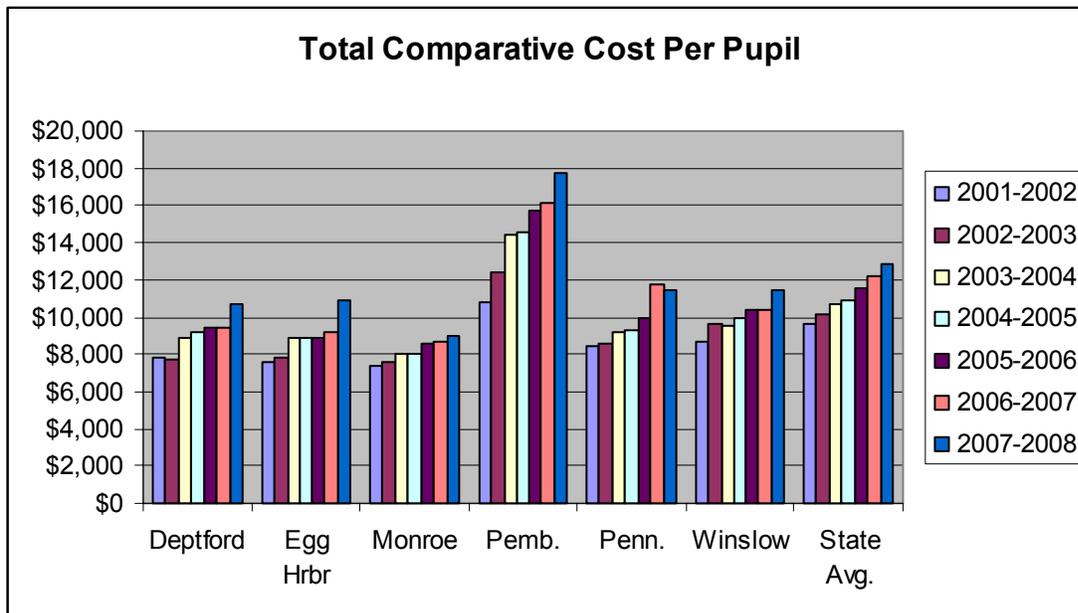
4.4 Annual Budgets

New Jersey school districts receive funding from state and federal sources and local property taxes. On or about April 15th each year the constituents have the opportunity to vote up or down on the school budget. (The irony is not unnoticed.) If the school budget is not approved by the constituents, then the school board presents the budget to the local town council for their approval. The town council then has the authority to reduce funding by categories, or leave it as presented, should they choose. There are no restrictions about what and how much can be cut. The town council then approves the revised school budget. If the school board believes the cuts are too deep or inappropriate, the Board of Education may appeal to the County Superintendent of Schools for relief. School funding relies primarily on property taxes and has been a contentious issue throughout the state. Despite efforts to change the method of funding, state legislators have failed to eliminate the reliance on property taxes. (Guenther, 2008; McCoy,

2008) New Jersey permits citizens to vote on two budget areas: school funding and fire district funding. This fact alone makes the school budget a political issue.

In governing, allocating scarce resources is a political activity. Unable to meet the needs of all the constituents, Board members must decide their priorities and these are often revealed when examining school budgets. The New Jersey State Department of Education produces an annual report providing budget information. Much of the data in this section is from that report. (NJ Department of Education, 2008a) Figure 4.1 displays the Total Cost per Pupil for the six districts over the last three budget years as well as the State Average. With the exception of Pemberton, all districts consistently fell below the state average in spending per pupil. Within the budget, however, are various categories that may provide information about the priorities of the districts. [“comparative cost” doesn’t seem necessary here]

Figure 4.1: Total Cost Per Pupil by District



It is important to note that Pemberton Township falls into a different funding category from the other 5 districts. As a result of a New Jersey Supreme Court ruling in *Abbott v. Burke*, the state is required to provide additional resources to the 30 poorest school districts to insure that students are receiving an “equal” education. Specifically, Abbott districts must have “per-pupil funding equal to spending in successful suburban schools.” (Education Law Center, 2007) These funds are to be spent on supplemental programs for “at-risk” students (economically disadvantaged), facilities, preschool education for three- and four-year olds and reduction of class sizes. (Education Law Center, 2007) As an Abbott district, Pemberton Township receives a much larger percentage of its funding from the state than the other districts in my study. Figure 4.3 outlines the Revenue Sources for each of the districts for the most recent school year (2007-08). (NJ Department of Education, 2008a)

Table 4.5: Revenue Sources

District	State	Local Taxes	Sub-Total State \$	Federal	Tuition	Other
Deptford	36%	57%	93%	2%	1%	4%
Egg Harbor	32%	63%	95%	2%	0%	3%
Monroe	40%	54%	94%	2%	0%	4%
Pemberton	82%	11%	93%	3%	2%	2%
Pennsauken	48%	43%	91%	3%	1%	5%
Winslow	50%	46%	96%	2%	0%	2%

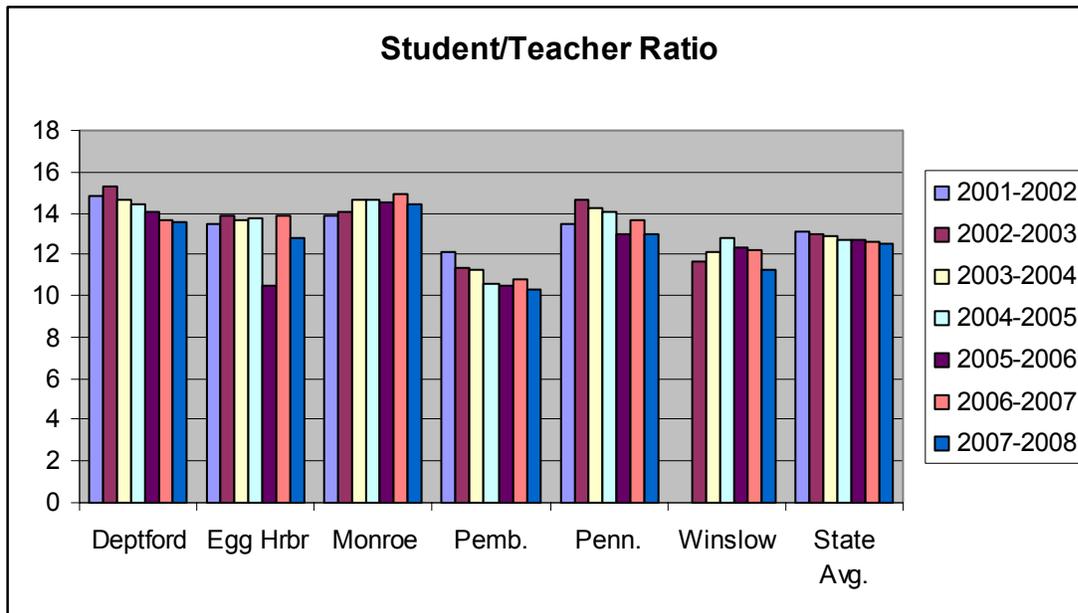
As you can see from the Table 4.5 above, compared to the other five districts, Pemberton receives at least 30% more of its funds from the state, which reduces the amount of property taxes that must be raised at the local level. Egg Harbor receives the least amount of funding from the state and has to raise the most from local property taxes. Combining the state and local resources you can see that all the districts receive more than 90% of their revenue from the NJ taxpayers. The federal funding varies between 2% and 3% for these districts.

By accepting the supposition that a budget is a political document that represents the priorities of the governing body, what can we learn about the school budgets and do they match what the Board members have stated in their survey responses? What the Board chooses to fund and how much they choose to fund are representative of how significant the Board views those items. I chose to include those funding categories that deal most directly with student achievement and Highly Qualified Teachers, the two areas in my research. These areas included: *Classroom Salaries & Benefits* (all salaries and stipends for both regular and Special Education students); *Classroom Supplies & Textbooks* (the cost of classroom supplies and textbooks for regular, Special Education, basic skills, bilingual and vocational instructional programs); *Classroom Purchased Services & Other* (professional development, assembly speakers, standardized subject exams, fees for teacher's membership in professional and other organizations); *Support Services Salaries & Benefits* (salaries for district social workers, attendance, health services, guidance services, child study team members, library staff). These four categories would most directly effect the number of teachers and support personnel to assist students in achieving proficiency on the state assessment tests, as well as the supplies and materials necessary to support that effort. These categories also include any monies set aside for professional development to aid the teachers. Other categories included in the annual budget include Administrative Cost, Operations & Maintenance of Plants, Food Service Costs, and Extracurricular Costs. These costs are directed more at the management of the school district and have less day-to-day effect on the students movement toward achievement. Comparisons of the district budgets are contained in the following charts. (Appendix F provides the specific numbers.) Figure 4.2 is a comparison of the Student to Teacher Ratio. Remember, Board

Members did not indicate a concern for class sizes. The lower the percentage the better.

Pemberton Township indicates the lowest ratio of students to teachers

Figure 4.2: Student to Teacher Ratio by District



while Monroe indicates the highest proportion of students to teachers. The state average in 2006-07 was 12.6 students/teacher and in 2007-08 it is 12.5. Insuring a small class size presumably equates to larger number of teachers which will effect staff salaries. This next chart demonstrates the differences between the districts over a three year period in their Classroom Salaries & Benefits as a percentage of Comparative Cost per Pupil. It is interesting to note that Pemberton has the lowest dollars spent per pupil for Classroom Salaries and Benefits. I think the explanation for this is that Pemberton's overall budget is much larger compared to the other districts due to the influx of *Abbott* money; therefore the percentage is misleading. In this next chart is a comparison of Median Teacher Salaries and Pemberton once again leads the group. I included the Median Teacher Salary as a balance to the Classroom Salaries and Benefits. If the district has a high number of long-term teachers, whose salaries would be higher, their Cost Per

Pupil will be higher. It appears that Pemberton, Pennsauken and Winslow have a high number of long term teachers. Egg Harbor, Monroe and Deptford Media Teacher Salary indicate that their teachers do not have as long a length of service.

Figure 4.3: Classroom Salaries & Benefits

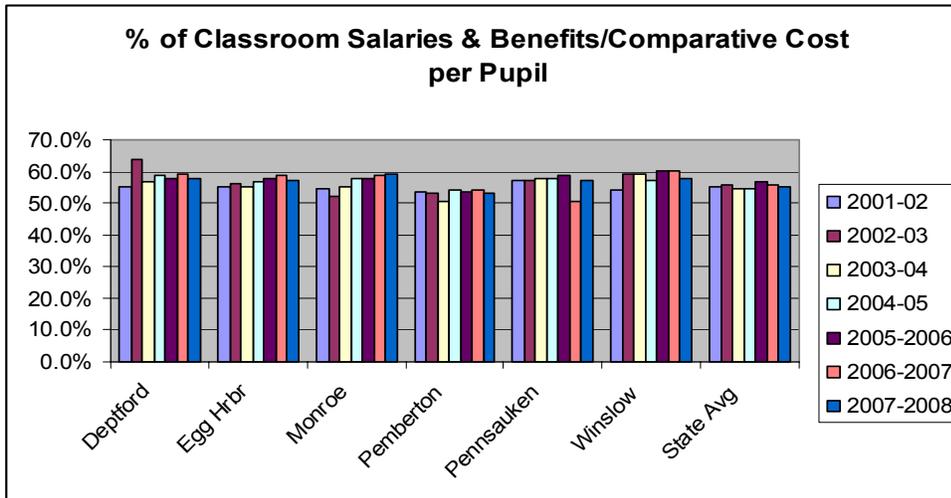


Figure 4.4: Median Teacher Salary

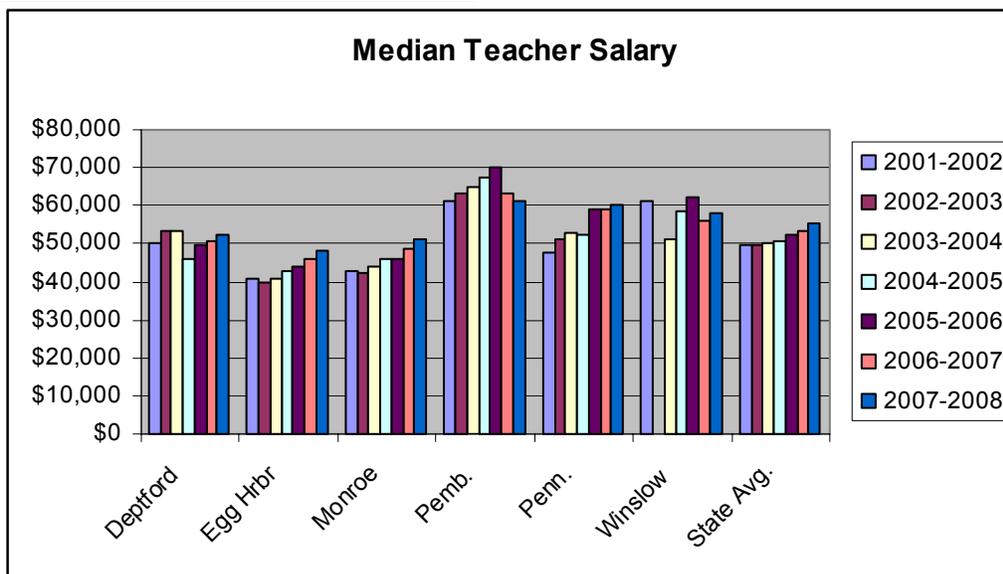
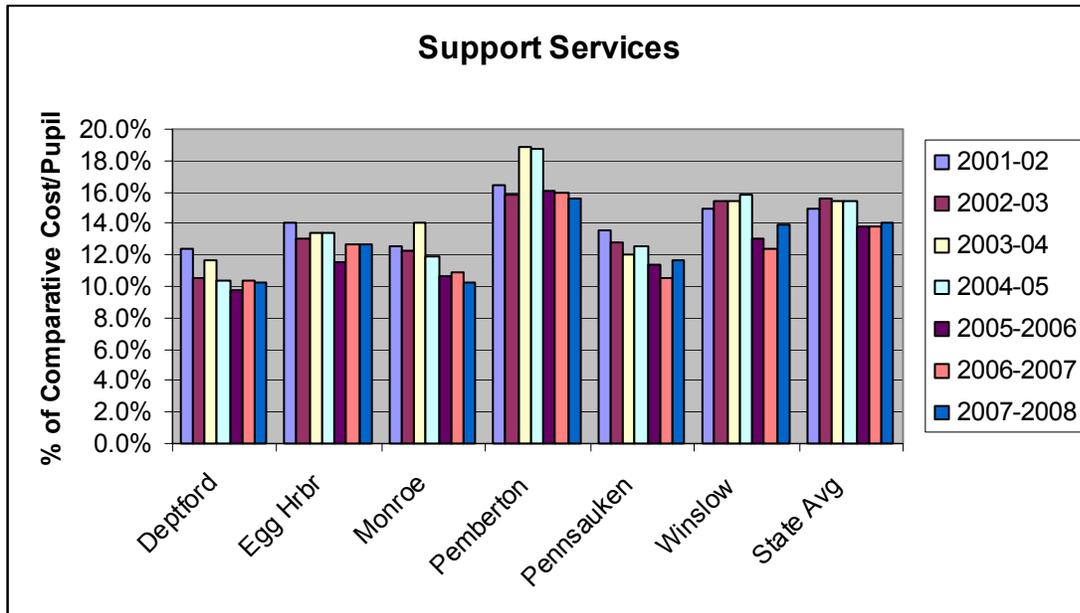


Figure 4.5: Cost of Support Service by District



Another important aspect of aiding students, especially those defined as “at risk” are the Support Services available. Figure 4.5 indicates the cost per pupil of Support Services by district. The Pemberton Township District clearly outspends the other districts. These figures are effected by the Student/Support Services Ratio which is listed in the table below.

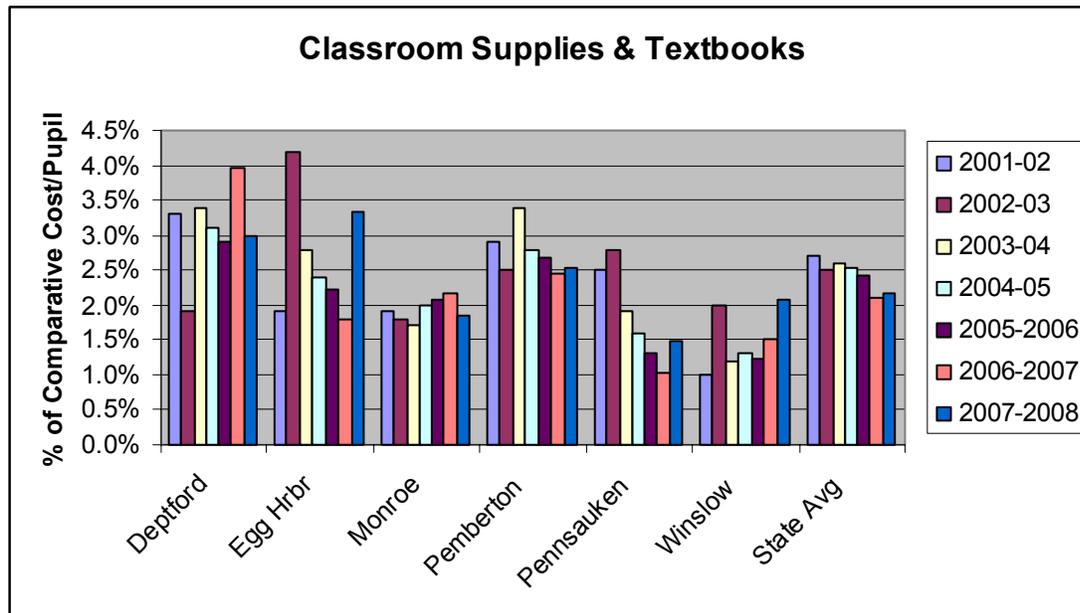
Table 4.6: % of Support Services to Students by District

District	Student/Support Services Ratio	% of Special Education Students	% of Economically Disadvantaged
Deptford Township	207.0	11.7%	33%
Egg Harbor Township	201.9	11.4%	27%
Monroe Township	232.3	15.3%	24%
Pemberton Township	136.0	15.1%	33%
Pennsauken Township	198.7	19.0%	49%
Winslow Township	200.9	13.0%	31%

Pemberton has the lowest ratio of Student/Support Services; Deptford Township has the highest. The highest percentage of classified Special Education students are found in Pennsauken which also has the highest percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students. The lowest percentage

of Special Education students are found in Deptford and the lowest Economically Disadvantaged students are found in Monroe Township.

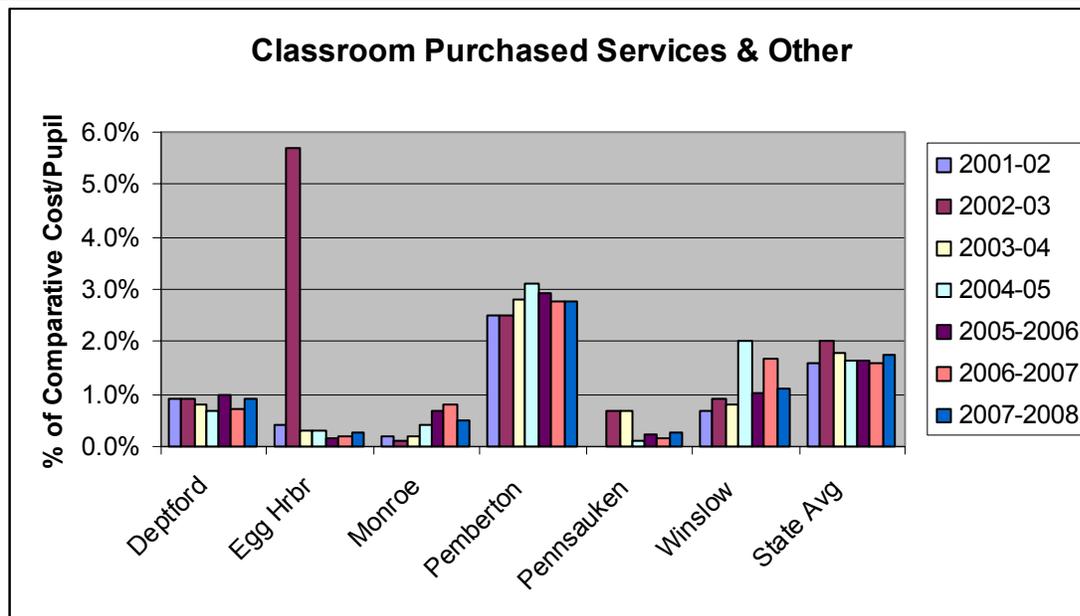
Figure 4.6: Classroom Supplies & Books



Classroom Supplies and Textbooks represent less than 5% of the budget, but the allocation is depicted in Figure 4.6. Egg Harbor appears to have increased their funding in the last school fiscal year which may be attributed to new textbooks as a result of curriculum change or simply an upgrade of existing supplies and equipment. Pennsauken appears to be the lowest spender in the districts, far below the state average. Winslow’s percentage is increasing each year.

The Board Members indicated in their survey that they approved funding for professional development to improve teacher performance. The following chart, Classroom Purchased Services and Other is where the Professional Development funds would be found. The most anyone district spent is less than 3% of the cost per pupil, but the differences between the districts is noteworthy. Pemberton spent 2.5% to 3.1% of its Comparative Cost per Pupil on

Figure 4.7: Classroom Purchased Services & Other/Comparative per Student by District



Classroom Purchased Services and Other, while the other districts spent below 2.0%. During the 2002-03 school year Egg Harbor reported a huge increase in Purchased Services, representing 5.7% of its Cost per Student. Grouped in this category are the costs for “professional-educational, technical and other services such as occupational, speech, and physical therapy, assembly speakers and standardized subject exams.” This category also includes the “rental or lease purchase of equipment for classroom use.”¹⁶ Possible explanations for such a large increase in one year may be the district purchase of computers and/or standardized exams to be used by students to prepare for the state assessment. Based on the information in the budgets submitted to the states it is not possible to identify how much each district spent on professional development activities, but it appears overall to be a relatively minor amount.

Salary is the largest percent of any school budget; the largest percent of salary is teachers salaries. Union contracts prevent the Board of Education from arbitrarily changing salaries, but

¹⁶ <http://www.state.nj.us/education/guide/2003/>

they can make decisions such as changing the student/teacher ratio, and adding/subtracting support teachers. The Board can also add or subtract the number of Support Services personnel (guidance, attendance, health, and Child Study Team) that are available to the student to impact salaries.

CHAPTER FIVE DISCUSSION

The true success of the “No Child Left Behind” Act depends on the day-to-day actions taken in underperforming schools and the effectiveness of the interventions provided for low-achieving students.

Jack Jennings, Director, Center on Education Policy,
Washington, D.C. (Plucker, 2005)

My thesis set out to determine the extent to which a sample of New Jersey public schools met selected NCLB objectives and the influence of the locally elected boards of education. The focus was on eighth grade student achievement as measured by state assessments and the hiring of Highly Qualified Teachers because these are two areas in which school boards have the most impact. The six districts in the study show mixed results in both objectives. All six districts are classified as “In Need of Improvement” due to the failure of one or more subgroups failing to achieve the benchmarks for either the Math or Language Arts assessment. (Appendix G) Only one district can state that all of its teachers in every classroom meet the qualifications for being Highly Qualified; yet no district has fewer than 92% of its teachers meeting the Highly Qualified requirement. It is in these types of districts where community pressure on the School Board is likely to occur as parents and other stakeholders express their concerns over the effectiveness of their schools. The level of community concern might be translated into the amount of competition for school board seats.¹⁷ (Owen & Burris, 2006) Satisfied constituents are not likely to challenge the existing governing body; while dissatisfied constituents will put forth a candidate to make a change. Every district reported that there was competition for seats on the School Board; 60% reported that there was competition for most or all of the available seats in

¹⁷ Note: A unique feature of many School Boards in southern New Jersey is their use as a “stepping stone” to other political offices. While the positions and elections are formally non-partisan, Board members often run as a group, and political affiliation is rarely kept secret.

elections. Evidence of this consequence is that 40% of the respondents indicated that they were in their first or second term.

If the community is demanding action by the Board through the competition for Board seats and if the Board is feeling the pressure to improve student achievement, the question then is what action has been taken? Again, looking at what the Board sees as the “cause” of the problem helps one to understand the action taken to “solve” the problem. In the area of HQT, the majority of the Board members believed that the “cause” was a lack of supply of teachers in the subject area and that salary, benefits, and district reputation had little effect on the ability to attract and retain teachers. School districts have no authority to *declare* a teacher as Highly Qualified; that is the responsibility of the state. The Board of Education can take actions to attract those Highly Qualified Teachers that are available and retain the ones in the district. As a result of the Board members’ beliefs about the cause, they have done little to respond to the issue, with the exception of Winslow Township which brought its salary in line with other districts to insure it could equally attract teachers. Of course, the lack of HQT is not yet critical in any of these districts; all have more than 92% of their teaching staff meeting the Highly Qualified requirements. There are no financial consequences for failing to have a HQT in the classroom, but the district must notify parents explaining that their child’s teacher does not meet the requirements for being Highly Qualified. This could become a public relations headache if too many of the classrooms do not have a HQT. Another concern for Board members should be the anticipated turnover in the next few years as many teachers begin reaching the retirement age as forewarned by the State Department of Education.

Despite not having HQT in a classroom, a school cannot be classified as “In Need of Improvement” unless it fails to meet the state benchmarks. The fact that every subgroup must

meet the benchmark for Proficiency is one of the complaints many educators have about NCLB. As shown in my research in these six districts, it has been difficult for some schools to meet those goals. Overall, White students achieve while Special Education and Economically Disadvantaged students and Minority students fail to achieve. In this regard, these six districts are not unlike hundreds of districts around the country that are experiencing the same results. My thesis questioned the actions taken by the Boards to meet these benchmarks. (Sunderman, Kim, & Orfield, 2005) What I found is that the Boards relied heavily on the Superintendent to develop the curriculum to meet the state standards and believed that their schools had the necessary resources to aid students in need. The causes Board members saw of students failing to achieve were their poor skills in math and reading and being unprepared for the state assessment. Approximately 83% believed that ineffective teachers also could be blamed for this failure to achieve. Students who were unmotivated, however, was not seen as a cause. To address these causes, Board members reported that they established district-wide goals stated in terms of student outcomes, created district assessment programs, and approved funds for teachers to participate in professional development programs. Boards also approved staff development in the areas of effective schools.

The Board members, however, have not fully exercised their leadership role by participating in regular school visits in support of achievement. Only half the Board members responded that they had made school visits and less than half indicated that the Board had established teams of Board members, administrators, teachers and community leaders to focus on improving student achievement. In addition, when Boards of Education members were asked how often open forums are held for parents and the community are held to discuss student achievement, 31% said twice a year, 19% said once a year, 6% said every two years or less, 6%

said never and a surprising 25% said they did not know. This might be explained by the belief by 58% that NCLB had “Mild Effect” to “Not an Effect” on community relations. Two of the respondents indicated by a written comment that parents were a “Major Cause” of students failing to achieve proficiency on state assessments. This response was not on the survey form (although it should have been included). Further research into this area would probably indicate that many other Board members believe there is a strong relationship between student achievement and parental involvement. If that is the case, perhaps Board members should be more involved in getting parents involved in their child’s education and school.

Not as difficult as trying to increase and improve parental involvement is the action that can be taken at the school level. One Board of Education responded to a critical situation by changing curriculum for those students who have failed to meet the Proficiency benchmark. Winslow Township Middle School must undergo Restructuring next year as a result of failing to achieve AYP for more than 5 years. The Board of Education has approved an increase in the amount of time students who failed to meet proficiency standards will spend in Math and Language Arts classes. In the 2008-09 school year those students will take a double class of math and a double class of English. To accommodate this change, their science and social studies classes will be reduced from one year each to one semester each. Students who have met the proficiency benchmark will have a full year of science and social studies and only a single class of math and a single class of English; they also will have the opportunity to take courses like chorus, band, and orchestra that non-proficient students will be unable to do. This action by the Board is aimed at improving the reading and math skills of underperforming students in order to raise test scores so the school can achieve AYP. This action matches the survey results in which Board members state their belief that a lack of skills in math and language arts causes

poor test scores. By increasing the amount of time students have in a subject area, the hope is that test scores will improve.

This leads us to the discussion of budget. Did the Board put its money where its mouth is? A large percentage each school budget is fixed, or at least cannot be deleted without charges of malfeasance. Boards must include operating funds for buildings and grounds, utilities, supplies and so forth just to open the buildings every day. Debt incurred must be paid. Staff salaries and benefits must be paid. Student transportation costs must be paid. The Board does have some leeway, however, when it comes to deciding how many teachers and how many support personnel are necessary. The purchase of textbooks and supplies, while ultimately required, are often times areas Boards have the opportunity to cut back without effecting the entire district. The decisions the Board must make determine their priorities. If small class sizes are important, then money is spent on maintaining or increasing the number of teachers (students cannot be decreased). In Winslow Township's case, the decision was made to increase seat-time for low performing students, thereby eliminating the need for as many elective classes, and reducing the number of Social Studies and Science classes. These decisions may result in the reduction of teaching staff in one area while increasing it in another. That decision has not yet been announced by the district.

Overall, the districts have generally maintained their funding in the different categories. The percentage of Total Comparative Cost Per Pupil in the various categories has not increased or decreased significantly in the budget years presented. Student scores in the state assessments also have not varied significantly during these same years. Even Pemberton Township which has the lowest class size has not seen a change in test scores

Is it possible that the actions of school boards have little impact on student achievement as suggested by Ilg and Tieman? (Ilg & Tieman, 2006) The six districts in this study seem to indicate that the Boards of Education have not changed their actions, at least as indicated in their budgets, for the last few years despite the fact that student scores consistently fail to make the state benchmarks. While the respondents indicated that more time is spent on student achievement issues, their actions have not resulted in an improvement in student scores. Looking at Board Minutes did not shed any light on types of actions being taken that directly focused student achievement. The allocation of funds also does not highlight any specific actions taken to increase student achievement. Perhaps, and this is only conjecture, the discussion about student achievement has increased, the attention on student achievement has increased, but finding the answers that will improve student achievement have not yet been found.

The other variable that I chose was having a Highly Qualified Teacher in every classroom as required by NCLB. Board members did not seem to believe that this was a major problem. This is supported by the fact that all the schools are almost 100% compliant. These schools have difficulty finding a HQT in the same areas that all schools have difficulty: Math, Science and Special Education. This only reinforces the Board members' belief that HQT problems are due to a lack of teachers, not something that the district is not offering. It will be interesting to see how these districts react and what action the Boards will be asked to take as the number of retiring teachers increases over the next few years, as predicted by the NJ Department of Education.

Future Research

What I found most interesting in doing my research was the limited role of the school board. Most revealing was the review of Board Minutes over a one year period. These meetings were filled with approvals of staff work and what I would classify as routine administrative functions (paying bills, approving new hires, retirements, etc.). It appeared, and this is only from Board Minutes, that the Superintendents set the direction of the Board meetings through the Agenda. One area of research might be trying to identify the relationships between Boards of Education and their Superintendents, especially in districts that have a large number of students who are failing to achieve. Do the Boards acquiesce to the professional Superintendent when faced with federal and state dictates? If this is the case, the selection of the Superintendent would appear to be an crucial decision. Future research might include a study on the process of selecting a Superintendent and how the selection impacts student achievement.

The six districts I selected had several important areas in common. They were all lower income, all contained a significant minority population, all were large districts, and all were in various states of being “In Need of Improvement” according to NCLB guidelines. Additional research might include comparing these “unsuccessful” districts with districts that are “successful,” i.e., districts in which schools have consistently met AYP and students are achieving. Are there differences between the actions of the school boards of the different districts?

As a teacher, I was astounded at the large percentage (83%) of the Board members in the study who believed that the lack of student achievement was attributed to ineffective teachers. I would like to see a study done that identifies what Board members consider to be effective teaching methods and the characteristics of an effective teacher. Rather than relying on a survey,

more information might be obtained from focus groups and structured interviews with Board Members. With that information, it might be interesting to then compare their beliefs with what occurs in a classroom and what resources the Boards make available to the teachers. What is being done to make ineffective teachers more effective? Are there mentoring programs to help new teachers? What types of professional development programs are presented and do those programs succeed in making teachers more effective? What kinds of feedback is given to teachers so that they may improve their teaching? Are the colleges training new teachers properly and are Boards of Education communicating with these institutions? These are all questions that should be answered if the focus is on ineffective teachers. .

Conclusion

New Jersey has nearly 600 school districts and elected Boards of Education. The desire for “home rule” gave rise to this large number of independent school districts. The people are loathe to give up “their” district to combine with neighboring communities, despite the known advantages of pooled resources and economies of size. The desire for community schools and educating “our” children overrides, it seems, the concerns for funding (until April 15th, Election Day). This attitude would lead one to believe that the communities are very involved in their schools and in the operation of their districts. And in my study, Board members responded that there is competition for most of the Board seats which would also reinforce the belief that Board involvement was high. However, the impact of the Board on student achievement seems negligible. The most important thing that a school is supposed to do, educate students, is not happening in these districts. The test score numbers show that over the course of four years under NCLB, Board actions do not seem to have made a change in student achievement scores.

While the various Boards indicated that various professional development activities have been approved and implemented for teachers, fewer than half the Board members have participated in activities at the schools. This lack of leadership by the Board was one of the surprises of my study. Less than half the Boards reported that teams of Board members, parents, and teachers have been created to address the concerns of student achievement. Less than half have participated in school visits to bring the attention to student achievement. As the elected leaders of the education community, they have a responsibility to maintain the focus on student achievement, not only at Board meetings but in the schools and with the students and teachers. Board members are prohibited by law from managing the day-to-day operations of the district and the schools, but they represent the community and as such have an obligation to set the tone for achievement through their personal involvement at the school level.

“No Child Left Behind” will probably not be reauthorized by Congress with the same requirements concerning testing and 100% proficiency. Too many professionals have shown that goal to be unfeasible. But, the concepts behind NCLB, that all children can learn and all children must be given the resources necessary to achieve will not go away. This legislation has spotlighted the achievement gap that existed for many years for Special Education and minority students. Schools and communities know that status quo cannot continue. NCLB has also allowed the federal government to insinuate itself into the classrooms across the nation unlike any previous legislation. Once in, it will be hard to get it out. It appears that some form of accountability will continue to measure student progress. There has been a growing call for national standards and implementation of a national annual test for all students. (Matthews, 2006)

As federal involvement increases, and state involvement increases, what happens to the local Boards of Education? It appears that their responsibilities diminish as federal dictates increase. There are fewer and fewer areas of sole authority for local Boards. Acceptance of federal funds comes with procedural and policy requirements which become the responsibility of the district Superintendent to enact with little or no discretionary action by the Board. In my study of six southern New Jersey districts there appeared a heavy reliance on the Superintendent to set the direction and action of the elected School Board. Outside of a complete reversal of policies and programs such as NCLB, it appears as if local Boards of Education may find themselves acting merely as community advisory boards, and less and less as governing bodies.

APPENDIX A

NJ HOUSE Standard: Content Knowledge Matrix

In order to earn Certification under the HOUSE Standards, teachers must have a minimum of 10 points earned through the following:

- Category Content Area College Coursework – Courses must be at least 2 credits
(4 Points required in this category; may accrue all 10 points)**
- Successful completion of a credit course in content for the subject area from an accredited community college, college or university
 - Courses may be taken in person or online
 - Courses may be taken in or outside New Jersey
 - Education courses are **not eligible** to be counted **unless** they are specifically connected to academic content
 - Teaching a credit course in content for the subject area listed above at an accredited community college, college or university
 - Courses may be given in person or online
 - Courses may be given in or outside New Jersey
 - Education courses are **not eligible** to be counted **unless** they are specifically connected to academic content
 - Multiple sections of the same course count once

- Category Content Area Professional Activities
(6 Point overall limit in this category; 1 point per documented activity in any area in this category per year; Activities must have been completed within the last 4 years)**
- Service on a committee to develop, select, validate and evaluate local, state, and/or national
 - Content Standards
 - Content Curriculum
 - Content Assessments
 - Completion of the relevant Content Area National Board Certification Assessment Process
 - Participation in high quality, sustained, intensive professional development that is classroom-focused, research-based, aligned with the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards and state assessments, and designed to advance teachers' understanding and use of content-specific instructional and assessment strategies to create a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction.
 - Making a content-specific presentation in a subject area at a state, regional, national or international professional organization meeting or conference or for a school or district level in-service program (multiple presentations of the same material count once).
 - Publishing an article addressing content knowledge and/or content-specific pedagogy in state, regional, national or international professional journal.

- Category Content Area Teaching Activities
(1 point per year; Within the last 4 years)**
- Collaborative, interdisciplinary work on a sustained unit of study with a content area specialist (both teachers must be working simultaneously with the same group of students).

- Category NBPTS Elementary Certification
(4 points)**
- Elementary teachers who have earned National Board Certification as an Elementary Generalist from the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)

- Category Successful Content Area Teaching Performance
(8-15 years = 2 points; 16+ years = 3 points)**
- Successful teaching experience in the content area specified on this form. Experience may be in New Jersey or out-of-state schools.

APPENDIX B

ONLY Proficient/Advance Proficient Student Scores – All Six Districts for the NCLB Period

DEPTFORD TOWNSHIP

<i>Language Arts Scores</i>					<i>Math Scores</i>					
Benchmark	58	66	66	66		Benchmark	39	49	49	49
Year	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06		Year	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06
Gen Ed	81.1	85.7	75.2	80.2		Gen Ed	45.9	54.3	55.7	58.0
SpEd	19.3	20.5	24.2	17.1		SpEd	7.3	11.1	11.1	11.7
White	69.5	79.4	78.0	70.7		White	37.7	52.1	52.4	52.4
Black	51.4	60.6	63.6	50.7		Black	21.6	28.7	35.8	31.4
Hispanic	61.5	**	**	58.3		Hispanic	23.1	**	**	25.0
ED	51.8	52.9	61.3	54.4		ED	29.8	21.1	28.4	34.8

EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP

<i>Language Arts Scores</i>					<i>Math Scores</i>					
Benchmark	58	66	66	66		Benchmark	39	49	49	49
Year	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06		Year	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06
Gen Ed	84.8	81.0	76.8	83.8		Gen Ed	58.6	68.5	69.6	73.7
SpEd	24.1	20.0	8.7	25.0		SpEd	4.5	4.8	10.4	21.2
White	78.7	75.4	71.9	82.5		White	56.5	65.8	67.8	73.7
Black	64.4	63.3	36.4	61.6		Black	21.4	35.1	32.7	44.3
Hispanic	54.2	50.9	43.9	57.9		Hispanic	33.9	32.7	29.9	52.7
ED	46.9	54.0	41.2	56.3		ED	23.1	34.6	36.3	48.2

MONROE TOWNSHIP

<i>Language Arts Scores</i>					<i>Math Scores</i>					
Benchmark	58	66	66	66		Benchmark	39	49	49	49
Year	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06		Year	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06
Gen Ed	59.7	90.2	78.2	89.5		Gen Ed	87.2	66.9	62.0	65.6
SpEd	14.3	30.5	37.9	35.6		SpEd	42.4	10.8	31.0	17.9
White	56.9	81.6	82.2	80.5		White	82.7	59.7	68.8	60.5
Black	29.5	64.9	65.1	68.8		Black	62.2	38.7	36.1	34.8
Hispanic	35.7	56.3	61.5	64.3		Hispanic	64.3	56.3	61.5	35.7
ED	18.9	59.8		60.0		ED	56.0	42.0		37.5

PEMBERTON TOWNSHIP

<i>Language Arts Scores</i>					<i>Math Scores</i>					
Benchmark	58	66	66	66		Benchmark	39	49	49	49
Year	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06		Year	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06
Gen Ed	84.9	77.8	63.3	76.9		Gen Ed	47.1	58.0	42.9	51.3
SpEd	21.7	18.5	23	8.2		SpEd	9.8	5.6	17.9	4.9
White	67.8	67.8	68.4	61.4		White	41.7	50.4	50.8	43.3
Black	63.2	50.0	54.8	58.8		Black	24.1	29.1	28.4	31.2
Hispanic	67.4	63.4	63.4	59.0		Hispanic	29.5	40.4	42.9	25.6
ED	55.4	53.3	53.4	51.1		ED	22.7	34.0	29.1	23.1

PENNSAUKEN

<i>Language Arts Scores</i>					<i>Math Scores</i>					
Benchmark	58	66	66	66		Benchmark	39	49	49	49
<i>Year</i>	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06		<i>Year</i>	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06
Gen Ed	75.4	66.7	64.1	74.4		Gen Ed	38.4	53.4	57.3	67.7
SpEd	8.9	12.4	10.9	7.2		SpEd	5.0	7.4	9.9	7.8
White	76.4	61.5	65.8	75.0		White	50.3	55.4	63.5	73.8
Black	51.6	55.7	52.3	51.5		Black	16.3	36.5	46.5	44.8
Hispanic	43.9	45.9	50.0	56.1		Hispanic	16.9	35	43.5	47
ED	51.0	44.5	46.5	52.2		ED	24.7	35.3	40.8	48.6

WINSLOW TOWNSHIP

<i>Language Arts Scores</i>					<i>Math Scores</i>					
Benchmark	58	66	66	66		Benchmark	39	49	49	49
<i>Year</i>	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06		<i>Year</i>	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06
Gen Ed	73.0	74.7	45.4	72.6		Gen Ed	36.2	48.7	70.1	50.0
SpEd	14.3	7.7	8.3	18.8		SpEd	3.6	6.4	9.5	9.4
White	48.4	76.5	62.6	70.7		White	47.9	62.2	54.8	60.5
Black	46.9	51.4	48.6	56.4		Black	15.4	22.1	29.4	28.9
Hispanic	52.4	35.7	70.4	73.3		Hispanic	18.2	14.2	40.7	56.6
ED	42.5	47.1	26.9	50.8		ED	18.2	25.7	48.3	27.4

APPENDIX C

New Jersey State Benchmarks for Adequate Yearly Progress

Content Area	Test (Grade Level)	Starting Point – 2003	2004-05	2007-08	2010-2011	2013-14
Language Arts Literacy	NJ ASK (3-5)	68	75	82	91	100
	<i>NJ ASK (6-8)</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>76</i>	<i>87</i>	<i>100</i>
	HSPA (11)	73	79	85	92	100
Math	NJ ASK (3-5)	53	62	73	85	100
	<i>NJ ASK (6-8)</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>62</i>	<i>79</i>	<i>100</i>
	HSPA (11)	55	64	74	86	100

From the NJ Department of Education

APPENDIX D

No Child Left Behind Disaggregated Groups

White

African American

American Indian/Alaskan Native

Hispanic

Asian

Economically Disadvantaged

Migrant

General Education

Special Education

Limited English Proficiency

Egg Harbor
Township
01-1310-037

Year	Language Arts			Math			
	General Education			General Education			
	<i>Partial</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Advanced</i>	<i>Partial</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Advanced</i>	
98-99	19.9	78.2	1.9	45	41.8	13.2	
99-00	16	80.6	3.4	41.5	49.2	9.2	
00-01	19.9	76.4	3.7	34	46.3	19.6	
01-02	17.2	77.8	5	39.4	50	10.6	
02-03	15.3	81.8	3	41.4	50.5	8.1	NCLB
03-04	19	78.7	2.3	31.5	52.3	16.2	
04-05	23.2	72.6	4.2	30.5	51.4	18.2	
05-06	16.2	77.6	6.2	26.3	52.8	20.9	

Deptford Township
15-1100

Year	Language Arts			Math			
	General Education			General Education			
	<i>Partial</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Advanced</i>	<i>Partial</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Advanced</i>	
98-99	18	79.3	2.7	36.6	52.5	10.9	
99-00	14.2	82.5	3.3	39.3	49.8	10.9	
00-01	19.8	76	4.2	38.8	47.5	13.7	
01-02	14.3	77.1	8.6	46.5	45.1	8.5	
02-03	18.9	80.4	0.7	56.1	37.6	6.3	NCLB
03-04	14.2	81.6	4.1	45.7	43.8	10.5	
04-05	33.1	60.9	6.1	44.3	48.4	7.3	
05-06	19.9	72.5	7.7	42	49.3	8.7	

Monroe Township - Williamstown MS

Year	Language Arts			Math			
	General Education			General Education			
	<i>Partial</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Advanced</i>	<i>Partial</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Advanced</i>	
98-99	15.6	79.2	5.2	31.8	52	16.2	
99-00	9.7	86.6	3.6	38.8	52.2	9	
00-01	9.9	81.2	8.9	41.4	48.3	10.3	
01-02	17.9	75.4	6.7	36.3	50.2	13.6	
02-03	40.3	50.7	9	12.8	64.6	22.6	NCLB
03-04	9.8	84.9	5.3	33.1	57.4	9.5	
04-05	21.8	72.6	7.3	44.6	49.4	6.0	
05-06	10.5	82.4	7.1	34.4	58.2	7.4	

Pemberton Township - Helen A. Fort MS

Year	Language Arts			Math			
	General Education			General Education			
	Partial	Proficient	Advanced	Partial	Proficient	Advanced	
98-99	22.8	71.9	5.3	52.4	38.4	9.1	
99-00	21.6	76	2.4	50.9	40.4	8.7	
00-01	25.3	81	2.6	56.6	35.9	7.6	
01-02	20.5	74.8	4.7	50.8	42.8	6.4	
02-03	15	79.4	5.5	52.9	40.7	6.4	NCLB
03-04	22.2	72.8	5	42	50	8	
04-05							
05-06	23.1	72.6	4.3	48.7	45.7	5.6	

Pennsauken Township - Phifer MS
07-4060

Year	Language Arts			Math			
	General Education			General Education			
	Partial	Proficient	Advanced	Partial	Proficient	Advanced	
98-99	21.7	76	2.2	53.3	40.2	6.4	
99-00	25.5	69.9	4.6	52.5	42.1	5.3	
00-01	34.9	62.7	2.5	62.1	33.5	4.4	
01-02	32.8	65.1	2.2	64.5	31.2	4.3	
02-03	24.6	72.4	3	61.6	31.9	6.5	NCLB
03-04	33.3	63.5	3.2	46.5	47.5	5.9	
04-05	35.9	59.5	4.6	42.7	47.7	9.6	
05-06	25.5	71.2	3.2	32.3	52.8	14.9	

Winslow Township - Winslow MS
07-5820

Year	Language Arts			Math			
	General Education			General Education			
	Partial	Proficient	Advanced	Partial	Proficient	Advanced	
98-99	20.4	75.4	4.2	52.9	38.4	6.7	
99-00	18.7	76.4	4.9	56.2	38.1	5.6	
00-01	22.5	75.7	1.8	45.7	44.8	9.5	
01-02	37	59	4	63.1	32.9	3.9	
02-03	26.9	72.5	0.5	63.9	33.2	3	NCLB
03-04	25.3	73.1	1.6	51.3	39.1	9.6	
04-05	45.7	53.2	1.1	62.7	32.4	4.9	
05-06	36.9	60.9	2.3	57.8	35.8	6.4	

Egg Harbor Township

Year	Language Arts			Math			
	Special Education			Special Education			
	<i>Partial</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Advanced</i>	<i>Partial</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Advanced</i>	
98-99	81.6	18.4	0	93.8	6.3	0	
99-00	86.9	13.1	0	98.4	1.6	0	
00-01	91.2	8.8	0	91.2	8.8	0	
01-02	85.2	14.8	0	92.9	7.1	0	
02-03	75.9	24.1	0	95.5	4.5	0	NCLB
03-04	80	20	0	95.2	4.8	0	
04-05	91.3	8.7	0	89.6	10.4	0	
05-06	75	25	0	78.8	19.7	1.5	

Deptford Township

Year	Language Arts			Math			
	Special Education			Special Education			
	<i>Partial</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Advanced</i>	<i>Partial</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Advanced</i>	
98-99	87.2	12.8	0	92.7	4.9	2.4	
99-00	77.1	22.9	0	94	6	0	
00-01	85.5	12.7	1.8	89.1	10.9	0	
01-02	83.6	16.4	0	95	5	0	
02-03	80.7	19.3	0	92.7	7.3	0	NCLB
03-04	79.5	20.5	0	88.9	11.1	0	
04-05	75.8	24.2	0	88.9	11.1	0	
05-06	82.9	17.1	0	88.3	11.7	0	

Monroe Township - Williamstown MS

Year	Language Arts			Math			
	Special Education			Special Education			
	<i>Partial</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Advanced</i>	<i>Partial</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Advanced</i>	
98-99	76.7	23.3	0	77.3	18.2	4.5	
99-00	58.1	41.9	0	62.8	37.2	0	
00-01	53.8	46.2	0	84.6	15.4	0	
01-02	63.2	36.8	0	77.2	21.1	1.8	
02-03	85.7	14.3	0	57.6	40	2.4	NCLB
03-04	69.5	30.5	0	89.2	10.8	0	
04-05	62.1	37.9	0	69	31	0	
05-06	64.4	35.6	0	82.1	17	0.9	

Pemberton Township - Helen A. Fort MS

Year	Language Arts			Math			
	Special Education			Special Education			
	<i>Partial</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Advanced</i>	<i>Partial</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Advanced</i>	
98-99	77.6	21.4	1	93.9	4.1	2	
99-00	81.7	18.3	0	95.8	4.2	0	
00-01	86.3	13.7	0	97	3	0	
01-02	91.3	8.7	0	94.7	5.3	0	
02-03	78.3	20.9	0.8	90.2	9.8	0	NCLB
03-04	81.5	18.5	0	94.4	5.6	0	
04-05	77	23	0	82.1	17.9	0	
05-06	91.8	8.2	0	95.1	3.9	1	

Pennsauken Township - Phifer MS
07-4060

Year	Language Arts			Math			
	Special Education			Special Education			
	<i>Partial</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Advanced</i>	<i>Partial</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Advanced</i>	
98-99	92.4	7.6	0	94	6	0	
99-00	89.7	10.3	0	94	6	0	
00-01	8.5	11.5	0	96.5	3.5	0	
01-02	96.9	3.1	0	98	2	0	
02-03	91.1	8.9	0	95	5	0	NCLB
03-04	87.6	12.4	0	92.6	6.5	0.9	
04-05	89.1	10.9	0	90.1	9	0.9	
05-06	92.8	7.2	0	92.2	6.9	0.9	

Winslow Township - Winslow MS
07-5820

Year	Language Arts			Math			
	Special Education			Special Education			
	<i>Partial</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Advanced</i>	<i>Partial</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Advanced</i>	
98-99	*	*	*	*	*	*	
99-00	89.5	10.5	0	95.4	4.6	0	
00-01	88.2	11.8	0	96.7	2.2	1.1	
01-02	87.2	12.8	0	96.4	3.6	0	
02-03	85.7	14.3	0	96.4	3.6	0	NCLB
03-04	92.3	7.7	0	*	*	*	
04-05	91.7	7.3	1	77.3	20.6	2.1	
05-06	81.2	17.6	1.2	90.6	6.4	0	

no scores reported

APPENDIX F

Budget from NJ DOE Comparative Spending Guide - Per Pupil Expenditures

	1100	1310	3280	4050	4060	5820	State Avg.
District	Deptford	Egg Hrbr	Monroe	Pemb.	Penn.	Winslow	
Classroom Salaries & Benefits							
2001-2002	\$4,319	\$4,450	\$3,854	\$6,093	\$4,908	\$5,225	\$5,316
2002-2003	\$4,427	\$4,292	\$4,188	\$6,222	\$5,101	\$4,843	\$5,601
2003-2004	\$4,718	\$4,767	\$4,285	\$7,133	\$5,322	\$5,682	\$5,870
2004-2005	\$5,374	\$5,144	\$4,800	\$8,131	\$5,662	\$5,741	\$6,159
2005-2006	\$5,397	\$5,088	\$4,953	\$8,424	\$5,860	\$6,260	\$6,519
2006-2007	\$5,622	\$5,436	\$5,076	\$8,730	\$5,977	\$6,248	\$6,779
2007-2008	\$6,172	\$6,239	\$5,335	\$9,433	\$6,529	\$6,577	\$7,045
Classroom Supplies & Textbooks							
2001-2002	\$257	\$145	\$141	\$316	\$212	\$89	\$264
2002-2003	\$149	\$152	\$139	\$312	\$236	\$187	\$252
2003-2004	\$289	\$176	\$129	\$469	\$151	\$158	\$271
2004-2005	\$284	\$222	\$169	\$416	\$161	\$135	\$285
2005-2006	\$273	\$196	\$178	\$423	\$130	\$128	\$279
2006-2007	\$376	\$166	\$188	\$394	\$121	\$157	\$260
2007-2008	\$319	\$362	\$167	\$451	\$168	\$237	\$277
Classroom Purchased Services & Other							
2001-2002	\$69	\$27	\$15	\$268	\$1	\$59	\$163
2002-2003	\$71	\$443	\$10	\$313	\$64	\$82	\$225
2003-2004	\$61	\$25	\$8	\$360	\$28	\$72	\$182
2004-2005	\$64	\$26	\$35	\$465	\$14	\$199	\$186
2005-2006	\$93	\$12	\$60	\$460	\$24	\$211	\$190
2006-2007	\$70	\$17	\$69	\$452	\$19	\$172	\$196
2007-2008	\$96	\$28	\$45	\$492	\$30	\$126	\$222
Total Comparative Cost Per Pupil							
2001-2002	\$7,855	\$7,566	\$7,400	\$10,854	\$8,413	\$8,634	\$9,679
2002-2003	\$7,707	\$7,767	\$7,588	\$12,434	\$8,548	\$9,583	\$10,198
2003-2004	\$8,824	\$8,906	\$7,995	\$14,467	\$9,242	\$9,493	\$10,725
2004-2005	\$9,223	\$8,902	\$8,067	\$14,578	\$9,330	\$9,942	\$10,952
2005-2006	\$9,377	\$8,831	\$8,550	\$15,758	\$9,941	\$10,408	\$11,519
2006-2007	\$9,461	\$9,228	\$8,649	\$16,175	\$11,776	\$10,358	\$12,150
2007-2008	\$10,693	\$10,889	\$8,965	\$17,734	\$11,414	\$11,394	\$12,806

District	1100 Deptford	1310 Egg Hrbr	3280 Monroe	4050 Pemb.	4060 Penn.	5820 Winslow	State Avg.
Support Services Salaries & Benefits							
2001-2002	\$856	\$930	\$754	\$1,408	\$1,007	\$1,078	\$1,223
2002-2003	\$705	\$900	\$765	\$1,646	\$977	\$1,301	\$1,308
2003-2004	\$851	\$1,038	\$880	\$2,036	\$981	\$1,287	\$1,391
2004-2005	\$895	\$1,037	\$814	\$2,247	\$1,049	\$1,366	\$1,482
2005-2006	\$913	\$1,019	\$912	\$2,530	\$1,137	\$1,360	\$1,589
2006-2007	\$985	\$1,171	\$938	\$2,578	\$1,232	\$1,285	\$1,679
2007-2008	\$1,096	\$1,374	\$918	\$2,761	\$1,328	\$1,589	\$1,804
Student/Teacher Ratio							
2001-2002	14.8	13.5	13.9	12.1	13.5	---	13.1
2002-2003	15.3	13.9	14.1	11.4	14.6	11.6	13
2003-2004	14.6	13.7	14.6	11.3	14.2	12.1	12.9
2004-2005	14.4	13.8	14.6	10.6	14.1	12.8	12.7
2005-2006	14.1	10.5	14.5	10.5	13	12.3	12.7
2006-2007	13.7	13.9	14.9	10.8	13.7	12.2	12.6
2007-2008	13.6	12.8	14.4	10.3	13	11.3	12.5
Median Teacher Salary							
2001-2002	\$49,945	\$40,700	\$42,700	\$61,077	\$47,650	\$61,236	\$49,500
2002-2003	\$53,450	\$39,500	\$42,600	\$63,160	\$51,050	----	\$49,490
2003-2004	\$53,320	\$40,850	\$43,900	\$64,677	\$52,800	\$51,166	\$49,956
2004-2005	\$45,800	\$43,000	\$46,100	\$67,477	\$52,250	\$58,636	\$50,776
2005-2006	\$49,800	\$44,146	\$46,137	\$69,877	\$58,875	\$62,378	\$52,061
2006-2007	\$50,650	\$46,260	\$48,774	\$63,159	\$59,175	\$55,804	\$53,546
2007-2008	\$52,100	\$48,180	\$51,213	\$61,034	\$60,325	\$58,036	\$55,500
Median Support Service Salary							
2001-2002	\$46,855	\$45,106	\$52,000	\$63,708	\$69,425	\$63,636	\$61,254
2002-2003	\$45,060	\$44,510	\$63,000	\$66,217	\$72,950	----	\$62,300
2003-2004	\$46,920	\$47,896	\$65,450	\$68,427	\$74,450	\$66,484	\$64,593
2004-2005	\$51,950	\$50,428	\$67,525	\$71,377	\$74,450	\$68,465	\$66,281
2005-2006	\$58,500	\$47,750	\$70,000	\$73,777	\$77,625	\$70,110	\$68,023
2006-2007	\$61,900	\$51,363	\$72,205	\$75,607	\$79,200	\$70,510	\$69,137
2007-2008	\$66,100	\$52,280	\$74,355	\$73,907	\$78,475	\$75,100	\$71,124
Median Administrator Salary							
2001-2002	\$89,475	\$79,432	\$83,276	\$89,932	\$95,200	\$86,580	\$93,375
2002-2003	\$87,915	\$85,442	\$88,375	\$98,126	\$96,285	----	\$96,337
2003-2004	\$91,355	\$82,500	\$92,175	\$102,354	\$100,760	\$91,000	\$99,441
2004-2005	\$95,355	\$83,262	\$96,323	\$107,085	\$104,594	\$92,345	\$102,630
2005-2006	\$94,220	\$84,126	\$101,139	\$105,126	\$104,345	\$91,969	\$105,893
2006-2007	\$97,438	\$87,772	\$105,437	\$112,400	\$107,679	\$94,882	\$108,431
2007-2008	\$101,759	\$91,124	\$109,918	\$110,000	\$104,656	\$95,918	\$111,190

APPENDIX G Survey Questions with Answers

	<i>Answers - % of Total</i>
1. How long have you served on the Board of Education?	
(1) less than 2 years	(1) 20%
(2) 2-5 years	(2) 20%
(3) 6-10 years	(3) 7%
(4) more than 10 years	(4) 53%
2. Were you...	
(1) elected	(1) 100%
(2) appointed	(2) 0%
3. Do you plan to seek another term?	
(1) yes	(1) 47%
(2) no	(2) 27%
(3) undecided	(3) 20%
(4) no answer	(4) 7%
4. Do you have children enrolled in the district?	
(1) yes	(1) 20%
(2) no	(2) 80%
5. Which constituent groups are “active” in board elections?	
(1) teacher union	(1) 41%
(2) parent groups	(2) 34%
(3) business community	(3) 6%
(4) ethnic or racial groups	(4) 9%
(5) religious organizations	(5) 6%
(6) school reform coalitions	(6) 3%
6. What is your profession/occupation?	
(1) business/professional	(1) 47%
(2) education	(2) 13%
(3) nonprofit/government	(3) 7%
(4) farming	(4) 7%
(5) homemaker	(5) 7%
(6) retired	(6) 13%
(7) other (please specify)	(7) 7%

7. Most Board elections in this district involve:	
(1) little or no competition	(1) 0%
(2) competition for a few of the seats	(2) 40%
(3) competition for most seats	(3) 40%
(4) competition for almost every seat	(4) 20%

8. Have you ever been asked to speak to a community group regarding the school district?

- (1) yes
- (2) no

Answers:

- (1) 93%
- (2) 7%

Amount of Concern:

9. Budgeting/Funding

- (1) Major Concern
- (2) Moderate Concern
- (3) Mild Concern
- (4) Not a Concern
- (5) Do Not Know

- (1) 80%
- (2) 20%
- (3) 0%
- (4) 0%
- (5) 0%

10. Student Achievement

- (1) Major Concern
- (2) Moderate Concern
- (3) Mild Concern
- (4) Not a Concern
- (5) Do Not Know

- (1) 93%
- (2) 0%
- (3) 7%
- (4) 0%
- (5) 0%

11. Special Education

- (1) Major Concern
- (2) Moderate Concern
- (3) Mild Concern
- (4) Not a Concern
- (5) Do Not Know

- (1) 20%
- (2) 60%
- (3) 20%
- (4) 0%
- (5) 0%

12. Improving Educational Technology

- (1) Major Concern
- (2) Moderate Concern
- (3) Mild Concern
- (4) Not a Concern
- (5) Do Not Know

- (1) 20%
- (2) 67%
- (3) 13%
- (4) 0%
- (5) 0%

13. Teacher Quality

- (1) Major Concern
- (2) Moderate Concern
- (3) Mild Concern
- (4) Not a Concern
- (5) Do Not Know
- (6) No Answer

- (1) 60%
- (2) 20%
- (3) 13%
- (4) 0%
- (5) 0%
- (6) 7%

14. Parental Support/Interest

- (1) Major Concern
- (2) Moderate Concern
- (3) Mild Concern
- (4) Not a Concern
- (5) Do Not Know

- (1) 53%
- (2) 33%
- (3) 13%
- (4) 0%
- (5) 0%

15. Regulation	Answers:
(1) Major Concern	(1) 33%
(2) Moderate Concern	(2) 60%
(3) Mild Concern	(3) 7%
(4) Not a Concern	(4) 0%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%
16. Drug/Alcohol Use	
(1) Major Concern	(1) 33%
(2) Moderate Concern	(2) 33%
(3) Mild Concern	(3) 33%
(4) Not a Concern	(4) 0%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%
17. Discipline	
(1) Major Concern	(1) 27%
(2) Moderate Concern	(2) 53%
(3) Mild Concern	(3) 20%
(4) Not a Concern	(4) 0%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%
18. Teacher shortages	
(1) Major Concern	(1) 13%
(2) Moderate Concern	(2) 33%
(3) Mild Concern	(3) 33%
(4) Not a Concern	(4) 20%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%
19. Overcrowded Schools	
(1) Major Concern	(1) 47%
(2) Moderate Concern	(2) 13%
(3) Mild Concern	(3) 13%
(4) Not a Concern	(4) 27%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%
20. School Violence	
(1) Major Concern	(1) 27%
(2) Moderate Concern	(2) 33%
(3) Mild Concern	(3) 44%
(4) Not a Concern	(4) 0%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%

To what extent are the following items a cause of students failing to achieve proficiency on state 8th grade assessment?

Answers

21. Inadequate preparation for the assessment		
(1) Major Cause	(1)	17%
(2) Moderate Cause	(2)	42%
(3) Mild Cause	(3)	42%
(4) Not a Cause	(4)	0%
(5) Do Not Know	(5)	0%
22. High absenteeism		
(1) Major Cause	(1)	0%
(2) Moderate Cause	(2)	8%
(3) Mild Cause	(3)	67%
(4) Not a Cause	(4)	25%
(5) Do Not Know	(5)	0%
23. Poor reading skills		
(1) Major Cause	(1)	25%
(2) Moderate Cause	(2)	42%
(3) Mild Cause	(3)	25%
(4) Not a Cause	(4)	0%
(5) Do Not Know	(5)	0%
(6) No Answer	(6)	8%
24. Poor Math skills		
(1) Major Cause	(1)	17%
(2) Moderate Cause	(2)	58%
(3) Mild Cause	(3)	25%
(4) Not a Cause	(4)	0%
(5) Do Not Know	(5)	0%
25. Lack of school resources to aid students in need		
(1) Major Cause	(1)	0%
(2) Moderate Cause	(2)	25%
(3) Mild Cause	(3)	42%
(4) Not a Cause	(4)	33%
(5) Do Not Know	(5)	0%
26. Lack of student motivation		
(1) Major Cause	(1)	0%
(2) Moderate Cause	(2)	33%
(3) Mild Cause	(3)	67%
(4) Not a Cause	(4)	0%
(5) Do Not Know	(5)	0%

27. Ineffective teachers	Answers:
(1) Major Cause	(1) 8%
(2) Moderate Cause	(2) 33%
(3) Mild Cause	(3) 42%
(4) Not a Cause	(4) 17%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%
28. Teacher turnover	
(1) Major Cause	(1) 0%
(2) Moderate Cause	(2) 0%
(3) Mild Cause	(3) 17%
(4) Not a Cause	(4) 83%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%
29. Lack of leadership by school administration	
(1) Major Cause	(1) 8%
(2) Moderate Cause	(2) 17%
(3) Mild Cause	(3) 25%
(4) Not a Cause	(4) 50%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%
30. Large class sizes	
(1) Major Cause	(1) 17%
(2) Moderate Cause	(2) 0%
(3) Mild Cause	(3) 25%
(4) Not a Cause	(4) 50%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%
(6) No answer	(6) 8%
31. Curriculum that does not match state assessment	
(1) Major Cause	(1) 17%
(2) Moderate Cause	(2) 17%
(3) Mild Cause	(3) 17%
(4) Not a Cause	(4) 50%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%
32. Other (please describe)	Parents

Who has responsibility for developing district curriculum?

Answers:

33. Board of Education	
(1) Major Responsibility	(1) 17%
(2) Moderate Responsibility	(2) 33%
(3) Mild Responsibility	(3) 33%
(4) Not a Responsibility	(4) 8%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%
(6) No Answer	(6) 8%
34. Superintendent	
(1) Major Responsibility	(1) 67%
(2) Moderate Responsibility	(2) 25%
(3) Mild Responsibility	(3) 8%
(4) Not a Responsibility	(4) 0%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%
35. District Administrators	
(1) Major Responsibility	(1) 50%
(2) Moderate Responsibility	(2) 33%
(3) Mild Responsibility	(3) 17%
(4) Not a Responsibility	(4) 0%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%
36. School Principal	
(1) Major Responsibility	(1) 33%
(2) Moderate Responsibility	(2) 42%
(3) Mild Responsibility	(3) 25%
(4) Not a Responsibility	(4) 0%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%
37. School administration	
(1) Major Responsibility	(1) 42%
(2) Moderate Responsibility	(2) 42%
(3) Mild Responsibility	(3) 17%
(4) Not a Responsibility	(4) 8%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%
38. Teachers	
(1) Major Responsibility	(1) 17%
(2) Moderate Responsibility	(2) 33%
(3) Mild Responsibility	(3) 25%
(4) Not a Responsibility	(4) 8%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%

39. State Department of Education	Answers:
(1) Major Responsibility	(1) 17%
(2) Moderate Responsibility	(2) 17%
(3) Mild Responsibility	(3) 25%
(4) Not a Responsibility	(4) 25%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 8%
(6) No Answer	(6) 8%

How does each of the following effect your districts ability to meet the requirement to have a Highly Qualified Teacher in every class?

40. Low Salaries	
(1) Major Effect	(1) 0%
(2) Moderate Effect	(2) 33%
(3) Mild Effect	(3) 0%
(4) Not a Effect	(4) 58%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 8%
41. High teacher turnover	
(1) Major Effect	(1) 0%
(2) Moderate Effect	(2) 0%
(3) Mild Effect	(3) 33%
(4) Not a Effect	(4) 67%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%
42. Lack of Highly Qualified Teachers in subject area	
(1) Major Effect	(1) 25%
(2) Moderate Effect	(2) 8%
(3) Mild Effect	(3) 25%
(4) Not a Effect	(4) 42%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%
43. Poor recruitment efforts	
(1) Major Effect	(1) 0%
(2) Moderate Effect	(2) 0%
(3) Mild Effect	(3) 42%
(4) Not a Effect	(4) 50%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%
(6) No Answer	(6) 8%
44. Lack of overall employee benefit package	
(1) Major Effect	(1) 0%
(2) Moderate Effect	(2) 8%
(3) Mild Effect	(3) 0%
(4) Not a Effect	(4) 92%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%

45. Location of district	Answers:
(1) Major Effect	(1) 0%
(2) Moderate Effect	(2) 8%
(3) Mild Effect	(3) 33%
(4) Not a Effect	(4) 50%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%

46. Other (please explain)

***How have the following programs been effected by the
“No Child Left Behind” legislation:***

47. School sports	
(1) Major Effect	(1) 0%
(2) Moderate Effect	(2) 17%
(3) Mild Effect	(3) 50%
(4) Not a Effect	(4) 33%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%

48. Elementary education programs	
(1) Major Effect	(1) 25%
(2) Moderate Effect	(2) 33%
(3) Mild Effect	(3) 33%
(4) Not a Effect	(4) 8%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%

49. Middle School programs	
(1) Major Effect	(1) 33%
(2) Moderate Effect	(2) 58%
(3) Mild Effect	(3) 8%
(4) Not a Effect	(4) 0%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%

50. High school programs	
(1) Major Effect	(1) 25%
(2) Moderate Effect	(2) 67%
(3) Mild Effect	(3) 8%
(4) Not a Effect	(4) 0%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%

51. Special Education programs	Answers:
(1) Major Effect	(1) 50%
(2) Moderate Effect	(2) 25%
(3) Mild Effect	(3) 25%
(4) Not a Effect	(4) 0%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%
52. Basic skills programs	
(1) Major Effect	(1) 33%
(2) Moderate Effect	(2) 58%
(3) Mild Effect	(3) 8%
(4) Not a Effect	(4) 0%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 0%
53. Vocational education programs	
(1) Major Effect	(1) 17%
(2) Moderate Effect	(2) 8%
(3) Mild Effect	(3) 50%
(4) Not a Effect	(4) 0%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 8%
(6) No Answer	(6) 8%
54. Fine arts programs	(1) 17%
(1) Major Effect	(2) 25%
(2) Moderate Effect	(3) 50%
(3) Mild Effect	(4) 0%
(4) Not a Effect	(5) 8%
(5) Do Not Know	
55. Graduate rates	(1) 17%
(1) Major Effect	(2) 17%
(2) Moderate Effect	(3) 42%
(3) Mild Effect	(4) 25%
(4) Not a Effect	(5) 0%
(5) Do Not Know	
56. Community relations	
(1) Major Effect	(1) 8%
(2) Moderate Effect	(2) 25%
(3) Mild Effect	(3) 33%
(4) Not a Effect	(4) 17%
(5) Do Not Know	(5) 8%

57. Thinking about the actions of the Board of Education during your tenure, how would you describe the time the Board has spent on student achievement issues?

- (1) increased
- (2) decreased
- (3) did not change
- (4) do not know

Answers:

- (1) 75%
- (2) 25%
- (3) 0%
- (4) 0%

58. How often does the BOE hold open forums for parents and the community to discuss student achievement goals?

- (1) twice a year
- (2) once a year
- (3) every 2 years or less
- (4) never
- (5) do not know
- (6) no answer

- (1) 33%
- (2) 20%
- (3) 7%
- (4) 7%
- (5) 27%
- (6) 7%

During your tenure on the Board, which of the following actions has the Board taken to improve student achievement:

- | | |
|---|------|
| 59. Established district-wide instructional goals stated in terms of student outcome | 100% |
| 60. Revised promotion policies to insure they are in line with state standards | 47% |
| 61. Increased seat-time students spend in class | 40% |
| 62. Created a district-wide assessment program to identify progress in reaching district goals | 93% |
| 63. Implemented a district-wide assessment program to identify progress in reaching district goals | 67% |
| 64. Approved a district-wide staff development program concentrating on creating effective schools | 80% |
| 65. Implemented a district-wide staff development program concentrating on creating effective schools | 67% |
| 66. Approved funds for teachers to attend out-of-district professional development programs | 87% |
| 67. Created staff time to develop plans and set goals | 73% |

68.	Established teams consisting of BOE members, administrators, teachers and community members to focus on improving student achievement	47%
69.	Participated in regular school visits of Board members in support of achievement	53%
70.	How would you classify your political views?	
	(1) liberal	(1) 13%
	(2) moderate	(2) 47%
	(3) conservative	(3) 30%
	(4) none of the above	(4) 0%
	(5) no answer	(5) 7%
71.	Please indicate your age:	
	(1) 18-25	(1) 0%
	(2) 26-35	(2) 0%
	(3) 36-50	(3) 21%
	(4) 51-65	(4) 57%
	(5) 66 +	(5) 21%
72.	Please indicate the highest level of education you have achieved:	
	(1) high school graduate	(1) 13%
	(2) some college	(2) 47%
	(3) bachelor's degree	(3) 27%
	(4) graduate degree	(4) 7%
	(5) doctorate/professional	(5) 7%
73.	How long have you lived in the district?	
	(1) 1-5 years	(1) 0%
	(2) 5-10 years	(2) 0%
	(3) 10-25 years	(3) 60%
	(4) all my life	(4) 40%

End of Survey

APPENDIX H

Approval Letter from IRB (saved as text)

Office of Research Compliance

Carmen T. Green, IRB Administrator
2000 Kraft Drive, Suite 2000 (0497)
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
540/231-4358 Fax 540/231-0959
e-mail ctgreen@vt.edu
www.irb.vt.edu

DATE: January 24, 2008
FWA00000572(expires 1/20/2010)
IRB # is IRB00000667

MEMORANDUM

TO: Karen M. Hult
Randi Richards

FROM: Carmen Green

SUBJECT: IRB Exempt Approval: “Local School Boards and “No Child Left Behind””, IRB # 08-018

I have reviewed your request to the IRB for exemption for the above referenced project. I concur that the research falls within the exempt status. Approval is granted effective as of January 24, 2008.

As an investigator of human subjects, your responsibilities include the following:

1. Report promptly proposed changes in previously approved human subject research activities to the IRB, including changes to your study forms, procedures and investigators, regardless of how minor. The proposed changes must not be initiated without IRB review and approval, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects.
2. Report promptly to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.

cc: File

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE UNIVERSITY AND
STATE UNIVERSITY

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