

## ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation:           READING INSTRUCTION FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH OR AT-RISK FOR EMOTIONAL IMPAIRMENTS: AN EXAMINATION OF READING COURSES, CONTENT, AND PRACTICES

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Students with emotional impairments exhibit a wide range of academic and behavioral difficulties within school settings. Academically, this group of students holds low grade point averages, have higher rates of academic failure, progress at slower rates, and often do not graduate from high school. Behaviorally, these students make classroom instruction difficult, often causing teachers to focus on behavioral management for these students rather than on academic successes. Within the participating school district, students with disabilities obtained much lower standardized test scores than their same grade peers. The purpose of this study was to investigate reading instruction for students with or at-risk for emotional impairments across three middle schools, 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades. Five students and seven middle school language arts and/or reading teachers participated. The seven teachers had at least one participating subject in a language arts, reading, or *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup> class in one or more middle school grades. Student cumulative school files were reviewed to obtain academic, demographic, and attendance data. In addition, teacher interviews were conducted to obtain data on teacher

experience, reading program knowledge and implementation, reading strategies applied within their classes, and collaboration practices with special education personnel. The evaluated data associated with this study produced results which varied between individual participants. Information gained however, provided suggestions for improving the delivery of reading instruction in the participating school district.

Reading Instruction for Middle School Students with or at-risk for Emotional  
Impairments: An Examination of Reading Courses, Content, and Practices

By

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## Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my loving family who without their continued support, I never would have had the confidence to begin. To my beautiful wife Robyn, I thank you for your patience, understanding, and continual loving support. To my oldest daughter Devan, your constant courage has been a daily inspiration, something I can only hope to match one day. To my middle daughter Riley, your shared smiles and laughter brightens my world even on its darkest days. To my youngest daughter Addison, your resiliency makes me believe, anything is possible. To my family, you make me believe I truly am a blessed man.

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## CHAPTER I

### **Introduction**

Students identified with or at-risk for an emotional and/or behavioral disability (EBD), as known in the Participating School System (PSS) as emotional impairments (EI), face tremendous difficulties throughout their academic and social lives. In 2001, Sutherland and Wehby reported students with EBD demonstrated lower grade point averages than any other disability group, had higher rates of failing courses, and roughly only one third of students within this disability category graduated from high school. They also found students with EBD were more likely to exhibit academic problems than students without disabilities.

Epstein, Kiner, and Bursuck (1989), Kauffman (1997), and Walker, Colvin, and Ramsey (1995) found students with EBD were far more likely to possess weaker basic academic skills than their peers with and without disabilities and were more likely to fail in school. Kauffman (2005) shared students with EBD tend to possess dual deficits with disabilities in both academic and social behaviors. Anderson, Kutah, and Duchnowski (2001) concurred by revealing students with EBD often exhibit difficulties in reading and frequently progress at slower academic rates than their same aged peers, including students with learning disabilities. Babyk, Koorland, and Mathes (2000) and Skinner, Robinson, Adamson, and Woodward (1998) found students with EBD demonstrated deficits in the area of reading that make classroom instruction difficult.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Kaufman (2005) suggested one reason for the low academic achievement among students with EBD is their teachers tend to focus their instruction primarily on behavioral

modification rather than on academic success. He concluded this practice has proven to be detrimental to student success. Yet, year after year, students with EBD are among the highest percentage of students removed from classes for discipline reasons, thus missing pertinent instruction from qualified teachers. Without evidence based instructional reading programs that promote academic success in addition to behavioral modification, students with EBD are at great risk for failure in school and beyond. Research also demonstrated students who lag behind their peers in reading ability will find it difficult beyond high school to find employment in a higher paying position. According to Barton (2000), 25% of the fastest growing professions have the highest literacy demands, while the fastest declining professions have the lowest literacy demands.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), commonly known as the Nations Report Card (2009), demonstrated the average 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading score was higher in 2009, than in 2007, than in 2005, and higher than the first reading assessment given in 1992. The NAEP, which assesses 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in reading, mathematics, and science, is a national criterion reference test conducted in all 50 states, Washington, DC, and in the PSS's worldwide schools. Data for the PSS system consists schools in Europe, Asia, and Cuba, as well as stateside schools which include schools in Guam and Puerto Rico. The Nation's Report Card shares the PSS's results along with the 51 other areas (The Nation's Report Card, 2009).

The NAEP uses data collected from all 52 areas to distinguish patterns in reading, mathematics, and science. For the purpose of this study, NAEP data will be viewed only in the area of reading and focus on students in special education who took the NAEP while in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. At an astounding 90%, the PSS can proudly boast that no other state or

jurisdiction has a higher percentage of students who are reading at or above the basic reading level, with 41% of its students reading at or above the proficient level (The Nation's Report Card, 2007). However those numbers can be viewed with skepticism, while the PSS has demonstrated success for a large number of students in reading, students with disabilities were not included in the percentages.

The NAEP, which does not break down disability categories beyond reporting students with disabilities, does present information troublesome for many states including the PSS. In 2007, NAEP identified 12% of whites, 16% of blacks, and 12% of Hispanics as 8<sup>th</sup> grade students with disabilities. Additionally, 2007 data demonstrated of those above listed students, 6% of whites, 7% of blacks, and 5% of Hispanics were assessed in reading with the assistance of accommodations in 8<sup>th</sup> grade (The Nation's Report Card, 2007). The 2007 NAEP reported for students with a disability in the PSS, 58% were reading below the basic reading level. While the PSS may promote itself on its success ratings for students without a disability, reading test data demonstrated only 10 other states had a smaller percentage of their students with disabilities reading below the basic reading level, with two states tying the PSS at 58% and four others slightly higher at 59%. Given the PSS students without disabilities reading so well, how is it possible the PSS scores are much lower for students with disabilities (The Nation's Report Card, 2007)?

In 2009, similar results were found with 8<sup>th</sup> grade PSS students outperforming their same aged peers once again. The 2009 NAEP Reading Assessment demonstrated 87% of 8<sup>th</sup> grade PSS students could read at or above the basic reading level with 39% of these students scoring at or above the proficient reading level (The Nation's Report Card,

2009). Boasting how well the PSS students perform and indicating the reading success that PSS students have, it is important to note students with disabilities were not included in either of these results. While the PSS is top in one area, students with disabilities across the PSS fair a different outcome.

In 2009, NAEP Reading Assessment scores indicated the PSS demonstrated success by decreasing the percentage of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students with disabilities to 49% who read below the basic level. Only five states had a lower percentage of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students with disabilities reading below the basic level. However, while trend is noted, of these students, the PSS fell behind 11 states to reading at or above the proficient reading level, tying an additional six other states with the same score (The Nation's Report Card, 2009). This brings into question, if 8<sup>th</sup> grade general education students within the PSS can outperform all other states and jurisdictions on the NAEP Reading Assessment, why does the PSS fail to do the same for students with disabilities?

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to provide a comprehensive review of quantitative and qualitative data to describe reading instruction for students with Individual Education Program (IEPs) with or at-risk for an emotional impairment (EI) during their middle school grade years in a participating school district which educates a large number of children with parents serving in the United States Armed Forces. As of 2010, the participating school district provided an American educational experience to 9871 students encompassed within 19 schools (nine elementary, six middle, and four high).

Specifically, the study provides a rich descriptive account of the type of reading instruction provided to participating students during their reading and/or language arts

class while in middle school in a participating school district (PSD) located within the participating school system (PSS). While participating students refers to students with or at-risk for EI, “at-risk” is defined as students who qualify for special education services under PSS guidelines in another disability category, yet may exhibit similar characteristics as students with EI, and have social/emotional/behavioral/interpersonal goals and objectives listed on their IEP. The PSS guidelines will only recognized one disabling condition, although difficulties may lie in additional areas.

Reading instruction is defined as methods used to teach reading behaviors that may include but not limited to phonemic awareness training, decoding and phonics instruction, fluency development, vocabulary development, and comprehension-strategies instruction. At the time of this study, students within 6th grade were required to have a reading class separate from a language arts class, whereas students in 7th and 8th grades in the PSS were only provided reading instruction during their language arts class. Supplemental reading services were offered to qualified individuals throughout the participating school district. One widely used supplemental reading program was the *Scholastic’s READ 180™* program.

While NAEP results are troublesome for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students with disabilities in the participating school system, the NAEP test is only administered every two years. The *TerraNova™*, a standardized norm-reference achievement test administered in grades 3 through 11, is a yearly, weeklong assessment given to students throughout the PSS during the second full week of March. Created by CTB/McGraw Hill, the norm referenced *TerraNova™* assesses students in the areas of Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. Obtained scores are then compared to a “norm group”

which is a sample of the national population of students that represent all gender, racial, and socio-economic backgrounds. These scores are used by the PSS to drive instructional focus, assisting teachers and administrators in the complex area of determining the strengths and weaknesses of individual students, and thus providing instructional decisions to better promote a student's full academic potential (Participating School System Assessment Program, 2008).

In 2008, the PSS disaggregated its 2008 *TerraNova*<sup>TM</sup> test results into four separate categories: all students (general and special education), ethnicity/race, gender, and special services (students with IEPs and students receiving English as a second language services). *TerraNova*<sup>TM</sup> assessment data for 2008 demonstrated there were 7736 PSS students in grades 6-8, who took the *TerraNova*, <sup>TM</sup> *The Second Edition* during the second week of March. Overall the PSS reading scores indicated the median national percentage (MNP) in 6<sup>th</sup> grade was 66, in 7<sup>th</sup> grade it was 66, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade produced a score of 72. However, while the PSS does not break down *TerraNova*<sup>TM</sup> assessment scores to individual disability categories, 2008 data demonstrated of the 7736 students who took the *TerraNova*<sup>TM</sup>, 604 of the students in 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade were students with an IEP. Respective reading scores for the 604 students indicated the MNP was 33 for 6<sup>th</sup> grade, 26 for 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and 38 for 8<sup>th</sup> grade (Participating School System Data Center, 2009).

*TerraNova*<sup>TM</sup> Language Arts data for 2008 in the PSS demonstrated results were higher than their reading counterpart across all students. Language Arts *TerraNova*<sup>TM</sup> data for all PSS students states the MNP score in 6<sup>th</sup> grade was 68, in 7<sup>th</sup> grade it was 74, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade results produced a score of 72. Yet similar to reading scores from the same



year, language arts MNP scores for students with IEPs were considerably lower than their same aged peers without an IEP. Students in 6<sup>th</sup> grade scored 31, students in 7<sup>th</sup> grade scored 33, and students in 8<sup>th</sup> grade scored 34 (Participating School System Data Center, 2009).

As part of the PSS, the participating school district yielded similar results across students with and without disabilities. Moreover, *TerraNova™* data over the past four years (2005-2008) demonstrated reading scores across the participating school district have not shown tremendous progress. District *TerraNova™* assessment results are displayed only by the number of students per grade level who took the test at individual schools. The participating school district's *TerraNova™ The Second Edition* reading and language arts results are viewed in Table 1.

Table 1

*Participating School District 2005-2008 TerraNova™, The Second Edition Test Result Scores across All Students*

Year	Grade	Number of Students	Reading Percentiles	Language Arts Percentiles
2005	6	787	67 <sup>th</sup> percentile	65 <sup>th</sup> percentile
2005	7	822	67 <sup>th</sup> percentile	72 <sup>nd</sup> percentile
2005	8	694	70 <sup>th</sup> percentile	70 <sup>th</sup> percentile
2006	6	866	66 <sup>th</sup> percentile	67 <sup>th</sup> percentile
2006	7	761	66 <sup>th</sup> percentile	72 <sup>nd</sup> percentile
2006	8	776	73 <sup>rd</sup> percentile	73 <sup>rd</sup> percentile
2007	6	740	68 <sup>th</sup> percentile	68 <sup>th</sup> percentile
2007	7	761	65 <sup>th</sup> percentile	75 <sup>th</sup> percentile
2007	8	666	71 <sup>st</sup> percentile	71 <sup>st</sup> percentile
2008	6	658	65 <sup>th</sup> percentile	66 <sup>th</sup> percentile
2008	7	671	67 <sup>th</sup> percentile	74 <sup>th</sup> percentile
2008	8	685	72 <sup>nd</sup> percentile	73 <sup>rd</sup> percentile

Understanding that scoring has roughly remained the same from 2005-2008, reading scores remained stagnant in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, while language arts scores improved dramatically. Could it be that 7<sup>th</sup> grade is the first year reading is not taught as an independent class? Throughout the participating school district, 2005-2008 *TerraNova*<sup>TM</sup> scores demonstrated, with the exception of two schools in 2006 where the reading and language arts scores were identical, reading scores across the district in 7<sup>th</sup> grade were lower than their language arts counterpart. In five of the seven schools which provided instruction to 7<sup>th</sup> graders, reading scores were at least 10 percentile points lower than language arts scores, with two of the seven schools demonstrating a 15 percentile point gap between reading and language arts *TerraNova*<sup>TM</sup> scores (Participating School System Data Center, 2008).

In 2009, the *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *Third Edition* was administered across PSS during the second full week of March 2009. While data from the *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *Third Edition* cannot be directly compared to previous editions of the *TerraNova*<sup>TM</sup>, scores across the participating school district continue to demonstrate a weakness in reading when compared to language arts test scores as viewed in Table 2. Data pose the same outcome presented for previous years: language arts scores dramatically increased in both 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades in the participating school district, while reading percentile scores decreased from 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

Table 2

*Participating School District 2009 TerraNova,™ Third Edition Test Result Scores across All Students*

Year	Grade	Number of Students	Reading Percentiles	Language Arts Percentiles
2009	6	735	71 <sup>st</sup> percentile	71 <sup>st</sup> percentile
2009	7	639	68 <sup>th</sup> percentile	73 <sup>rd</sup> percentile
2009	8	611	70 <sup>th</sup> percentile	77 <sup>th</sup> percentile

In the six middle schools that provided educational instruction across the participating school district, 2009 *TerraNova*™ test data demonstrated all six schools had lower reading scores than language arts scores in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. For students with disabilities across the participating school district, their MNP scores were well below the average reading and language arts percentile scores as demonstrated in Table 3.

Table 3

*Participating School District 2009 TerraNova,™ Third Edition Test Result Scores for Students with Disabilities*

Year	Grade	Number of Students	Reading Percentiles	Language Arts Percentiles
2009	6	42	35 <sup>th</sup> percentile	27 <sup>th</sup> percentile
2009	7	33	35 <sup>th</sup> percentile	35 <sup>th</sup> percentile
2009	8	39	35 <sup>th</sup> percentile	34 <sup>th</sup> percentile

In 2010, the *TerraNova,™ Third Edition* yielded similar results found in 2009 for all students, with reading scores across the participating school district continuing the trend of falling below their language arts counterpart as viewed in Table 4. Likewise, students with disabilities scored below their same aged peers with a MNP reading score of 35 in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, 43 in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and 40 in 8<sup>th</sup> grade on the *TerraNova,™ Third Edition*. This information is viewed in Table 5.

Table 4

*Participating School District 2010 TerraNova,™ Third Edition Test Result Scores across All Students*

Year	Grade	Number of Students	Reading Percentiles	Language Arts Percentiles
2010	6	764	69 <sup>th</sup> percentile	71 <sup>st</sup> percentile
2010	7	711	71 <sup>st</sup> percentile	72 <sup>nd</sup> percentile
2010	8	625	71 <sup>st</sup> percentile	74 <sup>th</sup> percentile

Table 5

*Participating School District 2010 TerraNova,™ Third Edition Test Result Scores for Students with Disabilities*

Year	Grade	Number of Students	Reading Percentiles	Language Arts Percentiles
2010	6	57	35 <sup>th</sup> percentile	37 <sup>h</sup> percentile
2010	7	55	43 <sup>rd</sup> percentile	41 <sup>st</sup> percentile
2010	8	47	40 <sup>th</sup> percentile	46 <sup>th</sup> percentile

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to describe and examine the delivery of reading instruction for students with or at-risk for EI having Individual Education Programs (IEPs) during their middle school grade years in the participating school district. It is hypothesized that one major reason students with or at-risk for EI perform poorly on norm and criterion referenced testing is because they receive inadequate reading instruction. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected at three middle schools that contained 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades.

As outlined in their 2008 Community Strategic Plan, PSS lists data driven decision analysis and implementation as a requirement of all teachers and administrators. Goal Number 1 of the 2008 Community Strategic Plan states “All students will meet or exceed challenging standards in academic content so that they are prepared for continuous learning,” and has two objectives that address the issue of using test data to determine the effectiveness of an intervention (Participating School System Community Strategic Plan, 2008). Objective 1 for this goal states “all students will show academic growth (beginning to end of school year) in student achievement through a curriculum that challenges each student to excel” (Participating School System Community Strategic Plan, 2008). Contained within this objective, PSS provides administrators and teachers three strategies, two of which directly tie in with the purpose of this study. Strategies 1 and 2 state data driven decisions must identify the students’ academic needs and be aligned to a “continuous improvement process” (Participating School System Community Strategic Plan, 2008). Objective 2 states, “all students will have access to varied and supplemental learning opportunities to meet or exceed the PSS standards” (Participating School System Community Strategic Plan, 2008). Similar to Objective 1, two strategies

are listed that promote the efficacy of this study. These two strategies state “differentiated instruction” be used to meet individual student needs and engage learners while “student support services and special programs be optimized” for success (Participating School System Community Strategic Plan, 2008). With both of these objectives listed under Goal 1 of the 2008 PSS Community Strategic Plan, it is essential that NAEP and the *TerraNova*<sup>TM</sup> test results determine the effectiveness of reading instructional programs in the participating school district.

This study may lend credence to the belief that students with or at-risk for emotional impairments receive inadequate amounts of reading instruction. This study illuminated factors as to why students with or at-risk for EI read at low levels by reflecting on the type of reading instruction provided during their middle school years. By conducting a thorough student archival record review and interviewing 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading, language arts, and *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup> teachers who provided services to students with or at-risk for EI, vital information was gained providing credible suggestions for improving the delivery of reading instruction. The results will allow PSS to examine the reading curriculum and policies to determine if current practices are effective and produce desired results for students with or at-risk for EI.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the specific demographic and academic information on middle school students with or at-risk for an emotional impairment in the participating school district while enrolled in the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, 2008-2009, or 2009-2010 school years?

2. What specific types of class placements and reading instruction did middle school students with or at-risk for an emotional impairment in the participating school district have while enrolled in the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, 2008-2009, or 2009-2010 school years?
3. What reading instructional practices did middle school students with or at-risk for an emotional impairment in the participating school district receive while enrolled in the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, 2008-2009, or 2009-2010 school years?

### **Significance of the Study**

Little research has been conducted on improving the academic outcomes of students with EI or examined teacher perceptions of their skills in teaching reading to this population of students (Levy & Chard, 2001; Trout, Nordess, Pierce, & Epstein, 2003). Prior to this study, the PSS had not conducted research into either area raising questions into the effectiveness of programs geared for students with EI. Understanding the lack of current research, the results of this study have the potential to inform PSS teachers and administrators of the academic plight of students with or at-risk for EI. Results of the data collected and analyzed on the identification of reading achievement levels among 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students with or at-risk for EI in the participating school district and the type, frequency, and amount of reading instruction provided to these students may be used to implement reading instruction changes throughout PSS.

### **Definition of Abbreviations and Terms**

#### **Abbreviations**

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: ADHD

Case Study Committee: CSC

Communication Impairment: CI

Emotional Behavioral Disorder: EBD

Emotional Impairment: EI

Individualized Education Program: IEP

Learning Impairment: LI

Median National Percentiles: MNP

National Assessment of Educational Progress: NAEP

Objectives Performance Index: OPI

Participating School District: PSD

Participating School System: PSS

### **Terms**

**Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD):** According to PSS, ADHD is a neurological condition that involves problems with inattention and hyperactivity – impulsivity that are developmentally inconsistent with the age of the child.

**Communication Impairment:** According to PSS, this disability category includes two disability categories: speech disorders and language disorders. Students whose educational performance is adversely affected by a developmental or acquired communication disorder to include voice, fluency, articulation, receptive, and /or expressive language.

**Emotional Impairment:** According to the PSS, this category includes conditions that have been confirmed by clinical evaluation and diagnosis and that, over a long period of time and to a marked degree, negatively affect educational performance. One or more of the following characteristics must be present:



1. An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors;
2. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers;
3. Inappropriate types of behavior under normal circumstances;
4. A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems; or
5. A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.

The emotional impairment category includes students who are schizophrenic but does not include students who are socially maladjusted, unless it is otherwise determined that they are emotional disturbed. The emotional impairment does not usually include anti-social behavior, parent/child problems, conduct disorders, interpersonal problems that are not the result of a severe mental disorder.

**Intellectual Disability:** An intellectual disability is characterized by significantly below-average intellectual functioning along with deficits in adaptive behavior (for example, self-help skills in dressing or toileting). This is usually seen during the child's developmental period and has a negative impact on the child's educational performance.

**Language/Phonological Disorders:** A language/phonological disorder is characterized by an impairment/delay in receptive and/or expressive language including semantics, morphology/syntax, phonology and/or pragmatics.

**Learning Impairment:** According to PSS, this category includes two disabilities: specific learning disability and intellectual disability. The presence of either of these disabilities must negatively affect the child's educational performance.

**Physical Impairment:** According to PSS, this category included physical impairments that require environmental and/or academic modifications and that have a negative impact on a child's educational performance. Examples include, but are not limited to visual, hearing, and orthopedic impairments, and other health impairments. This category also encompasses the disabilities of autism (including those on the autism spectrum disorder), deafness, deaf-blindness, and traumatic brain injury. The disability of Other Health Impairment (OHI) includes attention deficit disorder with or without hyperactivity disorder.

**Reading Instruction:** Methods used to teach reading behaviors that may include but not limited to phonemic awareness training, decoding and phonics instruction, fluency development, vocabulary development, and comprehension-strategies instruction.

**Specific Learning Disability:** A specific learning disability is a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological process involved in understanding or using spoken or written language. It may manifest itself as an impaired ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, remember, or do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, or mental retardation or emotional disturbance, or of other environmental, cultural or economic influences.

**Speech Disorders:** Speech disorders are classified into the following three areas.

1. **Articulation Disorder:** An articulation disorder is characterized by substitutions, distortions, and/or omissions of phonemes that are not commensurate with expected developmental age norms, are not the result of

limited English proficiency or dialect differences, and may cause unintelligible conversational speech.

2. **Fluency Disorder:** A fluency disorder is characterized by atypical rate, rhythm, repetitions, and/or secondary behavior(s) that interferes with communication or is inconsistent with age/development.
3. **Voice Disorder:** A voice disorder is characterized by abnormal pitch, intensity, resonance, duration, and/or quality that is inappropriate for chronological age or gender.

**Students with or at-risk for Emotional Impairment (EI):** Students diagnosed with an emotional impairment, a communication impairment, a learning impairment, or other health impairment (found in the physical disability category relating to ADHD) and received special education services to deal with at least one behavioral or social goal and corresponding objective on their IEP during their 8<sup>th</sup> grade school year.

***TerraNova***<sup>TM</sup>: a standardized norm-referenced achievement test created by CTB/McGraw Hill that compares students' scores to scores from a "norm group." The norm group is a national sample of students representing all gender, racial, economic, and geographic groups. *TerraNova*<sup>TM</sup> is administered to all students at grades 3-11, except those students who have been approved for an alternate assessment. Subjects covered include Reading, Mathematics, Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies.

**Median National Percentile:** According to CTB/McGraw-Hill, the Median National Percentile is the score that divides the national percentile in half. The Median National Percentile for the United States is 50.

**National Percentile:** According to CTB/McGraw-Hill, the National Percentile is the percentage of students in a norm group whose scores fall below a given student's score. National Percentiles of 25-75 are considered to be in the average range. A student who scores at or about the score of 65% can be interpreted to be in the upper end of the average range.

**Objectives Performance Index:** According to CTB McGraw-Hill, Objectives Performance Index is an estimate of the number of items that a student could expect to answer correctly if there had been 100 items for that objective.

## CHAPTER II

### **Review of the Literature**

The purpose of this literature review was to analyze current reading interventions employed by both general and special education teachers for middle school students with emotional impairments (EI) or emotional/behavior disorders (EBD) and to determine their effectiveness in promoting both academic and behavioral success.

### **Search Methods**

The methods used to collect information related to reading difficulties of middle school students with EI or EBD were electronic searches of relevant published material between and including the years of 2002 and 2007. Electronic searches involved ERIC, PsycINFO, EBSCO, and the University of Maryland at College Park on-line library database. Keywords used to collect data were “emotional and/or behavioral disorders,” “behavioral disorders,” “emotional impairments,” “middle school,” “secondary,” “primary” and “reading difficulties.” Twenty-three matches were initially located, however, after further reviewing each article’s content, only 10 articles were deemed suitable for this topic. Further research produced 10 individual article abstracts, from which based on information gathered from reading each abstract, a refined search yielded nine studies that focused directly on students in middle school who were diagnosed with EI and had reading difficulties.

Electronic research of periodicals yielded articles from *Behavioral Disorders*, *Behavioral Interventions*, *Education and Treatment of Children*, *Exceptional Children*, *Journal of Emotional & Behavioral Disorders*, *Journal of Special Education Technology*, *Psychology in the Schools*, *Remedial and Special Education*, *School Psychology Review*, and *The Journal of Special Education*.

While numerous periodicals covered topics dealing with students and EBD, the majority of information dealt primarily with behavior management. Coleman and Vaughn (2000) and Levy and Chard (2001) pointed out that while suggestions for improving the reading ability of younger children with EBD have been developed, specific guidelines and criteria in the area of reading do not exist for junior high or high school students. Coleman et al. also pointed out in their literature concerning students with EBD and reading difficulties, only eight published papers were available, and the majority of this work concerned students under the age of 12. However, while limited, ten research articles were found since this period, producing evidence that suggested the use of differing techniques to improve the reading ability of middle school students with EBD. Each study is summarized below, providing implication for practice through listing of salient points for teachers and researchers alike.

### **Participants**

The participants of studies reviewed, totaled 40 male and 8 female students. While 8 of the 40 male students did come from an upper level elementary school setting, all the remaining 40 students shared a commonality of being middle school students, grades six through eighth. The ages of the participants ranged from 10 to 15.

Students were selected in each study based on criteria pre-established by the researchers. Students were not randomly selected, but rather selected based on individual test scores, reading service location, and teacher recommendations. Of the 48 total students, 8 of 10 studies confirm that 29 students were African-American, 9 students were Caucasian, 2 were Hispanic, and 1 student was a Russian immigrant. Data revealed that in six studies, reading instruction for these students took place in a self-contained classroom. Other locations were resource classrooms, a classroom adjacent to their resource class, and in one study, a general education classroom setting.

Data also revealed student reading levels were below grade level in each study. Several studies indicated students with EI were reading four to five grade levels below their current grade level. None of the studies indicated any student was reading on grade level. Three studies also shared intelligence quotient (IQ) levels for 17 students. With the exception of two students whose IQ levels were 101 and 106 respectfully, all the other IQ levels were listed below average.

For the 10 studies researched, all had a primary purpose of focusing on reading improvement. Seven studies focused on improving reading fluency, with two of those studies using the Corrective Reading program as their intervention. Two studies assessed the effectiveness of a reading intervention on academic success, and one study focused on improving reading comprehension. Each study, summarized below, provides implications for practice through the listing of salient points that teachers and researchers alike should be aware of and become familiar with.

### **Study Variables**

**Independent variables.** The reading programs used as an intervention throughout these studies allowed the researchers an opportunity to compare programs and instructional modes, and focused on determining what reading programs produced the greatest positive reading gains for students with EI. Four of the 10 researched studies used programs to study the effectiveness of repeated readings. Of those four, two studies used the *Great Leaps Reading* (Leaps) program as their intervention (Scott & Shearer-Lingo, 2002; Strong, Wehby, Falk, & Lane, 2004). However, “Leaps” was not used exclusively in either study as one study also used the *Teach Your Child to Read in 100 Easy Lesson*, to assist in determining the effectiveness of repeated readings, while another study used the *Corrective Reading Program* as their other intervention (Scott & Shearer-Lingo, 2002; Strong, Wehby, Falk, & Lane, 2004). The other two studies that focused on repeated readings used a peer-mediated method of repeated reading training (Staubitz, Cartledge, Yurik, & Lo, 2005), while another study used the two strategies of repeated readings and repeated readings plus prediction to measure success (Alber-Morgan, Ramp, Anderson, & Martin, 2007).

The *Corrective Reading Program*, which was used in connection with an earlier described intervention was also used in two additional studies, one to determine the reading ability and behavior of middle school subjects (Lingo, Slaton, & Jolivette, 2002), while the other was used to focus on the effectiveness of a reinforcement package for on-task and reading behaviors (Dolzeal, Weber, Evavold, Wylie, & McLaughlin 2007).

Of the remaining studies, two studies looked towards the students to help produce desired reading outcomes. Sutherland and Snyder (2007) used peer tutoring and self-graphing as its independent variable and Daly, Garbacz, Olsen, Persampieri, and Ni



(2006) used student choice on the proposed reading instruction/implementation and rewards received. The final two studies used specified reading intervention programs to judge a possible outcome. Hale, Skinner, Winn, Oliver, Allin, and Molloy (2005) used a *Timed Reading* series to investigate listening and listening while reading on reading comprehension, whereas Wehby, Falk, Barton-Arwood, Lane, and Cooley (2003) investigated the use of modified version of the *Open Court Reading* program in combination with *Peer Assisted Learning Strategies* (PALS) to study the effectiveness of implementing an intensive reading program for elementary school students with EI.

**Dependent variables.** Five of the 10 studies stated their dependent variable was oral reading fluency/rates alone or in combination with additional dependent variables. Two of the five studies also had dependent variables that listed reading comprehension in addition to their oral reading fluency dependent variable (Staubitz, Cartledge, Yurik, & Lo, 2005; Strong, Wehby, Falk, & Lane, 2004). Two other studies also focused on on task behaviors while reading (Dolzeal, Weber, Evavold, Wylie, & McLaughlin, 2007; Scott & Shearer-Lingo, 2002). In addition to oral reading fluency measures, accuracy, and reading errors, and reading achievement were also listed (Lingo, Slaton, & Jolivette, 2002).

Three studies dealt with words read correct per 30 seconds or per min. Of these, Daly et al. focused on number of errors per 30 seconds or per min, whereas Alber-Morgan et al. dealt with answering comprehension questions. Sutherland and Snyder (2007) also focused their study on student behavior. Of the final two studies reviewed, Hale et al. dealt with answering multiple choice questions, whereas Wehby et al. looked at standardized reading, processing, and picture vocabulary assessments.

**Study designs.** All 10 studies used single subject methodology, but the overwhelming majority of studies conducted used a multiple baseline design. Eight out of 10 studies reviewed used a multiple baseline design, which differed in the subject or personnel aspect of how their design was established. Of the eight studies, four used a multiple baseline across subjects design (Alber-Morgan, Ramp, Anderson, & Martin, 2007; Scott & Shearer-Lingo, 2002; Staubitz, Cartledge, Yurik, & Lo, 2005; Sutherland & Synder, 2007). Two other studies used a multiple baseline across subjects design (Lingo, Slaton, & Jolivette, 2002; Strong, Wehby, Falk, & Lane, 2004). Wehby et al. (2004) used a multiple baseline design focused on a multiple baseline design across groups and Daly et al. (2006) used a multiple probe across reading passages research design.

Two other studies used differing single subject designs in their studies. Hale, Skinner, Winn, Oliver, and Allin (2005) used an alternating treatment design. Dolezal, Weber, Evavold, Wylie, and McLaughlin (2007) used a single subject ABAB design.

**Study procedures.** As noted earlier, four studies focused their attention on the aspect of implementing repeated reading procedures to determine a plausible outcome. Scott and Shearer-Lingo (2002) used a repeated reading instructional strategy to determine its effects on reading and on task behaviors by implementing two independent reading programs to the subjects: *Teach Your Child to Read in 100 Easy Lessons* (referred to as “Teach Your Child”) and the *Great Leaps Reading Program* (known as “Leaps”). In the “Teach Your Child” condition, teachers modeled letter-sound correspondences and guided students through a series of practice exercises, culminating in a test. Given instruction from scripted lessons via the “Teach Your Child” lesson

book, students were assessed once a week to determine the effectiveness of repeated readings and time spent engaged with the lesson. In the “Leaps” condition, instruction was covered during short 1 min segments. Oral reading fluency levels were measured on a daily basis. Similar to the “Teach Your Child” program, on task behaviors were also measured via a partial-interval time sampling probe.

Alber-Morgan, Ramp, Anderson, and Martin (2007) extended previous research with the Great Leaps Reading Program to determine the effects of systematic error correction, performance feedback, and repeated reading on reading fluency as well as the effects of repeated reading plus prediction on reading fluency. Building upon the Scott and Shearer-Lingo (2002) study, reading passages were taken from the *MacMillian McGraw* and *A New Day* basal reading series. A total of 35 passages, at each subject’s independent reading level, were selected based on individual Analytical Reading Inventory scores. Eight comprehension questions, four literal and four inferential, were created by the researcher and asked at the end of each reading session. During repeated reading intervention, students were asked to read a selected passage. When a student missed a word during a session, the experimenter stopped the student, read the word correctly, had the student read the word correctly, and then offered praise as the student correctly read that word. Upon completion of the task, the experimenter then reviewed the missed words and had the student reread the previous mistakes. Following the instructional phase of the lesson, students were then asked to read a selected passage for 1 min and were scored on the number of correctly read words (CRW). Students were told their scores and then asked to reread the same passage, trying to beat their previous score.

In the repeated reading plus prediction stage, students were asked to read the title and then predict what they believed the selected passage would be about. After reading the first two sentences, students could then modify their prediction, after which students then proceeded to read the passage. Upon completion of the task, the experimenter discussed how closely their prediction matched the information given in the text. The students were then given two 1 min timed readings followed by an eight-question comprehension test.

Strong, Wehby, Falk, and Lane (2004) also implemented a study to determine the effects of a corrective reading (CR) and repeated reading (RR) intervention. Corrective reading involved a direct teaching scripted method in which decoding strategies were taught through word attack skill lessons, group readings and workbook exercises to improve the reading ability of students in fourth grade or higher who exhibit reading difficulties and read below their current grade level. Students first took a CR placement test to determine which reading series would be appropriate for the intervention. All students met the criteria for the B1 level series. Repeated readings involved selecting passages from the *Great Leaps Reading Series*. Stories were chosen based on the high level of content interest, as well as the series wide range of difficulty levels.

Implementation of the repeated readings strategy occurred in pairs in the school library where a trained research assistant (RA) had the students first chorally read aloud a selected passage twice. Once the choral reading segment was completed, students took turns reading the same passage aloud while the other student read along silently. Roles were reversed after the passage was read. Incorrectly read words were corrected by either partner while the other read aloud. Finally, students silently read the next selected

passage in the series on their own. While both interventions were carried out Monday through Thursday, weekly reading probes were administered on Friday of each week. Students were first asked to read a selected passage where an examiner recorded the number of missed words and the time it took to read the passage. Students were then asked to answer a five question, multiple choice comprehension test.

Staubitz, Carledge, Yurik, and Lo (2005) investigated the effects of repeated readings (RR) along with peer-mediated strategies as reading interventions for students with EI. Students read selected 180-200 word passages for 10 minutes during a peer mediated RR session. Students who read received corrective feedback as necessary that followed a scripted procedure. The researcher provided feedback during the 10 min time period. Reinforcements were provided during the 10 min practice period. Students then read for 1 min with the experimenter. Students were allowed to read the same selected passage up to three times and then were directed to record their best score. A predetermined reading criterion was established for each grade level within the study. Once a student met this criterion, five comprehension questions were asked. Students proceeded to the next grade level only once they met the established reading criteria (correct words read per minute) and answered all five-comprehension questions correctly.

Lingo, Slaton, and Jolivette (2006) conducted a study to determine the effectiveness of a corrective reading (CR) program. Corrective reading lessons took place in one resource classroom, from which academic and behavioral observations were conducted. The study took place over a 3-mon period and each session lasted approximately 45 min. Students engaged with the lesson typically received instruction from their teachers, followed by word attack skills, and workbook exercises. Students

moved to the next lesson when they met a predetermined fluency criterion established on a reading probe. Reading probes consisted of students being asked to read a selected passage for 1 min. Each passage presented was at the instructional level for the subject. Data were collected on the number of CRW during that time frame. Students were given the *Woodcock Reading Mastery Test-Revised Normative Update* (WRMT-RNU) Forms G and H, to determine appropriate reading levels for each participant. Feedback was continually provided to the students at the completion of their reading probes. In order to generalize the intervention, students were asked to read aloud-selected grade-leveled passages every third reading session.

Dolzeal, Weber, Evavold, Wylie, and McLaughlin (2007) investigated the use of a reinforcement package during reading instruction for students reading below grade level. Using a partial interval scoring system dealing with on task behavior, data were collected three times during a 45 min reading lesson. With the assistance of a teacher, the students counted the number of words they read correctly and compared their total with that of the teachers total to produce a total number. A direct instruction correct reading program was used in combination with a supplemental reinforcement package, which gave student the opportunity to earn rewards based on their on-task behavior during a reading lesson, their accuracy on reading comprehension questions, and 100% accuracy on workbook assignments.

Sutherland and Snyder (2007) examined the effects of reciprocal peer tutoring and self-graphing of reading data on active responding skills and reading fluency. It was hypothesized that within this study, students with EBD would increase their active responding, decrease their disruptive behaviors, and demonstrate increases in reading

fluency during peer reciprocal peer tutor as opposed to general classroom instruction. Students were paired using a range of techniques including the use of the *Interpersonal Competence Scale for Teacher* (Cairns, Leugn, Gest, & Cairns, 1995). Prior to pairing a higher reading level student with a lower level student, the teacher reviewed the procedures for the peer tutoring intervention. Throughout the 48 day study, the teacher was directed to provide supportive feedback to the students. Using the *Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies* (PALS) (Fuchs et al., 2001), a reading intervention using structured activities, continual feedback between the tutor and tutee, repeated readings, and a reversal of roles, students were paired and seated across from one another and began each session with the higher level reading student reading a selected passage for 5 min. During the next 5 min the second student was asked to reread the same passage. Following the 5 min of each student reading a selected passage, students would begin a shrinking activity, involving stopping at the end of each paragraph to summarize the main idea in 10 words or less. Cue cards were used to guide both participants. Subjects reversed roles when each section was completed. The entire lesson took approximately 20 min. Upon completion of the task, students graphed their data using an Excel spreadsheet.

Another study that focused on student assistance in producing desired reading outcomes was done by Daly, Garbacz, Olson, Persampieri, and Ni (2006) who asked students to choose whether to be given instruction in high content reading passages. If students chose to receive instruction, they were given the opportunity to choose what type of instructional antecedents would be delivered prior to reading text in which rewards would be given for attaining a pre-determined criterion fluency level. Reading instruction

was provided via similar passages with high overlap content. The authors believed positive reinforcement and tangible rewards would influence students' choice involving whether they received instruction provided with modeling, practice, error corrections, and performance feedback, or whether they chose to attempt reading passages without the aid of assistance. In choosing instruction, students would have numerous opportunities to respond and engage in the lesson.

With instructional criterion passages established, and baseline data collected prior to intervention, students began each lesson with five possible choices. One choice was to read a selected passage without the aid of instruction. Thus their correctly read words per minute were calculated. Students choosing to receive instruction however, were also asked to choose an antecedent, what type of instruction they would receive, how long they were to receive instruction, and what their reward would be. Upon completion of the task antecedent and instruction, students then read a selected passage and had their CRW per minute determined.

Listen-while-reading (LWR) combines listening to a selected read text; while at the same time students follow along and read the same passage. Extending previous research, Hale, Skinner, Winn, Oliver, and Allin (2005) investigated the effects of LWR compared with the listening only comprehension skills. The instructional task involved each student having a selected passage read to him or her from the *Timed Reading Series*. Based on results obtained from each student's *Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (WISC-III), participants were placed in a fourth grade reading level group. Participants were exposed to a selected reading passage through the following methods: listen to a text, LWR, and silent reading. Reading passages were selected and followed a



sequential order, with listen to text being one level below LWR, and LWR being one level below silent reading. Silent reading involved students reading a particular passage without the assistance of the experimenter. Upon immediate completion of each selected passage, students were asked to return their reading materials and complete a comprehension assessment involving 10 multiple-choice questions. Student scores were recorded and corrective feedback was provided during the next day's session. To assure cooperation, rewards were given when a total number of predetermined right answers to the multiple choice questions were obtained.

Wehby, Falk, Barton-Arwood, Lane, and Cooley (2003) implemented the *Open Court Reading* program through daily instruction lasting between 1.5 to 2 hours a day. For the purpose of their study daily instruction in phonemic awareness and explicit phonics (25 to 30 min), comprehension skills (15 min) and dictation/spelling (3 to 5 min) was conducted. Following daily work of the OCR program, the PALS system was used. High performing readers were matched to lower performing classmates. With instruction focused on fluency and decoding, students worked for 30 min and reversed roles midway through the lesson. Skill instructions were practiced after teacher led instruction. Weekly probes were administered to check and monitor the progress of each intervention. Behavioral observations were conducted using a computer based observational system. Students were administered the WRMT-R, CTOPP, and the PPVT-III.

**Study findings.** Despite limitations such as high student absenteeism and assessing only oral reading abilities, the results of the Scott and Shearer-Lingo (2002) study demonstrated both programs were effective tools in promoting higher levels of oral reading fluency and on task behaviors. However, it was noted the "Leaps" program

provided students with an opportunity to measure and chart their overall success, which could have aided in promoting an increased reading ability. The “Leaps” program also demonstrated when compared to baseline data, students receiving this intervention showed a minimum increase of time on task to 75%. This greatly outshined the “Teach Your Child” program. When dealing with the same data compared to baseline scores, students’ progress with time on task was at a maximum of only 60% for all participating students.

Similar to the Scott and Shearer-Lingo (2005) study, Alber-Morgan, Ramp, Anderson, and Martin (2007) proved through the use of repeated reading, error corrections, and performance feedback, their participants increased their overall reading fluency and demonstrated a greater comprehension of the material presented. The results also indicated that repeated reading plus predictions did not show any significant improvement in students’ overall reading ability and one to one instruction may not be a feasible method in a self-contained classroom.

Strong, Wehby, Falk, and Lane (2004) indicated students showed moderate growth in oral reading fluency using the CR program and a majority of students in their sample demonstrated greater oral reading gains when RR strategies were introduced. For those students who didn’t show progress, baseline data indicated they were already reading at a higher level and rate than the other four participants. This study once again demonstrated that for students with EBD, supplementing a current reading program with proven, effective measures can be extremely beneficial in improving a student’s oral fluency rate and comprehension.

The results of the Staubitz et al. (2005) study revealed students increased their correct words read per minute scores during the RR condition as compared to their sustained silent reading (SSR) conditions. The students also generalized the readings faster than in the SSR conditions. Accuracy and comprehension scores also increased once RR was implemented as compared to the SSR condition.

The results of the Lingo, Slaton, and Jolivette (2006) study revealed all students demonstrated reading gains in oral reading fluency showing improvement in CRW per min and decreases in error rates. Several students demonstrated increases in CRW by over 40 words and decreased their errors to two or less. The majority of students met the reading criterion to move to the next level after only one CR reading intervention. Students were able to transfer the techniques of the CR program and continued to make fluency gains demonstrating this ability by statistically scoring better on a post Woodcock Johnson reading mastery test. In addition to the improved academic reading scores, the authors noted that while a direct correlation between the CR program and improved social behavior could not be established, social behaviors and time on task greatly improved with over half the participants. Teachers reported great satisfaction with the CR program in improving the reading abilities of their students and stated they would continue using the program.

Lingo et al. (2006) indicated the corrective reading program, when used with a combination of behavior management techniques, improved the oral reading fluency skills for middle school students with EBD. The corrective reading program provided teachers with the strategies to improve reading performance, which may have a direct correlation with on task behaviors.

Dolzeal et al. (2007) demonstrated throughout their use of a reinforcement package for on-task reading behavior, all students showed reading improvement in CWR per min. Decreases were evident when the reinforcement package was removed, however, when the intervention was reintroduced, the student reading scores once again increased beyond baseline scores.

In the Sutherland and Snyder (2007) study, a frequency count was used to measure disruptive behaviors, while a duration measure was used to calculate active responding for each student during a 20 min reading lesson. All students showed a marked improvement in active responding and a decrease in disruptive behaviors. Students demonstrated growth in the number of words read correctly per minute and based on surveyed information, they appeared to enjoy the peer tutoring and self-graphing components of the intervention. Researchers noted the more engaged students were with the lesson, the less likely they were to demonstrate disruptive behaviors, and thus a direct correlation between active responding and decreased disruptive behaviors was noted. Follow up data suggested that PALS was an effective tool for students with EBD and reading difficulties. Surveyed teachers who continued to implement the practice felt the treatment was effective in producing higher academic gains as well as decreasing disruptive behaviors. Teachers also indicated there were few adverse consequences associated with the practice. Sustained implementation of PALS may be significant if implementation were to continue for students with EBD. Repeated reading, a major component of the PALS system, once again proved to be an effective technique when used with students with EBD.

Daly et al. (2006) found when treatment intervention was introduced, both students demonstrated increases in CRW per min, reading fluency, and responding rates. Criterion levels were met in all but one intervention treatment for both students. Results further demonstrated when students chose the intervention, a significant amount of time was spent on instruction. Both participants' favorite mode of treatment was practice, the most intrusive and demanding of each student. Although hampered by student absences, school wide functions, and asking the four students to perform multiple tasks, the results of this study indicated the four middle school students with EBD demonstrated academic gains in comprehension levels and comprehension rates using LWR. Conversely, only two students showed improvement in both categories using listening only skills. The authors noted this technique may be used in a wide variety of subjects and tasks involving written text.

Wehby et al. (2003) demonstrated as a result of using the OCR and PALS interventions, students showed improvement in blending sounds together to form words. Results varied however, for students in sound naming, sight words, and segmentation probes. Focused behavioral observations demonstrated students did attend more during reading instruction, while inappropriate behavior was often witnessed during reading instructional time.

### **Synthesis and Critique of the Research Literature**

Due to the limited research conducted on middle school students with EBD and reading difficulties, this literature review must err on the side of caution when making conclusions regarding reading instructional strategies for such students. The overall results, solely based on the limited amount of data are inconclusive. However, several

factors are notable, and therefore research within this area of study should be continued and broadened to encompass new techniques.

One consistent finding of many of these peer-reviewed investigations was the continual reference of repeated readings. Alber-Morgan et al. (2007) indicated repeated readings proved to be an effective procedure and was a beneficial component of their interventions with three out of the four students participants demonstrating increased reading rates, while all four students showing decreases in the amount of reading errors. Strong et al. (2004) previously had demonstrated in their study that four of six participants' demonstrated growth in oral reading fluency and accurately answered comprehension questions when the repeated reading intervention was implemented. Scott and Shearer-Lingo (2002) found through the use of repeated readings in the "Leaps" program, students demonstrated academic gains in reading fluency and greater on task behaviors. Daly and Martens (1994) found that through repeated readings, students demonstrated increases in oral fluency rates and reading comprehension levels.

Another important area addressed within these peer-reviewed investigations was the successful demonstration of allowing students to work with one another, and thus become fully engaged with the material being presented. Expanding previous research, Sutherland and Snyder (2007) demonstrated through the use of peer assisted learning strategies (PALS), all four students within their study improved in active responding and correct words per minute, while demonstrating decreases in disruptive behavior. Strong et al. (2004) found students were more successful in reading when they were able to listen, correct, and receive feedback from their same aged peers. Within these two studies, students seemed to not only enjoy working with their peers, they also appeared to

have a greater focus on the material being presented, outperformed previous academic gains, and demonstrated superior behavior while engaged within each lesson. Daly et al. (2006) went one step further as they shared when students were engaged in choosing a particular method of instruction, not only did they learn and retain more information, they were also given small amounts of control in what could be a daunting environment. Teachers need to be willing to allow students opportunities of choice whether working together with a peer or selecting an appropriate means of instruction, which as a positive result in doing so, may relate to other academic and social areas within the classroom.

### **Summary**

Due to the limited amount of research on successful reading intervention programs for middle school students with EI, it is crucial that further research be conducted. More often than not, research conducted in this field deals with behavioral modification in age ranges below middle school (Coleman & Vaughn, 2000). While a lack of research does exist, the studies contained within this review report on interventions that show dramatic improvements in the reading ability for students with and at-risk for EI. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to provide a comprehensive review of quantitative and qualitative data to describe the delivery of reading instruction for students with or at-risk for EI having Individual Education Programs (IEPs) during their middle school grade years in the participating school district. Specifically, the study provides a rich descriptive account of the type of reading instruction provided to these students during their reading and/or language arts class so as to illuminate factors as to why students with or at-risk for EI read at low levels, reflecting on the type of reading instruction provided during their middle school years.





## CHAPTER III

### **Methodology**

Prior to this study the PSS had not collected and analyzed data concerning the reading achievement of students with or at-risk for EI. Current literature indicated students with emotional impairments read well below grade level and read at lower levels than students with learning impairments or other health impairments (Anderson et al., 2001). Recent *TerraNova*<sup>TM</sup> data demonstrated reading scores within the participating school district have remained stagnant and students with disabilities continue to do poorly on the reading segment of this standardized assessment.

The reasons could be many, however for students with or at-risk for EI, it is hypothesized the following seven components contribute to the poor reading results: students in special education may not receive adequate amounts of reading instruction; special education teachers who teach reading may not be certified in reading instruction; support classes and supplemental services designed to assist students who struggle with grade level material often exclude students who receive special education services; language arts teachers in the general education setting may not necessarily provide daily reading instruction during their language arts class period; students may not receive daily individual reading time; students in the *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup> program may not receive instruction for the designed amount of time; and depending on the population and setting of each individual school, instructional time and special education services in the area of reading, may greatly differ.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the specific demographic and academic information on middle school students with or at-risk for an emotional impairment in the participating school district while enrolled in the 2006-2007, 2007-08, 2008-09, or 2009-10 school years?
2. What specific types of class placements and reading instruction did middle school students with or at-risk for an emotional impairment in the participating school district have while enrolled in the 2006-2007, 2007-08, 2008-09, or 2009-10 school years?
3. What reading instructional practices did middle school students with or at-risk for an emotional impairment in the participating school district receive while enrolled in the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, 2008- 2009, or 2009-2010 school years?

## **Reading Instruction Options**

Between the years of 2006 and 2010, middle school students in the participating school district received reading instruction in general education, special education, and/or supplemental service settings. All 6<sup>th</sup> grade students received reading instruction in a required reading class, Reading 6. A language arts class was also required in 6<sup>th</sup>, as well as in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. Reading instruction was clearly the focus of the Reading 6 class, but reading instruction was also included within the middle school language arts classes. Students in the general education setting received instruction from a reading and/or language arts teacher. Students in a special education setting (resource room) received instruction from a special education teacher. Middle school students with or at-

risk for an EI received reading instruction in one or more of the following options which could vary each year.

**Reading instruction in the general education setting.** Students with or at-risk for EI who received reading instruction in the general education setting in 6<sup>th</sup> grade received instruction via *Scholastic's Literacy Place* for 6<sup>th</sup> grade Series One and Two from a general education teacher. Students with or at-risk for EI in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades assigned to a general education language arts class were taught by a general education teacher and received instruction on reading from a variety of teacher directed sources. The primary books used within the participating school district for 7<sup>th</sup> grade language arts were the *Elements of Writing Revised Edition* (1998) and *The Language of Literature Grade Seven* (1997), whereas the books used for 8<sup>th</sup> grade language arts were the *Elements of Writing Revised Edition Second Course* (1998) and *The Language of Literature Grade Eight* (1997).

**Reading instruction in the resource room.** Middle school students with or at-risk for an EI may have received reading instruction in a resource room environment. If so, a special education teacher provided instruction in the resource room to students receiving special education services. In 6<sup>th</sup> grade, reading instruction in a resource room was available as the required reading class, Reading 6. In 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, reading instruction in a resource room was available as a student's language arts class. It is important to note, students in all three middle school grade levels who received reading instruction in a resource room environment may have been using all, some, or none of the above listed books in their reading and/or language arts class. The special education teacher may have relied on different materials to assist with reading instruction, which

was at the discretion of the special education teacher in the middle school resource room setting.

*Scholastic Read 180™*. A supplemental reading program offered to some middle school students was the *Scholastic Read 180™* program. The *READ 180™* program was a comprehensive computerized reading program designed for students who read below grade level to receive differentiated reading instruction for a 90-minute period. Teachers, both general and special educators, trained in these procedures taught the *READ 180™* program. *READ 180™* is a three-tiered approach that has students work through a series of stations that involve “group instruction, adaptive and instructional software, high-interest literature, and direct instruction in reading, writing, and vocabulary skills” (Scholastic *READ 180*, 2008). Students use computer-based assessments to establish effective reading instruction as software programs adjust to the students’ reading ability.

The *READ 180™* program was offered to all three middle school grade levels and specially trained *READ 180™* teachers provided instruction to eligible students. Eligible students for the *READ 180* middle school program were students who read below grade level as determined by a Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI)™ computer assessment and a score below the 35<sup>th</sup> percentile on a current standardized test (e.g., *TerraNova™*).

Reading scores of eligible students in the participating school district were taken from the *TerraNova™* test for PSS students who took the *TerraNova™* their previous school year.

Students in 6th grade may have received this service as a class that would take the place of their reading class. Students in 7th and 8<sup>th</sup> grades may have received this service in addition to their language arts class. While its efficacy with students receiving special education services has yet to be determined, middle school students with or at-risk for an

emotional impairment who met eligibility requirements to be enrolled in a *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup> class could have been enrolled in this class similar to students in the general education setting.

### **Design of the Study**

The design for this study was a triangulation mixed methods design that placed equal emphasis on both qualitative and quantitative research measures; data were collected concurrently (Gay et al., 2006). Quantitative data were collected by reviewing individual student records to determine the following information: (a) disability category, (b) number of years receiving special education, (c) demographic data to include age, gender, and race, (d) attendance/suspension history, (e) number of schools attended during his/her middle school years (a minimum of two years in PSS required for participation in the study), (f) health related issues (as applicable), (g) 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010 *TerraNova*<sup>TM</sup> reading test scores, (h) final end of semester report card grades for 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010, and (i) reading and language arts classes enrolled during the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, 2008-2009, and 2009-2010 school years.

Qualitative data were collected from individual reading and/or language arts teacher interviews. Two interview questionnaires were constructed and used. The first interview questionnaire was designed for general and special education teachers who taught a reading and/or language arts class in one or more of the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, or 8<sup>th</sup> grades. The second interview questionnaire was designed for teachers who taught *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup> at the middle school level. Qualitative data were collected in the following areas: (a) professional background information, (b) philosophical beliefs regarding literacy learning, (c) reading instructional training received within the last three years, (d)

instructional programs used within a reading and/or language arts class, (e) current reading instructional practices, (f) involvement with special education teachers regarding accommodations and modifications for individual students, and (g) cooperative teaching information. Section (f) refers only to general education teachers.

### **Participants**

Participants for this study were qualified middle school students and consenting reading and/or language arts teachers who taught in one single grade or in a combination of 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, or 8<sup>th</sup> grades during the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, 2008-2009, and 2009-2010 school years.

**Students.** For participation in this study, students who met the following eligibility criteria were included:

- 1.) Students had an active PSS IEP.
- 2.) Students diagnosed with an emotional impairment, communication impairment, learning impairment, or other health impairment (found in the physical disability category) and received special education services to deal with at least one behavioral or social goal and corresponding objective on their IEP during their 8<sup>th</sup> grade school year
- 3.) Students enrolled in 8<sup>th</sup> grade within a middle school setting in the participating school district for the 2008-2009 or 2009-2010 school years.
- 4.) Students enrolled in a PSS middle school in the participating school district for at least two full, consecutive school years.
- 5.) Parent or guardian permission obtained for their child to participate.

To assist in providing a comprehensive review of the delivery of reading instruction for students with or at-risk for EI, three distinct data collection methods were used. First, data retrieved between the months of July 2010 to December 2010 were collected by reviewing IEP records housed at one of four high school settings located within the participating school district to determine the number of eligible students. Prior to beginning data collection, the Case Study Committee (CSC) chairperson at the four high schools was contacted and provided a detailed explanation of this research study. Each CSC Chairperson was provided approval letters for this study from the University of Maryland's Institutional Review Board and from the PSS's Department of Research and Evaluation. Any questions dealing with this study were answered.

While data collected for this study related only to reading instruction for students with or at-risk for EI at the middle school level, the reason behind involving high school CSC chairpersons dealt only with the fact that student IEP records for the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 had transitioned from each student's middle school to the student's home high school setting. Data collected across the participating school district presented 14 eligible student participants.

Once determination of eligibility for this study was conducted, parental permission to obtain data within a student's cumulative file was sought. Of the 14 eligible participants, only one parent granted permission through the initial mailed packet, consisting of a cover letter, instructional information on how and where to return signed permission, parental letter, parent permission form, and a return self-addressed envelope. For the remaining 13 eligible participants, a second mailing was conducted, followed by telephone calls and personal contacts. If a parent rejected the request, the

process of seeking permission was halted. One eligible participant was eliminated from this study as he withdrew from school and returned to the United States. Of the remaining 12 possible participants only an additional four parents granted permission for access to their child's student's archival cumulative file.

Upon receiving parental permission, a second data collection method was used to retrieve additional data. The student participants were randomly assigned numbers 1 through 5 to maintain strict discretion throughout the study and assigned numbers were placed on all data collection sheets for each participant. Data obtained from the student's archival cumulative file provided information in the following areas: (a) demographic information which included age, gender, and race, (b) attendance history, (c) number of schools attended during his/her middle school years, (d) any noted health related issues, (e) 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010 *TerraNova*<sup>TM</sup> reading test scores, (f) final end of semester report card grades for 2007-2008, 2008-2009, and 2009-2010 school years, and (g) reading and language arts classes enrolled during the 2007-2008, 2008-2009, and 2009-2010 school years. Confidentiality was maintained at all times.

**Teachers.** Given the five students who participated in this study, there were 11 teachers eligible to participate. This number was determined by each student participant having spent a minimum of two years or a maximum of three years in a participating school district middle school and having one reading and/or language arts teacher per grade level or a combination of 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, or 8<sup>th</sup> grades. From the list of reading and language arts classes taken, as indicated on individual, grade level report cards, individual teacher names who taught reading, *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup>, and/or language arts for the eligible student participants were obtained. All 11 teachers were general or special



education qualified and taught or co-taught reading, *READ 180™*, and/or language arts classes to participating middle school students with or at-risk for an emotional impairment.

All eligible teachers were notified by electronic mail during the fall of 2010 informing them a research study was being conducted and their participation would be extremely welcomed. Upon acceptance of an invitation and a signed consent form, teachers were individually contacted to establish a meeting time for an in-depth interview, the third data collection method, specifically designed for this study. Interviews were conducted in person, over the phone, or through electronic mail responses. Interviews were conducted between the months of October and December 2010.

Of the 11 eligible teachers, two were unable to be contacted due to an inability to locate each teacher since PSS no longer employed these teachers. Nine of the 11 eligible teachers were contacted by electronic mail to explain how and why they were found eligible for this study. Attached to each initial e-mail were a teacher participation letter and a teacher consent form.

Of the remaining nine eligible teachers, four teachers responded favorably to the initial e-mail request, with the remaining four out of five responding positively to a second e-mail request. One favorable teacher response however decided against participation. Another teacher failed to respond after numerous e-mail attempts and telephone messages. Ultimately, seven teachers participated, four person-to-person interviews were conducted and three electronic mail interviews were conducted.

Six participating teachers were asked interview questions listed in Appendix A, specifically geared for general and special education teachers. The one remaining teacher was asked interview questions found in Appendix B, specifically designed for teachers who taught *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup>. Teachers were randomly assigned numbers from 1 to 7. All interview data sheets indicated a teacher's randomly assigned number and avoided using the teacher's name. This number was written on each interview sheet to maintain strict confidentiality. Interviews were conducted without interruption, each lasting until all questions were fully answered ranging from approximately 25 to 90 min. Copious descriptive notes were taken during each interview.

### **Setting of the Study**

The participating school district contained two elementary, six middle, and one high school, which potentially could have been associated with this study. Two elementary schools were initially involved because each school included 6<sup>th</sup> grade. One high school associated with this study contained grades seven and eight. Each school, while different in location, number of staff members, and number of students served, provided an education to children with parents serving in the United States military. After permission and consent forms were signed, there were three middle schools in which the participating students were enrolled in the reading, language arts, and/or *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup> classes with the participating teachers. The three schools were randomly assigned letters from A to C.

## Data Collection Procedures

**Record reviews and data collection form.** Data collected via individual student record reviews provided information to ascertain the type of reading instruction students with and/or at-risk for EI were provided throughout their PSS middle school years as well as results on yearly reading tests. Upon determination of student eligibility and parental consent, a comprehensive student archival record review was conducted with data recorded on a data collection form found in Appendix C. An examination of the information found in student records that related to reading instruction was used to generate the data collection form. Records of former 8<sup>th</sup> grade students between the years of 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 who had an IEP and were diagnosed with or at-risk for an EI were examined to provide information on the student which included the following: (a) disability category, (b) number of years receiving special education, (c) demographic data to include age, gender, and race, (d) attendance/suspension history, (e) number of schools attended during his/her middle school years (a minimum of two years in PPS), (f) health related issues (as applicable), (g) 2008, 2009, and 2010 *TerraNova*<sup>TM</sup> reading test scores, (h) final end of semester report card grades for 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010 years (grades used in the PSS are based on a ten point system subtracted from 100 and given a corresponding letter based on an individual's score: 100-90 is an A (Excellent), 89-80 is a B (Above Average), 79-70 is a C (Average), 69-60 is a D (Below Average), and grades below are considered failing and receive a grade of a F), and (i) reading and language arts classes enrolled during the 2006- 2007, 2007-2008, 2008-2009, and 2009-2010 school years.

Individual record reviews were conducted as PSS did not have a database containing the needed information. Therefore, each student participant's reading and language arts class provided the names of class teachers. Additionally, for each year a student was enrolled in PSS between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades, students were required to take the *TerraNova*<sup>TM</sup> assessment. When test results were returned to each school, a printed test results page entitled the Individual Profile Report was placed within a student's confidential file. All school records remained in each student's school building while the researcher recorded the data.

**Teacher interview.** In addition to retrieving archival student data, teacher interviews were used to determine the characteristics of the reading instruction of students with or at-risk for EI in middle school settings located in the participating school district. General and special education teachers who taught reading in one or multiple middle school grade levels were invited to participate in a one-on-one interviews addressing their experience in teaching reading to students with and/or at-risk for EI. Teachers were selected after reviewing student records to determine which teachers provided what type of classroom instruction across each participating student's middle school academic career. The information obtained was used to describe the reading instruction, where the instruction was delivered, the type of class, and to determine which reading strategies were provided.

Teachers were invited by electronic mail in the Fall 2010 to participate in the interview. Interview 1 (found in Appendix A) was designed for general and special education teachers who taught a reading class for 6<sup>th</sup> grade students and/or taught a language arts class for 7<sup>th</sup> and/or 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Interview 2 (found in Appendix B) was

designed for *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup> teachers who taught one or a combination of middle school grade levels.

Each interview consisted of seven questions dealing with teacher experience, specific information on individual beliefs on the teaching of reading, specific reading program awareness used within his/her class, specific reading practices and strategies employed, and interaction and co-teaching possibilities with other teaching professionals. The interview questions were piloted on several general and special education reading teachers who were not teaching students with or at-risk for EI. The interviews were not recorded, but extensive notes were written on the responses of each teacher. Contacted teachers were invited to conduct this interview during the fall of the 2010-2011 school year. There were four person-to-person interviews conducted and three electronic mail interviews. Teachers were asked all questions associated with the interview.

Prior to conducting a person-to-person interview, teachers were provided a copy of the interview questionnaire at the setting of the interview. Teachers were asked if they had any difficulty with the questions or attempting to answer any question. After any questions associated with the study and interview were answered, interview questions were asked verbatim, with copious notes written down by the researcher. To make sure the researcher understood what the teacher attempted to convey, each answer was read back from the researcher to the interviewee for clarification. All changes were made before moving onto the next question. At the conclusion of the interview, the researcher shared his notes with the interviewee for further clarification. All questions from the interviewee were answered by the researcher prior to the conclusion of the interview.

Electronic mail interviews were conducted through a series of question and answer sessions. Similar to person-to-person interviews, participating teachers were provided a copy of the interview questionnaire and asked if they had any difficulty with any question in particular and/or answering any question. Additional information about the study was provided as needed. Teachers were given an opportunity to write their answers to each question, which were printed out by the researcher. Follow up electronic mail by the researcher was conducted to ensure teachers responses were what they intended and any changes needed were made. Electronic mail interviews were conducted at the request of the participating teacher. None of the teachers reported any difficulty understanding and/or reporting information on each question.

### **Reliability**

After all student records were reviewed and information recorded on the data collection form by the researcher, two sets of student records (40%) were checked by a second reviewer, trained in the use of the data collection form. After the two sets of records were randomly chosen for determining inter-rater reliability, one additional record was randomly chosen for practice using the data collection form. The researcher and second reviewer practiced using the data collection form and then the second reviewer independently recorded data from two student records.

The data collection forms completed by both the researcher and the second reviewer were checked using the item-by-item reliability agreement method. The formula used for calculating inter-rater reliability was agreement (occurrence and nonoccurrence) divided by agreements plus disagreements multiplied by 100 to obtain

the percent of agreement for each record. The reliability across both student records was 100% agreement.

Using a reverse records check, reliability for teacher information was checked by the second reviewer. Three (43%) of the written teacher interview results were matched with corresponding student records. Reliability was determined by calculating the occurrence and nonoccurrence of courses taught divided by the instances of reading and/or language arts classes listed in a subject's school cumulative record, multiplied by 100. Reverse records reliability check determined reliability across teacher course data was 100%.

### **IRB and Confidentiality**

In order to conduct this study, permission was obtained through PSS, the University of Maryland Internal Review Board (IRB), by the parents of each student involved who had or was at-risk for EI, and the middle school teachers who participated. Appendix D provides a copy of the parent permission form and Appendix E contains a copy of the consent form signed by each teacher. All personal information was held in strict confidence.

## CHAPTER IV

### Results

The purpose of this study was to provide a comprehensive review of quantitative and qualitative data to describe the delivery of reading instruction for students with or at-risk for EI and having IEPs during their middle school years in the participating school district during 2006-2007, 2007-2008, 2008-2009, or 2009-2010. Data were collected through archival student record reviews and through qualifying reading, *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup>, and/or language arts teacher interviews. The collected data covers a two or three year period, depending on the special education qualifying criteria of each student. Students and teachers associated with this research must have met qualifying criteria established prior to initial data collection. This chapter covers the findings of each research question.

#### Research Questions and Analysis of Data

By conducting a comprehensive, archival, cumulative student data record review of qualified 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in the participating school district, Research Questions 1 and 2 are answered in narrative form to include Tables 6 through 20. To answer Research Question 3, interviews were conducted with participating teachers. Their data are provided in narrative form with Table 21 listing demographic data.

#### Research Questions 1 and 2

What are the specific demographic and academic information on middle school students with or at-risk for an emotional impairment in the participating school district while enrolled in the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, 2008-2009, or 2009-2010 school years? What specific types of class placements and reading instruction did middle school students with or at-risk for an emotional impairment in the participating school district



have while enrolled in the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, 2008-2009, or 2009-2010 school years?

Demographic information regarding the five student participants is found in Table 6 to include school, gender, ethnicity, birth month/year, eligibility date of services, and disability/category. *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *The Second Edition* Reading Test Scores, *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *Third Edition* Reading Test Scores, and *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> National Percentage Scores for the five students are found in Table 7. Reading, *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup>, and Language Arts classes and type of teacher (general or special education) for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades are presented in Table 8.

Reading test scores on the *TerraNova*<sup>TM</sup> are the culmination of six reading subtests. The Participating School System selected four of the six reading subtests to be administered to their students in 3<sup>rd</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> grades. The four subtests on both editions, while comprised of different questions, were the same: Basic Understanding, Analyze Text, Evaluate and Extend Meaning, and Reading and Writing Strategies. The two reading subtests not included in PSS testing were Oral Comprehension and Introduction to Print.

Content objectives on the Basic Understanding subtest ask students to “demonstrate understanding of the literal meaning of a passage through identifying stated information, indicating sequence of events, and defining grade-level vocabulary.” The content objectives in the Analyzing Text subtest indicate a student needs to “demonstrate comprehension by drawing conclusions; inferring relationships such as cause and effect; and identifying theme and story elements such as plot, climax, character, and setting.” For the reading subtest, Evaluate and Extend Meaning, the content objectives are to

“demonstrate critical understanding by making predictions; distinguishing between fact and opinion, and reality and fantasy; transferring ideas to other situations; and judging author purpose, point of view, and effectiveness.” On the final scored subtest, Reading and Writing Strategies, students are asked to “demonstrate awareness of techniques that enhance reading comprehension, such as using existing knowledge, summarizing content, comparing information across texts, using graphics and text structure, and formulating questions that deepen understanding.”

Scores on each of the four subtests are given an Objectives Performance Index (OPI) score. The OPI is an average of the student’s percent correct raw score on an individual objective and an estimate of the performance on an individual objective, based on each student’s performance on the test. The OPI score is an estimate of the number of items a student could be expected to answer correctly if there had been 100 items for that objective (*TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *The Second Edition*, 2008). For the purpose of this study, OPI scores listed on each student’s Individual Profile Report were compared with National OPI scores. The difference between the two scores (the subject’s OPI and the National OPI) indicates how much higher or lower a subject’s test score is when compared to the national average score. An OPI score cannot be higher than 99 (*TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *Third Edition*, 2011).

Table 6

*Demographic Information for Students 1-5*

Subject	Schools A - C	Gender	Ethnicity	Birthday	Eligibility Date	Disability Category/ Disability	Types of Goals Listed on an IEP Covering Subject's 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Yr
1	B	Female	Caucasian	November 1995	03/08	Cat. B – EI	Language Arts (LA), Learning Strategies (LS), Reading, & Social-Interpersonal Skills
2	A	Male	Hispanic- American	July 1995	10/08 – PSS 03/05 – Non-PSS	Cat. D – LI	LS, Reading, & Social-Interpersonal Skills
3	A	Female	African- American/ Caucasian	May 1996	06/08	Cat. C – CI	Communication, LS, & Social-Interpersonal Skills
4	C	Female	African- American/ Pacific Islander	August 1995	05/08	Cat. D – LI	LA, LS, Mathematics, Reading, & Social- Interpersonal Skills
5	B	Female	Caucasian	December 1994	03/02 (Prior to Middle School)	Cat. B – EI	LA, LS, Mathematics, & Social-Interpersonal Skills

Table 7

*TerraNova,™ The Second Edition Reading Test Scores, TerraNova,™ Third Edition Reading Test Scores, and National Percentage Scores for Subjects 1-5*

Subject	<i>TerraNova,™ The Second Edition Reading Test Score – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade 2006/07</i>	<i>TerraNova,™ The Second Edition Reading Test Score – 7<sup>th</sup> Grade 2007/08</i>	<i>TerraNova,™ Third Edition Reading Test Score – 7<sup>th</sup> Grade 2008/09</i>	<i>TerraNova,™ Third Edition Reading Test Score – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade 2008/09</i>	<i>TerraNova,™ Third Edition Reading Test Score – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade 2009/10</i>
1	N/A	23 (68) <sup>1</sup>	N/A	32 (72) <sup>3</sup>	N/A
2	N/A	N/A	43 (66) <sup>2</sup>	N/A	40 (70) <sup>3</sup>
3	N/A	N/A	55 (66) <sup>2</sup>	N/A	58 (70) <sup>3</sup>
4	N/A	18 (68) <sup>1</sup>	N/A	32 (72) <sup>3</sup>	N/A
5	76	55 (68) <sup>1</sup>	N/A	62 (72) <sup>3</sup>	N/A

<sup>1</sup>National Percentage *TerraNova,™ The Second Edition Reading Test Score – 7<sup>th</sup> Grade*

<sup>2</sup>National Percentage *TerraNova,™ Third Edition Reading Test Score – 7<sup>th</sup> Grade*

<sup>3</sup>National Percentage *TerraNova,™ Third Edition Reading Test Score – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade*

Table 8

*6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading, READ 180™, and Language Arts Classes and Type of Teacher (General or Special Education) for Subjects 1-5*

Subject	School	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Reading	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Reading	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Reading
1	B	General Education Teacher	General Education Teacher	Resource Room/ Special Education Teacher	N/A	Resource Room/ Special Education Teacher <sup>1</sup>	N/A
2	A	General Education Teacher	General Education Teacher	General Education Teacher <sup>1</sup>	Reading 7/ Special Education Teacher	Resource Room/ Special Education Teacher <sup>1</sup>	Literature Enrichment/ General Education Teacher and Reading 8/Special Education Teacher
3	A	General Education Teacher	General Education Teacher	Resource Room/ Special Education Teacher <sup>1</sup>	N/A	General Education Teacher <sup>1</sup>	Literature Enrichment General Education Teacher
4	C	General Education Teacher	General Education Teacher	Resource Room/ Special Education Teacher <sup>1</sup>	READ 180™ General Education Teacher and Reading 7/ Special Education Teacher	Resource Room/ Special Education Teacher <sup>1</sup>	READ 180™ General Education Teacher
5	B	General Education Teacher	General Education Teacher	General Education Teacher <sup>1</sup>	N/A	General Education Teacher <sup>1</sup>	N/A

<sup>1</sup>A Learning Strategies class was also taken with a special education teacher.

Subject 1 was a female Caucasian student who attended a school in the designated district during her 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade years from 2006-2009. Found eligible in March, 2008 for special education services under Category B – Emotional Impairment, she received specialized instruction in language arts in a resource room by a special education teacher during the second semester of her 7<sup>th</sup> grade year. Based on her eligibility and the timing of the findings, it was determined that individual and small group instruction was necessary for student success and thus a change in Subject 1's language arts class to a more restrictive, smaller group, resource room environment taught by a special education teacher was made in the student's schedule during the third quarter of the school year. Each academic school quarter is nine weeks in length with two quarters per semester. As depicted on the end of the 2007-2008 academic report card, Subject 1 passed all her classes. She received three below average marks: a D in Integrated Science II – semester 1, a D+ in Mathematics 7 – semester 2, and a D- in Language Arts 7 – semester 1. In addition, two classes in which Subject 1 received an A were quarter classes, Creative Thinking and Study Skills.

Subject 1's cumulative file indicated that based on the time of eligibility findings for special education services, Subject 1 took the *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *The Second Edition*, during her 7<sup>th</sup> grade year with accommodations. Accommodations were not individually listed for each subject, however Subject 1 was allowed accommodations on standardized testing, which included additional time for any timed assessment (not to exceed 150% of the standardized time), test administered by a familiar teacher (e.g., special educator), and the assessment taken in a small group or different classroom environment. Reading scores on the *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *The Second Edition* during Subject 1's 7<sup>th</sup> grade year

demonstrated a 23 national percentage and scale score of 636, refer to Table 7. Scores on each subtest in the reading portion of the *TerraNova,™ The Second Edition (2008)*, refer to Table 9, were well below the National Objectives Performance Index (OPI), an estimate of the number of items a student could be expected to answer correctly if there had been 100 items for that objective. Subject 1's highest score, 58 in the reading subtest Analyze Text, was 14 points lower than the National OPI score.

Table 9

*Scores on Reading Subtests on TerraNova,™ The Second Edition (2008) for Subject 1 for the 2007-2008 Academic Year (7<sup>th</sup> grade)*

Objective No.	Objective Title	Student Score	National OPI	Difference
02	Basic Understanding	46	65	-19
03	Analyze Text	58	72	-14
04	Evaluate/Extend Meaning	36	54	-18
05	Identify Reading Strategies	37	55	-18

Subject 1's cumulative file also indicated changes were made at the beginning of her 8<sup>th</sup> grade school year to incorporate another resource room class. In addition to receiving special education resource room services in the area of Language Arts 8 taught by a special education teacher, an additional class, Learning Strategies, was taken. Learning Strategies, a class geared for students receiving special education, provided opportunities for students to master a wide variety of topics to better prepare students academically. Topics included note taking, how to read a textbook, use of proper study techniques, time management skills, and how to prepare for and take differing academic tests/quizzes. In addition to these strategies, numerous opportunities were provided for

students to receive additional assistance with assignments in their core classes during this class period. Final end of the class report card grades indicated Subject 1 received only one C during the entire year (Health Education 8A) and no grades below a C. Subject 1 received a B- in both semesters of Language Arts 8 and received an A- in both semesters of Learning Strategies, both taught by a special educator.

Taking the *TerraNova,™ Third Edition* with accommodations during her 8<sup>th</sup> grade school year (2009), Subject 1's reading scores gave her a 32 national percentage with a scale score of 656, refer to Table 7. Similar to the 2007-2008 school year, Subject 1 was afforded the same accommodations on the 2009 *TerraNova,™ Third Edition*. Subtests on the *TerraNova,™ Third Edition*, revealed similar results on the reading subtests of the *TerraNova,™ The Second Edition*, namely Subject 1 scored at least double digits below the national OPI score in all reading subtest areas. Table 10 presents these data.

Table 10

*Scores on Reading Subtests on TerraNova,™ Third Edition (2009) for Subject 1 for the 2008-2009 Academic Year (8<sup>th</sup> Grade)*

Objective No.	Objective Title	Student Score	National OPI	Difference
02	Basic Understanding	44	60	-16
03	Analyze Text	43	55	-12
04	Evaluate/Extend Meaning	42	55	-13
05	Identify Reading Strategies	40	51	-11

Through a careful review of Subject 1's archival cumulative student records during her 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade school years, Subject 1 took medication for Attention Deficit Disorder. Her records showed she was absent 17 days during her 7<sup>th</sup> grade year, with 16



absences recorded during her 8<sup>th</sup> grade year. Records did not indicate any in or out of school suspensions, nor refer to any disciplinary action conducted at her school. Subject 1 had been retained in third grade.

Subject 2 was a male Hispanic-American student who attended School A during the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 academic school years. He was found eligible for special education services under PSS criteria in October, 2008. Determined eligible under Category D – Specific Learning Impairment, Subject 2 received specialized instruction in a resource room for Reading 7 in the areas of reading, organizational strategies, and social/interpersonal skills in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Prior to the PSS eligibility findings for special education services, archival subject records indicated Subject 2 was found eligible for special education in a southern state under a Specific Learning Disability category. Subject 2's end of the class report card grades for 7<sup>th</sup> grade indicated he received a B+ in Mathematics 7, while the rest of his grades were As which included grades in Language Arts (general education), Learning Strategies, and Reading 7class.

*TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *Third Edition* Reading test scores taken with accommodations during Subject 2's 7<sup>th</sup> grade school year (2008-2009) indicated he demonstrated a 43 national percentage and a scale score of 663, refer to Table 7. Subject 2's accommodations as listed on his active IEP at the time of administering the *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *Third Edition* in March 2009, stated he would be afforded the following accommodations: questions/answer choices read aloud by proctor or software including reading comprehension, take assessment in a small group of different classroom, and directions, stimulus material, questions, and/or answer choices paraphrased. Reading subtests of the *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *Third Edition* indicated Subject 2 scored below the national

OPI in all reading subtests, including scoring 12 points below the national average in Identifying Reading Strategies. A comparison of his scores with national scores is found in Table 11.

Table 11

*Scores on Reading Subtests on TerraNova,™ Third Edition (2009) for Subject 2 for the 2008-2009 Academic Year (7<sup>th</sup> grade)*

Objective No.	Objective Title	Student Score	National OPI	Difference
02	Basic Understanding	54	60	-6
03	Analyze Text	49	55	-6
04	Evaluate/Extend Meaning	53	55	-2
05	Identify Reading Strategies	39	51	-12

During the 2009-2010 school year (8<sup>th</sup> grade), Subject 2 received special education services in reading, organizational strategies, and social/interpersonal skills in a resource room for language arts class. Intended to support these areas, Reading 8 and Learning Strategies classes were conducted in a small group, resource room environment also taught by a special education teacher. Subject 2 received final course grades of As with the exception of three Bs in the classes of Integrated Science III (B+), Language Arts 8 (B), and the second semester of U.S. History 8 (B). An A+ was received in Literature Enrichment, Reading 8, and Learning Strategies.

In 8<sup>th</sup> grade during 2009-2010, Subject 2 took the *TerraNova,™ Third Edition* with the same listed accommodations as used during his 7<sup>th</sup> grade school year (2008-2009). Subject 2's *TerraNova,™ Third Edition* scores for 8<sup>th</sup> grade produced a 40 national percentage and a 665 scale score on the Reading section of the test, refer to

Table 7. Reading subtests of the *TerraNova,™ Third Edition* indicated Subject did well, as compared to the national OPI, on the Basic Understanding subtest with a +1 scoring difference. Yet when compared to the three remaining subtests, Subject 2 scored below the national OPI. These data can be found in Table 12.

Table 12

*Scores on Reading Subtests on TerraNova,™ Third Edition (2009) for Subject 2 for the 2009-2010 Academic Year (8<sup>th</sup> grade)*

Objective No.	Objective Title	Student Score	National OPI	Difference
02	Basic Understanding	67	66	+1
03	Analyze Text	45	46	-1
04	Evaluate/Extend Meaning	40	44	-4
05	Identify Reading Strategies	64	65	-1

Individual archival cumulative records did not indicate any school disciplinary action taken towards Subject 2, health difficulties, or use of medication at school. Report card data from Subject 2's 7<sup>th</sup> grade school year did not indicate the number of absences for this subject. Data showed Subject 2 missed eight days of school during his 8<sup>th</sup> grade school year.

Subject 3 was a female Caucasian/African-American student who attended School A from 2007 to 2010. She was found eligible for special education services under Category C – Communication Impairment in June, 2008. With eligibility criteria met, special education services were provided in speech, learning strategies, and social/interpersonal skills. All special education services were provided in small group, resource room situations taught by a special education teacher and/or a speech

pathologist. Her 7<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts and Learning Strategies classes were in a resource room setting with a special education teacher.

Data contained within Subject 3's cumulative school file during her 7<sup>th</sup> grade school year (2008-2009) showed she received only one C, a C- in Integrated Science II, whereas the rest of her grades were a B- or above. These grades included an A+ for the entire year in Learning Strategies and an A- in semester 1 and a B- in semester 2 of her Language Arts 7 class.

During her 7<sup>th</sup> grade, Subject 3 took the *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *Third Edition* with the use of accommodations as listed on her IEP that covered the time period of March 2009. These accommodations were the following: take the assessment in a small group or different classroom and have directions, stimulus material, question, and/or answer choices paraphrased. The end result produced a 55 national percentage and a 678 scale score on the reading section of the standardized test, refer to Table 7. Reading subtests of the *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *Third Edition* indicated Subject 3's did extremely well, posting higher scores on all four subtests when compared to the national OPI. Subject 3's reading subtest scores are presented in Table 13.

Table 13

*Scores on Reading Subtests on TerraNova,™ Third Edition (2009) for Subject 3 for 2008-2009 Academic Year (7<sup>th</sup> grade)*

Objective No.	Objective Title	Student Score	National OPI	Difference
02	Basic Understanding	73	66	+7
03	Analyze Text	50	46	+4
04	Evaluate/Extend Meaning	48	44	+4
05	Identify Reading Strategies	76	65	+11

In 8<sup>th</sup> grade, Subject 3's Language Arts 8 class was in general education with a general education teacher. According to final course grades as indicated in Subject 3's cumulative school file, she received no less than a grade of a B- during her 8<sup>th</sup> grade year. The B- was displayed in Health Ed 8 AB, whereas the rest of her grades were higher, including a B+ in Literature Enrichment, a B in semester 1 and a B+ in semester 2 of Language Arts 8, an A+ in semester 1 and an A in semester 2 in Learning Strategies.

Taking the *TerraNova,™ Third Edition* with the same accommodations as listed during Subject 3's past year, her 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading scores indicated she earned a 58 national percentage and a 684 scale score on the exam, refer to Table 7. As demonstrated in Table 14, reading subtests of the *TerraNova,™ Third Edition* indicated Subject 3 scored as well or better on all four reading subtests when compared to the national OPI, including a +8 difference in the area of Identifying Reading Strategies.

Table 14

*Scores on Reading Subtests on TerraNova, <sup>TM</sup>Third Edition (2009) for Subject 3 for the 2009-2010 Academic Year (8<sup>th</sup> grade)*

Objective No.	Objective Title	Student Score	National OPI	Difference
02	Basic Understanding	60	60	0
03	Analyze Text	62	55	+7
04	Evaluate/Extend Meaning	62	55	+7
05	Identify Reading Strategies	59	51	+8

Subject 3's cumulative school file indicated she was absent six times during her 7<sup>th</sup> grade year, but data were not reported on the number of absences during her 8<sup>th</sup> grade year. There is no indication in her file that Subject 3 was referred and/or subject to any school disciplinary actions. Health records reported Subject 3 took medication to assist with depression and had her special education service time on her IEP time increased as it had been expressed she conveyed suicidal thoughts numerous times during the school day.

Subject 4 was an African-American/Pacific Islander female student who attended School C during the academic school years of 2007-2008 and 2008-2009. While Subject 4 did attend PSS middle schools in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, her 6<sup>th</sup> grade year was spent outside the participating school district. Subject 4 was determined eligible under Category D – Specific Learning Impairment in May, 2008. So, during the fourth quarter of the subject's 7<sup>th</sup> grade year (2007-2008), special education services were deemed necessary and provided in reading, language arts, mathematics, learning strategies, and social development in a more restrictive, small group instructional environment occurred.

Subject 4, during the fourth quarter of her 7<sup>th</sup> grade year, received core subject instruction in Language Arts 7, Reading 7, and Mathematics in a resource room setting taught by a special education teacher; refer to Table 8. In addition to these resource room classes, Subject 4 also took Learning Strategies taught by a special education teacher housed in a resource room environment. Subject 4 also received additional reading instruction through the *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup> program during her Reading Lab.

End of class report card grades for 7<sup>th</sup> grade indicated Subject 4 received a B- in Language Arts 7, an A- in Reading 7, and a C in her Reading Lab (*READ 180*<sup>TM</sup>) class. The student passed all her classes during her 7<sup>th</sup> grade year with the exception of Integrated Science II, of which she received an F during the first semester and a D+ during the second semester. Unfortunately, teacher interview data for Subject 4 was unobtainable for classes she took during her 7<sup>th</sup> grade academic school year. One teacher failed to respond to repeated requests, while the other teacher pulled out of the study.

*TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *The Second Edition* reading scores during Subject 4's 7<sup>th</sup> grade year demonstrated a 18 national percentage score and scale score of 627, refer to Table 7. Scores on subtests in the reading portion *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *The Second Edition* indicated areas of deficit as shown in Table 15. Subject 4 took the test without any accommodations.

Table 15

*Scores on Reading Subtests on TerraNova,™ The Second Edition (2008) for Subject 4 for 2007-2008 Academic Year (7<sup>th</sup> grade)*

Objective No.	Objective Title	Student Score	National OPI	Difference
02	Basic Understanding	44	65	-21
03	Analyze Text	54	72	-18
04	Evaluate/Extend Meaning	31	54	-23
05	Identify Reading Strategies	28	55	-27

For Subject 4's 8<sup>th</sup> grade year (2008-2009), her Language Arts 8 and Learning Strategies classes were in a resource room taught by a special education teacher. Her grades demonstrated success in Art, Physical Education, and her Reading Lab (*READ 180™*) class. In her Art class, Subject 4 received an A, while both end of the class grades for her Physical Education and *READ 180™* class she received a grade of a B. All other classes during her 8<sup>th</sup> grade year were either a D or F, including failing the entire year of Integrated Science III. Three additional classes Subject 4 received either a D or an F were Language Arts, Mathematics, and Learning Strategies, all of which were taught by a special education teacher.

Taking the test with accommodations during her 8<sup>th</sup> grade year, *TerraNova,™ Third Edition* reading scores demonstrated a 32 national percentage and scale score of 655, refer to Table 7. Similar to other subjects within this study, individualized testing accommodations were not listed on Subject 4's *TerraNova,™ Third Edition*. However, standardized testing accommodations presented in her time relevant IEP stated Subject 4 will participate on a standardized test with accommodations in the following areas:



repeat/re-read and/or clarify directions to the student, take the assessment in a small group or different class, and use extra time for any timed assessment (not to exceed 150% of standardized test limit).

Subtest scores in the reading portion of the *TerraNova,™ Third Edition* revealed the following data found in Table 16, which demonstrated continued weakness in all four subtest areas. Subject 4's weakness area when compared to the National OPI score was in Basic Understanding with a difference of 15 points. Subject 4's lowest score however was a 37 in Identifying Reading Strategies. This score was 14 points below the National OPI.

Table 16

*Scores on Reading Subtests on TerraNova,™ Third Edition (2009) for Subject 4 for 2008-2009 Academic Year (8<sup>th</sup> grade)*

Objective No.	Objective Title	Student Score	National OPI	Difference
02	Basic Understanding	45	60	-15
03	Analyze Text	44	55	-11
04	Evaluate/Extend Meaning	41	55	-14
05	Identify Reading Strategies	37	51	-14

Archival student record data showed Subject 4 was absent from school 10 days during her 7<sup>th</sup> grade school year and nine days during her 8<sup>th</sup> grade year. There were no indications of the student being suspended, although through an interview, Teacher 3 remembered Subject 4's mother shadowed her daughter throughout the school day for a three-day period. Student records did not contain any information concerning student retention or items related to health issues during her middle school years.

Subject 5 was a Caucasian female student who attended School B during her 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, from 2006-2009. Qualifying for special education services under Category B – Emotional Impairment in March, 2002 during elementary school, Subject 5 received special education services during her middle school years under the areas of mathematics, social/interpersonal skills, and organizational skills. Cumulative record data demonstrated that for her special education services, Subject 5 received instruction in a small group, resource room setting taught by a special education teacher in the areas of mathematics, learning strategies, and social skill development. Her 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts classes were in general education and taught by a general education teacher, refer to Table 8.

Sixth grade final course report card grades indicated Subject 5 demonstrated great success in many of her classes, however struggled in her general education Reading and Language Arts classes, receiving final grades of a C during semester 1 and a C- in semester 2 for Reading and a C during both semesters for her Language Arts class. Subject 5 did not receive a D or F in any class during her 6<sup>th</sup> grade year.

Reading scores on the *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *The Second Edition* demonstrated Subject 5's 6<sup>th</sup> grade national percentage was 76 and her scale score was 687. Subject 5 was afforded the opportunity to take a standardized assessment with accommodations. While accommodations were not individually listed on the *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *The Second Edition*, Subject 5's IEP at the time listed two accommodations for standardized testing. The two accommodations were to have the test administered in individual or small group setting and to have the test administered by a familiar teacher (e.g., special education teacher). Subject 5's subtest scores on the reading portion of the *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *The Second Edition*

indicated she scored 15 to 21 points greater than the national OPI on all reading subtests.

Each subtest score is presented in Table 17.

Table 17

*Scores on Reading Subtests on TerraNova,™ The Second Edition (2008) for Subject 5 for 2006-2007 Academic Year (6<sup>th</sup> grade)*

Objective No.	Objective Title	Student Score	National OPI	Difference
02	Basic Understanding	86	68	+18
03	Analyze Text	84	63	+21
04	Evaluate/Extend Meaning	77	57	+20
05	Identify Reading Strategies	70	55	+15

Final course grades as demonstrated on her 7<sup>th</sup> grade report cards showed her poorest grades in Health Ed 7 and Language Arts 7 where Subject 5 received a C-. Semester 1 grades also indicated Subject 5 received grades of a C in Learning Strategies, Mathematics, and World Geography. Special education teachers taught both Learning Strategies and Mathematics in a resource room. Semester 2 yielded improved grades in all subject areas, with a C received in Language Arts, a B in World Geography, an A+ in Learning Strategies, and a B+ in Mathematics. Grades of A were received in her elective classes.

Subject 5 took the *TerraNova,™ Third Edition* in 7<sup>th</sup> grade (2007-2008) with the same accommodations listed on her IEP during 6<sup>th</sup> grade. She demonstrated a national percentage score of 55 while her scale score was 672. Subject 5's subtest scores on the reading portion of the *TerraNova,™ Third Edition* indicated she scored above the

national OPI once again, posting higher scores in all reading subtest areas. This information is presented in Table 18.

Table 18

*Scores on Reading Subtests on TerraNova,™ Third Edition (2009) for Subject 5 for 2007-2008 Academic Year (7<sup>th</sup> grade)*

Objective No.	Objective Title	Student Score	National OPI	Difference
02	Basic Understanding	70	65	+5
03	Analyze Text	79	72	+7
04	Evaluate/Extend Meaning	58	54	+4
05	Identify Reading Strategies	58	55	+3

Eighth grade (2008-2009) end of semester grades demonstrated Subject 5's lowest grade of the year was in the resource room mathematics class where she received a C in both semesters. A C+ was earned in semester 1 in her Language Arts 8 class, while a B was received in the second semester for the same class. Grades of A were earned in Art, Intercultural Education, Physical Education, and Pathways to Career, while the remaining classes Subject 5 earned a grade of a B or B+.

Eighth grade reading scores on the *TerraNova,™ Third Edition* demonstrated Subject 5, while taking the standardized test with accommodations, had a national percentage of 62 and her scale score was 689, refer to Table 7. Subject 5 was afforded the same accommodations on her 8<sup>th</sup> grade *TerraNova,™ Third Edition* assessment as in previous years. Subject 5's successful subtest scores on the reading portion of the *TerraNova,™ Third Edition* are indicated in Table 19.

Table 19

*Scores on Reading Subtests on TerraNova,™ Third Edition (2009) for Subject 5 for 2008-2009 Academic Year (8<sup>th</sup> grade)*

Objective No.	Objective Title	Student Score	National OPI	Difference
02	Basic Understanding	70	60	+10
03	Analyze Text	63	55	+8
04	Evaluate/Extend Meaning	65	55	+10
05	Identify Reading Strategies	57	51	+6

Subject 5's records indicated she took medication at school to combat anxiety and depression. While Subject 5's records do not contain data regarding the number of absences in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, it was recorded that in both 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, Subject 5 missed 8 days each year.

While grades and test scores differed among the five subjects, one commonality shared by all was the fact they were enrolled in Learning Strategies during their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year. Grades for Language Arts, Learning Strategies, Reading, and *READ 180™* are depicted in Table 20.

Table 20

*Individual Grades in a Language Arts, Learning Strategies, Reading, and READ 180™ Classes during 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Year across all 5*

*Subjects*

Subject	School	Language Arts 8	Learning Strategies	Reading 8	READ 180™
1	B	B-(Both Semesters)*	A (Both Semesters) *	N/A	N/A
2	A	A (Semester 1)* A (Semester 2)*	A (Semester One) * A+ (Semester Two) *	A (Semester One) * A+ (Semester Two) *	N/A
3	A	B- (Semester 1) B+ (Semester 2)	A+ (Semester 1) * A (Semester 2) *	N/A	N/A
4	C	D (Semester 1) * C (Semester 2) *	D (Semester 1) * B (Semester 2) *	N/A	B+ (Semester 1) B- (Semester 2)
5	B	C (Semester 1) B (Semester 2)	A (Semester 1) * B+ (Semester 2) *	N/A	N/A

\* Denotes class taught by a special education teacher in a resource room.

Concluding, all five subjects lived with at least one natural parent. Subject 5 was the only participant who lived in a single parent household. No subject was retained in any middle school grade level and any discipline referrals, if having existed, were removed prior to the student transferring from a middle school to a high school setting. .

### **Research Question 3**

What reading instructional practices did middle school students with or at-risk for an emotional impairment in the participating school district School District receive while enrolled in the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, 2008-2009, or 2009-2010 school years?

Demographic information regarding the seven teacher participants is found in Table 21.

Teacher 1 had taught since 1983 at elementary and middle school levels and was a special education teacher who taught a combination of reading and language arts classes geared towards the changing needs of students in special education. Teacher 1 taught students in both a special education resource room settings as well as served as co-teacher in a variety of differing classroom environments. During this same period, she was a CSC chairperson as well as a special education assessor for the school district. During the past three years, Teacher 1 worked at School B and provided learning strategies and language arts resource room special education services/instruction in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. Specifically dealing with this study, Teacher 1 provided language arts instruction for Subject 1 during the second semester of her 7<sup>th</sup> grade year (2007-2008) and during her entire 8<sup>th</sup> grade year (2008-2009).

Table 21

*Demographic Data for Teachers 1-7*

Teacher Number and Gender	Highest Attained Academic Degree	Years of Teaching Experience	Certification: Special, General, or Both	Reading Classes Taught between 2007-2010	Received Reading Instruction between 2007-2010	Students Taught/ School
1 Female	MS	27	Special	Reading & Language Arts (LA)	Yes	1/B
2 Male	BA	16	General	LA	Yes	5/B
3 Female	MA	26	General	<i>READ 180™</i>	Yes	4/C
4 Male	MA	34	General	LA	Yes	5/B
5 Female	PhD	28	Both	LA	Yes	2 & 3/A
6 Male	MS	22	Both	Literature Enrichment	No	2 & 3/A
7 Female	BS	27	Both	Reading	Yes	2/A



Teacher 1's philosophy was literacy learning is a combination of many ideas and methods such as whole language, direct instruction, and phonics based programs.

Individualized instruction for students with disabilities depends on the unique learning styles that each student possesses. Teacher 1 indicated her teaching methods varied from using what a general education classroom setting may use, to using a technique and/or strategy designed specifically for individual students. While Teacher 1 indicated she had not co-taught any classes over the past three years, she often worked with general education teachers to plan, modify, and accommodate the unique needs of students with disabilities.

Understanding that Subject 1 was diagnosed with an EI, Teacher 1 was unaware of any reading strategy instructional practices designed for the unique needs of students with EI. Of the six reading programs listed on the Interview Questions for General and Special Education Teachers including *Great Leaps Reading Program*, *Teaching Your Child to Read*, *Time Reading*, *Corrective Reading*, *Open Court Reading*, and *Peer Assisted Learning Strategies*, Teacher 1 was only familiar with one, namely *Peer Assisted Learning Strategies*. Teacher 1 knew of *Peer Assisted Learning Strategies*, but had only read of the program and implemented only a minimal amount of ideas from the program.

Teacher 1 reported using instructional materials from the *REWARDS* reading program, *READWELL Stage 1*, *Strategies that Work*, and parts of the *Literacy Place Reading Program*. Teacher 1 reported during the 2009-2010 school year, she took a class called "Strategies That Work," designed specifically to teach different reading strategies. The program had been shared with teachers in School B and had become part of the Continuous School Improvement Literacy Committee. She shared however, while

“Strategies That Work” provided helpful techniques, neither this program nor any above listed programs were exclusively used, and she often had to find appropriate materials based on the unique needs of her students. She noted for Subject 1, materials were used to incorporate written expression as this class was also geared for language arts development. She reported Subject 1 had great difficulty with written expression and would often refrain from doing assigned work in class. Teacher 1 believed Subject 1 was often absent from class and had difficulty with staying focused on designated material(s).

Teacher 1 reported that of the strategies listed on the Interview Questions for General and Special Education Teachers, error correction, peer mediation, and direct instruction corrective reading practices were implemented and used. She had not used listening to text and listening while reading.

Teacher 2 was a female general education teacher with 16 years of education experience, specifically the last seven being spent at the middle school level. Teaching at School B, she provided language arts instruction to Subject 5 during her 8<sup>th</sup> grade year (2008/09). Teacher 2 earned her Bachelor’s of Arts degree in English Literature and possessed PSS certification in the relevant middle school areas of English, Language Arts, and Reading. Her philosophy regarding literacy was a belief that successful students need to have a common higher level of vocabulary in order to academically achieve literacy across the curriculum. Teacher 2 shared that literacy is improved by allowing students time to think, use of graphic organizers, inferencing and drawing conclusions, and allowing students to relate real life experiences. Teacher 2 also felt writing improves literacy across the curriculum. She also related that over the past three years, she had training in implementation the *Diagnostic Reading Assessment 2* (DRA2),

*Critical Thinking Skills*, and literacy training associated with curriculum presented in her class.

As indicated on the Interview Questions for General and Special Education Teachers, Teacher 2 only heard of one of the reading programs listed: *Great Leaps Reading Program*. When asked if she had used the *Great Leaps Reading Program*, she replied she hadn't used the program and/or any of the other programs because the PSS had not made them available to her, her grade level, and/or the school. At the time of the interview, Teacher 2 used the *Scholastic Reading Inventory*, guided reading practices, and reading groups to assist her language arts classes with reading. Teacher 2 shared she also implemented the six traits of writing in her classes, referring once again of her belief that writing improves literacy.

While the listed reading programs contained within the Interview Questions for General and Special Education Teachers were not used, Teacher 2 was not aware of any additional programs specifically tailored for students with EI. However, of all the listed practices, Teacher 2 used error correction, listening to text, listening while reading, peer mediation, and direct instruction corrective reading within her classes. Teacher 2 relayed that in teaching Subject 5, the special education department assisted her with implementing these listed practices with Subject 5 and based on this assistance, it was believed Subject 5's performance in her class improved. Teacher 2 shared she met weekly with special education personnel to assist with accommodations and modifications and she held language arts classes with paraprofessional assistance.

Teacher 3 possessed a Bachelor's of Science degree in Education and a Master's of Arts degree in Human Relations. She was a female general education teacher, who

taught the *READ 180™* program over the last three years to students who struggled with grade level reading material, including Subject 4. During her 26 years as a PSS teacher, Teacher 3 taught a variety of elementary school grade levels, including kindergarten and reading recovery. Possessing Reading Recovery Certification, Teacher 3 believed all students, regardless of their current reading level and/or disabling condition, should be allowed to develop a love of learning through reading. Teacher 3 believed in the *READ 180™* program and felt the practices worked on in class can be easily transferred to improvement in all academic areas.

Teacher 3 shared that over the past three years, the *READ 180™* program was implemented to the best of her ability, yet due to School C's conflicting short class periods, it was extremely difficult to implement the program as designed. She also relayed that technical software duties resulted in less than optimal teaching experiences, which often lead to negatively viewed behavior and progress within her class. She did however, share the program closely modeled an ideal situation, noting the program was specifically designed for students with disabilities. Teacher 3 noted for designated periods of allotted time, her students moved through the three main sections of the program: independent reading, small group instruction/activities, and adaptive computer software designed for individual self-paced computer time. Three years removed from her previous *READ 180™* training, Teacher 3 was excited about the possibility of designated training to be held during the second semester of the 2010-2011 academic school year.

Individual student progress was monitored through graded group work assignments and Teacher 3 witnessed improvement on 10 comprehension question

*Reading Counts* quizzes which were individually administered and taken by students throughout the class. Quarterly report card grades were based on student improvement and graded material completed in class over a nine week period. Teacher 3 also shared there was rarely any contact with the special education department while she worked at School C. She explained when she asked for assistance for students with disabilities, often a paraprofessional joined her class to work with the students on a limited basis. While she welcomed this support, rarely had she worked with the students' case managers, nor had any accommodations and/or modification been made by special education personnel to assist students. Due to the computerized nature of the *READ 180™* program, Teacher 3 related that materials presented in her class were not associated with other classes, and thus were unable to be worked upon in other areas of school, including a learning strategies support class that Subject 4 was enrolled. Teacher 3 shared she believed this hampered the success of several of her students including Subject 4 whom she provided instruction during the 2008/09 academic school year. Teacher 3 also shared Subject 4 could have benefitted from additional reading support but based on Subject 4's schedule, she was not permitted to attend a support class geared for reading.

In directly relating information to Subject 4, Teacher 3 noted the subject had difficulty with the class structure and rarely completed the necessary components associated with demonstrating marked improvement within the class. Teacher 3 revealed homework had not been assigned to her former classes due to the numerous assignments given in other classes so as to prevent overwhelming the students under her care.

Teaching for 34 years in both adult and child education, Teacher 4 had been a general education language arts teacher at School B over the past three academic school years. Possessing both a Bachelor's of Science and Master's of Arts in Education degrees, Teacher 4 also taught English as a Second Language (ESL), English, French, Literature Enrichment, and Journalism. Believing in courses he taught, Teacher 4 shared that his reading literacy philosophy was literacy must include exposing students to a variety of text at their appropriate levels. In addition, Teacher 4 stated that responding both verbally and through written expression to written material(s) was essential to being literate. To continue to define this philosophy, Teacher 4 over the past three years continued his education in the area of reading by taking an online reading course entitled "Scholastic Red" which provided instruction in fluency and strategies for struggling readings.

In the 2008-2009 academic school year, Teacher 4 provided 8<sup>th</sup> grade language arts instruction for Subject 5. Teacher 4 recalls Subject 5 had difficulty with his class and appeared overly anxious about assignments in and out of class. He reported Subject 5 often had difficulty completing assignments and would use avoidance techniques to refrain from having to do multiple assignments. To assist in the instruction of Subject 5, Teacher 4 often met with special education teachers to discuss appropriate accommodations and modifications to the material and the instructional delivery system. However, Teacher 4 made it clear while assistance was sought in this situation and others, co-teaching opportunities were not established as true co-teaching opportunities; special education and/or paraprofessionals who worked in his room from time to time were there solely for assisting students in special education. Special education assistance

previously provided was indicated as being beneficial, yet the focus of this assistance, similar to the focus of the class, dealt with written expression.

Knowing that Subject 5 had a diagnosed EI, Teacher 4 attempted to find materials of interest to the student, allowed the student to respond verbally to written questions, and encouraged self-control as an important element of success. Teacher 4 also shared knowledge of four of the six reading programs associated with the Interview Questions for General and Special Education Teachers: *Time Reading*, *Corrective Reading*, *Open Court Reading*, and *Peer Assisted Learning Strategies*. The two programs Teacher 4 was unfamiliar with were *Great Leaps Reading Program* and *Teach Your Child to Read*. While knowing four of the six listed programs, Teacher 4 reported only using *Corrective Reading* and *Peer Assisted Learning Strategies* in his classrooms. While only using two programs, Teacher 4 shared he used error correction, listening to text, listening while reading, and direct instruction corrective reading practices within his classes. The only practice listed that was not used was peer mediation.

Holding a Doctorate of Philosophy degree, Teacher 5 taught an entire year of 8<sup>th</sup> grade language arts during the 2009-2010 academic school year to Subjects 2 and 3. Previously employed outside of the PSS as a special education teacher and special education department chairperson, Teacher 5 was a female teacher who believed all students have the ability to learn and through appropriate guidance, can flourish in school. Specifically regarding literacy, Teacher 5 stated all students should have the opportunity to be well educated through a wealth of differing print materials specially designed for the unique needs each child possess. Working at School A over the past three years, Teacher 5 reported reading literacy can be greatly improved through the use

of written expression. Her language arts class combined both reading and writing for students to demonstrate mastery of PSS curriculum standards.

From her experience, Teacher 5 was aware of the five of the six reading programs listed on the Interview Questions for General and Special Education Teachers. The one specific program she was unaware of was *Teach Your Child to Read*. She had used *Great Leaps Reading Program*, *Time Reading*, *Corrective Reading*, and portions of *Peer Assisted Learning Strategies*. The one program she was familiar with, yet had not used, was *Open Court Reading*. However, none of the above mentioned programs was used in Teacher 5's language arts class over the past three years in the PSS. When asked if she knew of any reading program designed specifically for students with emotional impairments, she shared she did not. Of the practices listed on the Interview Questions for General and Special Education Teachers, Teacher 5 was aware and had used error correction, listening to text, and listening to reading. She had heard of, but had not used, peer mediation and direct instruction corrective reading.

Teacher 5 had met often with special education teachers regarding the unique needs of her students and often accommodations and modifications were made concerning individual student needs. It was relayed that for Subjects 2 and 3, both accommodations and modifications were made to enhance learning, yet it appeared more academic assistance was provided for Subject 3. Often this support came via a paraprofessional assigned to her class. Teacher 5 shared this support was the PSS way of stating the class was co-taught, when in reality, rarely had she taught a class with a special education teacher.



Providing general education Literature Enrichment classes for Subjects 2 and 3 at School A, Teacher 6, a male, was a former special education teacher for students with EI. Holding a Bachelor's of Science and Master's of Science degrees in Education, he was a 22 year teaching veteran who had also taught gifted education and spent time as a middle school reading specialist, all of which, helped develop Teacher 6's literacy philosophy. Teacher 6's philosophy in literacy was that teachers need to teach the students who they have, not the students they wish they had. He shared it is important to start where the students are and as a teacher, you attempt to plant a seed in their mind and with some assistance along the way, a teacher can watch that seed grow. He hoped he was able to perform such an act with Subjects 2 and 3.

Teacher 6 stated for Subjects 2 and 3, his Literature Enrichment class was a nine week quarter class in which both subjects did extremely well. Grades for his class were based on assignments in and out of class, yet revealed homework for this class was minimal. He noted instructional programs used in his class were not specific in nature, but he used literary circles and differentiated learning as practices within his Literature Enrichment classes during the 2009-2010 academic school years. In addition to these current practices, Teacher 6 used three of the five reading practices, listening to text, listening while reading, and direct instruction corrective reading, as listed in the Interview Questions for General and Special Education Teachers.

Teacher 6 was aware of four of the six listed reading programs contained with the interview questionnaire, with *Teach Your Child to Read* and *Corrective Reading* being the two he not. While he had knowledge of four of the six listed programs, he had yet to use any of these programs. He did not have knowledge of any reading program

specifically designed for students with emotional impairments, followed by a statement questioning if there should even be such a program.

Specifically teaching Subjects 2 and 3, Teacher 6 was unaware of any particular accommodations and/or modifications needed for his class, but noted if problems were to arise, he would contact each student's case manager for assistance. From his recollection, he did not need to do this. He also stated for his class, he didn't believe he needed co-teaching assistance. During the 2009-2010 academic school year, he did not have another teacher and/or paraprofessional in his Literature Enrichment class. He did share he had opportunities for co-teaching experiences in the past, both as a general and special education teacher.

Working at School A, Teacher 7, a female, taught for 27 years, 22 of those years spent within the PSS. Holding two Bachelor's of Science degrees, one of which was in Education, she taught a variety of subjects across differing grade levels. Spending 20 years as a special education teacher, Teacher 7 relied on her time spent as a general education teacher and a CSC Chairperson to assist with her knowledge of classroom instruction and materials associated with reading. Over the past three years, her focus on instruction was in the field of special education as a reading teacher, presenting a literacy philosophy in which she believed it possible for all students to read. In addition, she believed reading is more than decoding and that comprehension is a huge aspect of reading.

Being trained at a three day seminar in the implementation of the *REWARDS* reading program, Teacher 7 used this program over the past two and a half years starting in the second semester of the 2007-2008 academic school year. At the time of this

interview, she praised the *REWARDS* program, but was also excited about the possibility of implementing a new *Keystone Reading Program* during the 2010-2011 academic school year.

Providing 8<sup>th</sup> grade resource room reading instruction for Subject 2 during the 2009-2010 academic school year, Teacher 7 shared that Subject 2's overall grade was based on his classroom performance, as homework assignments were minimal. While Subject 2 demonstrated social difficulties at times, she did not believe there were any specific reading practices used for students with emotional impairments. However, she was well aware of the reading programs listed on the Interview Questions for General and Special Education Teachers. Of the six programs listed, Teacher 7 had used the *Great Leaps Reading Program* and *Peer Assisted Learning Strategies*. Of the five reading practices listed on the interview sheets, she used four of the five regularly, noting the one practice not typically used, error correction, was used in certain situations.

Teacher 7 co-taught reading classes with general education teachers in the past, but hadn't done so over the last three years. While she was a reading teacher for students with impairments, she had not worked with any general education teacher to make adjustments in her teaching of these students. She relayed it was expected that special education teachers work with general education teachers to make accommodations and modifications in the general education setting, but it was a very rare occasion if input was offered and/or sought after for students in special education. Special education teachers were viewed as having all the answers for students under their care.

## Summary

Using three associated data collections methods, data on five student subjects were researched to determine the amount and type of reading instruction provided during their middle school years in the participating school district. Their archival cumulative school records were reviewed to produce demographic data associated with individual student classes and end of the class grades. These data produced a list of teachers who taught reading and/or language arts classes during each subject's middle school. Seven qualified teachers responded to interview requests and data were collected in print form.

Of the seven interviewed teachers, data demonstrated that collectively the group had over 180 years of teaching experience. Five of the seven teachers held advanced educational degrees and four teachers taught for a portion of their teaching career as a special education teacher. No teachers were collectively at a training session together. Training that was provided was segmented and based on the perceived needs of each individual school. Time associated with reading instruction was reported by the five language arts teachers as being significantly less than that of a Reading teacher, due to the nature of the individual class. Teachers who taught language arts (N = 5) shared that reading was often assigned as homework, where a greater concentration on written expression would be addressed at school during individual class period. Chapter V will discuss these findings in detail and present reasons for why students with or at-risk for EI may perform differently in reading across the participating school district.

## CHAPTER V

### **Discussion**

Students with or at-risk for an emotional impairment (EI) face tremendous difficulties throughout their academic and social lives. Researchers have indicated students with or at-risk for EI demonstrated lower grade point averages, higher rates of failing academic courses, and extremely low graduation rates when compared to their peers without disabilities (Sutherland & Wehby, 2001). Kaufman (2005) found students with or at-risk for EI demonstrated dual deficits, signifying a weakness in academic and social behavior. Academically, students with EI often exhibit difficulties in the area of reading and often progress at a slower pace than their same aged peers Anderson, Kutah, and Duchnowski (2001). Teachers reported classroom instruction is difficult for students with EI and researchers reported teachers often focus on behavioral management techniques for these students and thus fail to address pressing academic needs (Kaufman, 2005). The negative plight of these students is well documented.

Students with or at-risk for EI within the PSS exhibit similar difficulties. The purpose of this study was to provide a comprehensive review of collected data and a description of the delivery of reading instruction for middle school students with or at-risk for EI. Subjects matching eligibility criteria had their cumulative school records reviewed, while participating teachers were interviewed.

Understanding the difficulty students with EI exhibit, three separate yet uniquely related research questions were developed to guide this study. Research Questions 1 and 2 were addressed through a comprehensive review of each subject's archival school record. Data were collected for Research Question 3 by conducting interviews with

general and special education teachers who taught reading and/or language arts classes in one or multiple grade levels in a middle school setting. Research was conducted to determine what types of reading instruction 8<sup>th</sup> grade students with or at-risk for EI received and the outcome of the reading instruction based on standardized reading scores. Data collected and analyzed produced mixed results due do small sample sizes for both students and teachers. Subject *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> test scores, classes taken, class grades, types of instructional practices received, time allotted to daily reading, and reading instruction provided by qualified reading and language arts teachers varied across the students associated with this study. Likewise, teacher interview data varied across the participating school district, which produced mixed results. Teacher training, classroom reading practices, and reading strategy knowledge and usage greatly varied among the participating teachers.

### **Research Questions 1 and 2**

What are the specific demographic and academic information on middle school students with or at-risk for an emotional impairment in the participating school district while enrolled in the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, 2008-2009, or 2009-2010 school years? What specific types of class placements and reading instruction did middle school students with or at-risk for an emotional impairment in the participating school district have while enrolled in the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, 2008-2009, or 2009-2010 school years?

Demographic data demonstrated that four of the five subjects in this study were female and four of the five subjects had a family member who was at the time of the study either a current or retired enlisted USA soldier, and all but one living in a

household with two parents. Two students were Caucasian, one was Hispanic, and two were from mixed racial backgrounds, African-American/Asian and African-American/Caucasian. This diversity prevented any generalization with regards to gender or race.

Data revealed three of the five subjects attended the same middle school during 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade, one subject attended another PSS middle school before enrolling in the participating school district, while one arrived in the participating school district after 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Four out of five subjects qualified for special education services during their middle school years while the remaining subject qualified in 2002, during 1<sup>st</sup> grade. Qualifying for special education services under the PSS's category B requires students receive a medical diagnosis of an emotional condition as listed in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Fourth Edition (DSM-IV) and present evidence indicating the emotional condition adversely affects the student's academic performance (Participating School System Special Education Procedural Guide, 2005). It is often noted throughout the PSS, this area is the hardest area to qualify a student, and problems such as a conduct disorder or an oppositional defiant disorder are not qualifying criteria. Even with exhibited difficulties, it has been reported students often do not qualify under category B until the middle school level where students must interact with a variety of teachers and deal with differing subject matter throughout the school day. Upon receiving special education services in middle school, only one student continued to demonstrate weak academic progress. Subject 4 received failing grades in Integrated Science III, Mathematics 8, and U.S. History during her 8<sup>th</sup> grade year. Again, no discernable patterns emerged.

Subjects associated with this study spent the majority of their school day receiving academic instruction in the least restrictive environment: the general education setting. During the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 school years, reading instruction for the majority of 7<sup>th</sup> grade students across the participating school district was taught in their language arts class. However, all five subjects received special education services for at least one school quarter of academic instruction during their 7<sup>th</sup> grade year. It is important to point out only Subjects 1, 3, and 4 received specialized instruction in their language arts class by a special education teacher in a resource room. Subjects 2 and 4 received small group, specialized reading instruction from a special education teacher in 7<sup>th</sup> grade in Reading 7. Subject 4, in addition to resource room services in Reading 7, also received instruction in the *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup> class and was the only participant of the five in 7<sup>th</sup> grade enrolled in this class. Subjects 3, 4, and 5 also received academic instructional support in a Learning Strategies class during 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Furthermore, even though Subject 1 did poorly on the reading portion of the *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *Third Edition*, she did not receive a reading support class such as *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup> or Reading 7. Subjects 2 and 4 also performed poorly on the reading portion of the *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *Third Edition*, yet Subject 2 received specialized reading support from a special education teacher in Reading 7 and Subject 4 not only received this service, but also received specialized instruction in the *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup> program. This information clearly indicates different special education services regarding reading instruction were provided across the five subjects within the three participating schools.

In 8<sup>th</sup> grade, Subject 2 continued receiving support in Reading 8 and Subject 4 continued with the *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup> program. It is essential to note similar to each student's



7<sup>th</sup> grade year, reading instruction was provided to students via their 8<sup>th</sup> grade language arts class whether in a general education class or a resource room. Subjects 1 and 4 continued to receive specialized instruction in a resource room for language arts. Student 2 attended language arts in a resource room, a change from 7<sup>th</sup> grade, while Student 3 attended language arts in a general education classroom, a change from 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Subjects 2 and 3 also were enrolled in a Literature Enrichment class taught by a general education teacher. The inconsistent pattern of class placements continued into 8<sup>th</sup> grade across the five students within the three middle schools.

Yet, all five subjects took Learning Strategies in their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year. The majority of students received an A in Learning Strategies in both semesters of their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year. One subject received an A in Learning Strategies in semester 1, followed by a B+ in semester 2. Another subject received a D in Learning Strategies in semester 1, earning a B in semester 2. Therefore, all five subjects were placed into a learning Strategies class in 8<sup>th</sup> grade regardless of their reading performance as indicated on *TerraNova*<sup>™</sup> testing. This is important to note because students in special education often receive this service class as a catch-all approach to providing instruction in a variety of areas, and yet, not all students in this study appeared to need this service based on their academic performance in the majority of their classes. The flip side to this argument would indicate this class helped students perform academically well in their middle school subjects. The downside is this class wasn't removed once academic performance improved. It might be recommended that students who struggled with reading enroll in a reading support class instead of a learning strategies class.

Students with or at-risk for EI demonstrated weaker reading scores on their 8<sup>th</sup> grade *TerraNova™, Third Edition* Reading assessment when compared to their same grade level peers in their home schools. However, while the participants' scores were lower in nature, the scores varied across and within the three schools associated with this study. Subjects 1 and 5 attended 8<sup>th</sup> grade at School A during the 2008-2009 academic school year and their reading scores greatly differed. Subjects 2 and 3 attended 8<sup>th</sup> grade at School B during the 2009-2010 academic school year and their scores greatly differed. Subject 4 who attended School C was the only subject to receive special education services in language arts and Learning Strategies classes in association with the *READ 180™* program. Yet even with these services, Subject 4's 8<sup>th</sup> grade *TerraNova,™ Third Edition* Reading assessment score, when compared to her same grade level peers, was low.

While the focus of this study was on the reading achievement of these five subjects, it is important to understand that each subject had a science or math score on his/her 8<sup>th</sup> grade *TerraNova,™ Third Edition* which demonstrated a score lower than the reading assessment score. Subject 1 received a median national percentage score of 16 on her 8<sup>th</sup> grade Science assessment of the *TerraNova,™ Third Edition*. Subject 2 received a median national percentage score of 25 on his 8<sup>th</sup> grade Mathematics assessment of the *TerraNova,™ Third Edition*. Subject 3 received a median national percentage score of 25 on her 8<sup>th</sup> grade Science assessment of the *TerraNova,™ Third Edition*. Subject 4 received a median national percentage score of 19 on her 8<sup>th</sup> grade Mathematics portion of the *TerraNova,™ Third Edition*. Subject 5 earned a median national percentage score of 10 on her 8<sup>th</sup> grade Mathematics portion of his *TerraNova,™*

*Third Edition.* The data collected for students with or at-risk for EI relate back to the research indicating students with EI typically demonstrate dual deficits: academic and behavior (Kauffman, 2005). This information prompts future researchers to look not only at students with or at-risk for EI, but delve into each subject's IEP to determine the academic weakness of each subject.

### **Research Question 3**

What reading instructional practices did students with or at-risk for an emotional impairment in the participating school district have while enrolled in the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, 2008-2009, and 2009-2010 school years?

In conducting individual teacher interviews through the use of a pre-established questionnaire, general and special education teachers' reading instruction may have impacted the academic performance of the students they instructed. Of the seven teachers who provided reading instruction, only three teachers had been general education teachers their entire careers. Two teachers who taught general education classes during the course of this study were former special education teachers.

Teachers 2, 4, and 5 exclusively taught language arts while Teacher 3 taught the *READ 180™* program and Teacher 6 taught Literature Enrichment. Teachers 1 and 7 were special education teachers who taught reading, while Teacher 1 also taught language arts. During the course of this study, Teachers 1 and 7 also taught Learning Strategies, which may have directly affected the academic performance of Subjects 2 and 5. Students who took Learning Strategies were provided instruction in note taking, reading techniques to better understand curriculum textbooks, efficient study methods, time management, and proper ways to prepare and study for quizzes and tests. In addition to these items,

students were also afforded the opportunity to receive additional assistance within class and homework assignment from their teacher.

Six of the seven teachers reported they received reading instruction training between 2007-2010. Teacher 6 reported he had not. Training methods across the participating school district varied depending on the individual needs of each participating school. Teachers reported mixed results on the type of training received. Often teachers were unaware of training opportunities held at the district wide level and many felt they had missed opportunities for additional training. Some teachers questioned why more training had not been conducted.

However while training was received, reading instructional practices within the three schools greatly varied. With the exception of Teachers 1 and 3, reading instruction was not provided on a daily basis as reported by the remaining five teachers, due to the limited amount of class time and necessity to provide instruction in written language. Teacher 3 shared even in the *READ 180™* program there were days in which due to time constraints, reading was not taught. Often the *READ 180™* program focused on allowing students to read via a computer and through sustained silent reading. If students did not receive reading instruction in their language arts class, then they may have missed the opportunity to read not only in this class, but throughout their academic school day, as reading instruction was not a focal point beyond reading and language arts classes. Furthermore, Teachers 1, 4, 6, and 7 reported giving minimal amounts of homework in their language arts classes, Teacher 3 stated she did not give any homework.

Teacher 3 also shared while she had taught the *READ 180™* program the past three academic school years, not once during that time period had the program been run

according to procedures. Taking into account hard and software difficulties that do arise from time to time, Teacher 3's biggest complaint was the school's schedule which prevented the program from being run effectively. *READ 180™* is a 90 min program that needed to be spaced out between two school days, as classes at her school were only 45 min in length. Students who were absent often missed important aspects of the tri-tiered program approach and Subject 4 was often late and/or absent for this class.

Of the seven teachers, the average number of years teaching children was 26 years. This number is seen positively as their teaching experiences gave them a vast wealth of knowledge in their field of expertise. However, of the six programs listed on the interview questionnaire, only three teachers reported using any program within their classes. Teacher 5 was the only individual to report having used at least three programs during her career. None of the teachers reported using any of the reading programs during the past three academic school years. Teachers did report however using strategies within these programs. All teachers reported using direct instruction and corrective reading, while five reported using listening to text, listening while reading, and peer mediation practices, while four of the teachers reported using the error correction practice. Teacher 5 who taught *READ 180™* was not part of this reporting group because of the prescribed teaching procedures in *READ 180™*.

None of the teachers shared they were involved with a true co-teaching environment where general and special education teachers took a shared responsibility to teach an entire class. Of this group of teachers, general education teachers shared that during the course of this study, a special education teacher had typically not been present in a room during instructional moments. Four general education teachers reported they

had one or more paraprofessionals work in their rooms. None, however, could recall if paraprofessional special education assistance was provided directly to students within this study. Yet while having a paraprofessional provide assistance in a classroom may qualify as a minimal co-teaching environment, one teacher shared he didn't feel this was a co-teaching environment and most paraprofessionals only worked with students in special education. Three general education teachers reported special education teachers, only when asked, provided assistance for shared students. The same held true for special education teachers as all reported assistance for any of their classes had not been reciprocated.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Throughout the participating school district, 14 possible student subjects met established eligibility criteria, creating a very small overall subject pool. Of the 14 possible subjects, only five parents (35.7%) responded and granted permission to access their child's school cumulative file. This small return rate exacerbated the available student information for review in this study and negatively impacted the number of teachers involved with this study.

Based on a review of individual subject's cumulative school files, 11 teachers were deemed eligible to participate. Of these 11 eligible teachers, only seven (63.6%) granted permission to be interviewed using a pre-established questionnaire. One of the seven responding was the only *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup> teacher within the study. While teacher participation did exceed the number of student subjects, it was small and did not represent the middle schools across the participating school district in which there are nine schools that provided academic instruction to middle school students, 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>

grades. Due to the low number of student subjects involved with this study, only three schools housed teachers who participated in this study. Again, this low number of schools involved is not representative of the participating school district.

Limiting the study further was the fact that the *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *The Second Edition*, changed to the *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *Third Edition* during the course of this study. Test scores between the two tests could not be compared.

Unlike recorded information in a student's cumulative file, an additional limitation to this study was interview data relied solely on teacher self-reporting. The researcher had no true way of telling if teachers were honestly forthcoming or withholding information.

In addition to teacher self-reporting, interview data collected through e-mail messaging back and forth relied solely on the information presented in written text form. Electronic mail messaging did not allow the interviewer and interviewee to establish a rapport between each other and provide additional information based on information presented in a face to face interview.

While these limitations greatly affected the results of this study, the most restricting limitation is the fact data collected can only be applied to the PSS. The PSS school system is a unique organization that provides a kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade American education to military and civilian dependents of American. Data cannot be generalized and presented outside of the confines of the PSS.

### **Implications for Practice**

During the course of this study, with the exception of the *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup> program, reading content in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades was taught in the language arts classes. Special

education students took additional support classes (i.e., Learning Strategies, *READ 180™*, Reading 7, Reading 8, Literature Enrichment) inconsistently between and among the participating schools within the district. It is essential that the PSS adopt curriculum policy changes that make it necessary for all students in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade to receive a reading course taught by a qualified reading teacher, especially students receiving special education services. Although Teachers 1 and 7 were qualified reading instructors, a special education teacher who taught a resource room reading and language arts class at one participating school was not qualified in either area. Special education teachers across the PSS need to be certified in special education, but do not need to hold certification in the subject matter they instruct.

Of the seven interviewed teachers, none shared they communicated any successes and/or failures with reading instruction throughout the district. Schools become their own self-contained communities almost competing against each other. Rarely do successes and/or failures at one school get shared with personnel at another. Instructional ideas that work become closely guarded secrets, and instead of sharing information between schools to enhance academic and social success, schools fail to do so. This is a problem among the three schools associated with this study: a clear lack of communication. Taking into consideration planning, lunch, and the end of the academic school day schedule presented in the participating school district, teachers only teach for five or less hours a day. This is not to state teachers do not use their planning time effectively. Rather, teachers could communicate with other schools across the district. Teachers, via e-mail, could share their successes and failures with their students with other teachers. Personnel at the district level could create a shared electronic file between



schools of effective strategies and techniques that work for middle school students with or at-risk for EI (or with other disabilities as well).

An additional face-to-face way to circumnavigate the communication problem is to provide mandated literacy training that all middle school reading and language arts teachers (general and special educators) across the district would attend. This gathering of professionals would not only provide training, but also allow personnel to become acquainted with one another and share what's been working in their classrooms for students in special education.

Reading instruction across the participating school district has been limited. While teachers reported receiving additional training, none of the teachers reported attending the same training as one of their colleagues in this study. This is of great concern because all three middle schools are within 30 miles of each other. In addition, each teacher used a different set of instructional materials within their classrooms. While it cannot be expected that teachers of differing grade levels would use the same instructional materials, it is unique to note that Teachers 1 and 7 used completely different materials for reading instruction.

While report card grades and *TerraNova*<sup>TM</sup> assessment performances varied, only School C had a special education staff member trained to provide academic and behavioral support for students with or at-risk for EI. Currently, the participating school district only has two teaching slots for special education teachers with professional certification to provide academic and behavioral support for students with EI. The PSS currently has only six designated teaching slots to provide support for students with EI. Due to this low number of appropriately trained special education teachers, students with

or at-risk for EI may continue to poorly perform socially, greatly impacting their academic progress. Problems that arise in a classroom may not be properly dealt with in an effective and timely manner, allowing difficult situations to escalate without providing appropriate assistance. Properly trained special education teachers could provide appropriate classroom assistance in both the general and special education settings to enhance the learning for students with or at-risk of EI. The PSS should look into this matter fully.

In addition, none of the seven teachers reported receiving Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVC) training or taking the refresher course during the time of this study. Non-Violent Crisis Intervention training is a two day training period to assist teacher proactively deal with negatively viewed behaviors as they arise. This training focuses on the de-escalation of problem behaviors. It is essential for teachers who work with students with or at-risk of EI be properly trained. This PSS sponsored training could positively impact a student within this study. The lack of training could cause problem behaviors to escalate and be a cause of missed academics.

A final factor that needs consideration is the hormonal and physiological changes middle school adolescents go through. All participating students had to deal with puberty issues, which may have played a significant role in academic and social behaviors during each subject's 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade years. While this research topic did not address this issue directly, it is essential to understand that students with or at-risk for EI may have more difficulty handling their own personal changes, lending credence as to why four out of five subjects within this study did not qualify for special education services under category B until reaching middle school.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

Noting the limiting effects of this study's sample size, further research to include all of the PSS would greatly enhance the efficacy of this study. This study only encompassed three middle schools within one school district in the PSS. With a larger sample size, the information gained could be invaluable. In January, 2011, 8<sup>th</sup> grade students across the participating school district took the 2011 NEAP Reading Assessment. It is essential these data be gathered and compared with previous reading scores for students with disabilities. Researchers could identify NEAP long-term reading trends which may influence how reading instruction for students with disabilities be presented. An additional recommendation for further research would be to conduct cumulative academic record reviews for the five subjects upon completion of their 9<sup>th</sup> grade year. This additional research could provide academic information, which could question whether a different school setting and/or course selection had any impact on the reading performance of the eligible subjects. Finally, it is essential to acknowledge during the 2010-2011 academic school year, one middle school setting across the participating school district has implemented a general education, core reading course taught by qualified reading teachers for 7<sup>th</sup> grade students. Reading data from the 2011 *TerraNova, <sup>TM</sup>Third Edition* should be evaluated to determine if this core class has increased *TerraNova, <sup>TM</sup>Third Edition* reading scores at the particular middle school setting. Data presented along with information from this study should be weighed to determine the possible inclusion of reading classes in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade across the participating school district.

## Conclusion

This study was conducted to provide a comprehensive review of quantitative and qualitative data to describe the delivery of reading instruction for students with or at-risk for EI. Five subjects and seven teachers were associated with this study. Data collected produced mixed results as class opportunities, instructional practices and procedures, and individual teacher experience varied from school to school associated with this study. Yet in a school system that promotes its academic success, students with disabilities continue to lag behind their same aged peers. Subjects within this study received high academic grades in reading and language arts classes, however their reading achievement on the *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *The Second Edition*, and the *TerraNova*,<sup>TM</sup> *Third Edition* was poor when compared to their same aged peers. However, due to a wide variety of limitations, generalizations across the participating school district cannot be made.

## Appendix A

**Interview Questions for General and Special Education Teachers**

Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

**Background Information**

Over the last three years (including the current year), what grades and subjects have you taught in relationship to reading and/or language arts classes?

Grade(s) Taught: \_\_\_\_\_ Subjects Instructed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Interview questions**

1. What are your professional background experiences in education?
  - A. What credentials (degrees, licenses, certification(s) do you hold?
  - B. What positions have you held prior to your current role as a reading and/or language arts teacher?
  - C. What training have you received within the last three years concerning reading instruction?
2. What is your philosophy regarding literacy learning for all students?
3. A. What reading instructional programs are currently being used in your class?
  - B. What reading instructional programs were used over the past two years?

4. A. Are you aware of any of the following reading programs?

<u>Program Titles</u>	<u>Indicator</u>	
▪ Great Leaps Reading Program	Yes	No
▪ Teach Your Child to Read	Yes	No
▪ Timed Reading	Yes	No
▪ Corrective Reading	Yes	No
▪ Open Court Reading	Yes	No
▪ Peer Assisted Learning Strategies	Yes	No

B. Have you used any of the above mentioned reading programs?

<u>Program Titles</u>	<u>Indicator</u>	
▪ Great Leaps Reading Program	Yes	No
▪ Teach Your Child to Read	Yes	No
▪ Timed Reading	Yes	No
▪ Corrective Reading	Yes	No
▪ Open Court Reading	Yes	No
▪ Peer Assisted Learning Strategies	Yes	No

5. A. Are you aware of any specific reading practices used for students with emotional impairments?

B. Do you use any of the following practices:

<u>Practice</u>	<u>Indicator</u>	
▪ Error Correction	Yes	No
▪ Listening to Text	Yes	No
▪ Listening while Reading	Yes	No
▪ Peer Mediation	Yes	No
▪ Direct Instruction Corrective Reading	Yes	No

6. How often do you interact with a special education teacher to make accommodations and modifications to reading instruction?
  
7. Do you teach reading in a co-teach situation? If yes, is it with:
  - A. General education teacher
  
  - B. Special education teacher
  
  - C. Paraprofessional

## Appendix B

**Interview Questions for *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup> Teachers**

Teacher Identification: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

**Background Information**

Over the last three years, what grades and subjects have you taught in relationship to reading and/or language arts classes?

Grade(s) Taught: \_\_\_\_\_ Subjects Instructed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Interview questions**

1. What are your professional background experiences in education?
  - A. What credentials (degrees, licenses, certification) do you hold?
  - B. What positions have you held prior to your current role as a reading and/or language arts teacher?
  - C. What training have you received within the last three years concerning reading instruction?
2. What is your philosophy regarding literacy learning for all students?
3. How do you organize your *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup> class in terms of the types of teaching, learning activities, and student rotation?
4. How much time is devoted to each area within your individual *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup> class?
5. What are your observations about the impact of *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup> on student outcomes?
  - A. What do you believe is the impact of *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup> on:
    - reading achievement
    - achievement in other academic subjects
    - student behavior



- B. How is reading progress measured in your *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup> class?
- C. Do you believe *READ 180*<sup>TM</sup> has the same impact on all students?
- If no, do you believe this program is less beneficial for students receiving special education services?
  - If no, do you also believe the *READ 180* program is beneficial for students with emotion impairments?
6. How often do you interact with a special education teacher to make accommodations and modifications to reading instruction?
7. Do you teach *READ 180* in a co-teach situation? If yes, is it with a:
- A. General education teacher
  - B. Special education teacher
  - C. Paraprofessional

Appendix C

**Academic Record Review  
Data Collection Sheet**

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

**Demographic Information**

Student Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: (Please check) Male \_\_\_\_\_  
Female \_\_\_\_\_

Students' Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor's Affiliation (Please circle): USA, USAF, USMC, USN, Civilian

Sponsor's Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

School(s) enrolled during the students' middle school years: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Days Enrolled in School: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Absences: \_\_\_\_\_

Was the student suspended from school for any time: (Please circle) Yes No  
School suspension can be either in-school or away from school

If yes, how many days (in total) was the student suspended: \_\_\_\_\_

.....  
7<sup>th</sup> Grade

Days Enrolled in School: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Absences: \_\_\_\_\_

Was the student suspended from school for any time: (Please circle) Yes No  
School suspension can be either in-school or away from school

If yes, how many days (in total) was the student suspended: \_\_\_\_\_

.....  
6<sup>th</sup> Grade

Days Enrolled in School: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Absences: \_\_\_\_\_

Was the student suspended from school for any time: (Please circle) Yes No  
School suspension can be either in-school or away from school



_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

\* Denotes class provided in a resource room (special education)

### Test Data

8<sup>th</sup> Grade *TerraNova*<sup>TM</sup> Reading Test Score: \_\_\_\_\_

7<sup>th</sup> Grade *TerraNova*<sup>TM</sup> Reading Test Score: \_\_\_\_\_

6<sup>th</sup> Grade *TerraNova*<sup>TM</sup> Reading Test Score: \_\_\_\_\_

.....  
8<sup>th</sup> Grade Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) Test Score: \_\_\_\_\_

7<sup>th</sup> Grade SRI Test Score: \_\_\_\_\_

6<sup>th</sup> Grade SRI Test Score: \_\_\_\_\_

### Individual Education Plan Record Review

Current Disability Category: (Please circle) Category A, Category B, Category C,  
Category D

If Category A, indicate current diagnosis: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Found Eligible for Special Education Services: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D

## Parent Permission Form

<b>Project Title</b>	The Effects of Reading Instruction on Eight Grade Students with or at-risk for Emotional Impairments: An Examination of Reading Courses and Practices
<b>Why is this research being done?</b>	<p>This is a research project being conducted by Aaron J. Scalise under the supervision of Dr. Frances L. Kohl at the University of Maryland, College Park. We are inviting your child to participate in this research study because they have met the following criteria.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Your child was enrolled in eight grade in a PSS middle school</li> <li>2. Your child has a current IEP and receives special education services under one of the following eligibility categories. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Emotional Impairment</li> <li>b. Communication Impairment</li> <li>c. Learning Impairment</li> <li>d. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Your child has at least one behavioral, emotional, or social goal on the IEP</li> </ol>
<b>What will I be asked to do?</b>	<p>Your child's individual records will be thoroughly reviewed to determine the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Demographic Data <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. age</li> <li>2. race</li> <li>3. sex</li> <li>4. sponsor's affiliation</li> <li>5. school(s) enrolled in during middle school years (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>)</li> </ol> </li> <li>b. Enrollment Data <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. each grade level number of days present</li> <li>2. each grade level number of days absent</li> <li>3. if suspended and for how long</li> <li>4. health related issues</li> <li>5. report card information</li> <li>6. test results on the <i>TerraNova</i><sup>TM</sup></li> </ol> </li> </ol>

<p><b>What about confidentiality?</b></p>	<p>We will do our best to keep your child’s record reviews confidential. All data collected will be stored in a secure location in the investigator’s home office for 10 years in a locked filing cabinet. Data analysis will also take place in this location.</p> <p>If we write a report or article about this research project, your child’s identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible. Individual student names will not be used in this research report.</p>	
<p><b>What are the risks of this research?</b></p>	<p>There are no known risks associated with your child participating in this research project.</p>	
<p><b>What are the benefits of this research?</b></p>	<p>The benefits of participating in this study help determine if effective reading strategies have been used for students with or at-risk for emotional impairments. This study’s information will assist the PSS in making future decision on reading programs implemented in individual school settings.</p>	
<p><b>Do I have to be in this research? May I stop participating at any time?</b></p>	<p>Your child’s participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to have your child participate and may withdraw your child at any time. If you decide not to have your child participate in this study or if you stop your child from participating at any time, your child will not be penalized.</p>	
<p><b>What if I have questions?</b></p>	<p>Aaron J. Scalise at the University of Maryland, College Park, is conducting this research. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact Mr. Aaron J. Scalise at 0631-292-3290 (home) or you may contact Dr. Frances L. Kohl at: Department of Special Education, 1308 Benjamin Building, College Park, MD 2074, 001-301-405-6490, or <a href="mailto:flkohl@umd.edu">flkohl@umd.edu</a>.</p> <p>If you have questions about your rights as a parent of a research subject or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact: Institutional Review Board Office, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, 20742; (e-mail) <a href="mailto:irb@umd.edu">irb@umd.edu</a>; (telephone) 301-405-0678. This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.</p>	
<p><b>Signature and Date</b></p>	<p><b>STUDENT’S NAME</b></p>	

	<b>YOUR NAME</b>	
	<b>YOUR SIGNATURE</b>	
	<b>DATE</b>	

## Appendix E

## Teacher Consent Form

<b>Project Title</b>	The Effects of Reading Instruction on Eight Grade Students with or at-risk for Emotional Impairments: An Examination of Reading Courses and Practices
<b>Why is this research being done?</b>	This is a research project being conducted by Aaron J. Scalise under the supervision of Dr. Frances L. Kohl at the University of Maryland, College Park. We are inviting you to participate in this research study because you are currently or have been a reading, language arts, or READ 180 teacher for a student(s) with or at-risk for emotional impairments. The purpose of this research project is to determine the reading outcomes for eighth grade students with or at-risk of an emotional impairment in the Participating School District. The researcher wishes to use this information to establish whether instructional program and/or practices are effective for students with or at-risk for emotional impairments.
<b>What will I be asked to do?</b>	Once participating students have been identified having a diagnosis of an emotional impairment (EI), a communication impairment (CI), a learning impairment (LI), or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), student academic records will be reviewed to determine the reading, language arts, and/or READ 180 classes the eligible student participated. Through an examination of student records, individual teachers will be invited to participate in this study. Teachers agreeing to participate will be interviewed using individual questionnaires depending on what subject they have taught while providing reading instruction to students with or at-risk for EI. The interview requests information on professional background, literacy philosophy, reading programs and materials, awareness of reading programs and materials, and co-teaching opportunities. Each interview will consist of recording the interviewees' answers manually.
<b>What are the risks of this research?</b>	There are no known risks associated with participating in this research project.



<b>What about confidentiality?</b>	We will do our best to keep your personal information confidential. To help protect your confidentiality: (1) your name will not be included on the interview questionnaire or other collected data; (2) a code will be placed on the questionnaire and other collected data; (3) through the use of an identification key, the researcher will be able to link your questionnaire to your identity; and (4) only the researcher will have access to the identification key. If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible. All recorded information will be held in the researchers' home office and be destroyed after 10 years.	
<b>What are the benefits of this research?</b>	The benefits of participating in this study help determine if effective reading strategies are currently in place and used for students with or at-risk for emotional impairments. In addition, teachers are allowed to share their beliefs on the effectiveness of implemented programs as well as provide feedback on teacher interaction.	
<b>Do I have to be in this research? May I stop participating at any time?</b>	Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify	
<b>Statement of Age of Subject and Consent</b>	Your signature indicates the following: you are at least 18 years of age; you are currently or have been a reading, language arts, or READ 180 general or special educator; you currently teach or have taught in a PSS middle school setting; the research has been explained to you; your questions have been fully answered; and you freely and voluntarily choose to participate in this research project.	
<b>Signature and Date</b>	<b>NAME OF SUBJECT</b>	
	<b>SIGNATURE OF SUBJECT</b>	
	<b>DATE</b>	

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