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DISSERTATION

**THE EFFECTS OF SCHOOL DESEGREGATION AND RESEGREGATION ON
GIFTED AFRICAN AMERICAN INNER CITY
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Submitted by

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Colorado State University

Fort Collins, Colorado

Fall, 1999

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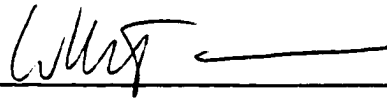
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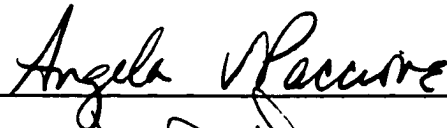
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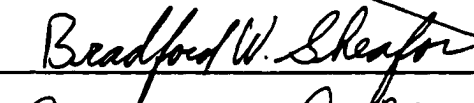
WE HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE DISSERTATION PREPARED UNDER OUR SUPERVISION BY DEBORAH A. HARMON ENTITLED THE EFFECTS OF DESEGREGATION AND RESEGREGATION ON GIFTED AFRICAN AMERICAN INNER CITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING IN PART REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY.

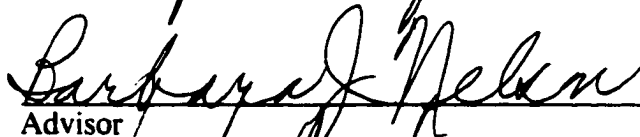
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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION
THE EFFECTS OF SCHOOL DESEGREGATION AND RESEGREGATION ON
GIFTED AFRICAN AMERICAN INNER CITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand the experiences of gifted African American, inner city elementary school students who were bused to desegregate a predominantly White school and then returned to their neighborhood. Students were interviewed about their experiences at both elementary schools and were asked to compare their experiences focusing on the trip to school, the classroom environment, classmates, and school resources. Three teachers, who were identified as exemplary, were interviewed about their education philosophies, teaching methods, classroom management strategies, classroom curriculum, and experience with resegregation.

Students were selected for this study after participating in bibliotherapy using literature that dealt with discrimination and prejudice. Student interviews were video and audio taped to capture both verbal and nonverbal communication. The teachers' interviews were audio taped.

The results of this study indicated that the students involved in this study experienced considerable anger with their experience with desegregation. The results of this study also had several implications including the need for the preparation of students and teachers participating in desegregation and resegregation, the importance of teachers being culturally competent and using culturally relevant teaching strategies, and the need for cultural competency when researching African American students.

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Finally, I want to thank the students and teachers who I interviewed. Thank you for your willingness to have your stories told. Your stories will be a source of strength that will inspire many.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to the memory of mother, who could see the teacher in me, when I could not.

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CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

Gloria Ladson-Billings (1994) wrote:

No challenge has been more daunting than that of improving the academic achievement of African American students. Burdened with a history that includes the denial of education, separate and unequal education, and relegation to unsafe, substandard inner-city schools, the quest of quality education remains an elusive dream for the African American community (p. ix).

Forty-five years after the Supreme Court overturned legislation which supported “separate but equal” education and the eventual desegregation of public schools, the quest for equity in education still remains. The success of the desegregation and integration of schools is still in question. With the dismantling of desegregation efforts and the resegregation of African American neighborhood schools, it is appropriate to raise the question: How have the efforts to desegregate and integrate schools affected African American students.

The purpose of this study is to understand the experiences of gifted African American elementary students who were bused to desegregate a predominantly White school and then returned to their neighborhood school. By examining and comparing the experiences of African American students in a majority White school environment and in a majority African American school environment, understanding and insight into the dynamics of integration can be gained. This knowledge will facilitate current and future efforts towards providing an equitable education for all students.

History of School Desegregation

In 1954 the Supreme Court, after considering the testimony of Kenneth Clark, Isidor Chein, Stuart Cook, Gordon Allport, and thirty two other social scientists, ruled in favor of Brown in the infamous Brown vs. Board of Education. This decision forced the federal

government to deal with the disparity of educational opportunities that existed between segregated schools as a result of Plessy vs. Ferguson (1896). Many desegregation plans were developed in hopes of finding an effective and efficient means to achieve school integration. These desegregation plans ranged from the creation of magnet programs in predominantly African American schools to attract White students, voluntary desegregation, to the busing of African American and White students to achieve racial balance (Cook, et al., 1984). To assist with this effort, the federal government commissioned a study to examine racially segregated school districts and to recommend the most effective means of implementing desegregation. The Coleman et al. (1966) report found that predominantly African American schools had lower quality facilities, fewer curricular choices, and lower student achievement test scores than predominantly White schools. These findings supported the assumption that the integration of African American students and White students would raise the quality of school facilities, improve programing, and increase achievement among African American students.

Based the Coleman et al. (1966) report, massive, mandatory busing of students to desegregate schools was initiated. People believed that desegregating schools would counteract some of the effects of widespread “de facto” segregation which existed due to segregated housing patterns.

The Supreme Court ruling in Green vs. County School Board of New Kent County (1968) established criterion to be used for determining whether school systems had achieved unitary status by providing equal opportunities for both African American and White students. These criterion, known as the “Green factors,” included the dismantling of segregated dual systems within a school district and the desegregation of student assignment, faculty, staff, transportation, extracurricular activities, and facilities (Fife, 1996). In 1971, the Swann vs. Charlotte-Mecklenberg decision reinforced efforts toward the desegregation of schools stating that neighborhood schools were not a right and it is the responsibility of the schools to prepare children to live in a pluralistic society. This Supreme Court ruling paved the way for busing as a means to desegregated schools (Streitmatter, 1988). Many schools districts “paired” predominantly White schools with

predominantly African American schools in an effort to desegregate and integrate their schools. In the South, school systems were usually countywide which allowed for the busing of students cross-town to integrate schools. But in the North, cities and suburbs usually had separate school districts which presented a problem since urban schools were predominantly African American and suburban schools were predominantly White. In 1974, the city of Detroit proposed a desegregation plan pairing suburban schools with urban schools. The Supreme court blocked this attempt in Milliken vs. Bradley (Fife, 1996).

After almost twenty years of bussing, in 1986, the first school district was granted permission to dismantle its desegregation plan in Riddick vs. School Board of the City of Norfolk, Virginia. The federal court permitted the return of the school district to local government control as it was considered to be unitary having achieved all of the “Green factors.” The Board of Education of Oklahoma vs. Dowell (1991) ruling declared the Oklahoma City school district unitary and allowed the return of neighborhood schools even though segregated neighborhoods still existed. The court also ruled that unitary status released districts from the responsibility of maintaining desegregation. In Freeman vs. Pitts (1992), the federal courts ruled that school districts could be partially released from their obligation to desegregate even if integration had not been achieved. What this meant was that a school district did not have to achieve unitary status in all six of the “Green factors” (Fife, 1996).

Renewed hope for desegregationists came in 1996 with Sheff vs. O’Neil where the Connecticut Supreme Court ordered state officials to desegregate the Hartford school district and approved a plan that would allow students to transfer between public school districts and the placement of magnet and charter schools within urban school districts.

As a result of these court rulings, there is a movement back to neighborhood schools and the resegregation of students in those schools districts (Watson, 1983). The Harvard Project on School Desegregation has been monitoring the resegregation of school districts and has reported that school segregation has increased steadily over the past fifteen years. This trend has been seen primarily in Northern states. The supporters of neighborhood schools believe that desegregation has not accomplished what it was intended to and that African

American children would be better off in their own neighborhood schools (Orfield, 1996). Many Whites feel that those families that left during desegregation will return to the neighborhood schools (Neuborne, 1995). According to Gary Orfield (1996) of the Harvard Project on School Desegregation, many urban students returned to neighborhoods schools that are segregated and inferior. The end of court-mandated busing or desegregation choice plans has brought with it poverty-stricken, segregated neighborhood schools and low levels of educational performance.

Research on School Desegregation

Research was conducted throughout the course of desegregation efforts to determine the effects of school desegregation on minority and White students. It has, unfortunately, failed to produce the expected results in terms of student achievement. The research has found that the effects of desegregation on African American students' achievement and self esteem have been inconclusive (Crain, 1987; Crain and Mahard, 1982; Lanke, 1979; Sheehan, 1979; St. John, 1978). Nancy H. St. John (1978) conducted an important study on the effects of school desegregation on minority and White children and suggested that since, ". . . findings have proved anomalous, it is high time to run to social theory for enlightenment We must dissect the phenomenon into component parts and be eclectic in the search for clarifying concepts" (p. 2). Most of the research conducted on the effects of desegregation on minority students has focused on student achievement using quantitative methods of inquiry and assessment. An analysis by Crain and Mahard (1982) to identify why study results differed indicated that inconsistencies in research findings were mainly due to two methodological flaws. First, researchers did not focus on the earliest years of schooling where desegregation effects are more significant. Second, there was an absence of adequate control groups in most studies because most research began after the implementation of busing and desegregation efforts. Thus, researchers were unable to use pretest and posttest designs in assessing student achievement (Campbell, 1976 Cook et al., 1994; St. John, 1978; Streitmatter, 1988)

Gifted Students

The 1993 federal definition of gifted described gifted students as children and youth with outstanding talent who show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of their age. They also exhibit a capacity for high performance in the areas of intellect, creativity, art, leadership, and specific academic fields. Gifted students require services and activities that are not ordinarily provided by the schools (Ford, 1996). Yet, it is the responsibility of the public schools to meet the needs of gifted students.

As suggested by the supporters of Brown vs. Board of Education (1953), segregated African American schools were unable to provide a quality education due to lower quality facilities and fewer curricular choices. The deleterious effects of these conditions were felt most by gifted African American students. With the implementation of desegregation efforts such as busing, voluntary desegregation, magnet schools, and the anticipated rise in the quality of education programs, gifted African American students were expected to reap the greatest benefit. However, gifted African American students are greatly underrepresented in gifted education programs. According to Chinn and Hughes (1987), in 1978, African American students represented 15.7 per cent of the nation's public school student population and 10.3 per cent of the students participating in gifted education programs. In 1992, while African Americans students represented 21.1 percent of the nation's public school student population, African American students represented 12 per cent of the students in gifted education (Ford & Harris, 1999). The identification and retention of African American students in gifted education programs declined during the implementation of desegregation programs.

Purpose of Research

In an effort to understand the meaning of the desegregation experience for gifted African American students, this research will study the effects of busing to desegregate schools on gifted African American students. The purpose of this study is to identify, describe, and determine the impact of the experiences of gifted African American fifth- and

fourth-grade students who were involved in court-ordered busing as well as resegregation. The primary focus of this research was to examine gifted African American students' perceptions of their experiences in a predominantly White, middle class school. Their gifts and exceptional abilities may give us special insights into this volatile period of social reform. Relationships with teachers, classroom environment, peer relationships, and student achievement will be specifically addressed.

Research Questions

It is the nature of qualitative research that hypotheses are not proposed but that questions emerge and are developed during the collection of data. However, there are a few general questions which will guide this research. What were the experiences of gifted African American fourth- and fifth-grade students who were bused to desegregate schools? What were the experiences of these students as they returned to their neighborhood school? How were the students' experiences with desegregation and resegregation similar? How were these students' experiences different? What impact have these experiences had on these students?

Definitions of Terms

A few basic terms used in this study are defined here.

Desegregation is the process of eliminating segregation through a deliberate effort, including policies such as voluntary or mandatory desegregation, pairing, and involuntary desegregation.

Gifted individuals are those who demonstrate outstanding talent or potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of their age group. They exhibit high performance in the areas of intellect, creativity, art, leadership, and specific academic fields.

In **involuntary desegregation**, students are assigned to a specific school in a predominantly White or predominantly minority school.

In **mandatory busing or busing**, students are assigned to specific schools for the purpose

of desegregation and students are transported to the school of assignment using buses.

Pairing is a practice that is used with involuntary desegregation involving two or more schools, usually the first, second, and third graders in both attendance areas combine to attend one school, while all fourth, fifth, and sixth graders from both attendance areas attend another school.

Resegregation is a return to segregated schools based upon housing patterns and the dismantling of voluntary or involuntary desegregation efforts.

Segregation is the separation of races within institutions which was supported by Plessy v. Ferguson (1896) and ruled that it was legal to have racially separate institutions and public facilities.

A **unified district** has successfully dismantled any segregated dual systems within the district including the desegregation of student assignment, faculty, staff, transportation, extracurricular activities, and facilities. The school district must offer equal access and equal opportunities for all students.

Voluntary desegregation policies are those where minority parents are asked if they will transfer their child to a predominantly White school.

Significance of the Study

Lower federal courts and the Supreme Court have relieved increasingly more school systems of the duty to maintain desegregation plans (Crain and Mahard, 1983). With the continued dismantling of busing in school districts across this nation and the preponderance of resegregation, it becomes imperative to take stock of what has occurred with students as a result, identifying the effects on minority students who attended desegregated schools, in particular, the impact on student achievement, self-esteem, and self-image. There is a need to understand the continued achievement gap between African American and White students which seems to have been unshaken by the desegregation of schools.

According to St. John (1978), the scientific investigation of school desegregation has been based upon little theory. In spite of the large numbers of studies that have examined

failure. In fact, school desegregation appears to have no unitary effect on students. This qualitative study will contribute to the analysis of desegregation by examining aspects that have previously been studied through quantitative inquiry.

Examining the stories of these gifted African American students in a qualitative fashion, provides a look at the complexity involved in the process of integration. The information from this study was valuable in evaluating current desegregation plans and in the development of new policies to address the inequality of educational opportunities between minority and White students.

There is very little research that explores the experiences of students in transferring from a desegregated school back to their neighborhood school. As more school districts are dismantling desegregation plans, this information would be helpful in assisting school districts with the transition of students back to their home school. This information will be especially valuable to those districts faced with the challenge of desegregating their schools.

Finally, while there is much research on the gifted generally, there is precious little on African American gifted individuals, and there has been no research on the effects of desegregation on gifted African American students. This study will shed light on this special population during this period of rapid social change and stress.

Assumptions and Limitations

The following assumptions and limitations have been observed in this study. First, it is assumed that participants will respond to the best of their abilities. Qualitative study focuses on each individual's meaning and reality of events, and it is, therefore, the individual's report of their perception of the events that is important.

Another assumption is the belief that students who have experienced both desegregation and resegregation may possess insights into the dynamics of both systems. As there have been so few studies comparing these kinds of experiences among students, the combined effect of both desegregation and resegregation are unknown.

One possible limitation to the generalizability of this study is the fact that all of these students have been identified as gifted and talented. Gifted students are usually more

perceptive and observant than non-gifted students. Clark (1983) states that one characteristic of gifted children is a heightened capacity for seeing unusual and diverse relationships and heightened self-awareness. Schmitz & Galbraith (1985) describe gifted children as very perceptive and profoundly sensitive to ethical issues and concerns, displaying high standards of truth and morality. When confronted with hypocrisy, double standards, and other forms of logical and ethical contradiction, gifted students often become distressed. The intuitiveness of gifted students and their ability to notice relationships easily, will serve them well in identifying the subtle influences and nuances within the classroom (Pirto, 1999).

Another limitation is the ability of these students to recall information accurately. One of the strongest characteristics of gifted students is memory. Most gifted children have a very keen memory and are quite adept at recalling even minute details (Alvino,1991; Clark, 1983; Ford, 1996; Pirto, 1999; Webb, Meckstroth, and Tolan, 1992). All of the students interviewed were reported to have very good memories by both their teachers and families.

This study has been limited to African American students. While one would suggest with caution that experiences of African Americans are different from those of other racial minority groups, minority groups share a common history and status in this country. Therefore, it may be possible to generalize the results to other minority children. Whatever the potential for generalizability, the results of this study could go far in helping to understand the impact of a period of social engineering whose lessons may still prove as profound today.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature reviewed for this study included research on school desegregation, school desegregation theories, and gifted students. The history of school desegregation and prior research on school desegregation was not limited. Included in this literature review are theories concerning the development of prejudice, contact theory, and attribution theory. Literature on school desegregation theory was not limited and included research focusing on self esteem and achievement in African American students, factors that effect academic outcome, dimensions of school desegregation, and necessary conditions for school desegregation. The literature on gifted students was limited to include the characteristics, educational needs, and psychological needs of gifted students with a focus on the characteristics, educational needs, and psychological needs of African American students. The selected literature contained theory concerning racial identity formation and racial socialization in African American students and the use of bibliotherapy.

School Desegregation

The social scientists who testified in Brown vs. Board of Education (1954) believed, that segregation had a negative impact on the achievement of African American students. First, unfair allocations of funds resulted in inferior school facilities and low per pupil expenditures contributed to low levels of student achievement. Second, due to the low status given to African Americans in White society, they argued that African American students have lower self-esteem than White students, a disadvantage which contributed to low achievement. Finally, the low status given to African Americans reduced the motivation to learn among African American students (Stephan, 1980; Watson, 1983;).

Social scientists believed the achievement of African American students would increase through the desegregation of schools for the following four reasons. First, the positive

effects of an improved school facility and high-quality teachers will contribute to the increase of student achievement. Second, African American students will acquire the essential knowledge and values of the middle class from their White peers which will lead to success. Third, teachers in integrated schools will raise their expectations of African Americans through contact with African American students. Finally, contact with White students will increase African American students' aspirations leading to an increase in motivation to achieve (Streitmatter, 1988). Social scientists also believed that segregation created a vicious cycle whereby, prejudice adversely effects the self-esteem of minority students eventually leading to lowered academic achievement among minority students. (Cook, et al, 1984; Stephan, 1980; Taylor and Rickel, 1981). It was presumed that desegregation would be instrumental in breaking this cycle by eliminating the institutional sanctions that kept segregation and prejudice in place. Through the desegregation of schools and increased contact with African Americans, prejudicial attitudes and behaviors of Whites will decline. By increasing the status of African Americans, the self-esteem of African American students will increase resulting in an increased level of achievement (Stephan, 1980). After reviewing the results of eighty studies on the effects of desegregation since 1954, Stephan (1980) found no empirical data to support any effect on prejudice, self-esteem, or student achievement. Stephan (1978) wrote:

"It [research on desegregation] tentatively concludes that (a) desegregation generally does not reduce the prejudices of whites toward blacks, (b) the self-esteem of blacks rarely increases in desegregated schools, (c) the achievement level of blacks sometimes increases and rarely decreases in desegregated schools, and (d) desegregation leads to increases in black prejudice toward whites about as frequently as it leads to decreases." (Stephan, 1978, p. 217)

Prejudice Reduction and Interracial Relationships

Prejudice is defined as negative generalized beliefs or stereotypes about a group and a predisposition to act in a negative way towards that group (Jackman, 1977). Racial attitudes are based on prejudice and are learned early in life. Children at the age of three become aware of their racial and ethnic backgrounds and can see similarities among their own group (Ponterotto & Pedersen, 1993).

Gordon Allport (1979) studied the development of prejudice in children, and he developed a model of the different manifestations of prejudice and how they are acted out. **Antilocution** is the first and mildest form of prejudice and involves prejudicial discussion among persons who hold the same beliefs. For example, White students may engage in a discussion about a particular race and tell racist jokes.

Avoidance moves from the simple prejudicial discussion to deliberate but indirect methods of avoiding a different race (Allport, 1979). For example, many White families withdrew their children from public schools that were being desegregated and moved them to all-white private or suburban schools. Such action is self-directed with no harm directed toward the group being avoided.

Discrimination is more overt in that individuals take deliberate and active steps toward excluding minority groups. Efforts are made to deny minority groups access to such things as education programs and recreational organizations (Allport, 1979). Using a quota system to control the number of minorities in an organization is also an example of discrimination.

Physical attack is a more extreme form of prejudice. It involves deliberately delivering harm to another individual and it generally occurs when conditions are stressful and tense. This form of prejudice usually takes place during economic strife (Allport, 1976), and hate groups such as the Klu Klux Klan often resort to this kind of activity.

The final stage is **extermination**. This is the most extreme form of prejudice and involves the systematic and deliberate destruction of a group of people because of their race (Allport, 1976). One example of extermination is the lynching of African Americans. Ford (1996) noted that currently, most racism is subtle but that, "manifestations of racism can appear at either the individual or the institutional level and are overt, covert, or unintentional" (p.76).

Contact theory states that interracial attitudes are often the product of negative stereotypes (Campbell, 1976). These stereotypes lead to a negative evaluation of racial group members. When African Americans and Whites can interact, it becomes difficult to classify people into stereotypical groups because the logical inappropriateness of the stereotypic images becomes inescapable. This theory predicts that given sufficient contact,

people will come to evaluate those who are in different racial or ethnic groups as individuals rather than as stereotypes and will become more racially tolerant.

This assumption that interracial contact will reduce interracial hostility and conflict has not been substantiated in the research on the desegregation of schools (Carither, 1970; Taylor & Rickel, 1981). There have been conflicting findings in studies of racial contact in desegregated schools with no general agreement about the effects of interracial contact. African American children who were bused into white receiving schools chose to associate with other bused students. According to Taylor and Rickel (1981), the effects of interracial contact depended upon the circumstances under which the association occurred. Proshansky (1966), Glidewell (1966), and St. John (1978) all found that the busing experience was a unifying and identifiable experience for these school children, and they chose to develop friendships with each other. Stephan's (1978) review of studies on busing also indicated that there was an increase in ethnocentric friendship choices in interracial settings.

Stephan (1978) studied the effects of desegregation on race relations and found that African American and White students had more negative attitudes about out-group and in-group relationships after desegregation. Iadicola (1980) looked at school environments conducive for equal status relations and found that peer group contextual factors were important to assimilation. In desegregated schools with a high percentage of White students and high socioeconomic status, in-groups identified more with socioeconomic level than with race and ethnicity.

Pettigrew (1971) points to the effects of attribution theory as a factor in interracial relationships. Attribution theory states that when the expectations of people do not occur (as expected as in the case of stereotypes) it is attributed to the exceptionality of the individual. Miller and Carlson (1984) found that White children only accepted those African American students who were considered to demonstrate good academic performance.

School Desegregation and Self-Esteem

The belief that African American students possess low self-esteem was in large part supported by Clark and Clark's (1939) work which found that a large proportion of African American preschool children in their study indicated a preference for white dolls and frequently identified a white doll as similar to themselves (Taylor & Rickel, 1981). These findings were interpreted as evidence that African Americans have negative self-concepts and generally devalue themselves. Other studies have both supported and contradicted these findings. Rosenberg and Simmons (1971) reviewed twelve studies of African American youth and self-esteem and concluded that there did not appear to be significant racial differences in self-esteem between African Americans and Whites. Cook et al. (1984) found in his review of desegregation studies that African American students had higher levels of self-esteem than their White peers, even among students who attended segregated and desegregated schools. Williams and Byar (1970) found that African American students in desegregated schools displayed greater self-esteem than those in totally segregated schools or schools with at least one white instructor. In Simmons' et al. (1978) study, the self-esteem and achievement of 800 African American and White youths was examined. The findings indicated that the racial makeup of the school had no effect on one's self-esteem.

Coleman's (1966) study also confirmed that there was no difference between African Americans and Whites in terms of academic self-concept and aspirations. Armor (1972) found no increase in the aspirations of minority students who were bused when compared to their non-bused siblings. He discovered that minority students who were bused already had high expectations prior to busing. Studies examining the aspirations of African Americans indicated that there does not appear to be a relationship between self-esteem, aspirations, and race (Cook et al, 1984; Lanke, 1979; Taylor & Rickel, 1981).

Research has suggested that the self-concepts of African American students can be effected by a hostile classroom environment. Carsrud and Burleson (1982) found that biracial schooling may have negative effects on the self-concepts of African American students by lowering their educational and vocational aspirations. Carsrud and Burleson

(1982) pointed out that African American students do suffer from higher levels of anxiety and identity confusion. Lanke (1979) found that African American students primarily compared themselves to other African American children and when faced with hostility and prejudice, became self-protective and were able to adapt. Kraft (1991) interviewed successful African American college students on white campuses who had experienced desegregation. Students reported that early experiences with Whites served to “thicken their skin” and helped them with future interactions with Whites.

School Desegregation and Achievement

Much of the research on the effects of desegregation on the academic achievement of African American students indicates that desegregation efforts have not been successful in raising the achievement levels of African American students. According to the Allegheny Institute for Public Policy (Chandler, 1997), after thirty years of busing, a significant gap between White and African American children in terms of school achievement still exists, and African American students still score below national averages on achievement tests. Achievement gains were found by Crain and Mahard (1982) in a meta-analysis of ninety research studies on desegregation. They found that schools with successful desegregation programs produced greater gains for IQ scores than for achievement test scores. Achievement score gains were in reading and language arts for elementary school students and in science and social studies for high school students. Ascik (1984) conducted a study commissioning seven leading research scholars to investigate the effects of desegregation on academic achievement. He concluded that desegregation had small positive effects on African American student achievement in reading and no effect in mathematics. Bennet and Easton (1988) used the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills scores to determine the effect of voluntary desegregation on the academic achievement among African Americans and Hispanics. They found that there had been no significant effect on reading and math levels. Others such as Natkin (1980) found the same results with students involved with involuntary desegregation.

Carsrud and Burleson (1982) compared the achievement of students within the same

community who were transported and those who attended neighborhood schools. They found that the non-transported students had higher achievement test scores while those children who were transported had lower achievement gains. Armor's (1972) study of inner city students who were bused to suburban schools found no significant improvements in academic achievement.

Frelich and Anderson (1981) found in their study of achievement with voluntary desegregation that achievement gains were higher if the receiving school had an enrollment of at least fifty percent minority (Carsrud and Burlison, 1982). The gains were much smaller in schools with less than fifty percent. Crain and Mahard (1982) found that the most successful desegregation plans occurred in schools where there was a majority and more than a token number of blacks. Additionally, achievement of African American students appeared to increase in school populations that were majority middle-class. Crain and Mahard (1983) attributed this to the fact that middle-class schools offer better resources, positive teacher attitudes, higher expectations, and higher standards than inner-city schools.

Factors Affecting Academic Outcomes in Desegregated Schools

Miller and Carlson (1982) conducted a study for the National Institute of Education and found that there were some significant gains in achievement among African American students but that compared to gains in White students, they were small and were not attributable to desegregation itself. This study was important in identifying the following factors that were affecting academic outcomes for minority students in desegregated settings.

Anxiety and Achievement

Gerard and Miller (1975) confirmed earlier research indicating that African American students perceived more hostility in their environment than do whites. This hostility contributed to anxiety. Gerard and Miller (1975) also found that the one way busing of African American students to white receiving schools contributed to anxiety. African

American students who were bused were suffering from anxiety which in turn affected their performances.

Alkin (1990) examined various integration programs looking at achievement, self-esteem, and racial tolerance. He also found that minority students were being harmed by the racial prejudice present within their classrooms and schools, resulting in low academic achievement. The Allegheny Institute of Public Policy (1997), in evaluating the effects of busing to desegregate, found no evidence of better race relations in cities where busing had been widespread. In fact, indications of continued strife and controversy were observed, suggesting that forced busing actually intensifies prejudice and increases racial tensions by dividing communities. In contrast, Scott and McPartland's (1982) research on desegregation and racial attitudes found that students who attended desegregated schools had more positive views about future interracial relations.

Classroom Dynamics

Cook et al. (1984) found that within the classroom, the verbal dominance of white children was very apparent. This social dominance of white students became significant in terms of interaction with African Americans. Cohen (1982) found that because of the verbal dominance of white students in the classroom, African American students took a more subordinate role, and this affected their achievement and status within the classroom.

Teachers

Miller and Carson (1982) confirmed what other studies had revealed about the strong influence of teachers on the achievement of students in the classroom (Cook et al, 1984; Gerard & Miller, 1975; Taylor & Rickel, 1981). Teachers tended to accept those African American students who demonstrated high academic performance. African American students who were with teachers who they felt were prejudiced, experienced a decrease in their academic performance. When African American children were embedded in classes with prejudiced teachers, their academic performance declined. Gerard and Miller (1975) found that in classes with non-prejudiced teachers, the academic performance of African

American students improved.

Clark (1983) discovered that African American students who were exposed to predominantly White classrooms scored lower than African American students who were exposed to classrooms that were predominantly African American. Teachers in the majority White classrooms were found to be ill-equipped to deal with African American students. Instead, these students were suffering from cultural shock of finding themselves a small minority in their classrooms.

Early Desegregation

Crain and Mahard (1978) reviewed seventy-three studies on the impact of desegregation on achievement. They concluded that the earlier the grade level during initial desegregation, the more positive impact there was on academic achievement. Teachers may hold higher expectations for students in the early grades when achievement differences are less noticeable and misbehavior is less of a problem. Older students, both African American and White, had more racial biases making social interaction more difficult.

Peer group influence

Natriello, McDill, and Pallas (1990) suggested that social factors play a large part in the academic success of African American students. When the peer group of the neighborhood environment is such that education is not valued, students may have a difficult time maintaining a level of excellence. Schofield's (1989) ethnographic study of the relationships between White and African American students found that the attitudes of both groups were slow to change, but over time, intergroup relations became more positive.

Problems with Research

It should be noted that the majority of studies on school desegregation were completed during initial phases of desegregation (Cook et al, 1984; Taylor & Rickel, 1980). There are additional variables that may be in effect such as the age of the students, the racial composition of the schools, the type of desegregation program, lack of data about

achievement levels, and students' self-esteem before desegregation efforts were put in place. One problem that frequently arises is the comparison of findings from two or more existing studies that have conflicting results. Studies may be dissimilar in design, vary in research quality, use different instruments and methods, or they may have been conducted at different times during the desegregation process (Cook et al,1984; Taylor & Rickel,1980).

Developing a Theory of School Desegregation

St. John (1978) suggested that one of the difficulties in assessing the impact of desegregation is that it is multifaceted, meaning different things to different children, and even different things to the same children in different circumstances. The way that desegregation is implemented and the the needs of individual children may work against each other with children gaining in one respect and losing in other respects. According to Campbell (1976), we can improve our understanding of the impact of school desegregation through paying greater attention to the variety of processes which contribute to the overall outcome. St. John (1978) conducted one of the most comprehensive studies on school desegregation:

If the effects of desegregation on academic achievement seem to be minimal or nonexistent, federal policy makers should ask why. The assumption has been that black children will benefit by an integrated educational experience; if they do not, it might indicate that research should go to the next lower level of the education process. Efforts need to be directed at finding out what happens in the classroom and in the particular interactions between the teacher and integrated child. (p. 2)

Dimensions of School Desegregation

St. John has attempted to explain the meaning of school desegregation for African American children through nine dimensions which correspond to different attitudinal variables. St. John suggests that each dimension has conditions that must be met in order for the student to benefit from desegregation.

Symbolic Message and Sense of Control

This dimension is based upon the symbolic interactionist theory developed by Cooley (1902), Thomas (1918-20), and Mead (1943) which stated that individuals are guided by the symbolic environment in which they live, where meanings and values are shared. Emphasis is on the interpretation of events by the individual. According to St. John (1978), the segregated school is a symbol to African American children that they could not expect equal treatment in life or control of their own destiny. The closing of African American schools during desegregation conveyed a message of the inferiority of African American institutions. The desegregated school symbolizes the victory of the African American community in gaining control of the environment. Self-determination and the perception of some control in the education decision-making policies of the community is a necessary condition (St. John, 1978).

Borrowed Stigma-Aura and Self-Esteem

This dimension refers to the student's self concept which is generated from social interaction with others. St. John (1978) stated that a student's self-worth would not have been enhanced by attending a low-status school or by attending a high-status school. Self-worth is accorded through the status given to the student by classmates. Efforts to avoid stigmatizing minority students along with equal access to high-quality schools and high-quality programs needs to be present (St. John, 1978).

Relative Deprivation and Morale

Relative deprivation is the perception of one's own deprivation relative to that of another person. Attending schools that are of higher quality than those in one's own community can bring about a feeling of powerlessness. Rosenberg and Simmons (1971) found that segregated children had little awareness about their family status, thus protecting their self-esteem. If discrimination does not exist among the students, teachers, and administration, African American students who are bused will feel gratitude for attending a higher quality school (Simmons, 1971).

Roles, Expectations of Significant Others, and Motivation

St. John (1978) stated that the most significant people of influence in a child's life are family, teachers, and neighborhood friends. Even though the influence of the family is very significant, Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) has shown that the expectations of teachers and classmates also have an influence on the child. When expectations of teachers and classmates are low, anxiety levels increase. Conditions that are needed for success in minority students are high expectations and respect from classmates and teachers.

Peers as Reference Group and School-Relative Norms

One of the assumptions of the Brown (1954) decision was that interaction with White peers would increase achievement as African American students adopted the values of the majority White classroom. This assumption was based upon the belief that the norms of the White students are more achievement-oriented than those of African American students. Other assumptions were that African American and White students would integrate into a single social group and that African American students would want to aspire to the majority culture's values. According to St. John (1978), it is necessary that equal status be present within the classroom along with respect and validation of diversity.

Cross-Racial Contact and Cross-Racial Attitudes

This dimension is based upon contact theory or the belief that contact with people who are different will lead to reduced prejudice. Although contact theory has been supported through research with adults, it does not seem to be as effective with children (St. John, 1978; Streitmatter, 1988). Some important conditions which are often missing are that contact has to be prolonged, with equal status to all, and a common pursuit of goals.

Minority Group Position and Anxiety

In most cases, minority students who were bused to a white receiving school were strangers to their new school and were one of a few racial minorities. St. John (1978) stated that these students suffered from fear of social threat ranging from rejection to physical harm. The anxiety that was present often caused "intellectual impairment". Blalock

(1967) believed that for conditions to be favorable for minorities, there must be a sufficient number present to make demands without being perceived as a threat. In addition, minority students must be protected from social threat.

Cultural Marginality and Group Identity

African American students who were a minority within their classroom have to straddle the dominant culture as well as their own. According to Pettigrew (1971) African American students were forced to accept possible rejection from their own racial groups and from the dominant group. Patton and Townsend (1997) discussed the development of an anti-achievement ethic in many African American students which is described as,

“. . . an oppositional social identity and cultural frame of reference which, consciously or unconsciously, causes them to associate certain achievement orientations, attitudes, motivations, and behaviors (e.g., speaking standard English, getting good grades, working hard in school, and generally striving for academic excellence) as betraying African American culture and acting white.” (p. 14)

St. John (1978) suggested that the cure for marginality is to replace the Eurocentric curriculum with an inclusive multicultural curriculum and the hiring of a multicultural staff.

Comparative Reference Group and Academic Self-Confidence

When students are moved to different schools, they often have the burden of proving themselves to the satisfaction of the white majority (Pierce, 1968). Kemper (1968) suggested that the pressure of this evaluative process can be deleterious to the student's self-confidence and academic achievement. One way to offset this process is to individualize instruction (St. John, 1978).

According to St. John (1978) these dimensions of school desegregation are operating for all students. The way that desegregation efforts are implemented can determine the kind of impact it will have on individual students. Along with these dimensions, there are additional necessary conditions that need to be met for desegregation to have the greatest benefit to all students.

Necessary Conditions for Desegregation

St. John (1978) states that if certain educational conditions exist, minority children will benefit from desegregation in the following ways: 1) increased sense of control, 2) reduction of stigma and enhancement of self esteem, 3) increased morale, 4) increased motivation, 5) favorable norms, and 6) reduction in prejudice.

Sense of Control: An increased sense of control and equality occurs when desegregation is based upon choice. A sense of equality is present in desegregation efforts that are supported by both White and minority families. A critical part of feeling a sense of control is the participation of African American parents in school policy (St. John, 1978).

Stigma and Self-Esteem: Desegregation efforts can reduce stigma and enhance the self-esteem of Black students if the pairing of schools involves busing Black students to a school of higher economic status. In addition, African American students should not be placed in low-status positions or tracked (St. John, 1978).

Morale: According to St. John (1978), an increase in the morale of African American students can occur by reducing the sense of deprivation relative to students in other schools. This can only be achieved if African American students do not feel deprived in relation to the White students in the school they are attending.

Motivation: The motivation of African American students can rise if the expectations of African American students rise. All school staff must have high expectations for both White and African American students (St. John, 1978).

Norms: With desegregation comes the association with peers who may hold different and even more favorable norms. If desegregation brings with it social class desegregation as well as racial desegregation, within-school segregation will not occur. A sharing and adaptation of norms is more likely to occur within the context of positive peer interaction.

Prejudice: One of the greatest possible benefits of desegregation is interracial contact which can reduce prejudice. In order for a reduction in prejudicial thinking to occur, interracial contact must occur over a number of years, with all students placed at equal status in a noncompetitive environment. School administration must also provide support and strong leadership.

The possible benefits of desegregation can lead to the kind of equity that desegregation policies have placed as a goal. Unfortunately, according to St. John (1978), desegregation can all too often have very negative effects on African American students. Desegregation can induce anxiety, cultural marginality, and identity confusion and lessen motivation.

Anxiety: St. John (1978) found that students who were placed in classrooms where they were a minority often became tokens. Tokenism within a classroom or school environment induces anxiety in students. According to St. John, teachers and staff need to be able to avert practices of tokenism and be knowledgeable enough to recognize it and skillful in protecting minority students.

Cultural Marginality and Identity Confusion: Minority students often suffer from cultural marginality and confusion about their own identity in predominantly White classroom environments. There may be a conflict of values, attitudes, and beliefs between majority and minority students within the school setting (Banks, 1999;1984; Bennett, 1995; Delpit, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1994). One way to reduce cultural marginality and identity confusion is to provide a diverse teaching staff that reflects the diversity of students. Students need to have a multicultural curriculum which is inclusive to validate all cultures. In addition, students need to have an opportunity for choices between assimilation and pluralism (Banks, 1999, 1984; Bennett, 1995; Delpit, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1994; St. John, 1978).

Motivation: As minority students compare the academic standards of their new school to their past school, they may feel discouraged which may lessen motivation. Additional support for these students needs to be made available. Competition within the classroom should be avoided. Instruction and evaluation should be individualized (St. John,1978).

St. John (1978) stated that the effects of desegregation are many and whether they are positive or negative in regard to the minority student can be predictable. Even so, the impact of desegregation often depends on the differences among individuals.

Individual Differences

St. John (1978) identified variables which she feels should be considered for the implementation of successful desegregation programs. These characteristics include start age and gender of the student, mental health status, achievement level and socioeconomic level of the family. According to St. John's (1978) research on school desegregation, students who are most favorably affected by desegregation are early elementary African American males. Several studies indicate that desegregation is socially easier in the early grades.

Among African Americans, the social threat of desegregation is greater for girls than boys with girls having lower aspirations, self-concepts, and greater own-group preferences. It is believed that the aspirations, self-concepts, and self-assurances of African American girls was lower in those who attended desegregated schools than those in segregated schools. African American girls have also shown less-favorable interracial attitudes and greater own-group preferences (St. John, 1978). According to Coleman's (1961) study on the importance of athletics and beauty, the athletic skills of African American males are often vehicles for prestige and acceptance in the eyes of White students in an integrated school. African American girls are often seen as lacking in feminine beauty when judged by White society standards and are not easily accepted.

African American children from lower socioeconomic status were found to have the most difficulty adjusting to biracial schools. They were the least ready, both socially and academically. Children of higher social economic status were found to be more ready for the necessary adjustments of attending a biracial school (St. John, 1978).

Katz (1969) found that desegregation seemed to be more beneficial to those students who possessed high ego strength and self-confidence. Students with high ability or achievement levels were found to more readily benefit from desegregation. Katz (1969) stated that a biracial classroom is socially facilitating to high achievers. Based on St. John's (1978) findings, gifted African American students in elementary school should experience more success and benefit from desegregated school programs than non-gifted elementary school students.

Gifted Students

Ford (1996) stated that despite the vast volumes of research on intelligence, there is little consensus on a defensible definition of intelligence. There are over two dozen definitions of intelligence (Feldhusen, 1994, 1995; Ford, 1996; Gardner, 1983; Guilford, & Hoepfner, 1971; Renzulli, 1996; Sternberg, 1981). These can be categorized as intelligence as 1) the ability to adapt to the environment, 2) intelligence being contextually bound, and 3) intelligence as the ability to reason abstractly. In 1925, Terman offered a definition of giftedness that equated intelligence with giftedness (Ford, 1993).

According to Ford (1996), the United States Department of Education's (USDE, 1973) definition of gifted and talented children described them as possessing outstanding intellectual abilities or creative talents. In 1978, the USDE definition was changed once again and defined five types of giftedness: general intellectual, specific academic, creative or productive thinking, leadership, and visual and performing arts. Achievement on aptitude tests is used to assess general and specific academic ability. Gifted students are identified by an IQ score of 130, and highly gifted students are identified by scores of 145 or higher (Feldhusen, 1986).

The most widely-used model of intelligence in the field of gifted education is Gardner's (1984) multiple intelligences model which includes verbal linguistic, visual spatial, logical mathematical, bodily kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences. Characteristics that can commonly be found among gifted students include a keen memory, exceptional command of language, advanced vocabulary, expression of ideas, inquisitiveness, critical problem solving, keen perception of patterns and relationships, strong sense of fairness, self-motivation, self-confidence, and the ability to empathize with others (Piirto, 1999).

Gifted African American Students

Gifted African American students share the same strengths as gifted students in general. In addition to this, gifted students from different cultures share certain unique characteristics of giftedness (Ford, 1996; Frasier, 1995). Some of the characteristics of gifted African

American students include the abilities to see things that others may not, read and interpret emotional cues and nonverbal behaviors of others, pick up on discrepancies quickly, and to confront rather than accept inequities. Gifted African American students may possess an unusual ability to express feelings and emotions using expressive and colorful language, elaboration, and imagery (Boykin, 1985; Delpit, 1996; Ford, 1996). Many gifted African Americans feel the need for positive social relationships and are sensitive to negative feedback and rejection. They are usually very innovative and like to improvise, preferring to interact with the environment (Boykin, 1982; Ford, 1996; Ford & Harris, 1999).

Educational Needs of Gifted Students

One of the single most important events to affect gifted education was the launching of the Sputnik in the 1960's. American education focused on the achievement of exceptional students in comparison to other countries. This interest in gifted education brought to life the problems of underfunding, understaffing, and inattention in meeting the needs of gifted students. In 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education validated the educational needs of gifted students by stating that gifted students should have a curriculum that is more intensive and individualized with more challenging tasks, opportunities for creativity, enrichment, and practical guidance and experiences. The Marland Report (1972) developed the first definition for gifted which led to the creation of the United States Office of Gifted and Talented. Renewed support for gifted education came with the Jacob K. Javits Act of 1988 which provided financial assistance to state and local schools to develop and deliver gifted education programming giving highest priority to students who are economically disadvantaged, students with limited English proficiency, and students with special needs (Ford & Harris, 1999).

The educational needs of gifted students have been the subject of much research. Research has supported a differentiated curriculum for gifted students because they learn differently in terms of rate and ability to think abstractly. Piirto (1999) suggested that curricula for gifted students needs to be based upon the learning characteristics of the students, possess academic rigor, use thematic and interdisciplinary units, possess

orientation, and be balanced and articulated. The curriculum must be modified according to student's exceptionalities and should provide academic rigor. An interdisciplinary curricula is necessary to expose students to the different structures, terminology, and methodology of the myriad of disciplines. In addition, the curriculum needs to be relevant and technical, have rational outcomes, provide opportunities for social adaptation and social reconstruction, develop cognitive processes, produce insight, and be based on contemporary postmodern curriculum thought. (Piirto, 1999;VanTassel-Baska,1998).

Educational Needs of Gifted African American Students

Colangelo and Axum (1979) studied inner-city gifted students and economically disadvantaged gifted students and found that culturally different gifted students have different learning styles from White gifted students. Boykin (1994) investigated the behavior of African American students and identified nine cultural styles which he believes are learned in the home and manifest themselves in the learning preferences of African American children within the classroom context. These cultural styles or "cultural assets" are spirituality, harmony, movement, verve, oral tradition, expression individualism, affect, communalism, and social time perspective.

Spirituality: The belief in inner-strength and that non-material, religious forces influence people's everyday lives so that events in life occur for a reason.

Harmony: The belief that ones' fate is interrelated with other elements of nature's order and that humankind and nature are harmonically conjoined.

Movement: A preference for kinesthetic activities that allow for movement and experiential learning.

Verve: An inclination for relatively high levels of stimulation.

Affect: An emphasis on emotions and feelings with a sensitivity to emotional cues and a tendency toward emotional response.

Oral tradition: A preference for oral modes of communication such as metaphors, analogies, graphic forms of language, and code switching.

Expression individualism: The need for developing a distinctive personality and uniqueness of expression.

Communalism: The need for social connectedness, interdependence, communal learning, affiliation, and social acceptance.

Social time perspective: An orientation to time where the event is seen as more important than the time.

The cultural assets of African American students coupled with the characteristics of gifted students create additional educational needs for gifted African American students (Ford, Baytops, & Harmon, 1998). Ford (1993) interviewed gifted African American students who chose not to participate in gifted education programs. The concern most frequently reported about gifted education programs was the lack of an inclusive curriculum. A multicultural curriculum, according to Ford and Harris (1999) is needed to affirm individual differences and provide the inclusiveness that most gifted curricula do not provide. It is a curriculum built upon the philosophy that all people must be affirmed and given respect regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, language, religion, physical ability or mental ability. The goal of a multicultural curriculum is to affirm human diversity through the elimination of prejudice and bias (Ford & Harris).

In addition to providing an inclusive multicultural curriculum, teachers must adopt strategies that will eliminate bias in the classroom. Teachers must be prepared to discuss issues about prejudice and racism with their students. An affective curriculum that facilitates the development of positive self-esteem and self-confidence is necessary. Classrooms need to develop a sense of community where students are able to participate in cooperative learning (Ford, 1996; Ford & Harris, 1999; Frasier, 1995, 1992; Patton & Townsend, 1997; Van Tassel-Baska, 1998)

Ford and Harris (1999) recommend a multicultural gifted curriculum for gifted African American students, one that integrates the goals and philosophies of both multicultural education and gifted education and addresses issues of diversity. A multicultural gifted curriculum provides the challenge and the affirmation that gifted African American students need.

Psychological Needs of Gifted Students

According to Silverman (1993) and Morelock (1992), most of the difficulties that gifted students experience can be attributed to asynchronous development. Morelock explains that, "giftedness is asynchronous development in which advanced cognitive abilities and heightened intensity combine to create inner experiences and awareness that are qualitatively different from the norm" (p. 14).

VanTassel-Baska (1999) stated that psychological needs of gifted students can best be understood in the context of their affective characteristics including heightened sensitivity, idealism, unusual drive to excel, and strong sense of justice. While these characteristics are viewed as positive, they can also be very problematic. According to Silverman (1993), these characteristics can lead to self-concept issues causing confusion about the meaning of giftedness, feelings of inadequacy, relentless self-criticism, increased levels of inner conflict, and lack of understanding from others.

Gifted students often to engage in early self-analysis which can lead to the development of perfectionism in oneself. Teachers need to help gifted students understand the difference between perfection and excellence (Van Tassel-Baska, 1998). Gifted students are usually motivated to achieve internally, possessing a strong inner drive; they often have high aspirations. As a result, many gifted children become very self-sufficient, independent, and autonomous (Piiro, 1999). Delisle (1985) suggests that teachers help students develop reasonable expectations for their own performance, based upon ability, interest, and personality factors. Teachers also need to offer grouping opportunities with other students with similar abilities and interests.

Gifted students' intense sensitivity and internal responsiveness to others can lead to ridicule and social rejection from peers. Through bibliotherapy and role-playing, concrete examples of more positive behaviors are modeled (Janos & Robinson, 1985). Most gifted students have fewer opportunities for positive recognition from the peers and fewer peer friendships as they seek friendships with older children and adults. Students need to be provided with strategies for developing new peer relationships and maintaining existing friendships (Piiro, 1999).

Psychological Needs of Gifted African American Students

Gifted African American and White students share many concerns and challenges, but gifted African American students have additional concerns related to the fact that they are a minority in this country and are often given low status due to their race. Underachievement and racial identity are two of the primary psychological needs of gifted African American students (Ford, 1992, 1993, 1995, 1996; Torrance,1998, 1977) .

Underachievement

Underachievement in gifted students is a very complex phenomenon which is best defined as the failure to perform at a satisfactory level on academic tasks while demonstrating exceptionally high capacity for academic achievement (Whitmore, 1980). Many factors influence the achievement of gifted African American students. Ford and Harris' (1995) research on underachieving gifted African American students identified factors within the school as well as individual psychological factors that impact underachievement in gifted African American students. Factors within the school included 1) low teacher expectations, 2) a hostile classroom environment, 3) feeling alienated from teachers and classmates, 4) lack of racial diversity among students, and 5) lack of a multicultural curriculum. A mismatch between African American students' learning styles and teaching styles contributes to underachievement (Hale-Benson, 1986).

Psychological factors include 1) low motivation, 2) negative attitudes toward school, 3) low tolerance for structured and passive activities, 4) poor relationships with authority or adult figures, 5) lack of success attributed to lack of ability or luck, 6) test anxiety, and 7) a learning disability. In addition to these factors, students may suffer from low self-esteem, low academic and social self-concept, and poor racial identity. The self-concept is considered to be the cognitive assessment of one's abilities when compared to others and is composed of several domains. Whitmore (1986) suggests that underachievement in gifted students is caused by the students's perception about their ability to fit in socially, satisfy the expectations of family and teachers, and to perform academic tasks. Social self-concept refers to the students ability to fulfill their need for belonging and affiliation. Ford and

Harris (1999) reported that gifted elementary students felt embarrassment, guilty, and confused about their academic success which affected their peer relationships.

Strategies that prove to be effective in reversing underachievement in gifted African American students include high expectations of students, accommodation of learning styles, cooperative learning, positive reinforcement and praise, student-centered classrooms, affective curricula, multicultural curricula, mentors and role models, and family involvement within the school. Strategies that increase motivation and self-concept include constructive and consistent feedback, active and experiential learning, individual and small group learning, learning contracts, learning journals, and academic counseling (Ford, 1996; Ford and Harris, 1999, Frasier, 1995; Piirto, 1999).

Racial Socialization and Racial Identity Formation

Racial socialization prepares children to cope with racism through the development of a positive racial identity. It is the process of raising children to be physically and emotionally healthy in an environment that is oppressive and occurs through both implicit and explicit teaching (Greene, 1992; Peter, 1985 Sander, 1994). According to Ford (1996), "an ignored but critically important variable related to the self concept of African American students is racial identity. . . which plays an important role in their psychological adjustment, academic motivation, and achievement" (p. 102). Ford, Harris, and Schuerger (1993) and Fordham (1988) state that minority students with poor racial identities are vulnerable to negative peer pressures and may equate achievement with "acting white" or "selling out."

Cross (1996) developed a model for the development of racial identity in African Americans. Racial identity development is the process of coming to terms with one's own racial group membership. **Pre-Encounter** is the initial stage of identity development where individuals view the world from the perspective of the dominant, White society. Cross (1996) stated that during this stage, African Americans hold one of three attitudes about their identity: low racial salience, social stigma, or victimization. African American students want to be viewed as human instead of being African American.

During **Encounter**, individuals experience painful encounters from their White peers or

White teachers which develop an awareness of their minority status and ethnic group (Cross, 1996). Encounter is a necessary stage for what Cross calls the identity metamorphosis that occurs during the next stage.

Immersion-Emersion is a very dynamic stage where African Americans struggle to rid themselves of their former identity and cling to their new-found identity. According to Cross (1996), an array of emotions are experienced at this time, ranging from rage to euphoria. It is during this stage that an anti-achievement ethic may unfold as there is an emphasis placed on the social self-concept more than the academic self-concept. The anti-achievement ethic is the belief that certain achievement orientations, attitudes, motivations, and behaviors are associated with being "White." **Emersion** occurs when the individual's identity is salient and a more pluralistic attitude emerges.

Internalization occurs when individuals are finally at peace with who they are racially and they become more pluralistic and nonracist in their thinking. During this stage, individuals experience a sense of belonging and regard themselves positively.

The final stage, **Internalization-Commitment**, is a very proactive stage. Individuals have a desire to bring about change for other African Americans and minority populations. They may become involved with organizations that they feel will promote change for all minorities (Cross, 1996).

Cross (1996) suggested that an individual moves across a continuum during the process of developing a racial identity. Movement may proceed in either direction or even become arrested at any stage. One effective strategy for facilitating students through the racial identity process is through bibliotherapy (Ford, Baytops, & Harmon, 1998).

Bibliotherapy

Bibliotherapy is the use of carefully selected literature that addresses specific issues and conflicts which are relevant to the student's life. This process provides an opportunity for the student to vicariously experience these issues and conflicts, as well as the resolution in a safe and less-direct manner (Ford, Baytops, & Harmon, 1998). Kyung-Won (1992) describes bibliotherapy as consisting of four stages. The first stage is **Identification** where

the readers sees similarities to themselves in the characters of the story. The second stage is Catharsis where readers allow emotions and internal conflicts to surface. During Insight, the third stage, readers make the connection between themselves and the character. In the fourth stage, Universalization, readers understand that their problems are not unique. According to Ford, Baytops, and Harmon (1998), the final stage in the process of bibliotherapy is called Proactivity. Students explore different methods for dealing with problems through discussion, writing, and role playing. Bibliotherapy is a powerful means to communicate with African American students and validates their struggle in forming racial identification (Ford, Baytops, & Harmon, 1998).

School Desegregation and Gifted African American Students

The impact of desegregation is still unknown. Most research on desegregation has focused on the achievement of African American students and much of the research has looked at the impact of racial integration on African American self-esteem and self-concept. What has been established is that there are numerous variables and dynamics at work in the process of desegregating schools. Variables such as the kind of desegregation plan, (involuntary, voluntary, or choice) and who is bused, have a great impact on the success of the program. The number of African American students bused to desegregate schools, how these students are grouped, and the level of involvement of families impacts the success. The age, gender, mental status, and achievement levels of the students also has an impact on the success of the individual. Yet, little research has been done to identify the variables and dynamics at work that contribute to success within the desegregated classroom

Until recently, researchers were unable to examine the effects of desegregation and resegregation. With the continued unification of school districts and the dismantling of desegregation programs comes resegregation and the need for new policies to ensure equity.

A review of literature on school desegregation and gifted students revealed that there has not been any research looking into the effects of desegregation on gifted students. Additionally, a search for literature on school desegregation and gifted African American

students produced no results indicating that there has been no research looking at the effects of desegregation on gifted African American students. These are critical areas that need to be researched to help identify factors within the classroom environment that impact the success of gifted students and African American students in interracial classrooms.

Summary

The history of desegregation suggests that the academic performance of African American students was hindered by the segregation of schools which led to educational inequities between African American and White schools. Support to desegregate schools was based upon the assumptions that African American students had inferior school facilities and teachers, suffered from low self-esteem and poor self-concept, and held low aspirations for academic achievement. Desegregation theory is built upon the premise that the academic performance, self-esteem, and self-concept of African American students will increase in high-quality school facilities with well-trained teachers, where African American student are be exposed to the values of middle class White students. A reduction of racial prejudice is expected through the contact of African American students with White students and White teachers. Research suggests that while successful desegregation is difficult to achieve, it can be achieved if specific conditions are met to ensure equal status among all students.

Gifted African American students were expected to benefit most from the desegregation of schools with opportunities to participate in high-quality gifted programs. Yet, gifted African Americans were and continue to be underrepresented in gifted education programs. One reason for the underrepresentation of gifted African American students in gifted education programs is that their educational and psychological needs are not being addressed.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

With the Brown v. Topeka School Board of Education(1954) decision came the legal imperative for the desegregation of public schools. Many school districts implemented the busing of students to desegregate schools. Research conducted on the effects of desegregation focused on the assumptions that the academic achievement and self-esteem of African American students would increase by attending high-quality schools with better educated teachers and White middle class students. It was assumed that a reduction of prejudice would occur as both majority and minority populations and teachers would have close contact with each other.

This study attempts to understand the experiences of six inner city gifted African American fourth- and fifth-grade students who were bused to desegregated a White middle class school and then returned to their resegregated neighborhood school. Students were interviewed about their experiences at both schools focusing on the trip to school, classroom environment, classmates, and school resources.

Previous studies investigating the effects of desegregation on student achievement and self-esteem have produced inconclusive results. African American student achievement and self-esteem did not increase as a result of desegregation, or if it did increase, it was clearly not at the level of White children (St. John, 1978). Patton (1990) stated that sometimes researchers are puzzled by the results of quantitative research and that detailed case studies may generate useful information. The focus of the case study is to develop an in-depth analysis of a case in order to understand the person or phenomenon (Creswell, 1998).

According to Maxwell (1996), one particular research purpose for which a qualitative study is especially suited is understanding the meaning of events, situations, and actions based on participants' experiences, looking from the 'participants' perspectives."

“The perspective of events and actions held by the people involved in them is not simply their accounts of these events and actions, to be assessed in terms of its truth or falsity; it is *part of* the reality that you are trying to understand”(Maxwell, 1996, p. 17).

In qualitative research, the focus is on the meaning which is central to what is known as the “interpretive” approach to social science. According to Patton (1990), the case study approach helps to illuminate or uncover something that is going on. Creswell (1998) described a case study as an exploration of a bounded system through detailed, in-depth data collection. This case study is bounded by the experiences of the participants in the desegregation and resegregation of their schools. This case study is not only descriptive, but also interpretive and evaluative, developing an understanding of the dynamics and realities of the participants. A naturalistic approach was used, interviewing students and teachers within the school setting. Inductive analysis or continual questioning and hypothesizing was used in interpreting the data.

Researchers’s Perspective

Patton (1990) stated that there are four ways in the researcher can distort the findings of a study. First, a halo effect, whereby staff and students perform in exemplary fashion and are motivated to “show off,” can occur in the presence of the evaluator. The presence of the researcher may also create tension and anxiety so that performances are below par. My presence in this study had minimal effect upon the participants since I had been involved with the students and staff at Tacoma Elementary school for nine months, observing in classrooms, and working with teachers and students. The students’ and teachers’ comfort levels were very high, and they shared a great deal of information with me.

A second evaluator effect can be a change in the evaluator translating into a change in the instrument. This can occur when evaluators become personally involved with program participants or staff and lose their sensitivity. I remained cognizant of this effect and maintained sensitivity through a variety of safeguard measures. Interviews with students were audio taped and video taped in order to capture how and what students were communicating in terms of verbal and body language. Observational notes were taken

immediately after observations and were reviewed to ensure accuracy. Patterns and themes that arose through data analysis were discussed with such professionals as the students' teachers, school psychologists, the school nurse, the school social worker, the reading specialist, the special education teacher, the vice principal, and the principal.

A third evaluator effect concerns the extent to which the predispositions or biases of the author may affect data analysis and interpretation. According to Maxwell, (1996) the explicit incorporation of one's identity and experience in research has recently gained support. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) suggested that the researcher's subjectivity provides the basis for the story that they are trying to tell. They believed that subjectivity is something to capitalize on instead of something to be removed. Reason (1988) suggested the use of critical subjectivity as a ". . . quality of awareness in which we do not suppress our primary experiences. . . or allow ourselves to be swept away and overwhelmed by it; rather we raise it to consciousness and use it as part of the inquiry process" (p. 12). Maxwell (1996) suggested that, ". . . separating your research from other aspects of your life cuts you off from a major source of insights, hypotheses, and validity checks" (p. 28). Strauss (1987) called the researcher's technical knowledge, research background, and personal experiences, experiential data.

According to Patton (1990), the researcher is the instrument in qualitative inquiry and previous experience and training must be disclosed. The knowledge and experiential data that I have gained from my experiences have given me insight and subjectivity for this research study. I am an African American and an educator in the field of urban education, multicultural education, and gifted education. I have consulted with numerous school districts in the area of gifted education, increasing the representation of minority students in gifted programs, providing staff development in the area of cultural competency and culturally congruent teaching methods. I am active locally as well as nationally in the area of gifted education, specifically serving minority populations.

As a child I experienced desegregation by integrating predominantly White elementary, junior high, and high schools. My experiences with desegregation gave me insight into the dynamics that are involved in the integration of African American and White cultures in a

school setting. My children also experienced integration in predominantly White schools. One of my children attended Rocky Creek Elementary School for kindergarten and encountered similar experiences to those of the students in this research. Knowledge of my experiences with desegregation appeared to increase the students' comfort level in discussing their own experiences with me. Having the advantage of these experiences enabled me to probe and question students' accounts, yielding richer data.

Banks (1998) stated that many scholars of color have challenged traditional interpretations of their cultures written by mainstream scholars and researchers, leading to discussions about the effects of a researcher's life experiences, values, and objectivity. Banks suggested that the biographical journey of researchers greatly influences their research questions, and their constructs of knowledge. He also suggested that marginalized groups not only experience a different reality but interpret that reality differently. According to Banks, being an indigenous member of the population in this study allowed me to endorse the unique values, perspectives, behaviors, beliefs, and knowledge of this culture. It legitimized me as a community member who could speak with authority about issues within the African American community.

One great advantage of sharing the same culture as the students and two of the teachers that were interviewed is that I was able to effectively communicate with them. According to Smitherman (1977), language consists of, ". . . words that fit into a symbolic and cultural system and can only be decoded within the context of that system" (p. 42). Delpit (1988) stated that Ebonics or Black English ". . . is the language spoken by many of our African American children" (p. 17). Black English includes idioms, terms, and expressions that are commonly used among African Americans. Many of these components of Black English make up a ". . . coded dialect of English whose meaning is veiled from whites . . ." (Smitherman, 1977, p. 49). Therefore, English words can have two levels of meaning, one Black and one White.

Delpit (1995) reported that, ". . . many African Americans present information indirectly, through use of metaphor or reference to presumably shared experiences. If listeners do not possess the background understanding needed to fill the gaps, accurate

interpretation becomes a difficult task" (p. 145-146). In order to understand the correct meaning, one must understand the communicative context which also includes nonverbal communication or body language in relation to verbal speech (Ford, 1996). As a member of the African American culture I was able to decipher, interpret, and comprehend the meaning of the students' and teachers' narratives.

In addition to sharing a common language, I was also able to understand Standard English which was used by one of the teachers interviewed. By being fluent in both Standard English and Black English I was able to code-switch or move easily between both languages when necessary (Smitherman, 1998; Ford, 1996). I was also able to communicate effectively with the African American teachers who were code-switching as well.

Participants

The participants of this study were from a moderate size metropolitan area in Midwestern United States. They consisted of gifted African American fourth and fifth graders from Tacoma Elementary School, a predominantly African American, inner-city school that was paired with Rocky Creek Elementary School, a predominantly White school in another area of the city. Families that attended Tacoma ranged from middle to lower socioeconomic status with 80% of the families qualifying for the USDA school lunch program. Families from Rocky Creek ranged from middle to upper socioeconomic status with less than 10% qualifying for the USDA school lunch program. Students from Tacoma were bused to Rocky Creek in an attempt to desegregate the predominantly White school. While students from Rocky Creek were assigned to Tacoma, very few attended Rocky Creek. The majority of the families from Rocky Creek who were assigned to Tacoma attended private schools or other schools within the district. In the mid-1990's, court ordered busing was repealed and dismantled, requiring students from Tacoma and Rocky Creek to return to their home schools. These schools are now considered to be resegregated as neighborhood patterns continue to be segregated.

Purposeful sampling was used to identify students who would participate in this study.

Participants were selected from those students who were bused during the first, second, and third grades before returning to their neighborhood school. These students have been identified as gifted and talented and participate in the gifted education program within their school. Students qualified for the gifted education program by undergoing a series of evaluations including a family checklist of gifted behaviors, teacher checklist of gifted behaviors, observations, achievement tests, and creativity tests. The process is first initiated by the classroom teachers and begins in the first grade. The achievement tests used to evaluate candidates for the gifted education program include both verbal and nonverbal standardized achievement tests including those used by the school district. Students must perform at the 95th percentile or above. The tests are administered by the gifted education specialist to groups of fifteen or more students at the beginning and end of the school year. In order for students to be accepted into the program, they must demonstrate gifted behavior through the family and teacher checklists and score in the 95th percentile or above on at least two achievement tests. Once identified as gifted, students are able to participate in the gifted education program offered at their school.

The students that participated in this study did not qualify for the gifted education program at Rocky Creek Elementary School due to low achievement test scores. Each of the students was identified while attending Tacoma Elementary school where their achievement test scores increased allowing them to qualify for the gifted education program.

Through bibliotherapy sessions that were part of the gifted education program, ten students who demonstrated a willingness and propensity to discuss their experiences with busing, were identified to guide in the understanding and meaning of their experiences with busing (Strauss, 1987).

Method of Data Collection

Qualitative research methods were selected for this study because of the desire to generate data rich in detail and embedded in context. Multiple sources, including interactive fieldwork, classroom observation, group discussions, student interviews, and teacher interviews, were used for data collection. According to Gay (1987), in-depth interviews are

a desirable method of data collection when utilizing qualitative research as they give respondents opportunities to clarify questions and allow the researcher to probe more deeply (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992).

Students first participated in the process of bibliotherapy engaging in discussions concerning racial identification, self-image, self-esteem, and achievement in relation to their experiences with busing and attending Rocky Creek. The books, Maizon at Blue Hill (Woodson, 1994) and The Story of Ruby Bridges (Disney, 1997) were used since they presented African American characters who were dealing with school segregation, desegregation, and integration. These characters were in various stages of their racial identity formation dealing with the challenge of racism. Field notes were taken on discussions along with analytic memos and contact summaries.

Permission slips were sent to the families of the selected students explaining the purpose of the research study including examples of interview questions. Four of the families discussed the research study with the researcher for further clarification. Families of six of the ten selected students granted permission to be interviewed. One student was ill and could not participate. The families of three students did not wish to have their students interviewed due to the sensitivity of the topic.

Students were individually informally interviewed in the library at Tacoma. They were asked to sign a permission slip which stated that they could refuse to answer any questions or end the interview at any time without penalty. Students were reassured that the information they shared would not be shared with any teachers or principals in the school district. They were also told that the information they shared would be used anonymously to protect their identity. Students were allowed to observe the audio and video equipment as they were told that they would be video and audio-taped. After answering any further questions, the interview began using open-ended questions.

The first questions focused on the students' experiences with busing. Next, questions concerning their classroom environment and their relationships with teachers at Rocky Creek Elementary school were asked followed with questions about their relationships with their classmates. The last set of questions were about the resources at Rocky Creek

Elementary School.

Students were then asked to discuss their experiences at Tacoma Elementary School beginning with the trip to and from school. Questions were asked about the classroom environment and their relationships with teachers followed by questions about their classmates. After students were questioned about the resources at Tacoma Elementary school, they were asked to compare their experiences at Rocky Creek and Tacoma elementary schools. They were also asked if, given a choice, which of the schools they would attend. Finally, students were asked what they felt they learned from their experiences at Rocky Creek Elementary school and Tacoma Elementary school. Before leaving, each student was asked how they felt discussing their experiences at Rocky Creek and Tacoma elementary schools and if they had anything else they wanted to add.

Audio and video taping of the interviews was used to capture the verbal and nonverbal communication of the students. The audio tapes were transcribed. Field notes were taken while observing in the students' classrooms and analytic memos and contact summaries were written following each observation and interview (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

Three teachers were selected based upon their in-depth knowledge of the students who were interviewed. All teachers had extensive contact with these students. Each of the teachers had the students in her own classrooms for at least one year in addition to teaching all of the students as part of a team. One of the teachers had the same students for two years. During the students' interviews, the same three teachers were identified as effective teachers by all of the interviewed students. Subsequently, the teachers were questioned about their philosophies of education, instructional methods, and classroom management techniques. Individual interviews with the teachers took place in their classrooms and were audio taped and transcribed and consisted of open-ended questions focusing on their perceptions of the identified students' self concept and academic achievement, their relationships with students, and their curriculum and instructional practices. Field notes were taken while observing in the classrooms of these teachers, and analytic memos and contact summaries were written following each observation and interview.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using an interpretational search for themes, a structural search for patterns in discourse, and a reflective-rich portrayal of the participants' views. According to Erlanson, et al. (1993), data analysis is an ongoing process in qualitative research; therefore, data were collected and reviewed on a continual basis throughout the entire research period. The data analysis was performed initially without the use of any qualitative computer software.

Both audio and video interview tapes were reviewed prior to transcription and observational notes were reviewed to develop tentative ideas about categories and relationships. Transcribed interviews were coded as soon as transcriptions were available. Codes were inductively generated using the "grounded" approach of Glaser (1992) and open coding techniques (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). A constant comparison of data was done, comparing new data to previously collected data and creating new categories. As patterns or themes were identified, recoding was done to develop the dimensions of a given theme (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) using axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Contextualizing strategies were used by sorting data into categories by relationships that connected statements and events and themes (Maxwell, 1996). Content analysis or the identification of concepts and themes within the data took place. Recurring descriptors and terms or indigenous concepts that were used by participants were analyzed in an effort to extract meaning. Patton (1990) suggested elucidating key phrases or terms which are used by participants by creating an indigenous typology. Indigenous typologies are classification systems made up of categories that are divided by aspects of the participants' world. Anthropologists, in their study of cultures have emphasized the importance of preserving and reporting the indigenous categories of people studied. Patton explains that . . . indigenous typologies are clue to the evaluation of the phenomena to which the labels refer. [The labels] are important to the people in the setting, and to fully understand the setting it is necessary to understand those terms and their implications (p. 394).

Analysis of the verbal categories of indigenous typologies was necessary to analyze the verbal categories used by participants and to break the complexity of their reality into parts

(see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1

Students' Indigenous Typology of Behaviors

Prejudice	Discriminate	Harass	Anger
injustice	segregate	intimidate	resentful
inequity	partiality	bully	alienated
unfairness	unfairness	threaten	hurt
discrimination	injustice	annoy	offend
bias	favoritism	antagonize	hostile
racism		stress	belligerent
		aggravate	militant
		torment	aggravated
		tease	upset
		provoke	enraged
		taunt	

Labels were identified from an analysis of what the students and teachers said in their narrative. The attributes that distinguished one category from another were then clarified using definitions from The New American Webster Handy College Dictionary (1995) and definitions offered by Banks (1999, 1997), Sleeter (1995) and Allport (1979). The indigenous typology of students' descriptions of behaviors assisted in fully understanding the experiences conceived by the students. Patton (1990) stated that indigenous typologies are important because they shed light on processes and outcomes among participants. By using the indigenous typology, descriptions became more easily identifiable and patterns began to emerge after reviewing previous coding and students' transcripts.

Analysis of the students' transcripts was done prior to analysis of the teachers' transcripts. Themes and patterns from the teachers' transcripts were found to be similar to the themes and patterns found in the students' transcripts. Memos were written throughout

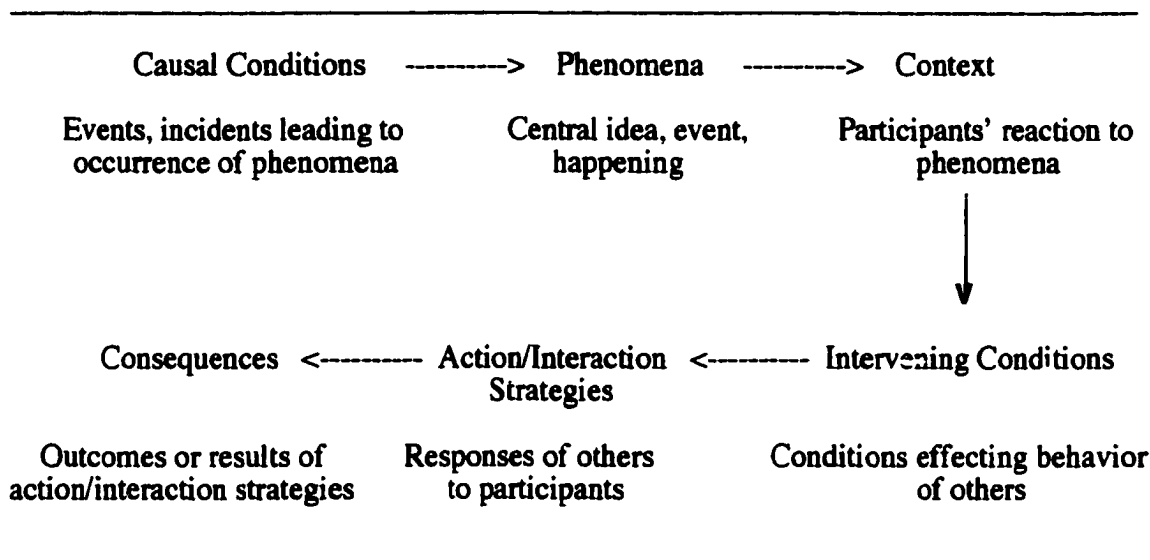
this phase of data analysis to capture analytic thinking about the data and to facilitate analytic insight.

At this point in the analysis, data were analyzed again, using the qualitative computer software, HyperRESEARCH. The transcripts of the students and the teachers were entered, coded, and analyzed. The categories, patterns, and themes from the HyperRESEARCH analysis were compared to the previous analysis looking for similarities or differences in categories, patterns, and themes. Any differences in patterns and themes were reviewed and developed. Memos were written throughout the data analysis.

Concept maps were constructed from the data to identify patterns, comparisons, trends, and paradoxes (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Periodic review of all the collected data, analytic memos, concept maps, and summary constructions led to additional questions. In addition, meetings with faculty and colleagues who are knowledgeable and have expertise in qualitative research took place to discuss emerging themes, concepts, and explanations.

In the final phase of the data analysis, each interview was reread and reviewed to compare and contrast perspectives. Selective coding took place by reviewing patterns and themes and selecting a core category or central phenomenon to which all other categories were related. The relationships between the core category and other categories were analyzed using inductive and deductive analysis by making comparisons and generating hypotheses (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). A model developed by Corbin and Strauss (1990) to identify the central phenomenon was modified and used to describe the relationships between categories and themes (see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2

Axial Coding Model

First, the central event or phenomena of the problem that is being investigated is identified. In this research study the phenomenon are the experiences of the interviewed students with desegregation and resegregation. Causal conditions are the events and incidents that lead to the occurrence of the phenomenon. The students' range of behaviors in response to the phenomena are defined as the context. Intervening conditions are the characteristics and dynamics of the students' teachers and classmates. These include the educational preparation of the teachers as well as the values, beliefs, and attitudes of both teachers and classmates. Action/Interaction strategies are the behaviors of the teachers and classmates in response to the students' behavior. Consequences are the end result of the action/interaction strategies or behavior of the students' in response to teacher and classmates behaviors.

Validation of data was achieved through triangulation which compared the student perspectives, teacher perspectives, and observer perspectives of behaviors and constructs with theory.

Validity and Reliability

Internal validity is considered credibility in qualitative research and concerns the establishment of the researcher's confidence in the "truth of the findings." In this study, credibility was established through prolonged field experiences, triangulation, member checking, interview techniques, and the authority of the researcher (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Acting as a specialist at Tacoma Elementary, I was able to observe, interact with, and monitor the students' behavior, making observational notes throughout the year. Memos and observations were made from weekly discussions with students. Observations were made of teachers in their classroom environments, interactions with students and in the school environment, interactions with parents, faculty, and staff (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Patton (1990) stated that after patterns, linkages, and explanations have been identified, it is necessary to consider rival organizing schemes and competing explanations. Investigations into alternative explanations were explored and consideration was given to the best fit between data and analysis. To ensure objectivity, member checking, review of the data, discussions with both African American and White professionals and colleagues, and continual questioning was performed.

Triangulation, according to Patton (1990), is an important strategy in strengthening a study. It involves the combining of several kinds of methods or data to study a single problem. This study achieved triangulation through multiple data sources, both qualitative and quantitative, multiple methods of collecting data, and multiple perspectives by combining teacher interviews, student interviews, informal discussions with staff, and observations of students. Triangulation was also used as an effective process for reducing systematic bias in the data (Creswell, 1998).

External validity is viewed as transferability and concerns the degree to which the findings can be applied to other contexts, settings, or groups. This was accomplished through reporting stories using thick descriptions or considerable detail (Emerson, 1983). According to Erikson (1986), the burden of transferability is actually placed on the reader. The reader must determine the ways in which the case fits the circumstances of the reader's own situation.

Reliability is described as dependability and concerns the degree of repeatability or replication. To ensure dependability, a continuous audit was conducted. Thick descriptions of research methods were completed. Patton (1990) described thick descriptions as descriptions of detail, context, emotions, and social relationships. Thick descriptions add history into the experiences of the participants by reporting significant events so that the feelings and interactions of the participants are understood.

Confirmability or objectivity concerns the degree to which the findings are based on the conditions of the research. Questions that were used to confirm objectivity included the following: 1) Is the phenomena at the core of the findings?; 2) Does the criteria fit and describe the phenomena?; and 3) Does the criteria encompass and relate to the other identified categories? (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). A confirmability audit, triangulation, and reflectivity all contributed to confirmability of this study.

Summary

This qualitative case study sought to understand the experiences of six inner-city gifted African American fourth- and fifth-grade students who were bused to desegregate Rocky Creek Elementary school, a White middle class school and were then returned to Tacoma Elementary school, their resegregated neighborhood school. Students were selected using purposeful sampling and were interviewed about their experiences at both schools. Students were asked about their trip to school, classroom environment, classmates, and school resources. Students were also asked to compare their experiences at both schools. Finally, students were asked which school, if given a choice, would they attend.

Three teachers from Tacoma Elementary school were interviewed about their experiences with the interviewed students. They were also interviewed about their philosophies of education, instructional methods, curriculum, and classroom management techniques.

Student interviews were video and audio-taped to capture both verbal and non-verbal language. Teachers' interviews were audio taped. All interviews were transcribed verbatim. Data analysis was performed initially without the use of any qualitative computer software and was later compared to computer data analysis using HyperRESEARCH. The

transcripts were coded using an interpretational search for themes, using the “grounded” approach and open coding techniques. As patterns or themes were identified, recoding was performed using axial coding. Contextualizing strategies were used by sorting data into categories by relationships that connected statements, events, themes, and by developing an indigenous typology. Validity and reliability were established through triangulation which supported the credibility, dependability, and confirmability of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

REPORT OF FINDINGS

Introduction

A brief discussion of the research methods will be presented before the presentation of the findings. The findings are presented in a narrative form beginning with an introduction of the students involved in the study. The first section of narrative deals with the students' experiences at Rocky Creek Elementary School and includes the trip to school, the learning environment, and classmates. The second section presents the students' experiences at Tacoma Elementary School beginning with the trip to school, the learning environment, and classmates. The third section presents the students' comparison between Rocky Creek Elementary and Tacoma Elementary Schools beginning with a discussion about teachers, classmates, and school resources. The impact of the students' experiences at both school is discussed in section four. The teachers' narratives follow and the chapter ends with a summary of the teachers experiences with the resegregation of Tacoma, their education philosophies, classroom management strategies, and classroom curriculum.

Research Methods

This research study was qualitative, utilizing a case study approach to help in the understanding of the experiences of gifted African American elementary students who were bused to desegregate a predominantly White middle-class school and then returned to their neighborhood school. These fourth- and fifth-grade students who currently attend Tacoma Elementary School were interviewed about their experiences with busing to Rocky Creek Elementary School and resegregation back to Tacoma Elementary School. Rocky Creek Elementary School is a predominantly White middle-class school Tacoma is predominantly African American, and located within a lower socioeconomic-level neighborhood.

Three teachers from Tacoma were also interviewed about their impressions and

observations of the students, and their teaching methods. All three teachers knew the students for three years, and the students were in each of the teachers' classroom for a year or more.

Sampling Procedure

This research study used purposeful sampling techniques. Students were selected from a population of identified gifted fourth- and fifth-grade students who participated in bibliotherapy through a Multicultural Book Club designed for gifted students. Students met once a week, discussing selected literature which dealt with issues of being African American and gifted. The literature also addressed issues of prejudice and discrimination in the school setting. Ten students who demonstrated a tendency to relate the issues within the selected literature to their own experiences were selected for this study. However, while ten students were selected for interviews, only seven students were given permission to be interviewed. Three students were not given permission to be interviewed, and it was reported by those students that their families were uncomfortable with the research topic. Then one of the seven students was unable to be interviewed due to illness, leaving six student interviewees. Four of the students were fifth graders and two of the students were fourth graders. Four of the students were African American males and two were African American females. Six of the ten students selected were interviewed at school. Three teachers from Tacoma Elementary School were selected using purposeful sampling techniques. These teachers were identified by all students in the study as exemplary teachers.

Data Collection

Students were individually interviewed at Tacoma Elementary School. Interviews lasted approximately thirty minutes and were video and audio-taped. Students were asked to discuss their experiences at Rocky Creek and then Tacoma beginning with the trip to school. Questions about the classroom environment included relationships with teachers, demographics of the classroom, and the curriculum. Students were asked to talk about their friends at Rocky Creek. They were asked to describe resources such as the school facility,

equipment, computers, and programming at each of the schools. The students were then asked to compare and contrast Rocky Creek and Tacoma Elementary Schools in terms of class environment, classmates, and school resources. Finally, students were asked what impact or benefits they gained from attending Rocky Creek Elementary and Tacoma Elementary schools.

Teachers were interviewed in their classrooms and were asked to discuss their experience with the resegregation of Tacoma Elementary and the academic performance of the study students. Teachers were also asked to describe their education philosophies, classroom management strategies, and curriculum development. The interviews were audio taped.

Data Reduction

All interviews were transcribed verbatim and a quality-reliability check indicated that transcripts were reliable. Video tapes were reviewed and compared to transcripts noting nonverbal behavior. Coding of the student transcripts was done by the researcher identifying emerging themes. A second coding was completed using the computer software, HyperRESEARCH, identifying themes and themes from both sets of codes were compared.

The teachers' interviews were coded after the completion of the coding of students' interviews. The initial coding was completed by the researcher, and a second coding was done using HyperRESEARCH. Themes from both sets of codes were compared. Emergent themes from the students' transcripts were compared with the emergent themes from the teachers' transcripts.

Finally, since all students participated in a Book Club discussion group, observational notes and memos were taken after each session. Students and teachers were also observed in the classroom as well as in informal settings and observational notes and memos were also made.

Data Analysis

Case analysis was performed and included all the interview data, the observational data, and the impressions and statements of the students, teachers and other staff members. Cross-case analysis or the grouping of answers to common questions from different individuals, was performed first on the students' transcripts and then on the teachers' transcripts. Analysis was done first by hand and then with HyperRESEARCH, a qualitative computer software and the results were compared. Using content analysis, the data was coded by identifying, coding, and categorizing patterns in the data. Classifying data for content analysis utilizing an indigenous typology facilitated the search for patterns and themes. Through the use of inductive analysis, patterns, themes and categories emerged out of the data.

Student Narratives

A introduction of each of the students in this study is presented discussing their family, hobbies and interests, educational history, friends, and aspirations.

Jamaal

Jamaal is an eleven-year-old African American male who lives with both of his parents in an inner-city community. One of his parents is African American and the other is European American. He is the youngest of three boys, all of whom attended Rocky Creek and Tacoma. His father works full-time and is attending community college. His mother works as a paraprofessional at an inner-city elementary school. Jamaal has a close relationship with his older brothers and refers to them affectionately quite often. He has expressed on occasion that one of his brothers is his hero.

Soccer is one of Jamaal's favorite sports and he has been involved with competitive soccer for some time even though there are limited resources and opportunities to play in the inner city. Other hobbies include reading, writing, and creating inventions. He has been working for the past year on a design of a hovercraft that can be fueled by water. With the help of one of his brothers, he has developed and revised his design and hopes to build an actual model within the year.

For first and second grades, Jamaal attended Rocky Creek Elementary School before going to Tacoma Elementary. Jamaal has been described by his teachers, including the three interviewed teachers, as a very intelligent child who is enthusiastic about learning. One of his favorite subjects is science. He is an intense observer and participates in class activities and discussions. His teachers reported that he is a very deep thinker. They also felt that he was an excellent critical thinker and problem solver. Jamaal is quite articulate, possessing a very impressive vocabulary. Not only does Jamaal understand complex concepts but he is able to express them in simple terms. Jamaal enjoys class discussions and his contributions indicate an exceptional level of sensitivity and insight. He was identified as gifted in the third grade when he returned to Tacoma Elementary School after being bussed to Rocky Creek Elementary.

Jamaal is well-liked by his peers. His friends seem to regard him with great respect, and he is known for being very smart and wise. Often he is placed in the role of a leader which he performs very well. He enjoys playing with his best friends, Charles and Steven.

Jamaal has a real concern for the events of his world. He identifies himself as African American and is very knowledgeable and proud of his history and culture. He is an advocate for societal reform and enjoys discussing his ideas for changing the world. His future plans are to finish high school and go to college. Jamaal wants to become a scientist and an inventor. He is also considering becoming involved with politics.

Charles

Charles is an eleven-year-old African American male who lives with his mother and two older brothers. Both of his brothers attended Rocky Creek Elementary and graduated from high school. He lives in an apartment with his mother and one of his brothers. His mother works as a receptionist.

Charles is an avid player of video games. He often uses themes that he finds in video games in his creative writing which is one of his favorite activities. Football is a special interest and Charles plays at the local community center. When Charles is not engaged with video games and football, he is reading, his favorite hobby. He particularly enjoys

science fiction.

Charles attended Rocky Creek Elementary for first and second grades. For third grade, he began at Tacoma Elementary and remained there through fifth-grade. Charles is a very bright student who has maintained an "A" average throughout elementary school. He is extremely proud of his achievement. He was identified as gifted in third grade when he returned to Tacoma. Teachers, at Tacoma Elementary, consider him an extremely talented writer having received many awards for his short stories in local contests. According to his teachers, he presents an arrogance and defensiveness which they feel may actually hide his lack of self-confidence. They fear that he believes he is invincible which sometimes can make him a challenge to deal with in the classroom.

Among his peers, Charles is very popular. In fact, his teachers spoke of many students who seem to admire Charles and even follow him around. He is well respected by his classmates for his intellect, physical ability, and reputation of being tough. He enjoys being the center of attention, in class as well as out of class. This behavior often presents problems in the classroom.

Charles plans on going to high school and then to college to become a writer. He has also considered becoming an actor and director of movies. He is very proud of his accomplishments and looks forward to what the future may bring him. He knows that he is going to be somebody.

Steven

Steven is an eleven-year-old African American male who lives with both parents in the inner city. Steven comes from a very large family with three older sisters and three younger brothers. His parents, two sisters, three brothers, and grandmother live very close to Tacoma Elementary School. Steven's family is a very close-knit. All of his sisters attended Rocky Creek and Tacoma elementary schools, and one of his brothers attends the first grade at Tacoma. The other two brothers are not of school age. Steven is often mistaken for Hispanic or White instead of African American. His teachers at Tacoma Elementary reported that while attending Rocky Creek Elementary, some of his White classmates did

not know that he was African American.

One of Steven's greatest loves is cars. He enjoys constructing models of cars, adding to his car collection. He has been collecting cars since he was five years old. In addition to collecting cars, Steven has a list of the names of all the books he has read. He is a voracious reader and plans on having a large house as an adult with a library right above his three-car garage. Steven also enjoys playing video games with Charles and Jamaal.

Steven attended Rocky Creek Elementary for first and second grades. He attended Tacoma Elementary for third grade. Teachers describe Steven as a very special child with a happy go-lucky disposition. He is a bright child who is very enthusiastic about learning. Science is his favorite subject and seems to be one of the areas where he excels. Steven is known for the effort he puts into his work and the quality of his products. He has maintained an "A" average since third grade. He was identified as gifted in the third grade when he returned to Tacoma.

Steven is very popular among his peers, and they seem to enjoy being around him and his good-natured personality. He spends most of his free time at school playing football, soccer, or basketball with Charles and Jamaal.

Steven wants to go to high school and then to college. He hopes to become a doctor, own a large house, and collect real cars. However, Steven believes that his family will not be able to afford to send him to college. He also feels a responsibility for caring for his parents which might interfere with college attendance.

Charday

Charday is an eleven-year-old African American female who lives with her grandmother in an apartment a block away from Tacoma. She has an older sister who is no longer living at home. Charday has never known her father and rarely sees her mother. Her grandmother babysits in their home during the day.

Charday loves to dance. She enjoys listening to music and choreographing dance routines. When she is not dancing, she is writing poetry or short stories for which she has won awards. Charday is very proud of her book collection which includes poetry and

novels which she likes to share with her teachers. She likes to spend time at her best friend's house playing video games and watching movies.

For first and second grades, Charday went to Rocky Creek Elementary. She started attending Tacoma in the third grade. Teachers describe Charday as a very enthusiastic and persistent worker. She is very bright and puts a lot of time and hard work into her products. Being a perfectionist, she becomes very frustrated when she doesn't perform well according to her own standards. She is a very sensitive child and reacts strongly when she feels an injustice has been done. She excels in language arts, creative arts, and mathematics. She has been on the principal's honor roll every year. Charday was identified as gifted when she was in third grade when she started attending Tacoma Elementary.

Charday has what appears to be a quiet demeanor, but she can be very assertive. She is well-liked by her peers, but she enjoys staying with a small group of friends. Most of her free time at school she spends with her best friend who has been in her class since she started attending Tacoma Elementary. She is very interested in student government and was elected class president in fifth grade.

Charday wants to go to high school and do well. After high school she plans on attending college. She wants to then go to graduate school to become a veterinarian.

Lamont

Lamont lives very close to Tacoma Elementary with his mother, grandmother, two older sisters, and two younger brothers. He is a very active ten-year-old African American male. Lamont attended Rocky Creek Elementary for first grade before attending Tacoma Elementary.

One of Lamont's favorite pastimes is playing video games. He prides himself in beating every game that has been made. Sports is another of Lamont's interest. He enjoys playing football and basketball with his friends in the neighborhood. Lamont likes movies that contain adventure and action with his favorite movies being science fiction. He is a loyal fan of Star Trek and Star Wars movies.

Lamont spent first grade at Rocky Creek Elementary and starting attending Tacoma

Elementary in the second grade. Lamont's teachers describe him as very active and very talkative. They also feel he is very insightful and bright. He was initially identified during the second grade, as having learning disabilities and with further assessment he was diagnosed as twice exceptional, or gifted with a learning disability. Writing is the greatest challenge for Lamont, and although he becomes frustrated at times, he works hard to keep up with the work he misses when he is pulled out by the special education teacher .

Lamont's peers are aware of his disability, yet it does not seem to matter at all to them. They are also aware of his special ability in sports and frequently argue over who will have him on their team. Lamont seems to enjoy the attention he receives from his friends. He has a very good sense of humor, but there are times when his friends don't understand his humor at all. Lamont appears to understand this and doesn't let it bother him.

Lamont wants to finish high school and go to college. He wants to learn how to develop and create video games. Eventually, he plans on owning a video arcade. In addition to that, he wants to have a video game chain of stores.

Keesha

Keesha is a ten-year-old African American female who lives with one of her parents who has just recently remarried and she now has a White stepparent. She lives a good distance from Tacoma Elementary. Both of her parents are very involved in her life. She has an older sister who attended Rocky Creek and Tacoma and is currently in high school. Keesha is very close to her sister who is very protective of her. Keesha welcomes the attention from her sister.

Keesha likes to draw, paint, and to make crafts. She claims that she can make something out of anything. Reading is another one of Keesha's hobbies. She relishes reading books that are part of a series. She takes pride in completing a whole series of books. Keesha also enjoys reading any kind of folk tale. Keesha has been taking dance lessons for some time but states that she is getting a little bored with her dance lessons.

Keesha attended Rocky Creek Elementary for first grade and then attend Tacoma for second, third, and fourth grades. She is a highly motivated and serious student who works

very hard even though her teachers feel that learning comes naturally to her. Her teachers describe her as very bright in all subject areas. She is also very sensitive, and when she does not perform as well as she would like, she becomes very upset. There have been times when she would cry when she was not satisfied with her grades on an assignment. She is also described as a very shy person who does not like attention drawn to herself. Her teachers shared that she is one of the most caring students they have known. Keesha was identified as gifted in the second grade at Tacoma.

Keesha has many friends but no apparent best friend. Students enjoy working on classwork with Keesha because she is so caring. During recess at school Keesha tends to seek out her friends in the fifth grade. Her friends enjoy her company and describe her as very sweet and shy.

Keesha wants to enroll in the International Baccalaureate program in high school, and after high school she wants to attend college, then to law school to become a lawyer working for people who are disadvantaged.

Rocky Creek Elementary School

Students who lived in the Tacoma Elementary School neighborhood and surrounding areas were paired with Rocky Creek Elementary School students. Selected students from Tacoma and Rocky Creek attended kindergarten at their own neighborhood school and were then bussed to their paired school for first through fifth grades. Eventually, busing was dismantled and students returned to their neighborhoods.

The students attending Rocky Creek were predominantly White and from the middle and upper socioeconomic level. Tacoma students were predominantly African American with the majority of students from the lower socioeconomic level. Rocky Creek was larger than Tacoma with 500 students while Tacoma had 300 students. The principals at both schools were African Americans. The staff at both schools consisted of predominantly White teachers with a few African American and Hispanic teachers.

The students who were interviewed first discussed their experiences at Rocky Creek during the first and second grades. Next, they were asked to discuss their experiences at

Tacoma. Finally, they compared their experiences at Rocky Creek Elementary School to their experiences at Tacoma Elementary School.

The Trip To School

Jamaal, shaking his head with disbelief, never could understand why, when there was a school right there in the neighborhood, he had to get on a bus and ride for half an hour to the other side of town just to go to another school. Charday didn't understand why she had to get up at 5:30 in the morning to get dressed and be at the bus stop by 7:00 to catch the bus, while the students from the Rocky Creek neighborhood didn't have to get up as early. She was very adamant in stating that she did not like riding the bus or having to attend Rocky Creek. Steven didn't mind too much because he lived right next to the bus stop, so he could sleep a little later than the others.

Once at the bus stop, everyone could talk and even play until the bus came. At first, there were African American, Hispanic, and White students on the bus together. Keesha remembered the bus being very, very loud. She dreaded riding the bus every day because there were a lot of students on the bus and they were always "ranking on each other" or making fun of each other.

Charles remembered that there were many fights on the bus during that time. Many of his friends would get into fights, often because some of the White students would call them derogatory names. Charday had bitter feelings about riding the bus and being called "nigger" and "black crispy" by White students. She recalled that it did not feel good to be called names and she just tried to ignore them.

Lamont shared Charday's feelings and felt that the White students were just prejudiced. He said that it was hard for African Americans on the bus because most of the White students would throw spitballs and other things at them. Once he was sitting in the front of the bus and a White student in the back started throwing rocks from the playground at him and his friends. One of the rocks hit him and when he went to tell the student to stop, the student started yelling and hitting Lamont. The bus driver, who had been watching through his rear view mirror, told the White student to stop, but he continued to hit Lamont and call

him names, so Lamont hit him in the face. He said that he knew that something was going to happen that day because he heard some White students behind him say "Go hit that Black boy!"

All of the students were upset with the way that the bus drivers handled problems on the bus. Although they realized that the bus drivers were limited in what they could do, they felt that they should have done more. Some of the bus drivers ignored the many incidents of name calling and fighting and would not even intervene to tell students to stop. A few bus drivers would try to control the behavior of students, but their attempts were usually ineffective.

Lamont felt that it was very stressful riding the bus to school each morning. He explained that , ". . . it felt kind of weird because *every day* you either have to get on the bus and *fight* or just let them *beat up* on you!" He recalled the day his friend, who was sitting next to him on the bus, was injured. He was hit in the head by an open can of soda pop that a White student threw at him. Shortly after this incident, there were separate buses for African American and White students. Charday remembered when the buses changed and shared how angry she was about the placement of a camera on the bus that transported African American students. What actually made her so angry was that a camera was not placed on the bus that transported White students. Charday expressed the sentiment of all of the students when she said, "...they put cameras in *our* buses but *not* on *theirs*....they think that *we* were the *bad* ones."

All of these students were very pleased with the changes made concerning the busing of African American and White students. According to Charday , "... it felt kind of good when they made the bus all Black... no one else to call me *nigger* and stuff like that." Jamaal remembered that it was pretty nice riding to school with people from the neighborhood who weren't being mean. Charles would sometimes sit on the bus and look out the window, memorizing how to get to Rocky Creek and back to his neighborhood. Sometimes he would sleep if he was tired. Usually, he would sit by his friends and talk or play his Gameboy. Steven would also visit with his friends on the bus. Charday would sit with her

friends and talk. Lamont played with his friend's Gameboy. Keesha still complained that the bus was too loud with everybody talking. She would just sit and look out the window.

Summary

Students reported feelings of anger around being required to attend a school that was not in their neighborhood. Many students were angry that they had to awaken so early in the morning to catch the bus. All of the students were angered by the name calling and harassment they received on the bus ride to and from school each day. There was very little intervention by the bus drivers, teachers, or principal concerning the behavior on the bus. Most of the students felt the bus was an unsafe environment which created an atmosphere of anxiety and stress for them.

All students experience less stress and even some enjoyment in riding bus once it had been segregated into all African American and Hispanic students. They were no longer forced to deal with name calling and harassment. Students indicated that they felt safer and experienced less stress on the bus ride. They were all very upset and angry about the placement of a camera on their bus to monitor their behavior while there was no camera on the White students' bus. All of the students felt this action was confirmation of the belief of White people that African American children were bad children.

The Learning Environment

Students were asked to describe their relationships with teachers at Rocky Creek Elementary School. They were asked to discuss how the curriculum met their educational needs.

Jamaal

In first grade, Jamaal was one of five African Americans in his class. He had two teachers, Mrs. Gutierrez and Miss Henderson. Miss Henderson replaced Mrs. Gutierrez after three months when she left to have a baby. Jamaal's face lit up when he talked about Miss Gutierrez. He really liked her because of the way that she taught. For example, in reading, she would divide students into groups and let parents who had volunteered to help,

work with the groups. She would always take Jamaal's group and would teach them using phonics. He felt that his academic needs were being addressed when she was teaching.

Mrs. Gutierrez would not allow any name calling in her class. She would always respond to complaints made by minority students about name calling outside of her classroom. Jamaal explained that she understood how African American and Hispanic students felt at Rocky Creek because she knew how it felt to be picked on because of what you were. She was Hispanic and let the class know that she knew they were being called names like 'wetback' and how painful it was for her when she had been called the same names. Jamaal also felt that Mrs. Gutierrez's treatment of all students was fair. He indicated that he felt safe with her because she knew what was going on in the school and was very intolerant of prejudice in her classroom.

When Mrs. Henderson took over the class, in Jamaal's words, "... everything just went downhill." Jamaal had a scowl on his face as he described her as very mean to African American students. In her classroom, all of the African American students were seated at one table. He described how she would teach the African American and Hispanic students differently from the White students in the class. Jamaal reported,

. . . she would tell them..*everything* and give them the *bare maximum* of what she had to tell them and give us the *bare minimum* of what she had to tell us. And half of the time, not many of the teachers helped us learned to read. Like all the other kids can *rush read* and read these stories like 'See Spot Run,' in a couple of minutes and we were *struggling* with the first word, 'See.'

In second grade, things seemed to get even worse for Jamaal. He was now one of four African American students in his class. His teacher, Miss Turner, was Asian American. As far as Jamaal was concerned, she acted as if she had no feelings for African American students. He told of the many times he would ask her questions and she would ignore him. When his table needed more information to complete an assignment and asked her for instructions, he was ridiculed by her. Jamaal claimed that she was even giving African American students different homework from the homework that was given to White students.

Miss Turner could be nice to Jamaal, he felt because his father was White. She would

also be nice when his mother was in the classroom. But most of the time, Jamaal felt that she was picking on him unfairly. Jamaal told of an incident where his mother, who was involved with Junior Great Books, asked Miss Turner to select some students to participate in a group. When she did not select Charles, or two other African American students, his mother requested them. Miss Turner replied with, "Do you really think that [they are] *ready* for this?"

When asked how he felt about this incident, Jamaal leaned forward, his eyes intense, and using his hands for emphasis said,

I felt just plain terrible about it. It's like I was thinking [pause]. *why would someone just judge you like this? Just because you're Black...Yet, they are thinking, "Oh, no one can touch a white person 'cause we're just white". And, all sheets of paper are white, and everything is white except for trees and plants...Does that make you superior or something?* [eyes swelled with tears] There are *many* different *colors* in the world aside from *white*. I mean, take a look at the *sky*, it's *blue*. Take a look at the *rainbow*, it's *different colors!* *Not just plain white!* And, so I was trying to think like, *why do these people do this to us?* And, then give their *own kind* [white students] the *perfect life*.

Jamaal was convinced that Miss Turner was trying to make it difficult for African American students. He believed that Miss Turner and Mrs. Henderson purposely did not want African American students to succeed. Jamaal shared that the way he was treated by his teachers caused him a lot of pain. After a slight pause, Jamaal explained with a determined look, how he felt. "In first grade, it made me *sad*. But, in second grade it just made me angry and *enraged*."

Charles

Charles and Jamaal were in the same first grade classroom. Charles smiled as he remembered having a lot of fun playing games and moving from center to center within the classroom. He loved the stories about African folk tales and Native American legends that Mrs. Gutierrez would read to the class. He enjoyed the way that Mrs. Gutierrez taught in small groups. According to Charles, she had a great attitude and made everyone feel happy. He believed that he learned a lot from Mrs. Gutierrez. Charles says that he was very sorry to see her leave. He doesn't seem too remember much about Miss Henderson who took over

for Mrs. Gutierrez.

In second grade, Charles had Miss Turner. Once again he and Jamaal were together in class. He liked Miss Turner very much. He especially enjoyed the many field trips that his class took to various museums. He was very impressed with riding the city bus instead of the school bus on the field trips. His favorite event was field day at Rocky Creek.

The activities in class were very interesting to Charles, and he felt that he learned a lot. Charles, leaning forward, confided that Miss Turner had to teach them a lot because they did not know what they were suppose to know for second grade. He was proud of the fact that she let them move ahead in math.

Charles liked his first and second grade teachers. He raised his eyebrows as he revealed that he felt they both understood that all he wanted was to get an education. They were allowed to have their fun but, "... when we needed discipline, they disciplined us in a firm way where we didn't have to disagree with what they were doing." Charles felt that his academic needs were met in both first and second grades.

Steven

In first grade, Steven had Miss Payo who he described as mixed Hispanic. He smiled and sighed as he explained that she was a good teacher and a nice person. He enjoyed the way she taught using small groups and teaching how to read using phonics. Steven like her so much that when she had a baby the following year, he brought her gifts for her new baby. He describes Miss Payo, affectionately, as his friend.

For second grade, Steven had Miss Smith. He sat back and wrinkled his forehead as he shared that she was very mean. She became angry easily and was very hard on the students. Steven recalls,

One day I had just moved into my new house, and I got homework that night. And, I didn't have any pens, pencils or anything to write with that night. And, I couldn't get over to my aunties to get one. So, she made me *stay after school* and stuff. And, lunch time and after school. She thought I *lied*...She just thought I *lied*.

Miss Smith could be nice, too. According to Steven, if you did exactly as she asked, she would give you treats. Steven smiled and also admitted that she was a good teacher. He explained,

She would teach us. When she was teaching us she would be *fun* about it. She wouldn't be that hard on us. Only sometimes when we didn't get the point...she would be kind of hard on us, so we could get the point. But, if we knew how to do it and we could do more of it, she would be nice to us and she would give us prizes and stuff.

Steven usually understood what Miss Smith was teaching and received several prizes. He made straight "A's" throughout the school year in her classroom.

Steven shook his head from side to side as he told how he felt that his first and second-grade teachers were very different from each other. With Miss Payo, he felt very comfortable and she was someone with whom he could communicate. Miss Smith did not seem to understand him very well. Both teachers, according to Steven, were good teachers. He felt that both first and second grade were too easy, and he was not challenged academically.

Charday

Charday was one of three African American students in her first-grade classroom. Her teacher was Mr. Martin. Sitting back in her chair, she describes Mr. Martin as kind of a good teacher, but he had a very, very bad temper. When he was angry, he would get very upset and yell at the students. According to Charday, Mr. Martin usually had a good reason for getting angry because many of the students would not behave as expected in class, but many times he seemed to become angry for no apparent reason.

As far as being an effective teacher, Charday felt that he could "be like a regular teacher." She explained that a regular teacher is one who can teach and will teach. When she would ask him for help, he would stop and help her. If she did not understand the meaning of any words in the directions, he would explain the words to her. Charday remarked, with a hint of sarcasm, that some of the time he could even teach her in a way that she needed to be taught. Even though Mr. Martin was a good teacher at times, she acknowledged in a very matter of fact way, that she had to learn a lot of things on her own.

Charday had difficulty with Mr. Martin when it came to his relationship with the students in her classroom. As she explained her relationship with Mr. Martin, she rose up in her chair and her eyes widened. Charday felt that he would listen and stick up for the

White students and not the African American students. She went on to explain using her hands for emphasis that,

He was *just* like the *other teachers*. When a *Black* student would complain...towards [about] another student who is of the *other race*, he would just tell.....*our race*, the Black student to just...just...*he wouldn't tell us anything!* He would *encourage* the other kids. He would *give them ideas* [about]what to do, but he would just let *us* get in *trouble* and things like that.

Charday remarked, while shaking her head from left to right, that she was very happy to get away from Mr. Martin. She had admitted during a discussion at the Reading Club that she feared him at times.

The following year Charday was in Miss Turner's second grade class with Jamaal and Charles. She felt that Miss Turner could also be like a regular teacher and did what she was suppose to do as a teacher. "She explained things; she helped us out; she did what she was suppose to do as a teacher. But, then, the other thing she didn't do as a teacher was be equal with all the children." Charday's voice began to get louder as she shared an observation she made of Miss Turner.

Well, if she sees a *White* kid raise their [his/her] hand and a *Black* kid raise their [his/her] hand at the same time, she will *normally* go to the *White* kid first. And, then *keep going* to the *White* kids 'til none of them got the answers. And, *then* she would go to *us last*. She would make the *Black* kids go last at *everything*.

When asked how she felt about the way Miss Turner treated African American students, Charday slumped back into her chair and said softly, " Not very good. It was kind of sad. Because of the way she treated us and just some things that she did." Charday would not share what she meant by her last statement and sat looking down at her lap.

As far as academic challenge, neither Mr. Martin or Miss Turner could meet Charday's needs. She expressed, rolling her eyes, how very bored she was in their classes and how she took it upon herself to find interesting books to read. It was also during this time that Charday started to write poetry and stories.

Lamont

For first grade, Lamont was in Miss Faubion's class. Lamont wore a huge smile as he described her.

My teacher, Miss Faubion. She was white. She was real nice. She [pause] was *not prejudice*. She would tell the kids to stop throwing stuff 'cause there were only three Black kids in my classroom. And then we had another Black teacher next door. Her name was Miss Brookins. She was real nice.

According to Lamont, Miss Faubion was a very good teacher. What made her such a good teacher was the way that she, "explained it more." She would take the students through all the steps that were necessary to complete the task before she gave them the task.

She made sure that everyone in the class knew what to do.

Lamont spoke about his classroom as being peaceful. Miss Faubion spent time talking to her students about the way that African American and Hispanic students were being treated. Lamont said "She said that if she catches the kids beating up on another kid, their parents have a right to sue." Miss Faubion would send any students that she found calling names or fighting to the office.

Miss Faubion treated everyone fairly in her classroom regardless of their race. She would also stick up for her students, especially if they were accused of wrongful behavior. Lamont told proudly of how Miss Faubion would try to help them. She would tell her students not to listen to people who might tempt them to do things that they knew were wrong to do. "our teacher told us, 'Don't do it.' She said then you would be blamed for it and they'll get the easy way out."

In an effort to stop the fighting and name calling, Miss Faubion brought a security guard from a juvenile detention facility to her class to talk about what could happen if students continued to fight. Lamont shared that, "He told them most of the places he took [students who fought too much at school] most of the places he took them to [were] like prison. And then they [students at Rocky Creek] all stopped fighting. And, for a couple of months, they all stopped. But, upstairs it was like [pause] it was like the fifth graders were beating up on the second graders."

Keesha

Keesha had Mrs. Warren for first grade at Rocky Creek. Mrs. Warren was African American. Keesha described Mrs. Warren as “really, really nice.” Mrs. Warren wanted everybody in the classroom to be friends. She did not tolerate any name calling or fighting in her classroom. Keesha’s face beamed as she told how “she wouldn’t let *anybody* talk about you and that. If anybody were to talk about you, she would *send* them to the office.” According to Keesha, no one *dared* to call anybody names when she was around.

Mrs. Warren was also very caring. She would ask her students how they were doing and what kinds of things they did over the weekend. Keesha smiled broadly as she shared that Mrs. Warren cared about every single student in her classroom. She was also respectful to her students. Keesha said that, “she never did talk about anybody. She was really, really light weighted [easy going]. She never did talk about other teachers with other teachers. She never, barely, screamed.”

As far as teaching, Keesha rated Mrs. Warren very highly. According to Keesha, she knew how to teach and did teach them in a way that they needed to be taught. She would only test them over work that she had taught them how to do. She felt that the work that Mrs. Warren gave her was appropriate for her, but Keesha felt that she was not challenged in her classroom.

Summary

Students were in predominantly White classrooms with only a few other African American students. Often times they felt isolated since they did not know any of the Rocky Creek students. The climate of the classroom was dictated by the classroom teacher, with teachers who addressed prejudicial behaviors providing the safest classroom environments. The classrooms of teachers who did not respond to the concerns of the students were described as hostile environments.

Teachers

Most of the students were angry with their classroom teachers for not making any efforts toward curbing the incidents of name calling and harassment between African

American and White students at Rocky Creek. All of the students spoke to their teachers at least one time about the treatment they received from some of the White Rocky Creek students. Whether or not students would share their concerns with their classroom teachers again depended upon the response of the teacher. If the teacher acknowledged and addressed the concern and the harassment declined, they would continue to confide in the teacher. If their concerns were not validated or attempts at resolving the problem were unsuccessful, students would no longer confide in the teacher. Teachers who did not respond to the concerns of the interviewed students were considered to be unfair, uncaring, and prejudiced.

All of the students experienced what they considered to be effective teachers at Rocky Creek. While Charles and Lamont reported that all of their teachers at Rocky Creek were effective teachers, Jamaal, Steven, Charday, Lamont, and Keesha reported having some ineffective teachers. Table 4.1 presents characteristics and behaviors of ineffective teachers identified by these students.

Table 4.1
Rank Ordered Characteristics of Ineffective Teachers at Rocky Creek By Students

-
1. No response to name calling and harassment
 1. Unsafe environment
 2. Unfair and unequal treatment of African American students
 3. Mean to African American students
 4. Preferential treatment toward White students
 4. Did not teach African American students
 5. Low expectations of African American students
 5. Prejudice against African American students
 6. Did not care for African American students
 6. Disrespectful to African American students
-

Those teachers who were considered to be ineffective were also perceived as uncaring, disrespectful, and prejudiced. Jamaal told of how his teacher would ignore his questions or ostracize him in front of the class. Charday shared during a Book Club discussion how one

of her teachers would talk to her in a disrespectful manner and say disparaging remarks about her and her family. All of the students had witnessed incidents where teachers would listen and attend to White students' concerns over African American students' concerns. Each student had witnessed what they considered to be unfair treatment, with teachers giving preferential treatment toward White students.

A recurring comment from Jamaal, Charday, Lamont, Steven, and Keesha was that the ineffective teacher at Rocky Creek "would not teach us." When asked to define what they meant by their statement, each student explained how their teachers held low expectations of African American students and did not believe that they were capable of learning. Consequently, these students believed that they were placed in lower ability groups and given less-challenging work. Jamaal spoke extensively about the differences in the quality of instruction that minority students would receive compared to White students in the classroom. The students believed that their teachers *could* have taught them but *chose* not to teach them. Further discussion revealed that most of the teachers considered to be ineffective had the following patterns in their teaching:

- 1) did not explain concepts in a way students could understand;
- 2) did not relate content or problems to students in a meaningful way;
- 3) relied on auditory teaching methods; and
- 4) gave instructions using language that was difficult to understand.

The characteristics of teachers who students felt were effective teachers at Rocky Creek are listed in Table 4. 2.

Table 4.2
Rank Ordered Characteristics of Effective Teachers at Rocky Creek By Students

-
1. No tolerance for name calling
 1. Provided a safe environment
 2. Taught African American students
 3. Explained concepts in a way students could understand
 3. Used contextual examples for problem solving
 4. Used cooperative learning groups
 5. Nice to all students
 6. Able to communicate with students
 6. Understood African American culture
 7. Fair
 7. Caring
 8. High expectations for all students
 9. Discussed life skills
 10. Disciplined classroom
-

All of the teachers identified by the students as effective were described as very nice and good people. Students commented on how these teachers respected all students and treated everyone fairly. Effective teachers did not allow any derogatory name calling in their classrooms and would act upon the concerns of African American and White students. According to the students, these classrooms were safe because the teachers “protected African American students from White students.” Teachers would intervene when African American students were called derogatory names or were harassed by White students. These teachers would take the time in class to discuss issues concerning prejudice and racism with their students.

Students commented on how these effective teachers were very good at teaching them. Instructional methods used by these teachers were identified by students.

- 1) Use of multicultural materials;
- 2) Use of a variety of teaching styles;

- 3) Explanation of the meaning of words; and
- 4) Breaking down new concepts into small steps.

There were limitations in analyzing patterns and themes regarding both effective and ineffective teachers at Rocky Creek as none of the Rocky Creek teachers were interviewed.

Classmates

Students were asked to talk about the demographics of their classroom and to share how they felt being one of a few African American students in their classroom. They were also asked about their classmates and friends at Rocky Creek Elementary.

Jamaal

Jamaal was only one of five African American students in his first-grade class and one of four in his second grade class. When asked how he felt about being one of a few African Americans, he replied with a sigh,

Well, at first I felt good about the difference. But then I *realized* that people are *afraid* of what they don't know and so being different isn't always the greatest. So, this way you're *stuck* thinking that it is pretty nice not being the same as another person. Yet, the next thing you know, someone is calling you names like [pause] '*you dirty black roach*' and stuff like that!

Many of the White students from Rocky Creek were calling African American students derogatory names. Jamaal opened his eyes wide as he confessed that it really hurt being called names. He told of how during recess, African American students would seek each other out on the playground and talk about what to do about the way they were treated.

Half of the time we would always just stay in one small group; like on the playground and talk about it. Like some of the kids thought [pause] most of them thought that it was *pretty bad* to be called this stuff. Like we should, [pause] since there is *nothing* we can do, we *might as well* just resort to violence. And, others thought that we shouldn't resort to violence. And, then finally a few or so would think that [we should] probably just try to [pause] *fit in*.

Jamaal, along with Charles and some others would fight when provoked. "We'd fight the White kids that were always starting trouble calling people names," Jamaal said proudly. "And, like [kids who were] *kicking* you in class and claiming they did *nothing*".

When asked if he ever told his teachers about the treatment that African American students were receiving from White students, Jamaal replied sadly, “No, because we figured that we would be know as tattle tales and then the teacher would say it’s not *right* to rap someone out [tell on someone] like that. And, they only meant to be friends.”

Jamaal did not make very many new friends among the students at Rocky Creek. He mentioned that there would always be a few White students who were nice to him and even told him that they admired his intelligence. Sometimes he would make friends with someone in his class but when everyone was out on the playground at lunch, they wouldn’t speak to him. He looked down at his lap and confided that it would really hurt his feelings when this would happen. Leaning forward, Jamaal told how one of his White friends told a group of white students that he [Jamaal] had said some derogatory things about them. When they were playing football that day, one boy tackled him and the rest of the boys came over and told him that he better not call them any names again and then beat him up.

Jamaal talked about a common practice where older White students would take African American students and lock them inside a locker. This would occur after school and usually by the time someone would come by to let them out, they had missed their bus and had to call home. One time, Jamaal told with pride, how he and Charles, along with some other friends, locked one of their White classmates in a locker to give him a taste of his own medicine. He begged them to let him out and promised that he wouldn’t do anything to them if they let him out. They did let him out and he thanked them and then the next day he came to school with his parents who talked to the principal and Jamaal and his friends were reprimanded.

Almost all of Jamaal’s friends at Rocky Creek were from his own neighborhood. They were African American and Hispanic and most of them rode on the bus with him to and from school. They continued to be his friends at Tacoma.

Charles

Charles was one of five African American students in his first grade class and one of four in his second grade classroom. He wasn’t very happy about having so few African

Americans in his class because he was looking forward to having friends of his own race. He got along with most of the White students but there were many with whom he did not get along. These students, according to Charles, acted like fools. He sat back in his chair, looked down at his lap, and explained.

They treated me *pretty cruel* [pause] getting me in *trouble* [pause] calling me *names* [pause] *disrespecting* me . They called me [pause] a *black monkey* and names like that. They would try to *fight* with me. They would just start calling me names, and I would just be like [say], "Leave me alone!", And also they would just start *pushing* on me and so I would have to *lay them down* [beat them up] because that's *not cool*. My mom told me if somebody tries to start a fight with you, you should *defend* yourself, *especially* if you weren't in the wrong.

Charles would react to the name calling by ignoring it, but at times it got the best of him, and he would challenge them by saying "Okay, you all believe that. But, *we* will see *who* will be the better person!" He did not tell his teachers about the name calling because, according to Charles, they wouldn't do anything when he did tell them and he didn't want to be considered a "punk" by all of his classmates for "tattle telling."

Charles, with a scowl on his face, told of how some of his White classmates would get him into trouble. "Sarah, she got me in trouble. She told Miss Turner that I was like [pause] *hitting* her and I *wasn't* doing that. Because, I didn't even *care* for her. She was pretty mean, anyway. And, then I got sent home and, that's [Sarah telling the teacher] like [pause] *bad*. "

Some of Charles' classmates would only be his friend if they were alone. Charles spoke about one student. "John. When he was just around me and Jamaal, he was *cool*. Because we could get along. But, then whenever George came around, he just tried to be an *enemy* ." He also spoke about Rick, one of his classmates who used to harass him. "He seemed like one of those timid White people who liked to skateboard with us and like that. When you got to know him he was really a sly evil person."

Charles, holding his hands and looking down at the floor, admitted that he was hurt that many of the White students would not be his friend.

I felt *bad* because I was like.."I *wanted* to be friends with you all but you all are like, *tripping* [getting upset]. I would be friends with *you all* if I was somebody else . Then , I would be friends with my self because when you get to know me you know that I am *not a bad* person. 'Cause it might seem like I'm like, hard and that, but I'm really not. I

'm really a *sensitive* person."

Another kind of cruelty described by Charles involved his White classmates getting him into trouble by provoking him, calling him names to the point where he would become very angry. Sometimes they would hit or trip him in class where he was unable to retaliate. Charles told how some of Rocky Creek students would, "knock my lunch down on purpose. And they would kick me and run and mess."

Charles told how he tried to make friends with some White students from Rocky Creek.

I tried to make friends with them but, then, they turned me down. It didn't really *feel* well because I was like, "We can all get along because we all are gonna end up at the same place. We all are going to end up in middle school or high school. And, most to the time we are going to go through the same experiences of bad games or something like that."

Charles did have a few White friends from Rocky Creek. His face lit up as he talked about his friend, Jason, who used to bring his skateboard to lunch and play with him. They also enjoyed playing basketball, soccer, and baseball together. He and Jason got along so well because, according to Charles, they were compatible. They both lived in the same neighborhood, like to do the same kinds of activities, and even liked to eat the same foods. Charles emphasized the fact that he could trust Jason and although he felt pretty safe at school, when he was around Jason at school he, "would feel 100% safe."

Steven

There were three other African Americans in Steven's first-grade classroom. It didn't bother Steven that there were so many White students in his class because he hung out with his friends, who were all African American students. He didn't really enjoy hanging out with the White students because, "I didn't know them and I was just like, I just hung out with people that I knew. I just *needed* to hang with them, I guess." As far as the White students in his classroom, he shared that there were a few students in his classroom who they, "acted kind of crazy," and he did not care to be around them. These students would show off and misbehave to get attention.

He did have a few White friends and spoke with affection about his good friend, Josh.

Steven and Josh shared a common interest. They both enjoyed art and since Josh's mother worked with the art teacher at Rocky Creek, they were able to work on a variety of art projects together.

Steven laughed as he told how in second grade he was the only African American student in his classroom. He didn't really mind being a minority because most of the White students were very nice. Steven really didn't care to play with them, though, because, he explained with a smile, "They acted *white*. They just like [say] '*How are you doing today* and stuff.' They acted *white*!"

Steven, fidgeting in his chair and avoiding eye contact, insisted that he was never called a derogatory name while he attended Rocky Creek. He believed that one of the reasons was because he was very big for his age in first and second grade. Steven remembered most of the Rocky Creek students being nice to him. He did recall an incident where one of his White classmates, Ed, would always select the book that he wanted to read. He would ask Ed if he would give it to him after he finished and Ed would always give it to his best friend. He also remembers at Rocky Creek, "you'd get talked about by a lot of people." Steven denied any of these incidents were based on prejudice. He claimed that when White students would say things about him, he didn't care because he was smarter than they were. Steven did admit that a few of the White students at Rocky Creek treated him cruelly, but they did not call him names.

Although Steven was never called names, he did remember his African American friends being called names frequently, especially Lamont. He theorized that Lamont was called derogatory names because, "he was darker than all the other black kids [and] he just has a funny personality; like to tell jokes." Steven went on to explain with some difficulty that

people at Rocky Creek, they weren't *racial* or anything. But, sometimes they were calling other people names. Like some others who were *really, really dark*. *Dark skin*. They would say '*charcoal*' or something but they wouldn't try to be *racist*. They were *just joking around* and people who were Black would joke around with them. It was just like a *game*, I guess. It really wasn't that important. But, some of the people that got called those names, like some of them started it. They would be joking around and the person that is getting called [the name] wouldn't really care because they were just joking around like that, too.

Steven explained apologetically that he didn't experience much prejudice because "I'm

not too dark, I'm not dark like a lot of people. I think that's why I didn't have too many racial experiences or any racial experiences." Steven concluded that the name calling at Rocky Creek, while he had never really given it much thought, wasn't important because the students who were involved with name calling were stupid. Smiling, he claimed that he just learned to ignore them.

Charday

Charday was one of three African Americans in her first-grade classroom. She had a scowl on her face as she explained that she did not like being just one of few African Americans in her class and her school. She claimed that it just felt weird.

Most of her friends at Rocky Creek were African American and came from her neighborhood. She smiled as she said how she liked them because she could really get along with them. She admitted that she had made friends with a few White students from Rocky Creek.

According to Charday, all the students stayed in groups that were racially segregated with White students keeping to themselves and African American and Hispanic students socializing with each other. Charday's voice increased with intensity as she talked about the students from Rocky Creek.

They would hang out with mostly their own color and *talk* about the kids of *our race*. And, it was *bad* because every time *we* would go somewhere, *they* would go another place and *talk* about us and *say it* out loud. They would call us *niggers* and black people and racial things. They would come *up to us* and *say it* in our *faces* and other things like that!

Charday looked down at her lap as she remembered that it did not feel very good being treated this way "because of what Dr. Martin Luther King said." She would usually try to ignore what the White students said or walk away from them. When asked if she ever told the teachers about the way African Americans were being treated by some of the White students, she rolled her eyes and said, "Yes. They wouldn't do anything about it. They would just say, 'Don't call names.'"

In second-grade Charday had three other African American classmates including Jamaal

and Charles. Some of the students from Rocky Creek continued to call her and other African Americans derogatory names. Charday leaned forward in her chair, balled up her fists and said,

In second grade, I kind of got *mad*. And, I was doing things *myself* because the *teachers* wouldn't do *anything* about it. So, I started doing things *myself*. And, what I mean by doing things myself is [that] I would *face the problem* and things like that.

When asked to give an example of how she faced her problems she smiled as she told of an incident with one of her White classmates.

There was a boy and he didn't like *any* Black kids. And he called me and my friends *niggers* and told us to go home. And, that time I really got *mad* and I went over to him and told him that I really didn't appreciate it. He didn't listen. He just copped an attitude.

Apparently, this strategy was not very effective and Charday soon began to face her problems by fighting. According to one of her teachers at Tacoma who knew of Charday's experience at Rocky Creek, Charday not only chose to deal with her classmates by fighting, she also started to attack her teachers verbally and physically. As a result, Charday was suspended several times from school.

Lamont

Even though Lamont was one of three African American students in his classroom, he made friends with everyone in his classroom and throughout the school. Most of his friends were African American and Hispanic but he also had many White friends as well. He remembered most of the White students would become friends with Hispanic students but wouldn't become friends with African American students. In fact, "The [Hispanic students] never started anything, and, the White kids used to always play with the *Hispanic* kids. They were *better friends* with us than with the White kids."

Lamont reported that he was called derogatory names by White students at Rocky Creek. "They called some of my friends *Dark Vader* and they called one of my friends, Big Bird, 'cause he was tall. They used to call me *crispy and charcoal*." Lamont insisted that the name calling did not bother him or hurt his feelings. "They would call *us* stupid and they were just *stupid* their selves. To me they just look *bad*. To me they were just.

[pause] they were [pause] they looked like *nothing* to me. I didn't pay attention to it."

At Rocky Creek the principal was African American and according to Lamont the principal told them "Don't just listen to them. She said all white people are not bad. That some are good. And, like we would go back and they [White students] would try to throw stuff at us, like trash can and stuff."

Lamont grimaced as he explained how African American students were treated by some of Rocky Creek students.

It got *harder* when we went to the bathroom and all when another class was out because the kids [pause] tried to, like beat you up in the bathroom. And, then sometimes up in the library [pause] when you had to go to look up information, they'd be like kids standing *all around* you and then they would try to *kick* you and stuff.

Most the White students who were harassing African American students were older and in the fifth grade. When asked if he told any teachers about these incidents, Lamont responded with pride,

Yeah. She told us to tell her who the kids were, and we told her. And, she talked to them. And, she told them she better not hear that it happened again or they were going to be kicked out .

This intervention was effective to some extent as a few of the students would stop the name calling. But, most of the students seemed to ignore what Miss Faubion had told them.

They still try to lock, like, my friend. He was in kindergarten. They locked him in his locker where he couldn't get out. He was Hispanic and he got locked in the locker by some older White kids. I took him out to the locker. He wasn't that mad. He was a little upset. He didn't get mad and want to fight 'cause if there was a loose hook or something, like the hook that you hang your coat on or something, they would try to hit us with one of those.

At this point, Lamont became agitated and using his hands to emphasize what he had to say, he revealed how challenging it was for him at Rocky Creek.

They were almost like..like..like..some of the kids that you interviewed earlier, they could tell you..its like..like..a *war*. Yeah. It was like Hispanics and Blacks and Whites. It was the Hispanics and Blacks that were fighting the Whites. Because *everyday* [pause] you couldn't go to that school and *be in peace* like here in this school. You *had* to fight *everyday*. And, I think that was *hard* on most kids.

I *never* listened to them [White students who were name calling]. I just *walked* away from them. If one of them hit me to the point that I'm mad then we would fight. And, then they would, most of the kids would always ask me, "How come you're not fighting today?" " 'Cause," I tell him, "I'm not like you guys. I'm not ready to fight *every* day, *every* time. I only fight when I *have* to."

Keesha

Keesha's made many friends in the first grade at Rocky Creek even though, according to her, she was very, very quiet. Her teacher, Mrs. Warren, was African American. Keesha told how it was very important to Mrs. Warren that everyone in the class got along and become friends. Most of the students in Keesha's class were African American. Keesha, proudly stated that she had both African American and White friends.

Keesha felt that everyone in her classroom was able to get along well. Keesha explained, "I didn't have anything against them [White students]. I never had asked them if they had anything against me. I never had asked them if they were mad at me or whatever. And, like if they didn't like me, I don't care."

Keesha insisted, emphatically, that no one in her classroom or even the entire school ever called her a derogatory name. She did say, reluctantly, that she heard students calling each other racially derogatory names. Shortly, after sharing this information she disclosed that although students within her classroom did not participate in name calling in the classroom, they would engage in name calling outside of the class when Miss Warren was not present.

Keesha grimaced as she spoke of how both African American and White students would interact with each other. She did not like the way students treated each other. "They would cuss at each other and call each other bad names. They would talk about each others' moms. "Listening to this verbal bantering made Keesha feel very uncomfortable. She explained, "I feel like they should just be friends and I don't think that we should fight like that."

Summary

All students with the exception of Steven and Keesha, reported being called derogatory names. They were teased, taunted, and intimidated by some of the White students at Rocky Creek. Steven suggested that only those African American students who were dark skinned were the target of prejudicial treatment. All of the students witnessed White students engaged in the name calling and harassment of African American students.

Students appeared to be confused initially by the treatment they received from their

classmates at Rocky Creek but learned quickly that they were not welcomed by some of the Rocky Creek students. Jamaal, Charles, Steven, Lamont, and Charday shared how they were greeted during the first week of school by White students from Rocky Creek who told them that they did not like them, did not want them attending their school, and suggested that they return to their own neighborhood.

Charles and Jamaal shared how hurt they felt when their White classmates would reject their attempts to become friends. What was even more painful was the realization that some of their White friends would not acknowledge or socialize with them outside of the classroom.

The students choose friends among the minority students who attended Rocky Creek. Steven preferred to remain among his African American friends because he could communicate with them, unlike the White students. He, along the other students who were interviewed, believed that they did not have very much in common with the White students at Rocky Creek. They found communication with them tedious. Due to cultural differences, they felt uncomfortable around White students and more comfortable among other minority students. All of the students characterized their experience with White students at Rocky Creek as very painful since they were forced to deal with prejudice on a daily basis.

Coping with Prejudice

Allport (1979) suggested that prejudice can take on various forms of behavior ranging across a continuum from "mild and overt" to "harsh and covert". He developed a model consisting of five phases of prejudicial behavior. The five phases are antilocution, avoidance, discrimination, physical attack, and extermination.

Antilocution is characterized by discriminatory and prejudicial discussion among persons who hold similar beliefs. An example of this behavior can be seen in Charday's description of the interaction between White and minority students on the playground, "They would call us *niggers* and black people and racial things. They would come *up to us* and *say it* in our *faces* and other things like that!" The constant name calling on the bus and at school are examples of antilocution. While antilocution can be quite harmful to those

at which it is aimed, it is the mildest form of prejudicial behavior.

Avoidance is an advanced form of prejudicial behavior because individuals will not only make disparaging statements, they will make deliberate efforts to avoid individuals who they feel are not equal to them. Jamaal, Charles, and Charday spoke of how White students would stay within their own group during recess.

They would hang out with mostly their own color and *talk* about the kids of *our race*. And, it was *bad* because every time *we* would go somewhere, *they* would go another place and *talk* about us and *say it* out loud

They also told of instances when White students from Rocky Creek would socialize with them in the classroom but would not acknowledge them on the playground. Students reported that White students on the bus would not share their seats with them. These are all examples of avoidance behavior. The behavior during this stage continues to be self-directed with no physical harm directed at individuals.

Discrimination occurs when the majority takes steps to exclude or deny minorities access or opportunity to participate in an activity. There were numerous descriptions of discrimination at Rocky Creek. One of Steven's classmates would select the book that Steven wanted to read and when asked to give to him when finished, would refuse. During recess, some White students from Rock Creek would not allow minority students to play football or soccer with them. The students who were initially selected by Miss Barella to participate in Junior Great Books were all White. When asked to select some students of color, the teachers would refuse, suggesting that they were not able to participate. Jamaal told how one of his teachers assigned all of the minority students together at the same table away from the tables with White students. She would give different instruction, work sheets, and homework to White students. The instructions she gave to White students seemed more comprehensive than the instruction she gave to minority students. Charday described one of her teacher's behavior.

Well, if she sees a *White* kid raise their [his/her] hand and a *Black* kid raise their [his/her] hand at the same time, she will *normally* go to the *White* kid first. And, then *keep going* to the *White* kids 'til none of them got the answers. And, *then* she would go to *us last*. She would make the *Black* kids go last at *everything*.

When tensions on the bus broke out into serious fighting, the buses were segregated

with African Americans and Hispanics on one bus and White students on another bus. A camera was placed on the bus with African Americans and Hispanics to monitor behavior. There was no camera on the bus with White students. All of these instances are examples of discrimination.

Physical attack is one of the more extreme forms of prejudice and is most likely to occur under tense or stressful conditions. The students who attended Rocky Creek experienced a great deal of physical attack. They were harassed and physically attacked on the bus, in the classroom, on the playground, and throughout the school building. Students told of many fights and the constant harassing which often resulted in fights.

They would try to *fight* with me. They would just start calling me names, and I would just be like [say] "Leave me alone!" and also they would just start *pushing* on me and so I would have to *lay them down* [beat them up] because that's *not cool*. (Charles)

It got *harder* when we went to the bathroom and all when another class was out because the kids [pause] tried to like beat you up in the bathroom. And, then sometimes up in the library [pause] when you had to go to look up information, they'd be like kids standing *all around* you and then they would try to *kick* you and stuff. (Lamont)

Its like, like a *war*. Yeah. It was like Hispanics and Blacks and Whites. It was the Hispanics and Blacks that were fighting the Whites. *Everyday*. (Lamont)

Extermination is the final stage of prejudice and is the most extreme. It involves the systematic and deliberate destruction of minority groups. Massacre and lynching are examples of extermination that have occurred in this country. None of the students attending Rocky Creek reported any instances of extermination.

The students did experience and witness a high degree of prejudicial behavior at the hands of some White Rocky Creek students and teachers. The continual exposure to prejudice led to high levels of anger. Students were very much aware of the fact that the basis for their discrimination was the color of their skin or their racial group membership. As a result, students expressed intense anger in regard to their experiences at Rocky Creek. To better understand the mechanisms students used to cope with the behavior of their White classmates and teachers, it is helpful to examine the manifestations of the students' anger and how these behaviors compare to Cross' (1996) theory of African American racial identity formation. This theory of racial identity formation is described as the process that

African Americans experience in dealing with prejudice based upon their racial group membership. Table 4.3 presents the behaviors of individuals in each stage of racial identity continuum developed by Cross (1996) and the behaviors of the interviewed students.

Table 4.3
Cross' Racial Identity Formation

Cross Racial identity Formation	Students' Reactions at Rocky Creek
<p>Pre-Encounter</p> <p>Naive about issues of race Places value on social status, etc. instead of race Given little thought to issues of race Sees race as a stigma Loathes other Blacks Eurocentric cultural referent</p>	<p>"People at Rocky Creek, they. . . weren't <i>racial</i> or anything. But sometimes they were calling other people names. Like some others who were <i>really, really dark, dark skin</i>. They would say '<i>charcoal</i>' or something but they wouldn't try to be <i>racist</i>. They were <i>joking around</i>. It was just like a <i>game</i>." (Steven)</p>
<p>Encounter</p> <p>Confusion, alarm, depression Inner directed guilt Rage toward White people Anxiety Determined Extremely motivated Obsessive</p>	<p>"I felt just plain terrible about it. It's like I was thinking [pause]. <i>Why would someone just judge you like this? Just because you're black.</i>" (Jamaal)</p>
<p>Immersion</p> <p>Confrontational Simplistic, glorified, highly romantic image of self Demonization of White people Immerse into African American culture Dedication to African American culture Commitment to personal changes Selflessness Challenge White people Seek revenge on White people</p>	<p>"I would tell people, if they would mess with me I would say, 'If you don't have anything better to do than to mess with me, then you ought to just leave me alone alone because there is no reason to mess with anyone if you have your own stuff down pat.' " (Keesha)</p> <p>"[I] feel really angry. Like I just want to come out and <i>beat</i> them senseless." (Jamaal)</p>

Table 4.3 (Continued)
Cross' Racial Identity Formation

Cross Racial identity Formation	Students' Reactions at Rocky Creek
Emersion	
Leveling off of rage Personal growth Prolonged frustration Regression to Pre-Encounter Fixated	"I just walked away from them. If one of them hits me to the point that I'm mad, we would fight. And, then most of the kids would always ask me, "How come you're not fighting today?" " 'Cause," I tell him, "I'm not like you guys. I'm not ready to fight <i>every</i> day..... <i>every</i> time. I only fight when I <i>have</i> to." (Lamont)
Internalization	
Salience to Blackness Pluralistic Feel calmer At peace with self Confident about being African American Control anger	"We can all get along because we all are gonna end up at the same place. We all are going to end up in middle school or high school. And, most of the time we are going to go through the same experiences of bad games or something like that." (Charles)
Internalization-Commitment	
Proactive self love Acceptance by Black community Pluralistic	Now I know to not expect all these [White] people to know things. They are afraid of what they don't know. (Jamaal)

Statements made by the students were compared to the characteristics listed under each stage of Cross' racial identity formation. Students' statements coincided with each of the five stages of racial identity formation. Some students appeared to move through several stages of the racial identity process arriving with their racial identity intact at internalization. Others appeared to be fixated or vacillated between different stages.

Pre-Encounter

During Pre-Encounter individuals may view issues of race as insignificant. It is not uncommon for African Americans at this stage to deny the existence of racial prejudice and racism. The individual discounts the realities of race by ignoring the existence of race.

Steven was in the Pre-Encounter stage. He denied that the constant name calling by White students at Rocky Creek was racially motivated. Steven also stated that he had never thought of his teachers or classmates in terms of Black and White. Eventually, he came to realize that much of the behavior at Rocky Creek was racially motivated, but he still had difficulty acknowledging the effect on himself. Steven could have possibly moved into the Encounter stage at the end of his experience at Rocky Creek. He identified very closely with the African American culture and stated that due to the culturally differences between White students and himself, he preferred to be around African American students.

Keesha, who also denied being called derogatory names but admitted to witnessing other African American students being called names. She was in Pre-Encounter. Keesha tried to avoid contact with students who were engaged in racial conflict. She stated that she felt everyone should just get along. Keesha also felt that the White students who were harassing minority students could not help themselves because they were not used to being around African Americans.

Encounter

Individuals enter Encounter after having interactions or encounters with members of the dominant culture. Many of these encounters are unpleasant and even painful. Often times individuals are very confused about the treatment they have received from the dominant culture and become very angry.

Each student, with the exception of Steven and Keesha, reported that they would try to ignore the disparaging remarks that some of the White students made towards them during their first weeks at Rocky Creek. They all expressed surprise, frustration, and pain at the way they were being treated, especially when they tried to make friends with their White

classmates. Jamaal told of how many of the African American students would meet at recess to talk about the discrimination they were facing within their classrooms.

Immersion

Immersion is a very dynamic stage where emotions are highly fueled often resulting in the need to defend oneself and one's race and to challenge authority. It is during this stage that individuals may not tolerate prejudice and discrimination and can be very confrontive. Up to this stage, Jamaal, Charles, Steven, Charday, and Lamont tried to ignore the derogatory remarks and the discriminatory treatment they received from some of their classmates and teachers. All of these students admitted that when White students would "set them up" to get in trouble they would confront them verbally. Most of the time this strategy would be effective. But, there would be many times when the verbal bantering would lead to fighting.

Jamaal engaged in a lot of verbal confrontation and fighting with White students. He told of how many of the African American students had decided to resist the expectation to assimilate and to beat up anyone who was treating African American students unkindly. Jamaal described himself as feeling enraged during this time.

Charles insisted that he did not care about the derogatory names he was called. He said that he just ignored it. Yet, he also admitted that he was often confronted by White students and was constantly in fights with these students.

Charday told how she, failing to get the kind of support from her teachers that she felt that she needed, started to take the situation into her own hands. Charday revealed in an informal discussion at school that she was tired of teachers doing nothing when she asked for help, and she had decided that she was not going to let anyone call her names any more. She would ask students to stop, and if they didn't, she would beat them up. According to Charday's teachers at Tacoma, she became very violent at Rocky Creek, verbally abusing students and teachers and continually getting into fights.

For a while, Lamont dealt with his anger by ignoring what other students said to him. He stated that he felt that they were foolish for calling him names and that he would not let it

bother him. Lamont also shared that after some time he was not able to tolerate the harassment and he would engage in verbal confrontation. When he was physically attacked, Lamont would fight back.

Emersion

Emersion is characterized as a time of personal growth. Individuals usually come to the realization that responding to prejudice with violence does not eliminate prejudice. The realization is made that there are several ways to respond to prejudicial treatment. Individuals become empowered as they gain control over their emotions and exercise their prerogative of choosing the best means to respond.

Jamaal's behavior was proof of his arrival to the Emersion stage. He told of how he was able to control his rage and respond to prejudice in more nonviolent ways. He explained: "Now I am in karate, and so I know that there are ways to not resort to violence and just try to calm yourself down."

Lamont also showed evidence of entering Emersion. He believed that he did not have to respond to discriminatory behavior with fighting and preferred to deal with conflicts verbally. Lamont chose to ignore what white students said to him as much as possible. When he could not tolerate the harassment, he would try verbal confrontation. He stated that he would only resort to fighting, if he was unable to avoid it. What was important to Lamont was that he did have a choice of how to respond.

Charles claimed that he preferred to ignore name calling and even walking away, if possible. Charles often chose to be very confrontational with teachers and students. He admitted that many times he had to resort to fighting but only if it was totally unavoidable.

Charday showed no evidence of advancing on to Emersion. She appeared to be arrested in Immersion. Charday felt very strongly about defending herself and did not chose to ignore racial remarks. She would confront individuals, and if they would not cease their behavior, she would beat them up.

Internalization

One of the hallmarks of internalization is that individuals feel at peace with themselves. Individuals in this stage have control over their responses to anger which empowers them (Cross, 1996). Individuals feel very confident and secure about their racial identity during this stage. They are able to handle racial conflict and their anger in a variety of ways without resorting to more violent means.

Jamaal was the only student who showed any evidence of approaching Internalization. He was able to look at the way he handled his anger in the past and realize that it was often very nonproductive. He had developed new strategies for handling racial conflict.

Well, now I feel like [sigh] I'm a *whole new person* basically because now I'm *not* the type that will just come after somebody and try to kill them or something like that. And, I'm also *not* the type that will let any and everything come at me and will just keep laughing if someone says you're a *black cockroach, Negro*, and stuff like that. I just like let it go and try not to let it get to me.

Cross (1996) reminds us that the process of racial identity formation is a continuous process that falls along a continuum. Individuals may move in both directions across the continuum at different rates. All in all, each of the students who were interviewed began in the Pre-Encounter stage and through their experiences with students and teachers at Rocky Creek they entered Encounter. Steven and Keesha appeared to remain in Encounter while the remaining students advanced on to Immersion and Emersion. Jamaal was the only student who presented behaviors that suggested he might be approaching internalization. Using Cross' model provided further understanding into the effects of the experiences of these students in an environment where their reference group membership was not valued by many of their peers.

School Resources

The students were asked to describe the school resources at Rocky Creek Elementary School. School resources included the school building, equipment, books and materials, computers, field trips, and special programs

All of the students in this study described Rocky Creek as a rich school which had better

resources than Tacoma. The school building had large classrooms and a large library that was well stocked with books that were up-to-date and in good condition. Computers were located within the library as well as in the classrooms. All of the computers were fairly new and outfitted with printers. The gymnasium was large and was complemented by a large playground. In addition to having such a large facility, the students reported that it was very clean and well kept.

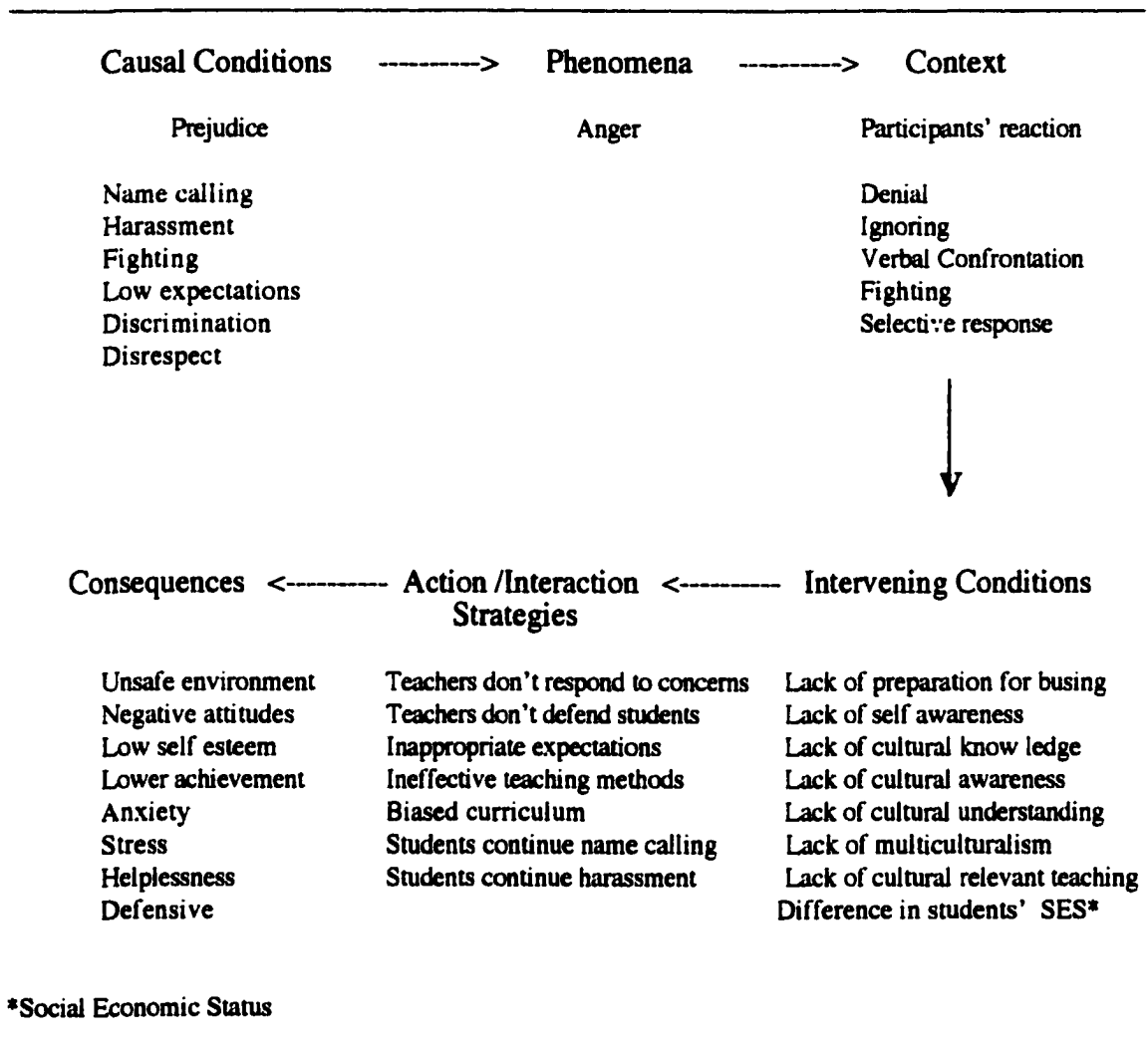
Charles was very impressed with field trips and special programming offered at Rocky Creek. There were frequent field trips throughout the year to a variety of cities. After school there were special classes that were offered at the YMCA that was near the school. Classes would occasionally visit the YMCA and go swimming.

Rocky Creek Experience

Various themes were found in the analysis of data from the students who attended Rocky Creek but all of the themes converged into a central theme of anger. Students were angry about many aspects of their experience at Rocky Creek including the trip to school, classmates, and teachers. Students manifested their anger in various ways depending upon the status of their racial identity. Many variables or intervening conditions (including Rocky Creek teachers' lack of experience with and knowledge of inner-city minority students) effected the way teachers at Rocky Creek interacted with African American students. The consequences of those interactions and strategies resulted in negative outcomes for the African American students.

All of the students who were interviewed agreed that attending Rocky Creek enabled them to obtain knowledge concerning relationships between African Americans and Whites which they may not have gained if they had not attended. A conceptual map of the students' experiences at Rocky Creek is found in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4
Conceptual Map of Students' Experiences at Rocky Creek



The students arrived at Rocky Creek Elementary School and were immediately met faced with prejudice. Many of the White students at Rocky Creek participated in racially derogatory name calling , intimidation, and harassment that often times led to physical fighting. Within their classrooms, students believed some of their teachers held low expectations for them and practiced discriminatory practices in the treatment of African American and White students. The students' perception of these teachers was one of disrespect. The encounters with White students and teachers at Rocky Creek generated

much anger in the students. Students responded to their anger with a variety of behaviors including denial, ignoring, verbal confrontation, physical confrontation, or any combination of these responses. Many factors, such as differences between socioeconomic levels, lack of preparation for busing (as reported by the interviewed teachers and principal at Tacoma), lack of self-awareness, and lack of cultural knowledge and understanding, influenced the way that both White students at Rocky Creek and teachers responded to the anger of the students. The lack of preparation for teaching African American students led teachers to hold inappropriate expectations of African American, use ineffective teaching methods, and to discount the prejudicial behaviors described by students in the study. The outcomes or consequences of these interactions with students were seen in the students' behavior and level of achievement at Rocky Creek.

Summary of Rocky Creek Experience

Each of the students who were interviewed reported experiencing prejudice and discrimination from both White students and teachers at Rocky Creek. The bus ride to school, which was accompanied by the name calling and harassment of some White students, was considered by all to be very stressful. Much of the behavior on the bus was not monitored effectively, culminating in an unsafe environment for the students.

Students felt that the majority of White students from Rocky Creek were prejudiced against African American people. The behaviors described by the students were identified by Allport's (1979) model of prejudicial behaviors as antilocution, avoidance, discrimination, and physical attack. These behaviors occurred on the bus ride to and from school, in the classroom, and throughout the school building.

While each student experienced at least one teacher at Rocky Creek who they considered to be an effective teacher, half of the students were taught by teachers who were considered to be ineffective teachers. According to the students, all of these teachers engaged in behaviors and practices which they considered to be discriminatory.

The students in this study felt a great deal of anger as a result of their experiences at Rocky Creek. The source of their anger came from the prejudice and discrimination they

were forced to deal with throughout the school experience. All of the students acted out their anger with behaviors that correspond to Cross' theory of racial identity formation which describes the process that African Americans experience in dealing with prejudice and racism. Each of the students moved through this process at different rates falling into different stages of identity development.

Rocky Creek was perceived by all the students in this study as a rich school. The school was large, very clean, and well kept. Books, materials, and computers were considered to be much better than those at Tacoma. Classrooms were able to participate in many field trips.

Almost all of the students attending Rocky Creek stated that given a choice of where to go to school, they would choose Tacoma. They felt that the treatment they received from the students and teachers at Rocky Creek was very painful, and they did not want to go through those experiences again. Charles was the only student who chose Rocky Creek instead of Tacoma. He explained that even though the students at Rocky Creek were difficult to deal with, they could not fight very well. He stated that he would rather put up with the prejudice and discrimination at Rocky Creek because he felt their facilities and programs were superior to those at Tacoma.

Tacoma Elementary School

When the Federal Court ruled that the school district had reached unitary status, busing was dismantled. The shift in student population was deeply felt at Tacoma Elementary School. The school had to give up its resource rooms for science and math, and their computer lab to make enough room for the incoming students. All classrooms were overcrowded and Tacoma was in need of additional staff.

Each of students were identified as gifted in the third grade while they were attending Tacoma Elementary School. One of the ways that gifted students were serviced at Tacoma was through a Book Club which met once a week during lunch. The format of the Book Club was similar to Junior Great Books where students engage in a literacy circle where they analyze readings. The books that were selected for the Book Club were *Maizon At Blue Hill* (Woodson, 1993), *The Story of Ruby Bridges* (Disney, 1997), and *Yolanda's*

Genius (Fenner, 1995). These books were chosen because the main characters in each of the books were gifted African American elementary students who lived in the inner city. Each of the main characters was forced to deal with discrimination and prejudice and responded in different ways. Through the use of the selected books and guided discussion, students participated in the process of bibliotherapy.

Trip to School

All of the students were greatly relieved that they did not have to ride a bus to school. Jamaal lived close enough to Tacoma to walk to school. He really liked the fact that he could now attend the school right in his own neighborhood. He enjoyed walking with a few of friends and arriving early so they could play soccer on the playground. Charles, Lamont, and Steven were also close enough to walk to Tacoma. Charles comments.

It's cool to walk to school. I guess because I like to see interesting things happen in the morning walking to school. People, on porches, sleeping, things like that, and like bugs. One day I just saw this really weird bug crawling when I was walking.

These students really enjoyed having free time in the morning to talk to their friends and play football or soccer before class. Charday walked to school with her grandmother. She thought of the walk as special time with her grandmother. Keesha would walk over to her cousin's house. Once there, she would eat breakfasts, get her hair combed, and then walk to school with her cousin.

Summary

Every student interviewed reported they were very happy walking to school instead of riding a bus to school. All of the students, with the exception of Keesha, walked to school with their friends. What the students enjoyed most was being around people who were like themselves racially and who were not prejudiced. Students commented on how nice it was to know almost everybody at the school because they all lived within blocks of each other.

The Learning Environment

The students were asked to describe their classroom and the relationships they had with teachers at Tacoma Elementary School. Students were also asked to describe the racial

demographics of their classrooms and how they felt being part of the majority student population.

Jamaal

Jamaal enjoyed going to Tacoma Elementary School because a lot of teachers at the school knew his brothers, and he knew a lot of the students who were now attending Tacoma. For third grade, he had Miss Lopez whom he described as mixed with Portuguese. According to Jamaal, she was “surprisingly exceptionally nice.” He really enjoyed her class and thought that she was an very good teacher. In fact Jamaal said that, “On a scale of one-ten, with one being the worst and ten being the best, I’d give her a nine.”

Jamaal like many things about the way Miss Lopez taught. If students didn’t understand something, she would help them individually or in small groups until they did understand. Instead of just telling the class what to do, she wrote it on the board. She also used manipulatives, worksheets, and visual aids in teaching. Jamaal felt that his academic needs were being met in Miss Lopez’s classroom. When he demonstrated to her that he understood what she was trying to teach, she would allow him to move on to the next task. Jamaal did well in Miss Lopez’s class. He had an “A” average and was on the principal’s honor roll.

In fourth grade, Jamaal was in Miss Oliver’s classroom. The students in his class were predominantly African American and Hispanic. Miss Oliver was his first African American teacher. He was very comfortable with her because he felt that she would understand him better than any of his other teachers. Jamaal’s face lit up as he rated Miss Oliver a nine on his ten-point scale. He described her as being very nice and very caring. Jamaal was very impressed that Miss Oliver could tell that many of the the students who had attended Rocky Creek were nervous about Tacoma.

Jamaal liked the way that Miss Oliver taught in her classroom. She gave clear directions and would write them on the chalkboard. She would explain and demonstrate how to solve a mathematics problem and continue to demonstrate on the board until she was sure

everyone understood. Miss Oliver would use mathematics problems that all the students could understand. He enjoyed going up to chalk board to work on math problems. He was able to ask Miss Oliver as many questions as he needed, and she never became angry. The books in her room were multicultural and the posters in her room taught the contributions of people of color. Jamaal was very enthusiastic as he told how Miss Oliver would teach the class about the people on the posters.

Jamaal liked the way that Miss Oliver would asses students on what they knew and then place them in ability groups. She would test the students regularly so students could move to higher groups as necessary. Jamaal really enjoyed the way she integrated mathematics with social studies and science with literature. He learned a lot about African American and Hispanic history in her class. Jamaal felt that Miss Oliver was able to challenge him academically. He did very well academically in her classroom and was on the principal's honor roll the entire year.

Miss Oliver had high expectations of all her students. One thing Jamaal said that he learned from Miss Oliver was that it was okay to get a "C." Jamaal said that he would become very disappointed with himself when he got grades on his assignments below an "A" or "B". Miss Oliver taught him that it was okay not to always receive "A's" and "B's" on everything and that he should not be so hard on himself. This impressed Jamaal so much that while delivering a speech at the fifth grade graduation ceremony, he thanked Miss Oliver for teaching him that it is okay to get a "C".

Miss Piper was Jamaal's fifth-grade teacher. He felt comfortable with her at first because his brother had been one of her students. Jamaal described Miss Piper as really nice. He felt that she really understood African American students because "she was used to having kids like African American and Hispanics and she's been here [for a long time]."

At one of the Book Club discussions, Jamaal stated that he felt that he couldn't get an "A" in his class. When asked why he made this statement, he clarified what he meant.

I was talking about Rocky Creek and this year in fifth grade. Now its harder because you've got all this stuff because they moved up grades where it is harder to get straight A's. Like you have to do all the work and you always have to listen to he teacher and do everything that she tells you.

Jamaal was successful in his fifth grade year and received awards for his academic performance.

Charles

Charles third grade teacher was Miss French. Charles shrugs his shoulders as he describes Miss French as okay and a good teacher. He liked the way that she taught.

Charles explained.

She helped us. If we didn't understand, she would break it down to us in, like steps. She would tell us one thing to do and we would practice that a couple of times and then we did that right, then we would move on to the next step. And she taught us really good lesson because I learned really easily.

Even though the lessons were good, Charles did not feel that he was challenged.

In fourth grade, Charles had Miss Oliver. He described her as a really very good teacher. Charles stated that, "fourth grade was a really good grade because [of] Miss Oliver." According to Charles, "she was *educating* us." He explained that, "she just taught us, and if you didn't understand it she would teach you to the point that you did." Charles smiled as he shared how he told Miss Oliver that he didn't really understand three-digit division. Miss Oliver sat him down and taught him how to do three digit division until it was easy for him.

Charles liked Miss Oliver for another reason. Miss Oliver taught him how to control himself. Charles stated that, "She just really kept me where I was disciplined. If I did something wrong, she would let me know that i did something wrong and that I should not do whatever I did the next time."

Miss Piper was Charles fifth grade teacher. He thought Miss Piper was a good teacher. He enjoyed the way she taught and felt that he had learned some new things in her class. The only thing that was difficult for Charles to understand was why he could not talk to his friends if they had finished their writing assignment. He told of an incident where he had finished his work and was talking to Jamaal who had also finished his work. The teacher assistant told him that his work was very good but that he would have to spend lunch inside because he was not on task and was talking. Charles felt that this reasoning made no sense

and was unfair.

When asked if he was challenged at any time at school, Charles sighed and replied that he didn't feel challenged at all and that he needed to learn about more things that he didn't know. Charles felt that he knew everything that his teachers were teaching him.

Steven

Steven was in Miss Lopez's class in third grade. He liked Miss Lopez but, he did not have a lot to say about her. He did feel that Miss Lopez taught him quite a lot. He commented that she taught him advanced material. According to Steven, Miss Lopez met his academic needs.

For fourth-grade, Steven had Miss Oliver as a teacher. When asked what it was like having an African American teacher, Steven fidgeted in his chair and replied, "I really don't think about the colors 'cause like, I really don't care. Everybody's equal, so I never thought about it." Steven did admit that he liked having Miss Oliver because she was younger than all of his other teachers.

Steven felt that Miss Oliver was a very good teacher. He especially enjoyed the game activities. "She would have us play a game. Then, after the game . . . if we lost and if we got mad, she'd say, 'You need to start working on that.' She'd tell us what we needed to start working on through a game. It was fun."

Miss Oliver was very strict. Steven reported that she had high expectations. "She wants us to do our best. If we don't do our best, she will have us come in at lunch and do it again because she knows that we can do better than that. She knows if we've done our best 'cause she knows our quality work and how we work and stuff. "Steven felt that Miss Oliver met his academic needs and provided challenging work for him.

One of the most important thing that Miss Oliver did, according to Steven, was to talk with them about things they were concerned about. Miss Oliver had a suggestion box and students could put concerns or requests in the box throughout the day. Every morning she would check the box and have a discussion based upon what she found in the box. Steven enjoyed these discussions and said that they helped to prepare him for, "what was going to

happen and how its going to be and how we should act and stuff.”

In fifth grade, Steven was in Miss Piper’s class. Jamaal and Steven were also in this class. Steven liked Miss Piper and talked about the similarities between her and Miss Oliver. They both were good teachers. They both had multicultural materials within their classrooms and provided an inclusive curriculum. Miss Piper would have discussions about issues they were concerned about including prejudice.

Steven described Miss Piper as strict but not as strict as Miss Oliver. Miss Piper, like Miss Oliver, expected them to do their best. Steven explained that, “ I get mostly “A’s” when I do my best. So, if I get a “C” or a “B-”, Miss Piper would have me come up at lunch and do again. And, I can do better.”

Steven did very well in third, fourth, and fifth grades. He was on the principal’s honor roll every year at Tacoma. Steven also received many academic performance awards at his fifth grade graduation ceremony.

Charday

Miss Lopez was Charday’s third grade teacher. Charday described her as “okay.” She wasn’t like her former teachers at Rocky Creek. She treated all the students equally regardless of their race. Charday said that, “She taught us well, and I learned stuff that I wouldn’t have learned at Rocky Creek because the teachers didn’t really care about the Blacks’ education.”

For fourth and fifth grades, Charday had the same teacher, Mrs. Cunningham. Mrs. Cunningham was Charday’s first African American teacher. She was very happy to have a teacher who was African American like herself. Charday commented that having an African American teacher made her feel more comfortable. She described fourth and fifth grade as very good. Mrs. Cunningham liked everybody in the class and treated everyone equally. She was also very fair.

Charday liked the way that Mrs. Cunningham taught the class using ability grouping. “She’d put you where you belonged. She’d make sure you were in the math group you belonged to and put you in higher groups that she knows that you can do. I’m in the

highest group.” Mrs. Cunningham would also have students work independently. Charday was able to move ahead of her classmates in most subject areas. She was also given independent projects to do such as reading selected books and discussing them with Mrs. Cunningham, overseeing the school newspaper, and tutoring younger students. Even with all of these activities, Charday did not feel that she was challenged.

In addition to enjoying the way that Mrs. Cunningham taught, she really liked Mrs. Cunningham and grew to be very close to her. Mrs. Cunningham gave all of her students her home phone number so they could call her with questions about homework. The students used it often and many of the students in her classroom, including Charday, would call Mrs. Cunningham to just talk about what they were doing or how they were feeling. Charday had done this on many occasions. She admired Mrs. Cunningham very much because she felt that Mrs. Cunningham “cared about all races.”

One way that Mrs. Cunningham demonstrated how much she cared for everyone was when “she *got up* on her soapbox and told us *how things were*.” Mrs. Cunningham would usually discuss some incident involving youth within the community. She would ask them how they would have handled the same situation. Students would share their opinions about the incident and sometimes even become involved in role playing. Mrs. Cunningham explained that she wanted her students to be prepared for the realities they would have to face in terms of being African American or Hispanic. These “soap box” discussions, according to Charday, taught her very important lessons that will help her in the future. They taught her how to deal with prejudice. She was so impressed with these talks that in her fifth grade graduation speech, she thanked Mrs. Cunningham for getting on her ‘soap box’ and teaching the students about life.

Charday did very well in Mrs. Cunningham’s classroom, making the principal’s honor roll each year. She also did very well on her achievement tests. She received numerous awards for her academic performance at the fifth-grade graduation. Charday confided that she wished Mrs. Cunningham would teach sixth grade at the school that she was going to attend. She even discussed this possibility with Mrs. Cunningham. Mrs. Cunningham had told her that even though it would be difficult next year not having Charday as her student,

she would always have her as a friend and she better continue to call her and keep her informed about how she was doing in school.

Lamont

Lamont had Miss Manning for second grade. He characterized second grade as a good year. He had lots of friends and was very happy to be at Tacoma. Miss Manning could be nice or mean according to Lamont. She would only become mean when students wouldn't do what she asked of them. Lamont spent a lot of time in the office during the second grade because Miss Manning had difficulty handling his activity level. It was difficult for Lamont to sit still and stay on task.

Mrs. Johnson was Lamont's third grade teacher. He really liked Mrs. Johnson's class and felt that he learned a lot. Mrs. Johnson incorporated multiculturalism in many of her lesson plans. He felt that "it was easy in her class because there was only one white kid and three Hispanics." When asked to explain further, Lamont leaned forward, using his hands and said,

Yeah, 'cause we would, like, argue over things. [selecting a flag for the class]. They would want their country's flag, or we would want our country's flag. They want the US flag, too. So, it was kind of hard when we had to pick flags because some groups wanted Canada because there is mainly White people in Canada. The Blacks wanted some of the African flags and the Hispanics wanted the Mexican flag. By the end of the school year, *we all became friends and we all got along perfectly.*

Mrs. Johnson was able to work with Lamont even though he had difficulty staying on task. She would work with him individually as well dividing the students into paired or small groups to work on lessons. In order to meet his special education needs, the special education teacher would come into the classroom and work with Lamont individually or in a small group.

For fourth grade, Lamont had Mrs. Cunningham for a teacher. He's really liked Mrs. Cunningham and felt that she was a very good teacher. Lamont explained that, "She teaches us the steps before she gives us the problems and then she uses example problems." The way that she taught made it easier for Lamont to understand new concepts.

Lamont shared that Mrs. Cunningham really expected him to do his best and she would

“keep on him” to make sure that he did his best. He had a tendency, according to Mrs. Cunningham, to believe that he could not complete any lesson without receiving help of some kind. To help him learn that he could complete assignment without having assistance, she had him work in class on his own from time to time. Lamont left the class each morning to spend time with the special education teacher. While he was away from class, he was expected to complete the work he had missed. Mrs. Cunningham shared that she would have preferred Lamont to receive support from the special education teacher within the classroom so that he would not miss out on the activities in class.

According to Lamont, Mrs. Cunningham could be strict because she would not except anything but your best work. Lamont told how Mrs. Cunningham did not tolerate “goofing around” and would make the whole class stay in for part of their lunch if necessary. If you didn’t finish your work she made you come in at lunch and finish it. If you did not do well on an assignment, she let you do it over. Lamont felt that Mrs. Cunningham had very high expectations, and he would try to meet them.

Lamont sat back and smiled as he shared that his favorite time in Mrs. Cunningham’s classroom was when she would, as Mrs. Cunningham would say, get up on her soap box. During this time, Mrs. Cunningham would discuss incidents that had occurred within the community or city and ask her students how they felt about them. She would try to explain to them the importance of education and taking responsibility for one’s own actions. She would also talk about being proud of being different and how to deal with prejudice. Lamont claimed that what he learned from Mrs. Cunningham getting up on her soap box was just as important as his other subjects.

Keesha

Keesha had Miss Manning in second grade. She felt that Miss Manning could be nice and she could be mean. Miss Manning would get angry with students who were “acting up” and doing things that they were not suppose to be doing. Most of the time Keesha thought that Miss Manning was pretty nice.

Keesha felt that Miss Manning was an “okay” teacher. She did not feel that the work

was appropriate for her because it was very easy. She explained how she would usually finish the work quicker than all of the other students in her classroom. Keesha did not feel academically challenged at all in Miss Manning's class.

In third grade, Keesha had Miss Armstrong. Keesha sat up in her chair and smiled as she said, "In third grade I had a really, really, really good time. My teacher's name was Miss Armstrong, and she was the best teacher that I ever had since Rocky Creek." What made Miss Armstrong such a good teacher was the fact that she challenged Keesha. According Keesha, Miss Armstrong created things. "I told my mom that I wanted to learn my times tables. So, she taught me how to do them. And, then when I got to school, Miss Armstrong taught me an easier way to do times."

For fourth grade, Keesha had Miss Oliver. Keesha beamed with pride as she told how Miss Oliver was the absolute best teacher in the world. Miss Oliver also challenged Keesha academically. Keesha shared: "She helps me learn different things other than what the other kids are learning. Sometimes she teaches it to me early."

Keesha felt that Miss Oliver taught in a way that helped students understand. Miss Oliver would allow students to work in groups, but she would work with any students who seemed to need extra help. She explained.

Sometimes, like when we were subtracting fractions, I didn't get it. I said, "Miss Oliver, I just don't get it." And, she said, "Okay, come sit by me at the round table and we can go over it." And, when we went over it, I knew how to do it. And, the next thing I knew, I was in front of the whole class solving problems on the board.

One of the things Keesha liked about Miss Oliver's room was all the books in which she could read about people like herself. She liked the way that Miss Oliver always taught about different people of color in every subject. Keesha enjoyed the community service projects that Miss Oliver and Mrs. Cunningham had the students participate in, especially helping in the soup kitchen which served homeless people.

Keesha felt that Miss Oliver really cared about all of the students. Miss Oliver taught her students how to be responsible. Keesha proudly explained how everyone sat in small groups in the classroom, and each group had to take care of one Siamese Fighting fish that Miss Oliver place on their group's table. Students had to feed the fish, clean the water, and

take turns taking the fish home for the weekend. This continued throughout the year and was a project that helped to teach them how to be responsible to each other. At the end of the year, all the fish had survived.

Keesha told of how she was very upset one day because she received a "C" on her spelling test. She had never received a "C" before and was so upset that she started to hyperventilate. She asked Miss Oliver if she could go to the office and Miss Oliver took her into the hall, helped her calm down, and told her that it was okay to get a "C". Miss Oliver told her that no one can get "A's" all the time and that she needed to stop being so hard on herself because getting a "C" on an assignment was not the end of the world. The next day, Miss Oliver took Keesha aside and pulled out her college transcripts. Keesha said that Miss Oliver had received a "C" in one or two of her classes. Miss Oliver told her that getting a C did not keep her from becoming a teacher. She told her that if students want to get grades higher than "C's" they need to ask their teacher what they can do to get a better grade. It meant a lot to Keesha to have Miss Oliver share this with her.

Keesha did very well academically the entire time that she attended Tacoma, remaining on the principal's honor roll each semester. She performed so exceptionally well on her achievement tests that she was honored by receiving a medal.

Summary

At Tacoma, students were in classrooms that were predominantly African American. They felt very comfortable because they knew their classmates and had a lot in common with them. Students described the classroom environment as safe because racially derogatory name calling and harassment were not tolerated at Tacoma. Students reported that their academic achievement increased while attending Tacoma and attributed their improvement to teachers that were able to teach them.

Teachers

Throughout the analysis of the interviews about Tacoma, the influence of their teachers was evident. Each of the students reported that all of their classroom teachers at Tacoma

were highly effective. Charles and Lamont stated that they experienced one teacher who they considered to be ineffective.

All of the teachers, ineffective included, provided a safe classroom environment by not tolerating any name calling, intimidation, or harassment. Ineffective teachers were described as lacking the ability to teach. When students were asked to define what they meant by a teacher lacking the ability to teach, they stated that they were teachers who did not know how to present information in a way they could understand. Table 4.5 lists the characteristics of teachers identified by students as ineffective teachers.

Table 4.5
Rank Ordered Characteristics of Ineffective Teachers at Tacoma by Students

-
1. No understanding of African American students
 2. Disrespectful to African American students
 3. Mean
-

Charles and Lamont also complained about the expectations their teachers held for their students. Students were expected to be quiet most of the time and sit still in at their desks. This was very difficult for Charles as he explained that after he finished his work he needed to move around so that he would not become bored. He could not understand why he could not talk to his friends if they all had completed their work. Lamont explained how it was necessary for him to move around a little bit while he was doing his work. They both complained that it was too quiet in their classrooms. They interpreted the refusal of their teachers to accommodate their needs as disrespect.

Ford (1996) suggested that a cultural clash often occurs between the expectations of teachers and the needs of gifted African American students. In a traditional classroom the behavioral expectations for students include conformity, passivity, quietness, and competition and may be inappropriate expectations for culturally diverse students. Della Valles (1984) found that almost half of the African American junior high school students

he observed could not sit still for extended periods of time. He also noticed that they tended to be more socially oriented and extroverted than White students. Boykin (1996) found in his investigation into the cultural assets of African American students that African American students possess a propensity for sensory stimulation, as well as a need for interaction with their environments. He was also found that African American students possessed a need for social interaction.

According to all of the students interviewed, the majority of the teachers they experienced at Tacoma were effective teachers. Table 4.6 lists what students identified as the characteristics of effective teachers.

Table 4.6
Rank Ordered Characteristics of Effective Teachers at Tacoma by Students

-
1. Taught African American students
 2. Fair and equal treatment of all students
 2. Nice
 3. Understood African American culture
 3. High expectations
 3. Culturally relevant teaching methods
 4. Direct teaching
 4. Ability grouping
 4. Cooperative learning
 5. Multicultural curriculum
 5. Differentiated, accelerated, enriched curriculum
 6. Able to communicate
 7. Caring
 7. No tolerance for name calling and harassment
 7. Disciplined classroom
-

Each student identified the same three teachers as having a significant impact on their lives. Of these three teachers, one teacher was White and the other two were African American. All three of these teachers were interviewed in an effort to identify her classroom teaching practices.

Classmates

Jamaal

Jamaal went from a classroom and school where he was one of a few to one where he was definitely the majority. He sighed as he shared that he and his classmates, “ were *really* happy that they were out of there, at least the ones who went to Rocky Creek.” Jamaal smiled when asked how he felt about being the majority in his school. He commented that one good thing about being at Tacoma was that everybody was friendly. Now he could walk down the hallway, and he knew most of the students because they lived in his neighborhood. When he said hello to someone in the hallway, they responded back to him. Another good thing about being in the majority was that “We weren’t *stuck* with all these *white* kids that would *pick* on you and get into fights.”

Jamaal made an interesting observation about some of the students who had previously attended Rocky Creek and were now attending Tacoma. He said that they would walk into the classroom silently. He noticed that they were nervous and very anxious about how they would be treated by the students and the teachers. Jamaal claimed that he did not share the concern of his classmates since he knew that Tacoma would be much better than Rocky Creek.

Charles

When Charles was asked how it felt to go from a school with very few African Americans to one that was predominantly African American, he replied: “That was cool because I made friends with everybody easily because they were just like ‘Hey, you wanna be friends?’ And, we just played together. And I made good enough friends to go to their house and spend the night. Play with them after school.” Charles looked very proud as he announced that he had lots of friends.

Charles went on to explain: “It [being in the majority] felt better because I could just *talk* to somebody. Because most of the them at Rocky Creek, some of them White people [pause] they were acting really *snobbish*. Because I *tried* to make friends with them but

they *didn't* like me." At Tacoma, Charles commented that there were no snobs and that everybody wanted to be his friend.

Steven

When Steven was asked how it felt to go from a school where he was one of a few African Americans to a school where he was in the majority, he fidgeted in his chair and responded "I really never thought about it. I just knew everybody. I liked it because I knew everybody that went there because I lived around everybody that goes there. And, so I see them like every day and then on the weekend." Steven had lots of friends at Tacoma and claimed that he didn't have to make any new friends so, "I could spend my time on other priorities."

There wasn't any name calling at Tacoma. Steven felt that it was because "everyone here is the same color as me so if they say that [name calling] they are saying that about themselves. Everybody's smarter than that". He did state that African American students often kidded around with each other making jokes about each other and their family members. Steven explained:

They say like, "Why are you so black? Like you're as black as all of us." And they are like "You're too black." They'd say that to Jamaal sometimes and like, "Did you mom throw you into the fire and you got so black?" But, Lamont mostly ignored it. They don't say that stuff anymore. That was in third grade and people got over it.

Charday

Charday was asked about her experiences with classmates at Tacoma. She leaned forward raised her head and exclaimed, "It was good! In fact, it was *excellent*, actually! Not having kids *call you names* and having mostly people that you know who won't call you bad names. And your class you know you can get along with." According to Charday, being with African American students made her feel better.

The students at Tacoma were very nice. Charday stated that she was very glad that there was no name calling or fighting at Tacoma. She was very quick to add that if there was any name calling, the teachers would take care of it. But, the name calling that did occur, according to Charday, happened when people got angry at each other and did not involve

racial names. Sometimes there was name calling between students and they would talk about each other or each others' mothers. Charday divulged that this type of name calling was just a way that students played around and showed off.

Charday really liked her friends at Tacoma. She was able to play with them before school, during school, and walk home with them after school. At a Book Club discussion, Charday shared that students at Tacoma *respected* her and that was why she didn't have any problems with anyone. Charday claimed that if somebody did not want to be a friend it was because they didn't like you and *not* because you were African American.

Lamont

Lamont was very happy to attend Tacoma. He said, with a wide grin, that it was *good* going to Tacoma. For one thing, Tacoma was right in the neighborhood and he didn't have to ride the bus to get to school. He referred to the fighting that always occurred on the bus and said, "It's not as *hard* as it was. You don't have to *fight* with anybody." He shared that he felt going to Tacoma was safer than Rocky Creek because if you were hurt, you would be close to home.

Lamont had many friends at Tacoma. Many of them lived near his home. Lamont thought it was nice to go to school early and play football or soccer on the playground. It was even nicer to be able to play with friends after school. At Rocky Creek Lamont was unable to participate in before-school or after-school activities because he had to catch the bus.

There were many fewer fights at Tacoma, according to Lamont. At Tacoma, students would fight over losing a game. Lamont explained that students would call each other names like "chomp and cheater" when they were angry, but they would not make racist remarks or use racially derogatory words.

Keesha

Keesha enjoyed going from a school where she was a minority to one where she was the majority. Her eyes opened wide as she remarked, "I think it's kind of fun to be around the

people who know that I am a good person.” Keesha explained that when she attended Rocky Creek, she was very quiet. She felt that her classmates knew that she was a good person, but according to Keesha, she just did not talk to them very much. Since she started attending Tacoma, she claims “I opened up!” When asked why she was able to open up at Tacoma, Keesha said “Maybe it was because I felt a little bit more at home. Like going out, way, way, way out there [Rocky Creek] is kind of unhome-ish.”

According to Keesha’s teacher, she had become more outgoing and pursued friendships with her classmates. She was very well-liked and appeared to enjoy working with other students. Her teacher felt that Keesha had grown to enjoy working in small groups.

Summary

Tacoma’s student population was predominantly African American. Each student who was interviewed stated that it felt good being part of the majority. They felt that they had so much more in common with their classmates at Tacoma. One thing that was mentioned by all of the students was that they were able to communicate with their classmates, something that was often difficult at Rocky Creek, as there were differences in communication styles and in the language among African American and White students.

All of the students were very emphatic in stating what they enjoyed the most about attending Tacoma was that none of their classmates were calling them derogatory names or harassing them. Some of the students admitted that they occasionally engaged in “playing the dozens” or using “snaps”, but that it was very different from the name calling at Rocky Creek. “Playing the dozens” or “snaps” are all part of African American culture and involve individuals engaging in a type of verbal bantering. The object is to use language in a clever and humorous manner to jest, tease, or insult one another (Haskins & Butts, 1973). According to Kochman (1981), “playing the dozens” serves African Americans well as it tests their abilities to take verbal abuse without resorting to violence. Much of what Keesha disliked hearing on the bus to school after African American students were separated from White students, were students engaged in “playing the dozens.”

Observations of the students in their classrooms and at recess suggested a close,

supportive, familial kind of relationship among them. When given the opportunity to work in groups, they would usually work together, assisting each other. They would often compliment each other on their efforts and performances. When frustrated or angry, the students would reassure and encourage each other. These same kinds of behaviors were observed during the Book Club discussions.

Resources

Every student interviewed agreed that the resources at Tacoma were not as abundant as the resources at Rocky Creek. Tacoma's building was smaller and older. Students commented that the building was not as clean as Rocky Creek's building. The library was small and was stocked with many outdated books.

Jamaal was the only student who felt that Tacoma's resources were just as good as Rocky Creek's resources.

... the classrooms are pretty small, but, it's not what you see on the outside. It's what's on the inside. Like the classrooms may be small but good things come in small packages. Like you can have good friends in small classrooms...

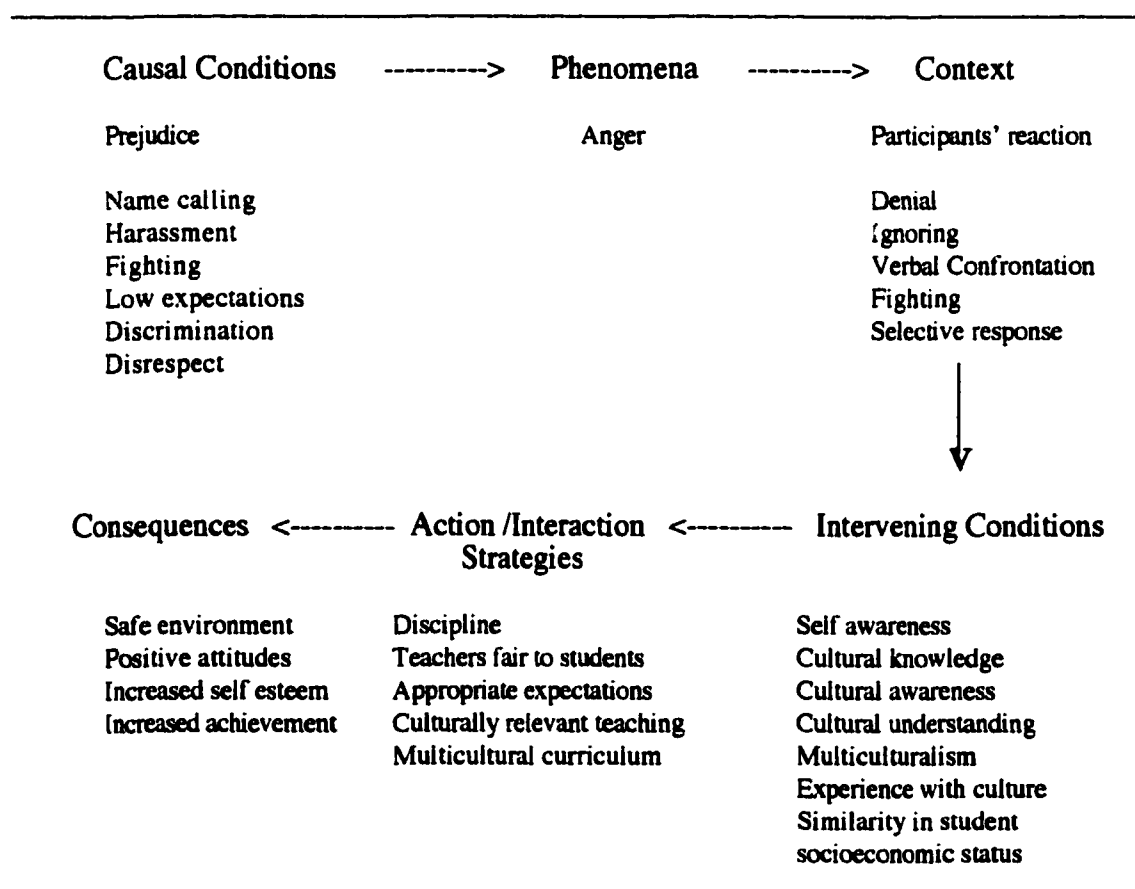
Jamaal acknowledged that Rocky Creek's resources were superior to the resources at Tacoma but that the superior resources at Rocky Creek could not compare to what he found at Tacoma. Tacoma had students and teachers who cared, accepted, and supported minority students. Tacoma provided a safe environment where all students could learn.

Tacoma Experience

Tacoma provided a very different experience for all of the students. The underlying theme of the Tacoma experience was one of the acceptance. Every student was happy attending Tacoma and underwent a transition with their teachers which produced constructive behavior resulting in a reported increase in their self esteem and academic achievement. Many of the students returning to Tacoma continued to feel angry about their treatment at Rocky Creek and were apprehensive about attending Tacoma. They arrived with very negative attitudes and were described as defensive. Teachers did not tolerate

discriminatory behavior in their classrooms. Many of them had prior experience with teaching minority students. Most teachers held high expectations for all students and assisted the students in learning. The curriculum was inclusive and used contextual and multicultural materials. As a result, many of the students, including the students in the study, were able to experience social and academic success. Themes of the Tacoma experience from the students' interviews were incorporated into a concept map and are illustrated in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7
Conceptual Map of Students' Experiences at Tacoma



Students in the study arrived at Tacoma and brought with them the experience from Rocky Creek where they were faced with prejudicial treatment from some of the White students and teachers. These encounters with prejudice created substantial anger within the

students resulting in the expression of that any in a variety of behaviors including denial, ignoring, verbal confrontation, fighting or a selected combination of responses. At Tacoma, many of the teachers had experience in teaching African American and inner-city students possessed and an understanding of the behaviors the students brought from Rocky Creek. Due to their level of cultural knowledge and understanding of minority student populations, most of the teachers provided a disciplined classroom environment where prejudicial behaviors were not tolerated. Teachers held high expectations for the students and using a multicultural curriculum delivered through culturally relevant teaching strategies. The outcome of the actions and interactions of the teachers were seen in the behavior of the students and the level of achievement.

Summary

The students in this study were interviewed about their experiences at Tacoma Elementary School after completing one or two years at Rocky Creek Elementary School. Students reported having a positive experience at Tacoma. They enjoyed walking to school and having their friends from the neighborhood as classmates. Students were pleased being part of the majority population of the school and having classmates with whom they had a lot in common. None of the teachers tolerated racially derogatory name calling or any discriminatory behaviors created a safe environment.

The students described most of the teachers at Tacoma as effective teachers who were able to teach them in ways where they could learn. Students found the discussion that many teachers led concerning prejudice and racism very helpful. They enjoyed the curriculum their teachers provided which was very inclusive and multicultural.

Students reported that they felt better attending Tacoma and were very pleased with their academic achievement. All of the students qualified for and participated in the gifted education program at Tacoma received awards at the end of the year for outstanding academic performance.

Comparison of Rocky Creek Elementary School and Tacoma Elementary School

Students were asked to compare their experiences at Rocky Creek to their experiences at Tacoma. Students compared teachers, classmates, and their overall experiences. They were also asked to discuss what they had learned from their experiences at Rocky Creek and Tacoma. Table 4.8 lists the teachers from Rocky Creek and Tacoma elementary schools.

Table 4.8

Teachers at Rocky Creek Elementary School and Tacoma Elementary School

Rocky Creek Elementary School	Tacoma Elementary School
Mrs. Gutierrez	Miss Lopez
Miss Henderson	Miss Oliver
Miss Turner	Miss Piper
Miss Payo	Miss French
Miss Smith	Mrs. Cunningham
Mr. Martin	Miss Manning
Miss Faubion	Miss Johnson
Miss Warren	Miss Armstrong

Comparison of Teachers at Rocky Creek and Tacoma Elementary Schools

Students were asked to compare teachers at Rocky Creek Elementary School and Tacoma Elementary School and to discuss the similarities and differences between these teachers. Whenever students described a teacher as “good” or “bad”, they were asked to describe the characteristics of a “good” or “bad” teacher.

Jamaal

Jamaal did not enjoy attending Rocky Creek. One aspect of Rocky Creek that troubled him was the way that many teachers treated African American students. According to Jamaal, the teachers at Rocky Creek did not like African American students. He felt that the Rocky Creek teachers did not understand African American students whereas the teachers at Tacoma did understand what it was like being a member of a minority group. Jamaal used Miss Piper as an example to make his point.

She’s [a] much better [teacher] because not only did she know what it was *like*, to be

separated, even though she was *white*, she knew *how it felt* [italics added]. She *understood* and so she *helped* [italics added] us learn how to do our work. And, like she *teaches* us, and she wouldn't just give us a problem and say work it before she even taught us.

Jamaal felt that the teachers at Rocky Creek did not respect African American students. He looked very serious as he explained that teachers would listen to the White students' complaints about minority students in the classroom and dismiss any explanations given by minority students. When African American students would tell the teachers about the treatment they were receiving from some of the White students, the teachers would either not believe them, reprimand the White students by telling them that they shouldn't call people names, or reprimand the African American students for being tattle tales. At Tacoma, teachers did not tolerate any kind of name calling or fighting and would discuss incidents. The school psychologist met with classes regularly to talk about conflict management and building healthy relationships. Jamaal thought that he could tell his teachers about any kind of problems he was having at school.

On several occasions during Book Club discussions, Jamaal announced that he felt he could not earn an "A" in his classes at Rocky Creek. He made the same statement about Miss Piper's class at Tacoma Elementary School. Jamaal sat back in his seat, sighed, and explained,

At first you would try [to get A's] and Miss Gutierrez would give me straight A's. So, I'd been *used* to that. And, then, the other teachers came in like the '*teacher from the black lagoon*' [pause] for all the *African American* kids. And, at Rocky Creek, I figured if *me* and *Charles*, who are the smartest of the African American kids *couldn't* get it [straight "A's"] , there was *no way* all the other African American kids couldn't get it [straight A's]. How are we *suppose* to get it! Since all the teachers, when we *would* do our work [pause, eyes swelled with tears] It would be *just like* back in the '60's where if you got them [your work] *all right*, the teacher would, *for no reason*, just mark it as "F".

Regarding Miss Piper's classroom, Jamaal had a different explanation.

This year in fifth grade, it is harder because you've got all this stuff because they moved up grades. It is harder to get straight "A's." Like you have to do all the work and you can never [pause] You always have to listen to the teacher and do everything that she tells you.

There were differences in the expectations of the teachers at Rocky Creek and Tacoma.

Jamaal felt that teachers at Rocky Creek would not expect African American students to learn in class and would not teach students so they could learn. Then, the teachers would expect African American students to score high on their achievement tests and would become unhappy if they did not do well. Jamaal began to get agitated as he explained that

Rocky Creek they expected you to *never* get anything right or to be the best. This way they could fail you either way. At Tacoma, I figured they meant they *wanted* you to do your best and if you got a zero at the beginning of the year on your tests or something, okay. That's the beginning of the year. Now once it gets to the end it [test performance] will happen way better.

Jamaal commented students did not do well on achievement tests, the teachers at Tacoma would not be unhappy or angry. The teachers would work with students in the area where they performed poorly.

One of the greatest differences between Rocky Creek and Tacoma, in Jamaal's opinion, was the way that teachers would instruct students. Jamaal, discussed one of these differences.

The teaching at Rocky Creek, [pause] they would *claim* that it was *top notch* teaching and everything like that. For the *White kids*, of course, but *not for us* [italics added]. Because we were stuck with, 'Okay, do this problem and this problem and this problem, like five times nine.' And, you're like, 'What's five times nine mean? What's times mean?' At Tacoma the teaching is like, top notch. Because instead of having to do five times nine, since you didn't know it in the beginning, the teacher would say, 'Okay, whoever didn't understand it, raise your hand.' And, if a lot of kids raised their hands and you'd come up onto the floor [sit on the floor] or you'd stay at your desk and she [teacher] would tell you how to do it.

At Tacoma, Jamaal felt that teachers would teach in a way that African American students could learn. Teachers at Tacoma would explain things using language that everyone could understand. Jamaal liked the way that teachers would write instructions on the board. At Rocky Creek, Jamaal admitted that he often did not understand what his teachers meant and would have to try to guess at the meaning. Students could relate to the examples that Tacoma teachers used to illustrate concepts. They would not only give students knowledge by telling them about it, they would have activities where students could touch and feel and experiment with their new knowledge. Jamaal said that Rocky Creek teachers would want students to just watch experiments.

Rocky Creek teachers did not challenge Jamaal but at Tacoma he felt that he was

challenged academically. He felt that much of the work was easy even though he learned a lot of the work on his own because his teachers did not do a very good job of teaching. Jamaal explained how his teachers at Tacoma would allow him to work as fast as he wanted. Many times he was ahead of the class, and his teachers would give him more challenging work. If he already demonstrated that he knew what his teachers were teaching, they would not require him to complete the work. Often times his teachers would let him work on special assignments or independent projects.

At many Book Club discussions, Jamaal spoke about the difference between Rocky Creek and Tacoma in regard to the curriculum. Jamaal stated that he never learned about African American contributions in history, math, science, and literature at Rocky Creek. He expressed how much he loved to learn about African Americans as well as other cultural groups' contributions in all of his subjects at Tacoma. Jamaal also shared how at Rocky Creek, lessons about African American contributions did not always have accurate information. He felt that this was just another example of how the teachers didn't care about or value African American students.

Charles

Charles felt that Rocky Creek was a better academic environment than Tacoma. He thought they had a more academic curriculum than Tacoma. Charles described Rocky Creek as

. . . just a *better* environment 'cause it's like we got to go on lots and lots of field trips and like, have fun. And, when you are suppose to have, like, a free day [at Tacoma], you'll end up doing some work but like when we had a free day at Rocky Creek, it was like, we played with stuff all day.

At Rocky Creek, Jamaal's mother ran a Junior Great Books program. At Tacoma, the Junior Great Books program which the students called Book Club, was modified to include multicultural books with characters and issues that were relevant to the students. Charles enjoyed the Book Club more because he had an opportunity to really discuss what he was feeling and what was on his mind as well as discussing ways to deal with racial issues.

The teachers at Rocky Creek and Tacoma were about the same to Charles. He thought very highly of Miss Turner at Rocky Creek.

It [Rocky Creek] was more academic. But, like Miss Turner. I think she was a better teacher than any second grade teacher in this school [Tacoma]. And, like, she's more compassionate. She takes more time out of the day to speak with us [individually]. And, they all [other teachers at Rocky Creek] expect you to know [everything] and I'm like "You're suppose to be teaching us. You're not suppose to expect them [us] to know [everything] while they are only in second grade."

At Tacoma, Charles thought very highly of Miss Oliver, Mrs. Cunningham, and Miss Piper and described them as being 'really tight' [really great].

Even though Charles believed that the program at Rocky Creek was more academic, he admitted that it did not present any academic challenge for him. In fact, he stated that, in terms of academic challenge, neither school met his needs.

Steven

Steven felt that he learned more at Tacoma than at Rocky Creek. He said that Miss Oliver taught him more than all of his other teachers. She seemed to teach differently from all his other teachers. She made learning fun and used activities such as games to help students learn.

Steven liked the curriculum at Tacoma better than the one at Rocky Creek. At Rocky Creek they celebrated Black History Month. At Tacoma they learned about African American history as well as Mexican history throughout the year. Whatever the subject, they learned about African American contributions.

At Tacoma, since Steven was so ahead of most the students in his classroom, he was able to continue learning instead of having to wait until all the students in the class had caught up to him. He was also able to do research in areas of interest to him. At Rocky Creek, he hadn't even been identified as gifted or bright.

Charday

Charday liked the teachers at Tacoma much more than the teachers at Rocky Creek. She liked having African American and Hispanic students in her classroom. According to Charday, being with teachers who were like herself made her feel very comfortable. She felt that the teachers really understood who she was and what she needed. They were able to

teach her important skills that she would need in life to be successful. Charday said that her teachers really motivated her to work hard and taught her that education was the key to success.

At Tacoma, Charday felt that the teachers were fair to everyone. When students were put into ability groups, they were put in the appropriate group whereas teachers from Rocky Creek would put all the African American students in the low group. Charday became very angry and very frustrated when she was placed in a groupings that were too easy for her.

Charday felt safer at Tacoma than Rocky. Her teachers responded to her concerns and believed her when she would tell them that someone had called her a name. She saw her teachers at Tacoma as her friends. She saw her teachers at Rocky Creek as adversaries.

Lamont

Lamont felt that one of the biggest differences between Rocky Creek and Tacoma was that he could walk to Tacoma and had to ride the bus to Rocky Creek. Riding the bus posed concerns for Lamont about safety. He did not like riding the bus on the highway. He was very concerned about people who were speeding on the highway. Lamont told how when someone missed their bus at school, they had to walk across a busy street and continue for a few blocks until they reached a middle school where they bus would pick them up. At Tacoma, there were no busy streets or highways to cross.

As far as differences between the teachers, Lamont felt that all of the teachers he had at Rocky Creek and at Tacoma were very similar. They were all very good teachers in his opinion with the possible exception of his second grade teacher. They were all very effective in teaching him in a way he could understand by breaking concepts down into steps and helping him move through each step of the process. He believed that all of these teachers really liked him and cared for him. They all included information about African Americans and other cultures in their lessons.

Lamont felt that all of his teachers were fair to students and treated all students the equally. He liked the way Mrs. Cunningham would teach her class about life and how to

deal with prejudice. She also helped them understand how important it was to get an education.

Keesha

Keesha thought that her teacher at Rocky Creek was very good but the other teachers at Rocky Creek were questionable. At Tacoma, she felt her teachers were excellent, especially Miss Oliver who in her opinion, was one of the best teachers in the world along with the physical education teacher. They both really cared about their students and were very fair. Keesha felt that, comparing Tacoma to Rocky Creek, Tacoma had “more grades, more challenging work, more disciplined teachers, more new teachers and, the new teachers were really, really, really nice.”

Summary

All of the students characterized teachers at both Rocky Creek and Tacoma as either effective or ineffective with effective teachers having the qualities of teachers who are culturally competent and use culturally congruent teaching strategies. Students believed that there were more effective teachers at Tacoma than at Rocky Creek. Most of the students rated the teachers from Tacoma as better teachers than those at Rocky Creek. Students voiced pride in their academic achievement at Tacoma and believed that their academic experience at Tacoma was much more positive than at Rocky Creek.

Comparison of Classmates at Rocky Creek and Tacoma Elementary Schools

The students were asked to compare their relationships with classmates at Rocky Creek and Tacoma elementary schools. They were also asked to discuss how they coped with the treatment they received from their classmates.

Jamaal

One of the first books that students read in the Book Club was Maizon At Blue Hill (Woodson, 1993). Maizon was a gifted African American fifth-grade girl who lived with her grandmother in Harlem. Maizon left her grandmother to attend Blue Hill, a private all-

girls school in Connecticut where she was one of five African American students. Maizon faced racial discrimination at Blue Hill which ultimately led her to leave the school. During discussions, Jamaal would compare his experiences at Rocky Creek to Maizon's experiences at Blue Hill. He explained how he would have refused to go to Blue Hill because Maizon was just a token at Blue Hill, just like he was just a token at Rocky Creek, and being a token was very difficult. Jamaal went on to describe how he had to deal with the same kind of discrimination from students at Rocky Creek. "At first I thought it felt kind of good. I thought like 'Yeah, there's not many of us but they will probably treat us better.' And, the next thing I know, after a couple of days, I say 'hello' to one of them and they say, "Get away, you black cockroach!" Jamaal mentioned how on the first day of school some White students from Rocky Creek approached him and told him to go back to where he came from because he was not wanted at Rocky Creek.

At Tacoma it was quite different for Jamaal. He was part of the African American majority. "Its different because if I say 'hello,' they [Tacoma students] will take it as a compliment and say 'hi,' and, later you'll end up getting into a conversation with them if you see them after school or on the playground." Jamaal felt as if he were accepted by his classmates at Tacoma. He did not get into fights over being called derogatory names. Jamaal felt that all the students respected one another. This was very different from Rocky Creek where he felt that very few of the Rocky Creek students respected him. He characterized Rocky Creek students as hostile and prejudiced.

As if it wasn't enough for Jamaal to deal with the Rocky Creek students at school, he also had to deal with them on his soccer team.

Even on my soccer team it was pretty hard being the token because half of them were from Rocky Creek, and they were the same kids that I was getting into fights with [at school]. People would make fun of you, *just* because of the way that you *talk*. Even some kids on my soccer team would make fun of me *just* because I'm *Black*.

When asked how he felt about the treatment of his teammates, his eyes swelled up with tears as he replied, "*Now* it makes me feel really *angry*, like I just want to come out and *beat* them *senseless*. *Now* I've got control over myself and [pause] every single day. I just can't take it any more [so I just imagine] coming after a kid and . . . strangling him."

Jamaal admitted that he really had to put forth great effort into controlling his feelings. He shared how difficult it was, "Now, [that] I am in karate, and so I know that there are ways to not resort to violence and just try to calm yourself down."

Charles

The behavior of many White students at Rocky Creek presented a problem for Charles which he did not have at Tacoma. Charles told of White students greeting them in the hallways and playground during the first week by telling him and other African American students to go back home where they belonged.

It's like 90% of the people at Rocky Creek were White and they were trying to treat all the Black people all cruel. But, some of those people, they weren't really cruel. They were trying to be friends with me and they weren't really cruel.

Charles felt that many of the White students at Rocky Creek were snobs. He told how, "they think that they are better than you because you are black, 'cause most of the time, I might have had a better education than like all of those people."

At Tacoma, making friends was not a problem. In fact, Charles had a large group of admirers who wanted to be his friend. He knew most of the students who attended the school because they lived in his neighborhood. During the first year at Tacoma, Charles admitted that some students were calling him names for a while, but it only lasted for a short while. The teachers at Tacoma did not tolerate name calling.

Steven

One big difference that Steven noticed between Rocky Creek and Tacoma was at Tacoma everybody knew him and he knew everybody but at Rocky Creek he didn't even know the people in his classroom.

I know more people here [at Tacoma]. It is easier to relate to people here than at Rocky Creek because they were mostly White and so they didn't have the same background as you 'cause some of them lived in a nice neighborhood. Some of them lived in a suburban neighborhood. See, down here we grew up in the same neighborhood. It's not ghetto, but you know what is going on down here.

Steven felt that he didn't have much in common with the students at Rocky Creek. Communicating with them was very burdensome at times.

They just had different things to talk about and they just bored you sometimes. But, down here, you can just talk to people that know what you are talking about. But, there, they are like “What, excuse me?” But, down here they know what you are talking about.

It was difficult having to explain what he meant to White students. When asked if he changed the way he communicated with them, he chuckled and replied,

No, I really didn't change. They just learned to know what I was talking about. I really didn't talk *that* ghetto back then. I just talked. Sometimes I would say, “tight” or something and they were like “What's that?” and, so I had different experiences and stuff. But, now people down here [at Tacoma] have the same experiences basically.

Steven thought that the students at Rocky Creek were crazy. According to Steven, “They would draw on their desks. They *wanted* to get in trouble or something].” At Tacoma, students wouldn't think about drawing on their desks because they knew that wasn't acceptable behavior. Students at Tacoma avoided getting into trouble.

Charday

Charday said that while attending Rocky Creek, she felt just like Maizon in the book Maizon at Blue Hill when she went to Blue Hill for school and like Ruby Bridges when she first integrated a White school. She felt as if she didn't fit in. Many of the White students did not treat the African American students kindly. She remembered the first week of school when Rocky Creek students would come up to her and tell her that she did not belong at Rocky Creek and that she should go home. Charday had a lot of difficulty dealing with the name calling and taunting in her second year at Rocky Creek. She had begun to fight with her classmates quite frequently at Rocky Creek as she had decided that she was not going to allow anyone to disrespect her. She had even become disrespectful to her teachers, talking back and calling them names.

At Tacoma, Charday said that she could finally relax. She felt very comfortable being among African Americans and Hispanic people, especially when most of them were from her neighborhood. She no longer had to deal with the racial name calling she faced almost daily at Rocky Creek. She felt that all the students and teachers respected her, and she respected all of them. Charday said that there was no reason to fight anymore. She virtually became a ‘perfect’ student according to her teachers.

Lamont

Lamont had more friends at Tacoma than at Rocky Creek. At Rocky Creek most of his friends were the same friends that he has now at Tacoma. Many of the White students at Rocky Creek called African Americans and Hispanics derogatory names and would often get into fights. Lamont remembered how some White students would come up to him and his African American friends and tell them to go home because they didn't belong at Rocky Creek. At Tacoma, the majority of the few White students that did attend got along with the African Americans and the Hispanics. From time to time, Lamont said that there were instances where a White student would get very angry and call an African American or Hispanic a derogatory name. Usually, these students would be reprimanded by the teachers and the principal as well as beaten up by other students.

Lamont liked the students at Tacoma more than the students at Rocky Creek because he could communicate with them. They all had similar interests and liked to do the same kinds of activities. They even enjoyed each others music, food, television shows, and movies. Lamont shared that at Rocky Creek, most of the White students did listen to the same music and like the same activities. He felt it was much more comfortable at Tacoma than Rocky Creek.

Keesha

Keesha enjoyed attending Tacoma because most of her friends also attended Tacoma. Keesha felt at Rocky Creek, many White students did not seem to want African American students to go to their school. She remembers hearing White students telling African American students to go back to their own school. The White students would call the African American students names and the African American students would call the White students names. Fighting between African American students and White students was frequent. Keesha did not like all of the fighting that was going on but she could understand why some student might want to fight. She even had difficulty handling the name calling from some of the White students.

At Tacoma, it was completely different. According to Keesha, the name calling that

occurred was not racial. Teachers would not tolerate any name calling. Students would not fight as often. Most of the fights that did occur at Tacoma were not racially motivated.

Summary

All of the students in the study stated that their experience with classmates at Tacoma was much more positive than at Rocky Creek. They liked their classmates at Tacoma more than their classmates at Rocky Creek because they had more in common with their classmates at Tacoma who were predominantly African American. Many of the White students at Rocky Creek were prejudiced and treated the students cruelly. While they found it difficult to make friends with White students from Rocky Creek, all of the students did develop some friendships with White students and they found these friendships very rewarding.

Comparison of School Resources at Rocky Creek and Tacoma Elementary Schools

Students were asked to identify and compare the resources at Rocky Creek and Tacoma elementary schools. Resources were defined as the facility, equipment, and special programming.

Jamaal

When comparing the resources at Rocky Creek and Tacoma, Jamaal felt that Rocky Creek was "top notch." Rocky Creek seemed rich to Jamaal because, "the books were up-to-date and basically the books were always like, not torn up. And the gym wasn't really old and it didn't have roaches in there. And, also their cafeteria was much larger."

At Tacoma the books were not in very good repair and were very dated. This difference didn't seem to concern Jamaal.

I still say this school is better because instead of having the up to date books you could have the old fashioned books, so you could be able to read about stuff like things that happened and were happening during the time this book was written. Like, if there was one in here about World War II, it was about what was going on. You couldn't find that at Rocky Creek.

Comparing the size of the classrooms, Jamaal admitted that the classrooms at Rocky

Creek were a lot larger and nicer than those at Tacoma but he insisted that classroom size was no necessarily important.

As you can see, things are okay [at Tacoma] and the classrooms are pretty small, but it's not what you see on the outside. It's what's on the inside. Like the classrooms may be small but good things come in small packages. Like you can have good friends in small classrooms. That just means that you may know less people in there, but that means that you'll get closer to your friends.

Charles

Charles felt that Rocky Creek was a much better school than Tacoma for many reasons. The first reason was that Rocky Creek's school building was bigger than Tacoma's. The second reason was that Rocky Creek's building was 'tighter' [much nicer]. The third reason was that Rocky Creek's building was cleaner. According to Charles, "You would find a bug in this school, some kind of bug that you would not normally find in a school that supposes to be civilized, and like we didn't have that at Rocky Creek."

Charles believed that Rocky Creek had more money than Tacoma because the students were able to go on many field trips. They would visit museums and go to the YMCA to swim. Tacoma only had one or two field trips each year. They never went swimming.

Steven

Steven said that the main difference between Rocky Creek and Tacoma was that the school building at Rocky Creek was bigger than Tacoma's school building. There were more rooms and the rooms were larger at Rocky Creek. The library was larger and had more books than the library at Tacoma. They also had a librarian which is something they did not have at Tacoma. The food tasted better at Rocky Creek and Steven also said that students could get as much food as they wanted.

Charday

Charday remembered Rocky Creek as having a bigger building than Tacoma. The library was better at Rocky Creek because it had more books and a librarian. The cafeteria was larger as was the gymnasium.

Even though Rocky Creek had a better building, Charday felt that it was not a better school. She said that she would rather have a beaten up building and good friends than a fancy building and no friends.

Lamont

Lamont saw lots of differences between Rocky Creek and Tacoma when it came to resources. The classrooms at Rocky Creek were larger than the classrooms at Tacoma. Lamont mentioned that he thought that Rocky Creek had even been remodeled. The library at Rocky Creek was much larger than the library at Tacoma.

According to Lamont, Rocky Creek had a swimming team that would swim at the nearby YMCA. The families of Rocky Creek students raised money for the swim team. Tacoma did not have a swim team and did not have families that could give money to a swim team.

Lamont said that Rocky Creek had new Macintosh computers with color printers that their school community purchased. At Tacoma, the computer lab had to be disassembled so the computer room could be used as a classroom for the influx of students after students returned to their neighborhood schools. According to Lamont, "they [Rocky Creek] just got brand new computers. Not the big ones that we [Tacoma] just got. They got the brand new Apple Macintoshes. And, they already got [had] printers for each computer. Color printers. Tacoma has black and white. Our stuff is used."

Lamont went on to explain,

[Rocky Creek] has more money than we do. At Rocky Creek, every Friday they have a snack bar there. Tacoma doesn't. They only have a school store after school. At Rocky Creek . . . in the gym, you could play tennis. There's a tennis court there and a volleyball [court]. Then, every week, they take you skating and out to the YMCA to go swimming. . . . At Rocky Creek, they have sleep-overs in their auditorium where you got to watch movies.

Keesha

Keesha believed that Rocky Creek was a rich school because the building was so nice. The classrooms, gym, and cafeteria were all larger than Tacoma's rooms. Rocky Creek had lots of books in the library compared to Tacoma's library which did not have as many

books.

The largeness of Rocky Creek did not impress her because some of the students at Rocky Creek were not very friendly. At Tacoma, everything was smaller but the students were so much nicer.

Summary

Each of the students rated the resources at Rocky Creek superior to the resources at Tacoma. They were impressed with Rocky Creek's facility, equipment, and programming. However, all of the students, with the exception of one, stated that while Rocky Creek had better resources, it did not provide a positive experience for them.

The Impact of the Students' Experience at Rocky Creek and Tacoma Elementary School

Each of the students was asked to reflect upon their experience at Rocky Creek and Tacoma elementary schools and to describe what they learned through these experiences. Students were also asked, if given a choice, what school they would attend. Finally, students were asked if they benefited from their experience at Rocky Creek and Tacoma elementary schools.

Jamaal

Jamaal felt that the experiences he encountered at Rocky Creek were very painful for him. If he were able to return to first and second grade and had a choice of which school to attend, he would select Tacoma. He commented that he would pick Tacoma because, "I know what would happen at Rocky Creek, and I would stay here at Tacoma and then it would feel much better." When asked how he felt about himself after both experiences at Rocky Creek and Tacoma, he replied with pride:

Well, now I feel like [sigh] I'm a *whole new person* basically because now I'm *not* the type that will just come after somebody and try to kill them or something like that. And, I'm also *not* the type that will let any and everything come at me and will just keep laughing if someone says your a *black cockroach, Negro*, and stuff like that [italics added]. I just like let it go and try not to let it get to me. But, then there are times, like when people would *literally* criticize me and everything like that. And, then it would make me really angry and I just couldn't hold it in.

The experiences at Rocky Creek and Tacoma had an impact on Jamaal. Responding to how these experiences effected him, Jamaal closed his eyes for a moment, looked up and said

It affected me in a good way because this way, now I know to not expect all these [White] people to know things. They are afraid of what they don't know. And so always keep your guard up when you are going somewhere new.

Jamaal shared at a Book Club discussion that by attending a school like Tacoma, he learned that there were places where you can go to learn and not be judged by the color of your skin. There are places where being different is actually embraced and you are treated like a human being.

Jamaal chose not to apply to any of the programs designed for gifted students for sixth grade. With his academic performance and high achievement scores, Jamaal would have qualified for any of the special programs. Instead, Jamaal chose to attend a middle school in his own neighborhood. The population of the students would be similar to that of Tacoma. He explained that he could not go through what he experienced at Rocky Creek again. A school with a student population that was diverse would be more accepting of him than a school that was predominantly White. Jamaal wanted to go to a school where he felt comfortable and would be among friends.

Charles

When Charles was asked which school he would attend for first and second grade if he had a choice, he emphatically chose Rocky Creek. He felt that Rocky Creek was overall better. Charles thought that Rocky Creek's academic program and Rocky Creek's resources were so much better than Tacoma's. He explained,

It was actually very good at Rocky Creek. But, that whole Black-White thing [pause] it wasn't cool because people really acted stupid. It was not really the badness. When it hit second grade when we were older, people started acting really stupid. But, we really didn't know how to do it in first grade, so it was pretty cool in first grade.

Even though some of the White students from Rocky Creek were prejudiced and many of them discriminated against him, Charles believed that he could live with the prejudice.

I would go to Rocky Creek because most of that mess. I didn't let it offend me because

you try to fight me. Most of them White people, they can't fight. So, it's an easy job to lay them down [beat them up].

Charles was so confident about his choice of Rocky Creek.

Most of the people that you interview are going to tell you the same thing because everybody thinks that its [Rocky Creek] better. Because it is. Minus the fact that people [pause] they are prejudice at Rocky Creek.

When Charles was asked how the experience of being bused to Rocky Creek and returning to Tacoma effected him, he replied with pride.

I am really smart. And, like I am proud of that. And, I 'm a really good athlete and I am proud of that, too. I feel good because I want to represent the Black people really good. Like that is why I am trying to try for excellence [and] be a really smart person to show all White people that *you all* are *not* just the smart ones. *We* can be *smart*, too. *We* can be really successful, *too!*

For middle school, Charles was accepted into many of the magnet programs in the district, but he chose to go to his neighborhood middle school which did not have any magnet programs. When asked how he made his decision, Charles replied:

[the magnet program is] a lot different from Rocky Creek because Rocky Creek was like [pause] people were trying to be prejudice. When I went to La Salle, they gave me a tour at La Salle and I went and everybody was really nice there. Well, its like a pleasant environment. But, I just don't feel *comfortable* around a lot of White people because I'm like, "You all might start to act like snobs and I'm not down for that 'cause *I* don't treat nobody bad intentionally."

Charles confided that he didn't want to go to La Salle because it was predominantly White, and he would have to go through the same experiences he went through at Rocky Creek. Even though his neighborhood school did not have a special program for gifted students, he wanted to go to a school in his neighborhood.

Steven

If Steven could return to first and second grade and chose whether to attend Rocky Creek or Tacoma, he would choose Tacoma. He explained that he would like to go to Tacoma where his memories are better than his memories of Rocky Creek. Tacoma was much more comfortable for Steven than Rocky Creek. He liked going to school in his neighborhood with friends with whom he could communicate.

Steven felt that being bused to Rocky Creek and then returning to Tacoma, his neighborhood school, affected him in a positive way. He believes that he would not have known how White people could be nice and could be very mean if he had not attended Rocky Creek. He felt that the experience has helped in dealing with different situations involving White people.

For sixth grade, Steven was accepted into a magnet program for high achievers and will be attending the school which is predominantly White. He said he wanted to go somewhere where he would be challenged. Steven was not happy about the low numbers of African Americans and Hispanics he saw during his visit, but he felt he will be able to deal with being a minority again.

Charday

Charday, when given a chance to choose between Rocky Creek and Tacoma for first grade, selected Tacoma without hesitation. She did not go into detail as to why she selected Tacoma. She simply lowered her head, looked down at her lap, and said "I like it [Tacoma] better than Rocky Creek. I like Tacoma better than Rocky Creek [pause] because of what happened at Rocky Creek."

Charday feels that from the experience of being bused to Rocky Creek and then attending Tacoma, her neighborhood school, she learned that White people are very prejudiced. She believes that there are some White people who are not prejudiced, but that most of them are. Charday also learned that she would rather be with African Americans and have African American teachers.

For sixth grade, Charday chose not to attend any of the magnet programs that she could have attended. She, instead decided to attend the neighborhood school where most of her friends were attending. She did not want to travel on a bus to another school. Charday stated that she wanted to be challenged, but she wanted to go to a school where there were a good number of African American students.

Lamont

If Lamont could return to first grade and select which school to attend, he would select Tacoma. He was much more comfortable attending Tacoma where he felt welcomed, was part of the majority, and where students did not call him names. He felt safer at Tacoma because it was close to his home.

When asked what lessons were learned from the experience of being bused to Rocky Creek and then returning to his neighborhood school, Lamont sat back thoughtfully, and replied, "Not to fight so much. Nobody at Rocky Creek ever beat me up. They were beating up other kids. They would fight but they wouldn't win." Lamont said that fighting was going on all the time between White students and Hispanics and White students and African Americans. At Tacoma, Lamont admitted there were a few fights but they were seldom based on racial prejudice.

Lamont felt that "at Rocky Creek, it taught me a lot of things. [pause] That's what I learned at Rocky Creek. How to stay calm." Lamont explained that he had to stay calm and control his emotions or he would have been fighting everyday. He tried his best to ignore what students might say or do and was pretty successful. At Tacoma, Lamont felt that he could be himself and say whatever he pleased.

One important lesson Lamont learned from his experience with busing and returning to his neighborhood was that "[Rocky Creek] taught me that all White people are not the same. That everything's not all bad." Although many White students were participating in racist behavior, there were many White students and some White teachers who did not discriminate against them.

The final thing that Lamont learned from this experience was that, "going to a new school. It might seem bad but it is not always bad." Lamont shared that his mother was apprehensive about him attending Tacoma because she witnessed students breaking the windows of the building. Since Lamont has attended Tacoma, his mother feels that the school is a very good.

Lamont will return to Tacoma to complete his fifth-grade year. He is considering applying to some of the magnet programs that are offered. At this time, his plans are to

finish the fifth grade at Tacoma and attend the middle school in his neighborhood. He wants to go to a middle school that will be more diverse than Rocky Creek.

Keesha

When Keesha was asked which school she would attend for first grade if she had a choice, she selected Tacoma immediately. Keesha related her experience at Rocky Creek to those of Ruby Bridges who integrated a school during school desegregation in the South. Keesha felt very alone at Rocky Creek. She went on to explain how Ruby Bridges felt so alone and how she could hear parents saying they were not going to leave their children in school with her kind. When asked if she heard any parents at Rocky Creek or Tacoma say anything similar to that, she raised her eyebrows and answered, "No. I don't want to hear it!" But, Keesha did feel that some people at Rocky Creek felt that way.

Keesha felt that the experience of being bused and then returning to her neighborhood school had a impact on her. "I started to [pause] to be a little bit open. I would tell people, if they would mess with me, I would say, 'If you don't have anything better to do than to mess with me, then you ought to just leave me alone because there is not reason to mess with anyone if you have your own stuff down pat.'" Keesha also took Tae Kwon Do so she could defend herself. Keesha's experience with Rocky Creek taught her that she needed to be more assertive and to defend herself.

Keesha plans to complete fifth grade and then to apply to some of the magnet programs for middle school. She would like to attend a school that is very diverse and not predominantly White. She does not want to have to go through another experience like Rocky Creek.

Summary

Gifted African American fourth- and fifth-graders who were bused to desegregate Rocky Creek and then returned to their home school, Tacoma, were interviewed about their experiences at Rocky Creek and Tacoma. Interview questions focused on the trip to school,

classroom environment, classmates, and school resources. Students were also asked to compare the two school experiences.

Students were very angry about the unkind treatment they received from many of the White students at Rocky Creek. They were also angered by the discriminatory practices of many of the teachers at Rocky Creek. Students dealt with their anger over discrimination and prejudice through denial, ignoring remarks, verbal confrontation, or fighting depending upon the status of their racial identity formation

All of the students were taught by at least one teacher at Rocky Creek who was considered to be effective. Half of the students were taught by at least one teacher at Rocky Creek whom they considered ineffective. Students were able to identify the characteristics of both effective and ineffective teachers.

All of the students were happy to return to their home school, Tacoma. Instead of riding a bus they could walk to school with their family and friends. Student were accepted at school because they knew most of the students as they lived in their neighborhood. They felt they had more in common with the students at Tacoma and were very comfortable. In addition to this, students enjoyed being in the majority where at Rocky Creek they were the minority.

Each of the students in the study felt that while their experience at Rocky Creek was painful and even traumatic. They obtained important knowledge concerning interaction with White people which they may not have learned otherwise. All study students demonstrated resiliency in dealing with the discriminatory and prejudicial behavior of their classmates and teachers. At no time during their experiences at Rocky Creek or Tacoma did they give up believing that they possessed special abilities and that they could succeed. While all of the fifth grade students qualified for specialized magnet programs, all of them refused to participate as the programs were predominantly White and they were fearful of repeating their experience at Rocky Creek.

Tacoma Elementary School Teachers

At Tacoma, classrooms were comprised of multi-aged groupings. Teachers within a grade level would team teach in some subjects. Some teachers looped with their students, having the same students in their classrooms for two consecutive years. As a result, all the students interviewed were in the classrooms of three teachers, Miss Oliver, Miss Piper, and Mrs. Cunningham. These same three teachers were described by all of the students as very effective. Miss Oliver, Miss Piper, and Mrs. Cunningham were interviewed about the participating students. They were also asked about their methods of teaching.

Miss Oliver

Miss Oliver was a young African American teacher who grew up within a middle class environment. She lived in a suburb of the inner city community where Tacoma is located. Miss Oliver started teaching at Tacoma as a substitute teacher the first year that students returned to neighborhood schools. By the middle of that same year, Miss Oliver had been hired in a full-time position helping out in the third grade. Miss Oliver knew all the students for the past three years and was involved with them in many ways. She was involved with the African American community and often saw her students at community events.

When students returned to Tacoma after busing was dismantled, they arrived with very hostile and negative attitudes. Miss Oliver described their behavior as

very rude to one another. Disrespectful. Basically they thought that they could do whatever they wanted to do. Whether that would be to get up and talk whenever I wanted to talk or move here whenever I wanted to move here or say whatever I liked to anyone whenever I got ready to say it. And *attitude*. Some came in sagging, gang talk, bad language, rolling their eyes. [Saying] "I'm gonna slap you down and I'm gonna do this to you." That kind of an attitude.

Miss Oliver knew that she had quite a challenge in front of her. She grinned as she explained how she decided what to do.

After that first day of school, I told myself that we're going to especially work on attitude, self-control because I thought to myself I could give them all of the tools, all the academics that they needed but if they don't have those *essential skills* that they need, it is not going to do them any good. And, they need to learn it now because they only have one year before they go into middle school. So I want to work really really hard with

them on that.

On the first day of the school year, Miss Oliver started out with a discussion. She would discuss what she called “real issues” that were bothering the students. Each day she would open class with these discussions which were usually prompted by suggestions she found in her suggestion box. Students were told that they could put any topic they wanted to talk about in the suggestion box, and Miss Oliver would check it daily. Miss Oliver said that many of those discussion were about racism and civil rights.

They had a very real concern that they were not liked by all races of people and they were making reference to the fact that that they had a black teacher [that they felt], *cared about us*. And, then they went on to make reference to other teachers in the school. And they'd say, “she doesn't care about us.” And, it just seemed [that] they happened to pick out all the teaches who were not of color, not of their own race. That's one thing I tried to work on them with, showing them that those things are going to come up but that they have to learn to deal with them.

Miss Oliver shared a conversation she had with Charles regarding Rocky Creek.

He told me that kids made fun of him because he was dark. And I said to him “There is nothing wrong with being black.” I said, “When you come in here,” I said, “Miss Oliver doesn't see light and dark. I don't see white and black. I see children who need to learn.” And, I said, “We all bleed the same color so I don't see any difference.” And, that kind of worked. It worked last year. And he was one of the main ones that they [Rocky Creek students] called monkey, and gorilla, ape.

A few times the students who had attended Rocky Creek, including Jamaal, Charles, Steven, and Keesha made references to Rocky Creek. Charles would usually beam with pride when he told how he received straight “A's” each year.

Some of them said that they had heard people call them niggers, monkeys, gorillas and that that bothered them. And, it just seemed kind of strange that nine-year-olds could have in-depth knowledge of that kind of vocabulary in that sense or in that context. And, *feel so strongly* about it. They *really, really, really felt strongly* about it. It *bothered* them.

Miss Oliver remembered that so many of them were so angry. She looked very serious as she explained,

I don't know where their *anger* and the *aggression* came from. Yeah [pause] and, even ones that you didn't interview, when I reflect on it, *angry*. [pause] *Angry*. And I don't know where that anger generated from. Even though they spent the year here, I still don't know. But, I don't know where it came from.

And, I guess I was really frustrated at first because I was talking to and *working, working, working*, and it didn't seem to do *any good*. I guess the advice I got

was that it took them four, five years to get that way. How do you expect to change it in one? But, I didn't look for the behavior to change. I guess maybe I did at first, but I wanted it *long term*. I was looking into the future. How are [they] going to be when they graduate from high school and when they interview for college, because that's basically where I was looking. I was looking at the *long term*, and I wanted them to have some kind of *basis or beginning*. I could at least say that, in the class room, if they didn't know how to act appropriately or if they didn't know how to express themselves appropriately, they were taught last year.

Throughout the year, Miss Oliver worked with her students teaching them academics as well as social skills. She became excited as she described the activities she provided her students.

Like I said, a lot of it, wasn't just all academic teaching last year. A lot of it was *personal skills*. *Communication* skills that we worked on. I had them do a lot of reading and writing in front of the class. And, a lot of business-type stuff. . . . we worked with Junior Achievers. Also, I gave them a lot of role models. I tried to bring in as many young African American professional people as possible because I think that its importance for them to see that someone who is just like me, and they are successful.

At the end of that year Miss Oliver was very pleased with her students and she swelled with pride as she shared.

I felt like they had come long way. I wanted to see them with someone who would stay on them that way and expect that from them. Demand it from them. That's what they needed. That was the biggest part of their problem. And, once you can see past that, I think their grades improved. Because once you see past that behavior, that shell that they had on the outside, and you get to the core, they're bright. They were intelligent kids.

Miss Oliver said that she knew Charles, Jamaal, and Steven were very bright from the beginning. From working with them in third grade, she knew enough about them to know that they had difficulty with self control and seemed to have the attitude that they were not capable of doing very much. She decided then that she would focus on helping them develop self control and to help them come to believe that,

they could do anything that they put their minds to. In addition to that, showing them that success comes from within. That grades don't give you success. Hard work gives you success.

Miss Oliver was concerned about Jamaal because he was very hard on himself. Miss Oliver felt that "he needed to learn how to control that so that it didn't interfere with his learning or anything that he was doing." She was also concerned about Charles because Charles was the same way. He had an arrogance about him that was, I mean, if you

walked into a room it's overwhelming. And so one thing we worked on with him is that "Yeah you're smart, but when do we really want to use that charm and when do we want to put it in our backpacks and save it for a little bit later on."

Every student who was interviewed and who had Miss Oliver for a classroom teacher spoke of how she was an excellent teacher and how she made an impact on their lives. Even those students who weren't in her classroom, were influenced. Miss Oliver responded to this information.

Well, I guess at the time they really hadn't had a teacher quite like me [laugh]. So, for some of them it was just kind of a shock and for the rest of them they adapted very well. And, all throughout the year it was, "Oh, Miss Oliver, she's tough" and tough, tough, tough." But, most of the reward came after. They went into the fifth grade and a lot of times they'd come to me and say "Thank you for being hard on me. You know I learned those multiplication facts because you pushed me." So, a lot of it is because of the structure that I offer in my classroom. I believe that there is a time and a place for everything.

Miss Oliver, describing her classroom structure explained,

When I say tough [I mean that] I am fairly young and I was raised "old school" [traditionally] so my philosophy is that school is not just coming and getting academics but, it is also etiquette, manners, affective learning. I mean it all ties into their learning. That starts the first day of school and [I would say to my students], "I expect that when you come in that your homework is done everyday. I expect that you if you have a problem [and] if you are mature enough, come and talk to me. The word shut up is not allowed in the room. No running. And on task. And when we are in the classroom it is not on task twenty minutes, off task ten. You are on task for the whole time that you are in there. When you go out to recess or gym, then that's your time, okay. But, when you are in the classroom, you are on task. When asked to do something I expect for it to be done without back talk or stomping feet. And, when we are in the hallways, I expect it to be silent."

I let them know that from day one. And, there is a time for fun. Everything else is a learning experience. [With] everything I do, I try to keep a teaching point in mind. Right down to love letters in the classroom. I took that and made it into a writing assignment, and we talked about relationships and how we should handle relationships that we have at 9- and 10-year old.

Miss Oliver spoke about building trust in her classroom. She would tell her students that if they did what was asked of them, they would earn her trust. She told them that they could trust her because she would never lie to them. So, if they wanted to really know the truth, they could come and ask her and she would tell them.

I am always going to let you know if you're not doing right But I am also in the same breath going to tell you how wonderful you are if you do exactly what you are supposed to do. Even when you do mess up , you are still a wonderful person. You

made a bad choice and you need to think about how you are going to go back and amend that decision.

As far as privileges, Miss Oliver told her students that you have to earn privileges.

You earn the privilege to do this. You don't earn it, you don't get it. And I think that is the way it is in society. I mean, that's what we are supposed to train them for. To be life long learners. So they may as well start learning now. You do what you are supposed to do, you are rewarded.

Along with expectations, Miss Oliver would give her students rewards.

Well, I'll tell you. . . . they don't get rewards for being good. You should be good anyway. They don't get rewarded for turning in homework. That should be done anyway. You don't get rewarded for turning in class work. That should be done anyway. But, what they are rewarded for are doing exceptional tasks. One big thing [I use] with them was [an] affective learning piece where they were rewarded for apologizing. . . . That's going above and beyond what is needed from you.

Positive reinforcement. For a lot of them, to have a little note from Miss Oliver in their folder was a big deal. You know, saying "I am so proud of you. You know, you've achieved so much this week. Doesn't this feel good? Let's try to keep it up for next week." Sometimes a call home to their parents was a reward and I'll do that. And, I'll call and the parents, "I'm calling because such and such has been doing a wonderful job this week and you need to know that and he needs to be commended for that. "[Students would say] "Miss Oliver...you called my mom!" "Yeah, I sure did." It just depends on the child. You reward them individually rather than collectively because each of them needs something different.

With Jamaal, Miss Oliver would give a hug or a touch. She felt he received a lot of reinforcement at home. She also felt that he was so hard on himself that she would make a point to pull him aside and tell him "you are a wonderful person and its okay if you are not the top one in the class." Miss Oliver felt that people had been telling Jamaal that he was gifted so often that he had come to believe that he had to perform instead of just being himself.

Charles also received a lot of reinforcement at home. Miss Oliver said that what Charles enjoyed as a reward was having free time to draw, write stories, or talk to his friends.

Throughout the year, Charles was unable to earn Fun Friday with the exception of one time. While Charles was very unhappy about missing Fun Friday and would even cry at times, Miss Oliver felt that it was a necessary process for him to learn that he had to do what was expected of him.

Steven enjoyed receiving notes from Miss Oliver. Steven would find a note on his desk from Miss Oliver, look around to see if anyone was looking, and then read the note. Miss Oliver said that a beautiful smile would come upon his face. Then, he would wait for just the right time when she was alone and tell her that he received her note.

Miss Oliver felt that Keesha looked for acceptance from everyone around her and as a result was very, very hard on herself. Miss Oliver would speak with Keesha often, trying to get her to stop putting herself down when she did not get the grade that she wanted. She told of how at the end of the fourth grade, Keesha came up to her and asked, "Miss Oliver, I have a question to ask you. Was I good this year or was I kind of bad this year?" Miss Oliver replied, "You were kind of good this year [laugh]."

All of the students who were interviewed commented that they really enjoyed the way that Miss Oliver had taught them in her classroom. In her classroom, Miss Oliver would work with students individually or have students work in pairs or small groups. Information was first presented to the whole group of students using direct teaching. The presentation of information was given using both standard English and Ebonics. Teachers were often very animated in their presentations. Examples of problems would first be solved working together as a group. Then, Miss Oliver would have students pair up or work in small groupings. If they still needed additional instruction, she would sit with them at a round table and work with them individually until they understood the concept she was teaching.

When Miss Oliver was asked how she felt about the performance of the students who were interviewed, she declared that she was definitely proud of them academically. Most of them were accepted into gifted programs or magnet programs in the district. When she was told that only two students out of the entire group were planning to go to a magnet program, she exclaimed, "I knew it! Because of the conversations that we had last year. The conversations from the first week of school that I just said earlier. I knew that was coming." Miss Oliver said that she knew they would not go into those programs because they were predominantly White and they did not want to go through what they had gone through at Rocky Creek. Although she was very disappointed with the decision of the

students, she admitted that she could understand their desire to be in an environment which they believed as accepting rather than an environment they believed to hostile.

Miss Piper

Miss Piper was a middle-aged White veteran teacher who came from a middle class background. She was considered to be a veteran teacher and had been teaching at Tacoma for several years. For a good part of her career, Miss Piper had been teaching at schools in the inner city. For the past three years she taught in the fifth grade. She was teaching at Tacoma during the time that students were paired with Rocky Creek for busing. She was also teaching the first year that students returned to their neighborhood schools.

One of the nice changes that occurred with the cessation of busing was that more of a community feeling began to evolve at Tacoma. Miss Piper explains,

I think it was hard for the two communities [because they were] totally opposite, [and] not just in terms of Black and White. And, I think coming back to a community feeling where the kids all can go to the neighborhood school, no buses, we all walk to school has given it a different feeling throughout the building that probably filtered in more with [positive] attitude and ownership.

The feeling of ownership among the families at Tacoma took some time to develop as Miss Piper explains.

Rocky Creek parents were very involved and they were probably 90% of our PTA. After the two schools split, we don't even have a PTA now. Rocky Creek ran a lot of that stuff and that made a difference. We had to build that community, initially. We had to really encourage our parents to come back in and say, "This is your neighborhood school now and all the kids are part of this. You need to take this on with your ownership." And, it didn't happen overnight. I mean, we still don't have PTA. But, we do have more parents every year coming in and getting more involved.

Miss Piper felt that she continued to teach in the same manner before and after busing. She had high expectations of all her students. She did not care about the backgrounds of her students in terms of expectations. She assumed that all children could learn and believed that it was her job to help them learn. Miss Piper always assessed students to determine which grouping would be appropriate for each student. She emphasized that student's from Rocky Creek were not the only ones in the high-ability groups. According to Miss Piper,

Some of the Rocky Creek students appeared to be brighter because they did have more

experiences that they brought. You know when you've been to the library, when you've been read a lot a books, it does a lot. So, sometimes we'd find that we had to catch up in those areas with kids that did not have those kinds of opportunities.

Discussions in classroom would be challenging at times. They often required some redirection because,

I think that they overall, and this is a generalization, big time, but,[Rocky Creek] kids had some more experiences [than Tacoma kids]. And, when we had class discussions I was aware of them kind of leading the conversation. I was very much aware [of how] to blend that conversation to include all students' experiences.

The most frustrating obstacle for Miss Piper to contend with was acquiring multicultural materials for her classroom. She discusses her frustration.

I always flooded my room with books. I think I've become more aware since the busing stopped how few books had African American students in them and I have complained at the book stores about it. I became more aware when my class was mostly African American and I couldn't find books that I thought they could relate to rather than the freckle face, smiley kids in the city. I thought, "Where are the books that I need?" That became frustrating to me as far as resources.

I think the kids need to see that there are all kinds [of people] in the world. I think we need to get our publishers aware of that. I think we need to get our writers aware of that and the buyers aware of that.

I found myself in social studies seeking a little bit more, putting Black history into the history component.

As far as classroom management, Miss Piper believed that she followed the same strategies she had used for years. She stated, at first, that she didn't think that she had any more problems now, after busing, than she did during busing.

Maybe [I have] a few more challenges now [pause]. Some of the kids seem very angry to me. And, I hate to say that, just because of different situations they carry more anger but, they do. The kids are aware that things aren't just right now. It seems like I have deeper discussions now than I did [before]. Maybe the kids are just more aware of what's going on.

One of the activities where Miss Piper could see the anger her students carried was in their journal writing. She felt that writing was beneficial for her students because "I think its a good out for the kids because they can make up a story and put all their anger into it and never have to use any of their names or anything else an who is going to know. Their writing is usually very revealing."

Along with journal writing, Miss Piper selected literature with characters who were like her students and would have class discussions where students could voice their feelings. Miss Piper reported that many student, especially those students who were interviewed, would participate fully in the discussions. They usually had very strong reactions to the literature. Miss Piper told of one incident where the class read a book which compared how many Jews were held in bondage to how many African were enslaved.

They have times where *they* have to *struggle*. And, what is sad about it is that what comes out at the end of some of those discussions is that [Miss Piper's eyes swelled with tears] is that that *stuff* still *happens*. *That's* what *bothers* me and *that's* from *them!* Its not me saying, "Gee, do you think that still happens?" Its *them* saying, "It *still* happens."

Miss Piper was asked how she would assess the self-esteem of Jamaal, Steven, and Charles. Her impression was that all of them were doing very well in regard to their academic self-esteem. All three students scored very high on their achievement tests and had received medals for their high scores. She felt they were all very confident with their abilities and very proud of their performances. Miss Piper did have concerns about Charles and what she feels is his facade of "king of the mountain." She suspected that he may not be as confident as he appeared. Charles was very, very defensive and had been a big challenge in the classroom the entire year. He seemed to think that he knew everything that was being taught in class and enjoyed showing off his knowledge in class by interrupting and blurting out answers. He would become defensive when he was reprimanded or corrected.

Miss Piper was concerned about another gifted African American student in her classroom. Kianna was the only student in her classroom who applied to various magnet programs and had not been accepted into any of them. Miss Piper asked her how she was feeling and then explained to her how the process of application into magnet programs is not infallible. She reassured Kianna that she was indeed very bright and that she should not doubt her ability. "Anytime I put the kids out here for something, I hate when they come back and they feel like they weren't worthy. I don't want them to feel like that."

Miss Piper felt very confident that all of her fifth-grade students would be successful in

middle school. She had worked very successfully to make sure that any student who she felt would do well in any of the magnet programs had the opportunity to apply to those programs. Miss Piper even helped parents complete the applications and wrote letters of recommendation. She spent time trying to prepare her students for the transition to middle school through discussions of what to expect, what they should do, and what they should not do. Miss Piper was extremely proud of her students.

Mrs. Cunningham

Mrs. Cunningham was a African American teacher who was in her fourth year of teaching. She grew up and continued to live in an inner city community. Mrs. Cunningham was very active in the African American community and frequently saw her students at community events. She was in her third year of teaching at Tacoma. She had the same students in fourth and fifth grades. Mrs. Cunningham started teaching at Tacoma the year that formerly bused students returned to Tacoma.

Mrs. Cunningham felt that the students from Tacoma who were bused liked going to school in their neighborhood. She remembered how these students discussed how glad they were that they could walk to school and to not have to travel so far on the bus. She recalled,

When they came back, they talked about it [Rocky Creek] all the time. Charday talked about it a lot. She said, "I don't like to catch that bus. I didn't want to go down there." I think it was just the fact that they had to catch the bus and they couldn't go to the school that was in their neighborhood. [Charday said], "I don't want to go all the way down there. That's why I was bad." And I guess, that was their way of saying, "I'm rebelling against this. I gonna show out." Charday said she used to fight; she used to curse. She used to tell teachers to shut up. Fighting. Cussing. Hitting the teacher. Whatever. And [I'd ask], "Why you do that?" [She'd say], "I didn't want to go to that school." Her mom used to have to go up to the school all the time and stuff like that.

At the beginning of the school year, most of the students were very 'antsy.' Charday, along with many of her classmates, were used to being very unruly and disrespectful towards each other. Mrs. Cunningham described the attitudes of the students and how she handled her class and began to laugh.

Yes. [laugh] We came back with some attitudes. They all had these little attitudes. I think

they all come in with that little attitude like, “Hmmm, let’s see what I can try” attitude. Basically, I have to just let them know that I wasn’t having it. Wasn’t doing that in here [laugh]

[I’d say], “I don’t care where you did it before or whatever. You are not going to talk to me any kind of way or say whatever you want. You’re not going to be bouncing and jumping all over the place and running and screaming. I just think that if you set up a discipline policy as far as what you are going to do and what you are not going to do, they know who to mess with [laugh].

When it came to academics, Mrs. Cunningham had very high expectations for her students. She would assess students often and place them in ability groups for reading and math. For those students who did not fit in a grouping, such as Charday, she would provide opportunities for enrichment, acceleration, independent study, and academic compacting.

Multiculturalism was very evident in Mrs. Cunningham’s classroom. She went to great lengths to make sure that contributions from other cultures were in each thematic unit. There was multicultural literature available for her students to read. African American speakers and professionals were provided as role models for students.

Mrs. Cunningham believed in having high expectations for student behavior as well as academic performance. Any student who entered her classroom knew that she expected them to be respectful to everyone. All of the African American teachers at Tacoma worked together and supported each other in disciplining their students. They did not believe that students should be sent to the office unless a student was totally out of control. Discipline was considered to be the responsibility of the teachers. Therefore, when a student in one of their classrooms was having a difficult time, they would be sent to another teacher’s classroom where they would spend time thinking about their behavior and how to improve their behavior. This cooperative discipline strategy proved to be highly effective. Mrs. Cunningham explained, “That ‘s our way of keeping it ...close to home.” Mrs. Cunningham, believed in rewarding her students as a part of disciplining her students. Students received classroom money for high grades on their work and for extra credit work. The money was managed by a banking system that was run by students in the classroom. Every Friday, students would go to the bank and withdraw their money to purchase various items.

For most of her students, Mrs. Cunningham was their first African American teacher.

Most of the students told her how happy they were to have an African American teacher. They would say, "Mrs. Cunningham, we like you because you're not White." According to Mrs. Cunningham, many of the students did not feel that White teachers really understood them and thought that they were not very smart.

Mrs. Cunningham believed that there were differences between White and African American teachers. One difference was in the way that teachers disciplined their students.

Well, I think we treat them almost like their parents treat them if not a little sterner. I think just coming from where we came from, what we had to go through in school. Just letting them know that its not going to fly. And, I think all of us here, we're pretty tough on them. Yeah, because we know how hard it is out here. We want them to know that your education is important. You can't come to school and play. Can't come to school and fight. And, if they were going to be in another [White] teacher's class, [then] nothing will happen [because] they really don't make them work up to their ability or above their ability.

Another thing is that we actually do genuinely care about them. You know, we love them up. We are not afraid to touch them. Be close to them. To let them know somebody cares for them. And I don't think they get that from the other [White] teachers. I really don't. [Getting angry] I honestly don't. They don't get that from the other teachers.

I heard one of them [White teacher] say, "Okay, go sit down. You're not gonna do well on a test because you just don't have it. Well, you know, your mother had you at fifteen. You just don't have it."

One way that Mrs. Cunningham would teach her student the realities of being minorities was by what she referred to as "getting on her soapbox." She recounted this incident.

Get up, come on over here and look out this window and see these people wondering up and down the boulevard aimlessly. So, what do you think they do? Because when they were in school, they wasn't doing their math. They wasn't doing their reading. That's why they up there wandering up and down the street.

She laughed.

I really get up on my soapbox and tell it like it is. A lot of times I used to get mad. "Look, I saw so and so on the news last week and it made me think of you. What would make a kid do that? [Students would answer], "Gee, I don't know. They wasn't in your class."

At the beginning of the school year, Charday's and Lamont's self-esteem seemed to be very low. Mrs. Cunningham was concerned about the way Charday and Lamont behaved as if they had been victimized and were afraid of even trying to complete tasks on their own.

I think for Charday and Lamont, because I know they both went to Rocky Creek, [their]

self-esteem was very [low]. [Charday and Lamont] have that learned helplessness, "Oh, I can't do it. Oh, help me. You don't want to help me." And, I don't know if that came from Rocky Creek or third grade.

Mrs. Cunningham tried various strategies to help Lamont and Charday gain some self-confidence. Describing one effective strategy she said,

It's called independence. A lot of assignments that I had them do in my class I . . . make them do it independently. I'll either teach it whole group, small group, and ask for questions. I'll say, "Do page whatever," just to see if they can do it on their own. "If you have any questions, you can ask me. But, I want you to try it first" . . . I did try to make them feel independent and let them know, "You can do it on your own. You really can."

Concerned about the self-esteem and self-concept of all of her students, Mrs. Cunningham felt that it was very important for her to develop a trusting relationship with her students. Beaming with pride, she explained:

I talked to them a lot. They know that I'm approachable. [I would say], "If you are having a problem at home or if somebody's bothering you, somebody's hurting you or doing something, I want you to know that you can come and tell me because you can trust me. No matter what it is, you can always tell me." And, I would sit down and listen to their little conversations that they would have. It was important to them. They can tell me who they don't like, who they like, who get on their nerves [laugh].

"Call me if you need me." You know, they really did take advantage of that. And, I think for some of them it really helped them.

At the end of the year, Mrs. Cunningham was asked about her students' progress. She felt that academically, her students had done an excellent job, especially Charday. In terms of self-esteem, she swelled with pride as she boasted:

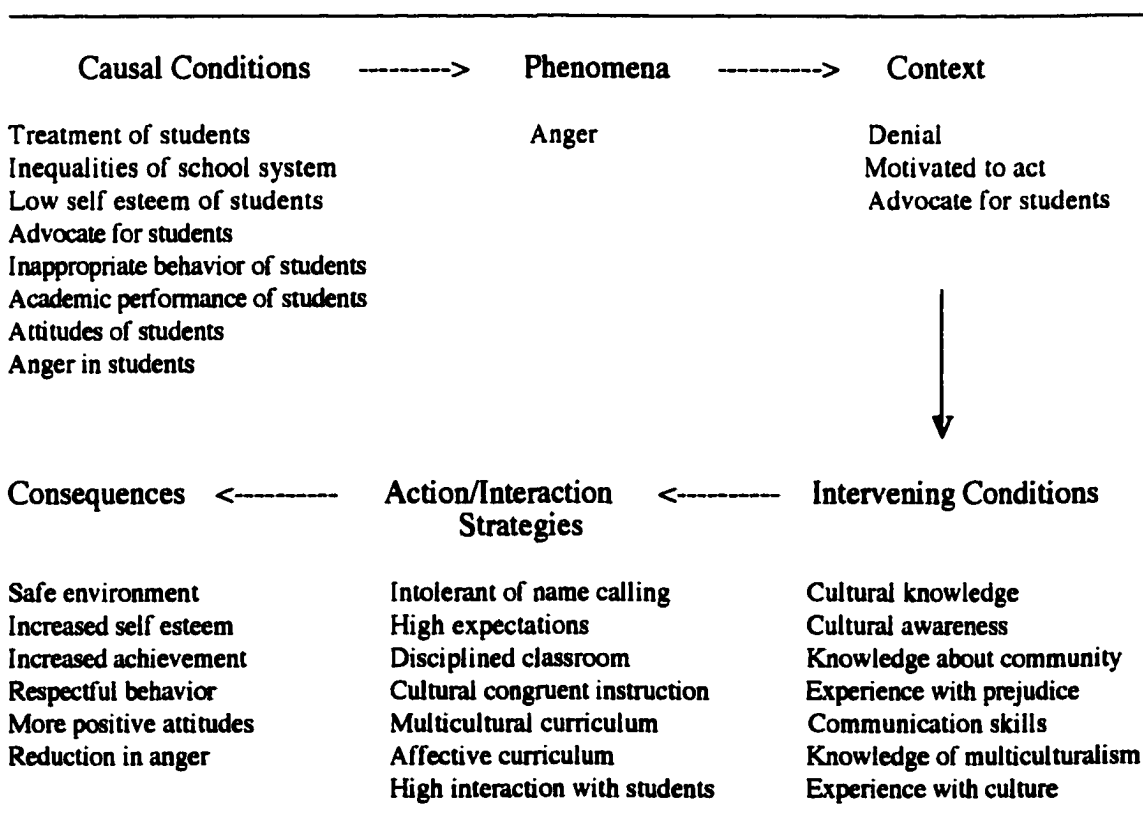
Oh, their attitude has changed 360 degrees. . .they're more confident now. [Charday's] not as helpless as she was which is good because she doesn't do that little baby thing, "help me." Attitude is a lot better. She's looking forward to going to middle school. She's like, "Mrs. Cunningham, I can do it. And you taught me a lot of stuff." They were really confident that they were going to go to middle school and that they *knew* that they were going to be okay.

Teachers' Experience with Resegregation

The central theme that emerged from the interviews with all three teachers was anger. The teachers were angry about many things including the negative attitudes of the students, the poor academic performance of students, the low self-esteem of the students, and the

degree of anger in the students. All three teachers admitted that they did not want to believe that inequalities existed between schools but after listening to their students and observing their behaviors, they believed it to be true. It was at this point that all three teachers chose to make an effort to provide more positive experiences for their students and to contribute what they could toward affecting change. This change could be seen in the interaction strategies they used which provided a safe and supportive classroom environment where students were able to achieve more success. Using the themes that emerged from the data, a conceptual map was created which can be seen in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9
Conceptual Map of Teacher's Experience with Students



Teachers spoke of the realization that disparities existed between Rocky Creek and Tacoma by observing the behavior of the students and by assessing their achievement level. The behavior of the students indicated to the teachers that the students had experience discrimination and prejudice. They also believed that some of the students' former teachers

may have held low expectations. These realities angered the teachers who responded initially with denial, but were then motivated to become advocates for their students. With their knowledge and understanding of cultural differences and their experiences with teaching African American inner-city students, they created a classroom environment for these students where that was disciplined and intolerant of name calling and any prejudicial behaviors. They held high expectations for the students and provided them with a curriculum that was affective and multicultural. These strategies were very effective and were evident in the change of behavior demonstrated by the students and the increased levels of achievement.

Family Involvement

All of the teachers agreed that both students and their families were very happy to have a neighborhood school. There even seemed to be a developing community spirit throughout the school as parents were beginning to become involved in the school. Families were encouraged to become involved in their children's education by all three teachers.

The Behavior of Students

Many of the students that returned to Tacoma were very unruly, including some of the students who were interviewed. The teachers described the students as extremely angry and distrustful. The intensity of their anger was a major concern to all of the teachers. Some students had very negative and defensive attitudes and could be verbally abusive to other students and to some of the teachers. In addition to being angry, the students appeared to suffer from low self-esteem. Many of the students did not believe that they could learn and would not engage in learning activities. Teachers reported that students would actually tell them that they were not capable of learning. It was apparent to Miss Oliver and Mrs. Cunningham that their students needed to learn social skills, and a decision was made to incorporate a more affective curriculum in the classroom.

Miss Piper's first year with these students was difficult, but by the following year she felt more confident in teaching the students. She commented that many students were

confrontational and had great difficulty staying on task. All of the teachers shared the basic belief that all students can learn, and this was reflected in the high expectations that they held for their students. Miss Oliver and Mrs. Cunningham created a community sense within their classrooms by allowing students to develop rules and policies for classroom behavior. They gave respect to their students and demanded respect in return. Discriminatory behavior was not tolerated by any of the teachers.

Curriculum

All of the teachers provided the students with a multicultural curriculum with multicultural materials. Miss Oliver and Mrs. Cunningham, who were active in the community, made arrangements for their students to work in the community. They would also bring in members of their community as role models for the students.

The teachers gave the students lots of support through rewarding them for appropriate behavior and student achievement. Rewards were given in various forms including tokens, play money, special privileges, and notes from their teachers. The teachers encouraged the students to push themselves and would place them in leadership positions whenever possible.

One of the most influential activities the teachers provided for their students was discussing their concerns. All of the teachers would take time to discuss current events with the students encouraging them to share their feelings. Many times the topics dealt with prejudice and racism and Miss Oliver, Miss Piper, and Mrs. Cunningham would take these opportunities to prepare their students for the realities of being an African American in society.

All of the students who were in Miss Oliver's and Mrs. Cunningham's class commented on how pleased they were to have an African American teacher. They shared with their teachers that they felt more comfortable with them. Mrs. Cunningham and Miss Oliver believed that there were differences between White and African American teachers. One difference they saw was in the way that teachers disciplined their students. They felt that African American teachers were much more direct and expected more from their

students than White teachers. African American teachers were not as likely to send their students to the principal's office but worked with problems in within their classroom. In fact, the African American teachers at Tacoma developed a system of support between themselves for handling unruly students. They believed that African American teachers nurtured African American students more than White teachers.

All three teachers were very pleased and proud of the performance of their students. They all agreed that their students had developed much better social skills and study habits. The teachers were very proud of the fifth grade students who were interviewed as they all qualified for accelerated magnet programs. Miss Piper was disillusioned by the decisions of the students not to attend any of the magnet programs. Miss Oliver and Mrs. Cunningham were saddened but not surprised about the students' decisions. They admitted that they knew that these students would not want to go through another experience like the one they experienced at Rocky Creek.

Summary

Three teachers from Tacoma Elementary School were interviewed about their experiences with the resegregation of students from Rocky Creek Elementary School. They were also asked to describe their education philosophies, classroom management strategies, and classroom curriculum.

All three teachers expressed anguish over the low achievement level and low self-esteem of the students. Students from Rocky Creek entered Tacoma below grade level on the district achievement tests (Iowa Tests of Basic Skills). Within their classrooms they provided a safe environment for the students where they were held to high expectations for behavior and academic achievement. All of the teachers used an affective, multicultural curriculum and multicultural materials. The teachers reported that student achievement test scores significantly increased after a year at Tacoma.

Culturally Competent Teachers

In addition to interviews, observations were made of each teacher in their classroom. All three teachers were found to display the characteristics of what Ford (1996) identifies as culturally competent teachers.

Sullivan (1974) stated that in order to for teachers to provide an effective education for culturally diverse students, it is necessary that they demonstrate knowledge of the history of minority populations, societal racism, language, affirmation of minority students, multicultural education, and the role of community and family. Ford (1996) defines cultural competent educators as those teacher with the following characteristics:

1. self-awareness and self-understanding regarding their biases, assumptions, and stereotypes;
2. cultural awareness and understanding;
3. social responsiveness and responsibility; and
4. appropriate techniques and strategies.

Self-awareness and self-understanding

Teachers who possess self-awareness and self-understanding are aware of themselves as cultural beings. Being knowledgeable about their own cultural heritage, they are also aware of the influences of their culture and/or the dominant culture on teaching. They are comfortable with the differences between themselves and their students.

Miss Oliver and Mrs. Cunningham were both African American and were very involved in the African American community. They both were motivated to teach inner city minority populations because they believed education was one of the urgent needs within the African American community. In addition this, they both felt a responsibility to contribute to their African American communities.

Miss Piper, who was White, had taught in inner city schools with minority populations for some years, by choice. She was also concerned about the failure of education in serving underprivileged students. In addition to a passion for teaching, Miss Piper felt a responsibility for working with students less fortunate than herself.

Cultural Awareness and Understanding

Once aware of their own negative reactions toward students of other cultures, culturally competent teachers seek to become non judgmental. They have an understanding of how cultural differences and conflicts influence and affect their teaching and their students' learning. They provide an inclusive curriculum which addresses issues of inequality. These teachers confront injustices within their classrooms and their schools and are often involved in their communities as advocates for students.

Culturally competent teachers develop meaningful relationships with their students. They often extend their relationships beyond the classroom. Teachers also reach out to include the students' families in the education process.

All three teachers demonstrated an understanding of the cultural differences of their students.

I think its hard for two communities, totally opposite, [and] not necessarily different just in terms of Black and White. Some of the Rocky Creek students appeared to be brighter because they did have more experiences that they brought. You know when you've been to the library, when you've been read a lot a books, it does a lot.

Miss Piper

You know, because I think just coming from where we came from, what we had to go through in school, and I think all of us here, we're pretty tough on them. Yeah, because we know how hard it is out here. We want them to know that your education is important.

Mrs. Cunningham

Teachers made an effort to make family members feel welcome and encouraged them to become involved.

We had to build that community, I think initially. We had to really encourage our parents to come back, "This is your your neighborhood school now and all the kids are part of this. You need to take this on with your ownership. And, it didn't happen overnight.

Miss Piper

Sometimes a call home to their parents was a reward and I'll do that. "I'm calling because such and such has been doing a wonderful job this week and you need to know that and he needs to be commended for that."

Miss Oliver

Social issues as well as concerns of the students were discussed in class.

They had a very real concern that they were not liked by all races of people and they were

making reference to the fact that that they had a black teacher [that they felt] *cared* about us. And, then they went on to make reference about other teachers in the school. And, they'd say, "She doesn't care about us." And, it just seemed [that] they happened to pick out all the teachers who were not of color, not of their own race. That's one thing I tried to work with them on, showing them that those things are going to come up but that they have to learn to deal with them.

Miss Oliver

I talked to them a lot. They know that I'm approachable. That they can come [and talk] and it doesn't have to be about school. [I would say], "If you are having a problem at home or if somebody's bothering you, somebody's hurting you or doing something, I want you to know that you can come and tell me because you can trust me. No matter what it is, you can always tell me. Even if you think you can't tell your parents, you

know, you can always tell me." And, I would sit down and listen to their little conversations. It was important to them. But, I allow them to tell me just about anything.

Mrs. Cunningham

Social Responsiveness and Responsibility

Teachers who are culturally competent seek to increase the racial harmony within their classrooms and to decrease the negative beliefs and attitudes of White students toward minority students. They demand respect of individual differences and are intolerant of discriminatory behavior. Regardless of the composition of their classrooms, they provide a multicultural curriculum that is inclusive of all cultures. They have as a goal the development of cultural awareness in their students, encouraging them to become proactive.

The three Tacoma teachers invested a lot of time and energy into teaching appropriate social skills to their students.

After that first day of school I told myself that we're going to especially work on attitude, self control because I could give them all of the tools, all the academics that they need, but if they don't have those *essential skills* that they need, it is not going to do them any good [italics added]. And, they need to learn it now because they only have one year before they go into middle school. So I want to work really really hard with them on that.

I was looking into the future. How are [they] going to be when they graduate from high school and when they interview for college, because that's basically where I was looking at the *long term*. And I wanted them to have some kind of *basis or beginning*. I could at least say that, in the class room, if they didn't know how to act appropriately or if they didn't know how to express themselves appropriately, they were taught last year

Miss Oliver

Each of the teachers provided a multicultural curriculum with many carefully selected multicultural materials.

I don't believe in just learning about Black history in February. We need to learn about the contributions of Blacks and everybody else throughout the year.

Miss Oliver

I always flooded my room with books. I think I've become more aware since the busing stopped how few books had African American students, kids in them, and I have complained at the book stores about it. I became more aware when my class was mostly African American and I couldn't find books that I thought they could relate to rather than the freckle face, smiley kids in the city. I thought, "Where are the books that I need?" That became frustrating to me as far as resources.

I think the kids need to see that there are all kinds [of people] in the world. ... I think we need to get our publishers aware of that. I think we need to get our writers aware of that and the buyers aware of that.

I found myself in social studies seeking a little bit more, putting Black history into the history component.

Miss Piper

Multiculturalism is a part of every lesson I teach. I like to go over to the bookstore and just sit and look through the books there because they do have some good quality books. It doesn't matter what the subject is, I always bring out what contributions African Americans, Hispanics, or whatever have made towards it.

Mrs. Cunningham

Appropriate Techniques and Strategies

Culturally competent teachers have an understanding of the traditional practices of education and how they may conflict with the values of minority students. They are also aware of the institutional barriers that prevent minority students from obtaining an equal education. Teachers who are culturally competent use culturally congruent and culturally relevant teaching methods. The curriculum is modified so that it becomes more cultural sensitive and multicultural. Teachers are willing to engage with students so that they are able to help them in their understanding of content.

Like I said, a lot of it wasn't just all academic teaching last year. A lot of it was *personal* skills. *Communication* skills that we worked on. I had them do a lot of reading and writing in front of the class. And a lot of business-type stuff with Junior Achievers. Also, I gave them a lot of role models. I tried to bring in as many young African American professional people as possible because I think that it's important for them to see someone who is just like me and they are successful.

I let them know that from day one. And, there is a time for fun. ... Everything else is a learning experience. ... [With] everything I do, I try to keep a teaching point in mind.

I would work with students in small groups or individually. I would sit them at the round table or we would get on the floor and I would work with them until they got it. I would

let them go up to the board and work out problems so they could see that they could do it.

Miss Oliver

To better understand the impact of the teaching practices used by these three teachers, a comparison was made between their teaching practices and methods and culturally relevant teaching practices.

Culturally Relevant Teaching

According to Ladson-Billings (1996), cultural congruent teaching refers to the ways in which teachers alter their speech patterns, communication styles, and instructional styles to resemble more closely those of the students' own culture. Culturally relevant teaching refers to methods of teaching that empowers students to grow intellectually, socially, and emotionally by using cultural referents in teaching knowledge and skills. Winfield (1986) states that teachers tend to teach students using an assimilationist style that operates without regard to the cultural characteristics and cultural assets of the student. Culturally relevant teaching is in direct opposition to assimilationist teaching (Ladson-Billings, 1996). Gloria Ladson-Billings observed and interviewed several inner-city elementary teachers who were identified by families and principals as highly effective teachers. All of the teachers demonstrated specific characteristics and teaching practices which came to be called culturally relevant teaching techniques.

Culturally Relevant Teachers Conceptions of Self

Culturally relevant teachers can be characterized by the ways they view themselves and others. They see themselves as part of the community and have a desire to give something back to the community. In an effort to connect their students to the community and to experience helping their communities, Miss Oliver and Mrs. Cunningham arranged for their students to assist in a neighborhood soup kitchen. Students were able to interact with a part of their community of which they were not aware.

Teachers who use culturally relevant teaching practices believe that all students can learn and succeed. All three teachers emphasized repeatedly that they believed all students

could learn. This belief was very evident in the high expectations that they held for their students.

Culturally relevant teaching involves helping students make a connection between their community and the world. All three teachers started each day with a discussion about the events in their communities, the nation, and the world. Discussion about students' concerns was also encouraged. Tables 4.10 present the characteristics of culturally relevant teachers and their conceptions of self, social relations, and knowledge. The teaching practices of the three Tacoma teachers are compared to those used by culturally relevant teachers.

Table 4.10

Culturally Relevant Teachers Conceptions of Self

Culturally Relevant Teacher	Tacoma Teachers
Teacher views self as part of the community; teaching is giving something back to the community	Teacher chose to work in the inner city
Teacher believes all students can learn and succeed.	High expectations of students Encouraged students to experience new challenges
Teacher helps students make connections between their community, nation, world	Students worked in local soup kitchen

Culturally Relevant Teachers Conceptions of Social Relations

Culturally Relevant Teacher	Tacoma Teacher
Teacher-student relationship fluid and equitable.	Students were able to call teachers if they had any problems
Teacher -student relationship extends to interactions beyond the classroom and into the community	Teachers attended student's sports events, activities
Teacher demonstrates a connectedness with all students	Teachers discussed issues and concerns of students and called families to report positive growth
Teacher encourages a "community of learner" in the classroom	Students developed the rules and consequences Students rotated responsibilities in classroom Students cared for fish
Teacher encourages students to learn collaboratively. Students are expected to support each other and be interdependent	Teachers used cooperative learning within and between classrooms

**Table 4.10 (Continued)
Culturally Relevant Teachers Conception of Knowledge**

Culturally Relevant Teacher	Tacoma Teachers
Knowledge is continuously recreated and shared	Teachers approach knowledge from multiple perspectives
Knowledge is viewed critically	Teachers included multicultural curriculum, critical thinking skills
Teacher is passionate about knowledge	Teachers spent considerable time preparing for lessons
Teacher helps students develop necessary skills	Teachers used direct teaching, individual teaching, contextual learning
Teachers see excellence as a complex standard that takes student diversity and individual differences into account	Multicultural education evident

The teachers' description of their education philosophy, instructional methods, classroom management strategies, and curriculum coincided with the characteristics of culturally relevant teachers in the areas of conception of self, conception of social relations, and conception of knowledge.

Summary

Three teachers from Tacoma Elementary School were interviewed about their experiences with resegregation. Teachers reported feeling very angry about the negative and defensive attitudes, lack of social skills, low self-esteem, and academic achievement of the returning Tacoma students. These same teachers were consistently identified by all interviewed students as highly effective teachers who had an impact on their learning experiences. They were interviewed about their educational philosophy, instructional methods, classroom management strategies, and classroom curriculum. All three teachers

displayed characteristics of being culturally competent. The education philosophies of the teachers as well as their instructional methods and classroom management strategies coincided with cultural congruent teaching. Teachers were intolerant of discriminatory behaviors. They used a curriculum that was multicultural and affective utilizing cooperative learning. Opportunities were provided for students to become involved in the community. Members of the community were invited into classrooms as role models and mentors.

Each of the teachers stated that the students that were interviewed entered Tacoma with below-grade level achievement scores but were able to raise their scores significantly enough to qualify for accelerated magnet programs. They were all disappointed with the students' decisions not to attend any of the magnet programs in the district.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this research study was to understand the experiences of gifted African American elementary students who were bused to desegregate Rocky Creek Elementary School, a predominantly White school, and then returned to their neighborhood school, Tacoma Elementary School which was predominantly African American. Gifted African American fourth- and fifth-grade participated in a Book Club which was designed for gifted students and focused on literature about African American gifted students who were integrating White schools. Students who displayed an interest in the discussions about the literature were asked to participate in the research study. Out of a possible ten students, six students were interviewed about their experiences with being bused to integrate Rocky Creek Elementary School and the return to their neighborhood school, Tacoma Elementary School which was predominantly African American.

Students were asked to describe and discuss the trip to and from school, the classroom environment, their interactions with classmates, and the resources at each school. Students were also asked to compare and contrast their experiences at both schools. After comparing their experiences at Rocky Creek and Tacoma, students were asked where they would choose to attend school if they had a choice. In addition to this, students were asked to discuss what they had learned from their experiences at both schools.

Three of the students' teachers at Tacoma elementary school were also interviewed about their experiences when the bused students return to Tacoma Elementary School. They were interviewed about the academic progress of the students, their own education philosophies, instructional methods, and classroom management strategies.

Research Methods

This qualitative research used a case study design. Purposeful sampling was used to identify student participants. Student participants' were interviewed individually at Tacoma Elementary and their interviews were audio and video taped to capture both active and passive communication. Teachers were interviewed individually at Tacoma Elementary, and their interviews were audiotaped. All of the interviews were transcribed verbatim.

Transcripts were analyzed and coded using content analysis. An indigenous typology was developed to assist in the understanding of the students' language and descriptions. Patterns that emerged from the narrative were identified. Transcripts were then coded and analyzed a second time using the qualitative software HyperRESEARCH. Finally, a comparison was made between the emergent patterns of both analyses. A conceptual map was developed describing the experiences of the students at Rocky Creek Elementary utilizing the identified emergent themes and patterns. A second conceptual map was constructed describing the experiences of the students at Tacoma Elementary utilizing emergent themes and patterns. The experiences of the teachers with students returning to Tacoma were illustrated in a third conceptual map.

Review of Findings

All of the students involved in this study experienced considerable anger with their experience in desegregating Rocky Creek Elementary School. The primary cause of their anger was attributed to the hostile environment created by the prejudicial behaviors of many of the White students and some of the teachers at Rocky Creek. These behaviors included White students calling the interviewed students derogatory names as well as continuous intimidation and harassment. Students reported that many incidents of fighting were a direct result of racial discrimination and harassment.

The interviewed students characterized teachers at Rocky Creek as either effective or ineffective. Students stated that teachers who were ineffective did not respond to the prejudicial treatment the bused students were receiving from some of the Rocky Creek students, ignored the concerns of African American students, gave preferential treatment to

White students, excluded African American students from activities, and held low academic expectations of African American students. One major complaint of the students was that these teachers would not teach them and they were convinced that many of the teachers at Rocky Creek Elementary did not care for them. The student believed that these teachers lacked an understanding and appreciation of African American culture.

Those teachers at Rocky Creek Elementary, who were identified by the interviewed students as effective teachers, did not tolerate racially derogatory name calling, addressed prejudicial behaviors effectively, provided a safe environment, and were fair to all students. These teachers held high expectations for African American students and possessed an understanding of African American culture. Students perceived these individuals as caring teachers. The students believed that these teachers were successful in teaching them because they explained concepts in ways the students could understand, used contextual examples for problem solving, and employed cooperative learning. In addition, teachers considered to be effective conducted discussions in the class about life skills, prejudice, and racism.

The students responded to their anger in a variety of ways including the denial of prejudicial behaviors, ignoring prejudicial behavior, confronting prejudicial behavior verbally, physical attack, or any combinations of these. African American students met on the playground during recess and discussed ways of coping with the unsafe and hostile school environment at Rocky Creek Elementary. These behaviors correspond to Cross' stages of racial identity formation which suggests that African American individuals respond differently to racial discrimination and prejudice based upon their level of racial saliency. Additional support for Cross' stages of racial identity came from students' statements, informal discussions with teachers and staff, and observations of these students.

The return of students to their neighborhood school was a very positive experience for all of the students who were interviewed. Students viewed Tacoma Elementary School as a more accepting, nurturing, and safe environment. They enjoyed walking to school instead of riding a bus. Students enjoyed being part of the racial majority and felt they had much more in common with the African American and Hispanic students who attended Tacoma

Elementary school. Students also felt comfortable being among classmates who were part of their own community.

Students identified both effective and ineffective teachers at Tacoma. The ineffective teachers were described as being disrespectful to African American students. They were seen as lacking an understanding and appreciation of the African American culture. Students characterized teachers, who they felt were ineffective, as mean and uncaring.

Students described effective teachers as those who were successful in teaching them. These teachers provided a safe and disciplined environment where there was no tolerance for prejudicial behavior. They used contextual learning, cooperative learning, culturally congruent teaching methods, differentiation of curriculum, and an affective and multicultural curriculum that was inclusive and affirming. Students described teachers who they considered to be effective as having an understanding and appreciation of African American culture. They were considered to be respectful and caring teachers.

All of the interviewed students felt that their experiences at Rocky Creek were very negative and that Tacoma Elementary provided a more positive experience. Every one of the students who were interviewed, with the exception of one student, selected Tacoma Elementary School as the school they would want to attend if given a choice. The single student who preferred to attend Rocky Creek stated that the exceptional resources at Rocky Creek influenced his decision. Resources included the facility, books and materials, computers, field trips, and extra curriculum activities. These differences in resources were very apparent to the other students who were in agreement that Rocky Creek Elementary was superior in resources to Tacoma Elementary. Each interviewed student reported that while their experiences at Rocky Creek Elementary was painful, they did gain important knowledge and an understanding about interactions with White people. Students agreed that even though they believed that many White people were prejudiced and would treat them unfairly, they also believed that some White people were not prejudiced and would treat them with respect and genuinely cared about them.

One impact of the students' experiences with desegregation and integration could be seen in the preferences of the fifth grade students to attend a middle school that was

predominantly African American and Hispanic instead of attending any of the accelerated programs to which they had gained admission. When questioned as to why they did not wish to attend any of the accelerated programs, they replied that even though the accelerated programs would present the kind of challenge they were seeking in an educational program, they did not want to go to a program that was predominantly White for fear of experiencing the prejudice they encountered at Rocky Creek Elementary school.

Three teachers at Tacoma Elementary school were interviewed about their experiences with students returning to Tacoma Elementary after busing was dismantled. Since each of the students were in the classrooms of these three teachers for one or more years, they were questioned about the academic progress of the interviewed students. These teachers were also asked to describe their education philosophy, teaching methods, and class management strategies. Each teacher reported feeling very angry about the academic performance, social skills, inappropriate behaviors, and attitudes of the students returning to Tacoma Elementary. All three teachers were distressed about what they perceived to be inequitable resources between Rocky Creek Elementary and Tacoma Elementary Schools, the treatment students reported receiving from their teachers at Rocky Creek Elementary, and the intensity of anger in the students. The teachers believed that the students' experiences at Rocky Creek Elementary had a negative impact on their self esteem. These conditions motivated all three teachers toward making an effort to change their students' negative attitudes toward teachers and school. They attempted to teach students more positive social skills and provided a safe, disciplined classroom environment with high expectations for behavior and academic performance. Using culturally relevant teaching methods, they provided a multicultural curriculum across all subject areas. Affective learning was integrated into the curriculum. Teachers' relationships with students extended beyond just their classroom. Members from their community were invited into the school to act as role models and mentors, and students were encouraged and provided with opportunities to participate in their community. All three teachers believed that an increase in the self-esteem of most students took place, especially among the students who were interviewed for this study.

In regard to the students' academic performance, all of the teachers were impressed with

the academic progress of the students in this study. Each teacher believed that each of the students had progressed academically, socio-emotionally, and psychologically. Each of the fifth-grade students qualified for academically challenging magnet programs for the following year and received awards for high academic performance from the school district.

Implications for Desegregation Research

The review of the literature in preparation of this case study looked at previous research on school desegregation and its effects on African American students. The basic assumptions for the desegregation of schools, St. John's theory of necessary dimensions for desegregation, and factors that affect student academic achievement were presented. A discussion of this literature in relation to the findings of this research study follows. In addition to this, a brief discussion about the relationship between the findings of this study and resiliency, cultural competency, and racial socialization and racial identity will be presented.

Assumptions about the Desegregation of Schools

The push for the desegregation of schools was based upon the beliefs that predominantly African American schools had lower quality facilities and fewer curriculum choices than White schools due to unfair funding allocations. There was an assumption that as a result of these discrepancies, African American students suffered from lowered self esteem, motivation, and aspirations resulting in lower academic achievement than White students. Other assumptions behind Brown v. Board of Education (1954) included the beliefs that the integration of African American students with White students would raise academic achievement of African American students as they would have the opportunity to experience improved school facilities and high-quality teachers. Students would also have the opportunity to adopt the values of middle class White students and increase their self-esteem . A final assumption was that through contact with African American students, the expectations of White teachers concerning African American students would rise.

The experiences of the students in this study did not support these assumptions. While

students did enjoy a better quality facility with more educational resources, there was no indication that the facilities effected their academic achievement. Also, there was no evidence to support the belief that the teachers at Rocky Creek were of higher quality and more affective than the teachers at Tacoma Elementary although this study was not designed to find this.

All of the students expressed resentment about the attitudes and beliefs of many White students and teachers that middle class values were superior to their own cultural values. They interpreted these attitudes and beliefs as disrespect for their African American culture. There also was no evidence that the students' self-esteem rose while attending Rocky Creek elementary school. Teachers from Tacoma Elementary did report that students returning from Rocky Creek did present attitudes and behaviors that indicated low self-esteem and self-confidence along with below grade-level performance on district achievement tests. These teachers also noted an increase in the students' self-esteem and self-confidence after attending Tacoma Elementary as evidenced by more positive attitudes and higher performance on district achievement tests. There was also no evidence that the presence of African American students for twenty years at Rocky Creek had significantly changed teacher's expectations of Africa American students evidenced by the students' descriptions of the majority of teachers at Rocky Creek elementary as ineffective teachers who did not have high expectations of African American students.

Desegregation Theory

St. John (1978) suggested that the conditions of eight dimensions of school desegregation have to be met in order to achieve success in desegregating a school. These dimensions include: 1) symbolic message and sense of control, 2) borrowed stigma and self-esteem, 3) relative deprivation and morale, 4) peers as reference group and school-relative norms, 5) cross-racial contact and cross-racial attitudes, 6) minority group position and anxiety, 7) cultural marginality and group identity, and 8) comparative reference groups and academic self-concept. None of the eight dimensions were present in this research

study which would mean that busing to desegregate Rocky Creek Elementary School was not effective.

Symbolic Message and Sense of Control

Symbolic interactionist theory (Cooley, 1902; Mead 1943; Thomas, 1918-20) states that individuals attach symbolic meaning to the environment in which they live. St. John (1978) suggested that the segregated school was a symbol of inferiority and unequal treatment to African American children, and the desegregated school represented victory in gaining control of the environment. This was not evident in this study. While most of the students were unaware of the reason they could not attend the school in their own neighborhood, they gave no indication that they believed it was inferior. Students also gave no indication they believed attending a desegregated school was empowering. In fact, the students in this study described feeling very powerless while attending Rocky Creek and empowered while attending Tacoma. When students compared Rocky Creek and Tacoma Elementary Schools, all but one student believed Tacoma was the higher-quality school.

Borrowed Stigma and Sense of Control

St. John (1978) stated that a student's self-worth is measured through the status given to the student by his/her classmates and that a student's status would not be enhanced by attending a low- or high-status school. Rocky Creek Elementary was a high status school, yet the interviewed students experienced low status compared to their White classmates. While Tacoma Elementary would be considered a low-status school, students were placed in high status among their classmates.

Relative Deprivation and Morale

Relative deprivation and morale referred to the perception of one's own deprivation relative to that of another person. It was suggested by St. John (1978) that attending schools that are higher quality than those in one's own community can bring about a feeling of powerlessness. While student who were interviewed were able to recognize that Rocky Creek Elementary had superior resources than Tacoma Elementary, none of the students

indicated feeling powerless because of these differences. All of the students, except one, had a strong preference for attending Tacoma. The one exception was influenced by the resources at Rocky Creek. In addition, it appeared that the students who preferred Tacoma viewed the environment at Tacoma as a resource that far surpassed the resources Rocky Creek Elementary school had to offer.

Peers as Reference Group and School-Relative Norms

St. John (1978) believed that the roles and expectations of significant others had an influence on students. High expectations and respect from classmates and teachers are necessary to prevent anxiety within the school. Students reported that they believed that many of the teachers and White students at Rocky Creek did not respect them and held low expectations of them which contributed to the anxiety they felt attending Rocky Creek Elementary.

Cross-racial contact and cross-racial attitudes

Contact theory suggests that allowing people who are different to interact with each other will lead to reduced prejudice. In order to facilitate this process, St. John (1978) believed that there must be prolonged contact, with equal status and a common pursuit of goals. Allport (1979) supports contact theory stating that in addition to the previously-stated conditions, the support of the administration must be evident. In this study, while the study students had a relatively short length of contact of one to two years, they were part of a system of desegregation that had been in place at Rocky Creek and Tacoma Elementary Schools for twenty years. With the absence of equal status and a common pursuit of goals, contact theory did not appear to be very successful in this study. Equal status among classmates within the classroom must occur for students to adopt the values and norms of a school community. In addition to this, respect and validation of diversity must take place within the classroom. According to the students who were interviewed, none of these conditions were present and as a result, they did not receive equal status.

Minority Group Position and Anxiety

St. John (1978) stated that students will suffer from fear of social threat ranging from rejection to physical harm if they are strangers at the new school and if there are relatively-few racial minorities. The anxiety that can occur often can cause “intellectual impairment.” The conditions that are most favorable for minorities include the presence of a sufficient number of minority students so that the demands of the students won’t be perceived as a threat and so minority students can be protected from social threat. The experiences of the students who were interviewed suggested that the numbers of African Americans attending Rocky Creek were low, with an average of two African American students in each of the students’ classrooms. While students reported supporting each other and working together in dealing with prejudice, they also reported continuous incidents of prejudice including antilocution, discrimination, and physical attack.

Cultural Marginality and Group Identity

St. John (1978) stated that minority students are faced with the challenge of straddling the dominant culture as well as their own culture. She suggested that the cure for marginality is the replacement of the Eurocentric curriculum with an inclusive multicultural curriculum. In addition, a multicultural staff must be hired. The interviewed students reported that while Rocky Creek’s teaching staff did have representation from diverse races, the majority of their teachers did not provide a multicultural curriculum. Students expressed frustration about the lack of validation and support of their African American culture within the school.

Comparative Reference Group and Academic Self-Confidence

St. John (1978) suggested that students who are moved to a different school are faced with proving their competency to the white majority. The pressure of this process can have a negative impact on student self confidence and academic achievement. Many of the students who were interviewed spoke about how taxed they felt trying to prove that they were capable of learning. Upon returning to Tacoma elementary, these same students were

described by their teachers as suffering from low self-confidence and even feelings of hopelessness in regard to their abilities to learn.

In examining the dimensions for desegregation put forth by St. John (1978), this study indicated that none of the recommended dimensions that are a part of successful desegregation programs was present. Further examination revealed that the school district made no effort to ensure that any of these dimensions were present. Teachers at Rocky Creek were not prepared for the population of culturally-diverse and economically-diverse populations of students. There was no training or staff development available to help teachers understand the dynamics of desegregation. Students at Rocky Creek Elementary and Tacoma Elementary were not prepared for the experiences they were to encounter in the process of desegregation. Also, teachers and students were also ill-prepared for the dismantling of desegregation. There were no staff development trainings on what to expect or on effective ways to facilitate the process.

Factors Affecting Academic Achievement

Miller and Carlson (1982) identified factors that affected the achievement of minority students in desegregated schools. These factors included anxiety, classroom dynamics, teacher expectations, early desegregation, and peer group influence. Gerard and Miller (1975) found that the academic performance of African American students was negatively affected by an environment they perceived to be hostile. Alkin (1990) suggested that minority students are harmed by racial prejudice that is present within the classroom and school, resulting in lowered academic achievement. The results of this study support previous research which found that academic achievement in minority students was effected by the classroom and school environment. Each of the students who was interviewed described the classroom and school environment at Rocky Creek Elementary as hostile due to the prejudicial treatment they received from students and teachers. Teachers who were interviewed stated that the students in the study were performing below grade-level on district achievement tests (Iowa Test of Basic Skills) when first entering Tacoma Elementary. Students described the school environment at Tacoma as safe because

prejudicial behaviors were not tolerated. While attending Tacoma Elementary, all of the students scored in the 90th and 95th percentile on the same district achievement test (Iowa Test of Basic Skills). Each of the students qualified for the gifted education program while attending Tacoma by scoring in the 90th and 95th percentile on selected achievement and ability tests used by the district to identify gifted students. All of the fifth-grade students qualified for accelerated magnet programs after attending Tacoma Elementary.

Cook et al. (1984) and Cohen (1982) both found that the verbal dominance of white students caused African American students to take a more subordinate role in the classroom which, in turn, impacted their academic achievement. Students in this study reported that many of their teachers would call on the White students before they would call on African American students. The use of this practice angered the students and who began to feel that their answers were not worthwhile and that these teachers did not like them. As a result, some of the students shared that they no longer tried to complete their assignments or no longer participated in the class. One student confided that her inappropriate behavior was in response to teachers ignoring her.

Miller and Carson (1982) as well as other researchers (Cook et al, 1984; Gerard, Miller, 1975; Taylor & Rickel, 1981) found that African American students who were with teachers who they believed were prejudiced, experienced a decrease in their academic performance. The academic performance of these students when they returned to Tacoma Elementary was reported by teachers at Tacoma to be below grade-level. Most of the interviewed students reported that they were very angry with the treatment they received from their teachers and felt hopeless in terms of learning. Gerard & Miller (1975) found that in classes where students perceived teachers as not being prejudiced, the academic performances of African American students improved. The same results were seen in this study as the interviewed students' achievement scores increased after attending Tacoma where they reported having more teachers who were not prejudiced.

Researchers also found that many of the teachers in majority White classrooms were ill-equipped to deal with African American students. This sentiment was expressed by the students as they described how some of their teachers did not understand their culture. Two

of the African American teachers who were interviewed also believed that many White teachers did not have the knowledge and skill to effectively deal with African American students.

Crain and Mahard (1978) concluded from their research that the earlier the grade level during initial desegregation, the more positive impact there will be on academic achievement. They believed teachers held higher expectations for students in the early grades when differences in achievement are less noticeable and misbehavior not as great a problem. The students in this study were bused in the first grade, and those students with teachers who they believed held high expectations for them admitted they put forth effort into their work. Those students with first grade teachers who they believed held low expectations for them, admitted feeling frustrated and did not put as much effort into their work. These results indicated that more important than the age of the student at the onset of school desegregation was the expectations that teachers hold for African American students.

The influence of peers has been suggested as an important factor in the academic success of African American students (Natriello, McDill, and Pallas, 1990; Patton & Townsend, 1996). The belief of many African American students that academic achievement is "acting white" is referred to as the "achievement paradox" (Ford, 1996; Patton & Townsend, 1996) and can be a major factor in the academic success of gifted African American students. None of the interviewed students showed any indication that they subscribed to the "achievement paradox." In fact, most of the students took pride in sharing their academic successes and held high aspirations. Some of the students reported that knowing that their White classmates believed they lacked intelligence motivated them to work hard to prove how capable they were of learning.

Scott and McPartland's (1982) research suggested that racial attitudes were more positive about future interracial relations as a result of African American students' experiences with integration. The students in this study reported that their experiences with integration left them with knowledge regarding the prejudices of White people and that this knowledge would be beneficial in future interactions with White people. The students stated that if given a choice, they would rather go to schools with African American students because they did

not want to experience the prejudice of White students. The fact that each of the fifth-grade students chose to attend schools that were predominantly African American over accelerated programs which were predominantly White, suggested that the students' racial attitudes were not positive about future interracial interactions and that students had a preference for interactions with students from their own race.

The students in this study, who were of lower socioeconomic status, did experience difficulty adjusting to an integrated school as suggested by St. John (1978). While Katz (1964) suggested that students possessing high ego strength and self confidence demonstrated the highest academic achievement, this was not the case in this study. Each of the students who was interviewed presented characteristics of high ego strength and self-confidence according to their teachers and support staff. However, the achievement test scores of these students, at the beginning of their first year at Tacoma Elementary, indicated that they were performing below grade level. By the end of their first year at Tacoma, each of the students scored at or above grade level on the same achievement tests and were identified as gifted. These scores indicated that while these students were capable of high academic performance, they did not demonstrate high academic achievement while attending a desegregated school. In fact, the students' academic performance increased significantly after one year at a segregated school.

The coping strategies of the students included activities such as meeting during recess to discuss their experiences with prejudice, developing strategies to deal with prejudice, and maintaining a community among themselves. None of the students stated that they believed they were inferior to White students, and all of them rationalized that the prejudice that many White students and teachers felt for them was unfounded. While there was evidence, according to the students' teachers at Tacoma Elementary, that the prejudicial treatment they received did effect their self-confidence and self-esteem, they continued to be motivated and to achieve. The fortitude and strength of these students are evidence of the amount of resiliency these students possessed.

Resiliency

Resiliency is defined as the ways individuals develop successfully despite risk and adversity (Rutter, 1984). The ability of individual to form relationships, solve problems, develop a sense of identity, and maintain a sense of purpose and the future are skills related to resiliency. Each of the students in this study demonstrated each of these abilities while attending Rock Creek Elementary as well as Tacoma Elementary Schools.

Studies about resiliency have found that there are three protective factors that enable positive development in students and meet the student's needs for safety, love and belonging, respect, power, accomplishment, learning, and meaning (Benard, 1991). The three factors are caring relationships, high positive expectations, and opportunities for meaningful participation. According to Benard (1991), teachers have a significant amount of power in facilitating resiliency in their students. Teachers can provide a caring relationship with their students where they can listen and validate their students' feelings and demonstrate kindness, compassion, and respect (Higgins, 1994; Meier, 1995; McLaughlin & Talbert, 1993). Noddings (1988) has suggested that a caring relationship with a teacher gives students the motivation for wanting to succeed.

Teachers' high expectations challenge students and guide their behavior. By motivating students to learn using the students' strength and interests, students learn to believe in themselves and in their futures. Students are able to develop positive self-esteem, self-efficacy, autonomy, and optimism which are important components of resiliency. An inclusive curriculum that is thematic, experiential, and challenging and delivered utilizing all learning styles and cooperative learning supports resiliency (Delpit, 1996).

Providing students with opportunities for meaningful involvement and responsibilities within the school and the community allows students to contribute to their community and to realize that they can make a difference. (Kohn, 1993; Rutter, 1984; Rutter et al., 1979). By asking questions that encourage critical thinking, dialogue, and self-reflection, teachers are providing opportunities for their students to participate and contribute within their own classroom (Heath & M.W. McLaughlin, 1993).

The students in this study possessed resiliency that was fostered, in part, by their

teachers at both Rocky Creek Elementary and Tacoma Elementary. The teachers identified by the students as effective teachers at both schools, presented qualities that are found in teachers who facilitate resiliency in students. They were involved in caring relationships with their students that often extended beyond the classroom. They held high expectations for their students and used a multicultural curriculum which was delivered through culturally relevant teaching methods. Opportunities were provided for students to participate in cooperative group activities. Also some of the teachers provided ways for students to contribute to their own community. With the support of their teachers, the students were able to establish relationships, solve problems, develop a sense of identity, and maintain a sense of hope and purpose for the future.

Cultural Competency

Students in this study were very clear in describing the characteristics of teachers and instructional methods that encouraged and allowed them to succeed. The increase in all of the students' achievement scores provided proof of the effectiveness of these teachers. All of the teachers identified as effective teachers possessed cultural competence. They looked upon the cultural differences of these African American students as cultural assets instead of cultural deficits. They provided an affective and multicultural curriculum which was inclusive and affirming to the students. Culturally relevant teaching methods allowed the students to obtain knowledge. The identification of these characteristics in effective teachers as well as the characteristics of ineffective teachers and their instructional methods offer an understanding into why African American students, as a whole, are not achieving at high levels.

Racial Socialization, Racial Identity Formation, and Anger Management

An important dynamic that guided the behavior and contributed to the resiliency of the students in this study was racial socialization and racial identity. The status of the students' racial identity had a direct relationship with how they dealt with their anger. Understanding racial socialization and racial identity formation can give insight into

interpreting and responding to the behaviors of African American students. Educational strategies such as bibliotherapy have proven helpful in facilitating the movement of students during certain stages of racial identity development.

Implications for Teacher Education

One of the most important implications of this study is that teachers and schools have the power to transform the lives of their students. Teachers and schools can create classroom and school environments that support their students. A discussion of the knowledge and skills that are needed to create such an environment and the findings of this research study will follow.

Teacher Education Programs and Staff Development

In informal discussions with the teachers, staff, and administrators at Tacoma Elementary School, including those teachers interviewed in this study, it was shared that prior to the desegregation of schools and the dismantling of busing, no training or support on the process of desegregation and integration of diverse populations of students was provided for principals, teachers, staff, or students. Many of the faculty believed that the lack of knowledge and understanding in teaching culturally-diverse populations created a mismatch of teaching styles and learning styles which negatively impacted minority students. Concerns were raised about the the preparation and training of teachers to work with minority populations.

The faculty and staff at Tacoma Elementary shared concerns about the lack of courses and practicums dealing with minority students and urban education in teacher education programs. All of the teachers, staff, and administrators admitted never receiving any training in their teacher education programs in urban education and that much of the training they received through staff development was inadequate. Staff development was considered to be inadequate due to lack of support while implementing recommended strategies. The knowledge and skills identified as most important by the faculty and staff included cultural competency, culturally congruent teaching strategies, effective classroom management

strategies for culturally-diverse populations, and multicultural education.

Another concern was the lack of instructors, professors, and staff development trainers of color in teacher education programs and in staff development. Many of the teachers and staff stated they have more confidence and are more likely to listen and implement suggestions from people who are part of the population of students they are teaching.

Teachers need to learn how to support the development of resiliency in their students through caring relationships with their students and by demonstrating positive beliefs about students, high expectations, and trust. Teachers need to become cognizant of the role that community involvement plays in the education of students and develop the skills that are necessary to successfully interface with the community.

When dealing with African American students, teachers must participate in the process of becoming culturally competent. This process consists of developing self awareness and understanding, cultural awareness and understanding, social responsiveness and responsibility, and culturally sensitive techniques and teaching strategies (Sue, Arrendondo, & McDavis, 1992). Attention to the process of discrimination and its impact on African American students is vital in the development of understanding and tolerance for diverse populations (Pearl, 1997). Developing cultural competency is a process that requires significant contact with diverse groups of students and can best occur in the teacher education program.

Teachers need to undergo training in multicultural education. They need to learn about intergroup similarities and differences through vicarious experiences and intergroup contacts (Hewstone & Brown, 1986; Sue, 1995). Vicarious experiences include learning about culturally- different groups through exposure to materials that present diversity in an accurate and positive way. Intergroup contact provides an opportunity to engage and improve intergroup relations (McLemore & Romo, 1998).

Banks (1984) along with other researchers in multicultural education (Banks & Banks, 1989; Bennett, 1990; Sleeter & Grant, 1988) have the following recommendations for teaching multicultural education in teacher education programs:

- 1) one of more courses in multicultural education that take into consideration the needs

of all students;

2) course content that includes information about the history and culture of students with different ethnic, racial, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds;

3) emphasis on contributions made by diverse populations;

4) course content that includes information about first-and second-language acquisition and effective methods for teaching students who do not have Standard English as the primary language;

5) field experiences and opportunities to teach students from diverse backgrounds.

Teachers need to understand the miscues which can occur between teachers and students as a function of misinterpretations and generalizations about culturally-different populations (Bennett, 1990; First, 1988). Understanding the meaning and impact of language among African American students is necessary for effective communication (Hudson & Fradd, 1990; Cheng, 1987).

Teachers also need to understand the nature of high levels of intelligence and creativity, the cognitive, social, and emotional needs of gifted students and the potential problems experienced by gifted and talented students from diverse backgrounds. Teachers must have abilities to develop a differentiated curriculum to appropriately meet the intellectual needs of gifted students. They need to be able to create environments in which gifted and talented students can feel challenged and safe.

Implications for Research

A discussion of the processes involved in conducting this research and suggestions for future research follows.

Language

While conducting this research on gifted African American students, whose first language was not Standard English, the power and significance of language became very apparent. One of the characteristics of gifted children is their ability to communicate

extremely well. Communication can take many forms including written and spoken language. The gifted African American students in this study communicated their experiences with desegregation and resegregation through their native Black English or Ebonics. While reviewing the transcripts of the student interviews, it was very obvious that a lot of the students' meaning was lost in translation. It became evident that Ebonics or Black English was a language that utilized significant word codes and body language. Without an understanding of both words and body movement, much of what was being communicated would have been lost. By listening to the narrative on the audio tapes, and watching the narrative on the video tapes a more accurate translation ensued. Utilizing the audio and video tapes combined with the knowledge and understanding of African American culture brought about a much deeper understanding of what the students were communicating.

Another interesting dynamic in interviewing the students and teachers was frequency of code-switching among the students, the African American teachers, and the researcher. Code-switching is the process of switching from one language or dialect to another. In this case, code-switching occurred between Standard English and Ebonics. While interviewing the students, questions were initially given in Standard English. When students indicated verbally or through body gesture that they did not understand what was being asked of them, the researchers switched to Ebonics. Students responded more to questions asked in Ebonics than those that were delivered in Standard English.

Reviewing the narrative of the students' interviews and the African American teachers' interviews, a pattern of questioning by the researcher was noted. Questions were asked in groups with secondary questions qualifying the primary question. Both students and teachers responded to questions delivered in this format with greater detail than those questions consisting of one question. The questions that were asked during the interview with the White teacher were given in Standard English and were single questions.

Another pattern that was identified was one that has been identified as a characteristic of Ebonics. The students and African American teachers answered many of the questions in present tense by sharing what they said to other individuals as if those individuals were

present. The White teacher that was interviewed shared what she had said to other individuals using the past tense. There were also many phrases and gestures used by the students to describe very intense and emotion laden experiences. Most of these phrases were code words for emotions and thoughts that are frequently used in Ebonics or in discourse between African Americans.

Cultural Competency in Research

Recognizing the impact of language on understanding a phenomena raises many questions in regard to research conducted by individuals who do not have the same cultural knowledge and understanding of the culture they are investigating. Much of the research on African American populations has been conducted by White researchers. Recently, the question has been raised whether or not White researchers can conduct bias-free or value-free research on populations who are racially- and culturally-different from themselves. This belief that all research is based upon objectivity is being seriously challenged by questions about the appropriate relationship between scientific research, objectivity, and the role of researchers' values and beliefs (Ford & Harris, 1999; Graham, 1992; Kimmel, 1988).

According to Kimmel (1988), a totally-objective methodology cannot be expected to overcome initial biases that are inherent in individual decision making. Therefore, a more realistic goal would be to reduce bias in ourselves by seeking greater awareness and understanding about our selves and individual who are culturally different. Researchers should strive to become culturally competent. According to Ford and Harris (1999), researchers must acknowledge that they are first human and are fallible and subjective. In addition to learning about culturally-diverse populations, culturally competent researchers must develop insight or self awareness by identifying the assumptions they may hold about culturally-different populations and how those beliefs affect their research. The earmark of culturally-competent researchers is that they seek equity through bias-reduced research (Banks, 1998; Ford & Harris, 1999).

In this research study, being a member of the students' culture presented a great

advantage. Students were very comfortable describing their experiences and their emotions. Every student was grateful for the opportunity to discuss a very unpleasant experience and reported feeling a sense of relief after the interview. The African American teachers were very candid and forthright in answering questions and indicated that they would not have disclosed as much information with someone outside of their culture. More educational research needs to be conducted on minority students by minority researchers to gain an even greater understanding of the dynamics at play with diverse student populations.

Further research is needed in the area of academic achievement among African American students. More attention needs to be given to the impact of cultural competence and multicultural education on the achievement of African American and other minority students. Techniques such as bibliotherapy need to be investigated and incorporated into existing curriculum.

Conclusion

This study sought to understand the effects of desegregation and resegregation on six gifted African American fourth-grade and fifth-grade students. The results of this study indicated that further research was needed in investigating the impact of racial desegregation and resegregation of schools on other groups of students. While the intent of this study was to examine the experiences of gifted African American students in both a segregated and resegregated school, the students and teachers in this study shared important information regarding the practices of teachers and their implications for African American students in any setting.

With the dismantling of desegregation has come the inevitable resegregation of minority communities. School resources and program opportunities in schools with predominantly minority population are very different from school resources and program opportunities in predominantly White schools. The decrease in numbers of minority students participating in advanced placement programs which impacts the chances of minority students being admitted to colleges and universities is creating the same the conditions of education inequity that were precursors to Brown v. Board of Education (1954). Attention needs to be

given to policies, curricula, instruction, and teacher education to meet the educational needs of minority students by creating classroom and school environments that are affirming and safe for all students. Takaki (1993) wrote, "America's dilemma has been our resistance to ourselves --- our denial of our immensely varied selves. But, we have nothing to fear but our fear of our own diversity" (p.3).

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