

# **A Snap Shot Investigation of the Academic Achievement of Low Achieving Kindergarten Students Enrolled in an Extended Day Enrichment Program**

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## **ABSTRACT**

**The purpose of this snap shot investigation was to study the academic achievement of low achieving Kindergarten students enrolled in an extended day enrichment program as compared to Kindergarten low achieving students not attending extended day enrichment program. The difference in test performance was not significant. However, based on the results of the study, the researchers concluded that students who attended extended day enrichment classes performed better. It may be inferred that the additional enrichment was helpful.**

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## **Introduction**

One concern for teachers today is the failure and retention rate of children in education within the public school system. Teachers are using more creative ways of teaching as well as other tools to capture the student's attention and make learning fun

and exciting. In spite of the attempts made by teachers, there are still some students who need that extra special attention to advance and be successful. These are students who for some reason do not catch on as fast as others in the classroom. To combat this problem many public schools have implemented a program called Extended Day Enrichment. This program is designed to meet the needs of those students who need that extra assistance with the skills that are taught in the classroom.

### **Hypothesis**

Low achieving kindergarten students enrolled in an Extended Day Enrichment program will show significantly higher gains in academic achievement than low achievers kindergarten students not enrolled in extended day enrichment.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the academic achievement of low achieving Kindergarten students enrolled in an extended day enrichment program as compared to Kindergarten low achieving students not attending extended day enrichment program.

### **Research Question**

Do low achieving students in extended day show significantly gains in achievement as compared to low achieving students who are not enrolled in extended day services?

### **Review of Related Literature**

Educating the student classified as at-risk is a growing concern for educators. There is no exact definition of what constitutes an at risk youth. There are many definitions. Most definitions refer to potential high school dropouts and do not define at-risk elementary school students. McCann and Austin (2002) have defined at-risk students with respect to three characteristics:

- 1) Students who are not achieving the goals of education;
- 2) Student's who exhibit behavior problems that interfere with attaining an education, and
- 3) Students whose family background characteristics may place them at risk.

Extended Day enrichment on the elementary level is one strategy of intervention to decrease the school failure rate. Title 1 of the education consolidation and

Improvement Act provide for enrichment in reading, math and language arts (Webb, Metha, Jordon 2001). Since 1981 this act has provided school districts with supplementary services funds for more than five million low-achieving students. Schools have utilized pull-out programs to serve this population, but the provisions of the current legislation, the Hawkins-Stafford School Improvement Amendment of 1988 allow schools with an enrollment of 75 percent low-income students to use title one funds.

Title 1 funds create projects for improving programs in public education. Administrators suggest that Title 1 funds might be better used to purchase add-on services that increase the amount of time students spend in basic skills instruction. By placing Title 1 instruction outside the regular school day, this not only adds to instructional time, but also prevents students from missing instruction in other academic subject areas.

### **Methodology**

The study utilized a qualitative research approach. This research methodology included direct observations as the primary data method of collection.

### **Subjects of the Study**

At the time of the study, Thurgood Marshall Elementary Magnet School had a total enrollment of 1071 students. The school has two grade levels, Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten. There are 540 Kindergarten students and 531 Pre-Kindergarten students. The ethnicity of the student's population at Thurgood Marshall is 90 percent African American, 9 percent Hispanic, and 1 percent Caucasian. There are eighty seven Kindergarten students enrolled in extended day enrichment. The sample size of this project was taken from 87 students enrolled in extended day enrichment classes. The sample size consists of 30 students divided into two groups. Group A included 15 kindergarten low achieving students who attended extended day enrichment after school for an hour and a half a day for four days a week. Group B includes 15 low achieving kindergarten students who were recommended but did not attend. Ages of the students in both groups range from 5.5 to 6.6. All of the students in the study were African American.

### **Procedure**

Data for this study was secured from student scores in the areas of Vocabulary, Listening, Language, Mathematics and Word Analysis on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills Scores were recorded for each student in all five areas of the test. The average of the test scores for the students who attended extended day enrichment classes (group A) was 67.33. The average of the test scores for the students who did not attend extended day enrichment (group B) was 57.49.

### **Analysis of Data**

The composite scores were derived at by adding the scores for all students in the group for each subject area of the test. Once a total was derived, it was divided by the number of students. This same procedure was followed for both groups. Students in group A scored a composite score of 73.2 in Vocabulary, 63 in Listening, 57.4 in Language, 67.9 in Mathematics and 75 in Word Analysis. Students in group B scored 66.4 in Vocabulary, 52.6 in Listening, 49.8 in Language, 57.8 in Mathematics and 57.4 in Word Analysis. The students who attended extended day enrichment classes (group A) scored higher in all areas of the test as compared to the students who did not attend extended day enrichment (group B). Although the students in group A scored higher than students in group B, the difference was not considered significant by the researchers. The percentage difference in performance was 8%, the researchers believe if the difference was 10% or higher, it would represent a significant difference.

### **Concluding Remarks**

In conclusion, the difference in test performance was not significant. However, since the students who attended extended day enrichment classes performed better, it may be inferred that the additional enrichment was helpful.