THE EMANCIPATION

OF

THE LEARNER

By

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Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of the

Graduate School of Rowan University

In Partial fulfillment of the requirement

For the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

In

Educational Leadership

April 2005

Glassboro, New Jersey

UMI Number: 3200731

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Abstract of the Dissertation

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Rowan University: 2005

This dissertation examines the existence of a powerless, marginalized, group of students and the instruction provided this population. An intervention strategy with the intention to create an environment that allowed the students in the study to emancipate themselves as learners was developed. The dissertation also follows the school's principal through this process as he defines his leadership. The data from this study revealed participants performed better as a result of the intervention.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my closest and best friend Jimmy L. Moore. In life you made me laugh, you made me cry, and you made me believe in myself. In your passing, you motivated me to complete this dissertation. I miss my friend.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Christine Johnston my dissertation chair for her belief in me and for trusting me with "Let Me Learn." I would also like to thank her husband Dale for sharing her with me all of those endless hours. I would like to thank the other members of my dissertation committee, Dr. David Hespe, and Dr. Franklin CampbellJones. I appreciate both the breadcrumbs and the sandpaper

I would like to thank my staff at Salem High School, especially my superintendent for giving me the latitude to do my research and the two brave teachers who were not afraid to step out on a limb with me. I want to thank my "Kitchen Committee" for the support and advice, especially the advice to pull back once in a while.

I want to thank the 2002 cohort. I enjoyed learning and reflecting with you. Scarecrow, I will miss you most of all.

Finally I want to recognize my family who supported me throughout the doctoral process. First, thank you mother, you are full of grace and wisdom. Next, thank you to my highly sequential daughter Shai. One of my greatest joys has been learning from her. Last but certainly not least, my wife Denise. Your faith in me has helped me move mountains. Thank you.

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Chapter 1
Introduction

I began to look inward. There was no road map for my journey; I had to discover my spiritual center (Bolman & Deal, 1995).

Every leader has a story to tell, and I am no exception. My story of leadership begins with the exercise of my innate abilities, an untamed, raw leadership driven by the desire be an effective instructional leader. My story as far as it is recorded in the ensuing chapters relates the honing and shaping of myself using informed leadership, which reflects not only my innate abilities but also the totality of my professional and academic experiences. The chapters, which follow, weave the chronology and substance of my leadership story-- the story of my journey is the journey of an authentic transactional leader with the task galvanizing my staff and students to work together to meet the standards that have been set by the state and Federal Government. My leadership must be able to draw on the moral core of my school family, empower stakeholders to take the lead, and foster collegial relationships within the school community.

The Journey

My journey did not begin with my enrollment in the Rowan Doctoral Program. As far back as I can remember I have been interested in learning and how people learn. I actually began my professional life as a Research and Development Technician for a transistor company. This company grew silicone chips, a process of manufacturing and assembling transistors for use in miniature amplifiers. I enjoyed this career, but soon began to feel isolated, having no

meaningful interaction with people during my working hours. My fondest memories of that company were during lunch. The entire research unit ate together. We told stories and shared experiences. It was 1967 and at that time in America's history, many African Americans, including me, were beginning to question what contribution we were making to the development of our race. I had a good job, but I felt that I was only contributing to my own development. I was good at math and science. I believed that I could contribute to my race if I could somehow share what I believed was my special gift. The Black Panthers had a saying, "If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem." I wanted to be part of the solution.

My colleagues, although somewhat older than I, were responsive to my dilemma. They seemed to be interested in what I had to say. They encouraged me to pursue my destiny. I began to think that perhaps my contribution was interacting with people and not conducting experiments as I was currently doing. I decided to resign from my job and, I joined a non-profit community action agency in the city of Boston, funded by the Federal Government and began teaching electronics in a federal government-training program designed to serve the "hard core unemployed". These trainees were predominantly African American, and Hispanic. Many of them were high school dropouts. They generally had no skills and therefore had difficulty finding good paying jobs. . Many of them lacked the social skills to successfully interview for a job. My responsibility was to train these individuals as entry-level electronic technicians,

and place them in one of the many electronic companies in and around the Boston area. I was very successful at this endeavor.

My success was due in part to my ability to interact with potential employers. I believe that I was able to do this because these employers saw my passion and sincerity. I understood electronics and what skills an entry level technician needed to be viable in a shop or lab. I connected with the trainees on a personal level and I was able to relate theory to everyday aspects of life so that they understood the material and were able to make practical applications. Moreover, I believed in these trainees and I was able to convince them that if they followed the prescribed process they had an excellent chance for successful employment.

My ability to use metaphors and humor helped bridge the gap between the employers' world and the world of my clients. One of the companies where I had placed several trainees, Lincoln Laboratories, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) hired me as their Director of Training. My success continued at MIT, but I realized that it was important for my growth to understand more about the process of teaching and learning. I left MIT in 1972 to attend Tufts University where I earned a Masters of Arts in Teaching. After I earned my Masters I returned to work for the Federal Government as a Training Program Director. Between 1973 and 1980, I worked as Director of Manpower Training Programs for the City of Boston and the City of Newark. During my tenure in these positions, my leadership style drew heavily on satisfying human needs, developing human recourses, and investing in people. It was important to my

clients and potential employers that the mission of the program was clearly understood. That mission was to provide people who had previously been denied a chance, the opportunity to work as a skilled individual in a growth industry. During the seventies and the eighties that mission became increasingly difficult as the political climate and the national focus changed. I found myself unemployed and working as a training consultant. My consulting brought me to the Delaware Valley. I settled in Camden, New Jersey.

My Introduction to Public Education

In 1981, I co-founded and published the Camden Sun, a monthly newspaper. I started the newspaper because I saw that there was a void in positive news and information for and about the citizens of Camden New Jersey. The Camden Sun did not print negative news. Instead, the newspaper focused on the political, social, educational and religious issues in and around the Camden area. The newspaper was a critical success, but it was a financial failure. In between issues of my newspaper, I worked as a substitute teacher in the Camden City School System. My wife was a Music teacher in Camden, and we had many conversations about the students and the challenge of working in a financially depressed urban area. It was not long before I realized I had a penchant for teaching. Substitute teaching gave me that same feeling of contributing that I had realized in Boston during my technical training program days.

I enjoyed the interaction that I had with students and staff. The assistant superintendent of schools for Camden was also president of the city council. We had met several times and had spoken at length about my views on the

development of the city of Camden and how important I thought the role of education was to that development. He told me that the district needed teachers with the passion and sensitivity that he saw in me. Because of this, and my technical background, the assistant superintendent hired me to teach Math and assigned me to Woodrow Wilson High School. I received my teaching certification through the Alternate Route, and I taught Math for eight years.

My teaching style was somewhat unusual. To quote my supervisor, " You teach like you are a coach." I was never sure whether she considered that as a compliment or a criticism, but she saw exactly what I was attempting to do. I had previous success in working in and with groups. At Tufts during my masters program, I studied the Gestalt method of group dynamics, and I liked it. I also studied group dynamics at National Training Labs in Virginia during my days in Manpower Training. Whenever I was part of a group, I looked at the various roles within the group. Understanding the various roles in a group helped me with classroom management. I saw each class as a group of individuals with different personalities, different goals, different out side influences, different levels of ability, all put together in one place for a common purpose.

During the first two weeks of each school year, I placed a lot of emphasis on getting my classes to function as a team. They helped each other, called one another when someone was absent, and they learned to respect each other's differences. Whenever any of my students had a problem with another student, teacher, or an administrator, I was usually able to mediate the situation. I always insisted that students respect themselves, their peers and all of the adults in their

world. I showed them love and concern. I did not alibi for them when they were wrong. What I did not realize was that my principal was taking notice of my leadership in the classroom, and the positive impact that my leadership style had on my students and colleagues. Pleased with what he saw, he recruited me to serve as a non-certified administrative assistant at Woodrow Wilson.

As an administrative assistant, I continued to interact with students and teachers in much the same manner that I had as a classroom teacher. My primary responsibility was discipline. I believed that students could be disciplined for their acts without robbing them of their dignity. I always listened to the student's version of the incident. I would give them the opportunity to tell me what happened, how it happened, and why they thought it happened. I would then give them the opportunity to reflect on their actions so that they could determine at what point they violated school policy, and what they could have done differently. This was not always popular with teachers. Many teachers believed that because they reported an incident, it happened exactly in the manner they described. When a student had a negative interaction with a teacher, it seemed as though the teachers did not want the student to have a say in the situation. Often they would remark, "Why are you asking him? I told you what happened."

Academic Development in Leadership

During my tenure as administrative assistant, I believe that I had a better relationship with the students than with the faculty. This troubled me. As I reflected on the various encounters that I had with students, parents, and teachers, I began to realize that if I was going to be effective as a school administrator, I

needed more training and expertise. I enrolled at Rowan University in the Masters program in Educational Leadership. A year later, I received my Supervisor certification, and was promoted to the position of Dean of Students. As Dean of Students, I still had disciplinary responsibilities, but I was now responsible for the observation and evaluation of all non-certified staff. Upon completion of the Masters program, I was promoted to the position of Assistant Principal and served in that position for two years.

The concepts that I learned in the Masters in School Administration program at Rowan began to add focus to my views on education, leadership and my career path. I believed that in order to develop into the educational leader and principal I aspired to be, I needed additional educational experiences beyond those of an urban setting. While at Woodrow Wilson I learned how to maintain an orderly learning environment. I developed skills in successfully interacting with difficult students and difficult parents. As vice principal, I did do classroom observations, but the district used a check the box observation form, not the clinical supervision model I had studied at Rowan. Subsequently, I accepted a position as Assistant Principal at Overbrook High School in Pine Hill, New Jersey. I honed my administrative skills, became involved in scheduling, budgeting, new levels of student management, and I was able to use clinical supervision. My relationship with the staff at Overbrook was good. They saw that I was not afraid to confront students for their misbehavior. These students were much easier to confront than the students at my previous school. My method of discipline with dignity worked well with them.

I had been at Overbrook for a year when the Salem High principal position opened. Dr. Ted Johnson, who had been one of my professors at Rowan, called me and informed me of the position. I submitted my name as a candidate, and on September 23, 1999, the Salem Board of Education approved me as principal of Salem High School. As principal, my vision as a leader was to effect positive changes in the climate of my school.

Statement of Theoretical Leadership Platform

Who am I as a leader? One plank in my leadership platform is made up of my early work related experiences. Another plank of the platform is made up of early learning experiences. Often these experiences shape who we are and remain in our declarative memory. I experienced this through reflective practice and a specific activity called the Personal Learning Jackdaw. The purpose of the activity is to find artifacts from your past that represent various stages of your personal develop. At first, I resisted this assignment. I have not lived in my parent's home in almost forty years. I have not even lived in the same city for twenty years, and I am 300 miles away. Where was I going to find things from my past that represented my early learning experiences? I did what any good student would do. I mulled.

When I had mulled long enough, I concluded that if I did not have things from my past, I would make or recreate them. For example; one of my items was a Christmas tree bubble light. My Grandfather had bubble lights on his tree. My family had bubble lights on our tree. For years, you could not find them in stores. They were out of circulation. I told my wife about them because I wanted them

on our tree. After many years she finally found some about ten years ago. We only have one string, and my daughter calls them Daddy's lights.

What these lights remind me of is the strong and gentle guidance that my mother gave me.   She was always supportive of me. She encouraged my imagination. She brought me records of classic fairy tales with classical music as a background. I tried to picture in my mind the events portrayed in the story. She helped me learn poems that we would recite together. Today my mother is 82 years old and she can still recite many of those poems. I believe that my concern for people, my desire to contribute something to their lives, my love for learning, and my interest in how people learn, all have roots in the learning relationship with my mother.

How do I see my self as a leader? There has always been a sense of caring on my part for my fellow man, which is why I made a career change. This sense of caring is one of the reasons that I became an educator. Gilligan (1982) describes leadership as the ethic of care, and it addresses the whole child. Care comes from connection. As an educator I must encourage students to become good citizens in a multi-cultural society. I must provide them with the intellectual tools to help them develop a moral compass. Does this mean that I am a Moral leader? Moral leadership is embracing stewardship. Moral leadership deviates from the traditional philosophy of leadership that enlists "force of personality", "bureaucratic clout" and "political know how." Moral leadership is the kind of leadership that touches people differently. It taps their emotions, appeals to their values, and responds to their connections with other people. Moral leadership is

morally based leadership. A great leader is a servant first. Servant leadership is legitimate because it encourages responsibility and ownership of the process and outcome, while providing a sense of direction (Autry, 2001; McCollum 2002). Caring, sharing, morality, and service, are all aspects of my leadership platform.

I see leadership as comprised of two central components, action and authenticity. I see leadership as a subset of action and see "showing up" or just being there and engaging, or participating in the work as minimum requirements. Action and authenticity are human traits we must understand before we are able to lead. Authentic leadership is the link between thought and action. Authentic leadership involves making decisions in a fully honest way and captures the idea of genuineness rather than purity. Authentic leadership offers the possibility of constructing a universal social ethic that preserves and enhances diversity (Terry 1993). Clearly my leadership platform is influenced by Terry's work. I am authentic using Terry's definition, which entails the acceptance of ethical categories such as love, justice and freedom.

As I reflect on my leadership platform, I am struck by how my sense of love, justice, and freedom has evolved. An example of this occurred during the 2000/2001 school year. A group of girls were intimidating several female students. These girls were involved in several fights. To address this problem, we held an evening meeting and invited each of these girls and their parents. I also invited several community members. We served refreshments. We discussed the problem, explained the steps that the administration would take, and allowed the girls to discuss their problems. The local school based youth service organization

provided counseling in anger management, and met regularly throughout the year, the fighting and the intimidation stopped. The following school year, those same young ladies serve as mentors for the freshman girls. I continue to see them and follow their academic progress closely. From time to time, I sit with them in the lunchroom. They have a good time talking about the "immaturity" of the freshman. This experience showed the value of demonstrating trust, sincerity, and caring. These young women accepted what I asked them to do because they trusted that I was sincere, and they believed that if they began to act in an appropriate way, the school family would respond favorable. Experiences like this helped validate me as a principal and leader. When I reflect on the work that I did with those troubled teenaged girls, I realize that I cared about them and it allowed me to make a connection with them

As a leader, I often wonder how my staff perceives me. I believe my staff and faculty see me as consistent, fair, approachable, and able to make difficult decisions for the good of the organization. I believe this because my staff confide in me on a variety of issues. They share their complaints about the way students may have been disciplined. They have questioned some of my decisions regarding programs. They have also come to me if they feel that another staff member has been given an unfair assessment or reprimand. Although this does not happen often, the fact that it has, makes me believe that my staff see me as approachable and fair-minded.

James Mac Gregor Burns (1978) writes about Transactional and Transforming Leadership. Transactional Leadership occurs when one person

takes the initiative in making contact with others for the purpose of an exchange of valued things. The exchange could be economic or political in nature. Each party is conscious of the power resources and attitudes of the other. Contrast this with Transforming Leadership. Such leadership occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality (Burns 1978).

As I move beyond the readings I internalize their message, and I see how it works in me and in my school. During my second year as principal, some classroom management problems developed with a non-tenured teacher. At the end of his first year, this teacher was having trouble handling unruly students. He was a good teacher, he planned effective lessons, and he had a positive attitude towards students. I worked with him on strategies for effective discipline procedures, and I demonstrated patience. Today he is one of my best teachers.

On another occasion, I worked with a tenured teacher who had a substance abuse problem while at school. He was a great teacher, but I had to relieve him of his duties. He was able to get help through the union and eventually returned to teaching. In the first instance I hesitated to make change, because the situation allowed me some leeway. In the second scenario, the safety of the students took precedence over the teacher. The fact that I followed protocol did not mean that I was void of caring. Supporting the teacher through his rehabilitation, and giving him the opportunity to return, demonstrated caring. I found my leadership style to be consistent as I seek to lead both students and faculty. I see myself as an Authentic Transactional leader.

Symbolic of my leadership is seen in the television character from Star Trek, Captain Jean Luc Picard. Captain Picard motivates his crew to go where no man has gone before. They are well trained, but the mission comes from Star Fleet Command his ultimate authority. As a principal, it is my crew, my ship, I get to make many decisions on how to get the school where it needs to be, but the mission comes from another authority. My success is predicated on how well my crew performs their roles and functions. They must trust me, which exemplifies my authentic leadership, and they must comply with certain protocol. In a public school system, the state of New Jersey has certain mandates that are not optional. When it comes down to the local level, superintendents, and principals also have policies and procedures which classroom teachers do no have the luxury not to follow. When it is necessary for me to hold staff accountable for the mandates, this is when I exemplify my Transactional leadership. As a leader I must be able to galvanize my staff and students, I must be able to motivate them to work together to meet the standards that have been set. I must be able to draw on that moral core, empower stakeholders to take the lead, foster collegial relationships within the school community. I believe this effort will require both vision and structure.

Espoused Theory vs. Theories in Use

As I reflect on my leadership platform, I realize that what I say is not always what I do. As described by Argyris (1976) theories of leadership show inconsistencies when applied. Observation and role-play with people in actual problem solving situations indicated that the theory that people espoused was not

the theory that they used (Argyris & Schon, 1974). A person's theory-in-use is what the person does on the basis of his or her conceptualization and interpretation of his or her espoused theory. Theory-in-use governs a person's actions and is not always compatible with the espoused theory (Argyris, 1976). I view my espoused theory of leadership to be consistent authentic leadership. As I reflect on my career I see evidence that I invest in people, develop human recourses, am sensitive, concerned and have an ethic of caring. In addition, the qualities of sincerity, trust, morality, servitude, loyalty, and genuineness are very important to me. I give strong and gentle guidance and want to contribute to the lives of those with whom I interact. However sometimes when I am faced with a crisis or an unpleasant situation, I have demonstrated other characteristics of leadership that are not consistent with authentic leadership.

It is easiest for me to see my theory-in-use, when I reflect on my interactions with my school district's central office staff. When I am suggesting a new program, or when another administrator wants to recommend something for my school, I often become defensive. This defensiveness impedes the flow of productive conversation. These meetings have a lot of polite conversations. Assumptions are made and not tested, and there is a lot of discussion, and very little dialogue. These values and behaviors tend to foster competitiveness among members. This competitiveness is known as attribution and social evaluation. By continually reflecting on my thoughts and actions, I am often able engage in more dialogic communication. Discussing directly observable categories and using valid information enables individuals to confront inconsistencies in their theories-

in-use, and the incongruities between theories-in-use and espoused theories (Argyris, Schon, p90, 1974).

Challenges to My Leadership Theory

Creating schools that function well, meet and exceed state and federal mandates, and have a sense of community and an ethic of caring in today's climate is a daunting task (Sernak, 1998). As a leader I must be able to guide my school community through the maze of standardization and bureaucracy that is most recently in the form of the federal legislation *"No child left behind"*

The renewed emphasis on accountability in schools across the United States closely follows the publication of "A Nation at Risk Report' in 1983 of our failing schools. The emphasis on academic achievement fails to recognize the importance of personal development of students as the only basis for academic achievement. In urban areas where there has been a legacy of failing schools and failing test scores academic achievement is often measured in inches rather than miles. These students require personal development before they can have academic achievement. They must be fully functional before they can successfully compete in college preparatory courses such as Algebra, physics, chemistry, and social studies (Cassel, 1996).

Standards developed by national, state, and local communities must ultimately translate into classroom practice. Teachers must keep abreast of current research in learning theory and use their available resources to plan and deliver quality instruction to their students. The teacher's task is difficult. Students come to school with a lot of unresolved issues. While politicians debate reform issues

and committees develop standards, frameworks and benchmarks, teachers are left to juggle a constantly changing curriculum. These frustrations have made teachers less than eager participants. They have been "developed, in serviced, observed, evaluated, regulated, manipulated, isolated, and infantilized" (Mann, 1995, p. 86).

The development of standards alone cannot ensure the success of school reform. An understanding of students as learners is necessary for success. It will be a difficult process as "the system"--by virtue of history, tradition, and over learned attitudes--is allergic to change (Sarason, 1995, p.84). I agree

The Change Problem

In my school district there is an eighty-point differential in SAT scores between minorities and non-minorities, as well as a significant difference in state standardized High School Proficiently Assessment (HSPA) scores. Minority students tend to have more discipline referrals while representing only 5% of the top twenty students. Minority students make up less than 10% of the band and 20% of the chorus and with the exception of sports do not participate in very many extra curricular activities. Minority representation in the Honors and academic courses in no way reflects the fact that they make up 45% of the school population. Students who are classified as in need of special education fare far worse. They are not represented in the top half of the class rank. Less than 10% of this population passed the math portion of the state test, and not one of this population scored proficient in the Language Arts portion of the standardized test. In many ways, Salem High is two schools. One school has achieving, white, regular education students taking mostly honors and college prep courses, and

theother school has underachieving, minority and special education students taking mostly general education courses.

The research project that I am conducting is an attempt to answer the questions: Can students who understand themselves as learners achieve greater success than those who do not have the same knowledge and understanding of their learning? Will knowledge of themselves as learners emancipate them from the inequity of power that I believe currently exist within over 40% of the classrooms in my school? What learning intervention will help level the playing field for those students currently marginalized by labels, classifications, and placement within the school's educational system?

Another Chapter in My Leadership Story

My desire is to be an effective instructional leader who develops an educational system that motivates students and teachers in such a way as to eliminate the power inequity that exists between them. I want to understand the nature of the power inequity; I want to remove dysfunctional and harmful labels; I want to build a learning environment in which all types of learners can thrive and achieve.

The research project that I am conducting is an attempt to answer the questions: "Can SLD students and other marginalized students emancipate themselves as learners with the knowledge and the use of an authentic, intentional, learning strategy?"

The chapter which follows (Chapter 2) reflects the point of inquiry from which I began the dissertation process. While the chapter recounts my first

attempt to develop an understanding of power inequity within my school, it serves an even greater purpose. For as I began my journey to find justice for the learners of my school who I felt were labeled, discounted, and marginalized, I soon was confronted by the realities of the data which I was collecting. Both the process and the data are reported in Chapter 2. Yet it was the process of analyzing the data of the pilot study that had the greatest effect upon me. It caused me to write still another chapter in my leadership story, one that ultimately helped me chart a clearer course to achieving power equity and student achievement for the underserved of my district.

Chapter 2

Cycle I

Not every child failing in school is handicapped, but in many cases every failing child becomes a candidate for special education services and is therefore considered handicapped (Lieberman, 1980).

Literature Review

The fate of the Special Education population in my school district is of concern to me. The existence of a powerless, marginalized, group of students in my school is unacceptable to me. In my life, I have had to use cultural capital and habitas to exist in multiple worlds and cross borders (Phelan, Locke, & Yu, 1998). I want this population, the (SLD students) to be full members of our learning community so that they are not victims of their labels. I want to come to a richer and fuller understanding of the SLD population and determine if they are treated as learners or labels.

Public schools, by virtue of their pedogological values engage in the practice of labeling students (Levin, Arnold, & Smith 1982). This practice starts at the earliest stages of the educational process. Why do schools feel the need to label students? My own district has opted to label and categorize learners. For example, we offer honors and academically talented programs for the upper level students, college preparatory programs for those students who have identified college as their goal after high school, general ability level programs for those students who have chosen not to attend a post secondary institution, and special education programs for those students who have been classified as being either

physically, emotionally or academically handicapped. The underlining reason for grouping is based on the belief that stratified classes are more manageable (Trimble & Sinclair, 1987), that teachers are not trained for mixed ability teaching, only whole-class teaching, (Moriarty, 1987), and that ability grouping seems to ease instructional problems posed by individual differences, making teaching easier (Oakes, 1987).

Ability grouping is another way to label students. It favors advantaged white students and locks lower tract students into an unchallenging curriculum that limits later academic pursuits and produces deleterious psychological effects such as decreased satisfaction with school, lower self esteem, and lower educational aspirations (Bempechat & Wells, 1989). Teachers believe that ability grouping overcomes the problem of individual differences and makes classes more manageable and are reluctant to change their methodology. Yet research points out that students in low and middle ability classes spent less time learning, were taught lower level skills and knowledge, and were exposed to fewer types of instructional materials (Trimble & Sinclair, 1987).

The dangers in the labeling process have been articulated. In the classical Pygmalion experimental design, teachers were led to believe that several of their students have exceptionally high potential for achievement. These students were actually randomly selected. The results of these experiments were that the students lived up to the expectations of the teacher. Heightened teacher expectations enhanced pupil performance. Conversely low teacher expectations resulted in low student achievement (Baxter, & Bowers, 1985)

The practice of labeling students has roots in the establishment of the American Public School. At the turn of the 20th century America had reason to be proud of the educational progress it had made.   The dream of equality of educational opportunity had been partly realized.   Any white American with ability and a willingness to work could get a good education and even professional training (Callahan 1962 p.1).   Callahan's characterization of the typical student identified the potential dilemma. The roots of the early schools in America still feed the educational system of today.   In the 1900's two major social developments had a profound impact in shaping the structure and philosophy of public education. They were the rise of business and industry, and the reform movement. This phenomenon created an atmosphere, which allowed Frederick Taylor and his system of scientific management, to have a major impact on society and education (Callahan 1962). It was felt then, as many feel today, that the economic and efficiency conscious practices of business are applicable to education.

William C. Bagley, a leader in American education from 1910 until approximately 1940, published a textbook entitled Classroom Management. This publication was characterized by its use of many business related terms to classify the problems of classroom management. Bagley stressed the need for unquestioned obedience as the first rule of efficient service. With this mantra, any student who did not or could not function efficiently or correctly in this structure was seen as unfit, and banished from the educational process, forever. Despite the fact that compulsory education was enacted in all states by 1918,

students with disabilities were often excluded from public schools. Courts upheld this exclusion of students with disabilities from public schools across the country. The precedent was set by a ruling in the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court which stated, A child who was weak in mind and could not benefit from instruction, was troublesome to other children, and was unable take ordinary, decent, physical care of himself could be expelled from public school. (Watson v City of Cambridge, 1893).

The labeling of this population as "weak of mind" and or "unable to care for themselves" isolated them from their opportunity to get an education. In 1910, national attention was focused on this problem with the first White House Conference on Children. This conference manifested itself in more attention to the plight of students with disabilities. Special education students were increasingly moved from institutions to the public schools. They were placed in segregated classes to meet their educational needs. Educators believed that the segregated classes were beneficial to the children because smaller class size would allow more individualized instruction, homogenous grouping would facilitate teaching, and the less competitive nature of these classes would do much for the self esteem of the children. Thus the number of special segregated classes and support services increased significantly from 1910 to 1930 (Winzer, 1993).

In 1933, a group of five mothers, in response to the deplorable conditions that their children had to endure, formed a group called the Cuyahoga County Ohio Council for the Retarded Child. This group protested the treatment of their special needs children. These protests led to the establishment of special

education classes sponsored by the parents themselves.   These local groups formed across the country throughout the 1930's and 1940's but did not band together at the national level until the 1950's, and ultimately established a national advocacy group, one of several during that era (Levine & Wexler, 1991).

In 1975, Congress passed Public law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Students Act (EAHCA, 1975). This law provides that all students with disabilities are entitled to a free and appropriate education that emphasized special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs in the least restrictive environment. Prior to this act, the education of students with disabilities was often relegated to institutions and asylums or hospitals for the mentally ill. During this period, professionals provided education for students in these institutions. These classes were considered early examples of the least restrictive environment, and were the first attempts at special education collaboration. This collaboration led to the development of Special Education training (Wood, 2001).

Wood surveyed students with severe learning and behavioral disabilities in 76 elementary schools in Minnesota. He discovered that a student's status as a school behavior problem was not necessarily related to a psychiatric diagnosis. Wood found that the struggle for dominance occurs in all social groups. This finding was important because any behavior that disrupts classroom functioning and requires the teacher's attention is a problem. Wood found that classification due to a school behavior problem is an outcome of classroom group dynamics, particularly those related to control.

Within public school systems, special education and general education programs were developed separately. These special classes were viewed as the best means for providing education for students with disabilities, while avoiding conflict. Kavale (2000), viewed special education classes as having the following advantages: low teacher-pupil ratio, specially trained teachers, greater individualization of instruction in a homogeneous setting, and increased emphasis on curriculum that fostered social and vocational goals. However, Dunn (1968) questioned the efficacy of special classes. In his view schools classified a disproportionate number of minority students as requiring special services. Dunn questioned whether separate special classes were justifiable and viewed special classes as an extension of segregation.

Before Dunn's paper, special educators tended to focus strongly on issues, such as identification of students in need, and curriculum with a view towards long-term outcomes. The concern of over representation of minorities classified in special education continues to be an issue of concern (Serna, L.A., Forness, S.R., & Nielsen, M., 1998), (Artiles, A., Harry, B., Reschly, D., & Chinn, 2002), (Zhang, D., Katsiyannis, A., 2002).

After Dunn's paper, the focus shifted to the fairness and appropriateness of identification, assessment, planning, and programming procedures involving special education students (Semmel &Gerber, 1994). This change was a shift from the child, to the program (Kavale, 2000). MacMillan (1971), challenged Dunn's position of least restrictive environment for lack of scholarly rigor, but the debate culminated in the passage of EAHCA, (1975).

In 1990, P.L. 94-142, EAHCA (1975), was re-authorized and renamed

The Individuals With Disabilities Act (IDEA, 1990). During this period,

many special educators worked toward full inclusion for students with special

needs in the general classrooms, instead of pulling out these students and

providing them services in self-contained classrooms called "resource rooms."

Some special educators believed that inclusion was the most efficient way of

providing services to all students (Monahan, Marino 1996; Stainbeck,

Stainbeck, 1983 Weiss, Lloyd, 2002). IDEA defines a Specific Learning

Disability (SLD) as a psychological processing deficit accompanied by a

severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and academic achievement.

However, because the law does not specify how to operationalize a severe

discrepancy, individual states are left to develop their own definitions. Thus

the inconsistency in the representation of students may result from the lack of

uniformity among state guidelines

The purpose of Cycle I is to research the SLD population at Salem High

School in an attempt to understand them as learners, and to determine if the

system sees this population as learners or are they viewed merely by their labels.

When specific labels are applied to students, these labels produce significant

effects on teachers' optimism concerning students' future. Teachers may believe

that students with labels such as Emotionally Disturbed may cause increased

control and discipline in the classroom possible leading to discriminatory

behavior by the teachers. This discriminatory behavior could lead to loss of

student efficacy and achievement resulting in a power inequity between the teacher and the learner (Silverberg, 2002).

Cycle I   Methodology and Cycle I Theoretical Framework

I began Cycle I because I was interested in exploring the power inequity that I believed existed between special education students, specifically students with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD), and the structure and policies of public education. I looked at the labeling of students and wanted to know how has being labeled negatively affected them? I wanted to know what benefits if any the label of SLD has provided these students. I learned that the marginalization of students goes beyond the SLD and Special Education labels.

To explore this topic I employed a qualitative research design. Qualitative research is descriptive. The data collected took the form of words or pictures rather than numbers. The goal of this study is to gain a richer and fuller understanding of Special Education students, specifically the Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) population at Salem High School. Interviews, journal entries, and case study information formed the data collection. The written results of Cycle I contains quotations from interviews and researcher comments to illustrate and substantiate the data (Bogdan, Biklen, 2003).

Setting

This research study took place in Salem High School, Salem, New Jersey. Salem City, with a population of 5,883, is the county seat of Salem County, New Jersey. Bounded by the Salem River, and the neighboring townships of Elsinboro (population - 1,170), Lower Alloways Creek (population - 1,858), Mannington

(population - 1,693), and Quinton (population - 2,511), Salem City is an urban center in the midst of rural communities. The Salem City School District provides education to approximately 1200 Salem City residents from grades Pre-K through twelve. These grades are housed in three buildings: John Fenwick School (elementary, pre K, and 3rd grade), Salem Middle (grades 4-8), and Salem High School, grades 9-12. The surrounding townships of Elsinboro, Lower Alloways Creek, Mannington, and Quinton maintain their own K-8 educational districts, but send their secondary aged students to Salem High School on a per pupil tuition basis.

The loss of major industrial employers and retailers over the past two decades has resulted in an economic decline for the city. Salem residents have a per capita income of $9,810 and an unemployment rate of 11.1%, which is almost double both the State of New Jersey, and national rates (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1998). Nearly one-third of the resident families are classified as "below poverty level." Over 40% are listed as having females as head of the household, and of these, 63% live "below poverty level." In 2003, the Salem-City school district was designated as the 31st Abbott District, making it eligible for increased state funding for "At Risk" students.

Participants

The participants of this study were all 10th-grade Special Education students. Each of the 7 participants was classified as SLD. These students were diverse in their race, gender, and sending district designation. The cohort was comprised of 3 African American and 4 Caucasian Students. Of the seven

students 4 were male and 3 were female. These participants came from Salem-City, Elsinboro, Mannington, and Quinton. None of the seven participants were from Lower Alloways Creek, the fifth sending district to Salem High School. Each member of the cohort participated in a study conducted by Dr. Christine Johnston of the Center for The Advancement of Learning, Rowan University, during the 2002, 2003 school year. They were selected to participate because I had data on them from the previous study.

Data Collection

An interview protocol was developed with twelve items. In qualitative research in general, and in emancipatory research in particular, the researcher is the instrument of data collection. The question of whether a member of the dominant culture can effectively interview a member of the minority group, within that culture, has been raised. When the language of the researcher is different than that of the respondent, the usual method of instrument construction is done in collaboration with respondents (Mertens 1998). As a result, when the interview questions were finalized they were pre tested on two students who were not part of this study to insure that the participants would respond to the interview process in a meaningful way. (See Appendix (A) to read the entire Interview Protocol).

Once the interviews were conducted and transcribed, they were coded. The data was categorized into general themes:

- Sense of self as learners
- View of themselves as special education students
- What they know about the process of being classified
- Has being classified helped them as learners?

Also as part of the data collection process, case history information was collected. This information consisted of historical data such as:

- When the respondent was classified,
- Child Study Team rational for the recommendation for classification
- IEP goals, and objectives
- Standardized test scores (Terra Nova 2002, 2003)
- Grade profiles (2002, 2003)

Finally, as part of the data gathering process, I kept a journal of my perceptions of the process, and I recorded reflections of my activities during the project. These reflections will be used to describe my leadership during this intervention project.

Results

The data collected from the recorded interviews conducted with each of the seven study participants was transcribed and charted by question. Working with the charted data, I began to highlight words and phrases that provided insights into the students' sense of self as learners and particularly their sense of themselves as a special education student. I then sought to triangulate the data by looking at the students' reason for classification, incidents of being retained, reading and math scores on the Terra Nova test and their high school grade averages for the last two years.

The results of the interview rendered some interesting data. In their response to the first question of the interview, respondents seemed aware of how they learned. All seven respondents articulated what worked best for them as learners.

1. How do you learn?– How does what goes on in class stick with you so you can use it later?

SH - In some of my classes there is support that is there for me. Another Student and I will go back into a corner after the teacher tells us what to do and if I don't understand it she will help me with it and show me a different way to do it. And that's really helpful.

JE – I just relate things to other things. Like when I have to memorize something I just relate it to something else and remember it like that.

CM – Not really. If I hear an assignment rather than reading it.

JVS – I kinda gotta pay attention. I have a good teacher, and things that go on in class that really help. If I write it down twice it really helps.

NVS – What I like most is visual aides. The teacher explains a little further then they do with most kids. The visual aides help me out a lot. I am better at learning with visual aides than I am with just listening and talking about it.

AW - I'm like a technical learner. I'm better with hands on stuff.
SS – Writing it down. Looking at it.

These participants had awareness of how they learned. They were able to articulate it to me, but perhaps they were not able to convey these feelings to their teachers.

In the second question of the interview asked, "How does school work for you, an do you like being here?

2. How does school work for you?-Do you like being here?
GHD – Do you like school?

SH – Oh, sometimes.
-Why are you here?
SH – To learn?

GHD – Are you in any clubs or sports?

SH – This year I am in the FFA and next year I plan to play soccer.
GHD – How do you feel about school in general?
SH – It's fun for the most part.
GHD – How about the classes?
SH – They can get kind of boring.

JE – Occasionally.
GHD – What about it do you like?
JE – I like seeing my friends and sports that I use to play. But I haven't been involved lately.
GHD – Do you belong to any clubs?
JE – Interact.

CM - It's all right.
-Why are you here?
CM – To get an education.
GHD -Why does it work –sports, clubs, friends, other
CM - I played basketball.

JVS – If people in class would be quiet.
GHD – Anything else?
JVS – Not really sure.

NVS – I love being here. People are friendly. Teachers are really nice. I have a lot of friends. I am buddies with the maintenance people so I get to talk to them. Just fun all day.
GHD – Are you in any extra curricular activities or clubs?
NVS – FFA and Interact Club

AW – Yea, I like school.
GHD – Are you involved in extra curricular activities, sports or clubs?
AW – I am in the Chess Club this year. I didn't play football this year but I am playing next year. And I ran track this year. That is pretty much all did this year. I plan to do more next year.
GHD – Why would you say you are in school? For what purpose?
AW – To succeed in life.

SS – Yes

GHD – Tell me about how school is for you?
SS – School is fine. I like coming to school.
-Why are you here?

SS – I come to school to learn. So I can get a good education.
GHD – How about outside of school?
SS – Yes, at my church we feed the homeless.

The respondents were divided on how they felt about school. Three of the seven respondents had a negative or somewhat negative view of school, while four of the seven respondents stated that they liked or loved school.

In the follow-up question, I asked the respondents, "What would make school work better for you?"

3. *What would make schoolwork better for you?*

SH – If we had more activities during the school year. Assemblies and stuff
The whole school could go to something like Ag Day.
SH – Like in cartoons, an amusement park day. SH – Everything I could do, like play games, talk to all my friends.
GHD – What kinds of things would people be saying?
SH – I hope they would be laughing and saying oh this is fun.

JE –Not getting up so early**.**

JE - Easy things that I already know or like review things. Just laughing.
 -What would you hear?
JE – Teachers would probably say good job and like I did well. And all the kids talking and laughing.
CM – Silence. Somewhat.

GHD – What made it somewhat good, what happened today that was good.

Did you take finals today?

CM – Yea.

GHD - Where any of them easy?

CM – My math.

GHD – So you felt good about it because you knew the work?
CM – Yea.

GHD -What would the "best day" in school be like?

JVS – Like going in and doing good on all my tests, take good notes everyday and just have an all out good day.
-What would you be doing?
GHD -What would you hear?

JVS – I just hear all kinds of stuff really.

GHD – Could you identify what kind of stuff you would hear on a good day?

JVS – Not really, no.
GHD -What would the "best day" in school be like?
NVS – Coming here, doing well on all my tests, maybe meeting a couple of new people. Have a good attitude coming in and leaving with a good attitude.

        -What would you be doing?
NVS – Conversing with a lot of people, trying really hard to get the notes, do the work, get it done and maybe getting a little ahead a little bit.
-What would you hear?
NVS – Generally good stuff, every once in a while I think I pick up something bad from somebody, but I pick up a lot of good stuff from people. I learn a lot, they teach me something new and then I tell them something I do. Kind of exchange back and forth a little bit.
GHD What would the "best day" in school be like?

AW – Probably just …..silence

GHD -What would you be doing?

AW – Something that doesn't have a lot of writing cause I don't like writing. Not a lot of reading cause I don't like reading. Something simple but still helping me learn.

GHD What would the "best day" in school be like?
SS – Um. I don't know. School is just good everyday. Everything is fine.
        -What would you be doing?

SS – Do you mean like helping out friends?

GHD – Yes, what is a good day at school like for you?
SS – Helping my friends through their problems.
GHD – Do your friends come to you a lot?

SS - Yes
- What would you hear?
SS - I'd hear a lot. Like some good stuff. Some bad. A mixture of stuff.

The respondents had a variety of answers. Several of the respondents

mentioned success in class would make school better.

The fourth question of the interview attempted to ascertain what students

knew about their classification.

4. Are you aware you are a classified student?

SH - Yes
GHD -What does that mean to you
SH – That if I ever need extra help it is always there for me.
GHD -Has anyone ever explained what classified means?
SH - No
GHD – Have you had your revalue yet for next year?
SH – Whats that?
GHD – Your I.E.P. meeting?
SH – Oh yea.
GHD – What went on during that meeting?
*SH – Oh my mom and my aunt came and my English and Math teachers came
down. They told my mom how I have been doing in all the classes. What I
have been doing and what I haven't done and what I owe.*
GHD – Has anyone every explained to you what your being classified means?
SH - No
GHD – Do you know what your classification is?
SH – Not that I am aware of.
GHD –Do you remember when you were first classified?
SH – I think it was fifth grade.
GHD – Do you remember why?
SH – No

JE – Yes.

GHD -What does that mean to you
JE – Just that I get extra help in certain things.
-Has anyone ever explained what classified means?

JE – silence

GHD **-**Who explained this to you?

JE – I don't know. Yes in grade school. But I didn't listen to them or didn't care.

GHD – How about recently? Have you had your meeting?
JE – I had my meeting yesterday.
GHD – So they didn't explain anything about your classification? Do you know what your classification is?
JE – No.
GHD – Do you care?
JE – No, occasionally.
GHD – That was just something I was interested in. That's interesting.
CM – Yes.
-What does that mean to you

CM –

GHD – What about being classified is different than not being classified.
CM – Sometimes I need extra help.

GHD **-**Has anyone ever explained what classified means?

CM- Not really.

JVS – Yea
-What does that mean to you?
JVS – I don't know.
-Has anyone ever explained what classified means?
JVS – A couple of years ago. At the beginning of my freshman year.
-Who explained this to you?
JVS – I forget.
GHD – Do you remember what they said to you?
JVS – No I can't really remember, I just know they said something about it.
GHD – Have you had your annual review yet?
JVS – I think so. Last week.
GHD – Was there any conversation about your classification?
JVS – Yes.
GHD – Do you know what your classification is?
JVS – No.

NVS - Yes
-What does that mean to you
NVS – I don't know.
-Has anyone ever explained what classified means?

NVS - No
-Who explained this to you?
GHD – Have you had your annual review yet?

NVS – Yes, last week.
GHD – So during that process did anyone discuss with you your classification.
NVS – Yes for a brief minute they did.
GHD – Do you know what your classification is?
NVS – No

AW – Classified like what?

GHD – The Special Education distinction.
AW – Yes
-What does that mean to you

AW – Just that I learn a little slower than other people in certain subjects.

-Has anyone ever explained what classified means?
AW – I know what classified means. I don't think that anyone has actually sat down and told me but I know what it means.
GHD – How do you know?
AW – I guess in middle school I learned what being classified means.
GHD – So you are saying no one every explained it to you but you know what it meant because you picked up on it in middle school. Do you know what your classification is?
AW - Nope

SS – Yes

GHD -What does that mean to you?

SS – Um. I get special help on certain things.

GHD – Like what, for instance?

SS – Like if I need help on certain school projects or like if I don't understand stuff, certain things.
-Has anyone ever explained what classified means?
SS – Not really.
GHD – How did you know that you were classified?
SS – By going to like, my parents, going to certain meetings when I was real little.
GHD – Do you know what your classification is?
SS – Not really.

All of the respondents answered *yes,* when asked if they knew that they were classified. When I probed further and asked, "What does being classified mean to you?" Four of the seven students responded that it meant that they could get extra help. Two of the seven respondents said, they did not know, and one respondent stated that being classified meant that he learned a

little slower than other people. The next probe for this question was to ask the respondents,

"When was the last time someone spoke to you about your classification?" and "Do you knew

your classification?" Six of the seven respondents stated that they could not remember when or

if anyone ever discussed their classification with them, and none of the seven respondents

knew what their classification was, despite the fact that they all had their annual Individual

Education Plan (IEP) review updated for the 2004/2005 school years within four weeks prior to

my interview of each student.

Respondents were asked, who knows that you are classified. One of the

seven respondents answered that everyone knew that she was classified

5. *Who knows that you are classified?*
SH – All of my friends do.

JE –Everyone.

CM –My close friends
JVS – Just the teachers really.

NVS – My parents, Mrs. Francis, my brother.

AW – Maybe I couple of my friends, not that many.   I mean because I take general
classes.

SS – My parents and some of my friends.

. Six of the seven respondents answered that only their family, teachers,

and a few close friends knew that they were classified.

6. *Would you rather people know or not know that you are classified?*

SH – It doesn't really bother me if they know or not as long as they don't start picking on me.
GHD – What do you mean by picking on you?
SH – I don't know. You know how people say your special ed.

JE – I doesn't matter to me because it doesn't bother me.
GHD – Why doesn't it bother you?
JE – I doesn't bother me because everybody is different, everybody has something like that.

CM - I don't care.

JVS – I guess not know.

GHD – Could you tell me why?

JVS – Mainly because they could get the wrong idea. You never know.

NVS – The students or teachers in general?
GHD – People in general?
NVS – I feel ok with it.

AW – I'd rather people not know.

SS – I would rather them know.

7. How do you feel about being classified?

SH – It doesn't really bother me. In the beginning it was kind of weird because I was the only one in my grade that was like that and at first I thought everyone was going to pick on me because I was different but it didn't bother them either.
GHD – What district did you attend?

SH - Quinton
JE – It doesn't bother me. Nobody says anything about it. I don't get teased or anything like that so it just doesn't bother meat all.
CM – It is alright.
JVS – It's ok I guess.
NVS – I feel alright with it because I feel that if I need the extra help I should get it and not sit there and get d's and f's on all my work and fail for the marking period. Passing and getting the extra help is better for me.
AW – I don't feel bad about it.
GHD – You say you don't feel bad, do you have any feelings about it?
AW – *I'd rather not be classified. I mean I'd rather not have a learning*

disability.

SS – To me there is nothing wrong with it, you are just getting an extra little boost.

      I asked whether or not being classified made a difference in the respondents' lives. Six of the seven respondents answered yes. When I probed further, and asked, "What special accommodations have been made for you?" six of the seven respondents answered that they were given extra help by their teachers or extra time on their tests. One student responded that his teachers tried to teach him the same way as everyone else in his class

    8.*What difference, good or bad, has being classified made in your school life?*

SH – None
-Give some examples
    -What special accommodations or considerations have been made for you?
GHD – Do you think that has made a difference?
SH – Yea
GHD – And how so?
SH – It's just better. I was in elementary school when I first started on the program and it just got a lot easier. Teachers started explaining things better and it just helped me a lot.

JE – It helped me get better grades on tests and stuff like that because I can take them to my resource teacher or my study lab teacher and she helps me.
-Give some examples
-What special accommodations or considerations have been made for you?

GHD – You would say you are given extra time on tests? Is that all teachers or just some?

JE – Health,?

CM – It helps me with some of my classes.

 -Give some examples
-What special accommodations or considerations have been made for you?

CM – Sometimes on tests …..

JVS – Getting extra help on tests and studying really helps out a lot.
GHD – So you have been given accommodations and considerations on test time?

JVS – Yea

GHD – Anything else?
JVS – That's about it. I get a study hall.
GHD – What is the study hall? Tell me what happens there?
JVS – Go in and any work I have or any make up work, go in and sit down and do it and if I have any trouble with it the teacher will explain it to me.
-Give some examples
NVS – Probably getting that little bit of extra help on tests. Getting my study lab teacher to help me that much more with them, study wise. A lot of extra help from teachers. They understand what I am trying to do and guide me in the right direction.
GHD -Give some examples-What special accommodations or considerations have been made for you?
NVS – On tests and quizzes, they help me out more to understand what they mean.
AW – Someways good like I have a class where it is a study lab but is the same thing as a study hall and it helps me to have a teacher to help me do my work and stuff in there so that is a good way that it helps me.
GHD – Is there anything negative?
AW – No not really.
GHD -Give some examples -What special accommodations or considerations have been made for you?

AW – No not to many different..

AW – No actually the teachers try to teach me like every other kid. I guess if I miss a test they will send it to the class and I can take it in there.

SS – I have come a long way.
GHD – Could you give me some examples?
SS – Like before I came to high school, it was where the teacher would say well she might not make it. She might have a lot of trouble with it. But once I stepped into school and started working, they said I couldn't do it, I did it and I proved them wrong.
GHD -Give some examples-*What special accommodations or considerations have been made for you?*
 SS – What do you mean?

GHD – Like in a classroom have your teachers done anything special for you?

SS – I don't know.
GHD – In terms of assignments or tests?
SS – If it was a test that I really didn't understand it I would take it to my study lab and get extra help there.

GHD – That's actually what they would call an accommodation.

When asked, "What do you want to do with your life, what are your goals?" All seven respondents expressed aspirations. Five out of the seven respondents mentioned a post secondary school or college experience as part of their future plans.

9. What do you want to do with your life, what are your goals?

SH – I am hoping next year to get accepted to the Vo Tech and I want to do mechanic work and work on cars.

JE - Next year I want to go to the Vo-Tech. I talked to Miss Hall about that and everything. I want to go for Autobody Collision Repair.

CM – Go to college and become an architect.

JVS – I want to stay farming right now. I might open up like a hot rod shop or something once I get out of college and restore cars for people.

NVS – My goals are to be successful on the farm. When I get done high school I want to go full time farming, growing grain and vegetables. So I want to be successful at that. I also want to be successful on the business end part of it. I want to make money not lose money.

AW – Go to college, I would like to be in the football or basketball profession but I don't see that happening so probably be an Art teacher or something.

SS – I want to become a culinary chef.

The respondents were asked to describe the biggest challenge they have faced and overcome. All seven respondents identified things that were personal in nature. Their accomplishments were not all related to success in school. Three of

the seven respondents did mention success in school as the biggest challenge they

overcame.

10. What is the biggest challenge you faced and overcome?

SH – I have changed a transmission.
GHD – When you started it did you think that you would be able to do it?
SH – Not really.
GHD – How did you feel when you did that?
SH – I went and got my dad and he helped me a lot and we got it done. It made me feel like wow I did it and it was fun.

JE – A lot of things. It doesn't have to be in school?
GHD – No.
JE – I was taught how to ride four wheelers and all that stuff. I hunt and I never thought I'd be able to pass the test and I did. I thought that it would be hard for me.

CM – Being able to pass.

GHD – What was different about this year?

CM – My grades….

JVS – Overhauling trackers.

GHD – The first time that you did that you didn't think that you would be able to do it?
JVS – No my dad showed my how to do it. And we rebuilt a couple of motors. Now we ?

NVS – Seems like all the time at home I am being challenged to work on different stuff on the farm and when my brother and my dad aren't there it is all up to me and what I should do, my decision and also being introduced to all the new equipment. My biggest challenge is learning to run the combine for one of the local guys I work for every year. That big, colossal machine would be hard to run. I thought that I wouldn't be able to do it but I do it every fall now.

AW – Probably make it this far in high school and not doing drugs.

SS – I would have to say coming here my first year.

GHD – How so?

SS – Because before I came here, like I said before, it was like I was on the borderline. Once I came here and I had the help I needed, it made a total difference.

The final question of the interview asked the respondents; "If you could design a school that could meet your needs what would it look like?" Two of the seven respondents said that they liked the way their school was now, and would not change a thing. One respondent answered that he would stop the fights. Another said that he would only have the nice teachers, the ones that help.

11. If you could design a school that could meet your needs what would it look like?

SH – I don't think I would change anything. I think it is good the way it is with all of the different people from all the different towns like Mannington and Elsinboro and everybody just comes in from different ranges. I think it is good like this.

JE – It would probably look the same as this school. Cause I don't like big schools. There would be a lot more color. The whole school just needs a lot more color.
GHD – Interesting, do you mean like on the walls?
JE – Yes like it is when you walk in by the boy's locker room, the mural on the wall. It just brings it to life. It just shows that everyone is unique in there own way.

CM -…. Maybe stop all of the fights.

JVS – It would be real nice landscape, and faculty that would be focused towards the students. And just overall a good school.

NVS – Appearance wise or teacher wise. I would have it just like this to tell you the truth because I would just have the good teachers like Mrs. Francis and Mr. Barton. And have all kinds of teachers just like that and Mr. Vengenock and have it just like that because they give me the extra help. All of my other teachers do but they go the extra step further and help me out.

AW –Well I like the way Salem High School is made and everything I would like it to be bigger so it could have more people in it so that I could have more friends and stuff but other than that I'd just keep it like that because it pretty much takes care of the people in it...

SS – I don't know. Um. I guess the students would all have the help that they need and..
GHD - Do you think that there are students that don't get the help that they need?
SS – Uh huh. There would be classrooms for students that work much slower than other students, that there would be certain classes for them.

Additional data collected, identified the respondents by sending district, date of birth and grade they were in when classified.

Table 2.1   Study Participants' Grade When Classified

Student	D.O.B.	Sending District		Grade Classified
S.H.	7/31/1988	Quinton		5
J.E.	6/14/1987	Elsinboro		2
C.M	11/27/1987	Salem		5
J.VS.	8/22/1987	Mannington		2
N.VS.	8/22/1987	Mannington		1
A.W.	6/23/1987	Mannington		2
S.S	6/17/1987	Quinton		8

Of the seven respondents in the study, three of them were from Mannington, two were from Quinton, and one each from Salem-City and Elsinboro. The fifth sending Lower Alloways Creek was not represented in the study population. The data also revealed that the respondents were classified at various grades. Only one respondent was classified after the fifth grade.

Data were also collected regarding the respondents' age at the time of the study, the initial reason for referral to the Child Study Team for classification, their classification, whether or not they had been retained, and an anecdote from their file regarding an interesting fact from their case history.

Table 2.2   Study Participants' Reason For Classification

Student	Age	Reason for Classification	Diagnosis	Retained	Additional Info
S.H.	15	Decline in grades in grade 5 Lack of concentration	ADD/SLD	No	Average in gr. 3 & 4
J.E.	17	Difficulty in reading	PI/SLD	Yes, 1st	Reading on level 5th
C.M	16	Poor work habits	SLD	No	3rd grade levels in 5th
J.VS.	16	Early Interven Prog	MH/SLD	No	Twin of NVS Pre mature birth
N.VS.	16	Early Interven Prog	MH/SLD	No	Twin of JVS Pre mature birth
A.W.	17	Difficulty w/ BS Behavior	ADHD/SLD	No	2nd grade reading level grade 2
S.S	17	Struggling in reading	SLD	No	Rec. D in Lang Art, Bin Math gr. 7

The respondents ranged in age from 15 to seventeen. Only one of the respondents had been retained. Five of the respondents were performing at or one grade below level when classified. Only one respondent, (AW), was identified as having a behavior problem.

The data shown in (Table. 2.3) represents standardized test scores for the respondents for their 9th and 10th grades. Salem High uses the Terra Nova Test. This test is nationally normed and gives scores in terms of grade level equivalents. The results for each participant varied. Some respondents improved their scores from grade 9 to grade 10, while others saw a decline in their scores from one grade to the next. Six of the seven respondents increased their reading scores from school year 2002/2003, to school year 2004/2005, three of the seven increased their vocabulary scores, and four out of seven increased their Math scores for the same time period.

The data showed some inconsistencies. For instance, JVS increased 4 grade levels in reading 4.9 to 8.3 in one year. NVS showed a similar increase in reading from 6.1 to 9.8 in the same period. SS increased her Math score 3 grade levels from 5.5 to 8.5 in a one-year period. JE saw 3.4-grade level drop in her Vocabulary score between 2003/2004 and 2004/2005, and AW also saw 3.1-grade level drop in his Vocabulary score in one year.

Table 2.3   Study Participants' Terra Nova Score Comparison

Terra Nova Scores		2002/2003	2003/2004	2002/2003	2003/2004	2002/2003	2003/2004
		Reading	Reading	Vocabulary	Vocabulary	Math	Math
Participant							
S H		9.8	8.7	5.9	**7.2**	8.9	7.6

J E		6.1	**6.8**	8.9	5.5	5.3	**5.7**
C M		7.5	**8.3**	8.5	8.1	11.4	9.8
J V S		4.9	**8.3**	10	**12**	6.3	**7.7**
N V S		6.1	**9.8**	11.3	8	7	7.1
A W		8.1	**11.3**	12	8.9	7.4	**10.5**
S S		7.6	**8.1**	5.7	**6.3**	5.5	**8.5**

This fluctuation in standardized test scores is unusual. Increasing reading level two or three grades levels in one year may be attributed to guessing, or the fact that the student under performed on the test the previous year.

Table 2.4 shows a comparison of the average grade for the study participants. In 2002/2003, the participants were in grade nine, and during the 2003/2004 school year the participants were in the 10th grade. The numerical values in the above chart represent grade level equivalents. Therefore for 2002/2003 the grade level value should be 9.0 if a student is on grade level, and for 2003/2004 the grade level value should be 10.0 if the student is on grade level. Each of the seven respondents attends regular classes with some in-class support. Each respondent has a Resource Study lab on his or her schedule. This study period is limited to six Special Education students and is proctored by a special education teacher who assists the students with their class and home assignments.

Table 2.4   Study Participants' Two-year Grade Comparison

	Av. Grade		Av Grade
Student	**2003**		**2004**

S.H.	79.4		71.1
J.E.	80.1		82.02
C.M	84.4		80.6
J.VS.	88.9		86.6
N.VS.	88.04		82.6
A.W.	78.9		79.9
S.S	88.7		86.6

The data revealed that each of the respondents has all passing grades. The minimum passing grade is 70% which translates in to a D letter grade Five of the seven respondents have an average for school year 2003/2004 of over 80 percent which translates into a C letter grade. .

Conclusions

I conducted this study for the purpose of exploring the power inequity that I believe exists between special education students, specifically SLD students, and the structure and policies of public education. I wanted to gain a richer and fuller understanding of this population. I believed this population is marginalized, and treated as labels and not as learners. I was interested in their sense of self as learners, and how they view themselves as special education students. I was also interested in what these students know about the process of being classified, and whether or not being classified helped them as learners.   The data collected proved to be very interesting. Three areas stood out:

- The students' lack of knowledge of their own classification

- The students' sense of self as learners and as classified students

- The things that students did not mention

When asked about their classification, all seven respondents knew that they were classified students. They all knew that being classified meant that they

received extra help with their school work and that being classified allowed them extra time on their tests. However none of the seven respondents could remember when the last time someone spoke to them about their classification. None of the seven respondents knew their classification, even though all of the respondents were present at their Annual Performance review held recently. I found it odd that these students did not know their classification considering their age and the length of time they have been classified. How do they know the services they are getting are the services they need?

Regarding the study question "How do these students see themselves as learners?" The results were varied. All of the respondents recognized that they did have a particular way that they learned. They had adopted methods that allowed them to adapt and compensate. Their passing grades supported this contention. The fact that the respondents were all aware of how they learned best is important, and speaks to their resiliency than to instructional strategies.

The respondents view toward themselves as Special education students was telling, and revealed some information about their sense of self. When asked, "What difference good or bad being classified made in your school life" the respondents referred to "getting extra help", and "being given more time on tests", as examples of positive differences. When the respondents were asked, "How do you feel about being classified?" all of the responds answered this question with qualifying statement, such as "It's ok, "I'm alright with it", and "I don't feel bad about it". These statements seemed to indicate that the respondents had a visceral

reaction to the question of feelings. They had to consider how they felt, and were ambiguous in their replies.

Another indication of the respondents' sense of self was their responses to the question of who knew they were classified. It was surprising to me that these respondents thought that the circle of people who know of their classification was small. Another question directed to the respondents' sense of self was, "Would you rather people know or not know that you are classified?" Only one respondent stated that she would rather that people knew, the remaining six gave responses such as: I don't care, or it doesn't matter, or it doesn't bother me. These responses appear to support the notion that these students do not have a strong sense of themselves as learners or classified students.

The third area of interest to me was in what respondents did not say. None of the respondents specifically stated what a teacher did to facilitate their learning. Their answers indicated that if they were given extra time on a test or if a teacher was gave them some extra help, they were served. None of the respondents referred to their Individualized Education Plan, (IEP), or any instructional modifications they were to receive. This is interesting to me because the fact that these students had no working knowledge of their classification, or their IEP suggests that these students were marginalized. That is they are generally lower performing students at-risk of dropping out of school, and therefore not provided with necessary skills and information to be successful. There is an inequity in the kind of cultural capital that is needed for marginalized students to be able to fully participate in society (Quinn, 2001)

All of the respondents expressed a desire to continue their education. Each had a career goal. One respondent wanted to be an architect, one wanted to be a chef, the two brothers wanted to work on their farm, one young lady wanted to be an auto mechanic. What I find interesting is that all seven respondents want a career that requires the use of their hands.

The respondents received grade averages from 71% at the low end, to 87% at the high end. None of the respondents received a failing grade. Additionally, none of the respondents received any major discipline referrals. In contrast, to the respondents' grade averages was the data from their standardized test scores. They each took the Terra Nova test in the 9th and 10th grade. The respondents' scores were varied, but only one respondent was reading on grade level, SH, 9.8, and only one respondent CM, 11.8 was at or above grade level in mathematics. Several students showed a three grade level increase from one year to another. Other respondents showed a two or three grade level decrease over the same period.

The sharp increase and decrease in performance leads to questions. Were the initial scores valid? Did the respondents guess better one year and not as well the next? Were the increases in scores due to good instruction? Is it reasonable for a student to scores in the 8th grade level in reading and vocabulary, and have an 80% grade average? Is it reasonable for a student to score at and above grade level in reading and vocabulary, and at grade level in Math, and be classified SLD? These are questions that remain unanswered. Does the data support the

existence of a power inequity between special education students and the school system?

Implications to Further Study

From this study, I gained insights into the seven SLD students' sense of themselves as learners. I learned that these students have adapted their learning methods to the instruction they received, and achieved a modicum of success. I learned that none of these students have any information on his/her disability, and I learned no one in the system is sharing this information with them, which would help them develop their learning skills. I believe being uninformed equals unempowered. Surviving does not equal thriving. Being lulled into complacency does not equal being equipped for the world of work or continuing education.

Each of these students has aspirations. Just as they lack knowledge of their classifications they are equally naive about what it takes to continue their education. There appears to be a real disconnect between the services promised these students during their IEP Conferences and their preconception of the services they received during the school year. I want to see those services delivered as promised and determine if they have an effect on student achievement, and efficacy. I believe that there is a prevailing attitude regarding classified students that as long as we do "something" with them, we are serving them. When these students are in inclusion classes, they are not receiving modifications other than more time on tests is an indication that the general education population of teachers is ill informed and ill equipped to support these students in accordance with IDEA. The fact that these students are performing

below grade level each year and their IEPs do not significantly change is an indication of a sort of benign neglect.

Therefore for my next cycle of inquiry, rather than just observing these SLD students for the purpose of understanding, I want to involve them in the learning process and empower them as learners. I want to effect a change in their learning process that will teach these students how to have control over their learning. What I have learned has led me to realize that there is a need for more intervention. For Cycle II of my study, I plan to use a treatment that will give these learners strategies that will allow them to function in complex learning situations. I will employ a standardized evaluation to assess the effectiveness of this strategy. I will engage faculty to participate in this process. I am interested in how behavior defines intent, and how that impacts the learning process.

There is an old proverb, which exemplifies my current perception of the SLD population, and what I hope to accomplish during Cycle II of my research project; "Give a man a fish, he eats for a day. Teach a man to fish, he can eat for a lifetime." As an instructional leader, I want the SLD population and any other student group marginalized by labels at my school, to learn how to fish.

Chapter 3

Cycle II

When we look at how a person learns we can be led to the best way to teach. Teaching strategies used by teachers have a significant effect on the learning strategies used by students (Karakoc, Simsek, 2004).

Cycle II; Change Issues Raised by Cycle I: More Questions Than Answers:

During Cycle I of this study, I focused on students classified as SLD. As I prepared to observe them in their classroom settings, I anticipated seeing these students being treated very differently from their non-classified classmates. I envisioned seeing differentiated instruction as per their individual IEPs. I believed I would see learners with observable learning disabilities. And I thought it was likely that I would observe overt and covert forms of discrimination against them because of their SLD label. What I actually saw was that they were treated *exactly* like everybody else in their general education classes. This would seem to be a very positive "finding." However, the data from Cycle I pointed to a larger issue of learning. While I found no signs of discrimination *vis a vis* the SLD label

as a student in special education, I also found no signs of purposeful assistance to these classified students.

What I was not prepared to find was a more insidious phenomenon: an acceptance of the status quo both by the students and their teachers; a quiet acquiescence among the students and a passive tolerance of their circumstances. The students accepted their lot not expecting more because they had no means by which to judge whether what they were getting was appropriate or helpful. They had no means to compare and measure the quality and the appropriateness of the instructional services they were receiving.

The purpose of an IEP is to bring services to that individual so that teachers and students will achieve the goals of the IEP and eventually the student will exit the special education program equipped to learn in a regular education setting. I found no evidence of this happening with the SLD population I studied in Cycle I. What the data did suggest was the following. Within the classrooms of the seven SLD students whom I studied in Cycle I, I found

- No identifiable/measurable overt discrimination between SLD students and the general education students
- No identifiable/measurable special services provided to the SLD students
- No identifiable/measurable instructional differentiation between SLD students and the general education students

- No identifiable/measurable difference in student behavior or performance within the classroom between SLD students and the general education students

- No identifiable/measurable sense of the students' learning potential.

- No identifiable/measurable plan for overcoming the students' inconsistent, underachieving performance.

Frankly I found these results more disturbing because of their subtle nature and chilling effect. I found teachers and students who were not engaged in any type of meaningful instructional process. By this I mean two things. First, the teacher simply gave out information for forty minutes by talking at the students and then expected the students to come back the next day knowing that information. The teachers worked hard to go through the motions of teacher-led instruction, but their stand and deliver method of instruction was not effective because it did not connect to the students and their learning processes; it did not engage the students in using their learning processes; it did not address nor honor the learning potential each student brought to the classroom.

Secondly, I found students who were to be receiving specific treatment for their learning disabilities but who were receiving no discernible services within the classroom context. I did not find what I thought I would find when I set out to conduct Cycle I of this study. I did not find discrimination due to labeling; I found marginalization.

I observed vivid example of this lack-luster teacher/learner interaction. I was completing an observation of a teacher in whose class were several SLD students. Here was an individual who I thought was one of my stronger teachers, and it occurred to me that he wasn't really teaching the class. He was going through the lesson. I would define it as the difference between teaching and lecturing. He talked for 35 of the 42 minutes of the class period and then the last 7 or 8 minutes the students were writing. Teacher and students did not engage each other. It was merely, "here is the information, learn it, and regurgitate." The students did not look as though they were engaged in any way, shape, or from.

Ironically his lesson had followed the district model for effective instruction. It began with an anticipatory set and a stated objective. However, the instruction, which followed, did not engage the students. This was going on in my school. For the first time I actually saw what was not happening in the classroom. I wondered, is it just these SLD students, in this class, or is everyone being taught this way?

I continued to visit classes and I discovered that in college prep or honors class there was a different level of energy, there was a different level of interaction and the teaching was different. It was the same teacher, different students, and a different presentation. In the honors and college prep classes the teachers were asking questions of inquiry and discovery. The students were participating in the lesson, and there was a high level of energy, expectation and interaction between the students and the teacher.

When I visited the general education classes I saw something different. The instructional process for the most part was lecture followed by a worksheet. The students were not asked challenging questions and seldom did I witness them in cooperative work groups. There was a level of energy in the class but it was mostly unrelated conversations between students rather than topical discussion. These General Education classes are also where classified students are placed when they are mainstreamed. I saw that it wasn't just the special education students that were taught this way, but any student who is not considered Honors or College Prep.

I recognized that one-half of my student population scheduled under the label of general education was being marginalized by the education system I was leading.

Shift in Focus: "From Discrimination to Marginalization"

Recognizing the data from Cycle I, taking a critical look at my school, and considering who I am as a learner, it was apparent to me that I needed to address the learning of a larger segment of my population and I needed to do it by having them emancipated as learners. During my doctoral program, I read the writings of Paulo Freire and Jurgen Habermas. Reading these authors opened my mind to new thoughts. Freire, (1974), claims that knowing, is the task of Subjects not Objects. Subjects are those with the knowledge. These Subjects have the knowledge because they actively engaged in the pursuit of this knowledge while Objects are docile and passive. Since knowledge necessitates curiosity, Subjects

have that curiosity and therefore constantly search and invent and re-invent, and use critical reflection on the very act of knowing.

This is a tough concept to grasp. At first I thought that the Subject and the Object were two people. The Subject had the information and he/she passed it on to the Object. But after some more reading and some reflection, I believe that Freire is saying that both teacher and learner should be subjects, both willing participants in the learning process. When the students lack interest or motivation then he/she is an Object. Also, when the teacher does not respect the learner, then learning also cannot take place. Freire also seems to be saying those with knowledge who do not share with the learners the condition of knowing, are practicing extension in a power over relationship.

Habermas, (1983), differentiates between three primary generic cognitive areas in which human interest generates knowledge. These areas determine categories relevant to what we interpret as knowledge. That is, they are termed *'knowledge constitutive'* they determine the mode of discovering knowledge and whether knowledge claims can be warranted. These areas define cognitive interests or learning domains, and are grounded in different aspects of social existence, work, interaction and power. The Emancipatory domain identifies 'self-knowledge' or self-reflection. This involves interest in the way one's history and biography has expressed itself in the way one sees oneself, one's roles and social expectations. Emancipation is from institutional or environmental forces, which limit our options and rational control over our lives but have been taken for granted as beyond human control (a.k.a. 'reification'). Insights gained through

critical self-awareness are emancipatory in the sense that one can recognize the correct reasons for his or her problems. Knowledge is gained by self-emancipation through reflection leading to a transformed consciousness or perspective transformation, (Habermas,1983). Effective meaningful, communication between a teacher and student is essential to learning. When teachers create a curriculum and class environment that facilitates engagement, students are less likely to feel alienated and marginalized by the educational process (Ennis & Mc Cauley, 2002).

Reading these authors opened my mind to new thoughts. I reflected on my research from Cycle I and began to see these students as being marginalized by the educational system. Marginalization to me means that you are not really considered part of the mainstream. Because we believe these students cannot learn, we do not challenge them. These students often do not experience academic success and as a result are at risk being truant which puts them further behind academically and eventually many of these students eventually drop out of school, or graduate with no preparation for the world of work or a post secondary educational program. When I was a young man in school, we used paper with the printed margins on the side. You could never write in the margins because that was off limits. It was almost as though they did not exist. The only thing that was real and usable was the paper that was inside the margins.

When I think of these marginalized students, this is what comes to mind. They are part of the paper, but they are on the outside. And that disturbed me. It was the timing of this new theory and the convergence of my research together

that led me to reshape the study that I now have. With the new awareness of what I found in Cycle I of this study, I had the responsibility to address this new problem. Therefore Cycle II of my study took a new direction.

The Change Project

In order for these SLD students to move further and faster, to be brought in from the margins into the mainstream and reach proficiency or even advanced proficiency on the HSPA, I chose to go beyond the population I had originally sought to study, the special education SLD students, and expand the population I studied the general education students and SLD students who are in a general education language literacy class. The students in my school who are in general education classes are typically minority, and economically disadvantaged. These students have not performed well on the New Jersey standardized tests. (See chart) When you look at Language Arts, 75% of the white students were either proficient or highly proficient in the Language Arts test above the 73% required, compared to 56.5% of the minority students. On the math portion of the HSPA, 66.1% of white students were either proficient or highly proficient, above the 55% required by the state as compared to 23.5% of minority students. There was only one African American who scored highly proficient in math compared to 17.7% of the white students.

Those test scores are an increase over the eighth grade GEPA scores of those same students coming from the sending districts. The majority of the students from the four sending districts came through the eighth grade test proficient in Language Arts and Math, and they maintained their proficiency

through high school. Some of them moved into the advanced proficient category. But the students from the Salem Middle School, where 90% of the minority students had only 25% of their eighth grade score proficient on either section of the GEPA. What this demonstrates is that education is taking place at my school, but not all students are benefiting equally. As a result, there is a tremendous achievement gap between white and minority students at my school. I maintain that one explanation for this achievement gap is that minority students are overwhelmingly in general education classes as are SLD students who are in inclusion classes. One reason for this unequal distribution is self-selection. Many of these students do not want the challenge. They will say, "I am not ready for college prep." They want to take classes they feel they can pass so they can graduate. I have called parents in an effort to convince them to place their student in more challenging classes, and they will say to me, "Greg's not going to pass if you put him in College Prep Algebra. Put him in general math. He will be ok there."

Another reason for the unequal distribution of minority students in a General education class is that school personnel recommend placement in courses based on previous courses that students have taken. Many minority students either do not choose or are not counseled into the more difficult courses. As a result, my school looks like two different schools. When I visit Honors or College Prep classes, I see white students almost exclusively. When I visit general education classes I see minority and special education students almost exclusively. This group of students epitomizes the point that I am seeking to make

and if I can make some inroads that would make it possible for me to duplicate those inroads in other similar settings at my school. My work with SLD students in Cycle I revealed a marginalization issue that was broader than I realized earlier.

Parallel Experiences as Leader/Researcher

I have had some unique experiences as a part of my development as a school leader. One of these experiences was having my leadership recognized by the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation. I was selected to participate in the Principal's Center for the Garden State during the summer of 2001, and a large part of my leadership platform has been formed by the experience made possible through Dodge. As a part of that award, I received a scholarship to participate in a program called Accelerated Certification in the Let Me Learn Process® (LML). That experience helped me to know my learning patterns and myself as a learner. The experience not only opened my mind to understand the complexity of learning in a manner I had not before experienced, but it also put me in contact with other educators throughout the United States and abroad who used the Process within their schools and found it to be a freeing and highly positive experience for both students and teachers (Calleja, 1998; Johnston, J., 1998).

Over the six months in which I participated in the LML accelerated certification process, I learned that the Let Me Learn prepares not only teachers but learners, to be accountable for their learning outcomes. This is its most compelling feature. The Let Me Learn Process® provides learners with the means to understand who they are as learners and articulate that awareness to their teachers, peers, coaches and mentors. Learners who are a part of this advanced

learning system can use their specially crafted learning tactics to decode test items, work independently, and solve learning problems. For example, students can understand what approach to take to respond to a specific test item because they can decipher the language of testing. They can crack the mystique of the intention behind the question and the type of answer that will result in full credit for their response. Learners can know how to manage their natural tendencies to respond with too many details or not enough; too much imagination or too little. They know what the key words within test items are calling for and how to make sense of them. They know how to take who they are as learners and make their performance count!

I was impressed with the data outcomes reported. For example preliminary findings suggest that participation in this process for 1-3 years has empowered underachievers to be more successful on the written portion of high stakes assessments (Pfeffer, 2000; Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004), allowed traditional students to become open and receptive to others who do not learn as they do, and enabled learners with diverse approaches to learning to participate equally in classroom learning communities Most importantly students who had previously been marginalized in their reading, math, and science performance are able to use their learning processes to a degree not previously demonstrated in the classroom (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004). In classrooms where this process is in place, referrals to special education, pupil assistance committees, and child study teams has been reduced by one-third while discipline referrals have been cut in half (1998; 2000).

After spending a morning with students and teachers involved in the Let Me Learn Process® at an elementary school no more than six miles from my school location in Salem County (one of four districts in which this process is used) the then New Jersey Commissioner of Education, Leo Klagholz, made the following comments "I was really impressed this morning with both the children's and the teachers' ability to articulate how they learn and to apply it to their class work. You have really made the connection here big time. You remind me of the importance of continually examining what schooling and learning ought to be about. You have brought these all together through the Let Me Learn Process® – to a degree that is unusual, to a degree that I haven't seen before" (June 1, 1998).

Consequently I chose the theoretical frame of the Let Me Learn Process® to use in as my theoretical framework for Cycle II. I believe that the LML Process interfaces well with the emancipatory framework that is central to my Cycle II study. I see the use of the LML Process as an opportunity for the students involved in the Cycle II research project to move from marginalization, to emancipation, to legitimatization. The Let Me Learn Process® is a major contributing factor to the leadership decisions that I have made, the knowledge base that I bring into this study, and the way that I have organized this study. A description of the underlying constructs of the LML Process follows. The reader will note the linkage between my leadership goal of emancipation of the learner and the intervention, which I have chosen to use to achieve this outcome.

An Authentic Model of Learning

The Let Me Learn Process® (LMLP) is based upon the most current understanding of the human brain-mind connection. It is rooted in a theory of learning that recognizes the centrality of our operational patterned processes and their link to metacognition and reflective practice. The Let Me Learn Process® posits that our learning processes involve the use of four internal patterns – each made up of the interaction of cognition, conation, and affectation – that form the framework in which the learner operates. Cognitive scientists have long held that the mind operates through the use of individualized patterning, or schema Pay (1981) referred to these schemas as 'patterns of activation and organization' (p.4), while Kolb (1984) called them 'individual possibility-processing structures' or 'consistent patterns of transactions with the world' (p.97). Keefe & Languis (1983) described the schema as the composite characteristics of cognitive, affective, and physiological factors that serve as 'relatively stable indicators of how a learner perceives, interacts with and responds to the learning environment' (np).

A key characteristic of the LMLP is the fact that it provides learners with a lexicon to describe their interactive use of synchronous patterns of mental processing (Flavell, Green & Flavell, 2000; Snow & Jackson, 1992; Johnston, 1996; Johnston, 1998). The cognitive strands of mental acuity, memory, range of experiences, and the ability to work with abstractions or concreteness; the conative cords of natural skill, pace, autonomy, use of personal 'tools' and degree of engaged energy; and the affective threads of feelings, values, and sense of self combine to form and individual's patterns of 1) sequence and organization 2)

specificity and precision 3) technical performance and reasoning, and 4) confluence and risk-taking. Each pattern is distinct from the other; each contributes to the other; each builds the wholeness of our learning processes.

Table 3.1   A Summary of Our Interactive Learning Processes

	How I think	How I do things	How I feel	What I might say
Sequential Process	▪ I organize information ▪ I mentally analyze data ▪ I break tasks down into steps	▪ I make lists ▪ I organize ▪ I plan first, *then* act	▪ I thrive on consistency and dependability ▪ I need things to be tidy and organized	▪ Could I see an example? ▪ I need more time to double-check my work ▪ Could we review those directions?
Precise Process	▪ I research information ▪ I ask *lots* of questions ▪ I always want to know more	▪ I challenge statements and ideas that I doubt ▪ I prove I am right	▪ I thrive on knowledge ▪ I feel good when I am correct	▪ I need more information ▪ Let me write up the answer to that ▪ Did you know that….
Technical Process	▪ I seek concrete relevance – what does this mean in the real world? ▪ I only want as much information as I need	▪ I get my hands on ▪ I tinker ▪ I solve the problem ▪ I *do*	▪ I enjoy knowing how things work ▪ I need real world relevance ▪ I do not need to share my knowledge	▪ I can do it myself ▪ Let me show you how… ▪ How will I ever use this in the real world? ▪ I could use a little space…
Confluent Process	▪ I read between the lines ▪ I think outside the box ▪ I brainstorm ▪ I make obscure connections	▪ I take risks ▪ I am not afraid to fail ▪ I talk about things – a lot ▪ I might start things and not finish them	▪ I enjoy energy ▪ I feel comfortable with failure ▪ I feel frustrated by people who are not open to new ideas	▪ What do you mean, "that's the way we've always done it"?! ▪ The rules don't apply to me ▪ I have an idea…….

Table 3-1. A summary of Our Interactive Learning Processes adapted from 'A Guide to Implementing the Let Me Learn Process® (Johnston, 2001). These patterns represent how the learner sees the world, takes in stimuli,

integrates the stimuli and formulates a response to it (Allport, 1961; Johnston, 1996; Keefe & Ferrell, 1990; MacLean, 1978; Pay, 1981; Philip, 1936).

I chose this theory to underpin and direct the implementation of my study because it is not a "program" or a curriculum. It is organic in nature. It takes roots as teachers reveal their own understanding about how they learn to their students. It develops as both teachers and students engage in reflective practice about learning (Osterman & Kottkamp, 1993; Silverberg, 2002).

Over the past eight years, educational practitioners (K-16) have reported that the use of this model provides the teacher and students with a non-pejorative lexicon for explaining personal experiences; it gives voice to otherwise non-descript learning behaviors that are left to the observer to translate and interpret. Preliminary studies reporting both quantitative and qualitative data, suggest that once learners are aware of their internal learning processes and can communicate to others (adults and peers) what they are experiencing, they learn to use their metacognitive processes to meet the challenges of understanding the constructs of various subject learning tasks (Calleja, 1998; Johnston & Johnston, 1998, Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004). Studies within the US and abroad have revealed that learners as young as 6 years of age can report the degree to which they use each of four interactive patterns of mental processes and use a common lexicon to discuss their learning experiences with others (teachers and peers) (Addy, 1996; Hayes, 1996; J. Johnston, 1996; Johnston & Dainton, 1997; Mifsud, 1996).

Teachers launch the Let Me Learn Process® using the Learning Combination Inventory (LCI) (Johnston & Dainton, 1997). The LCI is a 28 item

self-report instrument by which individuals record the degree to which they simultaneously use each of the four mental processes (patterns). Since 1994, over 9000 6-18 year old students (including regular education, special education, dispraxic/neurologically impaired students, and Westinghouse National Science scholars) and 5,000 adult professionals in six different countries have participated in establishing the tests of validity and reliability for each of the three different forms of the LCI. Individuals completing the LCI respond on a five point scale from 'never ever' to 'always' to statements such as "I feel better when I have time to double check my answers: "I like coming up with my own ideas instead of doing everything like everybody else", and "I like to Table out how to make things by myself."   Learners also complete three short-answer responses to questions such as 'What frustrates me most about doing an assignment is……"

A tallying of an individual's responses to the LCI produces four scores each of which indicates the respondent's degree of 'use first', 'as needed', or 'avoidance' of each of the four learning processes. Responses to the short-answer portion are examined in light of a set of protocols indicating whether the individual's self-generated responses support or do not support his/her forced-choice answers. Once students and teachers are given this information about themselves, they are ready to begin the LML process. It is the effect of the LML process on learner metacognition, learner internal communication, and teacher-learner external communication that forms the research agenda for this study.

The Change Strategy Action Research Model

This research project employs an Applied Qualitative Research model using Action Research. I have chosen to conduct my research within an emancipatory paradigm. The use of an emancipatory paradigm allows the researcher to focus on a powerless group in a system and analyze the resulting inequities in terms of the asymmetric power relationships that exists between the students and the school staff (Mertens,1998). Systematically distorted communications, and thinly legitimized repression, are seen as the conditions for claiming an emancipatory interest because there would be nothing to be emancipated from, unless there is institutional domination in our life (Habermas, 1984). The existence of a powerless, marginalized, group of students in my school is a concern to me. I see these students through a different lens. The aim of this study is to create an environment where the study participants can emancipate themselves as learners. Through the research process my aim is for the participants of this research project to take responsibility for their own learning through the knowledge and use of the LML strategies. The emancipatory interest is the guiding interest of critical social research (Mertens, 1998).

Intention of My Research Approach

I am interested in exploring the power inequity that I believe exists between SLD students, at risk students, minority students, and other identified groups who are marginalized by their labels. I connect with this population. In my life, I have had to use cultural capital and habitas to exist in multiple worlds and cross borders to pursue my dreams. (Phelan, Locke, & Yu, 1998).

The intention of my research is to create an environment that will allow the learners to emancipate themselves by making them aware of who they are as learners, and allowing them to develop strategies to take responsibility for their own learning. The emancipatory domain identifies self-knowledge or self-reflection. Knowledge is gained by self-emancipation through reflection leading to a transformed consciousness (Habermas, 1983).

To create my model of intentional learning for Cycle II of this study, I have selected a class that is representative of the general population. This general education class is embedded with five of the seven SLD students from Cycle I. A combination of a special education teacher, who will be providing in class support, and general education Language Literacy teacher will team-teach the class. Both teachers went through the Awareness Workshop and Let Me Learn process® during the summer of 2004 to learn about that authentic learning strategy, and the influence that a person's learning patterns has on their learning, and to understand their own learning patterns, the impact that they have on their teaching, and develop methods of intentional teaching.

The teaching team developed a language literacy module to help guide them and the students during instruction. The teachers tracked what they did and how the students are responded to the instruction using their pattern knowledge. To guide students' learning strategies, the teaching team formulated tasks, problems and questions related to their own course. These questions or problems were designed to evoke and maximize students' problem-solving strategies, namely, linking their knowledge of their learning patterns. Additionally,

strategies, enhancing goal-oriented selection of information, and evaluating the information were emphasized, in accordance to the stated problem. Students were be pre and post tested, and the work product was holistically scored in the same manner as the State of New Jersey on the HSPA. The work product took the form of essays from picture prompts, creative writing, and reading for interpretation.

The teaching team provided students with individualized (written and oral) feedback about the task (s), and returns the papers with text specific feedback and will devote some teaching time to highlight the major or most typical mistakes, pitfalls and shortcomings. Students were told that the grades on their independent learning tasks would not influence their final grade in either a positive or negative way. The curriculum content for English III and the literature remained, however, as the primary course material.

I will be observing the classroom activities and recording field notes as part of the data collection. As the study participants move through the continuum from marginalization to emancipation to legitimization they will not only have the freedom of knowing what their patterns are but also their teacher's patterns. Through this pattern knowledge the teaching team will be able to establish a legitimate connection that will allow questioning and instruction to go in a two-way horizontal direction.

I will be examining the outcomes to help me make defining decisions as I look at the new demands I will incur and what I will be asked to do, as Salem becomes an Abbott district. I will see my evolving leadership through this document and the decisions that I have made and how I have forged this study

into a meaningful opportunity for growth and change and the enhancement of the educational system at Salem High School.

Identification of The Research Question

The research question that I am now attempting to answer is "Can SLD students and other marginalized students who are in general education classes at Salem High School emancipate themselves as learners with the knowledge and the use of Let Me Learn, an authentic, intentional, learning strategy to achieve at the same level as those Salem High School students in college prep courses?"

Data Collection

The goal of Cycle II of this study was to emancipate the learner so that they can go beyond their labels. The data collected in a qualitative research study, takes the form of words or pictures rather than numbers. There are five English classes in the high school. The teaching team, who received, the LML training, will administer the LCI to only the students in the target class with the embedded SLD students from Cycle I. The teaching team will help all of the students in the target class to understand their learning patterns and how their patterns impact on their ability to learn. The teaching team will help the students develop strategy cards. During the ten-week project period, I will observe the project class on a weekly basis and take copious field notes to record the development of the students in the class as learners.

I will interview the 5 SLD students and two regular education students in that class to gain an understanding of their experiences during the research project period. The written results of this research will contain quotations from

interviews, journal entries, field notes, researcher comments, and quantitative data such as standardized test scores and students' grades to illustrate and substantiate the presentation (Bogdan, Biklan, 2003).

Chapter 4

Results

I wandered lonely as a cloud that floats on high over vale and hill.
When all at once I saw a crowd a host of golden daffodils. H.W. Longfellow

An Overview

The intention of my leadership was to create an environment that would allow the study participants to emancipate themselves as learners by making them aware of who they are as learners and allowing them to develop strategies to take responsibility for their own learning. My desire was to move the learner through phases of change from marginalization to emancipation to legitimization. As a result they would not only have the freedom of knowing how they learn, but they would use this self knowledge to form a connection that would allow questioning and instruction to go in a horizontal direction where both students and teachers alike would develop a mutual investment in learning. Finally, as the instructional leader of my school, my goal was to grow in my understanding of learning of how

to make defining decisions that develop and sustain the ongoing emancipation of the learners within my school.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, I established a methodology for studying the effects of learner's self-knowledge on learning outcomes. This chapter, while maintaining the focus of my leadership journey into learning and learning processes, moves from relating my story in words to telling my story through data. For example, in this chapter the reader meets the subjects of my study through a series of data reported in tables. I show the reader the nature of my subject as learners, both those in regular education and primarily those who are IDEA classified students. I tell the story of their journey in school by explaining how they are perceived, evaluated, and assessed by others over the course of their school life. Throughout the reporting of the data, I remind the reader that each of these students is an individual with specific learning processes. I suggest at times how these processes have helped or hampered their performance as students. I later suggest how their learning processes, as perceived by adult educators, has helped or hindered the learning environment in which the student finds him or herself.

The data I collected involves the standard two forms of data, qualitative and quantitative. Student cumulative files, pre and posttest data, and student grades, form the basis of the quantitative data presented in this chapter. The qualitative data recorded was gathered in two forms: 1) Through the use of a specially designed workbook used by the study participants in their 11th grade English class; and 2) a series of interviews conducted with students. I also chose

to include a single interview with each of the teachers who taught language arts literacy to the study participants a regular classroom teacher and an inclusion teacher.

As I began to formulate this chapter, I recognized that if I were to report the data simply in numbers, I would be leaving my voice behind and relegating this chapter to the cold vernacular numbers. If I were to use my voice only without incorporating the data, I would be telling a story that could not be easily verified. The use of both the numeric data and my voice allow me to tell the outcomes and important intricacies involved in emancipating the learner.

Analysis of Quantitative Data

The participants in this study were all members of a general level English III class. This class was selected because the students were 11th grade and had to take the HSPA test in March of 2005. The teachers of this class, both the regular education teacher and the special education teacher who provided in class support for the classified students enrolled in that class, worked well as a team. The teachers were provided in-service training in the implementation of the Let me Learn Process®. The class was comprised of 19 students, 11 regular education students and eight Special Education students. The Learning Combination Index (LCI), was administered to the 19 students and both classroom teachers who participated in this study. All student and teacher LCI's could be validated meaning each set of respondent's scores fell within a combination of standard ranges. As noted in Chapter 3, an individual's responses to the LCI produces four scores each of which indicates the respondent's degree of 'use first', 'as needed',

or 'avoidance' of each of the four learning processes. A score of 25 or higher indicates, a respondents "use first" learning pattern. Scores between 18 and 24 indicate the respondents' uses these learning patterns "as needed", and a score of 17 or lower indicates the respondent "avoids" the use of this pattern.

The data revealed that the learning pattern mean score for the study participants consisted of the following; Sequence 23, Precision 17, Technical Reasoning 27, and Confluence 22. A review of these scores suggests the use first pattern for the group was Technical Reasoning while their least used was Precision. The results (Table 4.2) showed that the Regular Education and the Special Education teacher both used Sequence as their use first pattern, followed by Precision. The 17.5 mean of the two teachers in their Technical Reasoning pattern is noticeably lower than the students' mean of 27 in the technical pattern. The student mean of 17 in precision is noticeably lower than the mean of 25 for both teachers.

The data reveals that 16 of the 19 study participants have a score of 25 or higher in Technical Reasoning. This indicates that when attempting to complete assignments these students will use their technical reasoning pattern characteristics first. The data further reveal that all eight of the classified students in this study use their technical reasoning pattern first.

Table 4.1   Study Participants' Learning Patterns

| | Study | Learning Pattern | | | | Classification |
	Participants	Sequence	Precision	Technical	Confluent	
1	SH	27	17	**29**	21	SE
2	JV	20	16	**34**	21	SE
3	JE	23	11	**31**	25	SE
4	DK	22	20	**33**	28	SE

5	NV	**27**	29	**34**	21	SE
6	MC	20	13	**33**	16	RE
7	SM	23	20	**26**	19	RE
8	LT	19	19	**34**	22	RE
9	CM	**30**	13	**33**	19	RE
10	AW	22	**26**	21	25	RE
11	JB	**27**	15	**32**	29	RE
12	AH	20	18	**29**	25	SE
13	AK	**32**	21	17	17	RE
14	TT	24	17	**26**	18	RE
15	BB	18	8	14	23	RE
16	MW	21	18	**25**	18	SE
17	KA	18	19	**27**	29	RE
18	BW	**25**	**30**	20	26	SE
19	CC	21	20	17	21	RE

Study participants' Learning Patterns Study participant mean
Bold indicates "use first" pattern RE indicates Regular Education   SE denotes Special Education

Student Mean	23	17	**27**	22

This stark difference in "use first patterns" between students and teachers is not unusual in a general education class. The fact that students use their learning patterns differently than their teachers, has contributed to the disconnect that exists between teachers and students in schools today. The highly sequential and precise modality of the two teachers in this study is directly opposite the "use first" technical, and "avoid" precision of the study participants.

Table 4.2   Study Teachers' Learning Patterns

Pattern Mean		Sequence	Precision	Technical	Confluent
Reg Ed Teacher		**35**	**29**	18	16
Spec Ed Teacher		**29**	22	17	21
Student Mean		23	17	**27**	22

Bold indicates, "use first" pattern

While there were 19 students who were assigned to the English III class chosen for this study, only 12 complete sets of data were able to be collected. Some of the original 19 students were not present for either the pre test or the

posttest. As a result, the remaining tables will only include those students for whom there is a full set of data. The students in Table 4.3 represent the students in this study who have complete sets of data. The data reveals that 11 of the 12 study participants have a "use first" Technical Reasoning pattern. Eight of the 12 students are classified as SLD (Specific Learning Disability) and one is classified as ED (Emotionally Disturbed). All nine receive Special Education services. Of the nine students 5 are students who participated in Cycle I of this study. They are indicated in bold print below.

Table 4.3 Cycle I Participants' Classification & "Use First" Pattern

	Study Participants	Sequence	Precision	Technical	Confluent	Classification
1	**JV**	20	16	**34**	21	SE
2	**JE**	23	11	**34**	**25**	SE
3	DK	22	20	**33**	**28**	SE
4	**NV**	**27**	**29**	**34**	21	SE
5	SM	23	20	**26**	19	RE
6	LT	19	19	**34**	22	RE
7	**CM**	**30**	13	**33**	19	SE
8	AW	22	**26**	21	**25**	RE
9	AH	20	18	**29**	**25**	SE
10	MW	21	18	**25**	18	SE
11	**SH**	**27**	19	20	17	SE
12	BW	**25**	**30**	20	**26**	SE

The express purpose of IDEA classifying students is to provide them with supplemental services that they would other wise not receive in regular education classes. The classified students in this study were categorized and labeled since early in their school careers. Table 4.4 shows the nine classified students, the districts where they were classified, the grade they were in when classified,

whether or not they have been retained during their academic career, and the reason they were referred to the Child Study Team (CST). The data revealed that of the nine classified students in this group, one student was referred to the Child Study Team (CST) in grade five, one student was referred in grade four, one student was referred in grade three, four students were referred in grade two, and two students were referred to the Child Study Team in the first grade of their education.

Table 4.4   Study Participants' Comparison of Classification and Grade Classified

	Sending District	Grade Classified	Reason for Classification	Diagnosis	Retained
Study Participants					
JV	Mannington	2	Early Intervention Program	MH/SLD	No
JE	Elsinboro	2	Difficulty in Reading	PI/SLD	Yes Grade 1
NV	Mannington	2	Early Intervention Program	MH/SLD	No
CM	Salem	5	Poor work habits	SLD	No
AH	Out of Dist	1	Poor academic performance	SLD	No
DK	Out of Dist	4	Disruptive behavior	ED	No
MW	Salem	1	Disruptive behavior	PI/SLD	No
BW	Mannington	3	Impulsive, slow learner	PI/SLD	No
SH	Quinton	2	Lack of concentration	ADD/SLD	No

The reasons for these students referral to the CST, except for two students, who were referred for disruptive behavior, were based on poor academic performance. These students had IEP's each year that set goals for them to achieve.

Of the nine classified students in this sample, six of them posted a proficient score on the Language Arts Literacy portion of the 8th grade GEPA (Table 4.5). .

Table 4.5 Comparisons of Study Participants and GEPA Scores

	Study Participants	Classification	8h grade GEPA Language Arts
1	**JV**	SE	p
2	**JE**	SE	p
3	DK	SE	pp
4	**NV**	SE	p
5	SM	RE	pp
6	LT	RE	p
7	**CM**	SE	pp
8	AW	RE	p
9	AH	SE	pp
10	MW	SE	pp
11	**SH**	SE	p
12	BW	SE	pp

They achieved the same level of proficiency as those regular education students in the sample Other data pertinent to understanding the subjects of this study includes the study participants' standardized test scores. The primary high stakes tests for the State of New Jersey are the Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment (GEPA) and the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA). The GEPA and HSPA are designed to elicit analysis and critical thinking by the students who are tested.

The curriculum design for the General Education English III course is not geared to teach those skills. The General Education curriculum (Table 4.6 Appendix 4) requires students to use rote skills that in terms of cognitive development do not require higher order thinking. The Honors and College Prep curriculum are specific in their descriptions that they expect the student to analyze, and interpret trends, while the General Education curriculum intends to strengthen a students command of grammar and usage.

As viewed earlier in Table 4.1, the study participants as a whole use first their technical reasoning-learning pattern first. This means that as a group these students seek concrete relevance in their required activities. They need to know, "what does this mean in the real world", and they only want as much information as they need. An effective curriculum for this group should allow them the ability to Table things out, seek assistance one-on-one, and record their information using the fewest words. As a group, they do not use the precision necessary to be successful on the writing prompts, which make up a significant portion of the writing assignment found in the New Jersey HSPA.

As a part of the intervention used in this study, the teaching team developed a Language Literacy module (Appendix B) to help the students develop enhanced writing skills as a result of their instruction. To guide students' learning strategies, the teaching team formulated tasks, problems, and questions related to both core curriculum and the HSPA. These questions or problems were designed to evoke and maximize students' problem-solving strategies, namely, linking their knowledge of their learning patterns to the tasks they were being asked to complete. Students were pre and post tested, and the work product was holistically scored in the same manner as the State of New Jersey on the HSPA. The work product took the form of essays written in response to a picture prompt, and a written prompt consecutively.

The teaching team provided students with individualized (written and oral) feedback about the task (s), and returned the papers with text specific feedback. They devoted teaching time to highlight the major or most typical mistakes,

pitfalls and shortcomings. In September 2004, the students in the study were
given a Pre Test to establish a benchmark for comparison to the scheduled HSPA
practice test to be administered to all 11th grade students in Language Arts
Literacy and Mathematics in December 2004. The Pre test consisted of a writing
assignment based on a picture prompt (Appendix B), similar to those picture
prompts used in the New Jersey State High School Proficiency Assessment
(HSPA). The pretest was scored on a rubric identical to the rubric used by the
State of New Jersey. (See Rubric Appendix A)   The results of the Pre Test
suggested the need for an instructional intervention.

Table 4.6   Pre-test Results

	Study Participant	Pre-Test Picture Prompt Score 1-6
1	**JV**	4
2	**JE**	3
3	DK	0
4	**NV**	2
5	SM	4
6	LT	3
7	**CM**	3
8	AW	0
9	AH	1
10	MW	0
11	**SH**	2
12	BW	1

For example in response to the picture prompt, three study participants
scored 0, which generally indicates that there was no attempt to answer the
question. One student scored "1", one student scored "2", three study participants
scored "3", and two students scored "4". None of the study participants scored
"5" or "6" on the Pretest. A score of "3" or higher would represent proficiency on

the HSPA. According to the data reported, three of the nine classified study participants scored "3" or higher on the Pretest.

The comparison between those students who scored at least "3" or higher on the pre test and those who were proficient on the Language Arts literacy portion of the eighth grade GEPA is noteworthy (Table 4.9). Six of the 12 of the study participants scored proficient on the GEPA. This is compared with five out of twelve study participants who scored proficient on the Pre-Test. Of the six study participants who scored proficient on the GEPA, four were classified as in need of Special Education services. Two students IDEA classified were proficient on the 8th grade GEPA, but did not score proficient on the Pre-Test.

Table 4.7   Comparison of GEPA Scores and Pre-test Scores

	Study Participant	Classification	8^h grade GEPA Language Arts	Pre-Test Picture Prompt Score 1-6
1	**JV**	**SE**	**p**	4
2	**JE**	**SE**	**p**	3
3	DK	**SE**	pp	0
4	**NV**	**SE**	**p**	2
5	SM	RE	pp	4
6	LT	RE	**p**	3
7	**CM**	**SE**	pp	3
8	AW	RE	**p**	0
9	AH	**SE**	pp	1
10	MW	**SE**	pp	0
11	**SH**	**SE**	**p**	2
12	BW	**SE**	pp	1

The data is inconclusive as to why a higher percentage of study participants were proficient on the 8th grade GEPA than were proficient three years later on the pretest. Several factors may have contributed including the testing environment,

the potentially more difficult writing assignment, and the curriculum that these students have been exposed to for the last three years.

The study participants had varying degrees of success their first two years in Language Arts Literacy (Table 4.10). Four of the 12 study participants were in a Resource Room Language Arts Literacy class in the ninth grade.

Table 4.8   Comparison of English Grades

	Study Participant	English 9 Final Grade	English 10 Final Grade
1	**JV**	87	80
2	**JE**	80	71
3	DK	*77	*84
4	**NV**	83	74
5	SM	76	77
6	LT	79	71
7	**CM**	*87	*82
8	AW	79	72
9	AH	*90	56
10	MW	*79	77
11	**SH**	76	59
12	BW	86	49

The data reveals that four of the 12 study participants had a grade of 85 which converts to a letter grade of B or higher in their 9th grade year. Two of those four study participants were in a Special Education resource room for the Language Arts Literacy. The data further reveals that during their 10th grade year, none of the 12 study participants earned a grade higher than 84, and three study participants earned failing grades. Of the four study participants who were in Resource Room Language Arts Literacy in the 9th grade, two of those study participants were in the resource room during their 10th grade year Language Arts Literacy instruction.

At the end of twelve weeks, the study participants, and the entire 11th grade class at Salem High School took the "S-Test" which is a HPSA practice test. The test was a "released" New Jersey 2001 HSPA. The language arts literacy portion of the test contained two writing assignments. One was a picture prompt and the other was a persuasive writing assignment that required the study participants to write an essay based on written directions. Tables 4.2 and 4.3 present the study participants scores on the on-demand prompts used in the Post-Test. Table 4.2 reports data associated with the picture prompt and scored on a six-point rubric. Table 4.3 reports data associated with the persuasive writing essay and was scored on a 12-point rubric. For comparison purposes, I have displayed the data in Table 4.11 which represents the mean scores of Posttest A for the regular education students in the total population of 11th grade English III in all three levels, General College Prep and Honors, who took the posttest. No classified student scores are reflected in this data. The data in Table 4.12 reflects the mean scores for the study participants for the Pre test and Posttest A. Both tests required students to write an essay from a picture prompt.

Table 4.9 Mean Score Regular Ed Students on Posttest A

All Regular Education Students Mean Posttest A
3.5

Table 4.10   Comparison of Mean Pretest and Posttest A

Study	Participants
Mean	Mean
Pre Test	Posttest A
1.9	3.0

The data shows that the study participants scored lower on posttest A than the regular education student population. The study participant's mean for the pretest and posttest A were tested for statistical significance. Due to the small sample a two-tailed t-test was used. The two-tailed test was used to test the null hypothesis (Ho). The Ho was stated as; the mean score for the study participants on Posttest A is not different from the mean of the study participants on the pretest. The Research Hypothesis (HI) was stated as; the mean score for study participants on the posttest is different from the mean score of the study participants on the posttest. In other words the mean difference between the two tests is not zero.

If the t value is higher than the critical value from the table, then; the finding is significant, you reject the null hypothesis, and the probability is small that the difference happened by chance. Using standard statistical formulas the

data revealed that there was a Standard Deviation (*S*) of 2.34 on the pretest, and a

Standard Deviation of 1.5 on Posttest A.

$$S = \sqrt{\frac{1}{n-1}\sum_{i=1}^{n}\left(X_i - \overline{X}\right)^2}$$ n = 12

S pre test = 2.34

$$S = \sqrt{\frac{1}{n-1}\sum_{i=1}^{n}\left(X_i - \overline{X}\right)^2}$$ n = 12

S posttest A = 1.5

When a decrease in standard deviation occurs between a pre test and a
posttest value that is an indication that the intervention strategy has worked.
More compelling was the results of the t-test for statistical significance. Applying
standard statistical analysis, the t value for the set of pretest and post test A data
was 2.5; the critical value for that population from the data table was 2.28 where
α= 0.05. This difference indicates that the intervention strategies contributed
significantly to the study participant's ability to perform better on Posttest A.

$$t = \frac{\overline{X}_T - \overline{X}_C}{\sqrt{\frac{var_T}{n_T} + \frac{var_C}{n_C}}}$$

t = 2.5

When we look at the study participants with respect to classification and Posttest scores, nine of the 12 study participants received "3" or higher on Posttest A (picture prompt) (Table 4.11). This score would represent a proficient level on the HSPA or GEPA test. Each of the three Regular Education study participants received a score of "4" on Posttest A, the picture prompt. The data showed that on Posttest B, 11 out of the 12 study participants received "6" or higher on that portion of the test, which would represent proficiency on the GEPA or HSPA.

Table 4.11 Comparison of Scores on Posttest A and Posttest B

Study Participant	Classification	Post-Test A Picture Prompt Score 1-6	Post-Test B Persuasive Essay Score 1-12
JV	SE	3	6
JE	SE	3	6
DK	SE	3	6
NV	SE	3	7
SM	RE	4	7
LT	RE	4	7
CM	SE	2	6
AW	RE	4	7
AH	SE	3	6
MW	SE	2	4
SH	SE	4	6
BW	SE	1	6

The results of posttest B also revealed that eight out of the 9 Special Education study participants scored "6" or higher. Of the three Special Education study participants who scored below "3" on posttest A, two of them scored "6" or above on posttest B. The data in table 4.14 compares the study participant's performance on the 8th grade GEPA, the pretest and posttest A and posttest B.

Table 4.12 Comparison of Pretest Posttest A&B and GEPA Results

Study Participant	GEPA LA 8th gr test	Pre-Test Picture Prompt Score 1-6	Post-Test A Picture Prompt Score 1-6	Post-Test B Persuasive Essay Score 1-12
JV	p	4	3	6
JE	P	3	3	6
DK	PP	0	3	6
NV	P	2	3	7
SM	PP	4	4	7
LT	P	3	4	7
CM	PP	3	2	6
AW	P	0	4	7
AH	PP	1	3	6
MW	PP	0	2	4
SH	P	2	4	6
BW	PP	1	1	6

The data indicates that gains were achieved for 10 of the 12 study participants between the pretest given in September of 2004, and the posttest given in December. Six of the seven study participants, who scored less than 3 on the pretest, scored 3 or more on posttest A. The data also revealed that five of the six study participants who scored partially proficient on the Langue Arts Literacy portion of the GEPA, scored "6" on Posttest B, the GEPA or HSPA. Posttest B the Persuasive Essay. The data suggests that a positive shift in written expression occurred in the 12 study participants between September 2004 and December 2004

Analysis of Qualitative Data

In addition to the quantitative data, qualitative data was collected using an interview protocol. The 12 study participants were asked a series of questions to assess to what degree they had achieved competence in the knowledge and use of

their learning patterns as applied to their language literacy skills. In addition both teachers who participated in the study participated in an interview. The data in Table 4.13 below represent the study participants' responses to the first item on the questionnaire.

Table 4.13   Responses to Interview Question 1

Question 1: Please tell me your learning pattern

Initials	Sequence	Precision	Technical	Confluent	Response
JV	25	19	**35**	26	S2, P1, T3, C4
JE	23	11	**34**	25	S3, P4, T1, C2
DK	22	20	**33**	28	S3, P4, T1, C2
NV	27	19	**35**	30	S3 P4, T1, C2
SM	23	20	**26**	19	S3, P4, T1, C2
LT	19	19	**34**	22	S2, P4, T1, C3
CM	30	13	**33**	19	S3, P2, T1, C4
AW	20	23	**27**	24	S1, P4, T2, C3
AH	20	18	**29**	25	S4, P3, T1, C2
MW	21	18	**25**	18	S3, P2, T1, C4
SH	**27**	19	20	17	S27, P_,T C17
BW	**32**	27	**25**	23	S1, P2, T4, C3

In an attempt to answer this question, 11out of 12 study participants used the digits 1 to 4 to indicate which was their use first pattern. Eight out of the 12 study participants successfully identified their use first pattern.   .

Table 4.14   Responses to Interview Question 2

Question 2: Please explain the meaning of each learning pattern as it pertains to you.
.

Initials	Sequence	Precision	Technical	Confluent	Response
JV	25	19	**35**	26	The S pattern is how you are tiltiled, P practice test

					lots of questions T training hands on C communication skills
					I am very hands on I like to do things alone I feel other people
					get in my way and slow me down.
JE	23	11	**34**	25	Tech, I use my hands and like projects. I don't like things in order
					I don't like things precise. C was #2 because I don't even know
DK	22	20	**33**	28	Technical I am a very Technical person. I love using my hands
					Sequential, I would rather have things done the way they are
					supposed to be
NV	27	19	**35**	30	I feel that 1 is good and my 2 OK I learn well off of my Technical
					and I like precision it really helps me seeing it as it is meant to be
					done. Precision is how I work the most effectively and get the best
					grades in English class.
SM	23	20	**26**	19	I don't remember the Learning Patterns. I do remember Technical.
LT	19	19	**34**	22	Technical, working on things with hands Sequential doing things
					in an orderly fashion confluence thinking planning before doing
					Precision to do things precise with specific details.
CM	30	13	**33**	19	I do more with Technical learning because I like to do a lot of hands
					on stuff
AW	20	23	**27**	24	I like to start with one thing and work my way down. I don't like to
					continuously do things in order I would rather not do
					things hands on because I would rather write
AH	20	18	**29**	25	I do like to work with my hands, and I have a lot of ideas
MW	21	18	**25**	18	Technical, Using my hands, that is the first thing that I think about
					C, asking a lot of questions
SH	**27**	19	20	17	S very organized P ask a lot of questions, T works with hands a lot
					C, lots of ideas dare devils
BW	**32**	27	25	23	I am a person who likes to know what I'm doing, and I am doing
					it right

An important aspect of this intervention strategy was the study participants' knowledge of their learning patterns. The purpose of this item was to determine how well the study participants understood their learning patterns and how these patterns pertained to them. The responses from the study

participants varied in their knowledge of the learning patterns. Students were able to articulate how they used their patterns. For example BW, *"I am a person who likes to know what I'm doing, and I am doing it right."* This individual leads first with Sequence at a 32 "use first" level. Order is very important to her. DK, who has a 33 in Technical, and a 22 in Sequence, answered, *"I love using my hands; I would rather have things done the way they are supposed to be."* SH, who has a 27 in sequence, identified herself in terms of each of the four patterns this way: *"S very organized, P ask a lot of questions, T works with hands a lot, C lots of ideas Daredevil."*

Table 4.15   Responses to Interview Question 3

Question 3: Would you tell me two specific strategies that you learned to use in your English class that helped you use your learning patterns more effectively to succeed in your class?

Initials	Sequence	Precision	Technical	Confluent	Response
JV	**25**	19	**35**	26	I have learned how to pre-write on a separate sheet of paper. It helps me get my thoughts together It also makes it easier to work an essay. also I can write a better picture prompt I also use pre writing skills in that class
JE	23	11	**34**	25	From September to now I have learned to read the questions before I read the story and see what kind of questions are there.
DK	22	20	**33**	28	Answer all the questions slow down and write what's next/
NV	**27**	19	**35**	30	I have learned that I have to put my ideas down on paper first then start writing quickly and neatly as possible. I also learned how to put my self in the position about the topic I am writing about.
SM	23	20	**26**	19	before we start writing we should think about what you're going to write first. Think about the topic.
LT	19	19	**34**	22	we learned about pre-writing. I also learned persuasive writing
CM	30	13	**33**	19	I started to read the directions more and started thinking more on how to get it done
AW	20	23	**27**	24	I can take a little information and do a little task to go step by step to make something work.

AH	20	18	**29**	25	Plot. Jot down ideas before you write them.
MW	21	18	**25**	18	5 sentences in a paragraph, write neat check spelling
SH	**27**	19	20	17	Read instructions 2 times and then rework them in words don't be shy to ask questions don't waste time on one thing go on and come back
BW	**32**	27	25	23	the first thing that I would do is write a sequential list the next things I would do is…I don't know

In order to gain some insight as to whether or not the study participants understood how to use their learning patterns with intention, they were asked question three. In response to this item, several study participants acknowledged that they had learned strategies to help them be successful in their English class. JV, stated, *"I have learned how to pre-write on a separate sheet of paper. It helps me get my thoughts together. It also makes it easier to work an essay. Also I can write a better picture prompt."* JV has a 25 in Sequence and a 35 in Technical. What is interesting about JV is that he is a classified student who was proficient on the 8th Grade GEPA. AW answered the question this way, *"I can take a little information and get a little task done to go step by step to make something work."* AW has a 29 in Technical and a 20 in Sequence. For this individual to be able to forge her Sequence enough to recognize the need to have order to be successful in her writing assignment is a good indication that she understands how her learning patterns influence how she approaches a problem-solving situation.

Table 4.16   Responses to Interview Question 4

Question 4: Have you used these same strategies in other classes?

Initials   Sequence Precision Technical Confluent **Response**

JV out	25	19	**35**	26	Now I don't rush right in and start a story I plan it
					because it help me in science class
JE	23	11	**34**	25	Yes, I've used them in History to do study guides
DK	22	20	**33**	28	Yes
NV will keep	27	19	**35**	30	No, in most of my other classes I am doing fine so I
					working in that direction
SM	23 or	20	**26**	19	Yes in my Chemistry class we have to write stories
					something so I can use the same strategy
LT	19	19	**34**	22	Yes, I pre write any story or essay that I write
CM	30	13	**33**	19	Sometimes
AW	20	23	**27**	24	Yes, I try to use the same strategy for each class
AH Wood it	20	18	**29**	25	Yes, Wood Tech. Jotting down ideas helped me in
					gave me a better picture
MW	21	18	**25**	18	No
SH	**27**	19	20	17	I guess
BW	**32**	27	25	23	Yes, I would ask a question

A major goal of this study was to determine to what degree the study participants were able to transfer those skills that they had learned in their English class about their learning patterns to their other classes The data from question four indicated that nine of the 12 study participants use, or sometimes use, the strategies that they learned in their English class in other classes. One respondent, SM stated, "*Yes in my Chemistry class we have to write stories or something so I can use the same strategy."* Another respondent, JV, *stated, "Now I don't rush right in and start a story I plan it out because it help me in science class."* LT added, *"Yes, I pre write any story or essay that I write."* AH answered*, "Yes, in wood Tech I jot down ideas to help me it gives me a better picture".* JE shared, *"I used them in History to do my study guides".* BW had an interesting response, *"Yes, now I would ask a question".* Although these findings are not conclusive, they do seem to indicate that these study participants learned enough about

themselves as learners and their learning patterns to recognize that these skills are

transferable to other disciplines.

Table 4.17   Responses to Interview Question 5

Question 5: What strategies did you think of to make your writing more, a. organized b. detailed, c. real life, d. interesting and different.

Initials	Sequence	Precision	Technical	Confluent	Response
JV	25	19	**35**	26	a. I plan out what I am going to do and use it as a guide when writing b. I go into detail through the question about other people's views c. It helps me understand how to write I do a better job with these skills d. I feel now I am ready it has taught me about the writing process
JE	23	11	**34**	25	a. When I am in English class sometimes I make an outline b. When I make my outline I put little details so I can remember them. c. I write things that happened to me or the way I feel d. Just write what I think
DK	22	20	**33**	28	a. I would list the events in order b. State facts use imagination c. Make it similar to my life d. List the pros and cons
NV	27	19	**35**	30	a. I put my thoughts down on paper to be more organized b. I will go detail my writing if I feel I have the time to do so c. I always try to be reasonable a possible it help me with thoughts d Most of the time I try to throw some different things in to spice it up
SM	23	20	**26**	19	a. Think about the question first b. Imagine what they want you to understand c. Put in examples that happened to you or someone you know d. Be original
LT	19	19	**34**	22	a. to start with the simple details and to end with a conclusive statement b. Pull facts from certain situations or facts of the matter pertain to driving d. Make it my way with my personality mixed up in different ways

CM	30	13	**33**	19	a. To make it organized for each topic that I bring up. b. I would explain each topic as much as I could c. I would compare it to things that happen around my area d. I would put some of my own stuff in it to make it different
AW	20	23	**27**	24	a. Think of what happened step by step so I can write it over b. Would tell some things that was read through the article c. think about situations that could happen or did happen d. Using words you wouldn't say everyday think beyond what is there
AH	20	18	**29**	25	a Places times, and who. b. Facts, expand the facts more c. Real people and real events. d. More action
MW	21	18	**25**	18	a. Talk about all the pros and cons about why you don't have to be 18 b. Get into the mood of the story c. Tell how some people have situations that they can't obey the law d. No comment
SH	**27**	19	20	17	a. Make notes and a rough draft b. Make sure I get the question and then go write c. Write stories about my friends' accidents and what happened to them d. If cars were made out of hard rubber so people
BW	**32**	27	25	23	a. e neat make a list think before you write b. I would use my imagination c. I would inject some life into the situation d. No comment

The study participants were asked to respond to item 5 of the interview protocol in an attempt to determine whether or not the students in this group were able to describe specific strategies that they would use to make their writing more effective. All of the study participants discussed several strategies to make their writing more effective. SM stated, *"I would think about the question first, I would imagine what they want you to understand. I would put my thoughts together and be original."* LT added, *"to start with the simple details and to end with a conclusive statement. Pull facts from certain situations or facts of the*

matter. Make it my way with my personality. BW answered, *"Be neat. Make a list before you write. I would use my imagination. I would inject some life into the situation.* MW, said, *"Talk about all of the pros and cons and why. Get into the mood of the story. Tell why some people have situations why they can't obey the law."*

The data from this item suggests that the study participants had learned how to use strategies for a writing assignment. The posttest scores earlier reported support that the respondents were able to organize their thoughts and write coherently enough to receive what would be considered a proficient rating based on the writing rubric. Most encouraging was the finding that the respondents were able to; 1) articulate what they would do to make their writing better; 2) Identify strategies transferable to other course applications; and 3) only one study participant could not able to describe himself in terms of his/her learning patterns.

The teachers in this study also responded to an interview protocol. Following are their responses to the eight questions.

GHD **Please tell me your Learning patterns**

RE Teacher My use first pattern is Sequence. I guess I am the kind of person who likes to do things in an orderly manner. I also have a use first level of Precision. I like a lot of information before I begin a project or assignment.

SE Teacher I use Sequence first. I like an orderly environment around me. Whenever I am assigned a project or do my lessons, I need everything in front of me before I begin

GHD **Please explain the meaning of each as it pertains to you**
.
RE Teacher I guess it means that when I teach I like to have the students well prepared. I expect that hey have done their homework and are prepared for

class, of course that is not always the case and that frustrated me. I like the students to ask questions, and when they do not, I question them.

SE Teacher When I am working with students, I ask them to show me where they are having problems. I then try to see where in the process they do not understand the assignment.

*GHD **What strategies did you teach your students to help them write more, a. organized? b. Detailed, c. real life, d. interesting and different.***

RE Teacher I did some things differently because I knew their learning patterns of this class because they almost all avoided precision, I stressed to them the need to make a list before.   I drew a chart on he board and ask them to use this format and fill in the necessary information before they started writing. With the picture prompts, I remind them not to describe the scene but use their imagination and tell a story.

SE Teacher I mostly reinforced what the RE teacher did. When I worked one on one with the students, I would probe and try to get them to put themselves in the scene. I would also ask them to try and draw what they were thinking to visualize their own thoughts

*GHD .**Do you believe that the strategies that the students learned helped them in class, on   posttest?***

RE Teacher I do. I think that the students had fun with the LCI. They liked knowing their patterns and the patterns of the other students. I think they liked knowing my patterns. It was some additional information about their teacher that they knew. Having knowledge of their patterns helped my understand they reluctance of some students to participate in cooperative education activities. And even though I still had them, I had fewer, and replaced them with project type activities.

SE Teacher I agree. Some of the students really responded to the knowledge of their learning patterns. It was as though they had a special knowledge that made it ok for them not to know something because they were capable of learning.

*GHD **Describe how knowledge of your learning patterns helped you in developing lesson activities***

RE Teacher Well at first I did not do anything to different. Later as I became more comfortable with this knowledge I began to look at my lesson plans. Were they too specific? Did they allow students with a high degree of Technical processing an opportunity to use that pattern to do they lesson. I also had to

nudge them to write more. I began to realize that they had to work harder on those areas that required pattern use that was not high for them

SE Teacher Since I modify my lessons from RE's I began to see a little shift, so I shifted my modification Since I worked with a handful of students it was really easy for me to say, I know you do not want to write more but in order to fully explain what you want to say more words are needed. It usually worked.

GHD Do you think that learning pattern knowledge is an important tool in instruction?

RE Teacher Yes I do. Teaching a class of 20 students with different personalities and different levels of competency is difficult. Knowledge of a students learning patterns is a valuable bit of information to have on students. Not only does it allow them to know that they are OK, if they do not write a lot, or ask a lot of questions, but also it gives the teacher a non-threatening way to address the issue. This knowledge of learning patterns helps to forge the student teacher relationship.

SE Teacher I agree. I have found that if I refer to a students learning patterns when I am correcting their work it is less threatening.

GHD. What could have been done to make this project more successful?

RE Teacher I would have liked more time to prepare for the project. Perhaps if I had the roster of students and their patterns shortly after I came back form the workshop, I could have planned my activities better. I did not know the patterns of my students until school started. It would have bee helpful to me to have had more discussion during the year about the students and their patterns, and how my lessons were impacting them.

SE Teacher I would have liked more discussion with someone on what to do when strategies did not work. Since this is all new to me, there were times when I did not know what to do next.

GHD Describe the level and degree of leadership you received during this project

RE Teacher I think that the leadership in this project was very supportive. I would have liked more hands on time during the project because there were times when I had questions. I appreciate the opportunity to try something different and the fact that I was picked was an endorsement to me by leadership that I was a good teacher willing to try something new.

SE Teacher For me I appreciated the support from leadership. I would have liked more contact and meetings about the project so that I would know that I was on

the right tract. But I guess that was part of the project. To see how we would do with a minimal amount of supervision. Anything we needed we got, and the principal was always here to encourage us.

The results of the interview protocol indicated that both teachers could identify themselves by their learning patterns. They identified different strategies that they gave the study participants. The Regular Education (RE) teacher stressed following the steps to writing, such as make a list, write a draft, and proof read your work. The Special Education (SE) teacher focused more on grammar, punctuation and spelling. Both teachers agreed that the strategies not only helped the study participants in the classroom, but they also believed that the strategies helped them on the posttest.

When responding to the question of how knowledge of your learning patterns helped you develop your lesson plans, the study project teachers had differing responses. The RE teacher discussed how she had to modify her lessons. She explained that due to the dominance of Technical processor patterns in her class, she developed more hands on activities, and projects. She asked students to write shorter assignments and reviewed them more frequently. She also minimized the use of cooperative education groups. The SE teacher who was in-class support stated that she did not change much of what she did in class. She viewed her role as support, and it was the responsibility of the Regular Education teacher to develop the lesson plans. She did acknowledge that the students were generally very responsive to the instructional material. Both teachers believed that knowledge of learning patterns was valuable to students and teachers, and that the most important aspect to team teaching is training. This view was consistent with

current literature (Austin 2001; Buell, Hallahan, Gamel-McCormick, 1999; Lanier, Lanier 1996; Fuchs, Fuchs, & Fernstrom 1992).

When asked, "What would you do to make this project more successful?" the RE teacher responded that she would like more time to plan lessons, perhaps an additional prep period during the day. She also stated that she thought that the entire 11th grade should have been included although she had no idea how she could plan for all of those students. The SE teacher responded to this inquiry by saying that she thought that we should give the LCI to all Special Education students. She believed that the pattern knowledge was a good conversation starter especially for students who are struggling with their assignments.

On the final question of the interview protocol, the teachers were asked to describe the level and degree of leadership you received during this project, both teachers believed that they received very good leadership during this project. Specifically the RE teacher cited occasions when she was disappointed in the results of a lesson and was encouraged by the principal to continue the process. She also mentioned the availability of release time to collaborate with the SE teacher. The SE teacher agreed with that assessment and added that she appreciated being selected for this project.

The data from this study suggests that the study participants learned better when they have knowledge of their learning patterns. These findings were supported by students' responses to the interview protocol. The data revealed a stark difference between the "use first" patterns of the study participants and their teachers. This is important because teachers often teach they same way they learn.

Problems arise when their students do not learn in that same way. The data seems to suggest that in this project the teachers were conscience of their learning patterns and their students' learning patterns and were able to develop lesson activities that allowed the students to learn and be assessed by methods that were consistent with how those students best processed information.

The data from this study also revealed that the study participants performed below the level of those students in regular education classes. This data is consistent with the earlier supposition that lower expectations and curriculum design may be contributors to the marginalization of some students. The study participants performed significantly better on posttest A than they did on the pretest. These findings were supported by a t-test for significance.

The data from this study also revealed that the teachers in this study believed that knowledge of learning patterns helped the study participants with the English III course content as well as with the posttest.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Implications

Give a man a fish he can eat for a day. Teach a man how to fish; he can eat for a lifetime. Anonymous

Findings

As a result of my leadership journey into this research project I have uncovered some disturbing current realities. First in Cycle I, I found SLD students experienced an inequity in power that prohibited them from participating in the learning process in a way that addressed their special needs. Secondly, I discovered a system of instruction within my school system that marginalized SLD and general education students alike. Finally, I found a more insidious phenomenon: an acceptance of the status quo both by the students and their teachers; a quiet acquiescence among the students and a passive tolerance of their circumstances.

The students accepted this because they had no means by which to judge whether what they were getting was appropriate or helpful. They had no means to compare and measure the quality and the appropriateness of the instructional services they were receiving. I saw that it wasn't just the special education students who were taught this way, but any student who is not considered Honors or College Prep. I recognized that one-half of my student population scheduled under the label of general education was being marginalized by the education system I was leading. These insights led me to use my leadership to construct and implement an intervention that would create an environment where the study

participants could emancipate themselves as learners by making them aware of who they are as learners, and help them to develop strategies that will allow them to take responsibility for their own learning, as well as emancipate the teachers from practicing extension. This became Cycle II of my research.

The data from Cycle II shows significant gains were achieved for the majority of study participants. Applying standard statistical analysis, the t value for the set of pretest and post test A data was 2.5; the critical value from the data table was 2.28. This difference indicates that the intervention strategies contributed significantly to the study participant's ability to perform better on Posttest A. Five of the 12 study participants improved their score from the pretest to posttest A, and 7of the 12 study participants improved their score from the pretest to posttest B. Ten of the 12 study participants have a "use first' technical processing learning pattern.

Students who use technical processing first would have difficulty with this type of writing assignment without coaching to help them tether or hold back the characteristics of that pattern. Their first tendency would be to dismiss the task and its relevance on interpreting an obscure piece of art as a feckless exercise. The data illustrated that with intervention; a technical learner improved his/her performance on an assignment that requires articulation of thought through the written word. Sixty-six percent of the study participants knew their use first learning pattern, and 91.6% of the study participants could describe themselves in terms of their learning patterns. This seems to validate the fact that the study participants developed practical applications for their learning patterns

The primary focus of the research project was to provide the study participants with learning strategies that they could use to be successful in their English III class as well as their other classes. The qualitative data collected in this study indicated that the study participants were able to develop some learning strategies that were associated with their learning patterns. These strategies, along with knowledge of their learning patterns, would allow the study participants to emancipate themselves as learners. These strategies will help them control their learning. These strategies will help them understand what works well for them. These strategies will help them recognize that even though they learn differently, they can still learn.

Conclusions

The data that emerged from this study support the notion that the intervention strategies learned by the students in the study were effective. The data revealed that study participants were able to articulate strategies that they used in their English III class and applied in other classes as well. The effective use of these strategies in their English class can also be verified by the results of the language literacy posttest as well as the comments of the study participants to Question 3 of the interview protocol.

While the data from my study suggests the potential of using learners' knowledge of their learning process to emancipate themselves from their current marginalized state, the data also raises some concerns. To what can we attribute the fact that 50% of the Special Education students in this study passed the GEPA Language Arts Literacy section, but can only manage C's and D's in their General

level English classes? Why were more study participants proficient on the GEPA (50%), than were proficient on the pretest (41.6%), two years later? One factor to be considered is the curriculum that these students have been exposed to. This disparity in curriculum for the three levels of General English III (Appendix 4), may account for the differences that I saw in classrooms.

Could it be that the English III curriculum for the General Education students does not require students to delve deeply into the subject matter? By design, it requires students to use rote skills that do not require higher order thinking. In fact, the curriculum has not kept pace with the demands of the HSPA. The standards and the content may be there, but the process of instruction and high student expectations are not. When Special Education students are mainstreamed, they are put in General Education classes. By having three levels in the curriculum, we insure that General Education and Special Education students do not grow and develop at the same rate as students in the two other levels because we do not require or expect it. We allow them, through the curriculum, to be mediocre, even though the HSPA requires a higher level of competency to be proficient. That is marginalization of that group and that group's learning potential.

The disconnect between curriculum design and curriculum development and lower achieving students occurs because many people who design curriculum believe that the skills and the structure of lower level curriculum is user friendly for the student who has not demonstrated a high degree of academic success. What this study has demonstrated to some degree, is that a population of learners,

who has been given a series of learning strategies based on their learning patterns, can be successful on a task that requires articulation and skills. Teachers need this information about their learners so that they can more effectively differentiate their instruction and teach with intention.

The purpose of the intervention strategy was for study teachers to develop learning activities that fit the learning patterns of the study participants as much as possible. When an assignment required the study participants to use precise processing, which was their lowest mean score, the study teachers provided the study participants with strategies to forge their less used learning pattern. These strategies included the following suggestions;

- Make a list. Do not trust your memory.

- Use process of elimination or deduction rather than guessing

- Write down questions for teachers

- Use questions of classmates to gain an understanding of why certain information is important

The data from the interview protocol administered to the study participants indicated that they learned these strategies and they not only used these strategies in their English III class, but they also were able to use them in other classes.

Implications

I approached this research study using an emancipatory theoretical paradigm. I saw the learners in this study as having little control over the options for their education. Initially, as a leader, I thought it was my responsibility to emancipate these students. Through reflection I realized that such a mindset put

me in the role of the liberator, the one with the power. In order for these students to be able to emancipate themselves as learners, they had to become aware of who they were as learners, and see how they were viewed by the educational system. To do this, the study participants needed to have self-knowledge and engage in self-reflection so that they could see for themselves what they needed to do to be successful, and why. The knowledge gained by self-emancipation through reflection leads to a transformed consciousness (Habermas 1984). Through the intervention strategy in Cycle II, these students have begun their journey to learn beyond me, and beyond the teachers who participated in the study.

The research reported in this study identifies an interesting dilemma in our education system. In order for students, like the ones in this research study to thrive, they require a relationship between their teacher and themselves. The teacher must also be willing to enter into that same kind of relationship with the student. The continuation of a teaching, learning relationship that involves the knowledge and use of learning patterns, may determine whether or not the students will be able to remain emancipated. If these students' new teachers are in the mindset that they have power over, or they view students based on whether they are in General, College Prep, or Honors classes and that's the way they approach their instruction, then these students may revert back to their old habits of underachievement. This is the challenge of Cycle III, Leading a Learner Centered School.

How do I lead a learner-centered school? How do I lead teachers to engage all students? The learners in my school need to become emancipated.

They need emancipation from the school's preconceived notions about them. They need emancipation from the teacher's pattern-disconnected instruction. Emancipation is not earned. It is internally grown and claimed as the result of students' need to overcome the tracking and a curriculum that does not introduce them or challenge them to develop skills. Students need to overcome teachers whose learning patterns do not naturally value their learning processes or understand their learning processes.

Even with the limited intervention strategy of the research project in Cycle II, the students grasped and used what had been provided them, the use of their learning processes with intention. Imagine if all of the factors were aligned. Think of what could be done! That is the focus of Chapter 6, how to lead the development of that process. How to lead a Learner Centered School.

Chapter 6

Cycle III

Leading The Change To A Learner Centered School

There were two slaves working in a field. One of them looked over and saw that the master's house was on fire. He called to the other slave, "look, the masters house is on fire." With that the first slave began to run toward the master's house, and the second slave began to run away from the house. The first slave grabbed the second slave's arm and said, "Wait, the masters house is on fire. Where are you going? The second slave replied, "Any place is better than here." Malcolm X

The Change Process

Although the emphasis of Cycle II was to study student learning, the emphasis of this dissertation remains the study of my leadership through the change process. This dissertation follows me on a journey to find my leadership platform and validate my espoused theory of leadership by the implementation of a change project. This project, executed by the use of an action research design, sought to investigate the degree to which a group of regular education and special education students in a general education English III class could emancipate themselves as learners by becoming familiar with their learning patterns and successfully developing strategies to use them in their classes.

Review of My Leadership

During this journey, I have constantly reflected on my leadership and the decisions I have made, the positions I have taken. I continue to see leadership as a subset of action and see showing up and engaging as minimum requirements. I

have high expectations of myself and high expectations of those with whom I work. I believe action and authenticity are human traits we must understand before we are able to lead. My leadership theory entails the acceptance of ethical categories such as love, justice, and freedom.

I view my espoused theory of leadership through this journey to be consistent authentic leadership. I invest in people, develop human resources, am sensitive, concerned and have an ethic of caring. In addition, the qualities of sincerity, trust, morality, service, loyalty, and genuineness are very important to me. As a leader, I give strong and gentle guidance and want to contribute to the lives of those with whom I interact. I have developed my belief system and my values over the years. This is why it was important to delve into my past, reflect on my decisions and mull over the reasons I made them.

During Cycle I, my espoused theories of leadership were consistent with my behavior. I realized that action and leadership were required by me if there was going to be any change in the way instruction was delivered in my school.

My Leadership Theories in use During Cycle I

Cycle I reflects the point of inquiry from which I began the dissertation process. This chapter not only recounted my first attempt to develop an understanding of the power inequity that I believed existed within my school, but it also served to point out that the initial problem that I was investigating was even more pervasive than I knew. It caused me to write still another chapter in my leadership story, one that ultimately helped me chart a clearer course to achieving power equity and student achievement for the underserved students in my district.

I was concerned with the differences that I saw in instruction, expectations and student/teacher interactions between the various levels within the curriculum. The underlining reason for ability grouping is based on the belief that stratified classes are more manageable (Tieso, 2003), that teachers are not trained for mixed ability teaching, only whole-class teaching, and that ability grouping seems to ease instructional problems posed by individual differences, making teaching easier (Oakes, 1987).

Teachers believe that ability grouping overcomes the problem of individual differences and makes classes more manageable and are reluctant to change their methodology. Yet research points out that students in low and middle ability classes spent less time learning, were taught lower level skills and knowledge, and were exposed to fewer types of instructional materials (Trimble & Sinclair, 1987).

At the beginning of this journey, I believed that ability grouping marginalized those students, (general education and special education), who were in the lower level classes. I still believe this. I contend that ability grouping is another way to label students. It favors advantaged students and locks lower tract students into an unchallenging curriculum that limits later academic pursuits and produces deleterious psychological effects such as decreased satisfaction with school, lower self esteem, and lower educational aspirations (Bempechat & Wells 1989).

Initially, I did not have enough confidence in my leadership to make suggestions or to take steps that I believed would help to remedy the perceived

injustice. I didn't want to step on people's toes. I didn't give my self or the process enough credit. My Espoused Theories were not consistent with my Theories in Use. My superintendent expected me to share what I had been reading and learning in the doctoral program. I was a little surprised that she was so receptive, but I should have been more confident in the process. I decided to expand the work with Let Me Learn that Dr. Christine Johnston and I had started in my school as the result of my Dodge Foundation grant, and I looked for two teachers who would be willing to attend the Let Me learn Summer Institute. The resultant intervention strategy that was developed with these two teachers became Cycle II.

How My Espoused Theories of Leadership Expanded From Cycle I to Cycle II

In Cycle I, I saw a group of SLD students and maintained that because of their special education label, they were powerlessness. I further maintained that because of this inequity in power, they were not going to be able to participate in a meaningful way to make sure that their special needs were being addressed. When I observed them in classes, I saw that their special needs weren't being addressed, but I also saw something else and that is, that *no ones* needs were being addressed. What startled me was the fact that the teacher was teaching a general education class with special education students in a very ineffective manner. I had been in that class before and hadn't noticed the student's reaction to the teaching because I was focusing on the teacher.

The shift in looking at learning rather than focusing on teaching occurred because I was very passionate about pursuing the SLD aspect for my change

project. One of my advisors referred to me as "being like a dog on a bone." I was tenacious and positive that I had a definitive study focus, and I really wanted to go after that angle. I came to the point where it finally occurred to me that labeling wasn't as much of an issue as I thought considering the manner in which the entire general education population was being taught.

After reviewing the data from Cycle I, taking a critical look at my school, and considering who I am as a learner, it was apparent to me that I needed to address the learning of a larger segment of my population. I had read Freire (1974), and Habermas (1984), during my residency in the doctoral program, and their writings influenced my thoughts. I believed the emancipatory paradigm was an appropriate theoretical frame for Cycle II, my expanded research project. I wanted to create an environment that would allow me to emancipate those learners that I believed were being held captive by an insensitive and uncaring system. I was convinced that my compassionate leadership would allow me to establish a meaningful relationship with those students because I understood their situation and their need, and I was empathetic.

What I did not realize was that I had misunderstood Habermas (1984). When Habermas talks about emancipation, he is speaking of a reciprocal emancipation. The emancipation is in the relationship itself. It is not in one person emancipating another. The emancipation that I thought I was going to experience for the students in Cycle I, actually turned out to be my own. I was emancipating myself from the previous relationship that I had with the

instructional process. This is why I was able to view these learners through a different lens. This revelation inspired me. I had to do something.

My Espoused Leadership in Action

I wanted to demonstrate that the students from Cycle I were able to learn. I wanted to create an environment where teaching and learning were done with intention. I view this as very representative of who I am as a leader. I see myself bringing my espoused theory of leadership and my leadership theory in use closer and closer. I also now understand the challenge that lies before me. Part of the challenge was to examine the connection or disconnect between my espoused theory of leadership and my leadership theory in use.

Theories of leadership show inconsistencies when applied. Observation and role-play with people in actual problem solving situations indicates that the theory that people espouse of leadership was not always the theory that they used (Argyris & Schon, 1974). A person's theory-in-use is what the person does on the basis of his or her conceptualization and interpretation of his or her espoused theory. Theory-in-use governs a person's actions and is not always compatible with the espoused theory (Argyris, 1976). In an effort to study my leadership through the dissertation process, one method of data collection that I employed was the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI).

The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) is designed as a 360-degree feedback instrument. The LPI is a 30-item inventory. The thirty items are spread over six major categories. They include the following: Model the way, Inspire a shared vision, Challenge the process, Enable others to act, and Encourage the

heart. The LPI-Self was used to verify my Espoused Theories of leadership. The LPI-Observer was administered to the faculty at my school in an attempt to verify my leadership Theories in Use. Fifty questionnaires were distributes with a memo to faculty who were asked to complete the inventory anonymously. Thirty-four questionnaires were completed and returned.

What the Data Revealed

The results of LPI indicated that teachers viewed my leadership differently than I viewed my leadership. Of the 30 items on the inventory, my teachers rated my leadership highest in the areas of: "Treats others with dignity" (8.5), and lowest in the area of "Asks for feedback on how his/hers actions affects people" (5.4). The staff also gave me high marks for "discussing future trends influencing our work" (7.9); "Sets personal example for what is expected" (7.9), and "Praises people for a job well done" (7.8). The staff expressed concern over my inability to "Show others how their interests can be realized" (5.8) "Seek challenging opportunities to test skills" (6.1) and "Experiment and takes risks" (6.3) (Table 6.1 Appendix 6).

As a leader it is important to be self-aware. The feedback generated from this instrument is important as I engage in the development of programs and policies to achieve my goal of a Learner Centered School. In reviewing the data from the LPI, I received some good insight into how my staff perceives my leadership. One of my most difficult leadership challenges during this process was facilitating the intervention strategy while attempting to understand my

organization and its culture. Leaders demonstrate their commitment to the values they espouse by setting the example (Kouzes, Posner 2003).

My espoused theory of leadership, authentic leadership, strives to invest in people, develop human resources, be sensitive, concerned and have an ethic of caring, seems to be consistent with how my teachers view my leadership.   In the category "Treats others with dignity", I received my highest rating, (8.5).   In addition, sincerity, trust, morality, service, loyalty, and genuineness are very important to me. These qualities were supported by the data from the items which included "Discusses future trends influencing our work" (7.9) "Sets personal example for what is expected" (7.9) and "Praises people for a job well done" (7.8). I also espouse to be Transactional in my leadership, and my teachers supported that as well. When responding to the items "Asks for feedback on how his/her actions affects people" (5.4) "Their interests can be realized" (5.8) "Seeks challenging opportunities to test skills" (6.1); and "Experiments and takes risks" (6.3), teachers in my school indicated that my leadership does not effectively address their needs in these areas.

My Leadership Theory in Practice: The Effects of My Leadership on Others

My leadership theory in practice, according to the results of the LPI administered to my faculty, has been somewhat different than my espoused theory of leadership. In the five leadership practices identified in the LPI, "Model the way, Inspire a shared vision, Challenge the process, Enable others to act, and Encourage the heart", the faculty rated my leadership highest in Enabling others to act. This seems to indicate that as a leader I have been able create a climate

where people are involved in the process and feel important. This is essential because teachers must be able to experience a sense of personal accountability so that they can feel ownership for their achievements (Kouzes, Posner 2003).

I received my lowest scores as a leader in "Encourage the heart". A leader encourages the heart by showing appreciation for individual excellence and celebrates the value and victories by creating a spirit of community. I was disappointed in this finding. On the LPI Self that I took, I rated myself 10 points higher than did my faculty on this item. I believed that my "Teacher of the Month" campaigns, and the recognition that I gave to teachers, club advisors and coaches, during the morning announcements, for their activities and achievements, were creating a sense of community. In retrospect, I generated these ideas. I do not have a "climate committee" made up of staff to generate ideas. I relied on my own perspective and competence to determine what the staff wants. This was a mistake. It manifested itself in the rating that the staff gave my leadership in the area of "Asks for feedback on how his/her actions affect people."

The results of the interview protocol administered to the two teachers who participated in the research project rated my leadership through this project as good to very good. They stated that they were given "freedom to implement the intervention strategy" without "intrusion" and they felt "special" and "honored" to be participating in the project. They both felt "empowered", and believed that the strategy should be expanded school wide. Apparently I was able to successfully articulate my vision of the research project to the teaching team, and they bought into it which gave them a sense of ownership to the project.

I have been less successful articulating my vision of a Learner Centered School to the rest of my faculty. On the inventory item "Is clear about his/her philosophy of leadership," I rated myself 9 on a 10-point scale, while my faculty rated my leadership at a 7.4 on a 10-point scale. A rating of 7.4 represents a frequency of "fairly often" as opposed to a rating of 9, which represents a frequency of "very frequently." Fairly often is not infrequent, but the difference between how I see myself as a leader and how those I work with see me as a leader is important to my success and my ability to lead the change to a learner centered school.

The Change Process

Change is a difficult concept for many people to grasp. I have conducted this research project within an Emancipatory Theoretical Frame work. Looking through that lens at change, I wondered why it has been so difficult to effect change. One problem that arises in leading change in an organization is that everyone is not at the same place when change is initiated. Some people do not want or do not see the need for change. When I reflected on the instructional practices at my school, it helped me to take a different view of that process and that allowed me to liberate myself from past practices and look for alternatives to what had been traditional practice. That is difficult for many people to accept. What has been difficult for me to accept is that not everyone wants to contribute to the decision making process. I did not realize that some people actually like to be micro managed. The feedback from my staff was useful to me. The scores represented means. When you look at the individual respondent scores some

faculty scored items very low, and others scored the same item high. To get a more accurate estimation on faculty views on these items it would have been helpful to have the respondents LCI scores as well as their LPI scores. This would have added a dimension to the understanding and interpretation of the results.. To engage people in the change process so that they feel ownership and commitment is the task of leadership. There is an old adage that says, "Good management is a necessary but insufficient condition for successful leadership." What is more accurate is that good leadership is a necessary but insufficient condition for successful schooling (Sergiovanni, 1992). I believe what Sergiovanni is saying is that good leadership is essential to a successful school, but alone, without staff support, is insufficient for success.

Defining Change

During my career, I have been resistant to change, especially if that change takes me out of my comfort zone. When I read the Four Rooms of Change, by Claes Janssen, (1975), I was enlightened. Janssen's work described the stages of change and what to do when you or others find yourself in each of the stages. The first room is Contentment. When a person is in that room they are content and feel no need to change. You are focused on maintaining the status quo. Then an external force, such as declining test scores or an ever-widening achievement gap requires you to change.

Your first reaction to change is often Denial, the second room. Denial is not always a negative. In the early stages of denial the pressure to change is often suppressed. Critical need for change will continue to pressure an organization.

Denying that pressure will result in you having no input in that change. Eventually when the reality of change has permeated the organization you will find yourself in the room of Confusion.

When you are in the Confusion room, you are unclear about yourself and your role. You wonder what do I keep; what do I throw away? Uncertainty, ambiguity, suspicion, and rumor share this room with you. If you are not careful, you can wither away in the confusion room. Eventually, the new vision begins to get clarity and you are ready to move into the fourth room Renewal.

The Renewal room is full of possibilities but one must be willing to embrace change. If you can make it to Renewal, you can find yourself back in the room of Contentment. People who continue to resist change that is inevitable will find them selves languishing in Doubt or Confusion. The Four Rooms of Change helped me understand that I liked being in that first room. When I did initiate or vigorously support change, it was to get me back into that first room. Once there, I had no more use for change unless it was needed to keep me in the first room. I now realize that change does not just impact an organization, but it also affects people.

With change, something is lost. Our disturbance with change is a reflection of a sense of bereavement. Any sense of bereavement impairs the ability to attach meaning to events or learn from them how to survive. Recovery from grief depends on restoring a sense that the lost attachment can still give meaning to the present not on finding a substitute (Marris 1974). When I experienced my ah ha moment during Cycle I, it also became clear to me that

first-order change alone was not going to provide the lasting change necessary to lead my school to becoming a learner centered school. To achieve that would be necessary to do something significantly or fundamentally different from what we have done in the past. The process is irreversible, and once begun, it is impossible to return to the old way of doing business. People make up an organization. If the organization is to change, the people will be the entity to facilitate that change.

Often what educators do in terms of reform is they attempt to reform the teacher but they never take the time with the learner. To be a learner centered school we need second-order change in our organization. Initiating second-order change requires that I identify and assess the potential barriers to change. Some of these barriers are common to any initiative for change; others will be unique to my school.

The insight that I have gained about my espoused leadership theory versus my leadership theory in practice as reported on the LPI Observer, is invaluable as I lead my organization through the change to be a learner centered school. What is critical to my successful leadership is to use the feedback that I received about my leadership and use it effectively. I must look at the messages in the data, and not focus on the measures. I must clearly articulate my vision to my staff. To become a learner-centered school, we must become a learning organization (Senge, 1990).

Leading Toward a Learner Centered School

The first measure that I want to initiate is to have the staff participate in the development of a new mission statement, one that is consistent with our

institutional values, reflects the complexity of our culture, addresses the needs of a changing society, and allows them to build a shared vision. To become a learner-centered school the teachers must become a team of learners.

We need a language for complexity. Without a shared language for dealing with complexity, team learning is limited. If one member of a team sees a problem more systematically, that person's insight will get reliably discounted if for no other reason than the intrinsic bias towards linear views in our normal everyday lives. The benefits of teams developing fluency in the language of the systems are enormous, and the difficulties of mastering the language are reduced in a team. There is no better way to learn a language than through use, which is what happens when teams start to learn the language of systems thinking. Language is important in order to communicate effectively we must have a consistent language (Senge 1990). In a learner centered school the language should be the language of learning, as opposed to the language of teaching. The Let Me Learn Process® provides a language for learning.

A key characteristic of the Let Me Learn Process® is the fact that it provides learners with a lexicon to describe their interactive use of synchronous patterns of mental processing (Flavell, Green & Flavell, 2000; Snow & Jackson, 1992; Johnston, 1996; Johnston, 1998). It is not a "program" or a curriculum. It is organic in nature. It takes roots as teachers reveal their own understanding about how they learn to their students. It develops as both teachers and students engage in reflective practice about learning (Osterman & Kottkamp, 1993; Silverberg,

2002). This dialogue between teacher and learner is the essence of the common language necessary for team learning.

Looking through my lenses which are often clouded with my own bias, I wonder if my school is capable of adopting a" learning framework" in order to understand and facilitate a more effective educational system. As leader, I must lead the effort to reform the curriculum and the teaching methods. I must insist that teachers have solid data on their students and that they study this information and develop lessons based on this knowledge. I administered the LCI to my staff two years ago as part of my Dodge Foundation Grant. We shared our scores with one another, but I did not make full use of the pattern knowledge that I had. I want my staff to interact with each other with this pattern knowledge. I intend to suggest to my superintendent, that the LCI be administered to all incoming freshman as part of their orientation day.

In time teachers, counselors and administrators will have learning pattern data from all students, the same way they have standardized test scores. Knowledge of a students' learning patterns ,in a learner centered school, can make communication between teachers, students, counselors, and parents easier and more focused. Learning pattern knowledge can facilitate the communication between members of the learning community necessary for critical change.

When I was in high school, I was good in math, so my counselor suggested that I become an engineer. It sounded good to me, so I went to college to study engineering. I graduated, found a job, and as I reported in Chapter 1, became disenchanted with that profession and sought a change. My learning

patterns are Sequential-processing 19, Precise-processing 26, Technical-processing 09, and Confluent-processing 28. These scores indicate that I avoid technical processing. I could care less about how something works; I just want it to work when I need it. If I had pattern knowledge in high school, I would have never chosen engineering as my initial career path. Leading a learner-centered school will require me to encourage staff to use this pattern information in all aspects of school life.

To lead the change required to become a learner-centered school, I must be able to distinguish between technical problems and adaptive problems. Technical problems are those everyday problems that people have the know how to solve. Adaptive problems are not amenable to authoritative expertise and standard procedures. When leaders look to technical solutions for adaptive problems they imply that they have all of the know how and answers. This can lead to a dysfunctional organization and leader burnout. There is a proportionate relationship between adaptive change and risk. The deeper the change the more learning is required (Heifetz, Linsky 1951). As part of a learner centered school where teachers and students alike are learners, the pattern knowledge that staff has of one another would stimulate the meta process among faculty and encourage them to begin to participate in some reflective practice.

The data from the results of Cycle I, Cycle II, and the LPI, has informed my thinking. The experience of this journey has energized me. It has provided me with knowledge and a richer and fuller understanding of my school community. This knowledge and understanding will help me articulate my vision

for my school and define my leadership and achieve my goal. The goal of my leadership in a learner-centered school is for all students SLD, regular education, Honors, and college Prep alike to be treated as individual learners despite their differences. My goal as a leader of a learner centered school is to have only one label for everyone, that is the label of learner.

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Appendices

Appendix A
New Jersey Registered Holistic Scoring Rubric

NEW JERSEY REGISTERED HOLISTIC SCORING RUBRIC

In scoring, consider the grid of written language	Inadequate Command	Limited Command	Partial Command	Adequate Command	Strong Command	Superior Command
Score	1	2	3	4	5	6
Content and Organization	May lack opening and/or closing Minimal response to topic; uncertain focus No planning evident; disorganized Details random; inappropriate, or barely apparent	May lack opening and/or closing Attempt to focus May drift or shift focus Few, if any, transitions between ideas Details lack elaboration, i.e. highlight paper	May lack opening and/or closing Usually has a single focus Some lapses or flaws in organization May lack some transitions between ideas Repetitious details Several unelaborated details	May lack opening and/or closing Single focus Ideas loosely connected Traditions evident Uneven development of details	Generally has opening and closing Single focus Sense of unity or coherence Key ideas developed Logical progression of ideas Moderately fluent Attempts composition risks Details appropriate and varied	Has opening and closing Single, distinct focus Unified and coherent Well developed Logical progression of ideas Fluent, cohesive Compositional risks successful Details effective, vivid, explicit, and/or pertinent
Usage	No apparent control Severe/Numerous errors	Numerous errors	Errors/Patterns of errors may be evident	Some errors that do not interfere with meaning	Few Errors	Very few, if any errors
Sentence Structure	Assortment of Incomplete and/or incorrect sentences	Excessive Monotony/same structure Numerous Structures	Little variety in syntax Some errors	Some errors that do not interfere with meaning	Few Errors	Very few, if any errors
Mechanics	Errors so severe they detract from meaning	Numerous serious errors	Patterns of errors evident	No consistent pattern of errors Some errors that do not interfere with meaning	Few Errors	Very few, if any errors

Appendix B
New Jersey High School Assessment 2002 Writing Prompts

LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY DAY 1 – PART 1
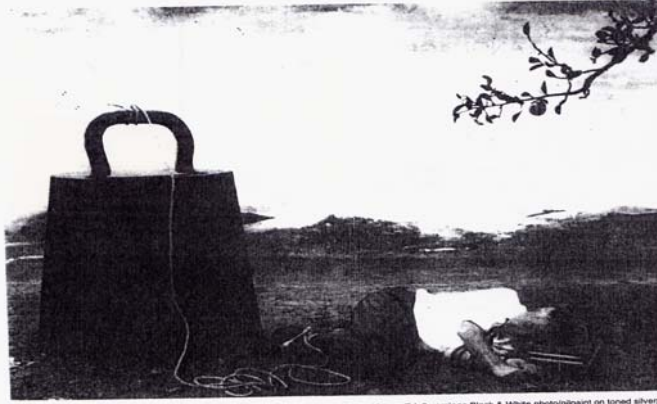
Teun Hocks untitled 1997/1998 117 x 164 cm Ed. 3 versions Black & White photo/oilpaint on toned silverpi
Courtesy TORCH Gallery Amsterd

WRITING TASK

An ancient proverb says, "A picture is worth a thousand words." Regardless of the artist's original intent, what we see in the picture can be very different from what others see. What words would you use to describe what is happening in this picture? Use your imagination and experience to speculate what the story is about or to describe what is happening.

LANGUAGE ARTS – PART 1

WRITING TASK 1

Directions: In today's media-driven world, the saying " a picture tells a story" has never been truer. More and more of the world is being presented to us in visual images. Regardless of the intended message of the picture, different people will interpret a picture in different ways. How would you describe what is happening in this picture? Using your experience and imagination, speculate about what is happening in the story.
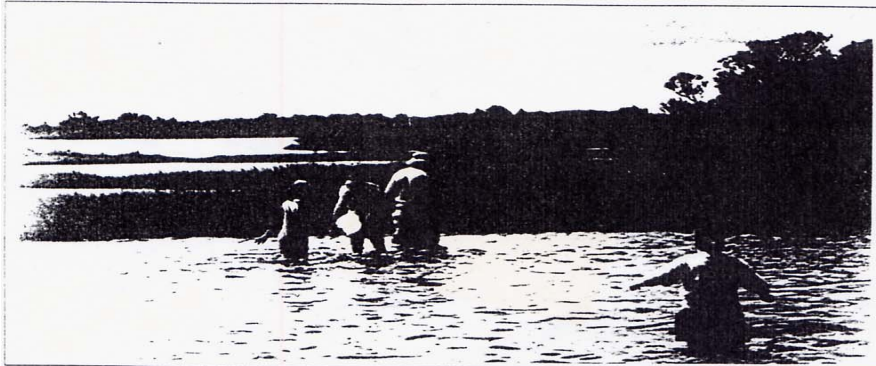
Write your description in your answer folder. Read the Writer's Checklist as often as you need. After you write your description, read what you have written. Use the Checklist to make certain that your writing is the best it can be.

STOP

You may check your work in this section only.
DO NOT GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

Appendix C
Salem High School English III Curriculum Matrix

Honors	**Description** Honors English III is an advanced course in Language and literature for students who have demonstrated superior aptitude for English during the first two years of study. The course is a survey of American literature, with examples of satire and selections from "World Literature" included, <u>designed to provide a framework for explanation and in-depth discussion by which students may acquire an understanding of the development of American literature.</u>	**Literature objectives**: Apply all the comprehension/vocabulary skills measured on the state HSP(A).~ ~Read and analyze a wide variety of American literary works from 1600 to the 20th century. Develop skills in analyzing and interpreting literature and its elements both orally and in writing. Analyze various literary devices and trends such as: figurative language, symbolism, imagery, and realism. Recognize how the literature of America reflects the changing values of its people. Employ critical thinking skills Determine author's intent. Content: Colonial Revolutionary, Early National, Late 19th Century, and 20th Century	**Research Requirement**, students are taught the formal research process and write a major (full-length, 12-15 pages) term paper on an American author and his/her works. Writing skills are emphasized, particularly in critical analysis and evaluation.	**Composition**: Apply all the writing/editing skills measured on the HSP(A).Use the "Process Approach to Writing." ~Use rhetorical skills Develop a thesis statement gather sufficient information provide logical supporting using both primary and secondary sources organize ideas coherently provide suitable introductions provide suitable conclusions ~Use rhetorical modes analyze a character and/or a work explain summarize/paraphrase compare and/or contrast support an opinion Persuade response (poem, passage, or picture prompt)
College Prep	**Description** College Prep English III is a survey course of American literature <u>designed to provide a framework for explanation and discussion by which students may acquire an understanding of the development of American literature. In addition Literary study focuses on analysis and understanding of author's intent.</u>	**Literature objectives**: Apply all the comprehension/vocabulary skills measured on the state HSP(A). Read and analyze a wide variety of American literary works from 1600 to the 20th century. Develop skills in analyzing and interpreting literature and its elements both orally and in writing. Analyze various literary devices and trends such as: figurative language, symbolism, imagery, and realism. Content: Colonial Revolutionary, Early National, Late 19th Century, and 20th Century	**Research Requirement** Apply appropriate research skills to successfully complete the full-length (12-15 pages) term paper. Recognize how the literature of America reflects the changing values of its people. Employ critical thinking skills such as: making inferences, comparing and contrasting literature, and evaluating literature. Determine author's intent.	**Composition**: Apply all the writing/editing skills measured on the HSP(A).Use the "Process Approach to Writing." Use rhetorical skills develop a thesis statement gather sufficient information provide logical supporting using both primary and secondary sources organize ideas coherently provide suitable introductions provide suitable conclusion ~Use rhetorical modes analyze a character and/or a work explain summarize/paraphrase compare and/or contrast support an opinion persuade response (poem, passage, or picture prompt)
General Ed	**Description** Regular English III is a study of American literature. This course is designed to strengthen a student's command of correct grammar and usage through application in written works. <u>This course will focus on the various genres to promote vocabulary expansion and comprehension in literary selections. methods for evaluating a literary work. ~Make inferences and draw Read, with understanding, vocabulary words in the context of their literature selections.</u>	**Literature objectives**: Apply all the comprehension/vocabulary skills measured on the state HSP(A). Read and analyze a wide variety of American literary works from 1600 to the 20th century. Discuss orally or in writing characterizations, plot development, and setting. Recognize various literary devices such as: figurative language, symbolism, and Imagery. Recognize themes common in various types and periods of American literature from 1600 to the 20th century. Content: Colonial, Revolutionary, Early National, Late 19th Century, and 20th Century	**Research Requirement** Apply appropriate research skills to successfully complete a term paper. and analyze a wide variety of American literary works from 1600 to the 20th century.	**Composition**: Apply all the writing/editing skills measured on the HSP(A).Use the "Process Approach to Writing. "Use rhetorical skills develop a thesis statement gather sufficient information provide logical supporting evidence organize ideas logically provide suitable introductions provide suitable conclusions Use rhetorical modes analyze a character and/or a work explain summarize compare and/or contrast support an opinion persuade response (poem, passage, or picture prompt)

Appendix D
Kouzes & Posner Leadership Practices Inventory

KOUZES
POSNER

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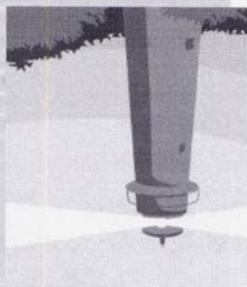
LEADERSHIP PRACTICES
INVENTORY

Feedback Report
for Gregory Dunham
Salem High School

March 21, 2005

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Leadership Practices Inventory

Contents

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Leadership Practices Inventory

The rating scale runs from 1 to 10
- 1 - Almost Never
- 2 - Rarely
- 3 - Seldom
- 4 - Once in a While
- 5 - Occasionally
- 6 - Sometimes
- 7 - Fairly Often
- 8 - Usually
- 9 - Very Frequently
- 10 - Almost Always

Model the Way Bar Graphs

- *Find your voice by clarifying your personal values*
- *Set the example by aligning actions with shared values*

The set of bar graphs for each of the six leadership behaviors related to this Practice provides a graphic representation of your and your Observers' average ratings for that behavior. Scores can range from 1 to 10.

Self   Manager

	Scale 1–10	
1. Sets a personal example of what is expected	S	9.0
	M	7.9
6. Makes certain that people adhere to agreed-on standards	S	9.0
	M	7.3
11. Follows through on promises and commitments	S	9.0
	M	7.1
16. Asks for feedback on how his/her actions affect people's performance	S	6.0
	M	5.4
21. Builds consensus around organization's values	S	4.0
	M	7.0
26. Is clear about his/her philosophy of leadership	S	9.0
	M	7.4

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Leadership Practices Inventory

The rating scale runs from 1 to 10
1 - Almost Never   6 - Sometimes
2 - Rarely   7 - Fairly Often
3 - Seldom   8 - Usually
4 - Once in a While   9 - Very Frequently
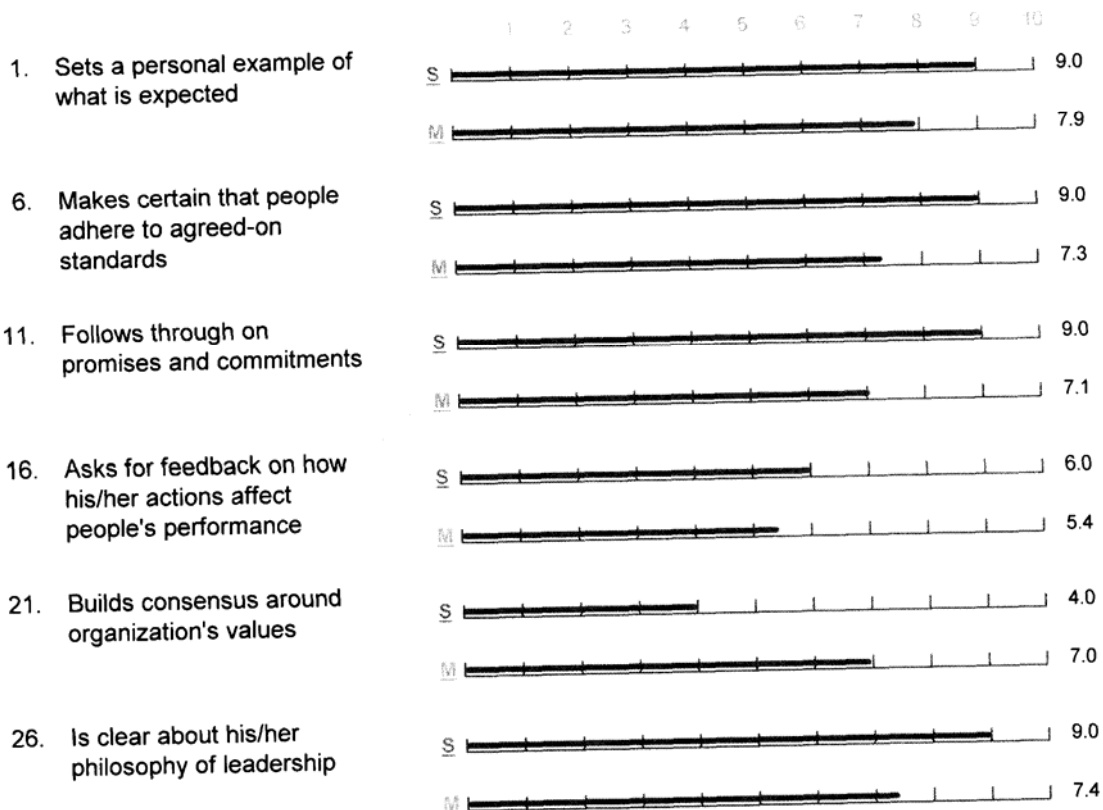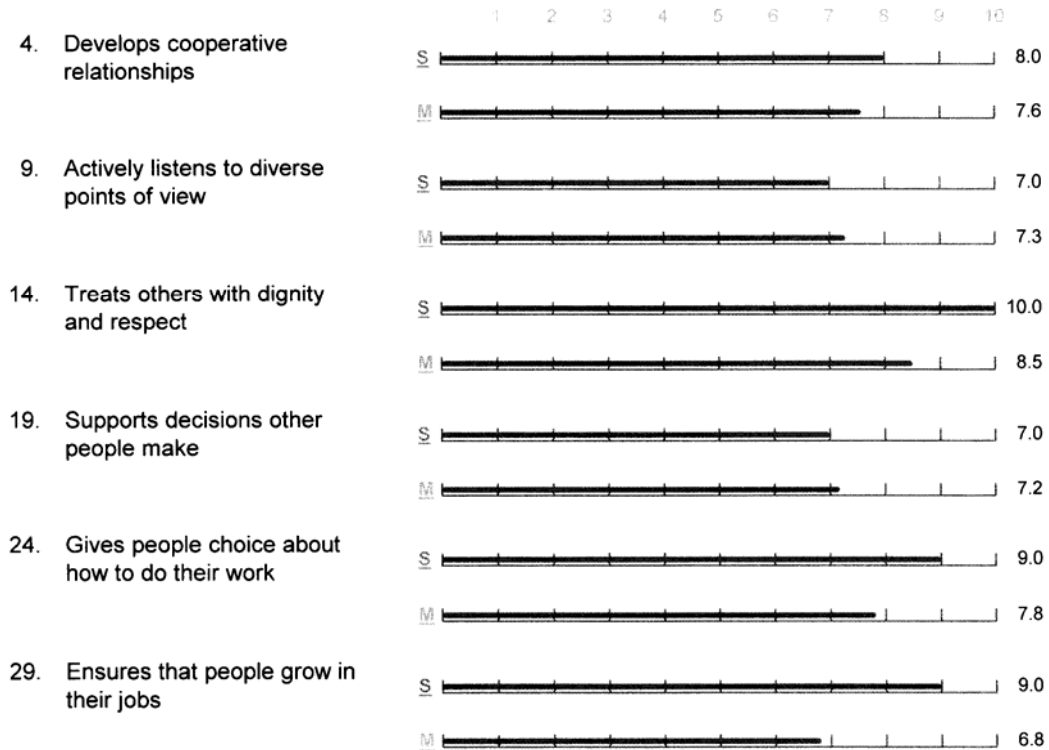5 - Occasionally   10 - Almost Always

Enable Others to Act Bar Graphs
* Foster collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and building trust
* Strengthen others by sharing power and discretion

The set of bar graphs for each of the six leadership behaviors related to this Practice provides a graphic representation of your and your Observers' average ratings for that behavior. Scores can range from 1 to 10.

Self   Manager

4. Develops cooperative relationships
S — 8.0
M — 7.6

9. Actively listens to diverse points of view
S — 7.0
M — 7.3

14. Treats others with dignity and respect
S — 10.0
M — 8.5

19. Supports decisions other people make
S — 7.0
M — 7.2

24. Gives people choice about how to do their work
S — 9.0
M — 7.8

29. Ensures that people grow in their jobs
S — 9.0
M — 6.8

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Leadership Practices Inventory

The rating scale runs from 1 to 10

1 - Almost Never	6 - Sometimes
2 - Rarely	7 - Fairly Often
3 - Seldom	8 - Usually
4 - Once in a While	9 - Very Frequently
5 - Occasionally	10 - Almost Always

Leadership Behaviors Ranking

This page shows the ranking, from most frequent ("high") to least frequent ("low") of all 30 leadership behaviors based on the average Observers' score. A horizontal line separates the 10 least frequent behaviors from the others. An asterisk (*) next to the Observer score indicates that the Observer score and the Self score differ by more than plus or minus 1.5.

High

		Practice	Self	Observer
14.	Treats others with dignity and respect	Enable	10	8.5
2.	Talks about future trends influencing our work	Inspire	7	7.9
1.	Sets a personal example of what is expected	Model	9	7.9
5.	Praises people for a job well done	Encourage	8	7.8
24.	Gives people choice about how to do their work	Enable	9	7.8
27.	Speaks with conviction about meaning of work	Inspire	9	7.6
4.	Develops cooperative relationships	Enable	8	7.6
8.	Challenges people to try new approaches	Challenge	8	7.5
26.	Is clear about his/her philosophy of leadership	Model	9	7.4 *
23.	Makes certain that goals, plans, and milestones are set	Challenge	8	7.4
6.	Makes certain that people adhere to agreed-on standards	Model	9	7.3 *
9.	Actively listens to diverse points of view	Enable	7	7.3
22.	Paints "big picture" of group aspirations	Inspire	8	7.3
10.	Expresses confidence in people's abilities	Encourage	8	7.2
20.	Recognizes people for commitment to shared values	Encourage	8	7.2
19.	Supports decisions other people make	Enable	7	7.2
11.	Follows through on promises and commitments	Model	9	7.1 *
21.	Builds consensus around organization's values	Model	4	7.0 *
7.	Describes a compelling image of the future	Inspire	7	6.9
29.	Ensures that people grow in their jobs	Enable	9	6.8 *
12.	Appeals to others to share dream of the future	Inspire	6	6.7
30.	Gives team members appreciation and support	Encourage	9	6.7 *
13.	Searches outside organization for innovative ways to improve	Challenge	9	6.6 *
25.	Finds ways to celebrate accomplishments	Encourage	9	6.6 *
15.	Creatively rewards people for their contributions	Encourage	9	6.4 *
18.	Asks "What can we learn?"	Challenge	5	6.3
28.	Experiments and takes risks	Challenge	9	6.3 *
3.	Seeks challenging opportunities to test skills	Challenge	9	6.1 *
17.	Shows others how their interests can be realized	Inspire	5	5.8
16.	Asks for feedback on how his/her actions affect people's performance	Model	6	5.4

Low

* Difference between Observers' and Self rating was greater than 1.5

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Leadership Practices Inventory

Percentile Ranking

This page compares your Self scores and those of your Observers to the scores
of several thousand people who have taken this version of the LPI. The
horizontal lines at the 30th and 70th percentiles divide the graph into three
segments, roughly approximating a normal distribution of scores.

<u>S</u>elf   Manager

	Model the Way	Inspire a Shared Vision	Challenge the Process	Enable Others to Act	Encourage the Heart