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AN ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTS OF TRADITIONAL VERSUS ALTERNATIVE
EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS ON STUDENT ATTITUDES
AND POST SECONDARY OUTCOMES

By

VINCENT ANDRÉ KEETON

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

An Analysis of the Effects of Traditional Versus Alternative Educational Assessment
Programs on Student Attitudes and Post Secondary Outcomes

By

VINCENT ANDRÉ KEETON

Dissertation Director:
Alan Sadovnik

This dissertation examines the effects different types of assessments play on the post secondary lives of students graduating high school in Newark, New Jersey. It is grounded in theories dealing with the impact of graduating via high-stakes versus alternative assessment programs. Analyzing two quantitative databases, this study examines the differences in post secondary outcomes, perceptions and attitudes of those students graduating via the state mandated high stakes HSPA (High School Proficiency Assessment) examination and the alternative SRA (Special Review Assessment) examination.

The data indicate that a majority of students tracked in this study graduate via the SRA as compared to the HSPA. Analysis found that blacks and Latinos graduate more often via the SRA than whites and women graduate via the HSPA assessment program slightly more often than men. The data indicate that magnet school students graduate more often via the HSPA than traditional neighborhood comprehensive schools; HSPA graduates attend college at greater rates than do SRA graduates; SRA graduates are more likely to attend 2-year community colleges compared to HSPA graduates and are more likely to attend public schools and vocational/technical schools than HSPA graduates.

Multivariate analysis found that, controlling for other factors, women are more likely to go on to post-secondary study as compared to men, blacks are more likely to go on to post-secondary study as compared to whites and Hispanic/Latinos, women, blacks and Hispanic/Latinos are more likely to graduate SRA than whites and HSPA graduates and magnet school graduates are more likely to go on to post secondary study and attend 4-year colleges/universities than SRA graduates.

Many educators and policy makers continue calls for elimination of the SRA. As a significant percentage of urban “Abbott Districts” graduates exit high school via the SRA, this study provides evidence against such a policy direction. This study suggests that eliminating the SRA might result in many students dropping out. Given that almost half of the SRA graduates studied here attended some form of postsecondary educational institution, sound policy dictates that the assessment be strengthened, not eliminated.

I dedicate this work to all those who have unfailingly supported me in my doctoral studies.

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INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

Rationale for Study

The debate on educational assessment centers on the proper method of measuring student achievement. Testing has been argued to “identify talent, diagnose problems, motivate performance, end social promotion, raise academic standards, increase the quality of schools, undermine public education, reduce racial and ethnic gaps, improve our international competitive edge and measure achievement (Fine, et al., 2007 citing Greene et al, 2004). On the one hand, are those advocates supporting the traditional “high-stakes” examination; a “paper and pencil” standardized exit examination which ultimately determines student success as measured by retention, promotion and/or graduation (Greene et al, 2004; Ravitch, 2000; Scheurich et al., 2000). On the other hand, the opposing view advocates a less confining, more holistic, non-traditional “alternative” approach to assessment. This alternative view posits that high-stakes testing narrows curricula and reduces graduation rates (Darling-Hammond et al, 2006; Haney, 2001; Heubert and Hauser, 1999; Linn, 2000; McNeil, 2005; Valenzuela, 1999; Valenzuela, 2005). Alternative advocates promote an alternative assessment program that “provides students with the opportunity to exhibit their understanding and mastery” of state graduation standards “in contexts that are familiar and related to their experiences.” (Fine et. al., 2007)

Though differing in approach, both high-stakes and alternative assessment activists must be considered cognitivists as both groups believe that learning is the

acquisition of knowledge and skills. In addition, to the extent that both traditional and alternative assessment examinations are relied on as sole measures for determining retention, promotion and graduation, both could arguably be considered “high stakes”; merely in different forms. What is not open to debate is that alternative assessment programs, in addition to being alternatives to the traditional standardized assessments, are multiple compensatory assessment programs. The goal of alternative assessments is to provide students with as many avenues to demonstrate knowledge and skills as possible. Therefore, the consequential decisions for students are not made based on the outcome of a single examination. Conceptually, the multiple compensatory natures of alternative assessments allow the students to compensate for a weakness in one area of an assessment with strength in another. With a traditional high-stakes multiple choice exam, this compensation does not occur. Additionally, there are myriad differences between the two groups, the principal difference being the manner of measurement of knowledge and skills and the decisions flowing from them.

The high-stakes standards-based school reform movement “is premised on the idea of setting clear, high standards for what children are supposed to learn...” (Heubert & Hauser, 1999: 13) From this view high stakes standards-based reform seeks to challenge educational outcomes to be more responsive and effective. From the perspective of challenging students to perform at higher levels and challenging educators to be more effective, the alternative assessment movement does not differ in this regard. However, for some the standards-based reform movement has resulted in a mean-spirited culture of accountability whereby schools are closed and teachers face removal if government mandated standards are not met. Alternative assessment advocates argue that

they too believe in setting clear, high standards; however, alternative assessment advocates promote providing students with as many avenues as necessary to demonstrate cognitive and non-cognitive skills. In fact, as Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond has demonstrated, “states and districts with strong achievement and graduation rates typically have multiple assessment pathways by which students may satisfy graduation requirements (Darling-Hammond et al, 2006).

Still, traditional graduation tests are the most popular type of individual accountability mechanism aimed at students and are also “high-stakes” (Olson, Jones & Bond, 2001). Thus, though popular and traditional, the use of single assessment tools for purposes of promotion, retention, and graduation are potentially very harmful to the students measured. For this reason, alternative assessment advocates promote the use of alternative assessment tools for students to demonstrate mastery of graduation requirements. In addition, alternative assessment advocates promote reliance on more than single assessment tools, traditional or alternative, in order to retain, promote or graduate. The harm of single assessment tools can be particularly acute when students are confronted with two assessment tools, but are faced with the proposition of failing one tool (the traditional paper and pencil high-stakes exam) in order to advance to another (alternative assessment). Not only is this potentially psychologically harmful to the student, but according to alternative assessment advocates, the holistic alternative assessment tool(s) more properly measure(s) students’ knowledge and skills (Darling-Hammond et al, 2006).

Current research and literature fails to address what actually happens to students once they leave high school under either of the two aforementioned assessment programs.

Though advocates on both sides argue the need for either more exacting or more holistic assessment programs while in school, the gap in the literature surrounds the lack of empirical evidence assessing post-secondary outcomes. In simple terms, though the debate, largely ideological, has centered on equality in assessment and exactly what constitutes equity, there has largely been little to no attention paid to the effects of exiting high school under one program as opposed to the other. In addition, the literature fails to address the results of placing students in the position of failing the high-stakes examination in order to reach the alternative assessment. This research seeks to address this gap in the literature by focusing on those groups of students exiting high-school post assessment. More importantly, this research seeks to evaluate the students' post-secondary educational opportunities, outcomes and attitudes in order to explore the relationship between assessment and post-secondary outcomes. Within this context, the research will explore the cognitive and non-cognitive effects of graduating via traditional or alternative assessment programs.

Using two databases composed of graduates of the New Jersey High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) examination and the alternative route Special Review Assessment (SRA) examination in Newark, New Jersey, this research seeks to identify and assess the differential effects of the assessment programs' post-secondary outcomes on high-school students graduating under either the HSPA or SRA.

The primary research question posed by this study is:

Q. To what extent does the process of graduation under an alternative assessment program rather than the state mandated high-stakes assessment program have a

differential effect on the post-secondary attitudes and initial post-secondary outcomes of the graduates in the different assessment programs?

Additional secondary research questions posed by this research are:

1. What is the difference in college attendance between those students graduating via HSPA versus SRA?
2. Is there a difference in 2 year versus 4 year college/university attendance between those students graduating via HSPA versus SRA?
3. Is there a difference in public versus private college/university attendance between those students graduating via HSPA versus SRA?
4. Are there differences in college persistence (who enters and continues) between those students graduating via HSPA versus SRA?
5. Are there any demographic differences in terms of race, ethnicity, gender and socio-economic status (ses) in those students graduating via HSPA versus SRA?
6. Do race, ethnicity, gender and socio-economic status (ses) have an effect on those SRA or HSPA takers persisting in or graduating from college?
7. What types of colleges/university do HSPA versus SRA takers attend?
8. Are there differences in post-secondary attitudes between SRA and HSPA takers?
9. Do HSPA and SRA graduates retrospectively view their high-school preparation differently?
10. Do HSPA and SRA graduates retrospectively view one assessment type as superior or inferior to the other?

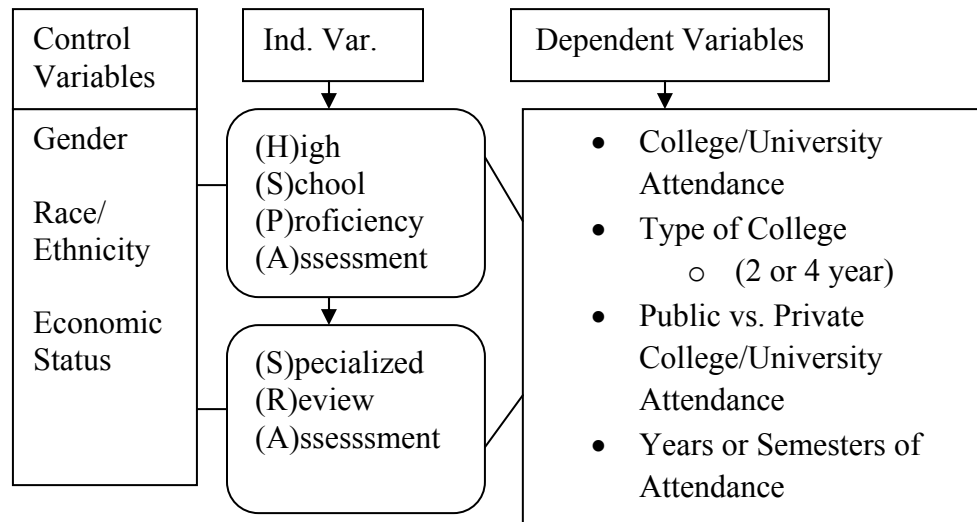


Fig. A: Conceptual Model

Quantitative research methods were used in this research study in two primary ways. First, data on approximately 10,000 high school student graduates was compiled from multiple district and state databases to form one database. The high school students in this database are comprised of students from the 10 comprehensive high schools (both traditional and magnet) throughout the same district as those students from the second survey database. The database is comprised of students from the district for the years 2003-2008. This database was then merged with data collected from a for-profit organization which compiles information on post-secondary pathways. Second, a self-report survey was sent to approximately 500 college student participants. Participants were chosen from a local incentive based college bound program taking students from two comprehensive high schools. A Likert-scaled survey was created with 20 main questions to determine perceptions, attitudes and post-secondary pathways of these college students. Bivariate, multivariate and descriptive statistics were used to analyze all the data collected.

CHAPTER 1
LITERATURE:
EDUCATIONAL REFORM HISTORY-
FROM COLEMAN TO NCLB

In recent years, the focus in public education has turned to Standards/Performance based reforms as well as accountability reforms such as the U.S. Department of Education No Child Left Behind law, passed by the U.S. Congress in 2001. These reforms seek to set quasi-national standards for public school education. Under these reforms, those schools meeting and exceeding standards are held up as models. The school's model is then held to be worthy of replication and implementation to insure success. Those schools failing to meet standards are admonished and given a timetable to adhere to them. Failure to meet imposed educational standards will result in replacement of leadership or, at worst, closure of schools. Due to underachievement in urban school systems and the disparity in performance between white middle-upper to upper income students and minority students, such accountability programs have particularly scrutinized urban school systems.

Coleman

In 1966 James S. Coleman's report *Equality of Educational Opportunity* (known hereafter as the Coleman report) indicated that schooling did not play as large a role in shaping the life chances and educational philosophies, as did families and classmates. Coleman argued that particularly for minority children (particularly black children), the composition of classrooms was important and integration could result in substantial positive achievement (Coleman, 1966). Coleman advocated integration as the mechanism for increasing achievement among black children. Of course, this argument

pre-supposes that academic achievement will only occur as long as minority children are integrated with middle-class white children. (Coleman, 1966)

This focus by Coleman on the necessity of integration between white and black children was used to argue, by more conservative commentators, that the emphasis had been taken off of the schools curricula and pedagogy and placed on who was sitting in the seats. The emphasis on non-cognitive concerns and the role such concerns have played in the failure of public education has been echoed in recent years. Critics have pointed to the increased importance placed on what they term “multicultural” education and self-esteem and the lack of uniformity in education as the primary culprits in the failure of schools to properly educate our nation’s children; particularly poor and minority children (Ravitch, 1981; Coleman, 1975).

Coleman reversed himself in 1975 and argued that the focus on integration through the mechanism of busing as the way to educational equity was directly leading to “white flight” thus exacerbating the problem of inequity. Though integrationists denounced him, more conservative commentators argued that the issue was not integration, but curricula, motivation of students and teachers, low expectations, minimal standards and measures of achievement/assessment. However, Coleman particularly argued that desegregation frequently depressed blacks’ achievement. Though he also admitted that the reasons for this depression was unknown (Coleman, 1975), there was a movement looming to take all issues other than academic ones out of the schools and increase the expectations and standards placed on all school children as the method of equalization.

The notion that schools are less important than social environment, school chums, and family has been echoed by many besides James Coleman. Sociologist Randall Collins (1979) argued that education was less a cognitive endeavor instilling complex technical abilities; rather, through training in social roles and behaviors, students will take their places as social and cultural leaders. In many ways this sentiment was echoed by Peter Cookson and Caroline Hodges Persell (1985) when they stated,

Learning certain social roles and behaviors is a central-and perhaps only-purpose of education. Because we know that where individuals go to school determines with *whom* they associate, and we also know that the social characteristics of schools' student bodies have powerful effects on a number of "student outcomes"... (Cookson and Persell, 1985:16)

The comments of Collins and Cookson and Persell are basic to the inquiry as to who succeeds in our society and why. The meritocratic argument has long been advanced as the American ideal; however, many scholars have disputed that notion arguing the "advancement through privilege" model (Cookson and Persell, 1985). This argument seeks to reinforce the idea that wealth and social standing are much better indicators of future success than what one learns in school.

In 1982, Coleman et al. published *High School Achievement*. The book is largely based on a report from a longitudinal study of sophomores and seniors in American High Schools comparing public and private schools. The survey used, *High School and Beyond* (1980), was designed by the National Center for Education Statistics. Though the book compared public and private schools and children attending these schools in terms of curricula, family background, post-high school plans, and other factors, the principal question for analysis was whether achievement is affected by attendance in either public or private schools.

Because the report was a major federal study, it was viewed as a valuable aspect for the study of school differences and their impact on achievement. According to Coleman et al. (1982) “the schools sampled for this study were drawn from what is perhaps the most complete listing of American public and private high schools in existence” (p.10). With such a broad sample of schools, Coleman et al. hoped to generalize the findings on a national scale.

Based on the study, Coleman reversed himself on the issue of whether schools make a difference in the lives of children and cognitive achievement. Coleman et al., found that private schools, particularly Catholic schools, promoted higher achievement because they provided a common academic curriculum and high academic expectations. For example, Coleman emphasizes that private and Catholic schools place and keep students in academic programs whereas public schools place students in general and vocational programs (Coleman, et al, 1982). This factor weighed heavily in determining that policy in public and private schools differed in that public schools and private schools differed substantially in the placement of the same types of student(s). According to Coleman et al., the near absence of vocational programs in private schools was a factor of cost and educational philosophy (1982: 201). Methodologically, Coleman was attacked for these conclusions, not least of which was because critics found that “creaming” (taking the best students from public schools and placing them in private and parochial schools) was a major though non-emphasized factor of the private school effect. However, Diane Ravitch emphasizes that Coleman’s reversal was good for public schools as he demonstrated that “schools can make a large difference for poor children

and that the students who achieve the most are those who take academic courses, do their homework, and apply themselves to their schoolwork (2001: 418).

What is most important about Coleman's reversal and Diane Ravitch's support of Coleman's reversal is the extent to which Coleman exempts students, or the culture of students from blame. Coleman finds that controlling for student and family backgrounds, students in Catholic schools achieve at higher levels than students in public schools (Coleman, et al., 1982). This is an important progression as it begins to turn the debate away from the students themselves and focus on the schools students attend.

In terms of cognitive development, discipline, character and personality development, generating interest in learning, etc., Coleman finds that private schools outperform public schools. Thus, Coleman's advocacy for the expansion of private schools, or at least the private school model of education, stands in stark contrast to the earlier admonition that schools could do little to affect children's achievement due to culture. Coleman's advocacy for the use of private schools especially private Catholic schools for low-income children joined the attack on public schools as ineffective bastions of mediocrity with lax standards.

The Standards Movement

It has long been acknowledged that schools and schooling as an institution have been the means through which assimilation and "Americanization" occurs. Though the nefarious ends of the assimilative process, through schooling, can be debated, what is not debatable is the fact that heavy responsibility for educating is placed on our schools. In spite of Coleman's and Randall Collins' prognostications, schools, particularly public schools, are relied on not just for assimilating, Americanizing, and "patriotizing", but for

providing our youth with the skills they will need to survive in a fast changing social, political, and economic environment. This heavy burden placed on our schools has resulted in a sustained attack on public schools in the United States. This attack has centered largely not only on quality from the perspective of standards, curricula, and infrastructure but quantity, the number of high-quality public schools available to service a growing population.

In the early 1980s the concern over the quality of the nation's schools was beginning to hit a fevered pitch. For example, John Chubb, a senior fellow in the Governmental Studies program at Brookings Institute and Terry Moe, a professor of political science at Stanford University, offered a historical overview of education reform in the United States. In their work *Politics, Markets and America's Schools* the authors provided a data-driven analysis using surveys of high school students, teachers and principals to illustrate the extent to which politics has dominated the reform movements as discord grew around the decline of America's educational system (1990). The authors conclude that rather than schooling and education, politics became the centerpiece of America's educational system. As a remedy, the authors suggest that public school privatization or a market driven voucher system should be implemented. This remedy is suggested to address the bureaucratic and political ideology that has become so pervasive in American public education.

In 1981, an editorial piece published by *The Washington Post* stated, "American education is in a fearsome decline...schools have been expecting less and students have been learning less." (Mathews, 1981) The heavy responsibility placed on schools for creating model citizens makes them easy fodder for attack. We have long expected that

as generations gain greater technical achievement and advancement schools, particularly public schools, would keep pace by teaching a more complex and focused curriculum; a curriculum that would keep the American educational paradigm relevant in relation to our international neighbors. Consistent with this perception has been the notion that public schools in the United States are shelters of lax standards, unmotivated/undisciplined children, unchallenging/non-competitive curricula, and unqualified teachers. Diane Ravitch has sought to cement this view by arguing that schools have been increasingly offering academic credit for non-academic activities (2001: 408). This perception was conceptualized in a report issued during Ronald Reagan's administration entitled *A Nation at Risk* (1983).

A Nation at Risk

In August of 1981, Secretary of Education Terrell H. Bell created the National Commission on Excellence in Education to conduct an in-depth 18-month examination of education in the United States. This examination was to be memorialized and published in a report to both the secretary and the American people. According to information contained in the report itself, the secretary was concerned with the "widespread public perception that something is seriously remiss in our educational system" (*A Nation at Risk*, 1983:5). Among other goals, the commission was specifically charged to: (1) assess the quality of teaching; (2) compare American schools with those of other advanced nations; and (3) define problems which must be faced and overcome if America is to pursue the course of excellence in education. These specific charges were examined by paying particular attention to teenage high-school age youth (*A Nation at Risk*, 1983:5). Though calling for greater federal support of education, and focusing

specifically on teenage youth and high schools, the report indicated that the nation was threatened by “a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people” (A Nation at Risk, 1983:7). Thus, it appeared that Bell’s report was pushing educational reform to be a top agenda item of Reagan’s second term. Excellence in education, one of the Bell commission’s charges, is not to be obtained without a sincere investment in time, money, and effort on the part of government. However, the fiscal crisis created by the Reagan administration’s tax cuts and defense spending relegated the cause of educational reform to a minor role. Bell resigned when it became clear that the President was cutting educational spending more than he was cutting most other programs (Cross, 2004:82).

This report heralded the standards-based curricula and the era of “high-stakes testing”. This was accomplished by emphasizing that America is not only falling behind other advanced nations in areas of industry and commerce, but the marketplace of intellectual, moral, and spiritual discourse as well. The report indicated that American students failed to keep pace on academic tests; millions were functionally illiterate (with functional illiteracy among minority youth running as high as 40%); scores on college entrance exams were in steep decline; basic skills were not being taught in secondary schools, but increasingly in college; and the skills necessary to compete in an ever-increasing technocratic global economy were almost non-existent among American youth. Indeed, educational researcher Paul Hurd concluded that, “We are raising a new generation of Americans that is scientifically and technologically illiterate” (A Nation at Risk, 1983:11).

Certainly this level of hyperbole would frighten anyone into believing that the American educational system was in danger of becoming nothing more than a back-water reservoir of scullery maids and boot-blacks. However, what was most determining in terms of the direction of our educational philosophy as a nation seems to have been the conclusion drawn by Paul Copperman, a Presidential Appointee to the National Council on Education Research, that “Each generation of Americans has outstripped its parents in education in literacy, and in economic attainment. For the first time in the history of our country, the educational skills of one generation will not surpass, will not equal, and will not even approach, those of their parents” (A Nation at Risk, 1983:11).

Among other things, the report recommended that schools adopt more rigorous and measurable standards, and higher expectations for academic performance and student conduct. Among these “rigorous and measurable standards” was the recommendation that “standardized tests of achievement should be administered at major transition points from one level of schooling to another and particularly from high school to college or work” (A Nation at Risk, 1983:24) Interestingly, in addition to clearly stating that the purpose of these tests would be to:

- (a.) certify the student’s credentials;
- (b.) identify the need for remedial intervention; and
- (c.) identify the opportunity for advanced or accelerated work

The report also stated that this system should include other diagnostic procedures that assist teachers and students to evaluate progress. Thus, though the report 24 years ago did emphasize the creation of a standard system of accountability and measurement, it never emphasized that this system should be the only measure of a student’s academic

proWess or accomplishment. The report itself clearly left room for other diagnostic procedures that could be used to more fully evaluate a student's present academic performance and cognitive ability.

A Nation at Risk was heralded to be a landmark piece of reform literature that advocated increased standards and expectations for all children. The report itself and advocates of the report have asserted that lax academic standards on the part of our nation's schools (particularly public schools) are highly correlated with lowered expectations and minimal standards of behavior. According to educational historian Diane Ravitch, a champion of the standards and accountability movement, the report took as a given the promise that "all children regardless of race or class or socio-economic status, are entitled to a fair chance and to the tools for developing their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost..." (Ravitch, 2000: 412). Arguably, this was the intention of the report; to give all children, through increased federal support and investment an opportunity to fully realize their cognitive functions and abilities. However, increased standards and expectations are not equated to singular measurements of accomplishment. That is, "high-stakes" testing does not cognize a fair chance for full development of individual tools and powers because it uses one singular measurement tool, the exam, to assess what has been learned.

Following *A Nation at Risk* the country endured the effects of increased globalization, development of technologies, and continued emphasis on international exams showing American students falling behind their international colleagues. According to Diane Ravitch, "employers had come to believe that a high-school diploma was a measure of seat time rather than reliable evidence of a good education, and higher

education was increasingly expected to do the work of high-schools” (Ravitch, 2000; 430). This perception led industry leaders, state legislators and governors, and the federal government to start to press for higher standards in the schools. According to Harold Stevenson at the University of Michigan, this zeal for standards was in part based on the perceived success of Asian nations. Stevenson found that, “...Asian nations had clear educational standards that were understood by teachers, students, and parents. Asian students performed better in school than American students due to their and their parent’s belief that effort, not ability, mattered” (Stevenson, et al., 1986). In addition, former United Federation of Teachers (UFT, 1964-1984) and American Federation of Teachers (AFT, 1974-1997) president Albert Shanker argued that American schools were sending youngsters the “wrong message” by allowing them to believe that they could receive a high-school diploma by “staying in school long enough”. Shanker further argued that “good tests” should be utilized instead of the “idiotic, low-level multiple-choice tests we now use” (Shanker, 1992).

Goals 2000

Bill Clinton’s first major educational legislation was *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* signed into law on March 31, 1994. Goals 2000 provided funds for states to develop academic standards and assessments, means to measure student progress, and support for student achievement. Goals 2000 was one of the first pieces of federal legislation enacting theories of standards based education reform (outcome based reform). However, following the Republican takeover of Congress in the mid-term elections of the same year, Goals 2000 was abandoned.

Though the major provisions of the goals of the Act were conceived at the Education Reform Summit of 1989, then Governor Bill Clinton hammered out six goals which were to direct the nation in developing high achieving students. The primary purpose of the Goals 2000 Act was to “promote coherent nationwide, systemic education reform.” (Public Law 103-227, 20 USC 5801). In order to accomplish this reform, the Act sets benchmarks. According to Stedman et al. (1993) and Seidman (1996), two of the primary benchmarks were to increase high school graduation to at least 90% by the year 2000 and to eliminate the graduation rate gap between minority and non-minority students. To account for those students who had dropped out, the reform effort was aimed at making sure that 75% of dropouts successfully complete a high school degree.

Goals 2000 was a comprehensive reform package which, in order to accomplish the aforementioned primary purposes and benchmarks would extend financial support to local and state governments to: (1) increase readiness to begin school; (2) increase student mastery of 4, 8, and 12 grade curriculum; (3) increase math and science mastery in comparison to other nations; (4) teacher education and professional development; (5) improved adult literacy and skills; (6) eliminate drug use and violence in schools; and (7) increase parental and family involvement (Stedman et al., 1993). Stedman et al. detail that approximately \$420 million had been appropriated for fiscal year 1994 to accomplish the aforementioned goals. However, as stated earlier, Goals 2000 was abandoned with the change of leadership in Congress.

Seidman (1996) argues that Goals 2000 was bound to fail had it been implemented because of the intractability of the educational system to attempts to reform it. He states, “...powerful systemic forces converge to stabilize the high school

attainment rate at about 75% where it has been since 1965 and where no traditional national education policy will be able to advance it much” (1996; 2). What Seidman argues is that for those for whom Goals 2000 was intended, largely minorities, the promise of Goals 2000 was empty due to social forces which prevent such well intentioned reform.

Following the abolishment of Goals 2000, the history of education reform has largely been one of the attempts to create state and, at times some sort of national standards. From the failed movement to create history and English standards, to that of mathematics, the obsession with standards has not resulted in the large-scale improvement of educational opportunity.

The result has been that the emphasis has been placed not on *increasing the quality of education delivered*, but rather *measuring* what has been learned (Borman, et al, 1996).

No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

Too many American children are segregated into schools without standards, shuffled from grade-to-grade because of their age, regardless of their knowledge. This is discrimination, pure and simple--the soft bigotry of low expectations. And our nation should treat it like other forms of discrimination. We should end it. One size does not fit all when it comes to educating children, so local people should control local schools. Those who spend tax dollars must be held accountable. When a school district receives federal funds to teach poor children, those children should learn. If they don't, parents should get money to make a different choice (George W. Bush, 2000).

No Child Left Behind (NCLB), which is the 2002 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, has spurred the debate concerning what assessment tools are most appropriate for New Jersey’s children. Based on theories of standards based reform and outcome based education, NCLB is much more far reaching than Goals 2000. With NCLB’s focus on standards and accountability and its outcome oriented goal

of all states achieving 100% proficiency by 2013-2014, it is not surprising that states are increasingly adopting uniform systems of educating their children. NCLB requires each state to make adequate yearly progress (AYP). This means that significant gains towards 100% proficiency must be shown every year in assessments and graduation rates. If schools do not demonstrate such gains, they run the risk of being labeled, losing funding, and possibly closing completely. Thus, though NCLB does not impose a strict method by which states must close the achievement gaps or achieve AYP, the consequences attached to NCLB act as a strong motivator. The best part of NCLB is the belief that all children are capable of learning. However, as David Karen (2007) demonstrates, while President Bush decried the “soft bigotry of low expectations,” the cure has been worse than the ailment. Hard bigotries of inadequate funding, poor understanding of the nature of educational and social inequality, and an even worse implementation plan has been the legacy of NCLB.

As stated earlier, NCLB is a reauthorization of Public Law 89-10, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which was signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965. President Johnson’s goals were laudable and fundamentally progressive. In a speech made in Johnson City, Texas on April 11, 1965, President Johnson stated:

By passing this bill, we bridge the gap between helplessness and hope for more than 5 million educationally deprived children. We put into the hands of our youth more than 30 million new books, and into many of our schools their first libraries. We reduce the terrible time lag in bringing new teaching techniques into the Nation's classrooms. We strengthen State and local agencies which bear the burden and the challenge of better education. And we rekindle the revolution--the revolution of the spirit against the tyranny of ignorance (Johnson, 1965).

Johnson's intention and the intention of Section 201 of P.L. 89-10 (ESEA) was to emphasize the special needs of not only low income children and families, but also the local communities and agencies that serve them. This national focus on education by the President in an arena that has been traditionally dominated by states and local governments was profound. Especially considering, as Morrison and Keeton (2007) indicate,

...our Constitutional system of federalism has been determinative in the delivery of education in the United States. Most importantly, from an educational perspective, the tenth amendment of the Constitution specifically reserves the powers not granted to the federal government to the citizenry of the states. As education is not federally mandated, it has been left to the states to administer as the states determine. For example, the majority of states have included Constitutional provisions providing for the public education of all resident children (Morrison and Keeton, 2007).

Though, as a result of the ESEA, a cabinet level post (Secretary of Education) and a cabinet level department (Department of Education) was created, ESEA was initially a political animal. Johnson's vision was aimed at eliminating inequality and poverty. It does not highlight worldwide politics as a motivation but rather Johnson's "War on Poverty". Conversely, President Bush in 2001 places political and economic concerns at the fore by stating, "In a constantly changing world that is demanding increasingly complex skills from its workforce, children are literally being left behind" (Bush, 2001).

NCLB continues to attempt implementation of many of the little complied with reorientation goals of President Clinton's *Goals 2000*. Under President Clinton, the national government attempted to dictate that states were required to set academic standards and districts would be responsible for implementing curricula that met those state standards. However, perhaps more importantly, teachers would be provided

professional development so that they could teach the new material. As Cross (2004) states, “Finally, new tests [would] be developed that are carefully aligned to the standards, which in turn must be reflected in the curriculum, and adults (and students) [would] be held accountable for learning the material” (pg.113). Clinton attempted, perhaps expediently, to walk the politically necessary line between tenth amendment state autonomy and federal regulatory authority; however, by the end of 2000, “only one-third of states had complied with its requirements” (Cross, 2004: 119, 124). States proved loathe to relinquish any of their state control over education. Even with considerable autonomy to set their own standards and assessments and with federal monies at stake, states balked at implementing the new federal requirements.

The primary difference between NCLB and other reauthorization’s of ESEA is that NCLB requirements have tied the performance of schools and districts, measured by many more standardized tests, to the receipt of federal funds. The important components of NCLB are:

1. Requiring annual testing of students in Grades 3–8 in reading and math, plus at least one test in Grades 10–12; science testing to follow. Graduation rates are used as a secondary indicator of success for high schools.
2. Requiring states and districts to report school-by-school data on students’ test performance, broken down by whether the students are African American, Latino, Native American, Asian American, white non-Hispanic, special education, limited English proficiency (LEP), and/or low income.
3. Requiring states to set “adequate yearly progress” (AYP) goals for each school. To meet AYP goals, not only must each subgroup make progress in each year in

each grade in each subject, but 95 percent of each subgroup must participate in testing. AYP goals must be constructed so that 100 percent of the students reach proficiency by 2014.

4. Labeling schools that fail to meet AYP goals for two years “in need of improvement” (INOI). Initially, this requirement means that schools must offer students opportunities to attend other public schools and/or to receive federally funded tutoring. Funds would also be provided for teachers’ professional development. A school that failed to meet future AYP targets would be subject to “restructuring” (firing of the teachers and the principal, the takeover of the school by the state or a private company, and so forth).
5. Requiring schools to have “highly qualified” teachers for the “core academic subjects” (English, reading or language arts, math, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history and geography) by 2005–06 (P.L. 107-110).

At once, President Bush sought to satisfy all ideological parties by promising money, promising standards and accountability, and promising to restrict state autonomy as little as possible. The latter he accomplished by failing to vigorously pursue a national curriculum or assessment tool. What this means is that NCLB is incapable of adequately measuring the adequate yearly progress (AYP) it holds as its foundation. According to Meier and Wood, not only do states continually employ tactics for exemption from NCLB, states and local districts attempt to shield low performance from national view thus avoiding being labeled. States and local districts persist in grouping the neediest of special education students with students who have mild disorders; having LEP students

take the same tests as non-LEP students; and encouraging low scorers to drop out, thereby raising a school's and category's proficiency (Meier and Wood, 2004).

NCLB has an impact on the assessment argument in several ways. The first way in which NCLB impacts assessment is teachers spend significant amounts of time “teaching to the test” or prepping students for high-stakes state assessment examinations. Why? NCLB policy dictates that teachers, schools, districts and states are labeled In Need of Improvement (“INOI”) for not making AYP without setting forth in national measurement tool as a guideline. Should the schools continue to fail to meet AYP the school is subject to restructuring (closure); teachers and administrators are subject to firing; and students are either relocated to another school within the district, shuffled outside of the district, or they dropout. Researchers estimate that elementary teachers spend 20% of their time practicing for high stakes tests and across the country teachers dedicate substantial time to test preparation (Nichols and Berliner, 2007). Further, researchers have found that the NCLB combined with state accountability systems have encouraged teachers to forego complexity and critical analysis in lieu of rote memorization, artificiality, and fact specific drills (McNeil and Valenzuela, 2000).

The second way in which NCLB affects assessment is that those struggling students are not encouraged to improve nor given the assistance they need. Why? Due to the AYP requirement and the consequences flowing from failure to meet AYP, students with potential to bring down a school's proficiency are hidden. This unintended consequence results in students dropping out or being made invisible on official records. Third, teachers, schools, and districts are not encouraged to innovate nor be creative. On the contrary, local and state authorities are encouraged to lie and deceive. Tying AYP to

increased testing and test scores forces teachers and administrators to behave irresponsibly and fail to educate.

Jennifer Booher Jennings and Andrew Beveridge have presented compelling evidence that schools use test exemption to, as they term it “game” the system (Booher-Jennings and Beveridge, 2007). What this means is that schools, in order to meet AYP have used less than honest means of inflating their pass rates (Booher-Jennings and Beveridge, 2007; Cullen and Reback, 2006; McNeil and Valenzuela, 2001). This bit of trickery generally falls into two categories: (1) exempting low scoring students from taking state tests in order to artificially increase pass rates; and (2) channeling resources to those students close to passing the state test who are likely to increase pass rates (Booher-Jennings and Beveridge, 2007). Using Texas as a model, Booher-Jenning and Beveridge show how states allow for the exemption of special education and English Language Learners (ELLs) from mainstream exams. In this way, the state’s pass rates increase exponentially and AYP is artificially achieved. NCLB is ripe for such machinations due to the extreme consequences placed on meeting AYP.

The impact of NCLB is particularly felt in under-funded and lower performing schools. These schools typically hire less qualified teachers (in terms of years of service and training), and have less innovative and more conventional curriculums. In addition, the lower performing schools do not have access to a significant population of motivated students due to environmental and socio-economic disadvantages. Researchers have found that the AYP and sanctions focus led these schools to make superficial or cosmetic changes. However, researchers observed no substantive changes in teaching styles, curricula, or professional development (Diamond and Spillane, 2004). Perhaps Dr. Linda

Darling-Hammond best articulated the conundrum of schools in her May 2007 piece for *The Nation*:

Perhaps the most adverse unintended consequence of NCLB is that it creates incentives for schools to rid themselves of students who are not doing well, producing higher scores at the expense of vulnerable students' education. Studies have found that sanctioning schools based on average student scores leads schools to retain students in grade so that grade level scores will look better (although those students ultimately do less well and drop out at higher rates), exclude low-scoring students from admissions and encourage such students to transfer or drop out" (Darling-Hammond, 2007, p. 16).

Educating entails more than administering multiple, uniform, standardized tests from 3-12 grade. Educating requires and demands teachers, districts, and states to be accountable to their students and recognize that not only can all students learn, but those students learn differently. In order to be cognizant of this fact and accommodate the variability in student achievement, teachers, districts, and states must have the freedom to use less static means of assessment and demonstrate with more holistic alternatives. If educational assessment means what we say it does, every possible avenue must be explored in order to assess what children are learning in school. NCLB does not allow for this freedom which makes an empirical analysis of the comparative effects of high stakes and alternative testing regimes crucial to the drafting of responsible educational policy.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE:
HIGH STAKES AND ALTERNATIVES

Effective formal education is premised on the ability to assess what is taught and what is learned. Assessments are the means by which we measure the value of something or someone. Herbert Kliebard (1995, 2004) through a historical approach, examined the forces that helped shape the American educational system between 1893 and 1958. Kliebard provides a historical perspective on the ferocity of the high-stakes testing debate with support for and against the use of such assessment methods. The historical portrait painted by Kliebard provides the reader with an idea that testing, not to mention high-stakes or alternative testing, was not a unanimously approved process; from whom to what was to be taught, testing was not uniformly considered beneficial nor predictive (Kliebard, 1995, 2004).

Today, testing in schools has become commonplace if not excessive. We use tests not only to quantify and measure achievement but to promote, retain, and graduate (Greene et al., 2004). However, just as Kliebard's historical perspective provided a snapshot of debate on education during the late-nineteenth through early to mid twentieth centuries; we continue to debate the proper role of testing. However, the debate now centers on the proper method of testing (assessment): high-stakes or alternative.

At the heart of the uniform standards and accountability approach to education is the "*high-stakes*" examination as the means of assessment. The examination is termed a high-stakes examination because of the use of the examination to make decisions that have high-stakes consequences in the areas of retention, promotion, and graduation. In addition to using standards (e.g., test results) for deciding who gets promoted to the next

grade or who receives the high school diploma, standards are also used to rate school, district, teacher and administrator performance. An example of this type of unit of measure in the context of promotion is a 10th or 11th grade high-school benchmark examination which is considered the final arbiter of whether a student will graduate despite previous academic performance, evaluations, attendance, etc. Other examples could be benchmark examinations administered earlier in a student's academic career that determines whether that student is promoted to the next sequential grade. The "high-stakes" component implies that no matter what the student's classroom performance has been, if the student does not pass the examination, the student will not be allowed to progress with his/her class. The high-stakes form of assessment has been criticized for narrowing curricula and instructional quality, diluting classroom learning, increasing dropouts and push outs, reducing graduation rates, encouraging cheating by educators and students, and penalizing students and teachers for the educational system's inequalities (Heubert and Hauser, 1999; Linn, 2000).

This single measure of student's academic abilities and cognitive functions is contrasted with *alternative assessment*, which is the utilization of non-traditional approaches in judging student performance. Alternative assessment does not imply that traditional exams are not used; however, the traditional exam is not given a place of primacy. Instead, the traditional exam is one of several criteria used for measuring student knowledge and skills. Examples of alternative assessment programs would be those that take into account any multiple compensatory criteria for evaluating a student's academic performance such as: exhibitions, portfolios, evaluations, products, performance tasks, etc.

These alternatives to the high-stakes examination do not imply that an examination should not be given nor do advocates of alternative assessments argue such. However, they argue that multiple units of measuring a student's academic performance should be taken into account when determining whether the student will be retained, promoted, or graduate. These multiple criteria can be used in conjunction with the examination to present a holistic picture of performance. Advocates of alternative assessments argue that "research findings confirm that students' high school records and GPAs — even with wide variation — better predict college going and persistence than standardized test scores (Haney, 2007). Thus, the inclusion of multiple compensatory criteria would be a more reliable means of both assessing knowledge and predicting post-secondary educational routes. As an alternative to the high-stakes movement multiple criteria are categorized under the rubric of "alternative assessments".

Traditional and Alternative Assessment

Traditional or "high-stakes" assessments are those that use single measures of academic performance as indicators of academic achievement. Most times these assessments are in the form of standardized multiple choice tests which require that students choose a single answer from a pre-determined list of possible choices. Because these exams are used for so many different purposes, but primarily to promote, retain and graduate students, they are characterized as high-stakes. Because they have long been the primary means of measuring students' knowledge and skills they are the traditional assessment tools.

The assessments have been criticized for their inability to encourage higher thinking skills. According to a National Assessment of Educational Progress report,

because there is only one correct answer, these types of assessments offer quick and superficial thinking (NAEP, 1981). According to Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond, Noe J.

Medina and Dr. D. Monty Neill, standardized assessment programs:

do not measure the ability to think deeply, to create, or to perform in any field. They are unable to measure students' writing abilities to write coherently and persuasively, to use mathematics in the context of real-life problems, to make meaning from text when reading to understand and use scientific methods or reasoning, or to grasp and apply social science concepts (Darling-Hammond, 1991; Medina & McNeill, 1988).

Further, traditional standardized assessments have been stated to narrow curriculums due to their emphasis on superficial content coverage and rote drill instruction. Additionally, due to accountability reforms teachers and test instructors fail to teach higher order thinking skills preferring to spend their time on test specific tasks like answering multiple choice or fill in the blank questions (Ancess, et al., 1995).

Alternative assessment generally refers to those assessment programs which are alternative to the traditional assessment programs. Alternative assessment programs will encompass multiple compensatory assessments which collectively, are used to inform the instructor of the totality of the student's preparation to advance or graduate. Convinced that traditional standardized tests not only fail to measure the most important aspects of learning, but further that they narrow and restrict innovative teaching, alternative assessment advocates promote approaches to assessment which require that instructors pay greater attention to their students and the way they learn. Alternative assessment advocates place no primacy on the use of standardized assessments, while perhaps conceding that they have some role to play in terms of initial diagnoses of educational efficiency.

Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond has argued persuasively for a more holistic view of assessing knowledge and skills. According to Dr. Darling-Hammond, other countries throughout the world rely significantly less on the use of traditional standardized assessment and have higher rates of achievement (2006). According to alternative assessment theorists and proponents, the use of essay examinations, research projects, scientific experiments, oral exhibitions and performances in areas like debating and the arts are all substantive measurements for use in assessing knowledge and skills (Acess, et. al, 1995; Clark and Flores, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2004; Darling-Hammond-2006; Valenzuela, 2005).

Valenzuela points to the disconnect between standardized testing and accountability. Valenzuela believes that accountability can be achieved without making children bear the brunt of it through their “retention /non-retention or graduation/non-graduation” based on the outcome of single exams (Valenzuela, 2005:20). Valenzuela argues that basing knowledge and skills on the basis of single exams is “inherently invalid” while the use of multiple compensatory assessments are more valid and lead to better decisions making on behalf of students (Valenzuela, 2005).

The use of single assessments such as standardized tests as the only means of determining retention, promotion, graduation, etc., thus making them high-stakes, reflects a misplaced emphasis on these exams as accountability tools. For example, traditional assessment advocates have argued that single assessments are valid for accountability purposes. (Scheurich and Skrla, 2001) This argument posits that teachers and students will be held to high educational achievement standards and when not met, will be held accountable. However, holding students, teachers and districts accountable (with

devastating results as to retention, promotion, and graduation and school closures, teacher transfers, firings and administration shuffling), cannot be validly measured and indicated by a single measure of academic assessment. (Valenzuela, 2005)

The conflict between alternative and traditional assessment largely lies in their use. According to Dr. Darling-Hammond, when standardized assessments were not high-stakes, in that they were not used as the sole source of decision making, they were used in a more holistic manner (2006). Since the advent of the primacy of standardized tests, schools have begun to “teach to the tests”. The result has been a measurable decline in critical thinking, analysis and complex problem solving with an increase in rote memorization and multiple-choice guesswork. (Acess, et al., 1995)

Traditional assessment advocates argue the equity and accountability of traditional high-stakes assessments. It is argued that the use of these exams places administrators, teachers and most especially students on equal notice of the consequences of failing to adequately prepare. All students take and are evaluated from the same exam; outcomes are certain pursuant to this type of assessment program. Either one is promoted or retained, one graduates or not. Alternative assessment advocates are greatly concerned that this argument misses the mark as accountability and high-standards can be met without such punitive measures. Measuring knowledge and skills should not be limited to single assessment tools, but rather multiple tools which validly provide a broad range of continuous data about students and teaching. With this data instructors can not only evaluate students’ abilities, but develop curricula helpful to the pedagogical experience. According to Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond et. al, “these concerns are especially

important for students with learning differences who may require different formats to demonstrate their knowledge” (2006:16).

Prior to progressing to the ways in which high-stakes and alternative assessment advocates differ, it is helpful to point out a few of the similarities. For example, Scheurich et al. (2000) state, “we [referring to a collective “we”] have posted a miserable academic record with the great majority of low-income children and children of color specifically” (p. 294). All sides agree on this point. The literature and the historical record are replete with examples of the ways in which students of color and low socioeconomic status (SES) students have been marginalized. It is likely that the pervasive and persistent nature of the evidence on the miserable track record educating certain segments of our young people make this a much less volatile point.

Another area in which there tends to be some agreement is in deficit thinking. What is meant here is that “many educators view the educability of low-income students of color as being limited and the makers of their own academic problems” (Delpit, 1988; Valencia, 1997 and Valenzuela, 1999). Among all parties there is the considered understanding that students, particularly students of color from low-SES backgrounds, “must be viewed as having unlimited potential; furthermore, we must have high, reasonable standards for success, and provide equal encouragement via democratic education (Pearl and Knight, 1999). All parties are aware of the egregious nature of deficit thinking and its effects on students of color (Skrla and Scheurich, 2001). However, it is not surprising that the advocates on each side share the central premise that all children are capable of learning. The large majority of educators feel this way. However, the question that remains concerns the method of achieving equity for all

children. Put more clearly, the question surrounds the proper method of measuring or “assessing” what children have learned. This brings us to a review of the competing assessment perspectives.

One of the fiercest advocates of uniform standards is historian Diane Ravitch. In her work on educational policy *Left Back: A Century of Failed School Reforms*, Ravitch trumpets uniformly high standards and attempts to place the fault of failed schooling firmly in the laps of the progressives. Ravitch assails the progressive era of education as a permissive era in which the standards and curricula were watered down to the point that children leave schools knowing a great deal less than previous generations, and with little capacity for application of what they have learned. Ravitch places the lack of quality assessment in education relative to past generations and our international neighbors directly in the lap of progressives. Ravitch states “progressive education did not begin with the intention of creating different educational programs for children from different social classes” (Ravitch, 2000:57).

Ravitch points a damning finger at multiculturalism and lack of uniformity in education. She blames the progressives for chipping away at the democratic, college preparatory ideal. Though she argues that Dewey was naïve in believing that schools should be “child-centered” environments that moved away from the academic subjects and focused on “problems and processes” (Ravitch, 2000:58), Ravitch believes that progressives have been the real culprits due to their lack of loyalty to Dewey’s intentions. That is, Ravitch argues that the attempt to satisfy everyone by the move away from teaching and a strictly academic curriculum has resulted in a failed system that ultimately satisfies and prepares no one (Ravitch, 2000). Ravitch argues that this idea of

multiculturalism and “caring” in education has served as a detriment to the nation’s children by not exposing and holding them to high standards in education. For example, though she praises progressives for their lack of focus on what she terms, “formalistic methods, and rote recitations, memorizations...” (Ravitch, 2000:15), she argues that the move away from an academic curriculum has so watered down the curriculum that our children are learning nothing. Ravitch also objects to the notion that reinforcing a positive self-esteem should be a focus of schools. She feels this misguided direction in education is a direct result of the progressive reforms that have been categorical failures, particularly for poor children (Ravitch, 2000). Ravitch argues that from these programs came children that felt good about themselves but had little useful knowledge.

Jeannie Oakes has also argued how low expectations and deficit thinking leads to tracking of low-income and students of color into basic and narrow educational tracks with uninspired curriculums. However, though Oakes does argue that standards and accountability systems did improve this practice, she was not arguing for the widespread use of single exam measurement (Oakes, 1985). On the contrary, there is certainly an argument that standards-based school reform very much misses the mark due to its improper focus on symptoms rather than causes. For example, when high-stakes standards based reformers speak of school failure, most times they are measuring this failure by pointing to low achievement. This thinking is counter intuitive; suggesting treatment of the symptom rather than the cause which is not poor achievement but poor schools and schooling.

Contrast this uniform view of educational standards with that of Angela Valenzuela and her contributing authors in the work *Leaving Children Behind: How*

Texas Style Accountability Fails Latino Youth. Valenzuela and her contributors believe wholeheartedly in alternative assessments as the surest way of determining what children know. Valenzuela believes that high-stakes testing fails youth, particularly Latino youth and children of color, by promoting a uniform and objectivist way of knowing and learning to the detriment of cultures, languages, and knowledge (Valenzuela, 2005). In addition, Haney (2000) found that in Texas attrition and retention increased among black and Mexican students due to the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS).

Valenzuela describes this as subtractive education (Valenzuela, 1999). More clearly, subtractive education is the use of uniform policies to subtract individual notions of culture in order to assimilate students of color to an American democratic ideal of schooling (Valenzuela, 1999). Valenzuela would argue that she does wish to hold schools and students accountable but she believes that uniform standards and high-stakes testing serve to hurt the very students they should be helping. Buttressing this argument, Audrey Amrein and David Berliner (2002) looked at changes in dropout rates, high school graduation rates and enrollment in GED programs in 16 states after the introduction of exit exams. The researchers found that all three variables increased markedly in the majority of the 16 states after the introduction of high-stakes examinations. The researcher's findings coincide with the findings of other researchers that once high-stakes exams are relied upon as the final arbiter of retention, promotion, and graduation high school completion rates decrease and academic opportunities are diminished (Haney, 2000; Sandholtz et al., 2004,; Warren, Grodsky, Lee, and Kulick, 2005; McDermott, 2007).

Valenzuela (along with a cadre of other critics of uniform standards and accountability in education) would argue that the focus on uniformity in education, despite decades of evidence to the contrary, does not take into account the fact that poor school performance is shaped in part by poverty, neglect and various social disadvantages. High-stakes testing and uniform testing fail to do anything to address these issues. For example, McDermott writes,

policy makers and implementers need to keep in mind that the schools currently most challenged by standards based reform implementation are the same schools that were not previously educating all students to high standards...schools serve the students who have been most harmed by racial and socio-economic inequality. To change schools, the state must not only direct its power against them, through sanctions, but also build the power of all educational institutions to do their work better. Otherwise, aspirations to expand the moral boundaries of educational governance will continue to degenerate into policies that appear to blame victims for their own injuries (McDermott, 2007; 111).

In addition, there is the issue of test validity and what students, particularly students in low-income areas are being taught or not taught. For these subgroups of students the impact of high stakes exams, particularly exit exams are extremely damaging. To base their retention, promotion, and/or graduation on examinations that are not testing what they have learned, or in many instances failed to be taught, is supremely unfair. Advocates of high-stakes statewide assessments, though giving some lip service to historic inequities and the plight of urban school students (Scheurich et al., 2000) , do not fully appreciate the extent to which real, lasting disparities exist in both resources (books, facilities, computer technology, etc.) and teacher preparedness and motivation. If they did they would not suggest, argue alternative assessment advocates, that one top-down system of accountability should be implemented.

Alternative assessment advocates argue that students of color and LEP (Limited English Proficient) students are particularly disadvantaged by educational policies centered on uniform assessment tools. For example, Klein et al. (2000) join McNeil and Valenzuela in criticizing the discrepancies between state assessment exams such as TAAS and national assessment exams such as NAEP. Whereas the state assessment indicates a decreasing achievement gap, the national assessment indicates an ever increasing achievement gap. This discrepancy is troubling because it suggests that those states indicating success with high-stakes accountability systems may be “hiding” or “suppressing” scores which do not support desired conclusions.

Linda McNeil argues, “The irony of this education policy, based on high-stakes testing, is that it is driving down the quality of public education and driving significant numbers of students out of school” (McNeil & Valenzuela, 2005:57). McNeil further argues as do many other advocates of alternative assessment that the focus on one uniform standard of learning and measuring assessment is flawed because the policy does not allow students the opportunity to demonstrate what they know by placing such emphasis and such high consequences on one final exam. Additionally, advocates of alternative assessments would argue that additional assessment tools allow those students who simply learn at a different pace the ability to demonstrate their true knowledge of the curricula rather than forcing them to attempt to regurgitate on one single exam what they have learned their entire academic career.

The need for greater flexibility in learning would seem to be especially true as it concerns Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students. The uniform standards movement would seem to doubly stigmatize these students due to (1) their status as students of color

who for a variety of environmental reasons lag in performance assessments, and (2) their limited ability to communicate in the language in which the exam was originally written. Though the argument that standard exams are biased towards a mainstream, white student population no longer has as much potency as it once did, multiple assessment advocates would argue that non-native students need at least additional time to adjust to mainstream constructs. The simple translation of an exam from one language to another does not provide the student with the contextual knowledge to succeed on the examination if their cultural and linguistic experiences have not been accounted for in the examination's creation. Thus the uniform movements concentration on retention and promotion based on the outcome of high-stakes examinations does not serve to demonstrate anything more than that those students failing it, especially those LEP students, are victims of poor preparation not deficient intellect.

However, it should come as no surprise that high-stakes testing and uniform standards disproportionately affect those students whose first language is not English. Again, Valenzuela has written eloquently on this subject. Her notion that the unyielding and restricted nature of high stakes testing and uniformity is in direct opposition to the cultural and linguistic offerings of LEP students is very powerful (Valenzuela, 1999).

Those advocating increased high standards and accountability have come to rely on high-stakes examinations as a more objective normative process. They argue that by placing emphasis on test results, we will more easily be able to focus on the achievement gap between Anglo children and children of color because we will have both an objective basis for comparison and uniform information from all fifty states (Scheurich, et al., 2000). Those advocating high-stakes argues that a system based on high-expectations

with an examination as the unit of measure for those high-expectations reinforces the motivation of students, teachers, and parents.

Valencia, et al. argues the opposite. Consistent with some of Scheurich's arguments, Valencia and colleagues concur that the education of children of color is supported by a "miserable record" complete with deficit thinking and subtractive schooling. However a standards-based reform system, which has at its center a high-stakes examination, will not reverse that record, but is more likely to exacerbate it (Valencia, et. al., 2001). High-stakes examinations are not based on objective learning. High-stakes examinations are based on the need to demonstrate higher percentages of students passing exams not increased learning. Thus, high-stakes exams often are a reflection of "teaching to test" not cognitive abilities. In addition, McNeil states that specifically in a state like Texas, standards based reform has "deskilled teachers and narrowed the curriculum, particularly in those schools serving low-income children" (McNeil, 2000).

Walter Haney has argued and supported with data that standards based reforms and emphasis on high-stakes testing has increased dropouts, particularly among students of color (Haney, 2001). Warren, Grodsky, Lee, and Kulick (2005) find support for the assertion that state high-stakes exit examinations are independently associated with rates of high school completion. Warren, et al. finds that completion rates (however measured) are simply much lower in states with high-stakes exit examinations policies. For example, for the national graduating class of 2000 the median state high school completion rate... was 73 percent for states with no HSEE (High Stakes Exit Examination) but only 61 percent in states with high-stakes exit examinations. Researchers note that under

current policy, many schools “rather than supporting students who are otherwise making progress toward graduation, but who are for various reasons (such as language barriers, lack of exposure to test content, past history of low test scores, and so on) unlikely to pass proficiency exams...do better by encouraging students to drop out or transfer so that their test scores do not trigger draconian penalties” (Fine, et al., 2007 quoting Shriberg and Shriberg, 2007; p. 80).

There can be considerable overlap in the results of research found by those advocating high-stakes examinations and those advocating alternatives. For example, those advocating alternative assessments, like those advocating high-stakes examinations, would argue for the use of an examination. However, whereas high-stakes advocates would argue that the exam be used to determine retention, promotion, and graduation, those advocating alternatives would argue that the standardized examination be used to test for literacy and numeracy. The results on the exam could then be used to assess advanced placements or remediation, but *only* if used in conjunction with multiple sources/criteria of information about a student’s academic performance (Valenzuela, 2005). Whereas, high stakes testing proponents would argue equity, alternative advocates would argue that high stakes testing narrows curricula and instructional quality, diluting classroom learning, increasing drop outs and push outs, reducing graduation rates, encouraging cheating by educators and students, and penalizing students and teachers for the educational system’s inequalities (Heubert and Hauser, 1999; Linn 2000).

Additionally, those advocating alternative assessments argue that they are not opposed to holding schools accountable for the education of children; this is consistent

with standards based reform especially in light of NCLB. However, where their paths diverge is in the emphasis placed on the single scored exam. Whereas standards based advocates believe the high-stakes examination contributes to increased motivation, engagement, competition, and academic performance, advocates for alternatives believe that this system contributes to increased marginalization, deficit thinking, subtractive schooling, and dropouts. Alternative assessment advocates don't argue against the use of examinations, but rather argue for the use of more than one method of determining academic success. For example, there has been great interest in the programs being administered by states such as Rhode Island and Maine that are experimenting with alternative assessment models rather than centralized high-stakes models.

Starting in 2004, those students entering high school in Rhode Island were eligible for alternative graduation criteria rather than to exclusive test-based requirements (Rhode Island Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education, 2003). Under this scheme, there will still be a state assessment (examination) as part of the graduation criteria, but the exam may not count for more than 10% of all factors contributing to graduation eligibility. What this means is that unlike states such as Texas and Florida where no matter what the student's previous academic performance has been, if the high-stakes exit examination is not passed the student will not graduate, in Rhode Island the student may demonstrate proficiency through multiple criteria including the state assessment examination.

In Maine, a similar multiple criteria basis of assessment is being utilized to gauge student proficiency in multiple content areas. Maine's Comprehensive Local Assessment System (CLAS) requires that student performance be assessed in up to eight content

areas. Like Rhode Island, Maine also administers a statewide assessment. Maine also allows student academic proficiency to be demonstrated by additional units of measurement such as achievement tests, exit presentations, portfolios, and other locally developed performance assessments. In Maine particularly, scores from the statewide assessment are viewed more as vehicles to gauge where student resources are most needed, not as punitive measures restricting advancement.

COSTS: Consequences of Alternative Route Elimination

High stakes exit exams have been consistently associated with decreased graduation rates, heightened dropout rates and reports of ninth grade retention. The negative impact of standardized testing bears disproportionately adverse consequences for low-income students, students of color, and immigrant students. As the literature makes clear, alternative routes to graduation have become embedded in communities with high percentages of students of color and immigrant students. The consequences attendant to eliminating these multiple pathways to high school graduation would prove disastrous for communities which have come to rely on the flexibility extended to children with different learning needs and leaning styles.

The evidence correlating increased negative consequences and high stakes exams nationally leads to a consideration of the likely consequences of eliminating the alternative route to graduation in New Jersey. The economic, social and criminogenic underpinnings of elimination of the SRA, though impossible to exactly quantify without an initial and longitudinal study of post secondary outcomes and outcomes for dropouts, can never-the-less be inferred based on some of the national data in these respective areas.

Economics

The economic consequences for the failure to complete high school are dire as education promotes productivity growth. Furthermore these consequences, which have traditionally been limited to those individuals failing to complete high school, will become more and more consequential for the nation at large. Those who cannot or choose not to complete high school are foreclosed from non-educational social benefits such as good job opportunities (Seidman, 1996). Bridgeland, Dillulio, & Morison have estimated that the lack of a high school diploma costs, on average \$9,200, per year as compared to high school graduates. Compare this number with college graduates and the chasm widens exponentially with college graduates earning approximately \$1 million dollars more over their lifetimes than dropouts (2006).

In addition, Belfield and Levin have found that, as compared to high school graduates, dropouts (1) work fewer hours, (2) get paid less wages, (3) have lower quality benefits, (4) have a higher incidence of unemployment, (5) fail to qualify for unemployment benefits at greater rates, and (6) cost the nation significant lost tax revenues (Belfield & Levin, 2007). Increased education results in better jobs, higher wages and increased taxes which in turn contribute to the growth of the state and national economy. However, those without a high school diploma not only contribute approximately 40% less in income taxes, but cost state and federal treasuries over \$50 billion in revenues (Belfield & Levin, 2007).

Racially the divide becomes even wider as women and men of color, particularly blacks and Latinos, without high school diplomas earn less than their white male

counterparts without high school diplomas. Though compared to those with high school diplomas, every demographic group suffers; even white males.

Black males without high school diplomas are invisible. Robert Mincy conducted an analysis of black males in their twenties without high school diplomas and determined that they had fallen out of the labor force (2006). For example, he determined that in the year 2000, 65 percent of Black males without high school diplomas were unemployed or incarcerated (Mincy, 2006). Four years later, Mincy determined that the percentage had swelled to 72 percent (2006). These numbers are startling without comparison to any other racial or ethnic group, but in comparison to White (34 percent) and Latino (19 percent) without high school diplomas, the consequences for blacks are increasingly bleak (Mincy, 2006).

It is important to recognize the dire consequences for vulnerable segments of our population when educational opportunities are removed. Providing alternative pathways to high school graduation not only gives students multiple opportunities to demonstrate their cognitive and social abilities, but it provides a safety net for communities which have historically been underserved educationally. Thus, the presence of the HSPA and SRA in New Jersey serves to present all children, but especially vulnerable children from challenged racial and ethnic communities, opportunities they may not have had otherwise.

Criminal Justice

The association between dropping out of high-school and anti-social behavior, deviance, and criminal offending has been studied intensely for over forty years. After forty years of research, there is still very little clarity in this area. Though eventual

dropouts have been found to have considerably higher rates of delinquency than do graduates during high-school (Elliott and Voss, 1974), the link between dropping out and post-dropout criminal behavior is much more spurious. However, empirical research lends support for three different perspectives:

- (1) A criminogenic effect of dropout status on post-dropout crime and deviance
- (2) An inhibiting effect of dropout status on post-dropout crime and deviance
- (3) No effect

This third perspective suggests that the most important indicators of post-dropout crime and deviance are the antecedents of pre-dropout school problems and pre-dropout deviant and criminal behavior (Bachman, et al., 1971; Yamaguchi and Kandel, 1984; Krohn et al., 1995).

There have generally been two theories of crime and delinquency used to interpret the effect dropping-out of high school has on law-violating behavior: social control theory (Bond Theory) and strain theory. However, due to the inability to consistently track dropouts in order to assess the effects of strain on the post-secondary life experiences of dropouts, social control theory remains the primary explanatory theory for dropout crime and delinquency.

Travis Hirschi (1969), working from the assumption that human beings have a natural tendency to engage in antisocial behavior, proposed that delinquency occurred because delinquents have a weaker attachment to their community than non-delinquents. Thus, for Hirschi the answer to why youth commit deviant acts or crime lies in the strength of their social/societal bonds

From this theoretical perspective, students who drop out of school increase their participation in crime and deviance due to having severed their ties with a conventional institution (school) which served to ground them and keep them positively connected and engaged with teachers, peers, extra-curricular activities, and community organizations. Those students staying in school are strongly and positively bonded; their contacts with the criminal justice system are substantially lessened. Those students dropping out of school have weak to non-existent bonds and have freed themselves to engage in crime and deviance.

With this brief theoretical history, the urgency of providing alternative routes to graduation from a criminogenic perspective is obvious. The desire to prevent exposure to the criminal justice system is one of the motivating factors of education. High school graduation triggers any number of positive post secondary life experiences including continued education. Elimination of alternative routes to graduation such as the SRA in New Jersey forecloses an opportunity to expose large numbers of children, particularly children of color, to post-secondary life experiences which could place them on the path to future social and economic success.

Bridgeland, DiIulio, & Morison have estimated that people who do not graduate from high school are eight times more likely to be incarcerated in prisons or jails (2006). As has historically been the case, race and ethnicity intersect with education to influence incarceration rates.

Belfield and Levin have found an inverse relationship between high school graduation rates and incarceration rates. That is, as high school graduation rates are raised through compulsory schooling, intervention programs and more challenging and

engaging curricula, incarceration rates decline (Belfield & Levin, 2007). Across races incarceration rates decline as rates of high school graduation increase. Incidence of serious violent crime and serious property crime also decreases with increases in education resulting in less contact with the criminal justice system and far fewer arrests. In addition, consistent with the economic advantages of graduating high school, the costs associated with the criminal activity such as policing and other deterrent programs are significantly reduced (Belfield & Levin, 2007).

Correctional populations differ dramatically in terms of educational attainment from the non-probationer general population. It is generally assumed that correctional populations report lower educational attainment than the general population, but the extent of the difference can differ from state to federal prison to local jails and probationers. For example, according to Caroline Wolf Harlow of the Bureau of Justice Statistics, 40% of State prison inmates, 27% of Federal prison inmates, 47% of local jail inmates and 31% of those serving probation sentences had not completed high school or its equivalent. By comparison 18% of the general population failed to attain high school graduation (BJS, January 2003). Of those failing to complete high school or its equivalent in state prisons: 40% were males whereas 42% were females. Of this group 27 % were whites, 44% blacks, and 53% were Hispanics, suggesting that the failure to complete high-school or its equivalent is disproportionately born by the black and Hispanic communities. In addition, the Bureau of Justice Statistics indicates that of the age group 30-34 nationally, 12.6 percent of white males in prison are high school dropouts while an astronomical 52.1 percent of Black men aged 30-34 are high school dropouts.

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics 2005 Midyear report (June 30, 2005), the nation's prisons and jails incarcerated 2,186,230 persons. Those incarcerated in Federal and State prisons accounted for two-thirds (1,438,701) of the population whereas those in local jails accounted for the other third (747,529). From midyear 2004 to midyear 2005 the numbers of inmates in the Nation's prisons and jails rose by 2.6% or 56,428 (BJS, May 2006). The state of New Jersey saw a .1% increase from midyear 2004 to midyear 2005. In June of 2004 prisoners under the jurisdiction of the State or Federal correctional authorities in New Jersey were 28,107 contrasted with 28,124 in June of 2005. The New Jersey correctional population in 2005 constitutes 1.2% of the National population.

Essex County (which includes the city of Newark) notoriously sends more residents to prison than any other county in New Jersey. Essex County is home for 18% of New Jersey's prisoners, but only 9.4% of the state's population. In addition, Essex County has the highest portion of its households making less than \$10,000 a year (13%) and the highest portion of its households receiving public assistance (6.5%) (Travis et. al, 2003). According to an Urban Institute study conducted from 1992 through 2002, admissions data show that prisoners sent to prison from Essex County overwhelmingly originate in Newark and its neighboring communities. This has substantial implications for those failing to graduate high-school as research demonstrates that nationally, the great majority of those entering jails and prisons do so without high-school diplomas or their equivalents and are disproportionately racial and ethnic minorities.

Juveniles-New Jersey

The U.S. Census Bureau indicates that as of 2002, 72,894,500 juveniles (those under the age of 18) were living in the United States. This number constituted approximately 25% of the overall U.S. population. Moreover, the U.S. Census Bureau's racial coding data indicate that of this 2002 number, 77.9% of the juvenile population is white, 16.4% is Black, 18% is Hispanic, and 4.4% is Asian (Sickmund and Snyder, 2006). The United States Census estimates that as of 2005, there are approximately 2,152,725 juveniles (below the age of 18) in the state of New Jersey (U.S. Census, 2005). Of this number, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention ("OJJDP") estimates that 1,941 juveniles are housed in public or private residential facilities.

Specifically, OJJDP estimates that approximately 1,851 individuals are housed in public facilities and 90 are housed in private facilities. OJJDP further disaggregates this population by race, estimating that of the 1,941 juveniles currently detained/committed in residential juvenile delinquency centers, 303 are White, 1,293, are Black, 321 are Hispanic, 3 are Native American. The disproportionately black population of residential detainees is startling in light of the fact that the U.S. Census estimates that as of 2005, the total population of New Jersey was 8,521,427 of which Blacks constitute the third largest racial/ethnic group at 1,130,967 or 13.3% while Whites at 5,954,926 or 69.9% are by far the largest racial group while Hispanic/Latinos rank second at 1,307,412 or 15.3% (U.S. Census, 2005). In addition, the Census estimates that of the juvenile (those below the age of 18) population, whites substantially outrank every racial ethnic group by almost 4:1. For example, of juveniles, Whites constitute 63.9% of the total population of 2,152,725, Hispanic/Latinos, 18.6%, and Blacks, 16.1% (U.S. Census, 2005). The

significance of these numbers become obvious when compared/contrasted with the New Jersey residential population above. For example, though Whites account for 63.9 of the total juvenile population, they account for only 15.6% of the delinquent residential population. Though Hispanic/Latinos account for 18.6 of the juvenile population, they account for only 16.6% of the delinquent residential population. Blacks, overwhelmingly make up the majority of residentially detained/committed juveniles accounting for 66.6% of the overall population. Though all of the percentages are significant as juveniles removed from their families, homes, schools, and communities and placed in residential facilities face an uphill battle in successfully completing residential programs, the overwhelming impact on the black community is even more significant educationally.

The literature has long reflected the extent to which Blacks trail Whites and Asians in high school graduation rates. Katherine McClelland details the extent to which blacks trail whites, Asians, and Hispanic/Latinos in academic achievement in math and science (McClelland, 2003). Using National Assessment of Education Progress scores from 4th, 8th, and 12th grade, Dr. McClelland finds that Blacks trail Whites, Asians and Latinos in achievement as measured by math and science scores. She additionally found that blacks trail whites and Asians in high-school graduation rates (McClelland, 2003).

This finding is supported by the U.S. Department of Education which finds that:

While National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results have shown that over time, black and Hispanic students have made great strides in narrowing the breach that separates them from their white peers. However, that progress seems to have come to a halt since the mid-1980s. For example, in 2003, while 39 percent of white students scored at the proficient level or higher on the 4th grade reading exam portion NAEP, only 12 percent of black students and 14 percent of Hispanic students did so. Forty-two percent of white fourth graders scored at the proficient level or above on the mathematics exam compared with just 10 percent of black students and 15 percent of Hispanic students (U.S. Department of Education, 2003).

This illustrates once again the importance of high school graduation and the extent to which lack of a high school diploma is strongly correlated with entering jails and prisons, Mincy's 1995 analysis demonstrates that 16 percent of black men in their 20s without college degrees were incarcerated (2006). Three years later the rate of incarceration had jumped from 16 percent to 21 percent and by their mid-30s, it is clear that education provides a safety net as 6 in 10 male dropouts had spent some time in prison (Mincy, 2006; Payne, 2005).

Calculating Dropouts

Pursuant to the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, state dropout rates are determined by summing or adding together the number of dropouts in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 and dividing this sum by the total number of students enrolled in these grades in any year. For example, if we are attempting to determine the dropouts for the 2006-2007 school years, we sum the dropouts for 9, 10, 11, and 12 graders and divide this sum by all students enrolled in those grades in the 2006-2007 school years.

Other dropout rates have been developed for different purposes. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) has published several such rates including status dropout rates and cohort dropout rates. Status dropout rates report the percentage of individuals in a given age range who are not in school and have not earned a high school diploma or equivalency, irrespective of when they dropped out and can be used to study general population issues (Laird, DeBell, and Chapman, 2006). Cohort dropout rates are designed to measure the percentage of students in a given cohort or class who drop out over a period of time (McMillen, 1997).

New Jersey uses an alternative calendar for each. Unlike most states which measure enrollment and dropout statistics from October to October, New Jersey measures from July to July. Thus based on all states reporting public school enrollment and dropouts for students in grades 9-12, during the 2002-03 school year, there was a national enrollment of 13,986,717. Of this number, there was a reported 548,020 dropouts for grades 9-12. This constitutes a national dropout percentage of 3.9%. In New Jersey, from July 2002 to July 2003, the state reported a total public high-school enrollment for grades 9-12 of 389,888. The state reported a statewide dropout figure for grades 9-12 of 7,199. The statewide dropout percentage for 2002-03 was 1.8.

Based on all states reporting public school enrollment and dropouts for students in grades 9-12, during the 2003-04 school year, there was a national enrollment of 13,806,520. Of this number, there was a reported 545,266 dropouts for grades 9-12. This constitutes a national dropout percentage of 3.9%. In New Jersey, from July 2003 to July 2004, the state reported a total public high-school enrollment for grades 9-12 of 403,883. The state reported a statewide dropout figure for grades 9-12 of 7,223. The statewide dropout percentage for 2003-04 was 1.8 (National Center for Education Statistics; Chapman and Hoffman, 2007).

Dropout rates nationally indicate that New Jersey's percentage of 1.8% for 9-12 grade public high school students 2002-03 is the lowest, and combined with 7 other states (Iowa, 1.9; Wisconsin, 2.0; Connecticut, 2.1; North Dakota, 2.2; Indiana, 2.2; Kansas, 2.4; and Maine, 2.8), had a statewide dropout percentage lower than 3 percent. National data demonstrate that the state with the highest dropout rate occurred in Arizona during

the school year 2002-03 (state enrollment for 9-12, 273,872; dropout total for 9-12, 23,242 for a dropout percentage of 8.5%).

Dropout rates nationally indicate that New Jersey's percentage of 1.8% for 9-12 grade public high school students 2003-04 was again the lowest whereas the highest for this year was Louisiana (state enrollment for 9-12, 191,292; dropout total for 9-12, 15,056 for a dropout percentage of 7.9%). New Jersey combined with 9 other states (North Dakota, 2.0; Iowa, 2.1; Kansas, 2.2, Indiana, 2.5; Maine, 2.7; Vermont, 2.8; Nebraska, 2.8; Virginia, 2.8; Pennsylvania, 2.9; and Mississippi, 2.9) had a dropout percentage under 3 percent (National Center for Education Statistics; Chapman and Hoffman, 2007).

Again, these event dropout rates measure the percentage of public school students in grades 9–12 who dropped out of school between one October and the next (with the exception of New Jersey which measures enrollment and dropouts from a different yearly perspective. Data are reported by states to the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

The Center on Education Policy reports that in 2006, 58 percent of White students but 76 percent of the nation's minority high school students were enrolled in public schools in the 22 states with exit exams; by 2012, 63 percent of White students and 81 percent of "minority" (Latino, African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian/Native Alaskan) students will be required to pass these exams (Center on Education Policy, 2007a).

The statistics cited above indicate that incarceration rates are racialized; however, because race and intersection intersect, the importance of education is immediately

apparent. The consequences of being undereducated or mal-educated for men and women of color, particularly Black and Latino men and women, are disproportionately negative compared to their white counter counterparts. Petit and Westin (2004) indicate that the levels of incarceration for uneducated low-skilled black men and women are enough to suggest a new stage in life-course development (p.151). Petit and Westin further suggest that whereas “going to prison was a marker of extreme deviance historically...the novel normality of criminality and criminal justice sanctions in the life-course of recent cohorts of disadvantaged men is now widely claimed” (Petit & Westin, 2004, p.156). Finally, Petit and Westin (2004) conclude that rates of imprisonment overshadow or at least rival college degrees for black men in their mid thirties; further, imprisonment for this group was twice as common as military service (p.164).

Post-Secondary Outcomes of General Education Development (GED)

Cameron and Heckman (1993) also reject the idea that GED recipients are similarly situated to traditional high school diploma graduates. Conducting a longitudinal study these researchers concluded that GED recipients are still significantly limited in comparison to traditional high school diploma recipients. Most importantly, Cameron and Heckman found that while “GED recipients lie between dropouts and high school graduates economically and socially, they are much closer to dropouts than high school graduates” (p.24)

The GED is certainly preferable to dropping out. However, Murnane, Willett and Tyler (2000) have found that

...high school graduates earned 42 percent more than observationally comparable dropouts who completed nine years of schooling, and 32 percent more than permanent dropouts who left school after completing

eleven years of schooling. On average, GED recipients earned 13 percent more than permanent dropouts without this credential who completed the same number of years of high school. (Fine et al., 2007 quoting Murnane, Willett, and Tyler, p.35)

Thus, even accounting for the suspected increased cognitive capacity of GED earners, economically, GED earners completing the same number of years as permanent dropouts without the GED credential, earn substantially less than high school graduates and only marginally more than permanent dropouts. Why? Likely the explanation is socialization skills introduced in high school and reinforced through twelve years of high school. As Fine et al. (2007) make clear, these societal norms are of significant value in the workplace. Therefore, though demonstrating increased cognitive ability, GED earners may be unable to demonstrate the social behaviors that which are of increased value in workgroups and service industry employment (Fine et al., 2007, p.54).

Also, relatively absent are the significant numbers of GED earners experiencing post-secondary educational success. With the increased demonstration of cognitive ability necessary to fulfill the requirements to receive the GED, the expectation would be that fairly substantial numbers would go on to experience post-secondary educational experiences. Sadly, this is not true. Though the numbers of GED earners with some college credit exceeds that of permanent dropouts, the comparison to high school graduates is startling. High school graduates on average access post-secondary opportunities at a 70 percent rate whereas only one-third of GED earners do so (Murnane, Willett, and Tyler, 2000). This statistic belies the fact that as Murnane, Willett and Tyler (2000) demonstrate, “each year of completed college is associated with a four percent increase in earnings at age 27” (p.34). What this research shows is simply that high

school graduates with diploma in hand access college more readily, more frequently, and ultimately to greater advantage than GED earners.

These numbers and the fact that an overwhelming majority of our nation's school age children attend public schools require us to examine the outcomes of high-stakes and alternative assessment programs on our children's futures. From the perspective of economics, socio-economics and criminal justice, graduating from high-school has an immediate and prolonged positive impact on the post-secondary lives of children and young adults. Statistics demonstrate that young people of color without high school diplomas fare significantly worse than white youth without high school diplomas. Further, without high school diplomas, young people of color face disproportionate likelihoods of imprisonment and financial hardship (Belfield & Levin, 2007).

In the context of the SRA, eliminating the alternative route to graduation in New Jersey considering the increasing numbers of students relying on the exam will have could have disastrous consequences. Currently over 13,000 students, more than a third of Abbott graduates and 20 percent of all New Jersey graduates receive their high school diplomas via the alternative route program. As the literature demonstrates, from an economic and criminogenic perspective, failure to graduate high school places you in an increasingly marginalized position. Not only are non-graduates foreclosed from employment and economic opportunities, non-graduates are disproportionately over-represented in the criminal justice system. Elimination of the SRA would be highly punitive and could place thousands of high school students a year in dire straits. New Jersey Education policy must recognize that any decision that has the effect of increasing dropout rates rather than graduation could have dire consequences for all youth, but

especially historically vulnerable youth. Providing them with every means of demonstrating their readiness to participate in post-secondary life is crucial if our true goal is to make their post-secondary life as positive an experience as possible.

Significance of Current Research

The current research project seeks to address the existing gap in both the research and the literature. Currently the debate centers on the need to provide equitable education in public schools. The heart of the exchange involves how we determine retention and promotion. On one side of the argument are those who believe that high-stakes examinations as the determinative unit of measure of success for all students is most equitable. On the other side of the argument are those who believe that high-stakes exams short change children, particularly poor and minority children because they marginalize and isolate cultural knowledge and abilities. The latter proponents advocate alternative assessment as an additive and holistic means of accurately measuring what children know. Where the literature is largely silent is on whether there are differential expectations, opportunities, and practical post-secondary experiences for those students graduating under one program or the other.

Given the number of students in New Jersey, especially its Abbott districts, graduating via the SRA, calls for the elimination of the SRA and adoption of one uniform standard of exiting high school are both shortsighted and empirically unsupported without an initial and sustained longitudinal examination of the post-secondary effects of graduating via one route (HSPA) versus the other (SRA). This study is particularly timely considering the revision called for by the New Jersey State Board of Education in March of 2008. Before revisions are made, prudence requires that a study is undertaken

to determine whether revisions, particularly in content, are needed. A study of the post-secondary effects in terms of life experiences including education, family, employment, and criminality is not only timely but responsible but necessary.

In addition, this research contributes substantially in the search for answers to several fundamental questions concerning the validity of the current differential assessment programs. Surveying and interviewing both SRA and HSPA graduates to learn what they have done since high school, this research will ascertain the variation in post-secondary life experiences for each group. If the research demonstrates that there are no significant differences between HSPA and SRA, the elimination of the SRA would not only be problematic but counterproductive. If, on the other hand, there are significant post-secondary differences in terms of college matriculation, college type and persistence between HSPA and SRA (favoring HSPA), then the legitimacy of the SRA as a tool of academic assessment could be seriously questioned. However, without empirical evidence, no responsible administrator, educator or policy maker can make any claims of illegitimacy.

The research undertaken here contributes theoretical, practical and pedagogical knowledge to the ongoing debate of the proper method of assessing what students learn in secondary educational settings. Responsible schooling dictates that before we make significant changes in educational policy, changes which have the capacity to affect tens of thousands of young people's lives, we have as much knowledge concerning the experiences of those undergoing the assessment and those having gone through the assessment. This research contributes what the literature does not: empirical evidence of what happens to students after leaving high school under the HSPA and SRA.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY and RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is fundamentally concerned with taking research questions and turning them into empirically testable projects. That is, the methods chosen are very much tied to the research question(s) you wish to answer. Manstead and Semin (1988), commenting on the methods used in the field of social psychology but applying the comment liberally, make the point that strategies selected when conducting research depend on the question you are attempting to answer. According to Hakim (1987) as cited by Robson (1994), researchers carrying out research projects are similar to builders. For Hakim,

Design deals primarily with aims, purposes, intentions and plans within the practical constraints of location, time, money and availability of staff. It is also very much about *style*, the architect's own preferences and ideas (whether innovative or solidly traditional) and the stylistic preferences of those who pay for the work and have to live with the finished result (Robson, 1994:39, quoting Hakim, 1987:1)

All of this is meant, of course, to sensitize the researcher to the importance of design issues. For researchers, the methodology must fit the research and the answers sought. Attention to design issues at the beginning, middle, and end of the project will result in a thorough examination of the research question posed. In most instances, ongoing attention to design will result in a clearer, more concise, more illuminating finished product.

Quantitative Research

Quantitative research employs mathematical theories, properties or principles in order to measure and quantify phenomena. Quantification is at the heart of quantitative research due to the link provided between observation and the interpretation of

observable and measurable phenomena into mathematical principles. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) observe that the resistance to qualitative as opposed to quantitative methods reflects, “an uneasy awareness that the traditions of qualitative research commit the researcher to a critique of the positivist project.” (p.4), or put more simply, an examination of more than what we can observe and measure. However, this desire to keep the colloquial hard and soft methods separate cannot and should not be the lone resistance to qualitative research. Creswell asserts that quantitative methods are appropriate when identifying those factors that might influence a specific outcome or when testing a particular theory. Qualitative studies are appropriate when the researcher is exploring and isn’t necessarily able to quantify the existing variables (Creswell, 2003). Quantitative research is elevated because of the position given the hard sciences. The positive sciences (physics, chemistry, economics) are considered to embody truth. Thus, in the positive sciences we move beyond subjective opinion and personal inclination and approach *truth* (Carey, 1989:99). In the current research project the variables are known and quantifiable. Thus a quantitative research design will be used.

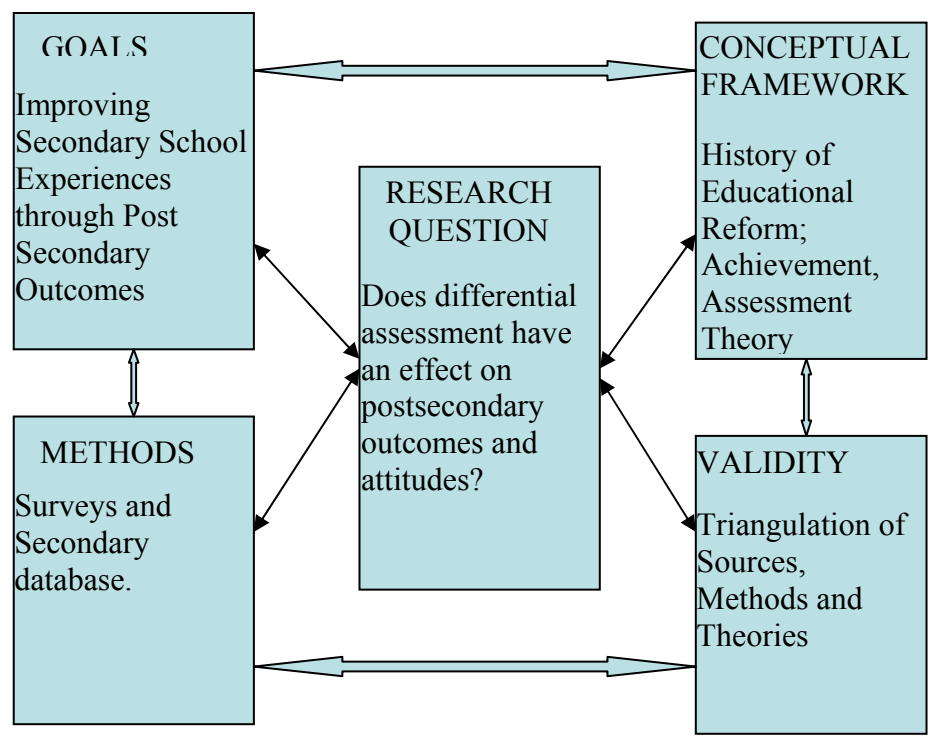


Fig. B: Model for Quantitative Research Design

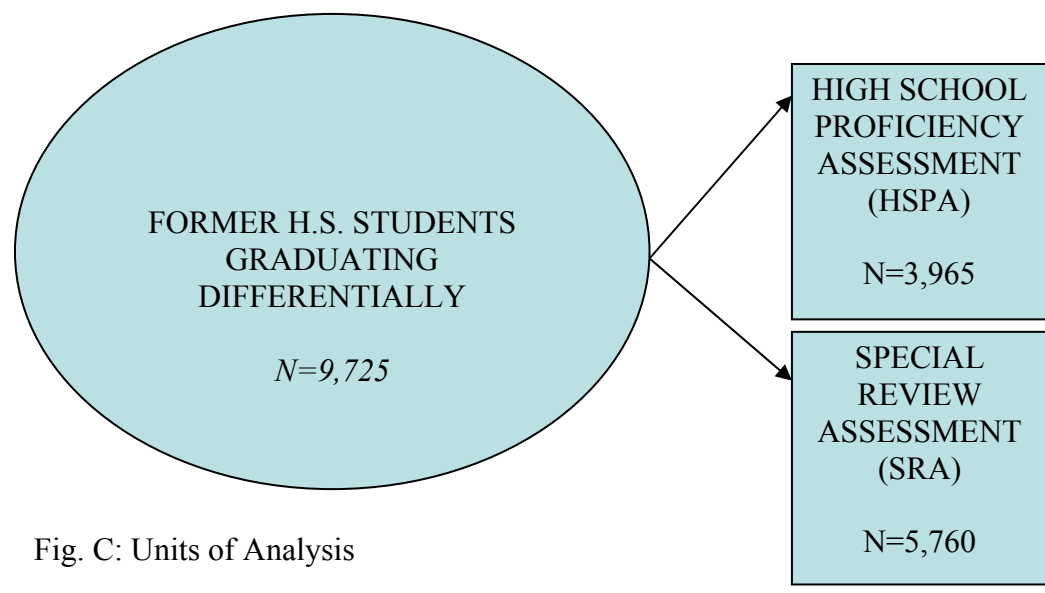


Fig. C: Units of Analysis

The units of analysis for this research proposal come directly from the research question listed earlier. The units of analysis should be a “concept, idea or action that illuminates the significant features of your data so that the question asked can be

answered”. (Foss and Waters, 2007: 187) For this research proposal, the units of analysis are the students in both the primary and secondary databases.

The target population of this study is students graduating via New Jersey’s dual assessment program. In order to study the post-secondary effects of having graduated under a dual high-school exit examination scheme, the target population must be representative of this scheme. This definition encompasses a significant number of students as the alternative scheme has been widely available to all New Jersey high-school students failing the HSPA examination since 1991. However, this is a smaller scale study meant to provide immediate information on differential effects. A larger multi-method study might offset questions of validity, but generalizability is not limited to the number of subjects studied. Smaller studies done with sound methods can provide as much if not more usable research data as larger longer studies. For this research study, the population will be targeted as to provide the researcher with access to a population of accessible participants.

Measurement of Variables

The dependent variables for this study are: a.) college/university attendance, b.) 2-year/4-year year, c.) public/private college and d.) years/semesters of attendance. The independent variables for this study are the assessment programs: High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) and Special Review Assessment (SRA). The control variables are gender, ethnicity, race and socio-economic status. Typically, an experiment or research study seeks to examine the effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable. *Figure D* below presents the variables the research will analyze. This figure is meant to reflect a certain relationship between the variables. This expectation involves

the notion of relationships. A student's attributes on one variable are expected to cause or encourage a particular attribute on another variable. In this particular figure, having graduated via the HSPA or SRA suggests some relationship as to post-secondary outcomes. This research seeks to suggest that the post-secondary outcomes may be caused by something. The type of outcome (dependent variable) depends on the assessment program (independent variable).

The two databases utilized for this study are a secondary database and a primary survey database. The secondary database was assembled by combining multiple data lists from throughout the district and a national post-secondary data warehouse. The secondary database comprises 10 high schools (6 traditional neighborhood comprehensive high schools and 4 competitive entry magnet schools) and approximately 10,000 students. The primary survey database consisted of approximately 20 Likert style and multiple choice questions and was distributed to approximately 500 graduates from two of the traditional neighborhood comprehensives within the district.

DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Outcomes

<u>CONTROL VARIABLES</u>	<u>INDEPENDENT VARIABLES</u>	COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY
GENDER	High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) Students	COLLEGE ATTENDANCE
		2-YEAR/4-YEAR COLLEGE
ETHNICITY RACE SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS (SES)	Special Review Assessment (SRA) Students	PRIVATE/PUBLIC COLLEGE
		YEARS/SEMESTERS OF ATTENDANCE

Figure D: Dependent, Independent and Control Variables

If not controlled for, the weakness of this type of research study is in the multiple confounding factors which effect educational outcomes. Here, the figure suggests that the outcomes have only two determinants or attributes: HSPA, SRA. This is likely an issue of validity, as there are bound to be other factors such as family support, Socio-economic status (SES), race, gender and teacher-student relationship (to name a few), which have some effect on outcomes. However, as *Figure D* shows, these factors can and will be controlled for to gauge independent effects. Controlling for these factors will

allow this research to gauge the extent to which there are differential outcomes based on the type of assessment program under which students graduate.

Operationalization

Michael Maxfield and Earl Babbie describe operationalization as “specifying steps, procedures, or operations for actually identifying and measuring the variables we want to observe.” (Maxfield and Babbie, 2005, pg. 31) What this means is that intangible concepts or notions can be fuzzy. Operationalization allows the researcher, many times by proxy, to define concepts thus making them measurable. From this step, relationships between independent and dependent relationships can be measured and analyzed.

Figure D lists those variables which will be analyzed for their relationships. The independent variables, or those variables *causing* something, are the HSPA or SRA. HSPA and SRA are dichotomous, as a student either graduates under one or the other. The outcome of the examination suggests a possible third option which allows for a graduation under both the HSPA and SRA by passing one part of the HSPA and failing the other. This suggestion is illusory as a partial proficiency is deemed graduation under the SRA. Graduation under the HSPA/SRA or the possible confluence of the two is readily measured through survey questions. The following *Figure E* represents those independent variables which will be utilized for this study. It is important to have a visual representation of the variables used and the operationalization of the concepts.

Figure E below visually represents the independent variables to be measured in the study. The High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) and Special Review Assessment (SRA) have been represented below in terms of objectives, methodology, advantages and disadvantages with

Assessment Program	Objectives	Methodology	Advantages	Disadvantages
High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA)	-Pursuant to the Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS) adopted by NJBOE in 1996, the HSPA11 is designed to test achievement in reading, writing, and mathematics in an objective formal setting pursuant to the CCCS which defines what students are supposed to know after 13 years of formal education.	-Administered as a single standardized pencil and paper examination (scantron) with several open-ended questions and an essay component.	-Administered in formal testing environment under timed, secured conditions on dates specified by state -Said to be more equitable due to its objective application and scoring process -Scored at the state level by third party vendors	-Traditional paper and pencil standardized exam -Fails to account for differences in learning styles and needs of students. -Views assessment as “one size fits all” proposition -Forces those students needing alternative assessment environment to fail HSPA before advancing to the alternative assessment program.
Special Review Assessment (SRA)	Pursuant to New Jersey Statute (N.J.S.A. 18A:7c-3) and Administrative Code (N.J.A.C. 6.8-7.1), the SRA is designed to allow those students meeting all non-exit examination requirements to comply with CCCS via an alternative examination under less stressful and time constraining circumstances.	-Administered as a series of skill clustered performance assessment tasks (PATs). -Two successful PATs are required for each section of the HSPA the student did not pass.	-Allows for informal, individualized assessment in the takers first language. -Similar in content and difficulty to HSPA. -Requires students to successfully complete a series of performance assessment tasks (PATs) that are aligned with the HSPA.	-Scored at the local level. -Untimed, informal, and inconsistent administration and lack of scoring review -Though comparable in content and difficulty with HSPA, incomplete explanation as to why students fail HSPA and pass SRA.

Fig. E. Operationalized Independent Variables

descriptions of each of the variables being given. The variables themselves have been operationalized in the form of questions directed towards the subjects of the study.

Figure F, Figure F1 and Figure F2 demonstrate several of the means by which the research will attempt to measure the extent to which the HSPA, SRA or a portion of each was utilized to graduate high school and go on to post-secondary life. Attitudes, behaviors and student demographics will be likewise measured using similar survey questions.

Though the questions here are primarily generated by the researcher, they reflect the difficulty of cross-survey analysis. Attempting to locate readily available questions representing the variables herein would have resulted in a number of proxies being used. Therefore, many times it is more efficient to generate survey and interview questions anew.

VARIABLES	QUESTIONS
HSPA and SRA	Which statement most accurately describes you? 1 <input type="checkbox"/> I graduated high school through the HSPA alone 2 <input type="checkbox"/> I graduated high school through the SRA alone 3 <input type="checkbox"/> I graduated high school through a combination of the HSPA math and SRA language arts 4 <input type="checkbox"/> I graduated high school through a combination of the HSPA language arts and SRA math 5 <input type="checkbox"/> I graduated high school through neither the HSPA nor SRA

Figure F: Operationalized Independent Variables

The question above demonstrates one of the ways in which the surveys will operationalize and measure the number of students graduating via the HSPA or SRA.

Another example of the use of survey questions and interviews to elicit responses from those surveyed and measure the use of the HSPA and SRA and the effectiveness of

the HSPA and SRA (from the perspective of those having graduated under the programs) would be the following:

VARIABLES	QUESTIONS
HSPA and SRA	<p>Please tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement:</p> <p><i>“In terms of the exit examination(s) I took (HSPA, SRA, or combination of both), I feel it adequately tested what I learned in high school?”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1• Strongly Agree 2• Agree Somewhat 3• Disagree Somewhat 4• Disagree Strongly

Figure F1: Operationalized Independent Variables

Or,

VARIABLES	QUESTIONS
HSPA and SRA	<p>Please tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement:</p> <p><i>“I feel there is no difference whether you graduate high school having passed the HSPA or SRA.”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1• Strongly Agree 2• Agree Somewhat 3• Disagree Somewhat 4• Disagree Strongly

Figure F2: Operationalized Independent Variables

These questions are, of course, just a sample of those questions which are asked to those individuals having graduated under the assessment programs being studied. The point of the questions is to elicit responses from the individuals which will assist the researcher in both measuring the number of individuals moving on to post-secondary life via one or the

other assessment program and measuring attitudes and perceptions of the individuals having graduated under the assessment programs.

Operationalization: Dependent Variables

In social research, it is very difficult to measure important concepts directly. Broad concepts are often interpreted and conceptualized differently depending on who is reading or being asked the question. For example, a question such as: *Are you currently attending college?* This question, if not properly operationalized can be interpreted in a number of different ways depending on who is being asked. For example, college can be conceptualized by some as any post-secondary educational institution. However, the researcher likely had in mind a minimum four-year educational institution. Therefore, when operationalizing variables, it is necessary to be as specific as possible though it is understood that at times, this is a less than straight forward process.

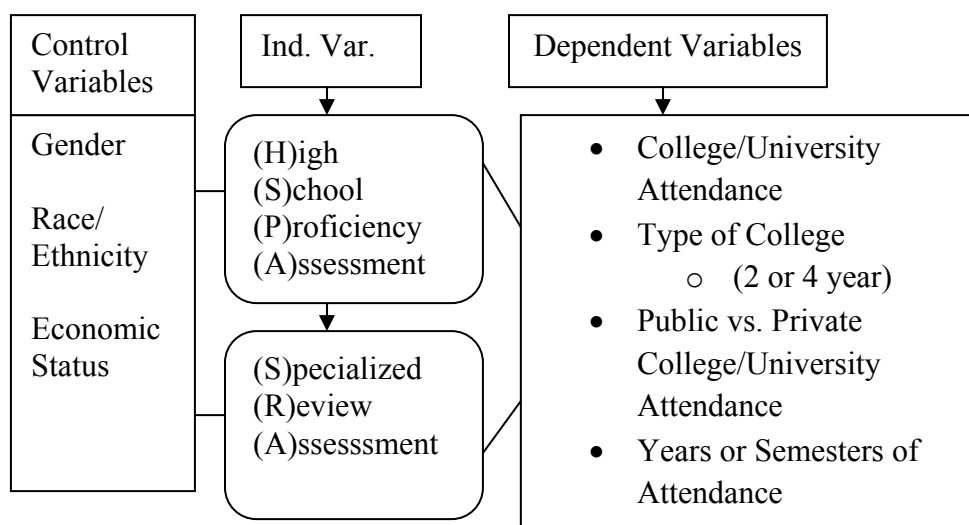


Fig. G: Conceptual Model

Figure G is a visual representation of the dependent variables measured in this study. For example, the dependent variable college/university is operationalized to determine whether the respondent attended a two-year junior college or a four-year college/university.

Figure G also lists race, ethnicity, gender and socio-economic status (SES). These demographic variables could be considered confounders or confounding variables. These variables must be controlled for to prevent errors in conclusion. For example, *figures D* and *figure(s) F, F1* and *F2* provide independent and dependent variables and position them such that the relationship between the variables is unaffected by any other influences. This could certainly be the case, but conclusions could also be attributed to confounding variables. Controlling for the demographic data here minimizes “false positives” or errors in conclusion concerning the relationship between independent and dependent variables. Thus, survey questions can be devised to gain demographic data on the research subjects and controlled for during analysis.

The figure below provides an example of the manner in which the dependent variable has been operationalized in the survey instrument.

DEPENDENT VARIABLE	QUESTIONS
College/university	Are you currently attending a junior college? 1• yes 2• no
	Are you currently attending a four (4) year college/University? 1• yes 2• no
	How many years have you spent in school after high school? 1• 2• 3• 4• 5 or more•

Figure H: Operationalized Dependent Variables

Data Collection: Current Research

For this study, in order to evaluate the attitudes and outcomes of students graduating under both the New Jersey state High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) and the New Jersey state alternative route Special Review Assessment (SRA), a research design utilizing both primary survey data and secondary research data compiled by combining multiple years' assessment and demographic data was used. The resulting research is a descriptive study of differences in post-secondary educational outcomes

associated with differential assessment. Both data collection methods discussed were employed to investigate the primary research question posed:

Q. To what extent does the process of graduation under an alternative assessment program rather than the state mandated high-stakes assessment program have a differential effect on the post-secondary attitudes and initial post-secondary outcomes of the graduates in the different assessment programs?

Additional secondary research questions posed by this research are:

1. What is the difference in college attendance between those students graduating via HSPA versus SRA?
2. Is there a difference in 2 year versus 4 year college/university attendance between those students graduating via HSPA versus SRA?
3. Is there a difference in public versus private college/university attendance between those students graduating via HSPA versus SRA?
4. Are there differences in college persistence (who enters and continues) between those students graduating via HSPA versus SRA?
5. Are there any demographic differences in terms of race, ethnicity, gender and socio-economic status (ses) in those students graduating via HSPA versus SRA?
6. Do race, ethnicity, gender and socio-economic status (ses) have an effect on those SRA or HSPA takers persisting in or graduating from college?
7. What types (quality?) of colleges/university do HSPA versus SRA takers attend?
8. Are there differences in post-secondary attitudes between HSPA and SRA takers?
9. Do HSPA and SRA graduates retrospectively view their high-school preparation differently?

10. Do HSPA and SRA graduates retrospectively view one assessment type as superior or inferior to the other?

This study researches the post-secondary educational pathways and attitudes of those high-school students having graduated through two different assessment programs. As stated throughout, the assessments themselves are designed to test the same content in different ways. For example, “the SRA content is aligned to the HSPA test specifications in order to ensure that students who are certified through the SRA process have demonstrated the same skills and competencies at comparable levels as students who passed the written HSPA test” (Fine, et al., 2007). In her testimony before the Senate Budget Committee Education Commissioner Lucille Davy stated, “the SRA was never intended to be used as a lower standard, but rather a different means of measuring the same standard.” (*New Jersey Senate Budget Committee Testimony*, April 16, 2007) In this way, the assessments are different in form only. One is the traditional pencil and paper exam in a formalized timed setting with multiple choice, short answers and essays, while the other is an untimed series of performance assessment tasks (PAT). The purpose of this research is to begin to formalize a method for monitoring the post-secondary academic achievement of HSPA and SRA takers to determine if they persist in pursuing education after high-school.

Aside from aggregate totals of the numbers of students graduating through HSPA and SRA, little information has been gathered to date on the characteristics or post-educational attitudes and outcomes of Newark high school students. Little to no information is known about the students’ post-secondary educational outcomes. This research fills this gap and supplies information that can help to inform policy decisions

that will affect tens of thousands of New Jersey's students and hundreds of its communities.

Sample, Population, and Participants: Database #1

The secondary database consists of district graduation data and assessment data (both traditional and alternative) from the ten (10) comprehensive high-schools throughout the school district for the years 2003-2008, as well as a National Clearinghouse database for those students going on to post-secondary education. These three databases were merged together through use of a combination of the statistical programs SPSS and Statistical Analysis System ("SAS"). After merging these multiple databases into one, the final merged list constituted the complete secondary database from which data analysis of the secondary dataset proceeded. This process will be discussed in detail below.

The creation of the secondary database was a process of merging multiple databases of essentially the same students. The creation of the database began by assembling lists of graduates for the desired years. The lists of graduates for the ten comprehensive high schools in question here were forwarded by the schools themselves and confirmed by checking the final numbers with those created by the district headquarters. To the extent that discrepancies existed, corrections were requested until the final numbers were reconciled. This process was undergone for each comprehensive high school. Once each comprehensive high school had sent in their lists and the graduate numbers had been confirmed, the lists were combined to create one list of graduates. This process was done for each year from spring 2003 to spring 2008.

Compiling graduate lists was followed by the need to compile lists of those who had taken the High School Proficiency Examination (HSPA) for the years in question. The HSPA examination is the traditional exit examination from high-school throughout the district. All students are required to sit for the examination at least once, generally in the spring semester of their junior year in high-school unless they are exempt. This exemption from the exam can be a result of several factors such as: Special Education Status, English Language Learner (ELL) Status (such as those ELL students who are in their first year of residency in the United States who are exempted from the Language Arts Literacy section of the assessment exams), and other discrete reasons. (Alfone, et. al, 2007). Therefore, the compiling of the lists is subject to recognizing that there are numbers of students throughout the district who are exempt from sitting for the HSPA for one reason or the other. The final lists of HSPA students in this study which were ultimately merged with the combined graduate list and post-secondary list reflects those students who sat for the HSPA at least one time and graduated via HSPA or Special Review Assessment (SRA).

The lists of 11th and 12th grade HSPA students were taken for each semester it was offered from the spring of 2003 through the spring of 2008. Generally this allowed for two semesters per academic year with the exception of the fall of 2008 which was unavailable for analysis at the time. The 2003-2008 data was deemed to be the most complete for analysis. This data provide five complete years of data for analysis.

The HSPA lists for the years in question were taken directly from the district databases and the contents of the data files were not altered in any way. The lists were basically combined one year to the next until all years were accounted for. The lists were

then set aside until such time as they could be merged with the graduate and post-secondary lists. As the post-secondary list was created directly as a result of the graduation list, the graduation list was merged with the post-secondary list and this list was merged with the assessment (HSPA) list. The lists were merged based on the most unique variables present. To the extent possible, the merging was done using last and first names, student id numbers, birthdates, and high schools. As will be discussed, the merging became problematic due to the numerous ways in which data had been entered over the years. This resulted in multiple spellings of names and entries of student ids and birthdates. However, conceptually, the combining of the lists proceeded in this fashion:

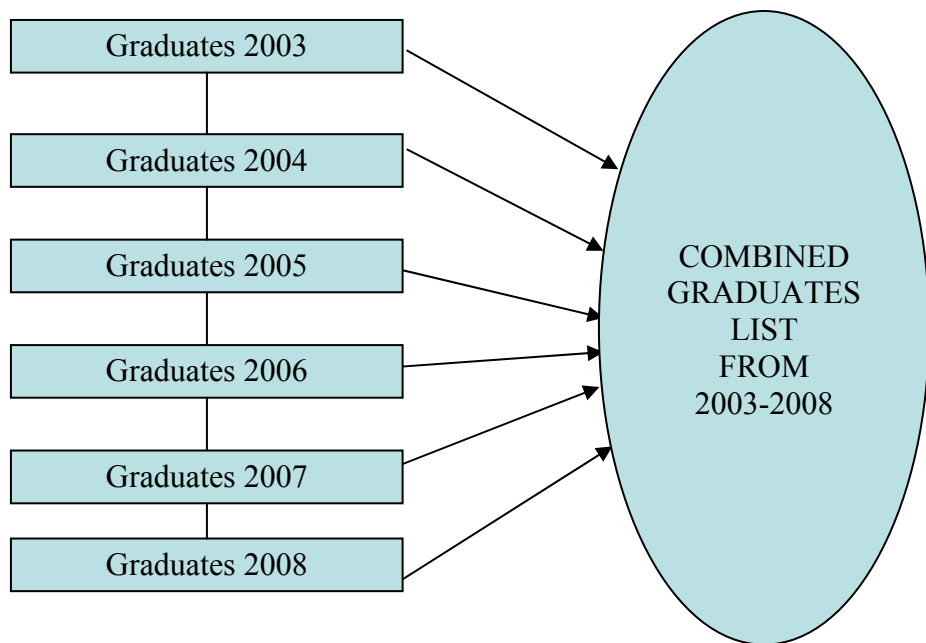


Fig. I: Model for Merging of Secondary Data: GRADUATE LISTS

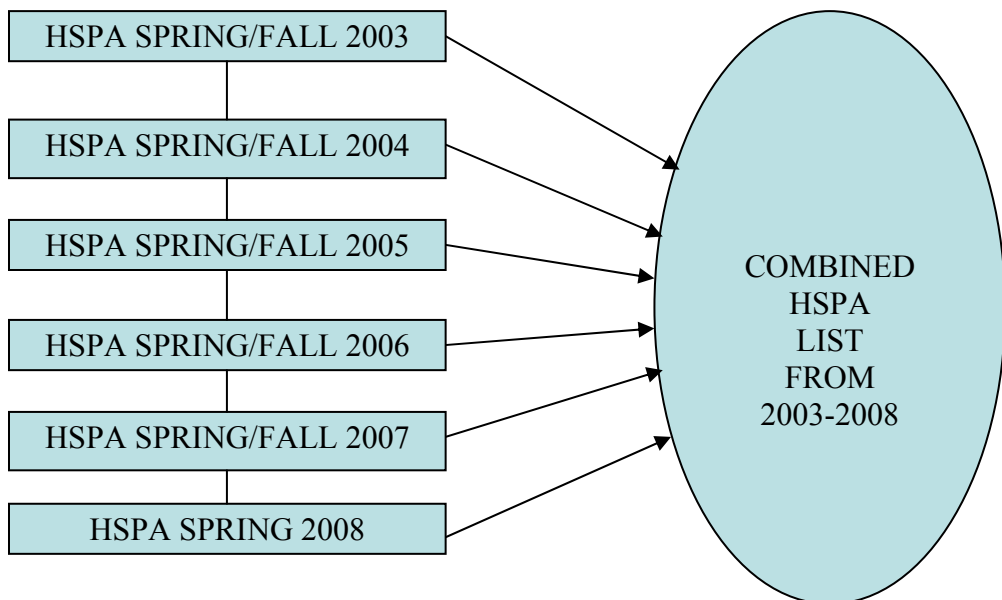


Fig. J: Model for Merging of Secondary Data: HSPA LISTS

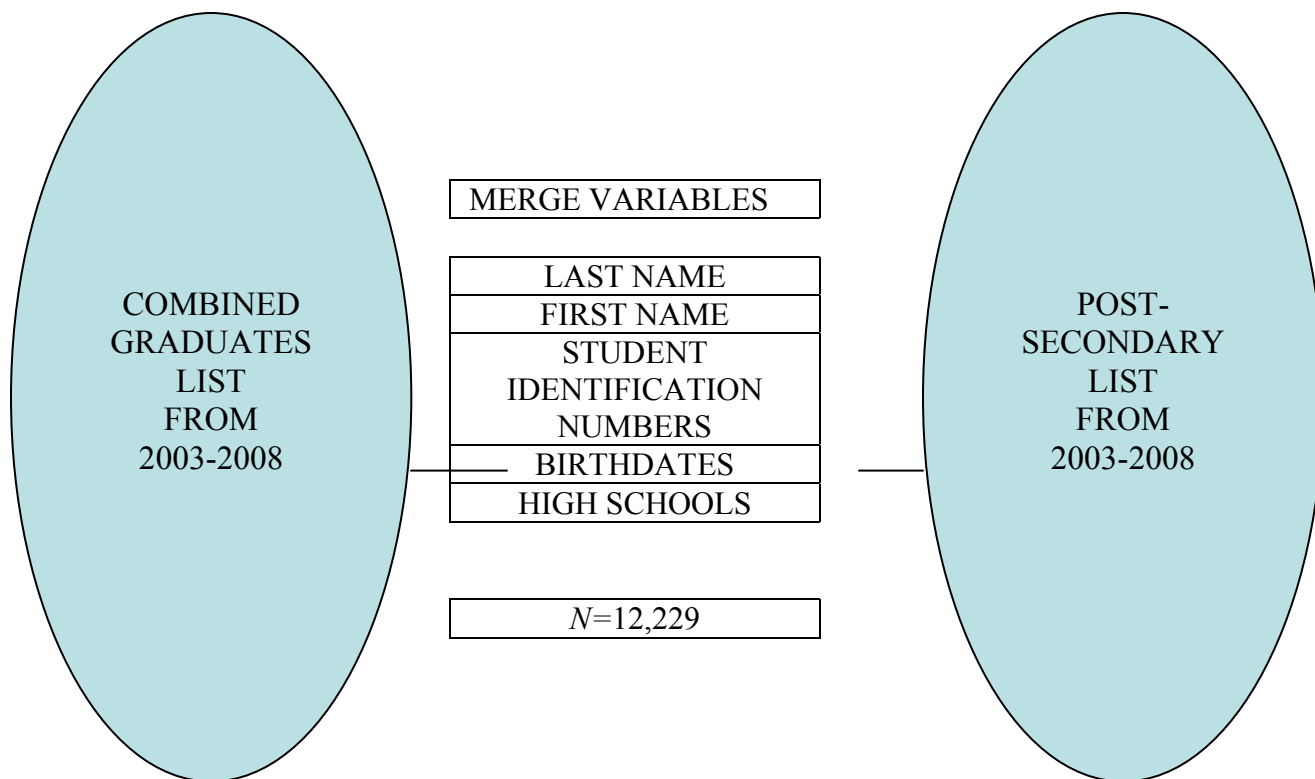


Fig. K: Merge Variables

As stated, the post-secondary list was assembled based on the initial graduates list. The post-secondary list contains any post-secondary information on the students based on the search variables submitted. The search variables submitted were:

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	DOB	STUDENT ID	HIGH-SCHOOL GRAD-DATE	SCHOOL NAME	SCHOOL CODE

Fig. L: Post Secondary Search Variables

Based on these variables, the post-secondary list returns information on the graduates such as whether or not each student submitted attended any post-secondary institution. This response variable was dichotomous (Yes/No). If the answer to the RECORDS FOUND query equaled NO, there was no post-secondary information. Therefore, the list returned nothing further than the initial information submitted on the graduate lists. However, if the response equaled YES, the list returned multiple lines of data for each student dependent on how many institutions the student attended and how many times the student registered for classes. Ultimately the list returned in excess of 50,000 lines of data for 12,229 students. These multiple lines were merged until all information returned for each individual student was non-duplicative and on one line. Eventually each student attending a post-secondary institution could be read on only one line.

The variables returned on the post-secondary list, excluding those submitted by the graduates list as search variables, consisted of the following:

COLLEGE	MAJOR	DEGREE (IF ANY)	2 OR 4 YEAR	PUBLIC/ PRIVATE	DATES OF ENROLLMENT	DATES OF EXIT	DATE OF GRAD. (IF ANY)
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Fig. M: Post Secondary Variables

After merging the graduate and clearinghouse lists, the individuals appearing on both lists totaled in excess of 12,229 students. This list was then merged with the HSPA or assessment list. This final merge constitutes the entirety of the post-secondary dataset consisting of assessment data and post-secondary data. However, not all of the students were usable as units of analysis (See limitations below).

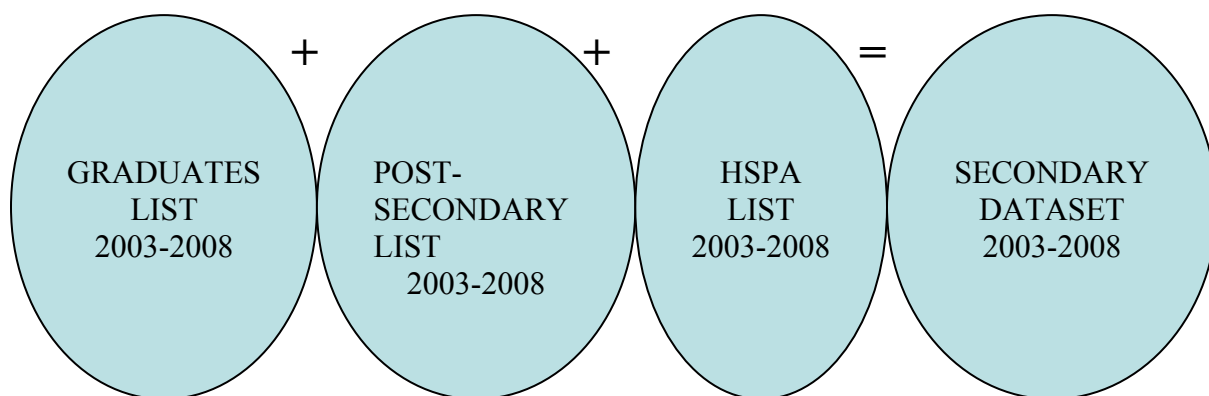


Fig. N: Secondary Dataset Merge Model

Sample, Population, and Participants: The Survey, Database #2

There is a tradition of empirical work outside of randomized experimentation.

Survey strategy aspires to quantitative rigor comparable to that of experimentation.

According to Robson (1994) and Groves, et al. (2004), surveys do not normally involve the extensive manipulation or control of variables inherent in experimentation. However, carefully designed surveys are the preferred method for asking/answering descriptive types of questions (Robson, 1994).

Groves, et al. (2004) defines surveys as “a systematic method for gathering information from (a sample of) entities for the purposes of constructing quantitative descriptors of the attributes of the larger population of which the entities are members (p.2). Surveys are extensively used and developed by social scientists. Involving the use of questionnaires and/or interviews surveys, like randomized or quasi experimentation, require the use of sampling as the surveying of whole populations (see U.S. Census) is generally impossible. Surveys involve the putting of “carefully crafted standardized questions to a chosen set up respondents.

Surveys can be used to measure not only social problems, but subjective states. Subjective states can be defined as those characteristics of individuals that are unobservable and internalized within a person. Therefore, surveys allow researchers to “get at” information that would not otherwise be available such as socially undesirable or personal information. Surveys, for example, have proven an invaluable method of provoking responses to personally sensitive questions as to sexual habits, criminal involvement, or other socially questionable subjects. Through the process of carefully crafting questions tailored to elicit either specific responses (yes/no) or more narrative responses, surveys allow for great candor. Additionally, surveys allow for anticipated follow-up questions; though many times these are best addressed in face to face interviews. However, socially undesirable traits are usually best requested through the medium of a survey (Groves, et al., 2004). Though, for obvious reasons, large scale surveys wherein a large group of trained surveyors and interviewers can be deployed and resources can be marshaled at a whim would be preferred, small-scale surveys have an important role to play in research. Robson (1994) says about small-scale surveys, “...this type of approach is readily understood by the ‘consumer’-and/or the person you hope to influence” (p.4). Further, other researchers have argued that surveys are the best tools for generating usable knowledge (Lindblom and Cohen, 1979).

Because of the desire to survey students retrospectively on their attitudes/feelings concerning high-school academic preparation, their attitudes/feelings concerning the HSPA/SRA and their attitudes/feelings concerning their current post-secondary positions, access to current and/or former directories is essential. One of the surest ways of obtaining contact lists when doing research is to engage in a partnership with an

organization owning such lists. The survey portion of this research was conducted with the assistance of an incentive based scholarship program (“Program”) serving similar types of students needed to conduct the research.

The Program engages students early in their academic life by making their presence known through school presentations and weekend programming. As the students progress up until and through high school, the Program contracts with the students to provide financial support after high school in college should the students finish high school in good academic standing. The contracts presented by the Program and signed by the students stipulate that certain requirements in terms of student GPA, high-school class attendance and weekend programming, etc., must be met by the student on a pre and post-disbursement basis in order to receive funding during their college years. These requirements are in place during high school after signing the contract and during college years.

Due to the need to communicate with scholarship recipients concerning weekend programming and other organizational activities, the Program requires that the students keep current addresses on file. The scholarship recipients have an incentive to keep current addresses on file due to the program’s mandate that not only must the scholarship recipients maintain steady progress toward graduation in terms of college GPA, etc., but they must continue to attend weekend programming and informational sessions. For this reason, the Program’s database of current addresses on former comprehensive high school students is unique.

High schools do not keep addresses of their former students on file. Once students leave high school for college their association with their high schools usually

ends unless there is a specific reason for it to continue. Successful college students will often be asked to return to give motivational addresses to current high school students, but this population of students is very small and certainly inadequate as a sample population for data collection. The Program's database of students and addresses thus presented an opportunity to collect data from a population of students otherwise inaccessible. As stated earlier, the program's scholarship population is composed of students who had graduated college differentially via assessment. More specifically as the research seeks to track the initial post-secondary attitudes, feelings and post-secondary pathways of differential graduates the Program provided an otherwise unavailable opportunity.

The program never made available nor authorized the use of or access to student names or addresses. The surveys themselves contain no questions requiring self-identifying information and are in that way completely anonymous. The survey was crafted by the author but mailed by the Program as an insert with one of the routine informational letters. The surveys were mostly returned by mail to the Program headquarters where they were removed by the assistant to the executive director and stored in a file. The assistant would then alert the researcher to the presence of the surveys via email, phone call, or on occasion. In addition, during those odd times when the scholarship recipients would stop into the office on a weekend break home or because they were local, they would deliver the mailed survey in person. The surveys returned in person were placed with the surveys returned by mail. In exchange for making the population of students available for surveying, a series of Likert style questions were

crafted for the Program specifically designed to illicit responses that could be used to act as quality control.

The mailing resulted in surveys being sent to 491 participants. This number reflects the number of students with whom the organization has been affiliated since 1999. Program participants from 1999 through 2007 were surveyed. Approximately 20 of the surveys were returned undeliverable resulting in an actual mailing to approximately 471 participants. This reflects the realization that students are transient. Even for an organization that keeps abreast of its students on pain of withdrawing financial support, the file information can grow cold. In addition, once the student satisfies the programmatic requirements as to GPA, high school attendance and weekend programming, the Program only guarantees support for six years from the date of high school graduation. Therefore, it is possible that some scholarship recipients had exhausted their eligibility and had not kept the program advised of their whereabouts.

Response Rates

Response rates are always a concern. The literature is ever evolving on the issue of response rates; particularly in the era of email and web-based surveys. The response rates for surveys have been reviewed to mixed results. As a general course, response rates for average citizens were higher for mailed surveys (Schonlau, Fricker, and Elliott, 2002). However, in a more recent look at the topic, Anderson and Kanuka (2003) in their book entitled *e-research, Methods strategies and issues*, report that rates of return are higher for internet based surveys than for paper surveys. Others have promoted the idea of mixed-mode strategy which utilizes both web based and mail surveys as a means of minimizing response rates (Dillman, 2000).

In this research mail surveys were crafted and used primarily because of the existence of the address database of the respondents. The database did not contain email addresses of the respondents. Though the costs associated with web-surveys can be less than mail surveys when printing and mailing are factored in, the need to secure the internet contact information, set-up the web survey and monitor the web-surveys were prohibitive in both time and financial costs at this time.

Though response rates for mail surveys can be low the response rate of 36% here is not atypical of rates found in surveys of other agencies and non-profits. In some instances this return rate is a great deal higher. Cordes, Henig, Twombly and Saunders (1999) found response rates of anywhere from 25%-50% not atypical for this type of non-profit or organizational research (Cordes, Henig, Twombly, & Saunders, 1999). Dillman, and Tarnai (1995) summarized survey response rates and found that response rates ranged anywhere from 26% to 95%. Thus, though non-response is always a problem when conducting anonymous surveys which include consent forms speaking to voluntariness, 36% here is deemed acceptable to move forward with analysis. As stated, the survey population was a total of 471 with a final sample size of ($N=168$).

Instrumentation

A survey was constructed to gather data respective to the research questions indicated. Questions were built primarily upon the conclusions and theories presented in the literature review. The instrument consists of 19 main questions within four overall areas: demographics, assessments and preparation, feelings and attitudes about assessments, and post-secondary pathways and educational direction. All the questions are either demographic or closed-ended questions with Likert-scale, multiple choice, and

yes or no responses. Within the demographic section, there are three questions. Within the section determining assessments taken and high school preparation, there are three questions. One question is a multiple choice question and two of the questions are comprised of 4 Likert-scaled responses. Within the section focusing specifically on the feelings/attitudes about the assessment examinations, there are five questions comprised of 4 Likert-scaled responses. Within the section on post-secondary pathways and educational direction there are nine questions. Six of the questions are yes or no questions, two of the questions are multiple choice questions and one of the questions is a Likert-scale question.

As an initial step to ensuring the survey was clear and concise, four individuals reviewed the survey instrument and provided suggestions to improve question and instruction clarity. Particularly one of the individuals suggested simplifying the language of the initial survey. To facilitate this, the survey was reorganized and questions grouped to provide greater ease of understanding. In addition the consent statement was rewritten for clarity and to provide a greater explanation of the usefulness of the responses to educational improvement. After these changes were made, the survey was reviewed again. The data from the survey was coded and transferred over accurately into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (“SPSS”). Because the questions were developed specifically for this research, there is no pre-established reliability or validity data.

Incentives to High School Graduation

The program utilized for the survey data in this study is an incentive based program. The program was first begun as a four year college scholarship program but

was reorganized to implement a “feeder” school system. The purpose of the feeder system is to make early recognition of student potential, build and nurture skill sets, improve student behavior, and most importantly identify and rehabilitate at risk students before they “drop-out” of school. As a theoretical framework, the feeder system allows intervention in the lives of future scholars beginning as early as kindergarten until high-school graduation. Throughout elementary and middle school, the program partners with the schools, students and families to provide a support network for future scholars feeding into designated high-schools. Thus, the belief that the relationship between student, family, and scholastic achievement promotes future success is at the core of the incentive program’s mission; closing the achievement gap, increasing high school graduation and college attendance for economically disadvantaged children would seem to be some of the goals.

The program, which has been in operation for 10 years, is a national program serving 10 cities and more than 120,000 students in over 200 economically disadvantaged public schools. In the city at the heart of this study, the program has designated two comprehensive public high schools as the apex of its feeder system. The survey respondents come from these two comprehensive high schools and are the products of this incentive based program.

Limitations

The Surveys

The survey participants were not chosen in a random manner. The surveys were mailed through a local college bound incentive based program primarily because comprehensive high schools find it difficult if not impossible to locate their former

students once they have left high school. Because the incentive based college bound program provides financial and academic support to its students for some years, the program initially gets and continually updates its directory with the whereabouts of its students. In addition, the students are required to make periodic appearances at the program headquarters. Though the students are both HSPA and SRA graduates, they may not be representative of the district in two ways. The first is that the students come from only two of the district's 10 comprehensive high schools. This can be seen as a limitation in that the survey responses may not be generalizable to the district. In addition, the very nature of an incentive based program encourages completion of high school and entrance into college with the promise of financial support. This can be seen as a limitation due to the increased motivation these students who may have been college bound might have had. Because the survey participants come from only two high schools, the results of this study will not allow us to predict how the other 8 comprehensive high school graduates might have answered. Though strong inferences can be drawn due to demographic similarities, the results cannot be automatically imputed to the larger district population.

Database #1

The secondary database is composed of district graduate lists, a national clearinghouse post-secondary list and a district HSPA list. The graduate list served as the "master" list for the compiling of/and merging of the post-secondary list. However, the secondary database as a whole was particularly subject to data entry issues and thus merging issues. Because the graduate list served as the master, the list was relatively "clean" and simply required elimination of extraneous information (such as repeats of ids, birthdates, YES/NO return on records inquiry) and merging of multiple data lines per

student (*see further explanation above*). The multiple data lines constituted different schools or multiple dates of entry at the same school. Once the multiple data lines were merged, the number of cases for the post-secondary list matched the graduate list as expected at $N=12,229$.

The HSPA lists were subject to variation in data entry. As the graduate list served as the master list for merging purposes for both the post-secondary list and the HSPA list, the variables on which the merge was based needed to match exactly. Though this was largely true for the graduate and post-secondary list, the variation in the entry of last names, birthdates, student IDs, etc., in the HSPA lists made the merging of student information from the master to the HSPA lists prohibitive in many instances. For example, a merge based on name, birth-date and high school:

LAST, NAME	FIRST, NAME	BIRTHDATE	HIGHSCHOOL
Samuels-Taylor	Christopher	19900812	Prairie View H.S.
+			
HSPA List			
LAST, NAME	FIRST, NAME	BIRTHDATE	HIGHSCHOOL
SAMUEL-TAYLORS	Christofer	08-12-1990	Prairie View High School

Fig. O: Merge Limitations

Though this is a hypothetical example, the differences between the Master List and the HSPA list are indicative of the types of variation encountered. Some of the changes here can be reconciled fairly easily. For example, case differences are simply a matter of programming. However, dates can be formatted in any number ways and the spelling of names is often left to the whim of the data entry person. Thus, correcting for all the variations became next to impossible without taking each person that would not initially

merge and was not subject to general manipulation (case and formatting) and inspecting them individually. Initially undertaking this exercise, the exercise became increasingly prohibitive because the individuals failing to merge for differences in spelling of names and formatting of birthdates were often entered differently numerous times. For example, as the study spans five (5) complete academic years, and the HSPA exam is offered beginning in the spring semester of the junior year and is available for two additional sittings for a total of three and then on a non-matriculated basis, each individual likely has multiple years of HSPA examinations to be merged. Placing each of these scores on one line from year to year required the data to match up exactly. If it did not match exactly, “cleaning” of the data took place.

This process of cleaning was not unexpected as data often requires manipulation of some sort; however, after a certain point, the time spent on correcting individual persons became an inefficient use of time considering the number of successfully merged and “cleaned” individuals. Thus the individuals whose HSPA data failed to merge for one reason or another constituted ultimately was 2,504 individuals out of the original $N=12,229$. After the exclusion of the unsuccessful HSPA merges the final sample size of the secondary data file consisted of $N=9,725$. This final sample population is the combined total of successful merges from 2003-2008 just as the excluded individuals constitutes an accumulation of individuals from 2003-2008. This time period constitutes over five (5) complete academic years, eleven (11) complete semesters, and eleven (11) sittings of the HSPA examination. This number also constitutes 80% of the total number of possible participants in the study.

Though the failure to successfully merge a percentage of the total population is a limitation due to the inability to know what impact this unknown population would have had on the final analysis; the effect was unlikely to be significant as it is impossible to know at this time which of those were exempt without having merged them. Of the 2,504 a fair percentage of these were, as stated earlier, exempt for one reason or another. The only participants under consideration were those having sat for the HSPA exam at least once. In this regard a variable was created to indicate that HSPA information was/was not available for each student. Those individuals for whom HSPA data was available=1. If there was no HSPA data available, those individuals=0. The 1 were assumed to have sat for the exam at least once, whether they passed or not and were kept. The 0 were assumed not to have sat for the exam and were not considered here. Thus, those ultimately excluded from the analysis were assigned an ordinal of 0, meaning there was no HSPA data available for them, and excluded.

Hypothetically, to be included in the analysis, the individuals would have needed to be categorized as SRA graduates as a default because there were no HSPA scores to determine whether they were HSPA, SRA or exempt. Doing this would have increased the population sample to 100%, but would have compromised the integrity of the data unacceptably. In addition a fair number would have been excluded due to Special Education status and ELL. Thus, though a fair percentage could not be merged in the end this was regarded not to have much of an impact on the HSPA/SRA differential. The high-percentage of successful merges is considered more than acceptable for analysis.

Lastly, the research design itself has some limitations. The results derived from this exclusively quantitative research design may be more limited in depth though

broader in scope than if a more mixed method process were employed. Further, quantitative measures do not accurately depict the complexity involved in human activities. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), “there are separate and detailed literatures on the many methods and approaches that fall under the category of qualitative research such as interviewing, participant observation, and visual methods.” (p.1) Due to the multi-method nature of qualitative research, it has been used distinguishingly in all social sciences as well as education, medicine, and communication. Thus, the complex and innovative aspect of qualitative research combined with the breadth of quantitative research allows the researcher to further employ the tools at hand necessary to answer the questions put forth. In this instance, a qualitative interview process combined with the visual observations would allow for a more substantive, holistic understanding of the quantitative data.

CHAPTER 4

NEW JERSEY ASSESSMENT HISTORY:
HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT (HSPA)
and SPECIALIZED REVIEW ASSESSMENT (SRA)

The Public School Education Act (PSEA), passed by the New Jersey State Legislature in 1975, was cognized as a means of providing all New Jersey school children an educational opportunity which would prepare them to fully function in a democratic society. To facilitate the dual goals of (1) providing a quality educational opportunity, and (2) creating civic minded youth, the Legislature amended the PSEA to establish minimum standards of achievement in basic communication and computational skills. This standardized program of assessment became known as the Minimum Basic Skills (MBS) program for reading and mathematics. This statewide assessment was administered from 1978 through 1982 and was applicable to third, sixth, and ninth grade students (NJ DOE, 2006).

In 1976 New Jersey began to apply the use of an exit exam as a graduation requirement (NJ DOE, 2006). Using the MBS program as a mechanism to prepare students, in 1981-82 New Jersey began to require all ninth grade students to pass the Minimum Basic Skills Test (MBST) as a requirement to receive a high school diploma. This was the first use of an exit examination as a requirement for graduation from a New Jersey high school (NJ DOE, 2006). Prior to this, the Minimum Basic skills program had been administered as more of a multiple assessment program or “portfolio” program whereby students would need to demonstrate reading and mathematics mastery through a series of benchmarks, but would not necessarily be retained if not passing the exit examination. In 1983-84, New Jersey adopted the High School Proficiency Test 9. This

examination was a more rigorous test of minimum basic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics for ninth graders. The examination was not administered as a graduation requirement until 1985-86. In 1988, the New Jersey Department of Education (DOE) again modified their assessment program by establishing the High School Proficiency Test 11 (HSPT11) and Early Warning Test (EWT8) (NJ DOE, 2006). The EWT8 was initially designed as a benchmark assessment; a tool for placement and planning. However, in 1991 the HSPT11 replaced the HSPT9, effectively moving the HSPT from 9th to the 11th grade. In 1993, the HSPT11 and EWT were both used as graduation requirements. In this year, the HSPT11 was first administered to regular eleventh grade students as a graduation requirement.

The New Jersey State Board of Education adopted the Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS) in 1996. The CCCS was created to “clearly define what all students should know and be able to do at the end of thirteen years of public education” (NJ CCCS, 2006). As constructed, the CCCS was not designed to be an inflexible curriculum guide, but a set of standards benchmarked at the 4th, 8th, and 11th grade years. The CCCS is meant to provide guidance to local districts creating their own curriculums while using the standards to provide some uniformity of what students are learning across the state. The CCCS is an attempt by the DOE to comply with the 1875 New Jersey Constitutional provision of “thorough and efficient” education as interpreted by the New Jersey Supreme Court in the historic case of *Robinson v. Cahill*, 303 A.2d 273 (1973). In *Robinson*, the NJ Supreme Court found that the New Jersey Constitution requires that all New Jersey students receive a “thorough and efficient” education. To this end, the Court found that New Jersey’s funding scheme (heavily reliant on property taxes to fund

education), monitoring systems and educational programs violated the 120 year old constitutional provision of “thorough and efficient” (*Robinson, 1973*). *Robinson* gave birth to the *Abbott v. Burke* decisions (I-XVII) in which the Court ordered, amongst other things, “parity” funding, or additional state funds to bring per-pupil expenditures in the Abbott districts up to the per-pupil expenditures in the state’s wealthiest districts (*Abbott, 1994*).

On May 24, 2007, the New Jersey Supreme Court declined to compel relief for the plaintiffs (Abbott districts) due to the premature status of the complaint. The Court reasoned that any arguments the plaintiffs might have with respect to the state’s failure to comply with prior *Abbott* decisions must weight for the 2008 fiscal year budget which had yet to be enacted (*Abbott v. Burke XVII, 2007*). As is the custom with appellate courts, the Court found that as yet, there was no true “case in controversy”.

On March 18, 2008, after adoption of the New Jersey state budget, the plaintiffs again asked the New Jersey Supreme Court to force compliance with previous *Abbott* decisions. The Corzine administration, in turn, asked the Court to do away with the current funding scheme which funds the Abbott districts at the rate of the wealthiest districts, and declare the new funding scheme known as the School Funding Reform Act (SFRA) constitutional. The new funding scheme would base funding not on municipality wealth, but rather individual student needs and risks. The Court sided with the government and as of 2009, the Abbott distinctions are effectively ended.¹

¹ On May 28, 2009 the New Jersey Supreme Court ruled that the Abbott funding scheme, which had effectively been in place since *Robinson v. Cahill* and funding ¼ of the state’s poorest children, could be replaced by the Corzine administration’s “follow the student” SFRA. The new funding scheme which results in increased funding for non-Abbott districts effectively overrules past Abbott decisions and does away with the Abbott distinction.

Pursuant to the “thorough and efficient” constitutional requirements and the attempts to define exactly what “thorough” education is, the CCCS is administered to *all* New Jersey students and is reviewed every five years (NJ CCCS, 2006). Thus the CCCS attempts to make sure that each of the over 600 local school districts align their curriculum to achieve the ultimate goal of creating students prepared to participate socially, politically, and economically in a democratic society.

In 1998, the New Jersey legislature enacted legislation in the form of New Jersey State Assessment program (N.J.S.A. 18A: 7C-6.2). This legislation provided for the replacement of EWT but more profoundly for the replacement of HSPT11 with the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA). The HSPA is meant to align and embody the CCCS in one examination which will be required by all eleventh graders prior to graduation from a New Jersey high school.

The HSPA examination was first administered to those students entering 11th grade on or before September 1, 2001. The HSPA tests achievement in reading, writing, and mathematics as required by the CCCS. The examination is given in March of the 11th grader’s junior year. If failed, the HSPA is re-administered in the fall and spring of the student’s senior year (NJ Assessment, 2006). The districts receive individual student reports (“ISR”) indicating the proficiency of each student in specific content areas. Those students failing to demonstrate proficiency, (defined by the HSPA as a scaled score of 200+ in either Language Arts Literacy or Mathematics) will be eligible for the Specialized Review Assessment (“SRA”). Students failing the HSPA are required to demonstrate proficiency via a CCCS and HSPA aligned SRA assessment measure. New

Jersey Statute (N.J.S.A. 18A:7c-3) and Administrative Code (N.J.A.C. 6.8-7.1) provides for the alternate assessment known as the Special Review Assessment (SRA).

New Jersey is one of 25 states requiring high school graduates to complete a high-stakes state graduation assessment in order to graduate. New Jersey is also one of 17 of those 25 to offer an alternative assessment to the traditional high-stakes exit examination. However, it should be mentioned that both the HSPA and the SRA could both arguably be considered high-stakes assessments due to the requirement that students pass one or the other in order to graduate. Both require that students meet all non exit examination graduation requirements to receive a diploma. However, the traditional exit examination (HSPA) and the alternative exit assessment (SRA) are very different in form and administration if not content.

The SRA

The SRA was based on the recognition that some students are “test phobic”. These students were defined as those having high-stress and anxiety and failing to perform well on high-stakes standardized tests under pressured (time constrained) situations. In addition those students with special needs (English language deficient, cognitive deficiencies) were allowed to demonstrate proficiency on state graduation standards via the SRA. Though both groups were believed to be a small minority, it was for these students that the SRA was initially developed (NJ SRA White Paper, 2003). Further, according to the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), the original intent of the SRA was to provide a way for students to meet CCCS and HSPA proficiency requirements under less stressful circumstances (NJ SRA White Paper, 2003).

Thus, the exam is administered as an alternative assessment “to those students

meeting all graduation requirements (110 credits, passage of all core courses, and meeting all local graduation requirements) except a demonstration of proficiency in all content areas of the HSPA (Librera, 2004). Those students scoring below 200 in either Language Arts Literacy (LAL) or Mathematics in one of three testing periods (Spring of Junior Year, Fall/Spring of senior year) are SRA eligible. However, it is nonetheless important to recognize that though the SRA assessment program was created for specific students to meet graduation requirements, in 1991 the New Jersey administrative code was changed to allow for all those failing to demonstrate proficiency on the HSPT11 (now the HSPA) to have an opportunity to meet proficiency on the SRA.

The SRA process begins upon receipt of an Individual Student Report (ISR) which gives specific information about proficiency results for each student who takes the HSPA. New Jersey high school students have three chances to demonstrate proficiency on the HSPA—the spring of their junior year, the fall of their senior year, and the spring of their senior year (Davy, et. al., 2006). In addition, students who transfer into a school district during their senior year are encouraged to begin the SRA process immediately to the extent they have not passed the HSPA. These students should continue to sit for the HSPA, but in the event of continued non-passage, the SRA provides a way for them to satisfy graduation requirements for a June or summer graduation (Davy, et al., 2006).

The SRA is aligned to the content requirements of the CCCS and the HSPA such that those students demonstrating SRA proficiency are said to satisfy HSPA requirements as well. For example, as Education Commissioner Lucille Davy has said, “the SRA was never intended to be used as a lower standard, but rather a different means of measuring the same standard.” (*New Jersey Senate Budget Committee Testimony*, April 16, 2007) In

addition, students are allowed an opportunity to demonstrate proficiency in a “familiar” setting. This means that the exam is administered as a series of mathematics and language arts literacy Performance Assessment Tasks (PATs) administered to individual students (non-group testing) (Librera, 2004). Fine, et al. (2007) states, “According to the NJDOE, the difficulty or ‘rigor’ of the PATs is comparable to HSPA questions (Fine et. al., 2007 quoting Doolan & Peters, 2007)

Though the SRA was originally cognized as a limited assessment tool available to only those “test-phobic” students, the assessment program became generally available to all those failing to demonstrate proficiency on the HSPA. In 2006 the state of New Jersey reported that over 13,000 New Jersey high school graduates received their high school diplomas by using the SRA to meet state standards. This number constitutes approximately 12 percent of all New Jersey graduates and about one-third of all graduates in the urban districts (Fine et al., 2007 quoting NJDOE SRA 2006 Annual Survey). However, the SRA is designed as an educationally equivalent assessment.

The SRA envisions remedial coursework and SRA administration. For example, after receipt of an Individual Student Report (ISR) in the spring of the student’s junior year, proficiency has either been met ($p \geq 200$) or not ($p < 200$). School personnel review the ISRs to see if the student has demonstrated proficiency on the language arts literacy and on the mathematics sections of the HSPA. A student whose scaled score is below 200, considered partially proficient, in the HSPA language arts literacy and/or mathematics content areas is expected to complete all state and local high school graduation requirements for a June or August graduation (Davy, et. al., 2006). A student who’s ISRs reflects partial proficiency is immediately eligible for the SRA process.

The school is to begin remedial coursework soon after receipt of the HSPA scores focusing on that content area (language arts literacy or mathematics) indicating weakness (Librera, 2004). The administration of the SRA provides for individualized assessment of proficiency of the HSPA content areas. After failure of a HSPA examination, the student is given intensive instruction on the weak content area. Prior to taking the SRA PATs, students must participate in an individual school-designed SRA instructional program for that content area. The SRA instructional program will begin in September of the student's senior year of high school. In this regard, school district staff is encouraged to use creativity and innovation as they design and implement the SRA process. For example, according to Davy, et. al. (2009):

One approach would be to involve the SRA Panel in designing the student's instructional program since the SRA Panel selects the PATs that the student takes. In mathematics, the PAT item number indicates the strand and the cumulative progress indicator (CPI) that the student should know in order to be successful on that PAT. For example, Standard 1/Strand A PAT 12 AO2-123S corresponds to Number and Numerical Operations and to CPI #2 which states, "compare and order rational and irrational numbers." With this information, the SRA Instructional Program teacher can instruct the students in these areas (pg.9).

When the student and instructor deem the student ready, Performance Assessment Tasks (PATs) are administered in one or both areas.

For each student deemed partially proficient in one or both content areas (LAL/Math), a two person panel certified in that HSPA content area is appointed. In addition, for each panel, a secondary certified English and mathematics teacher must be appointed. Should there be a disagreement of more than a point in scoring between the two panel personnel, a third HSPA certified teacher may be added (Davy, et. al., 2006). Through the administration of locally administered but state developed SRA Performance

Assessment Tasks (PATs), the students are allowed to demonstrate proficiency of HSPA content areas. For each part of the HSPA in which a student fails to demonstrate proficiency, the student must successfully complete two PATs from the same cluster of skills measured by the HSPA. For mathematics, the PATs are administered in clusters (specific mathematics content areas) and for LAL the PATs are administered and scored according to a criterion based “holistic” rubric which focuses on the “writer’s ability to convey an intended message to a given audience” (Librera, 2003 and 2004).

Upon completion of the required number of PATs (dependent on the weak content area), the student will be deemed to have demonstrated HSPA proficiency. That is, the student who has satisfied graduation requirements in every other way (GPA, credits, attendance) will be deemed to have satisfied New Jersey’s CCCS requirements as well. Through the series of PATs, the SRA is meant to test the totality of a student’s knowledge rather than the ability of the student to recall memorized information in a time sensitive atmosphere.

The selection of SRA PATs, made by the SRA panel, is based on the results of a students’ first HSPA administration. As stated earlier, a student’s first contact with the HSPA examination is generally the spring semester of their junior year in high-school. Where partially proficient ($p < 200$), students must complete two SRA PATs in each content area cluster or standard. For example, in Language Arts Literacy (LAL) there are two clusters. A student demonstrating partial proficiency must successfully complete a reading and a writing cluster: one (1) persuasive reading PAT, one (1) narrative PAT, and two writing PATs for a total of four SRA LAL PATs.

Whereas LAL has two clusters for a total of four PATs, mathematics has four (4) standards which require completion of two PATs each for a total of eight (8) PATs (Davy, et. al., 2006). The PATs consist of “one to six open-ended parts derived from a common stem; reading and writing for LAL and “number and numerical operations, geometry and measurement, patterns and algebra, and data analysis, probability and discrete mathematics” for Math (Davy, et al., 2006). Failure on a specific PAT does not doom the student’s chances at passing the overall SRA as long as the student retakes the PAT in that cluster area. The student is not allowed to retake the same PAT; rather another PAT in the cluster group is administered. For example, a student taking a reading PAT attached to a specific narrative would not be allowed to take the same PAT. However, that student would be allowed to take a different PAT attached to that narrative as the SRA panel creates several PATs linked to each narrative in advance. Likewise, the same holds true for the Math PATs (Davy, et al., 2006).

According to Davy, et al., the PATs are designed to be completed in one single untimed session (pg.7). However, students are allowed additional time to complete PATs should it be needed. However, no notes or PAT materials are allowed to leave the proctored area with the student(s) and all materials must be submitted for scoring (Davy, et al., 2006).

Prior to administration of the SRA PATs, mandatory instructional programs are required in either the Math or LAL content areas. After failing to meet proficiency in either Math or LAL in the spring of the junior year, instructional programs begin in September of the senior year. As stated, students will continue to sit for the October administration of the HSPA and will have been prepared for the retake by intensive

instruction in the deficient areas (Davy, et al., 2006). However, the SRA process continues before and after the October exam until the student is deemed prepared to succeed on the SRA PATs.

Alternative assessment advocates argue that the SRA is nothing more than a different means of measuring the same content. Though allowing for more personalized, supplemental instruction and in some instances additional time to complete PATs, the content of the two examinations (HSPA/SRA) is of comparable difficulty. Alternative advocates argue that the SRA is a better indicator of what has actually been learned as the SRA allows for individualized instruction and intensive remediation in areas in which the student's failure of the HSPA has highlighted some weaknesses. Further, the SRA appears to provide in hindsight, that instruction which should have been made available to the students throughout their high-school instruction. There seems to be little in the way of "special" accommodation as that word is pejoratively applied in the context of assessment due to the fact that the student is required to demonstrate the exact same content knowledge, albeit through a less high-stakes method of testing, as those students initially passing the HSPA.

Critics of the SRA point to the widespread use of the alternative assessment tool. For example, in the last several years between 11,000 and 15,000 New Jersey students annually have been meeting graduation requirements via the SRA (NJDOE School Report Card and SRA Annual Survey). Critics argue that rather than keeping them on track to post-secondary success, these numbers indicate a culture of lowered expectations which shepherds students through. Critics further highlight, ironically, the disproportionately negative impact these types of exams have on poor students and

students of color. Rather than the SRA being a little used tool for a small minority population, all students who do not score proficient on the HSPA are eligible for the SRA. For critics of the SRA, this element cannot be too little emphasized because the fact that in 2004-05 some jurisdictions graduated $p \geq 50\%$ of students under the SRA program is troubling (NJSRA, 2004-05). For example, according to the most recent published SRA graduation data, 2004-05 saw Paterson City, Pleasantville City, Newark City and City of Orange TWP, graduating 50% or more of their students under the SRA program rather than the traditional program. More specifically, in addition, Paterson City graduated in excess of 60% and Newark City, the most populated school district in New Jersey, graduated 52% (NJSRA, 2004-05). Critics argue that the HSPA, which is the primary standardized measurement tool in New Jersey, should be the measurement tool under which the large majority if not all (excepting some special education exceptions) of New Jersey students graduate and anything else is both a disservice to the students and the uniform system of standards and assessments.

Critics of the SRA have argued that the HSPA is not only the primary standard, but a more valid standard which is more strongly correlated to predictive validity in terms of post-secondary college/university success, post-secondary academic achievement, and financial/economic success. Yet, there is no empirical support for these claims as there has been no study of the post-secondary experiences by HSPA and SRA graduates. In the absence of such a study, both initial and longitudinal, tracking student progress through graduation and beyond, these contentions are spurious at best.

To buttress many of these arguments, critics point to the lack of a centralized grading center. Critics argue that this oversight results in a lack of quality control and

differing standards for passage of the SRA depending on where the student completes the PATs and who is grading them. However, rather than arguing for reform critics argue for abolishment. The SRA is scored according to state supplied scoring rubrics. The “item-specific” scoring rubrics provide the means by which SRA administrators on the local level objectively evaluate and score student performance. In addition, the PATs are independently scored by two certificated panel members. The two ratings must agree or be within one point of each other. The final score is obtained by taking the mean of the two independent scores. To the extent the scores disagree by more than one point, a third member steps in, independently evaluates the PAT, and the mean of the two highest contiguous scores is the PAT score. If there is still lack of agreement within one point, the student must complete another PAT (Davy, et al, 2006). As the student successfully completes the PATs, the SRA panel members affirm proficiency of HSPA content areas.

New Jersey is one of twenty-five states currently using a high school exit examination as a requirement for graduation. In New Jersey, the HSPA is the primary standardized assessment tool in New Jersey. As originally developed, it does allow for multiple sittings of the examination in recognition of the high-stakes inherent in failing the exam. The critical issue for New Jersey and those endorsing high-stakes testing and uniform standards is that the existence of an alternative scheme in the form of the SRA, of which more and more New Jersey students are taking advantage, serves to undermine the original assessment tool.

The SRA is also unique in that it translates the exam into other languages for Limited English Proficient (“LEP”) students. The critics of the SRA cite this as an example of the further undermining of the exam. The critics argue that LEPs should be

made English proficient and be made to take the exam in English with native speakers. According to the critics, the allowance of translated exams for satisfaction of graduation requirements further undermines not only the primary assessment tool, but the original intent of the SRA.

The attack on public school and public schooling directly pits those who advocate for uniformity and high-stakes testing against those advocating for alternative assessments and less emphasis on single exams as the measure of what a child has learned upon attempting to exit the secondary schooling arena. Uniform standards advocates would argue that the existence of the SRA is yet another example of the failure of progressive education. Uniform standards advocates would argue that the SRA is exactly the reason the achievement gap exists and the public schools are failing: the failure to hold all children to one high standard. The critics of that movement would argue that uniformity is illusory and fails to account for differences in rates and styles of learning.

To buttress this argument alternative advocates would point to the fact that students who, by the end of their senior year, are still not proficient (200 or better) in all HSPA content areas and have not successfully completed the SRA process must continue the SRA process as a regular, vocational, or alternative high school student (fifth-year student or retained twelfth grader) or as an adult high school student. If these students choose not to enroll in a regular, vocational, alternative, or adult high school, then they may not continue in the SRA process but may continue to take the HSPA as non-enrolled “returning students” at their high school. These alternative processes demonstrate that all students in New Jersey schools are expected to meet state mandated academic criteria in

order to receive a state diploma. No diplomas are issued unless every student has demonstrated proficiency of New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS).

(Davy, et. al, 2006)

Preliminary Update

On March 19, 2008 the NJ State Board of Education passed a resolution to retain and reform the SRA (Special Review Assessment) by an 8-0 vote. The resolution provides that the SRA as currently constructed will stay in place through the 2008-2009 school years. The resolution additionally instructs the NJDOE to revise the alternative route to high school graduation modeled on the SRA. The new assessment program is targeted for implementation in the 2009-2010 school years.

At this time, the composition of the exam has not been fully designed. Further information on the revised alternative route is not available. However, as the SRA in its current form is still the New Jersey alternative route to graduation relied upon by over 13,000 students, one third of Abbott graduates, and 20 percent of all New Jersey high school students, an examination of the post-secondary effects of differential high school graduation is not only warranted but more timely than ever (Fine, et., al., 2007).

CHAPTER 5

BRIEF HISTORY/BACKGROUND OF NEWARK, NJ

Schools administering dual assessment programs provide a rich and untapped resource for the study of post-secondary differential effects. The availability, in single institutions, of populations of students graduating under dual assessment programs provides the researcher with an opportunity to efficiently identify and assess the post-secondary attitudes and outcomes of students graduating under each program. In addition, the evaluation of quantitative data over several years allows the researcher to begin to table the post-secondary course of the graduates. That is, the availability of assessment data over the course of several years of students from dual assessment programs allows the researcher to begin to form some basis for determining the post-secondary differential effects of the graduates.

Before discussing the findings of the research, a bit of background on the location(s) and subject(s) of the research will help to inform the reader about the necessity and timeliness of the research. In this regard, the next section provides a snapshot of the current demographics and social setting of Newark, New Jersey.

Background/Profile: Newark, New Jersey

Newark is the largest city in New Jersey and the county seat of Essex County. According to the 2000 census, the city had a total population of 273,546 (U.S. Census, 2000). According to the United States census, the 2006 census estimate is 281,402. The increase over 2000 constitutes 2.9% over 2000 (U.S. Census, 2000; 2006).

Newark is the largest and second most diverse city in New Jersey (U.S. Census, 2000). Divided into five political wards, Newark has a Mayor-council run city

government. The city has a council consisting of nine members. Each of the five political wards elects one member to the city council for a four year term with an additional four “at-large” council members elected for terms of four years. The Mayor of Newark, elected for a term of four years, works with the municipal council to push the people’s business forward. As with most governance systems in which the power is shared amongst branches, the council operates as a legislative branch deciding what needs to be done in Newark. The mayor, as the head of the executive branch, decides how to put into effect the council’s agenda.

The demographics of Newark are very diverse. Newark is composed of blacks, Hispanics/Latinos (Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Brazilians, and Ecuadorians), whites (Italians, Albanians, and Irish), Spaniards, Jamaicans, Haitians, West Africans, and a sizeable Portuguese population. According to the 2005-2007 United States Census Bureau estimate, of the 265,375 residents, 91,382 households, and 61,956 families of Newark:

Table 1

District Demographic Chart

RACETHNICITY	N/%
BLACK	140,979/53.1%
HISPANIC/LATINO (OF ANY RACE)	84,205/31.7%
WHITE	57,400/21.6%
ASIAN	4,234/1.6%
AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKA NATIVE	1,115/0.4%
NATIVE HAWAIIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	107/0.05%

*Information taken from American Fact finder: <http://www.factfinder.census.gov>

Note. The failure of the demographic numbers and percentages to add up to 100% is a result of many residents designating themselves as members of more than one race or ethnicity.

The wards (North, South, East, West and Central) of the city are often used colloquially by residents in the identification of domicile. The wards remain fairly distinct and are generally racially or ethnically identified.

Newark has a substantial percentage of school age and high-school age children. For example, according to the United States census for the year 2000, approximately 27.9% of the city population was 18 or younger. This percentage constitutes 76,319 of the total population (Census, 2000) Broken down further, approximately 23.2% or 17,706 of the 18 or younger population is enrolled in 9-12 grade or traditional high-school programs. These numbers are significant as pertains to this research due to the fact that high school juniors and seniors take exit examinations.

Schools

The Newark Public Schools (NPS) is a comprehensive community public school district that serves the entire city of Newark, New Jersey. In the 2004-2005 school year, Newark Public Schools, a state-operated Abbott District, enrolled 41,889 students making it the largest school system in New Jersey (Great City Schools, 2007).

Newark's public schools are among the lowest-performing in the state. In 1995 the state government took over management of the city's schools. The move by the state government to take over NPS was heralded as a positive step in the state's efforts at education reform. The state justified the takeover of NPS by emphasizing future improvements in overall performance, higher standardized test scores and increased graduation rates. However, NPS, though possessing some high performing schools as measured by Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) continues to lag behind other New Jersey school districts in these categories.

An American Community Survey (2003) indicates that as of 2003, 64 percent of people 25 years and over had at least graduated from high school and 11 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher. Among people 16 to 19 years old, 10 percent were dropouts; they were not enrolled in school and had not graduated from high school (NJDOE, 2008; U.S.Census: American Fact Finder, 2008; ACS, 2003).

Abbott v. Burke and State Control

The New Jersey school finance battle has largely been one to define exactly what the New Jersey constitution requires as concerns education. As primary and secondary education is a state responsibility, state constitutions are typically looked to when plaintiffs seek remedies to educational funding imbalances. In 1875, the New Jersey

constitution was amended to require the legislature to establish a system of “thorough and efficient education” (N.J. Const. art. 8 § 4 – “The Legislature shall provide for the maintenance and support of a thorough and efficient system of free public schools for the instruction of all the children in the state between the ages of five and eighteen years”). However, this short passage has resulted in a long series of opinions in which the New Jersey Supreme Court has described the need for a restructuring of the New Jersey public education system. Particularly, the court has focused its opinions on eliminating the funding disparity between property rich and property poor districts.

The education received by young people is, of course, a substantive issue. The word substantive suggests something beyond how much money is being doled out to the property poor districts. The word itself speaks to the standard of education; the quality of education the students are receiving. The New Jersey Supreme Court began tackling this issue in the seminal case of *Robinson v. Cahill* in which the court unanimously affirmed a trial court invalidation of the state’s school finance formula for elementary and secondary schools on the basis of the aforementioned “thorough and efficient” clause (*Robinson v. Cahill*, 1973). More importantly the court argued that the responsibility rests with the state to ultimately meet the financial obligation of a thorough and efficient educational system.

If local government fails to provide [a thorough and efficient education] the state government must compel it to act, and if the local government cannot carry the burden, the state must itself meet its continuing obligation (*Robinson v. Cahill* 1973, 1975, pg. 513)

In subsequent decisions known as the *Abbott* (Abbott I-Abbott XVIII) decisions beginning in 1985, the court continued to explore, define and apply the parameters of the “thorough and efficient” clause of the N.J. Constitution. For example, in *Abbott v. Burke*

I, the court indicated that “thorough and efficient” meant that urban school children must be provided with the resources and opportunities to compete with their richer suburban peers (*Abbott v. Burke I*, 1985). However, in 1990 the court issued *Abbott v. Burke II*, in which the court took pains to identify the 29 (later expanded to 31) poorest urban districts labeling them “special needs”. The special needs districts were identified as those requiring legislation to be passed to ensure equalization of funding between suburban and urban districts (*Abbott v. Burke II*, 1990).

The “thorough and efficient” clause remains at the center of the *Abbott* litigation. Throughout the New Jersey Supreme Court’s pronouncements on the “thorough and efficient” clause and the court’s requirements of programmatic enhancements for the 31 *Abbott* districts, the state has continuously attempted to introduce constitutionally viable alternatives to equalize funding that do not require that the poorest districts be funded equally to the richer. As of 2009, the state has introduced a new funding scheme known as the School Funding Reform Act of 2008 (SFRA) which seeks to fund based on individual student risks and needs. The new funding scheme, found constitutional by the court, has rendered the *Abbott* distinctions irrelevant.²

State Control

In 1995, in the midst of the *Abbott* litigation, the state of New Jersey took over operation of the Newark Public Schools. Prior to the takeover of New Jersey’s largest school district, the second (Jersey City) and third (Paterson) largest districts had been placed under state control in 1989 and 1991 respectively. In a New York Times article

² On May 28, 2009 the New Jersey Supreme Court ruled that the *Abbott* funding scheme, which had effectively been in place since *Robinson v. Cahill* and funding ¼ of the state’s poorest children, could be replaced by the Corzine administration’s “follow the student” SFRA. The new funding scheme which results in increased funding for non-*Abbott* districts effectively overrules past *Abbott* decisions and does away with the *Abbott* distinction.

written in 1994, Newark administrators were portrayed as being comfortable armchair administrators “who sit aloof in comfortable offices while students struggle through badly taught classes in filthy buildings...” (McLarin, 1994, pg.1). The source of the article was a report issued by the New Jersey Department of Education under Education Commissioner Leo F. Klagholz. The report, damning in its indictment of the Newark School District, stated,

The Newark School District has been at best flagrantly delinquent and at worst deceptive in discharging its obligations to the children enrolled in public schools. Already at risk of school failure because of socioeconomic disadvantage, children in the Newark public schools are placed at greater risk by school district personnel who fail to provide them with the opportunity to achieve academically in a safe, healthful environment (NJDOE, 1994, 43-44, 66).

The report, known as the Comprehensive Compliance Investigation (CCI), serves as the fourth stage to state takeover. Having failed the previous three stages including state certification since 1984, Newark languished at the bottom of graduation rates, standardized test proficiency, and attendance (McLarin, 1994).

According to Jean Anyon (1997) the CCI, carried out by external consultants and state evaluators, reviewed such functions as finance, governance and management, educational programs, and facilities. To facilitate the review, unannounced visits were made at 50 of the 82 Newark schools (Anyon, 1997). *Mismanagement* and conflicts of interests were said to be standard practices while concern for children’s learning was secondary. The five volume report further states,

...These conditions tell of shocking neglect. Equally shocking, however, from the team’s perspective, is the lack of indignation on the part of staff. One teacher interviewed explained it this way: “After a while,” she said, looking around “you lower your expectations. (NJDOE, 1994, p. 66)

Based on the aforementioned scandals, alleged fiscal malfeasance, public dissatisfaction and low achievement, the NJDOE assumed control of the NPS on July 12, 1995 after the state Supreme Court refused to halt the takeover. The state appointed Dr. Beverly Hall as acting Superintendent. Dr. Hall served in that capacity for approximately four years until her acceptance of the superintendence of the Atlanta public schools. Dr. Hall was replaced by Dr. Marion Bolden who led the district from 1999 until July of 2008.

The Great City Schools report on Newark has reported on Dr. Bolden's aggressive leadership in her capacity as superintendent. The report states particularly that,

...in her efforts to turn around a system that was plagued by a negative national image...she put considerable energy into boosting staff expectations for student learning, enhancing professional development for principals and teachers, aligning curriculum, installing standard reading and math programs, developing interim assessments, assigning literacy and math coaches, mounting new extended-time programs and other intervention strategies, and improving the overall climate of the schools (Great City Schools, 2007, p. 6).

Of particular noteworthiness during Dr. Bolden's tenure has been the increase in parental involvement in the schools. As student success and graduation rates are particularly affected by parental participation in school climate, this is a most important feature of Dr. Bolden's long service to NPS as superintendent. Dr. Bolden has also overseen the strengthening of the magnet school programs (Arts, Science, Technology, and University High Schools), a reinvigoration of the arts and music programs, and continued improvement in compliance with state and federal mandates (Great City Schools, 2007). In short, Dr. Bolden has helmed a revitalization of the NPS. After years

of a moribund school district, the cumulative reforms under Dr. Bolden are reflected in the positive gains seen, in the aggregate, throughout the district.

However, as Dr. Bolden prepared to leave her post as superintendent of NPS at the end of the school year in June 2008, and the NPS prepared to return to local control, high school education is the focus of ongoing debate throughout the district. As the Great City Report on Newark emphasizes, student enrollment is declining, high school graduation rates are being eroded by standardized assessment failures and dropout rates, and those students aspiring to college “do not have college-entrance exam scores that would enable them to be accepted by a competitive college or university” (p.7). Moreover, the focus on those choosing alternative post- secondary education (vocational/technical) schools must increase as performance by this group is well below state average.

In June of 2008 Gov. Jon Corzine announced the appointment of former Washington D.C. Superintendent Dr. Clifford Janey as State Superintendent of Newark Public Schools. Dr. Janey comes to Newark with 10 years of experience heading large school systems having spent 7 years as superintendent of the 37,000 student Rochester, New York school system and another 3 years as head of the 50,000 student D.C. school system. Dr. Janey twice served as chairman of the Council of Great City Schools, a coalition of the nation's largest urban public school systems.

The current research achieves this goal by providing valuable information on post-secondary attitudes and outcomes of differential graduates. The research provides an initial picture of post-secondary expectations and experiences, and a template for further longitudinal study of students initially evaluated. Due to the past lack of

empirical information on post-secondary outcomes of district students, providing recommendations that assist students in meeting their own educational expectations has been impossible. The lack of available empirical data as to what happens to students once they leave high school, has made it extremely difficult to craft solutions to educational achievement gaps and to assess the outcomes of differential graduates. Without empirical data, it is impossible to provide sound information and instruction in high school to influence positive post-secondary outcomes. This research seeks to fill that gap.

Graduation Rates and Proficiency in New Jersey

As stated earlier, one of the many unintended consequences of NCLB is that due to the punitive nature of AYP, it encourages teacher, administrators and school districts to inflate their high school graduation rates. While at once setting benchmarks for graduation rates, it allows states to measure graduation rates any way they see fit. Unfortunately, calculating graduation rates is not the straightforward process it would seem to be. Most would simply take the whole number of students entering high school in ninth grade and divide that number by those exiting after completion of four, five, or six years of high school. This number may or may not include those transfers during the intervening years. If so, there would be a caveat stipulating those numbers of transfers and excluding them from the base number of students who began high school and exited high school in the same class. Unfortunately, many states' methods of calculating high school graduation are designed to hide more information than they disclose. The information hidden generally surrounds the number of students dropping out of high school after ninth grade.

Due to the prominence graduation rates have taken under NCLB, there has been a great deal of emphasis placed on how in fact these rates are calculated. For example, in 2007, a survey in *Education Week* placed New Jersey second in the nation with an estimated overall graduation rate of 82.5 percent (Diplomas Count, 2007). In addition, the Education Trust estimated that New Jersey ranks higher than even New York State when comparing entering high school freshmen who complete high school and go on to college within four years: 53 percent compared to 37 percent (Education Trust, 2006). Additionally, though the rates of high school graduation rank below their white peers, rates for students of color in New Jersey are estimated to be amongst the highest in the nation with the Fordham report placing New Jersey first for Hispanic graduation rates and second for blacks (Fordham Report, 2006), and *Education Week* placing New Jersey first for Hispanics and fifth for blacks (Diplomas Count, 2007). The overall graduation rate estimated by *Education Week* places New Jersey at more than 10 points above the national average (Diplomas Count, 2007). Again, the importance placed on graduation rates places specific emphasis on how these rates are calculated.

The differing graduation rates beg the question of how high school graduation rates are calculated. The calculation of graduation rates has always been controversial. Many have argued that the existence of an alternative route to graduation in New Jersey--the SRA--which awards a standardized high school diploma without a demonstration that the graduate has the knowledge and skill of a HSPA graduate-- is itself an inflation of the graduation rates. However, this argument misses the mark and grossly over estimates the value of the HSPA exam in relation to the SRA because as yet there is no empirical evidence to prove that HSPA graduates know more and do better post-secondarily than

an SRA graduate. Nor can it logically or rationally be disputed that multiple learners, learning in multiple ways, require multiple pathways to graduation. However, as to dropouts, the inflation of graduation rates by not counting dropouts accurately is extremely problematic.

Christopher Swanson argues that contextual matters such as the community in which an individual student lives and attends school, has a profound impact on performance (Swanson, 2008). For example, his study shows that there is a 15 point differential in graduation rates between suburban and urban high schools with urban schools on the lower end. Though contextual matters can relate some of the differences in graduation rates, they cannot explain the gross disparities in rates reported compared to the rates found using different methods of calculation.

In Swanson's report for the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, Swanson used the more accurate Cumulative Promotion Index (CPI) method to calculate graduation rates. The CPI tracks students from their entry in ninth grade across three grade-to-grade promotions (9 to 10, 10 to 11, 11 to 12) through awarding of high school diploma (Swanson, 2008). This method is deemed more accurate because besides calculating from entrance in ninth grade, the method can be adjusted to allow for a steady and stable attrition rate from year to year. Thus, if 100 students enter a ninth grade class and from ninth grade to tenth grade 5 percent are lost to dropout, ninety-five percent will go on with their class to tenth grade and so. Calculating from ninth grade forward allows for an accurate count of how many students enter with a class and how many should graduate with a diploma after twelfth grade (again, accounting for attrition and other contextual matters such as transfers even).

NCLB and AYP encourages states to manipulate graduation rate numbers by counting those numbers of students entering twelfth grade not beginning with a standard high school class in ninth. Thus, if 100 students enter twelfth grade in 2007 and 5 percent are lost to attrition over the course of the school year, ninety-five percent graduates and the state will declare a graduation rate of 95 percent for the 2006-2007 academic years. This method of calculating graduation rates, which is encouraged, is false and hides the number of dropouts from school year to school year leading up to twelfth grade awarding of the diploma.

It is worth noting once again that proficiency as measured by the HSPA means \geq 200. Scores lower than this benchmark score (\leq 200) are noted as partially proficient and the students are allowed to retest in the subject areas in which they have failed to meet proficiency. That said, partially proficient is merely a euphemism for failing. Those students testing partially proficient are not allowed to advance to graduation under the HSPA rubric unless they test proficient in a subsequent HSPA exam. Alternatively, those students testing partially proficient engage in SRA performance assessment tasks (PATs). Through successful completion of the PAT in the lagging subject area, partially proficient can become proficient just as well as a successful retest under the HSPA.

CHAPTER 6

RESULTS: A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF DIFFERENTIAL GRADUATION

The chapter 6 database is composed of lists taken from graduation and assessment data (both high-stakes and alternative) from the ten (10) comprehensive high-schools (both traditional neighborhood schools and magnet schools) throughout the school district for the years 2003-2008, as well as a post-secondary database. These three databases were merged together through using. After merging these multiple databases into one, the final merged list constituted the complete secondary database from which data analysis of the secondary dataset proceeded.

Chapter 6 uses bivariate and multivariate statistics to analyze, to the extent possible, each variable. SPSS and SAS were the statistical packages used for analysis.

Overview

The population (N=9,725) analyzed in this chapter are from former 11th and 12th grade high school students throughout the district. This number represents those students who went on to graduate via either the traditional (HSPA) or alternative (SRA) assessment program offered by the district. While using the comprehensive high schools for analysis—no charter schools or private schools were included in this study--four (4) of the comprehensive schools defined as “magnets”, as stated, have entrance examinations. The graduation years of the students range from 2003-2008.

As will be shown, the students comprise various races, ethnicities and socio-economic status. Many now attend both 2-year and 4-year colleges and universities, both public and private colleges; others chose different post-secondary paths. The database

population also includes students from many different types of colleges and universities both well known and highly regarded institutions and lesser known schools.

This database is composed of a population which is the combined total of multiple successful merges of data from the years 2003-2008 (*See Chapter 5*). This time period constitutes over five (5) complete academic years of high school attendance and graduation, eleven (11) complete semesters of college attendance, and eleven (11) sittings of New Jersey high school exit examinations (both HSPA and SRA). This number also constitutes 80% of the total number of possible participants in the study.

Within the district, 35.9% of the population is under 17 and lives below the poverty line. In addition, consistent with the data in the following chapters, 73.2% of the K-12 students are eligible for free or reduced lunch. Finally, the Education Law Center indicates that 92.1% of K-12 graduate and 45% of high school students throughout the district graduated via the Specialized Review Assessment (“SRA”) (ELC, 2009).

The population for this study is further taken from the ten high schools throughout the district. Of the ten high schools in the district six schools (Barringer H.S., Central H.S., East Side H.S., Malcolm X. Shabazz H.S., West Side H.S. and Weequahic H.S.) are traditional neighborhood comprehensive schools which draw their populations from zoned local neighborhood populations. The remaining four schools (Arts H.S., Science H.S., Technology H.S. and University H.S.) are magnet schools. The district magnet schools differ from the traditional neighborhood comprehensives in that they require examinations for entry and provide both comprehensive and specialized curricula.

Demographics

The 9,725 participants in the study were demographically varied. The birth-date of the youngest participant is December 3, 1991 while the birth-date of the oldest participant is May 28, 1981. Thus the ages of the participants range from 19-28 years of age.

High school graduates were more heavily female at 56.1% ($N=5,452$) than males 43.9% ($N=4,273$). With respect to *race and ethnicity*, the population was substantially non-white: 55.8% ($N=3,198$) were black, 28.4% ($N=1,629$) were Hispanic/Latino, 14.6% ($N=834$) were white, 0.9% ($N=49$) were Asian, 0.3% ($N=15$) were Pacific Islander and 0.1% ($N=8$) were designated American Indian.

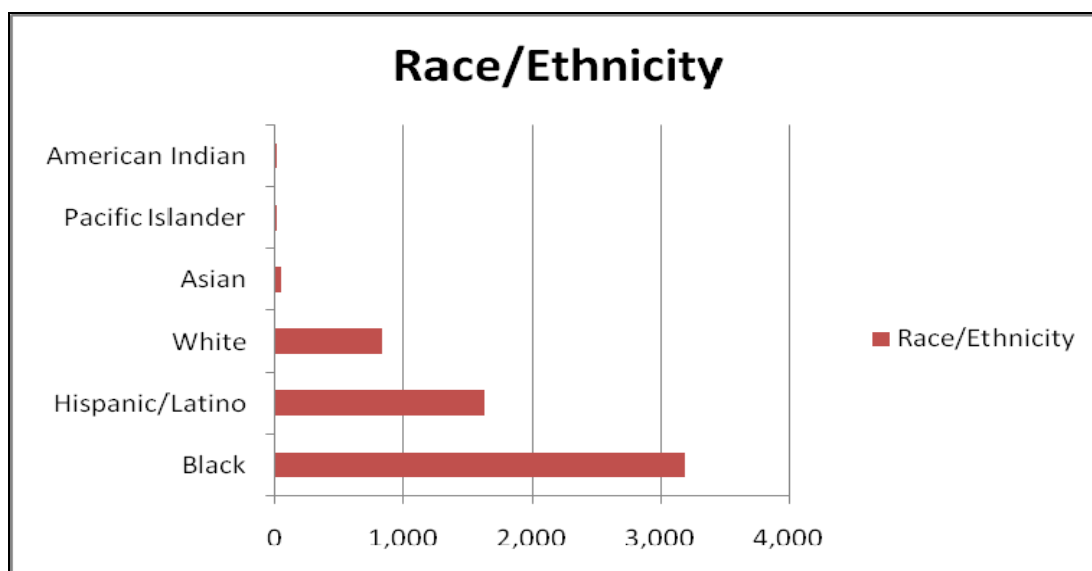


Fig. P: Study Sample Race and Ethnicity

To further illustrate the breakdown by race and ethnicity, *Table(s) 2 and 3* below disaggregates race/ethnicity by school.

Tables 2 and 3 below show certain schools are racially isolated. For example, of the 3,198 black students represented in *Tables 2 and 3*, black students represented as the overwhelming majority in Arts H.S., Central H.S., Malcolm X. Shabazz H.S. (hereinafter “Shabazz”), University H.S., Weequahic H.S. and Westside H.S. Importantly, four of the six are non-magnet and are overwhelmingly black: Central (89.9%), Shabazz (95.6%), Weequahic (97.4%), and Westside (95.2%). University High school, despite its magnet status, is also predominantly black (84.7%). The balance of students at these five schools is largely Hispanic. There were no schools in which black students were not represented, though their smallest numbers were seen in Technology H.S. ($N=111$) - where Hispanic/Latino students within the school were represented, in comparison to black students, by a 2:1 ratio-and their smallest percentages were seen at East Side H.S. (12.2%).

Of the 1,629 Hispanic/Latino students, Hispanic/Latino students were the overwhelming majority Barringer H.S. and Technology H.S. Hispanic/Latino students were marginally fewer than black students at Science H.S. There were no schools in which Hispanic/Latino students were not represented, though their smallest numbers were found in Weequahic H.S. where they were just 1.3% ($N=6$).

White students were the majority at Eastside H.S., although at Science H.S. whites ran a close third to black and Hispanic/Latino students 34.8% to 32.6% to 30.1%. Whites had no presence in Barringer H.S. or Central H.S. and a minimal presence in University H.S., Westside H.S. or Weequahic H.S.

The racial composition of the non-magnet schools is a function of the larger segregated communities in which the schools exist. For example, Barringer H.S. is

located in Newark's Hispanic north side, whereas Eastside H.S. is located in the Ironbound section of Newark, an area with Portuguese and Brazilian ethnic enclaves, plus a diverse Spanish-speaking population, which explains the majority ethnic white population and a substantial Hispanic/Latino population.

Table 2

(A.) Race and Ethnicity by Magnet High School

	Arts H.S.		Science H.S.		Technology H.S.		University H.S.	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Black	262	60.2	184	34.8	111	26.3	343	84.7
Hispanic	126	29.0	172	32.6	239	56.6	55	13.6
White	42	9.7	159	30.1	54	12.8	1	0.2
Asian	3	0.7	11	2.1	11	2.6	6	1.5
Pacific Islander	0	0.0	2	0.4	5	1.2	0	0.0
American Indian	2	0.5	0	0.0	2	0.5	0	0.0
Total	435	100.0	528	100.0	422	100.0	405	100.0

Table 3

(B.) Race and Ethnicity by Traditional High School

	Barringer H.S.		Central H.S.		Eastside H.S.		Malcolm X. Shabazz		Weequahic H.S.		Westside H.S.	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Black	226	28.9	362	89.8	136	12.2	534	95.6	411	97.4	629	95.2
Hispanic	536	68.5	39	9.7	409	36.7	23	4.4	6	1.3	24	3.6
White	13	1.7	0	0.0	559	50.1	0	0.0	4	0.0	2	0.3
Asian	6	0.9	1	0.2	10	0.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.2
Pacific Islander	0	0.0	1	.2	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	1.3	5	0.8
American Indian	2	0.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.5	0	0.0
Total	783	100.0	403	100.0	1,115	100.0	557	100.0	424	100.0	661	100.0

Though many of the district comprehensives, both traditional and magnet are racially isolated, it is important to point out the diverse demographic makeup of those specialized “magnet” schools in *Table 2*. Rather than being associated with a neighborhood or region, magnet schools draw their populations across neighborhoods and are district wide. Further, as specialized schools, entrance examinations are required for admission. The data show that the magnet schools are generally more diverse than the traditional neighborhood comprehensives.

With the exception of University H.S. which, though magnet, remains racially isolated, Arts H.S., Science H.S., and Technology H.S. enroll extremely diverse populations of students from throughout the district with Science H.S. admitting roughly a third of each of the majority populations in the district (black, white and Hispanic/Latino).

Of those students represented in this study, 73.6% ($N=7,155$) were designated as economically disadvantaged. Throughout the district this designation is measured in terms of receipt of free or reduced school lunch. *Table 4* below looks at this variable by race/ethnicity. For purposes of consistency, the study has excluded those students for whom a race/ethnicity designation was not available.

Table 4 shows all groups represented in these data are economically disadvantaged. *Table 4* further shows all groups receive high rates of free or reduced lunch. Focusing on the majority populations (*black, Hispanic/Latino and white*), there is seemingly little variance in their rates of economic disadvantage as all groups rank within 5 percentage points of one another.

Table 4

		Economic Disadvantage by Race and Ethnicity: Free and Reduced Lunch											
		Black		Hispanic		White		Asian		Pacific Islander		American Indian	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
School Lunch	Subsidized	2,222	69.5	1,200	73.7	568	68.1	39	79.6	12	57.1	7	87.5
	Not Subsidized	976	30.5	429	26.3	266	31.9	10	20.4	3	42.9	1	12.5
Total		3,198	100.0	1,629	100.0	834	100.0	49	100.0	15	100.0	8	100.0

Note. The failure of the total race/ethnicity to match the number of participants in the study reflects omissions in the data

Note. The above table contains column or group percentages only. The row percentages can be found in the appendix.

Viewing *Table(s) 2, 3 and 4* together, one begins to understand the possible importance of economic disadvantage in the daily lives of black and Hispanic/Latino high school students and likely in their postsecondary educational outcomes. Though the rates of economic disadvantage are similar across groups, blacks and Hispanic Latinos are overrepresented in this data as four (4) times greater than whites and two (2) times

greater than Hispanic/Latinos; thus more students of color rely on free or reduced lunches compared to white students. This economic disadvantage when combined with racial/ethnic marginalization highlights not only the extreme socio-economic obstacles students confront on a daily basis, but also the magnitude educational success will have on their future lives.

The Numbers by Assessment: HSPA or SRA

The 9,725 students tracked for this study attended the 10 comprehensive high schools throughout the district and all graduated through either the HSPA or SRA assessment programs. The following tables demonstrate the percentages of assessment populations, assessment passing rates by gender, economic disadvantage and race/ethnicity. A HSPA graduate is determined by successfully achieving ≥ 200 on both the language arts literacy (LAL) section and math section of the examination. An SRA graduate is achieved by failing to pass (\leq) one or both sections of the HSPA examination.

Table 5

Sample Population by Type of Graduation Assessment

Assessment		
Type	N	%
HSPA	3,965	40.8
SRA	5,760	59.2
Total	9,725	100.0

Table 5 above indicates the population by graduation method. Of the 9,725 students graduating from the 10 comprehensive high schools (traditional neighborhood comprehensives and magnets) throughout the district, the majority of students graduated

via the SRA assessment program: 59.2% (N=5,760) compared to 40.8% (N=3,965). In addition, *Table 5* taken with *Table 6* shows the greatest number of students graduating via the SRA failed to pass both language arts and math sections of the HSPA. However, the disparity between those students passing HSPA language arts and SRA math as opposed to HSPA math and SRA language arts is extremely troubling and suggests a lack of effective overall math instruction and preparation for the HSPA examination.

Table 6

SRA Passage by Section

Passage by Section			
N=5,760			
Math	LAL	N	%
No Pass	No Pass	3,172	55.1
No Pass	Pass	2,282	39.6
Pass	No Pass	306	5.3%
Total		5,760	100

Table 7 shows females comprised a majority of the graduates in the sample.

Females graduated via the HSPA assessment program slightly more often than males (at 7%), more likely though the majority of both males and females graduated via the SRA assessment.

The disparities in sex are notable. Over the course of the period examined in this study, women are the consistent majority in terms of overall population, high school graduates, and postsecondary enrollees. This is consistent with gains made by females in eliminating the achievement gap with respect to males over the past two decades, in the

language arts and social studies and high school and college graduation rates. However, males continue to outperform females in mathematics and sciences; and black females outperform black males in all of these categories (Education Trust, 2009; National Center for Education Statistics, 2008).

Table 7

Assessment Type by the sex of the Graduate

	Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%
HSPA*	1,677	39.2	2,288	42.0
SRA	2,596	60.8	3,164	58.0
Total	4,273	100.0	5,452	100.0

Note. The above table contains column or group percentages only. The row percentages can be found in the appendix.

χ^2 (df=1, N = 9,725) = 7.34, $p < .01$

*Relative Risk of HSPA graduation was 1.07 for girls as compared to boys.

As stated earlier, *economic disadvantage* in this study refers to the receipt of free or reduced lunch throughout the district. *Table 8* shows a clear majority of students graduating by either of the two assessment programs were identified as economically disadvantaged. However as *Table 8* indicates, economically disadvantaged students were 16.5% more likely to graduate via the SRA assessment program than the HSPA program. Taken with *Table 4* above, this has considerable implications for all races and ethnicities considered in this study, but particularly for students of color. As students of color comprise the large majority of students in the district, poor students of color disproportionately graduate via the SRA assessment program, and are more likely to attend traditional neighborhood comprehensive schools as compared to magnet schools.

Table 8

Assessment Type by Whether the Graduate Received Free or Reduced Lunch

Assessment Type	Economic Disadvantage (Free or Reduced-School Lunch)			
	Subsidized		Not Subsidized	
	N	%	N	%
HSPA*	2,753	38.5	1,212	47.2
SRA	4,402	61.5	1,358	52.8
TOTAL	7,155	100.0	2,570	100.0

χ^2 (df=1, N = 9,725) = 59.03, p < .001

*Relative Risk of HSPA graduation was 1.23 for not subsidized as compared to subsidized lunch.

As stated earlier, blacks make up 56% of the total population of students in the sample. Hispanic/Latinos, though significantly fewer than blacks, comprise 28% of the sample followed by whites at 14%. As *Table(s) 2* and *3* above have demonstrated, not only are blacks and Hispanic/Latinos more likely to attend severely racially and ethnically segregated neighborhood schools, but they are slightly more likely (at 2%) to be economically disadvantaged as well (*See Table 4*). Taken with *Table(s) 7* and *8*, which suggest that sex and economic status play a significant role in determining the assessment program under which a student graduates, the importance of the SRA as a continued and viable assessment alternative becomes clearer. Of the students in this study 60% relied on the SRA to graduate high school and attend college. These students tended to be female, black and Hispanic/Latino, poor, and from racially/ethnically isolated neighborhood schools. Due to socio-economic factors beyond their control these

students are much more likely to graduate through the alternative assessment method than the traditional high-stakes method.

Table 9

Assessment Type by the Race or Ethnicity of the Graduate

	Black		Hispanic/ Latino		White		Asian		Pacific Islander		American Indian	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
HSPA*	1,588	49.7	849	52.1	561	67.3	34	69.4	13	75.0	4	50.0
SRA	1,610	50.3	780	47.9	273	32.7	15	30.6	2	25.0	4	50.0
Total	3,198	100.0	1,629	100.0	834	100.0	49	100.0	15	100.0	8	100.0

Note. The failure of the total race/ethnicity to match the number of participants in the study reflects omissions in the data

X^2 (df=8, N = 9.725) = 990.05, $p < .001$

*Relative Risk of HSPA graduation was 0.74 for blacks, 0.77 for Hispanics/Latinos, 1.03 for Asians, 1.11 for Pacific Islanders, and 0.74 for American Indians as compared to whites

The data show that blacks are the only race or ethnicity for which a *majority* of graduates were SRA assessment takers. Expectedly, the large majority of all those graduating within each assessment program are located in the majority populations (black, Hispanic/Latino and white) in the district

For blacks graduating via the HSPA assessment constituted 49.7% ($N=1,588$) and those graduating via the SRA constituted 50.3% ($N=1,610$). Among Hispanic/Latinos, those students graduating via the HSPA assessment were 52.1% ($N=849$) versus 47.9% ($N=780$) for those graduating via the SRA.

Whites perform disproportionately better on the HSPA. Whites graduating from the 10 comprehensive high schools within the district, graduate via the HSPA by a rate of 67.3% ($N=561$) to 32.7% ($N=273$) compared to the SRA. The data further demonstrate

that blacks are 53.8% and Hispanic Latinos 46.5% more likely than whites to graduate via the SRA.

When taken with *Table(s) 7 and 8* which the data indicate are significant in determining who graduates via the HSPA or SRA, *Table 9* suggests that the SRA more so than the HSPA is crucial as a graduation vehicle for racial/ethnic minorities, women, and the economically disadvantaged. The SRA simply graduates more women, students of color and economically disadvantaged students than does the HSPA. Additionally, the data suggest that eliminating the SRA might result in denying high school diplomas to a substantial population of the district's students or condemning them to drop-out status or GED certificate holders. As dropouts and GED graduates have similar post-secondary outcomes in terms of un/under employment and economic standing in comparison to high school graduates, eliminating the SRA has significant educational and economic implications. Fine et al. (2007) referencing a longitudinal study by Cameron and Heckman (1993) suggest that not only are GED recipients “*not* the labor market equals” of high school graduates, but more importantly “they are closer to drop outs in terms of economic standing” (p.54). According to Tyler, Murnane, and Willett (2000), “while the GED remains a highly sought credential, the lack of socialization components, thinking skills and equitable economic benefits” (p. 463) renders the GED a distant cousin of a four-year high school career.

Thus, replacing a traditional high school diploma gained through passage of the SRA with a GED certificate will not result in the same social and economic outcomes. Further, though GED recipients have the expected increased access to post-secondary education—compared to dropouts—beyond cognitive skills, the GED fails to measure

thinking skills and the ability to adapt to societal norms. This actually places the GED closer to high stakes standardized tests than alternative multiple compensatory exams which tends to measure both cognitive and thinking skills. The data have demonstrated that a substantial majority of the district's students graduate via the SRA. The data will show that a significant percentage of these graduates go on to postsecondary educational institutions.

Definitions

Turning from the description of differences in who graduates through SRA and HSPA to postsecondary analysis on the effects of each graduation type on post-secondary participation, the research begins with an overview of the populations going on to post-secondary study and those failing to go on to post-secondary education. The research will continue with a more detailed analysis of those students graduating from the 10 comprehensive high-schools in the district and their postsecondary outcomes as concerns postsecondary education by assessment type. Consistent with the methodology, the analysis will address the research questions by exploring the extent to which HSPA and SRA graduates differ in their post-secondary educational outcomes. In this regard, the analysis will focus on the types of schools attended (two-year, four-year, public or private), degrees attained, and additional analysis based on assessment type (HSPA or SRA).

Community Colleges

There have generally been two views of the community college. One view posits that prior to the 1940s, two-year ("community colleges") were viewed much as vocational/technical schools are today: terminal programs ending after the second year of

study which prepared successful graduates for semi-professions (Frye, 1990). These institutions were not viewed as potential stepping-stones for pursuit of baccalaureate degrees, but were meant for those between artisan and professional levels only needing cultural courses and “social intelligence” or enough to get by and manage interpersonal relations (Eells, 1941). The contrary view is that the fundamental mission of the community college as always been to facilitate the attainment of baccalaureate degrees. The community college provided foundational education and aided transfer to four-year colleges (Brint & Karabel, 1989).

Today, community colleges offer academic, vocational and professional educations which terminate in an associate or “two-year” degree at most. However, there is no longer the *expectation* that this will be the end of the graduate’s post-secondary education. In many instances, the community college is the beginning. However, Brint and Karabel (1989) have argued that the educational model adopted by community colleges prohibit them from encouraging students to transfer to four year academic programs. Brint and Karabel argue that today’s community colleges, to the extent they ever did, do not serve as stepping stones to four year colleges and universities, but to lower middle class and middle class occupations. Thus, according to the authors, the community colleges of yesterday are not much different from the community colleges of today as the vocational model perpetuates class distinctions and prohibits social mobility; expanding the occupational model while suppressing the transfer mission (Brint and Karabel, 1989).

Despite the author’s criticism, the current mission of community colleges can be contrasted with the mission of vocational/technical schools. Without debating the

accuracy of the application to all 2 year schools, the definition of community colleges which has been clumsily been pieced together over the years is: an institution which offers academic, vocational and professional education and serves as the first two years of a student's baccalaureate degree. In fact, it could be argued that in recent years the transfer mission has been strongly revived as an effort to curtail rising tuition costs and decreasing available aid, promote diversity, and address the remedial needs of many college bound students (Callan 2003; Dougherty 2002). This is the definition, however inexact, that will be used throughout the analysis in this research. This is contrasted with vocational/technical schools: those institutions providing specialized vocational/technical training in a trade and/or skill to its applicants resulting in a certificate or degree of completion. These programs are generally understood to be terminal in nature and do not lead to baccalaureate degrees nor, in many cases, associate degrees. These are the definitions, which will be used going forward.

Colleges and universities are understood to be institutions offering diverse academic degree programs in a number of different disciplines over the course of, on average, four or more years. Colleges and universities result in at least a baccalaureate degree after the completion of a prescribed academic curriculum. It is understood, though not mandated, that many successfully completing college or university study will go on to pursue graduate degrees. Thus, the working definition for colleges/universities used in this research is: those institutions offering diverse academic programs in various disciplines resulting in a baccalaureate degree after the equivalent of four or more years of study. Most colleges and universities will accept up to two years from a community or two year college toward the baccalaureate degree.

Colleges/Universities

Many participants in the study have attended and graduated from a variety of colleges/universities both two-year and four-year, public and private. The participants have declared a number of different majors and some have received at least one degree while others have received multiple degrees. *Table B10 (See Appendix B)* indicates the different colleges and universities attended and graduated from during the years (2003-2008) covered by the study. The table also includes whether the college is a two-year, four-year college/university or a technical/vocational school. *Table 10* indicates as well whether the post-secondary institution is public or private.

Table B11 (See Appendix B) gives a list of all those colleges/universities that were *enrolled in* by the participants of the study. The two tables are to be distinguished by college attendance and the completion of a program of study resulting in a degree either two-year, four-year or certificate. The list of colleges/universities in *Table B10* represents those schools which were attended by the participants and from which degrees or certificates (in the case of vocational schools) were issued. *Table B11* represents those schools attended or being attended for some period of study, but from which no degrees have issued. In some cases the names of schools will overlap appearing in both lists. To the extent this occurs, the name has been removed from *Table B11* as *Table B10* indicates both successful attendance (degree issued) and persistence (enrollment/continued enrollment).

In *Table B10 (See Appendix B)*, 54 different schools have issued degrees or certificates over the period covered by this study for a total of 170 degrees issued. These schools comprise 5 different 2-year colleges, 43 different 4-year colleges and 6 different

vocational/technical schools. Additionally, of the 54 different schools issuing graduation credentials of some sort, 27 or just over half of those are designated private versus 26 public institutions.

The list of colleges/universities from which degrees have issued contains several of those national universities traditionally highly ranked and selective such as Cornell University, Boston University, Howard University, Rutgers-The State University of NJ-New-Brunswick and Newark, as well as the University of Minnesota.

The list also contains a number of distinguished HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) such as Delaware State University, Howard University, Johnson C. Smith University, Lincoln University, North Carolina A&T State University, North Carolina Central University, Spelman College, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Virginia State University and Virginia Union University. In fact, of the colleges and universities from which degrees have been received, 20% of those are HBCUs. Thus the colleges/universities from which district students have received degrees vary by type, status and racial composition.

Table B11 indicates attendance at 310 different schools over the 5 year period covered by this study. These schools comprise 106 different 2-year colleges, 192 different 4-year colleges and 12 different vocational/technical schools. Additionally, of the 310 different institutions attended, 186 are designated public versus 124 private institutions.

The types of schools represented reflect many of those national universities traditionally highly ranked and selective such as: Barnard, Brown, Columbia, Georgetown, Harvard, New York University, Smith, etc...as well as a continued

enrollment in many historically black colleges/universities not listed in *Table B10* such as: Clarke Atlanta University, Florida A& M University, Grambling State University, Hampton University, Morehouse College, Prairie View A&M, Tuskegee University, Xavier University, etc.

Both *Tables B10* and *Table B11* are meant to represent the breadth of colleges/universities attended by district students. The tables are also meant to exemplify the range of schools entered versus the much narrower range of schools from which students have graduated at this point. Though the study does not focus on post-secondary graduation rates or degrees received *per se*, the study does mean to show trends in college/university attendance.

Post-Secondary Outcomes by (HSPA and SRA)

Of the total number of 9,725 analyzed for this study for the period 2003-2008, the data indicate that 49% or ($N=4,724$) of the graduates did not go on to post-secondary study of any type, either 2-year, 4-year or vocational/technical school study. Of those students going on to post-secondary study or failing to go on to post-secondary study for one reason or another, the following analysis shows by which assessment program they exited high school.

Table 12 indicates that a sizable majority of those not going on to post-secondary study graduated via the SRA program. The majority of those going on to post-secondary study graduated under the HSPA program. Though the sample sizes *HSPA*, ($N=2,675$) and *SRA*, ($N=2,326$) would tend to suggest little difference in size between the two groups going on to post-secondary study, the data indicate that the assessment program has an effect on the post-secondary educational paths of differential assessment

graduates. In this instance, the small difference in each groups sample size is a result of the much greater number of SRA graduates as compared to HSPA graduates in the sample pool overall. Further, the large number of SRA graduates not going on to post-secondary study as compared to HSPA graduates cannot be overlooked. The data show that HSPA graduates are 67% more likely to go on to post-graduate study compared to SRA graduates. If the fundamental question is whether graduation via HSPA makes a difference, the answer is clearly that “Graduating under the HSPA program *does* make a difference” in terms of post-secondary educational outcomes. HSPA graduates go to college at greater rates than do SRA graduates.

Table 12

Assessment Type and Whether the Graduate Matriculated in Post Secondary Institutions

		Assessment Type			
		N=9,725			
		HSPA*		SRA	
		N	%	N	%
Post-Secondary Study	No	1,290	32.5	3,434	59.6
	Yes	2,675	67.5	2,326	40.4
Total		3,965	100.0	5,760	100.0

Note. The above table contains row percentages only. The column percentages can be found in the appendix.

X^2 (df=1, N = 9,725) = 689.60, p < .001

*Relative Risk of Post secondary study was 1.67 for HSPA as compared to SRA.

That said, it is important to view these results in conjunction with the other data. Significantly, *Tables 7, 8* and *9* indicate that racial and ethnic minorities, women and the economically disadvantaged disproportionately rely on the SRA for high school

graduation. *Table 12* further demonstrates that 40% of SRA graduates go on to attend post-secondary educational institutions. This is a significant figure considering the implications of eliminating such an important and relied upon alternative assessment program. Not only would elimination likely increase the percentage of dropouts, the data suggest elimination might stall efforts to increase the current 40% of matriculated college/university students.

Table 13 shows that many students graduating via the SRA go on to college. Those passing neither section of the HSPA go on to college at a rate of 34%, while those passing the LAL and failing the math go on at a rate of 49%. The low rates of HSPA math passage indicate, as did *Table 6*, a significant deficiency in math instruction throughout the district.

Table 13

SRA Assessment Passage by Section and Post Secondary Institution Matriculation

SRA Assessment Type		SRA Post Secondary Study			
		No		Yes	
Math	LAL	N	%	N	%
No Pass	No Pass	2,104	66.0	1,068	34.0
No Pass	Pass	1,163	51.0	1,119	49.0
Pass	No Pass	167	55.0	139	45.0
Total		3,434		2,326	

*Relative Risk of Post secondary study for Math-No Pass/LAL-Pass was 1.44; Math-Pass/LAL/No-Pass was 1.32 as compared to No Pass/No Pass.

The rates at which those failing to pass either section of the HSPA and graduate via the SRA or pass just one section of the HSPA and graduate via the SRA yet go on to college, underscores the extent to which SRA graduates go on to post secondary study. It has been assumed that students failing to pass the HSPA either dropout or graduate via the SRA and fail to persist beyond. As *Tables 12* and *13* demonstrate, the data do not support that conclusion.

Assessment vs. College Type

The following analysis examines those students going on to post-secondary study by analyzing under which assessment they graduated, and whether they went on to attend a two-year, four-year, or technical/vocational school after graduation. For the analysis, the internal database was re-coded so that all technical/vocational schools are represented as 0, 2-year colleges are represented as 2, and 4-year colleges/universities are represented

as 4 for purposes. However, in *Table 14* below, the types of colleges will be referred to by length of stay or vocation.

Table 14 below shows that SRA graduates overwhelmingly attended 2-year colleges and universities as their first post-secondary educational institution prior to moving on to additional study. The disparity in 2-year and 4-year college/attendance suggests that the path by which the students graduate has a significant effect upon the graduates' immediate post-secondary matriculation.

SRA graduates also attend vocational and technical schools at higher rates than HSPA graduates though the overall number of vocational and technical school attendance upon initially leaving high school is exceptionally low for both assessment types. The data demonstrate that SRA graduates are 49% more likely to attend 2-year colleges, HSPA graduates are 2.3 times more likely to attend 4-year colleges/universities than SRA graduates, and SRA graduates are 34% more likely to attend technical/vocational schools.

Consistent with *Table 12* which reveals that in excess of 40% of SRA graduates attend post-secondary educational institutions, and *Table 13* indicating that irrespective of the combination of assessment types by which they graduate SRA graduates persist to college, *Table 14* suggests that SRA graduates make post-secondary education a priority. Though a significant majority of SRA graduates begin their educations in 2-year colleges, as the data show, the graduates attend college at significant rates.

Table 15 below indicates overwhelming attendance at public schools for both HSPA and SRA graduates. However, HSPA graduates attend public colleges/universities and private colleges/universities at a slightly greater rate. HSPA graduates, as compared to SRA graduates are also 55% more likely to attend private college/universities.

Assessment type plays a statistically significant role in the graduates' attendance at public or private school. However, relatively few graduates attended private schools.

Table 14

Assessment Type and Matriculation in 2-Year, 4-Year, or Technical/Vocational Schools

		Assessment Type			
		<i>N=5,001</i>			
Type of College/University		HSPA*		SRA	
		N	%	N	%
	2-Year	871	32.6	1,734	74.5
	4-Year	1,778	66.5	524	22.5
	Tech/Voc	26	0.9	68	2.9
Total		2,675	100	2,326	100

X^2 (df=2, N = 5,001) = 968.13, $p < .001$

*Relative Risk of 2-Year matriculation was 2.28; of 4-Year matriculation was 0.34; of Tech/Voc was 3.22 as compared to HSPA.

Table 15

Assessment by College Type: Public or Private Colleges/Universities

	Public		Private	
	N	%	N	%
HSPA*	2,098	78.4	577	21.6
SRA	2,002	86.1	324	13.9
Total	4,100	xxx	901	xxx

X^2 (df=1, N = 5,001) = 49.17, $p < .001$

Relative Risk of Public University Attendance was 1.10 for SRA as compared to HSPA.

It is note-worthy that despite their greater numbers, SRA graduates attend both public and private colleges/universities at lesser rates than HSPA graduates. Due to the over-representation of SRA graduates in the sample pool and in community colleges (*See Table 14*), which tend to be overwhelmingly public, the greatest impact of the absence of SRA graduates in 4-year colleges in the study is felt in private 4-year colleges and universities.

Table 16 below gives an example of the students graduating from the 10 comprehensive high-schools via either the traditional program (HSPA) or the alternative program (SRA) and going on to post-secondary study or not. The larger goal of this table is to explore whether there are significant differences in post-secondary educational attendance based on the types of schools from which the students graduated.

Of the 10 comprehensive high schools here, 4 of the schools (Art H.S, Science H.S., Technology H.S. and University H.S.) are considered “high performing” or “magnet” schools. Though public schools, these magnet schools differ from comprehensive neighborhood schools in that they generally offer much more competitive or specialized curricula, have a greater variety of students than neighborhood schools due to the desire to “attract” students from differing geographical school zones. Also, since magnet schools have increasingly instituted selection criteria such as entrance exams to choose from the ever increasing number of applications submitted by families yearly. Traditional wisdom has maintained that the magnet schools “cream” or attract the best students from neighborhood schools. This can create the impression that magnet school students perform better than regular neighborhood schools. *Table 16* is meant to begin to

address how students graduating differentially fare post-secondarily based on the schools from which they graduated. The following analysis will shed some light on this issue.

Table 16

Assessment Type and Post Secondary Matriculation by High School: Traditional and Magnet

		No Post Secondary				Post Secondary				Total	
		HSPA		SRA		HSPA		SRA		N	%
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
TRADITION AL HIGH SCHOOL	Barringer HS	135	8.8	773	50.4	167	10.9	458	29.9	1,533	100
	Central HS	65	8.5	331	42.2	108	14.1	262	34.2	766	100
	Eastside HS	309	18.1	678	39.8	342	20.1	376	22.1	1,705	100
	Malcolm S. Shabazz HS	97	8.4	551	47.5	157	13.5	356	30.7	1,161	100
	Weequahic HS	101	11.1	384	42.2	165	18.1	259	28.5	909	100
	Westside HS	161	12.9	533	42.7	216	17.3	338	27.1	1,248	100
MAGNET HIGH SCHOOLS	Arts HS	116	18.6	44	7.1	374	60.0	89	14.3	623	100
	Science HS	98	15.0	1	0.2	551	84.1	5	0.8	655	100
	TechnologyHS	118	18.6	119	18.8	247	39.0	150	23.7	634	100
	University HS	90	17.1	20	3.8	384	72.9	33	6.3	527	100

χ^2 (df=19, N = 9,725) = 954.12, p < .001

As *Table 12* indicated, HSPA and SRA graduates attend college at significant rates. However, due to their over-representation in the sample pool SRA graduates appear to keep greater pace with HSPA graduates than they do. However, as *Table 12* has clearly demonstrated, graduating via the HSPA assessment has a statistically significant effect. *Table 12* show the extent to which HSPA graduates go on to postsecondary study at a rate of 67.5% while SRA graduates go on to postsecondary study at a lesser rate of 40.4%. In addition the data reveal the disparity in college attendance based on 2-year and 4-year attendance (*See Table 14*), public and private attendance (*See Table 15*) and disparities based on race, sex, and economic disadvantage (*See Tables 7, 8 and 9*).

The data in *Table 16* above show that those students not going on to postsecondary study are overwhelmingly SRA graduates from the six (6) traditional neighborhood comprehensive schools. However, SRA graduates from the six (6) traditional neighborhood comprehensives also comprise a majority of those high school graduates going on to postsecondary educational institutions. That said, magnet schools show an increasing number of SRA graduates.

The HSPA graduates from the four (4) magnet schools are over-represented in the HSPA category of non-post-secondary and post-secondary study. In the non-post secondary category, while comprising only four (4) schools, the magnet HSPA graduates still make up 33% of all HSPA graduates who do not go onto school. Likewise, while comprising only four (4) schools, the magnet HSPA graduates still comprise a 58% majority of all HSPA graduates going onto post secondary study.

Magnet school students are just 27.3% of graduates in the study! Due to the greater number of students attending the traditional neighborhood comprehensive schools, the expectation would be that they would comprise a fairly healthy majority in each category. Indeed traditional neighborhood schools make up 67% of the non-postsecondary HSPA category and 95% of the non-post secondary SRA category. However, the HSPA post-secondary education category does not conform to expectations. Though comprising six (6) schools, the traditional neighborhood comprehensive high-schools manage only 42% of the HSPA postsecondary total of 2,675, despite being over-represented in the postsecondary SRA category.

Table 16 further confirms that the assessment program under which students graduate makes a difference. HSPA graduates going on to post-secondary study have

disproportionately attended and graduated from specialized magnet high schools. However, this does not undercut the fact that SRA graduates have an increasing presence in magnet schools from the non-postsecondary to postsecondary categories. In addition, Technology H.S. sends a significant percentage of SRA graduates to post-secondary institutions.

Though the data illustrate the extent to which SRA graduates trail HSPA graduates in overall postsecondary attendance and type of postsecondary attendance, the data also show the extent to which SRA graduates attend post-secondary educational institutions at significant rates. SRA graduates disproportionately attend 2-year colleges upon exiting high school, but attend 4-year colleges (both public and private as well) at significant rates as well. In addition, despite the obstacles presented in terms of race, sex, and economic disadvantage, many SRA graduates continue to persist to postsecondary educational institutions.

Assessment by College Degrees and College Attendance

Previous analysis has shown differences between HSPA and SRA graduates. *Table 12* showed that while HSPA graduates attended post-secondary institutions at a greater rate than SRA graduates, SRA graduates also attended colleges/universities at significant rates. *Tables 14* and *15* indicated the extent to which SRA graduates disproportionately attend 2-Year public colleges in comparison to HSPA graduates' greater rates of attendance at 4-Year Public and private colleges/universities.

However, while highlighting these differences, the data also demonstrate that SRA graduates attend post-secondary institutions at significant rates, receive degrees from said institutions, though at lesser rates, attend and receive degrees from HBCUs,

and do so while confronting severely racially isolated schools, gross disparities based on race, sex, and economic disadvantage, and societal attitudes which undervalue both students and degree (*See Tables 7, 8 and 9*).

The relative small disparity in the number of degrees received by HSPA and SRA graduates further highlights the extent to which the SRA constitutes an important vehicle for high school graduation and college/university attendance. Of those students graduating under either assessment program from spring 2003 to spring 2008, there have been 170 degrees issued. *Table B17 (See Appendix B, Table B17)* indicates that 45.9% (N=78) of the degrees were issued to SRA graduates whereas 54.1% (N=92) were issued to HSPA graduates. This number is not reflective of the degrees that will be issued post spring 2008. Additionally, though this is not a study of the degrees received, it is important to note that relatively few degrees have been received considering the number of students in the sample and the period covered by the study. The degrees issued reflect the persistence of the students in the system to go on to receive either 2-year, four-year or vocational/technical degrees by assessment program within the parameters outlined throughout this analysis.

An additional important finding is the number of graduates attending and receiving degrees from HBCU (Historically Black Colleges/Universities) during the period of analysis here. Of the 34 HBCUs initially attended during this period of study, 5% (N=249) students out of the total number of 5,001 attended HBCUs. Of this number, 69% (N=171) graduated via the HSPA examination whereas 31% (N=78) graduated via the SRA. The data indicate that 10% (N=17) of the colleges/universities from which degrees have been received are HBCUs (*See Appendix B, Table B17*). Of the degrees

received from the HBCUs, 59% (N=10) have been received by SRA graduates and 41% (N=7) having been received by HSPA graduates. Thus, a majority of graduates going on to receive degrees from HBCUs during the period of analysis from spring 2003 to spring 2008 have been SRA graduates. These numbers show, when coupled with the degrees obtained, that HBCUs play a vital role in college and university attendance throughout the district. In no small regard, in comparison to the number of two year colleges attended and the relatively small number of traditional elite colleges attended, HBCUs act as an elite college/university destination for HSPA and SRA graduates.

A majority of those graduates going on to receive degrees from 2-year colleges were SRA graduates as well (*See Tables B17*). When coupled with *Table B18* (*See Appendix B, Table B18*), this makes sense as the majority of SRA graduates attend 2-Year colleges as their first postsecondary stop. Of those receiving degrees from 2-year colleges, a majority, 56% (N=30) are SRA graduates and 44% (N=24) are HSPA graduates (*See Appendix B, Tables B17 and B18*). Lastly, the number of students receiving degrees from vocational/technical schools was very modest in comparison to 4-year colleges/universities and 2-year colleges. However, of the students receiving degrees from these specialized schools, the majority were SRA graduates. Of those receiving degrees from vocational/technical schools 86% (N=6) are SRA graduates whereas 14% (N=1) were HSPA graduates.

These data confirm several important differences between HSPA and SRA graduates. Overall HSPA graduates receive degrees at greater rates than do SRA graduates. As has been stated earlier, the data here show that SRA graduates receive more degrees from 2-Year colleges as opposed to HSPA graduates' receipt of degrees

from 4-Year colleges/universities. Though the numbers are minimal, SRA graduates also receive more vocational/technical degrees than do HSPA graduates. This is consistent with earlier findings as well. However, the marginal disparity in degree receipt, the higher rate of degree receipt from HBCUs, and the relative paucity of enrollment in vocational/technical schools underscores the importance of the SRA assessment as a vehicle for high school graduation and college attendance.

To this point this study has analyzed the extent to which there is a differential effect in post-secondary outcomes of those students graduating through the traditional HSPA assessment program as opposed to the alternative assessment program. The purpose of the study has been to provide detailed empirical and descriptive data on the high school exit pathways of district students. In sum, the data provide evidence for maintaining the both the HSPA and SRA programs as such a substantial percentage of district students graduate high school and attend post-secondary institutions through them.

The data reveal that there is a significant difference in post-secondary college attendance between HSPA and SRA. The data show that HSPA graduates attend post-secondary institutions at a significantly greater rate than SRA graduates. SRA graduates disproportionately attend 2-Year colleges after high school graduation, while HSPA graduates attend 4-Year colleges/universities at substantially greater rates.

The data indicate that racial and ethnic minorities, women and the educationally disadvantaged disproportionately graduate via the SRA with blacks graduating a majority of students via the SRA and Hispanic/Latinos graduating a very slight majority via HSPA

rather than SRA. Women are the majority of graduates in the study and also graduate more HSPA and SRA graduates than men.

Just as race/ethnicity and sex play a significant role on the postsecondary outcomes of district graduates, economic status of the families of students throughout the district also plays a significant role. Economic disadvantage, defined as free or reduced lunch, has a significant relationship to assessment. SRA graduates are much more likely to be economically disadvantaged than HSPA graduates,

Persistence

The final section of chapter 6 will deal with persistence in post-secondary schooling. This section will assess the extent to which there are differences between HSPA and SRA graduates' total time spent pursuing post-secondary education after high school. Consistent with previous sections in chapter 6, this section on persistence will analyze these differences from the perspective of assessment type.

Of the 5,001 graduates initially going on to post-secondary study, 16.1% (N=804) went on to an additional post-secondary school. The following will begin to analyze persistence of study by providing a demographic profile of the 804 students who went to further post-secondary study. The study will then look at the types of colleges attended. The analysis will examine whether the colleges are 2-year or 4-year schools as well as whether the schools are public or private. Finally, the study will analyze the 804 schools by assessment and the total number of months spent in school.

The majority, 59% (N=477), of the 804 students going on to further post-secondary study are female, while males comprised 41% (N=327). Consistent with previous data, blacks constitute the overwhelming majority of races and ethnicities

accounting for 59.4% ($N=379$) of the population going on to further study, while Hispanic/Latinos, 27% ($N=172$) and whites 11.3% ($N=72$) generally comprised the remaining population of students going on to a second school. With respect to Economic Disadvantage, of the 804 responses 73% stated they were economically disadvantaged as that definition is applied in this study. The numbers as to race/ethnicity and economic disadvantage for this subgroup of students going on to a second post-secondary school are similar to the percentages of racial/ethnic minorities and economically disadvantaged students for the group overall.

Consistent with *Tables 14* and *15* above, *Tables 19 & 20* below indicate the extent to which HSPA and SRA graduates go on to attend a second school after their initial post-secondary enrollment. The data indicate that both within SRA assessment type and as compared to their HSPA colleagues, SRA graduates decrease their enrollment in 2-year colleges and increase their enrollment in 4-year colleges/universities.

Table 19

2nd School Matriculation in 2-Year, 4-Year, or Technical/Vocational Schools

		Assessment Type			
		<i>N=804</i>			
		HSPA		SRA	
		N	%	N	%
Type of College/University	2-Year	109	23.7	190	55.1
	4-Year	341	74.3	141	40.9
	Tech/Voc	9	2.0	14	4.1
Total		459	100.0	345	100.0

X^2 (df=2, N = 804) = 91.697, $p < .000$

Additionally, both within assessment and as compared to HSPA graduates, SRA graduates increase their presence in private schools. The rate of attendance in a second college or university further suggests the validity of the SRA as an effective means of measuring knowledge and skills and promoting college attendance. Contrary to belief, SRA graduates do not fail to persist in their pursuit of college degrees. To the contrary, pursuant to *Tables 19 and 20*, SRA graduates not only persist, but show progression by moving from 2-year to 4-year colleges/universities.

Table 20

2nd School Assessment by College Type: Public or Private Colleges/Universities

	Public		Private	
	N	%	N	%
HSPA	327	71.2	132	28.8
SRA	266	77.1	79	22.9
Total	593	100	211	100

$\chi^2(df=1, N = 804) = 3.494, p > .062$

SRA graduates' rates of attendance were lower than those for HSPA graduates in terms of enrollment in a second educational institution, as well as enrollment in 4-year colleges/universities and private colleges/universities. However, comparing HSPA and SRA graduates' rates of enrollment in their second school suggests that SRA graduates persist in their educational pursuits not only by attending a second school at similar rates to HSPA graduates, but by showing progression.

Total Semesters

As a final measure of college/university persistence, this section of the chapter examines the total number of semesters spent in college. Semesters are categorized here fall, spring and summer. This measure will take into account the number of semesters spent in college by the 5,001 students of the 9,725 having gone on to post-secondary study. The following table and figure illustrates the extent to which students persist in college by the number of fall, spring and summer semesters spent in college.

Table 21

Assessment and Total Semesters of College/University Attendance

No. of Semesters	HSPA			SRA		
	Semester Enrollment	Cumulative Enrollment	%	Semester Enrollment	Cumulative Enrollment	%
1	695	2675	100.00	724	2326	100.00
2	375	1980	74.02	447	1602	68.87
3	398	1605	60.00	361	1155	49.66
4	253	1207	45.12	204	794	34.14
5	260	954	35.66	172	590	25.37
6	166	694	25.94	99	418	17.97
7	184	528	19.74	88	319	13.71
8	115	344	12.86	68	231	9.93
9	93	229	8.56	56	163	7.01
10	65	136	5.08	38	107	4.60
11	48	71	2.65	29	69	2.97
12	13	23	0.86	18	40	1.72
13	5	10	0.37	10	22	0.95
14	4	5	0.19	8	12	0.52
15	0	1	0.04	3	4	0.17
16	1	1	0.04	0	1	0.04
17	0	0	0.00	1	1	0.04

These data indicate that student enrollment begins to drop off almost immediately from the first semester in both groups, but faster among the SRA graduates. The data suggests that for both groups HSPA and SRA, there is a stunning lack of retention from the first to second semesters with the HSPA group losing 26% of its enrolled population and the SRA group losing 32%. Additionally, the loss is magnified from the first to the fourth semester with the HSPA group losing 55% of its enrolled population and the SRA group losing 65%. After the first four semesters, there is a steady decline in the number of semesters SRA graduates attend post-secondary institutions through the twelfth semester. This can also be seen more readily in the following Figure P.

Assessment and Total Semesters of College/University Attendance

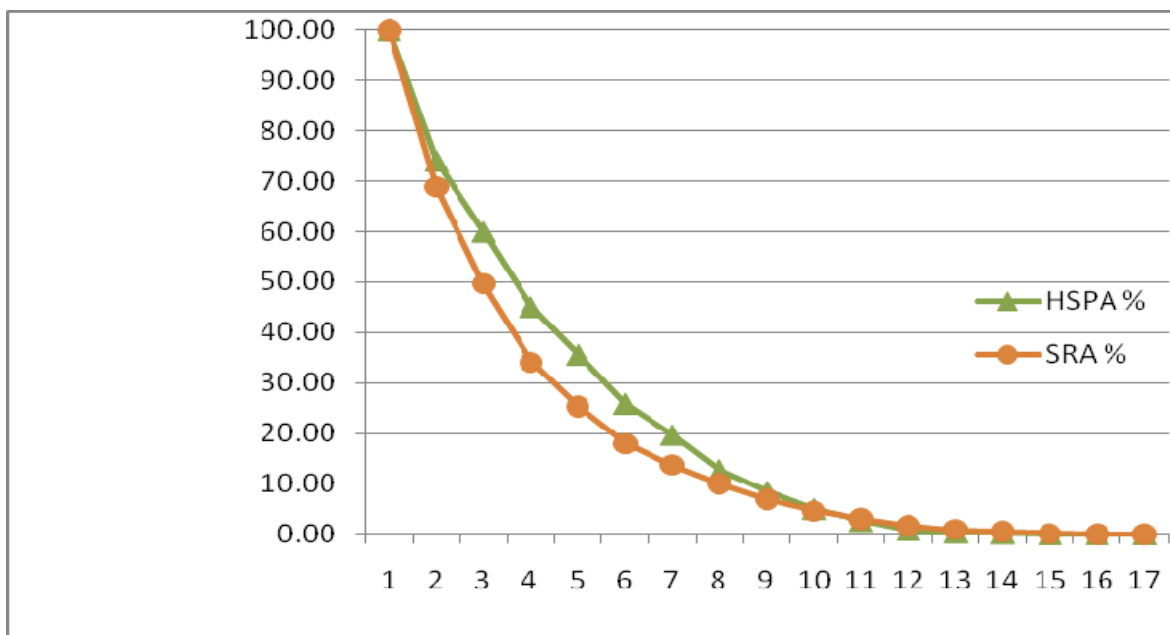


Fig. P: Semester Attrition

The persistence table above as well as the performance of SRA graduates demonstrated throughout this chapter informs us that eliminating the assessment and the potential it offers to truly assess knowledge and skills, while giving credence to *only* a single high-stakes test measure (the HSPA), suggests an acknowledgment to sacrifice the talent and academic curiosity of a generation of students. As has been shown throughout this chapter, though there are differences between HSPA and SRA graduates, the differences suggest neither elimination nor overhaul.

Although SRA graduates attend post-secondary institutions at a lesser rate, they do attend college at *significant* rates. The data suggest that the demographic and academic disparities might be attributed to the societal socio-economic disparities rather than a deficiency in the SRA as an assessment tool to measure knowledge and skills. However, more data is needed to investigate this question more thoroughly. Though they

do not attend, at least initially, the same types and quality of institutions, SRA graduates attend college and many persist through overwhelming socio-economic obstacles. Preventing them from pursuing improvement and rich and meaningful secondary educational experiences simply severely limits their likelihood of future educational, social and economic opportunities. The data suggest that without the SRA, high school students would be channeled to a much greater extent towards *dropping out* or the GED, which outcomes are eerily similar to those of dropouts. Clearly the answer is to improve, not eliminate the SRA so that the HSPA and SRA work in tandem to identify true talent and skills, not just rote memorization. This approach allows the talent and potential demonstrated by the findings in this chapter to work towards true equality of outcomes in educational assessment.

While the bivariate analysis above tells a great deal about the factors that affect differential high school graduation and the effects on these different graduation types on post secondary outcomes, they do not assess the independent effects of these variables on these post secondary outcomes (controlling for the others). In order to examine these independent effects, multivariate analysis is required.

Multivariate Analysis

Table (s) 22-25 presents multivariate log binomial regression model analysis of the relationship between various independent predictor (X_1 , X_2 , etc...) variables and the dependent variable post-secondary study (Y_1) (McNutt et al., 2001). As the previous bivariate analysis showed, the independent variables race, gender, economic disadvantage and magnet/traditional comprehensive high school have a significant effect on whether students in the district graduate high school and go on to post-secondary study.

Rarely is there only one statistical model that adequately fits a set of data. The following log binomial regression model analysis yields an adjusted relative risk of dichotomous common outcomes. According to McNutt, et al. (2001), when computing common outcomes (10 > percent) logistic regression, because it yields an adjusted odds ratio that approximates the adjusted relative risk when the incidence is rare (10 < percent), may be incorrectly applied (McNutt et al., 2001). When the incidence or outcome is rare, logistic regression and the odds ratio approximation to an adjusted relative risk can be more appropriate. However, when the incidence of outcome is more common, is likely to overestimate. Because this portion of the study is interested in estimating relative risk "...e.g. the probability of the outcome for one exposure group divided by the probability of the outcome for another exposure group (not the odds ratio)", or measuring the relationship between a risk factor and an outcome, logistic regression is as likely to keep factors as leave them out; whereas log binomial regression modeling produces an unbiased estimate of the adjusted relative risk.

Table 22 below presents adjusted risk ratios (RR) for the likelihood of post-secondary attendance based on gender, race, year of high school graduation, economic disadvantage, magnet or traditional high school, and HSPA or SRA assessment.

Table 22

Multivariate log binomial regression model of post-secondary enrollment within first two semesters of graduation

Variable		Estimate (Log)	Risk Ratio	P -value
Gender	Female	0.2005	1.22	<.0001
	Male	0.0000	1.00	ref
Race	Hispanic/Latino	0.0154	1.02	.7267
	Black	0.1445	1.16	<.0003
	White	0.0000	1.00	ref
HS Grad Year	2004	0.0000	1.00	ref
	2005	-0.0905	.91	<.0032
	2006	0.0023	1.00	..9352
	2007	-0.0282	.97	.4196
School Lunch	No	0.0000	1.00	ref
	Free/Reduced			
	Free/Reduced	0.0649	1.07	.0241
School	Traditional	0.0000	1.00	ref
	Magnet	0.2853	1.33	<.0001
Assessment Type	SRA	0.0000	1.00	ref
	HSPA	0.5104	1.67	<.0001

Table 22 indicates that women have a 22% greater chance of going on to post-secondary study as compared to men. *Table 22* further indicates that blacks have a 16% greater likelihood compared to whites and Hispanic/Latinos to go on to post-secondary study given an equal chance to do so. Additionally as the multivariate analysis indicates that blacks are the most likely *statistically* to go on to post-secondary study controlling for other variables, retention of the SRA assessment which has been the primary vehicle for graduating black students is of primary importance. The data in *Table 22* further show that, controlling for other factors, there is a 7% greater chance of going on to post secondary study by those receiving free or reduced lunch.

Table 22 further shows that those attending magnet schools have a 33% greater chance of going on to post-secondary study than do those attending traditional

neighborhood schools. In addition, the relationship between school type (Magnet or Traditional/Neighborhood) is statistically significant such that attending magnet schools matter. Taken with earlier findings that blacks and Hispanics are disproportionately poor, that blacks graduate a majority of their students SRA (followed very closely by Hispanic/Latinos) and that blacks and Hispanic/Latinos, though represented in magnet schools, graduate the overwhelming majority of their students through traditional schools, magnets have a substantial effect on post-secondary success. Those racial and ethnic minorities graduating via magnet schools are much more likely to matriculate post-secondarily than those attending traditional schools.

Table 22 lastly indicates that the relationship between graduating via the HSPA and going on to post-secondary study is statistically significant such that HSPA graduates have a 67% greater likelihood of post-secondary school enrollment. This is consistent with the findings from *Table 10* above indicating that approximately 67.5% of HSPA graduates go on to post-secondary study compared with approximately 40% of SRA graduates. Those findings too were statistically significant.

Though sex, being black, school type and assessment type were all significant, controlling for various predictor variables the single strongest predictor of going on to post-secondary study was to graduate via the HSPA examination followed closely by attending a magnet school. Again, these findings are not surprising as they reinforce previous findings indicating that school type and assessment method are statistically significant. However, as the large majority of students in the district are SRA graduating racial/ethnic minorities attending traditional non-magnet high schools, and 59% of the student population graduates SRA , while 40% of the SRA population goes on to post-

secondary study, there is no plausible argument for the elimination of the SRA assessment.

Tables 23-25 provide additional multivariate analysis concerning HSPA graduation, 2-year and 4-year school attendance and public and private schooling.

Table 23

Multivariate log binomial regression model predicting students graduating via the SRA				
Parameter		Estimate (Log)	Risk Ratio	P -value
Gender	Female	0.0454	1.05	.0668
	Male	0.0000	1.00	Ref
Race	Hispanic/Latino	0.3734	1.45	<.0001
	Black	0.3253	1.38	<.0001
	White	0.0000	1.00	Ref
HS Grad Year	2004	0.0000	1.00	Ref
	2005	-0.0128	0.99	.5772
	2006	-0.5963	0.55	<.0001
	2007	-0.8989	0.41	<.0001
School Lunch	No	0.0000	1.00	Ref
	Free/Reduced			
	Free/Reduced	0.0202	1.02	.5150
School	Traditional	0.0000	1.00	ref
	Magnet	-1.5501	0.21	<.0001

The data in *Table 23* show that women have a slightly greater chance of graduating via the SRA than men after controlling for other variables. Hispanic/Latinos had a 45% greater chance of graduating via the SRA as compared to whites; whereas blacks had a 38% greater chance of graduating via the SRA as compared to whites. As compared to traditional neighborhood comprehensives, magnet school graduates were 79% less likely to graduate SRA than traditional neighborhood comprehensive graduates. The grad years demonstrate a reduction in SRA passage. The data does not easily explain this circumstance. It is possible that the political circumstances surrounding the existence of the dual assessment program has emphasized passage of the HSPA as compared to the

SRA and thus emphasis has been placed on preparation. Again, more data is needed to adequately assess the drop off in 06-07.

Table 24 shows that Hispanic/Latinos were less likely than blacks or whites to go to private school. The data additionally show that magnet school graduates as compared to traditional neighborhood comprehensives had a 48% greater chance of going on to 4 year colleges/universities as compared to 2 year institutions. HSPA graduates were 161% more likely to make 4 year colleges/universities their first post secondary stop than SRA graduates.

Table 24

Multivariate log binomial regression model predicting students going on to 4 year colleges and universities

Parameter		Estimate (Log)	Risk Ratio	P -value
Gender	Female	0.0287	1.03	.4700
	Male	0.0000	1.00	ref
Race	Hispanic/Latino	-0.1189	0.89	.0262
	Black	0.0175	1.02	.7000
	White	0.0000	1.00	ref
HS Grad Year	2004	0.0000	1.00	ref
	2005	0.0068	1.01	.8691
	2006	0.0127	1.01	.7591
	2007	0.0671	1.07	.1124
School Lunch	No	0.0000	1.00	ref
	Free/Reduced			
	Free/Reduced	-0.0393	0.96	.3090
School	Traditional	0.0000	1.00	ref
	Magnet	0.3938	1.48	<.0001
Assessment Type	SRA	0.0000	1.00	ref
	HSPA	0.9597	2.61	<.0001

Table 25

Multivariate log binomial regression model predicting students going on to private colleges and universities

Parameter		Estimate (Log)	Risk Ratio	P -value
Gender	Female	0.2483	1.28	0.0179
	Male	0.0000	1.00	Ref
Race	Hispanic/Latino	-0.1825	0.83	0.2042
	Black	-0.0161	0.98	0.8992
	White	0.0000	1.00	Ref
HS Grad Year	2004	0.0000	1.00	Ref
	2005	0.0926	1.10	0.4082
	2006	-0.0272	0.97	0.8231
	2007	0.2197	1.25	0.0771
School Lunch	No			Ref
	Free/Reduced	0.0000	1.00	
	Free/Reduced	0.0510	1.05	0.1502
School	Traditional	0.0000	1.00	Ref
	Magnet	0.1268	1.14	<.0001
Assessment Type	SRA			Ref
	HSPA	0.4207	1.52	<.0001

Table 25 above shows women had a 28% greater chance of going on to a private college/university than men. Magnet school graduates were 14% more likely to go on to private school than traditional neighborhood comprehensive graduates. Finally, *Table 25* shows that HSPA graduates had a 52% greater chance of going on to private school after high school graduation than SRA graduates. It is important to note that though it may seem as though a judgment is made to the superior qualifications to enter or the education received in a private school, the analysis is not meant to judge the quality of the schools (private vs. public) rather the rate at which HSPA and SRA graduates from the district enter them.

Summary

This chapter revealed that contrary to the original hypothesis, in which it was believed that the post-secondary results of HSPA as compared to SRA graduates were negligible, there are some significant differences. The findings as to demographic indicators (sex, race/ethnicity, and economic disadvantage) as well as those relating to 2-year and 4-year college attendance, as well as public and private college/university attendance suggest that the HSPA assessment program does make a difference in the postsecondary outcomes of the graduates.

For example, the data strongly suggest that racial/ethnic minorities, women, and the economically disadvantaged graduate more often via the SRA than the HSPA. Additionally, the SRA graduates more women, students of color and economically disadvantaged students than does the HSPA. However, women, graduate slightly more often via the traditional high-stakes HSPA exam as compared to men, yet they still comprise an overwhelming majority of graduates in each assessment type, and due to their disproportionate representation in the sample pool, are more likely to graduate SRA than HSPA.

The data also suggest that economic disadvantage plays a great role in determining who graduates SRA as those economically disadvantaged are twice as likely to graduate SRA as compared to the HSPA. Whereas those not designated economically disadvantaged have an almost equal chance of graduating HSPA as SRA. Due to the fact that the majority of all groups represented in the sample pool are economically disadvantaged (thus in many respects we are comparing “working poor” to “poorer”), due to the disproportionate representation of blacks and Hispanic/Latinos in the sample,

and the racial isolation of these groups relative to the other groups, blacks and Hispanic/Latinos are disproportionately poor, disproportionately isolated, and disproportionately more likely to graduate SRA as compared to HSPA. Blacks too are the only racial/ethnic group who graduate a majority of their students SRA. Hispanic/Latinos are slightly more likely to graduate via the HSPA, but only slightly. The other groups graduate healthy majorities of their students HSPA as compared to SRA. This finding disproportionately disadvantages blacks and Hispanic/Latinos for graduation via the alternative assessment program. It further disadvantages them for the social context in which they find themselves. Being poor and a racial/ethnic minority is a strong indicator of SRA graduation.

The data further show, that contrary to the original hypotheses, SRA graduates disproportionately attend 2-year colleges public colleges compared to HSPA graduates who attend 4-year colleges/universities at greater rates. The data show SRA graduates attend technical/vocational schools at greater rates than HSPA graduates though attendance by both groups at technical/vocational schools is very low. SRA graduates disproportionately attend racially isolated public schools compared to HSPA graduates' attendance at magnet schools. HSPA graduates going on to post-secondary study disproportionately attended and graduated from specialized magnet high schools.

For all the differences in graduation and matriculation found in this chapter, it is extremely important to note the extent to which SRA graduates progress through high school and on to post-secondary schooling. SRA graduates comprise 60% of all graduates represented in this data, 47% of all postsecondary college/university enrollees, and 40% of all SRA graduates go on to post-secondary study. Though this figure is

significantly less than the 68% of HSPA graduates going on to postsecondary study, the figure represents thousands of high school graduates pursuing postsecondary educational goals in 2-year, 4-year, public/private, national, regional, historically black college/universities and some of the most highly selective schools in the country. Despite the aforementioned findings, SRA graduates continue to persist to college and obtain degrees.

CHAPTER 7

THE SURVEYS: AN EXPLORATION OF THE PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF POST-SECONDARY GRADUATES

This chapter presents findings from the graduate surveys. Descriptive statistics are used to analyze the data beginning with demographic questions, and working through questions related to assessment and preparation, feelings and attitudes about assessments, and post-secondary pathways and educational direction.

Data Considerations

On occasion, respondents in the survey portion of the study did not answer several of the questions. These questions usually concerned age or feelings towards the assessment type. Many seemed to have been skittish about giving their current age in spite of the fact that no self-identifying information linked them to the responses. This may have been due to the suspicion by many survey respondents that surveys *could* be linked back to them. Additionally, to the extent that HSPA takers/passers had no knowledge of the SRA, the student may have been unable to answer any questions concerning the SRA examination. Where appropriate I have simply stated where responses were missing and continued with the total number of responses for each question. Other than this, no changes were made to the data other than organizational and aesthetic changes for ease of use.

In addition, though non-response is always a problem when conducting anonymous surveys, which include consent forms speaking to voluntariness, the response rate here was 36% or 168 out of a total of 471. Response bias, responding in a way that the researcher wants rather than responding based on true feelings, is also a possibility

when dealing with small survey populations. However, the lack of contact the researcher had with the participants likely diminished the impact of this cognitive bias.

Survey Analysis

This portion of the survey analysis presents the result of each survey question beginning with demographic questions and working through the more complex questions related to assessments and preparation, feelings and attitudes about assessments, and post-secondary pathways and educational direction.

The overall response rate of the survey phase of the study was 36% ($N=168$). Survey respondents came from two different comprehensive high schools in the district; though the survey responses were not identified by high school. Of the responses 67.3% ($N=113$) were female and 32.7% ($N=55$) were male. This finding is consistent with the data in *Chapter 6* in which the sample is heavily female. This finding is also consistent with the literature on college attendance which indicates that more women than men are attending college.

Of the total number of surveys returned, the mean 4.2% ($N=7$) were 17 years of age 29.2% ($N=49$) were 18 years of age, 27.4% ($N=46$) were 19 years of age, 13.7% ($N=23$) were 20 years of age were 20.8% ($N=35$) are 21 years of age. The majority of students at high school graduation were either 17 or 18 with 43.5% ($N=73$) having been 17 and 46.4% ($N=78$) having been 18 years old at graduation.

Of the responses 50% ($N=84$) were HSPA graduates and 45.2% ($N=76$) were SRA graduates with an additional 4.8% ($N=8$) stating that they had graduated via neither HSPA nor SRA. In some instances those students with special needs or ELL students are required to sit for an examination, but not pass the examination. That is possibility here, or the responses could have been inadvertent. More specifically, 6.5% ($N=11$) stated

they had graduated via SRA alone, 6.5% ($N=11$) graduated via HSPA math/SRA language arts and 32.1% ($N=54$) graduated via HSPA language arts/SRA math.

Almost half of the respondents indicated that they graduated via the SRA, whereas almost 60% of the sample in *Chapter 6* graduated through the SRA. Of the 5,001 students going on to postsecondary study in chapter 6, 53% graduated via the HSPA and 47% graduated via the SRA. Also consistent with *Chapter 6* (See *Table 6*) is the great reliance on SRA for fulfilling the math requirement. Here, as in *Chapter 6*, the disparity in passing between HSPA math and HSPA language arts is glaring. Not only do both sets of data indicate a great reliance on the alternative assessment for fulfilling graduation requirements, but specifically the math requirement. The 54 SRA graduates, who indicated that they satisfied their graduation requirement with HSPA language arts and SRA math, are 71% of all SRA graduates in this sample pool. This would seem to indicate inadequate preparation for the math portion of the single high stakes test measure. Though it is impossible to state categorically that math instruction is deficient, the fact that so many students pass the language arts, fail the math, and graduate SRA indicates the continued need for the SRA and scrutiny of math instruction throughout the district.

Of the total number of respondents to the survey variable *High School Preparedness for post H.S. Life*, the majority of respondents stated they were either *well prepared* 42.3% ($N=71$) or *somewhat well prepared* 36.9% ($N=62$). Of the total number of respondents to the survey variable *Adequacy in Assessment* or “Whether the examination taken by the respondent tested what the respondent learned in high-school”, the overwhelming majority stated they either *strongly agreed* 29.2% ($N=49$) or that they

agreed somewhat 54.8% ($N=92$); while those indicating that they *disagreed somewhat* or *disagreed strongly* 15.6% ($N=26$) were a minority.

The responses to the survey questions on *preparedness* and *adequacy* indicate that irrespective of assessment type, the respondents felt that they were prepared to go on to college and that the assessment properly tested what they had learned in high school.

Of the total number of respondents to the survey variable *HSPA as a Better Indicator of Performance*, slightly more than expected either *strongly agreed* 22.6% ($N=38$) or *agreed somewhat* 36.3% ($N=61$) that the HSPA was a better indicator of performance than the SRA while fewer disputed this notion with 26.2% ($N=44$) *disagreeing somewhat* and only 14.9% ($N=25$) *disagreeing strongly*. Again, as 50% indicated they were HSPA graduates and 45% indicated they were SRA graduates, this finding was not extraordinarily out of line with the previous findings on assessment type. Of the total number of respondents to the survey variable *There is no difference between graduation via HSPA or SRA*, a majority disputed this with 38.1% ($N=64$) *disagreeing somewhat* and 17.3% ($N=29$) *disagreeing strongly*. However, though a minority, those finding relative equality between the exams were only slightly fewer than the 44% either *strongly agreeing* or *agreeing somewhat* that there is no difference whether one graduates via one or the other. Again, this finding is fairly consistent with assessment type as 50% graduated via HSPA and 45% via SRA. However, a greater defense of the SRA in the form of a much higher percentage in the *strongly agree* scale would have been expected.

Of the total number of respondents to the survey variable *SRA Easiness* (specifically the respondents were asked to respond to the statement “*I feel the SRA is easier than the HSPA*”), the findings were unexpected. Of the respondents, an

overwhelming majority (72%) either *strongly agreed* or *agreed somewhat* that the SRA was easier than the HSPA while only 28% disputed this notion by *somewhat* or *strongly disagreeing* that the SRA was easier than the HSPA.

This finding is not easily explained due to the findings indicating that the SRA graduates felt well prepared for life after high school, felt adequately assessed, felt confident in their majors, and did not fail to prepare for the HSPA because they felt the SRA was easier. Those graduating via the SRA failed at least one part of the HSPA at least once. Therefore, it is possible that those individuals found the opportunity to exhibit their understanding and mastery of graduation standards in a less stressful environment and in a more familiar context “easier”. In addition, it is highly likely that those individuals passing the HSPA feel as though the SRA is an easier assessment tool. The finding on easiness does not reflect the above finding on the *HSPA as a better indicator* or the *difference between graduation via the HSPA and SRA*. Those findings seemed to indicate more agreement than not that the assessment programs are similar.

For the survey variable questioning whether a student *Did Not Study for the HSPA because They believed the SRA was Easier*, two frequencies were run. The question was specifically directed, in the survey, to those having graduated via the SRA. However, the number of responses indicated interest by a greater number of students than those having taken the SRA in this question. Therefore, two frequencies were run. The first included all those answering the survey question and the second applying only to those graduating via the SRA. Out of the total number of possible responses ($N=168$), 109 responses were received with 59 responses missing from the total number of possible responses. Of the 109 responses 81.7% ($N=89$) *disagreed strongly*. For those respondents specifically

stating they had graduated via the SRA, 76 respondents answered the question and 84.2% ($N=64$) *Disagreed strongly*. The findings here do not support the idea that students fail the HSPA purposely to advance to an easier SRA assessment tool. The findings indicate that having failed the HSPA, the graduates moved on to prepare for and pass the alternative method of graduation.

With the exception of the finding on *SRA Easiness*, the findings here are fairly consistent. Those having graduated via the HSPA tended to favor it over the SRA while those having graduated via the SRA tended to favor their method of graduation. The finding on easiness, if placed in the context of those having passed the SRA feeling that the SRA was a *better* assessment tool for them rather than the HSPA, become easier to understand. It is possible that those having passed the SRA felt that the SRA was more familiar and thus “easier”.

In response to the variable concerning *2-Year, 4-Year, or Vocational Education*, the overwhelming majority of respondents attended 4-Year colleges and universities as opposed to 2-Year colleges and universities. In *Chapter 6*, there was a substantial disparity in 2-year and 4-year college attendance when analyzed by assessment type. Those results will be further analyzed below.

The large majority (70%) of the respondents had 1 or 2 years of college/university experience with the remaining 30% having 3, 4 and 5 years of experience. This is similar to *Table 21, Chapter 6* which indicated that 60% of HSPA graduates had more than 2 semesters of college and 50% SRA graduates attended at least 2 semesters of college. Overall HSPA and SRA rates of attendance decreased substantially after the first 2 semesters. Finally, the overwhelming majority of all students identified as *freshmen* or

sophomores with the overwhelming majority stating they were *definite* about their future plans.

The individual findings here are in many ways consistent with the previous findings in *Chapter 6*. This is all the more remarkable as the chapter 6 findings are objective and the survey questions here are self-reported. That the self-report results here are complimentary of the findings in chapter 6 simply reinforces the validity of the large database findings. For example, of those individuals going on to postsecondary study in the original database, 53% graduated HSPA and 47% graduated SRA. Of those postsecondary respondents here, 50% indicated that they graduated HSPA whereas 45% indicated they graduated via the SRA assessment. In addition, the finding as to the sex of the graduates in chapter 6 was overwhelmingly female and that finding is consistent here as the survey respondents were overwhelmingly female.

Further consistent with *Chapter 6* (See *Table 6*) is the great reliance on SRA for fulfilling the math requirement. Chapter 6 indicated that those graduating via the SRA either passed neither part of the HSPA or overwhelmingly passed the language arts section of the HSPA and failed the math. The survey responses support that finding as 71% of all SRA graduates in chapter 7 passed the HSPA language arts and failed the HSPA math. As stated earlier, this would seem to indicate a troubling deficiency in math instruction due to the extremely high percentage of SRA graduates in both databases passing the language arts literacy as opposed to the math sections of the HSPA. If the goal is to eliminate the SRA, the disparity in math passage will continue to plague district students until the deficiency is addressed. If there were no SRA, *Chapters 6* and *7* clearly indicate that thousands of students would not have moved on to post-secondary study.

These graduates, many of whom failed the HSPA math section multiple times, might have dropped out or applied for GED certificates. As has been discussed above, and will be further discussed in *Chapter 8*, the social, economic and criminal justice outcomes for dropouts and GED holders are similarly bleak. In light of this knowledge and the dismal performance of district students on the math portion of the HSPA, the remedial instruction provided by the SRA would seem to be an advantage to district graduates.

Of the preceding Likert style questions measuring the graduates feelings and impressions of the assessments survey questions 7, 8 and 9 proved very enlightening. For example, question 7 asked whether the *HSPA as a Better Indicator of Performance*, though the ultimate findings were fairly consistent with the relative representation of HSPA to SRA graduates, a much stronger defense of the SRA by SRA takers would have been expected here by a larger percentage *strongly disagreeing* with the premise of the question; that defense was missing here. Additionally, question 8 measuring whether *There is no difference between graduation via HSPA or SRA*, intuitively might have drawn a robust acquiescence from SRA takers in the form of a much higher percentage in the *strongly agree* response; that response was not present here. As stated above, the finding on *SRA Easiness* is not easily explained. Whether this is an acknowledgment by SRA graduates that the assessment was “easier” in the sense of being less challenging, or “easier” in the sense of appealing strongly to their desire for an opportunity to present mastery of required knowledge and skills is unknown. However, the finding is surprisingly out of line with the other responses.

Cross-Tabulations

The following section of the survey analysis provides statistical descriptions of the data based on cross-tabulations. As in the preceding section which focused on analyzing the results of each individual survey question, this section will allow for descriptions based on the relationships between variables.

Table 26

Assessment by Sex*

Assessment Type	Gender					
	N=160 (8 Missing)					
	Female		Male			
	N	%	N	%		
HSPA	56	51.9	28	53.8		
SRA	52	48.1	24	46.2		
Total	108	67.5	52	32.5%		

Note. The above table contains column or group percentages only. The row percentages can be found in the appendix.

* χ^2 (df=1, N = 160) = .06, p = .05

Over the course of the period examined in this study in both chapters 6 and 7 women are the consistent majority in terms of overall population, high school graduates, and postsecondary enrollees. In both the HSPA and SRA assessments, women constitute a larger percentage of each. These findings hold true for both databases. This is no doubt due to the greater representation of women in the survey responses by 2:1. However, *Table 26* differs from *Table 7, Chapter 6* in that men though only slightly, graduate more often via the traditional assessment program rather than the alternative as compared to women. This finding conflicts with *Chapter 6* wherein women, though only

slightly, graduated more often via the traditional assessment program rather than the alternative as compared to men (*See Table 7, Chapter 6*).

The findings regarding sex and 2-year and 4-year college attendance were not greatly disparate, particularly considering the much greater representation of women in the survey responses. The data indicate, as would be expected due to their greater numbers, women attended both 2-year and 4 year colleges in greater numbers than men. Men and women were much more likely to state *No* to 2-year college attendance and *Yes* to 4-year college attendance. In comparison to Chapter 6, this could be a result of the respondents' participation in an incentive based graduation program. The rate of attendance at 2-year colleges by the survey respondents is noticeably less than those in Chapter 6.

The data further show, consistent with the findings in Chapter 6, that SRA graduates were more likely than HSPA graduates to attend 2-year colleges. However, the survey SRA respondents attended 4-year colleges at greater rates than did those SRA graduates in Chapter 6. This is very likely explained by the survey respondents participation in an incentive based program and ongoing receipt of support throughout their high school and college years. The graduates in Chapter 6 were not participants in an incentive based program such as were those in Chapter 7. The extent to which this affected the attendance at 4-year colleges and universities is unknown. However, the greater rate at which the survey respondents attended 4-year colleges/universities in comparison to those differential graduates in Chapter 6 suggests that the incentive based program likely has some affect.

Likert Questions: Assessment and Post High School Life

The data in *Table 27* below begins an analysis of the Likert Style questions measuring feelings and attitudes about assessments, and post-secondary pathways and educational direction. *Table 27* measures the differential responses by the graduates in relation to whether they felt *high school prepared them for post high school life*. The majority of both HSPA and SRA graduates felt they were well prepared by their high school experiences. HSPA graduates were more likely to state they were *very well prepared* in comparison to SRA graduates who were more likely to state they were simply *well prepared* in comparison to HSPA graduates. HSPA graduates were more likely than SRA graduates to be ambivalent with their high school experiences. Overall, the findings were remarkably similar with graduates of neither assessment type strongly feeling that they had been poorly prepared.

Table 27

Assessment Type and Post-High School Preparation

(“In terms of class work, do you think you were adequately prepared for life after high school?”)

Assessment Type	Very Well Prepared		Well Prepared		Somewhat Well Prepared		Not Well prepared		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
HSPA	15	17.9	29	34.5	36	42.9	4	4.8	84	100
SRA	13	17.1	39	51.3	21	27.6	3	3.9	76	100
Total	28	17.5	68	42.5	57	35.6	7	4.4	160	100

χ^2 (df=1, N = 160) = 4.277, p < .05

Table 28

Assessment Type and Adequate Testing

(“In terms of the graduation examination(s) I took (HSPA, SRA or combination of both), I feel it adequately tested what I learned in high school?”)

Assessment Type	Strongly Agree		Agree Somewhat		Disagree Somewhat		Disagree Strongly		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
	HSPA	29	34.9	39	47.0	14	16.9	1	1.2	83
SRA	20	26.3	48	63.1	7	9.2	1	1.3	76	100
Total	49	30.8	87	54.7	21	13.2	2	1.3	159	100

X^2 (df=1, N = 159) = 1.826, p = .177

Consistent with *Table 27*, *Table 28* above reinforces the extent to which both HSPA and SRA graduates felt they were adequately assessed. For example, the majority of both HSPA and SRA graduates believed that their assessment type *adequately tested what they learned in high school*. HSPA graduates were more likely, in comparison with SRA graduates to *strongly agree* that they had been adequately tested. Taken with the higher rates of 4-year, private, and well known public schools HSPA graduates attend in comparison to SRA graduates this response may reflect the differences in placement at the time the surveys were responded to. Both Chapters 6 and 7 have demonstrated the extent to which SRA graduates attend 2-year colleges and public colleges at greater rates than HSPA graduates. This disparity between HSPA and SRA graduates in the *strongly agree* column could reflect this difference in types of colleges attended. HSPA graduates were more likely by a ratio of 2:1 to *disagree somewhat* that they were adequately assessed in comparison to SRA graduates who generally returned favorable responses

concerning the SRA. Overall, both groups of differential assessment graduates were satisfied with their assessment.

Assessment and HSPA as better indicator of performance

In *Table 29* below, the data indicate that a majority of both HSPA and SRA graduates agreed that the HSPA was a *better* indicator of high school performance than the SRA. HSPA graduates slightly *strongly agreed* more often that the HSPA was a better indicator of performance than SRA graduates. SRA graduates were more likely to disagree that the HSPA was a better indicator of performance and by a 2:1 margin *strongly disagreed* that the HSPA was a better indicator of performance; though this disagreement did not constitute a majority of responses. As stated earlier, the differences in perception of the assessment programs and the exposure of the graduates to differing opinions on the assessments likely affect the responses here. Also, affecting the responses here are likely, as stated in Chapter 6 and earlier in Chapter 7, the fact that SRA graduates are overrepresented in 2-year colleges, public colleges/universities of lesser reputations, and far fewer private schools. Again, a much stronger defense of the SRA by SRA graduates was expected here with a higher frequency and percentage in the *disagree strongly* column. However, consistent with the findings in this chapter relating to perception, SRA graduates clearly seem affected by the SRA assessment type. The failure of SRA graduates to strongly reject the premise of this question could indicate a lack of overall assurance in the assessment program. Despite the successes shown in both chapters 6 and 7, SRA graduates seem to have internalized negative perceptions of the assessment program.

Table 29

Assessment Type and HSPA as *Better* Indicator of Performance
 (“I feel passing the HSPA is a better indicator of how well someone does in high school”)

		HSPA Is a Better Indicator Of Performance									
		Strongly Agree		Agree Somewhat		Disagree Somewhat		Disagree Strongly		Total	
Assessment Type		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
	HSPA	19	22.6	35	41.7	22	26.2	8	9.5	84	100
	SRA	17	22.4	25	32.9	18	23.7	16	21.1	76	100
	Total	36	22.5	60	37.5	40	25.0	24	15.0	160	100

χ^2 (df=1, N = 160) = 1.353, p = .245

Table 30

Assessment Type and Difference in Graduation via HSPA or SRA
 (“I feel there is no difference whether you graduate high school having passed the HSPA or SRA.”)

Assessment Type	No Difference Between Graduation via HSPA Or SRA									
	Strongly Agree		Agree Somewhat		Disagree Somewhat		Disagree Strongly		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
HSPA	16	19.0	18	21.4	31	36.9	19	22.6	84	100
SRA	9	11.8	24	31.6	33	43.4	10	13.2	76	100
Total	25	15.6	42	26.2	64	40.0	29	18.1	160	100

χ^2 (df=1, N = 160) = .142, p = .706

Again, as in the previous table, where the expectation might have been greater SRA numbers in the last column or *disagree strongly* scale, the SRA graduates’ responses are strongest in the *disagree somewhat* and *disagree strongly* scales and not in the *strongly agree* or *agree somewhat* scales. In the first column the HSPA responses outrank SRA 2-1. Additionally in the first two columns HSPA responses outrank SRA. In the third and fourth columns, though not outranking HSPA, SRA runs very closely to HSPA in their concern that graduation via SRA does indicate some difference in how the graduation should be viewed.

In the *strongly agree* column, HSPA graduates are more likely to state that there is *no* difference between graduating HSPA or SRA. The expectation would be that the greatest defense of the SRA as a valid measure of knowledge and skills would come from

the SRA graduates themselves. This result does not occur. SRA graduates were more likely to *agree somewhat* that there is no difference. Again, this misses the mark as the majority of both HSPA and SRA graduates disagree with the premise of the question and endorse the notion that graduating via the HSPA means something.

Consistent with earlier analysis, the data inform us that graduation via the HSPA *does* have a significant effect, in other words, *it means something* in terms of postsecondary outcomes. It is possible here that the SRA respondents, due to their own postsecondary experiences are giving voice to those experiences here. However, the fact that the largest percentage of SRA respondents have stated that they *disagree somewhat* that there is *no* difference is both surprising and troubling as clearly one would expect the greatest defense of an assessment program to come from those actually graduating via the assessment program.

Table 31

Assessment Type and the Perception of SRA easiness or difficulty

I Feel the SRA is Easier than the HSPA												
Assessment Type	Strongly Agree		Agree Somewhat		Disagree Somewhat		Disagree Strongly		Do Not Know		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
SRA	34	44.7	29	38.2	11	14.5	2	2.6	0	0.0	76	100

Table 31 above is also inconsistent with previous responses in this chapter. However, the responses here coincide with both *Tables 29* and *Table 30* wherein a majority of the SRA graduates believed both *the HSPA is a better indication of high school performance* and that *there is a difference in graduation between the HSPA and*

SRA in favor of HSPA. The findings in *Table 31* are particularly disturbing in light of the very one-sided nature of the responses in the *strongly agree* and *agree somewhat* columns. As stated, it is possible that the concept of “easier” in the minds of the SRA graduates is reflective of their relative comfort with an alternative assessment which gives them opportunities to demonstrate mastery of knowledge and skills in ways other than a single high stakes test measure; in ways most comfortable to themselves. However, when combined, the responses to these three variables indicate that though having graduated; the graduates themselves have some ambivalence about the SRA assessment program, while at once believing that the SRA effectively tested what they learned in high school (*See Table 28*).

Table 32

Assessment Type and Definiteness of Plans
 (“*In terms of your major, how definite are your plans?*”)

Assessment Type	In Terms of Your Major, How Definite are Your Plans							
	Very Definite		Somewhat Definite		Not at all Definite		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
HSPA	53	63.9	24	28.9	6	7.2	83	100
SRA	46	61.3	25	33.3	4	5.3	75	100
Total	99	62.7	49	31.0	10	6.3	158	100

χ^2 (df=1, N = 158) = 107, p = .743

Lastly, the finding as to the *definiteness of major plans* is much more consistent with *Table 28* analyzing adequacy of testing than *Tables 29, 30* and *31*. Both HSPA and

SRA graduates overwhelmingly and confidently, from the *very definite* column responses, felt secure in their plans for the future. This is very much in line with the responses in *Table 28* wherein both sets of graduates felt that the assessment program under which they graduated adequately assessed what they learned in high school. The responses in *Tables 28* and *32* are inconsistent with the seeming lack of comfort and security indicated by the SRA graduates in those questions analyzing whether the *HSPA is a better indication of performance, there is a difference in graduation between HSPA and SRA*, and *whether the SRA is easier than the HSPA*. On the contrary, the responses as to *adequate assessment* and *major plans* indicate graduates who are comfortable in with their high school experience and prepared for future postsecondary educational challenges.

HSPA graduates were more likely than SRA graduates to state they were *very definite* in their major plans. SRA graduates indicated a bit more ambivalence by being more likely to state they were *somewhat definite* in their major plans as compared to HSPA graduates, but again only slightly. The difference between the SRA responses as to *very definite* and *somewhat definite* within group were almost 2:1 with SRA graduates being *very definite* in their future plans.

The apparent inconsistency betrayed in the responses here could be a function of the true ambivalence SRA graduates feel towards their assessment program. Whereas HSPA graduates agreed that the HSPA was a *better indicator of high school performance*, they were also as likely to disagree and support the equality of the two assessment programs, whereas SRA graduates were just as likely to negatively characterize their assessment as an inferior indicator, as expressing some reservation

about the validity of graduation under the SRA, and characterize the SRA as easier and less challenging than the HSPA. A Likert scale question is meant to gauge attitudes and perceptions by giving the respondent an opportunity to choose an option that best aligns with his or her view. The disadvantage is that respondents rarely agree and thus can generate inconsistent responses due to the limited number of options available. This is often seen in the middle scales which often less reflect the true opinion of the respondents and more the respondent's unwillingness to take extreme views. That may have occurred here where we see some consistency with a series of questions and inconsistency when attempting to reconcile the questions overall. What is seemingly obvious is that the SRA graduates have as strong opinions about their assessment program as anyone and, consistent with Chapter 6, felt they were well prepared, adequately assessed, and generally confident in their future plans.

Summary

Chapter 7 supports the findings in Chapter 6 to the extent women constitute a majority of the sample pool. Consistent with Chapter 6, here women also constitute a larger percentage of both HSPA and SRA graduates. However, inconsistent with Chapter 6 is the extent to which men graduate slightly more often via the traditional high stakes assessment as compared to the alternative assessment. In Chapter 6 women held a slight edge over men in this regard.

The Chapter 6 data also demonstrate that women attended both 2-year and 4 year colleges in greater numbers than men and that SRA graduates, but that men and women were much more likely to attend 4year college/universities than 2-year colleges. Additionally, the data indicate, consistent with the findings in Chapter 6 that SRA

graduates were more likely than HSPA graduates to attend 2-year colleges. However, the survey SRA respondents attended 4-year colleges at greater rates than did those SRA graduates in Chapter 6.

The Likert scale questions measuring feelings and attitudes about assessments, and post-secondary pathways and educational direction above, suggest some ambivalence on the part of the SRA graduates with regard to whether the assessment is a good performance indicator. Additionally, compared to the HSPA, the survey data suggest some unease by SRA graduates as to whether the SRA can stand on its own as a valid measurement tool. These findings were at best inconsistent with the SRA graduate's assertion that they were well prepared in high school, that the SRA adequately assessed what they learned in high school, and that they were confident in their future major plans.

The progress made by SRA graduates in Chapter 6 is supported by many of the findings here in Chapter 7. For example, in Chapter 6 we saw that of all those going on to post-secondary study, approximately 46.5% of those students graduated via the SRA. Additionally, of SRA graduates only, 40.4% went on to post-secondary educational study. This is fully consistent with the findings from *Table(s) 27* and *28* wherein almost 70% of SRA graduates stated they had been well prepared for life after high school and almost 90% felt they had been adequately tested by the assessment program through which they graduated. Additionally, the numbers of SRA graduates going on to college in Chapter 6 is supported in Chapter 7 by the 95% of SRA graduates stating they were definite in their major plans.

Additionally we see support in Chapter 7 for the findings in Chapter 6 in those SRA students persisting in college enrollment into the "double-digit" semesters and

attending second schools at similar—though lesser—rates as HSPA graduates. The data in *table(s) 19 and 20* suggest that SRA graduates increase their presence in both 4 year colleges and universities and private colleges and universities.

The data in Chapter 6 demonstrate that SRA graduates do not have the same outcomes as HSPA graduates in terms of post-secondary enrollment overall, enrollment in 4 year colleges, enrollment in private colleges and universities, nor do they persist after the fourth and fifth semesters in at the same rate as HSPA graduates. However, SRA graduates do persist, enroll, attend, and increase their presence in the same types of schools at which HSPA graduates initially enroll in much greater numbers.

As well we see that some of the findings from Chapter 7—in terms of SRA graduates agreeing with HSPA graduates that the HSPA is a better indicator of how one performs in high school—and finding that there is a difference in graduation between HSPA and SRA, could be viewed as consistent with some of the findings from Chapter 6. For example, the finding in Chapter 6 that SRA graduates attend 2 year community colleges and public colleges at significantly greater rates than do HSPA could certainly be consistent with their belief that the HSPA is a better indicator of high school performance. As well, these findings could support the finding in Chapter 7 that there is a difference between graduation through the HSPA or SRA. The data from Chapter 6 support the contention that there is a difference in post-secondary outcome. Therefore, taken together, chapters 6 and 7 provide a much clearer portrait of district assessment.

CHAPTER 8

DISCUSSION

To what extent does the process of graduation under an alternative assessment program rather than the state mandated high-stakes assessment program have a differential effect on the post-secondary attitudes and initial post-secondary outcomes of the graduates in the different assessment programs?

This research question, which has guided this study, has revealed some very interesting findings in relation to the attitudes and outcomes of the HSPA and SRA graduates considered. In some instances, the results supported the hypothesis that differential assessment has very little impact on the initial post-secondary attitudes and direction of differential graduates. However, the results also refuted this hypothesis in some very critical ways that bear further discussion here. Briefly, some of the findings are that of the 9,725 participants in this study:

- Of the district graduates tracked in this study, 60% completed the SRA assessment as opposed to the HSPA assessment.
- The data show that 55% of those graduating through the SRA pass neither HSPA Language Arts nor HSPA Math, whereas 40% pass HSPA Language Arts and no math, and 5% pass HSPA math and no Language Arts.
- Both males and females throughout the district graduate a majority through the SRA assessment, though females are 7% more likely than males to graduate via the HSPA than males.
- Economically disadvantaged students are 16.5% more likely to graduate through the SRA assessment program.
- Blacks are the only racial and ethnic minority throughout the district graduating a majority of students through the SRA; however, blacks are 26% more likely to graduate through the SRA and Hispanic Latinos are 23% more likely to graduate through the SRA.
- 53% of all students going on to post secondary institutions are HSPA graduates whereas 47% are SRA graduates.
- 34% of those going on to post-secondary study through the SRA pass neither HSPA Language Arts nor HSPA Math, 49% going on to post-secondary study pass HSPA Language Arts and no math and 45% pass HSPA math and no Language Arts.
- 68% of HSPA graduates enrolled in post secondary institutions whereas 40% of SRA graduates enrolled in post secondary institutions.

- 75% of SRA graduates enrolled in 2 year colleges as their first post secondary institutions.
- 67% of HSPA graduates enrolled in 4 year colleges as their first post secondary institution
- The large majority of all HSPA and SRA students going on to post-secondary study enroll in public/colleges and universities; however, HSPA graduates are more likely than SRA graduates to enroll in private colleges/universities.
- Traditional comprehensive high schools send more SRA graduates to post secondary institutions whereas Magnet schools send more HSPA.
- Through the first 4 semesters of college enrollment, HSPA and SRA graduates attend at similar rates (With SRA matriculating more than HSPA through the first 2 semesters).
- After the fifth semester HSPA graduates matriculate in greater numbers than SRA graduates.

Controlling for other intervening variables, the data show:

- Women are 22% more likely than males to enroll in college after their first two semesters out of high school.
- Blacks are 16% more likely to enroll in college and Hispanic/Latinos are 2% more likely than whites to enroll in college as compared to whites after their first two semesters out of high school.

Is it all Politics?

Assessment in education has long been the subject of rigorous debate. In most circles, the debate has proceeded from a rather axiomatic position that the only way to truly assess knowledge and skills is through a traditional, standardized examination. Indeed supporters of this type of “traditional” means of assessment have argued that anything other than a traditional, standardized assessment program amounts to social promotion, and as Fine, et al. (2007) characterized it, “a backdoor diploma” that “hurts the very students it seeks to help” (p.5).

In New Jersey, the debate over assessment has focused on the validity of two assessment programs: The High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) and the Specialized Review Assessment (SRA). As the traditional assessment program, the supporters of the HSPA have maintained that the HSPA is the only way to measure what

students have learned throughout a high school educational career. HSPA supporters maintain that only by providing all students the same type of examination can we accurately assess what students have learned and whether students are deserving of promotion and graduation. SRA supporters have long maintained that single assessment programs fail to take into account the various ways in which students learn and process information. Supporters of the SRA have asserted that the SRA assessment program is a legitimate alternative to the traditional standardized HSPA examination. SRA supporters have further argued that the SRA and its performance-based assessment tasks or (PATs) provide more personalized instruction, proceed beyond rote memorization by providing a deeper level of subject matter understanding, and is overall a more holistic assessment program.

SRA supporters frequently point to the statement of the Education Commissioner, Lucille Davy that “the SRA content is linked to the HSPA test specifications in order to ensure that students who are certified for promotion and graduation via the SRA have demonstrated the same skills and competence at similar levels as those students passing the HSPA” (*New Jersey Senate Budget Committee Testimony*, April 16, 2007) Despite this statement questions abound concerning the legitimacy of the SRA as a measure of proficiency of state graduation standards. Further, Commissioner Davy went on to say that “the SRA was never meant to be used as a lower standard, but merely as a different means of measuring the same standards” (*New Jersey Senate Budget Committee Testimony*, 2007).

SRA supporters point out that the New Jersey Department of Education has stipulated that the PATs, as a component of the SRA, are comparable in difficulty and

rigor to the HSPA examination (Doolan & Peters, 2007). In the face of this testimonial evidence by New Jersey officials, why would HSPA supporters routinely argue that the traditional paper and pencil standardized HSPA examination is a superior measure of knowledge and skills? Why argue that an examination, which arguably aspires to uniformity and equality in testing by using multiple choice and short-answer questions but routinely fails racial and ethnic minority children, is a superior assessment program? Are alternatives to the traditional test a lesser form of assessment?

In the United States, half of the states have eliminated or never instituted the requirement of an exit examination to graduate high school. However, of the remaining 25 states with such a requirement, the Center on Education Policy has reported that 17 provide some sort of alternative to the traditional assessment program. Is this an acknowledgement that children both learn in different ways and demonstrate what they have learned in different ways, or merely a means of, as has been argued by HSPA supporters, using a backdoor to shepherd undeserving, ill-prepared students to a diploma?

To answer these questions, it is necessary to examine empirical data. That is, it is necessary to look at the performance of students graduating under each assessment program and determine how they fare post-secondarily. This requires a look at the numbers and percentages of students going on to graduate via the HSPA and SRA and following them to post-secondary study. This research has taken on this task by compiling data on approximately 10,000 New Jersey high school graduates and assessing their post-secondary pathways. Using these data, this final chapter refines and clarifies the debate on assessment.

This chapter is written to both evaluate the important findings in the data, but also to provide policy makers with recommendations as to how to proceed in revising assessment programs in New Jersey. There is very little known about HSPA and SRA takers post-high school. The post-secondary educational opportunities, attitudes and outcomes are largely a mystery to academics and policy makers. These data are particularly crucial when evaluating the sufficiency of the SRA examination. Prior to this research there has been rampant speculation concerning the outcomes of SRA takers compared with HSPA takers, but no substantive empirical data to support either argument. Informed policy decisions require valid and reliable data especially as use of the SRA to meet the exit requirement for high school graduation has increased throughout the state of New Jersey. This research will seek to provide much needed clarity on the issue.

Assessing the Impact of the Data

In 2007 *Education Week* ranked New Jersey second among the states with the highest graduation rates (Diplomas Count, 2007). *Education Week* estimated New Jersey graduation rates to be 83% which placed it approximately 10 points above the national graduation average (Diplomas Count, 2007). According to Fine et al. (2007) and The Education Trust (2006), “New Jersey ranks among the top five states in the number of high school freshmen who go on to college within four years, with 53 percent compared to 37 percent in New York State.” (p.12) In New Jersey, the graduation rates for black and Latino students also rank ahead of the national average with New Jersey ranking first for Hispanic students and fifth for black students (Diplomas Count, 2007).

Fine et al. (2007) commented extensively on the fact that success has not been evenly distributed across New Jersey communities and most especially across racial, ethnic and social class lines. Many have pointed to the fact that the “unevenness” can be explained by the fact that there exists in New Jersey a dual assessment program in the HSPA and SRA. Additionally, it has been assumed that since a disproportionate percentage of SRA graduates come from Abbott districts and black, Latino and other ethnic/immigrant groups are heavily represented in SRA graduates, this explains why black and Latino students rank behind white students in academic achievement.

This explanation misses the mark as anywhere from 11,000 to 15,000 New Jersey students annually earn high school diplomas through the SRA (New Jersey Department of Education, School Report Card and SRA Annual Survey). The fact that the SRA has dramatically increased as a means of graduation in New Jersey has driven the debate about whether the HSPA or SRA is a more appropriate means of determining graduation and whether the SRA provides an excuse for students to opt out of the HSPA process, since they have an easier alternative. The data indicate that the overwhelming majority of those students, both responding to the survey and graduating through the SRA, disagreed strongly that they did not study for the HSPA because they believed the SRA was an easier assessment tool. However, whether this is true or not, these are students who have gone on to graduate high school and gone on to post-secondary study as the following discussion will demonstrate.

The data further suggest that the disparity in attendance between students of color and white students might be grossly exaggerated were there NOT a dual assessment program in place which has kept students on pace to graduate, kept students eligible to

pursue college and other post-secondary schooling, and resulted in the issuance of college degrees both two and four year. It would appear to be poor public policy social policy to remove an assessment program which has resulted in such a great number of New Jersey high school graduates. In addition, to remove one assessment program places primacy in the other. It has been demonstrated that success on single high-stakes assessment exams does not necessarily correlate to higher academic achievement or post-secondary attendance. Using one single exam rather than multiple measures to make decisions in the best interests of students seems counter intuitive. However, the use of an alternative examination merely because students have come to rely on it, without more, does not increase the legitimacy of the tool. A discussion of some of the important empirical evidence found in this study will shed more light on this issue.

Who goes on to post-secondary study?

The data indicate that of the 9,725 students graduating from the 10 comprehensive high schools, inclusive of the magnets throughout the district, 40.8% ($N=3,965$) graduated via the HSPA examination and 59.2% ($N=5,760$) graduated via the SRA examination. Further, 49% or ($N=4,724$) of the graduates did not go on to post-secondary study of any type, either 2-year, 4-year or vocational/technical school study. This leaves 51% or ($N=5,001$) of those students who did choose to go on to some type of post-secondary education. Of the 5,001 students going on to post-secondary study, roughly half 53.4% ($N=2,675$) were HSPA graduates whereas 46.5% ($N=2,326$) were SRA graduates. Of all those students graduating via the HSPA assessment program ($N=3,965$), 32.5% ($N=1,290$) did not go on to post-secondary study whereas 67.5% ($N=2,675$) did go on to post-secondary study. Of those graduating via the SRA

assessment program ($N=5,760$), 59.6% ($N=3,434$) did not go on to post-secondary study whereas 40.4% ($N=2,326$) did go on to post-secondary study. Thus, one of the crucial contradictions of the original hypotheses has been the finding of so great a disparity in HSPA graduates going on to postsecondary study in comparison to SRA graduates.

To place these numbers in perspective it is necessary to review some of the numbers with respect to graduation in New Jersey. New Jersey School Report Card data and SRA Annual SRA survey data indicates that approximately 12.3 percent of all New Jersey students graduate via SRA. Though the rates of SRA graduates vary by district, Fine et. al (2007) reports that 34 percent of the graduates came from Abbott districts. In New Jersey's largest urban districts such as Newark, Irvington, Pleasantville and East Orange high school graduation by the SRA has been known to exceed 50%. Indeed in this study, 59% of all participants were SRA graduates. Trends indicate that contrary to popular belief, the majority of those graduating via the SRA are not English Language learners or special education students. According to the New Jersey Department of Education, the overwhelming majority of these students (87%) are general education students (NJDOE 2006 SRA Annual Survey). The SRA has been growing in use as an alternative pathway to graduation with 60 percent graduating via non-Abbott school districts. (Fine et. al, 2007)

What do the data analyzed in this study tell us about this? First of those students going on to post-secondary study ($N=5,001$), roughly half 53.4% ($N=2,675$) were HSPA graduates whereas 46.5% ($N=2,326$) were SRA graduates. Of course, this number is likely skewed by the fact that 60% of the sample pool graduated SRA. Viewing the data more specifically, it is important to note that there is a disparity in the rate of post-

secondary attendance between HSPA and SRA graduates. For example, of all those students graduating via the HSPA assessment program ($N=3,965$), 67.5% ($N=2,675$) did go on to post-secondary study. Of those graduating via the SRA assessment program ($N=5,760$), 40.4% ($N=2,326$) went on to post-secondary study. This is a difference of 27 percentage points between HSPA and SRA post-secondary attendance. This is a disparity which does indicate that graduating via the HSPA is significant. However, the fact that 40 percent of all SRA graduates in this study go on to post-secondary institutions is also significant when considering the impact of not graduating high school.

Though the determination to retain an alternative assessment should not solely be based on the fact that multiple thousands annually rely on the examination to graduate, it should be a considerable factor. That taken with the national research speaking to the dire consequences of becoming a high school dropout (particularly in terms of economic, health and criminal justice outcomes), mal-educated and under educated blacks and Latinos have increasingly depressed expectations of economic success and heightened expectations of incarceration (Petit and Watson, 2004).

Though more HSPA graduates proportionally go on to attend post-secondary institutions, the elimination of the SRA might condemn generations of students to dire social, economic and criminal justice circumstances. However, the important point is that SRA graduates go on to post-secondary study at significant rates. Also important is the finding that females comprise not only a majority of high school graduates in the study, but a majority of SRA graduates and post secondary graduates as well. In addition, the economically disadvantaged, and racial and ethnic minorities also comprise a majority of the sample. As to being poor and racial/ethnic minorities, this finding is

also consistent with the state of most of the Abbott districts which tend to be urban, poor, and black and Hispanic/Latino.

Is there a 2-year, 4-year difference Public or Private school difference

As has been stated, 5,001 students went on to post-secondary study after high-school. Of all those students going on to attend two-year colleges after graduation (N=2,605), 33.4% (N=871) were HSPA graduates while 66.6% (N=1,734) were SRA graduates. Of all those students going on to attend 4 year colleges/universities (N=2,302), 77.2% (N=1,778) were HSPA graduates whereas 22.8% (N=524) were SRA graduates. Finally, of all those attending vocational/technical schools (N=94), 27.7% were HSPA graduates while 72.3% were SRA. Additionally, of all those students going on to attend public institutions after graduation (N=4,100), 51.2% (N=2,098) were HSPA graduates while 48.8% (N=2,002) were SRA graduates. Of all those students going on to attend private institutions after graduation (N=901), 64% (N=577) were HSPA graduates while 36% (N=324) were SRA graduates.

Again, these data demonstrate significant differences in postsecondary outcomes between HSPA and SRA graduates. The above data indicate a great deal, particularly the disparity between 2-year and 4-year college attendance. SRA graduates were twice as likely to attend 2-year colleges as were HSPA graduates whereas HSPA graduates were three times as likely to attend 4-year colleges as SRA graduates. Though the numbers attending vocational/technical schools were small, of those who did choose to attend vocational/alternative schools, SRA graduates were three times as likely to attend vocational technical schools as were HSPA graduates. At the same time, HSPA and SRA

graduates were almost equally as likely to attend a public college/university whereas HSPA graduates were twice as likely to attend private schools as SRA graduates.

Though critics of the SRA would use these numbers to argue that the disparity in 2-year and 4-year college/university attendance clearly militate against retention of the SRA, this argument would miss the mark. Fine et al (2007) reviewing studies of high school high-stakes exit examinations found that studies that attempt to determine the impact of these examinations on actual student achievement (actual growth in subject matter knowledge) (Grotsky, Warren, and Kalogrides, 2005; Warren et al., 2005), Warren et al. conclude that there is *no viable evidence* that, in the 1990s, high school high-stakes exit examinations have significantly improved student knowledge of reading, mathematics or science.(p.32) This intimates that the disproportionate attendance at 2-year colleges by SRA graduates has less to do with the HSPA or SRA exit examination and more to do with academic preparation, economics, and college/university exposure.

Research indicates that despite the fact that four-year college enrollment roughly doubled between 1960 and 1990, 2-year college attendance increased by a factor of five during the same period. According to the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, during the same period 2-year college attendance increased from approximately 200,000 to over 1,000,000. (U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1992, Table 169). Additionally, James Rosenbaum (2007) documents how open admissions policies and remedial courses at community colleges have sought “to reduce the academic barriers to college; and the Associate of Arts (AA) degree has increased in value in the labor market so that students do not need a BA to get an economic benefit from attending community college” (Rosenbaum, 2007:291 referencing Brint and

Karabel, 1989; Grubb, 1992, 1993, 1995). Rosenbaum indicates that the trend has been towards 2-year college/university attendance not away from.

Though this does not decrease the disparity in attendance, it does place the attendance at 2-year colleges/universities in perspective as the value of the 2-year degree has increased. Further, post-secondary attendance exponentially decreases the involvement by blacks and Latinos in the criminal justice system and further significantly decreases the adverse economic and health outcomes so often seen by those who either dropout of high-school or those completing GED programs (Petit and Western, 2004).

Gender, Race, Ethnicity and Economic Disadvantage

In terms of demographics, the assessment population, of the 9,725 students graduating from the 10 comprehensive high schools throughout the district, 40.8% ($N=3,965$) graduated via the HSPA examination and 59.2% ($N=5,760$) graduated via the SRA examination. Additionally, SRA graduates dominate both genders. For example, among men 39.2% ($N=1,677$) passed the HSPA and 60.8% ($N=2,596$) passed the SRA. Among females, 42% ($N=2,288$) passed the HSPA examination while 58% ($N=3,164$) passed the SRA. However, in Chapter 6 women were slightly more likely to graduate HSPA in comparison to men, whereas in Chapter 7 (analyzing the self-report surveys), men were slightly more likely to graduate HSPA as women. Despite this sex comparison, both sexes are overwhelmingly more likely to graduate SRA compared to HSPA.

Among those races and ethnicities considered, blacks was the only racial/ethnic group present graduating more students via SRA than HSPA. Amongst blacks those graduating via the HSPA assessment constituted 49.7% ($N=1,588$) and those graduating

via the SRA constituted 50.3% ($N=1,610$). Though Hispanic/Latinos only marginally graduated more HSPA than SRA (52.1%), every group other than blacks graduated a majority of their students via the traditional high stakes assessment program. However, the third largest racial group by number in the district performs disproportionately better on the HSPA by a margin of 2:1. Whites graduating from the 10 comprehensive high schools within the district, when statistically analyzed within their racial group, perform twice as well on the HSPA 67.3% ($N=561$) than on the SRA 32.7% ($N=273$). Asian students measured performed a bit better than twice as well on the HSPA 69.4% ($N=34$) than the SRA 30.6% ($N=15$). Those students identified as Pacific Islanders performed 3:1 in favor of the HSPA 75% ($N=13$) over the SRA 25% ($N=2$) while those students identified as American Indian performed equally as well on each assessment graduating 50% ($N=4$) HSPA and 50% ($N=4$) SRA.

Of all students identified as being economically disadvantaged, 38.5% ($N=2,753$) graduated via the HSPA and 61.5% ($N=4,402$) graduated via the SRA. Of those students identified as not being economically disadvantaged, 47.2% ($N=1,212$) graduated via the HSPA and 52.8% ($N=1,358$) graduated via the SRA. The data illustrate that SRA graduates constitute the majority of those designated as economically disadvantaged by more than 20 percentage points.

Citing research, Fine et al. (2007) have argued that today, schooling and testing is multifaceted. Besides the laudable goals of “identifying talent, diagnosing learning deficiencies, motivating/measuring achievement and performance, raising standards, reducing racial and ethnic gaps and increasing the quality of schools”, schooling and

testing has also been identified as “undermining public education” (p.46). However, it is beyond debate that politics and education have become almost indistinguishable.

Educational reform and the emphasis on high stakes exit exams as a means of accountability correlates with the unpopularity of public schools and public education. Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond (2007) has stated, “Perhaps the most adverse unintended consequence of NCLB, which encourages high stakes testing, is that it creates incentives for schools to rid themselves of students who are not doing well, producing high scores at the expense of vulnerable students’ education...” (p.16).

The most significant impact of these unintended consequences is felt in communities of color and immigrant communities. In these communities dropouts rates are higher, graduation rates are lower and enrollment in GED programs are disproportionate (Amrein and Berliner, 2002). Additionally, students receiving “free or reduced lunch” are significantly less likely to pass state exit exams. McDermott (2007) has written that when forming and implementing policy, “we must keep in mind that the schools currently most challenged by standards based reform implementation are the same schools that were not previously educating all students to high standards and that those schools serve the students who have been most harmed by racial and socio-economic inequality. To change schools, the state must not only direct its power against them, through sanctions, but also build the power of all educational institutions to do their work better; otherwise, aspirations to expand the moral boundaries of educational governance will continue to degenerate into policies that appear to blame victims for their own injuries” (p.111).

Viewing the data above it becomes even more important to, as McDermott says, "...build the power of all educational institutions to do their work better" (p.111). The racial and SES disparities seen are not only consistent with the data, but reinforce the notion that racial and ethnic minorities are disproportionately affected by the use of high-stakes exams. The number of blacks graduating via the HSPA assessment constituted 49.7% ($N=1,588$) and those graduating via the SRA constituted 50.3% ($N=1,610$). Among Hispanic/Latinos, those students graduating via the HSPA assessment were 52.1% ($N=849$) versus 47.9% ($N=780$) for those graduating via the SRA.

The elimination of the SRA could well be tantamount to ridding our schools of those whom we believe are underperforming by disproportionately succeeding on the alternative assessment. However, the data indicate that those SRA graduates go on to postsecondary study at significant rates if not the same rates as HSPA graduates. Though there is certainly a discrepancy there, there is an opportunity to rectify that discrepancy by improving and expanding our definition of educational assessment. By focusing exclusively on a single measure of knowledge and skills we do a great disservice to graduates as college/university study will require them to think conceptually and critically. Stale curricula, rote memorization, and teaching to the test will not avail district students in their pursuit of postsecondary education; they will merely find themselves falling further behind.

Blacks and Latinos could well be disproportionately affected should the alternative assessment be eliminated. Though roughly half graduate via the HSPA, half also graduate via the SRA. Consistent with the data referenced earlier, when compared with white students, black and Latino students have consistently relied more on the

alternative examination as a pathway to graduation. Eliminating that pathway might result in more than 50 percent of blacks and almost 50 percent of Latinos dropping out should they fail to pass the HSPA examination. Though less affected, a third of white students in the study also rely on the SRA as a pathway to graduation here. Though the numbers of black and Latino students are substantially higher, it must be remembered that the demographics of the district make that a reality. The presence of more white students might result in more white student reliance on the SRA as well. As 60 percent of SRA graduates come from non-Abbott districts, it seems clear that the affects of elimination may well be felt across all racial and ethnic lines; inside and outside the district.

Though the numbers of the other ethnic groups are small, we still see significant reliance on the SRA as a pathway to graduation. Asian students, Pacific Islanders and American Indian students in the district all rely on the SRA as a measurement of graduation. It is in the best interests of these students to retain the pathway and keep these students on track to graduate and eligible to pursue the post-secondary options visible in this study.

What is suggested from these data is that elimination of the SRA might result in increased dropout rates, lower graduation rates and larger numbers of students (disproportionately students of color) to increased dropout rates, lower graduation rates, and adverse health and criminal justice circumstances. As focusing on high-stakes examinations to the exclusion of more holistic exams has been shown, through considerable research, to sacrifice critical thinking and complex analytical skills to rote memorization and “teaching to the test”; forcing teachers and students to concentrate on

lessening sanctions rather than increasing knowledge and skills (Center on Education Policy, 2005, 2007). Firestone and Mayrowet have shown how single high stakes examinations may “primarily promote short term accommodations but not deeper learning” (2000: 20). Whereas Coleman, has persuasively argued that “...policy makers and the education community must work to guarantee that the establishment of high stakes standards for all students does not unfairly result in the denial of educational opportunity for any one student (1998: 82).

The data above suggest that students of color and students dependent on free and reduced lunches rely much more heavily on the SRA as a pathway to graduation. The failure to include multiple compensatory measures (other academic factors in addition to test scores), disproportionately affects and condemns students of color. Sole reliance on high-stakes test scores precludes large numbers of them from going on to graduate high school and pursuing post-secondary options. This process is not only bad for students and communities, but poor public policy generally as it places the burden on and harms the very students and communities it purports to help.

Other Data

Some additional comments provided by respondents were particularly noteworthy. The importance of the survey data introduced in Chapter 7 was to provide some additional substantive information to the study. The survey questions were presented in Likert style format and the results have been presented in Chapter 7. The information reported on the surveys was reported by those students having graduated and gone on to post-secondary study. Here, some of the important findings from Chapter 7 will be further explained in light of the above literature.

Table 27 measuring preparation for “post-high school life” by assessment type looks at the extent to which students graduating differentially felt that their high school experiences prepared them for post-high school experiences. The majority of both HSPA and SRA graduates felt they were well prepared by their high school experiences. HSPA graduates were more likely to state they were *very well prepared* in comparison to SRA graduates who were more likely to state they were simply *well prepared* in comparison to HSPA graduates. Consistently, the majority of both HSPA and SRA graduates believed that their assessment type *adequately tested what they learned in high school*. HSPA graduates were more likely, in comparison with SRA graduates to *strongly agree* that they had been adequately tested. There was very little variation here as all students, irrespective of assessment type, felt their high school experiences left them “somewhat well prepared” to “very well prepared” for post-high school life. Additionally, SRA and HSPA students were equally likely to agree that their assessment type (whether SRA, HSPA or a combination of both) adequately measured what they learned in high school; though those students graduating via the HSPA were more likely to state that they “disagreed somewhat” or “disagreed strongly” that their assessment type measured what they learned in high school.

As 13,000 to 15,000 students graduate via the alternative assessment every year, knowing how the students themselves feel about their preparation is very important. Prior to the information received and analyzed in this study, very little has been known about the educational experiences of SRA students. Their impressions, feelings, and attitudes towards their own assessments and educational experiences have not been a priority in developing policy which directly affects their futures. This study provides us

with some information to assess the student's feelings on the rigorousness of their preparation.

Table 29, 30 and 31 (See Chapter 7), assessing whether the differential graduates believe the HSPA is a better indicator of high school performance than the SRA, whether there is any difference between graduation via HSPA or SRA, and whether the SRA is *easier* than the HSPA, provides some insight into the toll the constant criticism and disparagement of the SRA has had on the SRA graduates. For example, *Table 29* indicates that HSPA graduates only slightly *strongly agreed* more often that the HSPA was a better indicator of performance than SRA graduates. HSPA and SRA graduates were just as likely to “agree” that the HSPA was a better indicator of performance as they were to “disagree” that the HSPA was a better indicator of performance. SRA graduates clearly seem affected by the SRA assessment type. Rather than defending the SRA, SRA graduates criticize the assessment as lacking reliability.

Table 29 is also inconsistent with *Tables 27, 28 and 32* in which the SRA graduates indicate satisfaction with the high school and the SRA assessment program. The expectation would be that the greatest defense of the SRA as a valid measure of knowledge and skills would come from the SRA graduates themselves. This result does not occur. SRA graduates were more likely to *agree somewhat* that there is no difference. Again, this misses the mark as the majority of both HSPA and SRA graduates disagree with the premise of the question and endorse the notion that graduating via the HSPA means something. The expectation here, as stated, was a more vigorous defense by the SRA graduates of the SRA assessment. The lack of this vigorous defense can be interpreted in several ways. Either the SRA graduates do not believe that the SRA is as

good an assessment as the HSPA, or they have begun to internalize the criticisms of the exam. If the former, this is somewhat inconsistent with the previous findings. If the second, it is an indication of the less supportive environment for alternative assessments compared to high stakes standardized testing. Additionally, *Table 29* when combined with *30* and *31* indicate at best ambivalence and at worst hostility by SRA graduates toward the SRA assessment. Rather than once again taking the opportunity to assert that the SRA is a legitimate means of testing knowledge and skills, the SRA graduates almost unanimously declare it to be an easier assessment than the HSPA. As stated earlier, either *easier* is a reference to comfort, or easier is a reference to less challenging. However, when taken with *29* and *30*, it is difficult not to feel the SRA graduates have great reservations about their qualifications; despite their aforementioned successes.

In addition to the emphasis the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) places on standardized reform and accountability is the statewide criticism of the alternative program by universities, businesses, and politicians. This criticism has to have had some impact on those graduating via the alternative assessment. The increase in the importance of standardized testing for purposes of retention, promotion and graduation has created a stigma which those students graduating via the alternative assessment have likely internalized. Consider again *Table 30* which assesses whether the differential graduates feel there is a *difference between graduation via the HSPA or SRA*. When this question was asked of the HSPA and SRA graduates, SRA and HSPA graduates were almost as likely to agree that there is a difference between the assessments as they were to agree that there is no difference.

The fact that SRA students have done well is undercut by the fact that there continues to be serious debate about the legitimacy of the SRA as a proficiency measure. Though all the respondents of the surveys have graduated and gone on to post-secondary study, there continues to be ambivalence in their own minds about the validity of the SRA to test the core curriculum content standards, the reliability of the results of the assessment, legitimacy of the assessment program under which they graduated. Though they did not drop out and persisted not only to graduation but post-secondary study, current policies rather than rewarding and supporting, have made them doubt their abilities and educational successes.

The aforementioned findings of the SRA graduates and the HSPA graduates cannot be viewed in a vacuum. That is, these successes must be viewed contemporaneously with some very troubling findings indicated by this study. Briefly, the following section will highlight three areas of concern that serve to provide balance to the accomplishments of both groups: (1) the number of students not going on to post-secondary study; (2) the great number of SRA students attending 2-year as opposed to 4-year colleges; and (3) the high attrition rate of both SRA and HSPA graduates in the study.

Lack of Graduation and Persistence in the Data

Of the 9,725 students included in this study, 51% (N= 5,001) went on to post secondary study of some type; however, 49% (N=4,724) students did not. Further, of the 4,724 students not going on to post secondary study, 73% (N=3,434) were SRA graduates and 27% (N=1,290) were HSPA graduates. Though the above analysis concentrated primarily on those going on to post secondary study, whether 2-year or 4-

year colleges/universities, it is important to take a moment to recognize and comment on those students failing to go further than high school graduation.

Though 51% of the study going on to post secondary study is significant and a laudable accomplishment, the failure of half of the study to go on to some form of post-secondary study as of this writing is cause for great concern. Though the 49% mentioned did graduate high school, they had not proceeded to post secondary study as of this writing. As Attewell and Lavin have indicated, the number of high school graduates entering college has increased in the last several decades. Additionally, though “college for all” should not be interpreted to mean that “all” high school graduates go on to college, the expansion of college access has resulted in the widening of the college doors (Attewell & Lavin, 2007).

For those not going on to college, it would seem that failure to take advantage of the opportunity of access to the academe betrays negligence and mindlessness of their economic and intellectual futures. However, though Max Weber viewed educational credentials as entrée to privileged groups and societies (Attewell & Levin, 2007: 157), Randall Collins viewed educational credentials as failing to forecast the skills needed to do the jobs for which employees were hired; skills are learned on the job (Attewell & Lavin, 2007). Thus, is college important and do the 4,724 students failing to go on to post secondary study betray a crisis? The answer cannot only be framed in terms of an economic argument as college encompasses a social and intellectual component as well. However, it is a very real concern that almost half of the study population failed to go on to post secondary study in an age when credentials, educational credentials, are looked upon by employers as demonstrating ability if not specific skill sets.

Further, as Attewell and Lavin state, “there is broad consensus among social scientists that college degrees have a substantial payoff in terms of annual and lifetime earnings” (Attewell & Lavin, 2007: 161). Indeed there are benefits for those going on to college and failing to graduate such that, “while it is clear that investment in a college degree, especially for those students in the lowest income brackets, is a financial burden, the long-term benefits to individuals as well as to society at large, appear to far outweigh the costs” (Porter, 2002). By most estimates, attending community college and 4 year colleges, while failing to graduate, result in 10-15% greater earnings than those only graduating high school (Attewell & Lavin, 2007: 165).

Again, while the economic component is important and for some even primary, it is important to remember that the skills learned and abilities honed in colleges prepare students for existence and participation in a larger world; a world where they will come into contact with diverse social and employment networks. The exposure to different people and cultures is a valuable and lasting social contribution of the college experience and cannot be undervalued. This social contribution instills the tolerance and patience to co-exist in workplaces, social hubs, and neighborhoods with those who look differently and have different viewpoints.

For the group not going on to college not only are they failing to be exposed to the tangible benefits of going to college – even when failing to finish- but they are missing out on the intangible benefits as well in terms of social exposure. Of the group not going on the large majority are SRA graduates. From previous analysis we know that this group tends to be primarily black/Hispanic Latino, socio-economically disadvantaged, to come from the traditional neighborhood comprehensive schools. As

the data demonstrates that there is a difference in post secondary outcomes between SRA and HSPA graduates, it is likely that there will be a difference in life consequences for those differential graduates who fail to go on to some form of post secondary study; with SRA graduates experiencing the more negative aspects of the two groups.

The data demonstrate that despite SRA graduates' greater presence in the sample, SRA graduates overwhelmingly attend 2 year colleges compared to HSPA graduates. In many respects this is not a particularly surprising finding as students from disadvantaged backgrounds, economically depressed backgrounds are more likely to need the types transitional services provided at 2 year community colleges. The data has demonstrated that SRA graduates are disproportionately poor and overwhelmingly come from the traditional neighborhood comprehensive schools. Therefore, it is not surprising that many take advantage of the relative inexpensiveness of community college, the opportunity to live at home while attending school, the opportunity to take introductory/general education credits and, as importantly, the remedial aspects of community colleges. Additionally, we know that students attending college, including community college receive a tangible economic benefit (Attewell & Lavin, 2007).

What is of greater concern, is the suggestion that those students graduating via SRA are being tracked into taking it or are failing to adequately prepare for the HSPA because of the perception that the SRA is an "easier" examination. The data (*see Chapter 7*) suggest that SRA graduates did not fail to study for the HSPA because they believed the SRA was an easier assessment. When asked, the graduates overwhelmingly disagreed with this premise. However, the ever increasing numbers of SRA graduates would seem to suggest otherwise. Additionally, the disparity, particularly in this study,

of blacks, Hispanic/Latinos and women graduating via the SRA seems to suggest that assessment in the district has become a bifurcated tracking process whereby white HSPA graduates go on to 4 year public or private colleges and students of color graduating via the SRA go on to 2 year colleges. Though more research is need to adequately answer the question of whether students purposefully choose the SRA, the much greater reliance on the SRA by 2 year community college students is a troubling finding. However, even should the 2 year community college students never graduate, they are correct in believing that they will gain from going to college. Attewell & Lavin have argued persuasively that college attendance results in “impressive” gains for both weak students and college dropouts. In spite of this, the relationship between SRA and 2 year colleges is one which should be explored in greater detail.

Critics of “college for all” suggest that students with weak high school performance will not benefit at the same rate as those with strong high school performance. Further, Rosenbaum has suggested that those with weak high school performance should not aspire to college as they are unlikely to gain economically (Rosenbaum, 2001). This argument misses the mark and not only fails to take in to account the substantial gains to be realized not only economically, but socially from any college attendance, but blames many disadvantaged students for not receiving adequate high school educations. However, arguments of critics as to the retention of students and the amount of time they spend in remediation which, according to some, leads to dropping out is well taken (Attewell and Lavin, 2007 quoting Deil-Amen and Rosenbaum 2002).

These data indicate that student enrollment begins to drop off almost immediately from the first semester. *Chapter 6, Table 21* suggests that for both groups HSPA and SRA, there is a stunning lack of retention from the first to second semesters with the HSPA group losing 26% of its enrolled population and the SRA group losing 32%. Additionally, the loss is magnified from the first to the fourth semester with the HSPA group losing 55% of its enrolled population and the SRA group losing 65%. It is important to note that many of these students will likely cycle in and out of college. In fact if we measure by the standard 4-5 year graduation rate, students remain enrolled after the 9th and 10th semester; though this enrollment is significantly less than might be expected considering the paucity of degrees received by both groups. Additionally, Attewell and Lavin indicate that finishing a BA works very differently in the 21st century as students work full or part-time to pay for school, drop-out for family concerns, and in general compromise their educations for more pressing immediate issues (Attewell and Lavin, 2007).

The students in this study could very well be a part of this cycling in and out of college, however the speed at which they leave school from the first to second, second to third, and third to fourth semesters suggest that they might not be returning as the data does not indicate that they return in significant numbers. There is a consistent fall off of enrollment for both groups which further suggests that the students might not be prepared for the rigors of college life and find remediation or developmental courses uninteresting, possibly supporting Rosenbaum's critique of "college for all". That said, there is insufficient evidence to rule out alternative explanations to this critique. The question as to why the rate of attrition seems to be so high is, again, a question which will need to be

investigated further. Do the students leave because of academic, economic, or familial issues? The data here do not answer these questions. However, strictly looking at the rate of attrition without knowing more suggests a startling lack of preparedness for post secondary academics by district students.

Conclusions and Future Research

The research has extensively documented the experiences of other states with high school exit examinations. The research indicates that eliminating the SRA could significantly reduce high school graduation rates and increase the number of dropouts among blacks, Hispanic/Latinos, immigrants, and ELL youth. Since a significant percentage of SRA graduates come from non-Abbott districts, elimination could be felt statewide and might substantially lessen the reported graduation rates throughout the district and the state.

Fine et al (2007) have documented how the state of New Jersey has long been a model for graduation rates throughout the nation. With the continued use of the SRA as an alternative assessment and pathway to graduation, the state can also be a model of equity. The state now has one of the nation's best overall graduation rates and one of the best graduation rates for students of color. As the data presented in this research shows, SRA students comprise a significant majority of students tracked for this study and a significant percentage of high school graduates throughout the district. The elimination of the SRA would likely result in increased dropout rates and GED certificate holders for a large proportion of the 60 percent of SRA graduates in this study. Though it is arguable that many of these might persist to graduation by retaking the HSPA exam as "non-enrolled" students, it might be the case that a fair majority of these students would

dropout and leave high school with no diploma. Again, it is possible that the elimination of the SRA would result in some students persisting to pass the HSPA as non-enrolled students, but this likely does not constitute the large majority of them.

It has been documented fairly extensively throughout this research how dropping out affects the future economic, health and criminal justice aspects of a young people's lives (Bridgeland, DiIulio and Morison, 2006). Additionally, it has been documented how these affects disproportionately affect students of color (Fine, et al., 2007). The disparity in earning potential, the increase in incarceration among black males (Mincey, 2006), and the high mortality rates (Molla, Madans and Wagener, 2004) among those without high school diplomas all point to the same fact: those without high school diplomas commensurate formal education suffer from pervasive negative social consequences.

Entering jail with no high school diploma is nothing new, as Travis, et al (2003) have documented extensively the disproportionate impact lack of education has on racial and ethnic minorities. Research has shown that education provides a pathway out of poverty, and away from the debilitating effects of social and cultural decay. The SRA provides not only a pathway to graduation, but to educational and economic affluence. Mitigating high school students away from prison and keeping them on track to graduation and post-secondary school attendance is a state obligation and policy priority.

The existence of the SRA alongside the HSPA in New Jersey has been painted as a form of social promotion whereby undeserving young people are given equivalent high school diplomas in spite of the fact that they did not graduate under the state mandated high stakes exam. Again, this view misses the mark. High school seniors meeting every

requirement as to GPA, class credits, attendance, etc., have every right to expect that after four years of high school they will receive a diploma which allows them to go on to post-secondary life adequately credentialed.

There has been much confusion and vitriol surrounding the value of the SRA, particularly in New Jersey assessment, that those having graduated under the assessment program have truly been victimized. They are either forced to lie, when asked, about the assessment under which they graduated for fear of being viewed as academically inferior, or they are made to defend themselves against abstract charges unsupported by any empirical support; however, different means neither sub-standard nor remedial.

The research here indicates that the SRA provides a substantive and sustainable pathway to graduation for 60 percent of high school graduates included in this study. Further, 40 percent of those SRA graduates included here went on to post-secondary school study. The research further indicates that though SRA graduates do not attend college at the same rates as HSPA graduates, and disproportionately attend 2-year over 4-year and public over private institutions, SRA graduates comprise a large percentage of all of the college bound students in the district. Elimination of the SRA could foreclose graduation and college attendance for 40+ percent of the college bound population. Surely public policy supports sustaining and improving this alternative pathway rather than eliminating it.

Improving the SRA

This study indicates that the SRA should be preserved and strengthened. The research presented here mitigates substantially against elimination and towards improving administration of the SRA. The presence of a rich multiple compensatory

environment whereby alongside the traditional standardized assessment program is offered the alternative assessment, can only increase graduation rates and further capture talent and skills missed by the single measure. A diverse population in which students are possessed of diverse learning styles and diverse abilities should be met with a rich differentiated program of assessment. The continued offering of the HSPA must be balanced with a richer multiple compensatory alternative. Strengthening the SRA by (1) increasing transparency, (2) implementing a system of uniform scoring and (3) providing ongoing professional development to districts and teachers to prepare for a reformed SRA process will continue to provide a diverse population with an even more valid and reliable means of educational opportunity.

The most consistent criticism of the SRA has been the lack of transparency in scoring the student portfolios. Improving the reliability for students, parents and the business community by implementing a standardized system whereby the student portfolios are scored by highly qualified trained individuals would go a long way towards allaying the concerns of all. Removing the discretion from individual districts and replacing these districts with state supported regional centers staffed by trained and certified New Jersey education professionals rather than commercial vendors would be most appropriate. In this regard, decisions most affecting the most vulnerable of New Jersey's students would be made by those who are intimately familiar with and sensitive to New Jersey, discrete district/regions, and New Jersey's student population.

Promoting Multiple Compensatory (Alternative) Educational Schemes

As important as increasing the external validity is the need to begin to move away from reliance on single measures of knowledge and skills. If the goal is to assess where

students are in their educational pursuits, to assess what they know and where they are deficient, as many measures as possible should be used to accomplish this goal without harming individual students when they prove deficient in one area or another. The use of a multiple compensatory assessment program whereby standardized exams, evaluations, presentations, interviews, project submissions are used will identify those students with exceptional abilities and not simply the ability to memorize, retain, and regurgitate.

The assessment culture must be reformed to promote standardized assessments as more of a diagnostic tool. These tools can be used to assess where students are deficient in their education. Because standardized assessments are usually in the form of multiple choice assessments, they can be quickly undertaken and the results readily known. This would allow teachers to more quickly identify and assess which students are deficient in which areas and to remediate before too much time and subject matter has passed. Standardized assessments can have a place, a prominent one, in a fully holistic assessment environment. However, the exclusive reliance on standardized assessments is unfairly punitive.

Encouraging Local Creativity

Fine et al. (2007) advocated increasing the professional development of New Jersey educators and using them to address the reliability issues inherent in using commercial vendors and untrained personnel to score the SRA (p.33) To this, should be added the benefits of removing the impediments to creativity in teaching and educating a diverse population of students. Educational reform has made it increasingly punitive to venture outside of rote and staid curricula. “Teaching to the test” has become a mainstay of our state and national educational environment and children who do not respond to this

method of “educating” are increasingly left behind. New Jersey is rightly proud of having some of the nation’s highest graduation rates, however sustaining those graduation rates will only come with innovation. It is imperative that New Jersey not only reform and retain the SRA, but also allow the development of additional local multiple compensatory assessment tools. As local administrators and teachers are best informed of the learning styles and capabilities of their students, they should be allowed to experiment—externally validated by the state—with new and creative means of assessing the New Jersey Core Content Standards. As the data has shown that single high stakes standardized exams fail to capture the full range of talents of New Jersey students, we must encourage educators to create new and fresh ways of identifying and nurturing talent. Allowing local administrators and teachers to express the full range of their creativity would be in the best interest of not only students, but the state.

Future Research

This research has demonstrated the extent to which math instruction is wholly inadequate to the needs of those high graduates seeking post secondary educational study. Research must be undertaken demonstrating why there exists such a disparity in those succeeding on the Language Arts Literacy sections of the HSPA and failing so miserably on the Math sections. As we continue to become a more technological and globalized society students with inadequate math instruction will be increasingly left behind. In urban areas where those students are overwhelmingly racial and ethnic minorities, it becomes a matter of significant urgency to redress inadequate math instruction.

Additionally, expanding this post secondary research to incorporate those students who have dropped out will provide a more holistic view of the disparity in outcomes

between high school graduates and dropouts. These outcomes include not only post-secondary education but health, family and work and criminal justice contacts as well. Analyzing these data will go beyond esoteric research and provide data speaking to the urgency of both high school graduation and post secondary education for increased positive life experiences.

The research done here has only begun the investigation of dual assessment in New Jersey. Informed public policy requires that continued research be done to unearth the longitudinal performance of the differential graduates in a number of different aspects particularly, criminal justice, occupation and family life. This research has provided empirical and descriptive data on the high school exit pathways as well as the types of post-secondary institutions attended. It also reinforces the weight of academic opinion that no single high stakes assessment tool can adequately measure knowledge and skills. Alternative assessments and multiple compensatory data more reliably predict high school and college success than standardized high stakes assessments. As assessment serves the primary goal of improving educational delivery through teaching and learning, it is incumbent upon all concerned with educating youth to resist the tendencies to stratify and label. Policy makers must invest in providing students with the best possible education that can be delivered. This can only be done by continuing to develop innovative multiple compensatory assessment programs which take into account multiple learning styles and skill sets...not uniformity.

Although this study clearly indicates that graduating via HSPA has a positive effect on postsecondary destinations and outcomes, with respect to college attendance, type of college, retention, and graduation, it also reveals that the SRA is an important

pathway to college, especially community colleges. Not only has general enrollment at community colleges grown faster than at four year colleges due to spiraling tuition costs, in excess of 40 percent of undergraduates begin their post secondary careers at community colleges (Dougherty, 2002). As has been stated, eliminating the SRA has the potential of turning large numbers of graduates in New Jersey's urban districts into dropouts or GED graduates. Given what we know about the differential effects of GED graduation and dropping out, its elimination could have profoundly negative educational and social effects for low income students and students of color in these districts. The current state policy of strengthening the SRA rather than eliminating it seems to make greater policy sense, unless the state can ensure that districts have the resources and support to ensure that their students can become better prepared to pass the HSPA examinations. And given the recent Supreme Court decision on SFRA and the still unknown consequences in the formerly Abbott districts, such support and resources are uncertain at best.

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APPENDIX A: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey. This survey should take 10-15 minutes to complete. All responses are anonymous.

Though the attached questionnaire does not request any self-identifying information (name, social security number, student id, etc.), your informed consent to participate in the study under the conditions described is assumed by your completing the questionnaire and submitting it to the researcher. If you do not fully understand these conditions please ask for clarification before completing the questionnaire.

This survey is about post-secondary (after high-school) life. It has been developed so you can tell us what you have done, what you do, and what you plan to do to assist in the ongoing development of your post-secondary life. Your participation in the survey will assist in the development of new ways of assisting students in their transition from high-school to post high school life.

Completing the survey is voluntary. Should you decide to complete the survey, be sure to carefully read the questions. Fill in the box provided for your response completely.

1. What is your sex?

1 Female

2 Male

2. What is your age currently?

1 18

2 19

3 20

4 21 or over

3. What was your age when you graduated high school?

1 16

2 17

3 18

4 19 or over

4. Which statement most accurately describes you?
- 1 I graduated high school through the HSPA alone
 - 2 I graduated high school through the SRA alone
 - 3 I graduated high school through a combination of the HSPA math and SRA language arts
 - 4 I graduated high school through a combination of the HSPA language arts and SRA math
 - 5 I graduated high school through neither the HSPA nor SRA
5. In terms of your high school class work, do you think you were well prepared for life after high school?
- 1 Very well prepared
 - 2 Well prepared
 - 3 Somewhat well prepared
 - 4 Not at all well prepared
6. Please tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement:
- “In terms of the graduation examination(s) I took (HSPA, SRA, or combination of both), I feel it adequately tested what I learned in high school?”*
- 1 Strongly Agree
 - 2 Agree Somewhat
 - 3 Disagree Somewhat
 - 4 Disagree Strongly
7. Please tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement:
- “I feel passing the HSPA is a better indicator of how well someone does in high school.”*
- 1 Strongly Agree
 - 2 Agree Somewhat
 - 3 Disagree Somewhat
 - 4 Disagree Strongly

8. Please tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement:

“I feel there is no difference whether you graduate high school having passed the HSPA or SRA.”

- 1 Strongly Agree
2 Agree Somewhat
3 Disagree Somewhat
4 Disagree Strongly

9. Please tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement:

“I feel the SRA is easier than the HSPA.”

- 1 Strongly Agree
2 Agree Somewhat
3 Disagree Somewhat
4 Disagree Strongly

10. If you graduated high school through the SRA, please tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement:

“I did not try to study for the HSPA because I thought the SRA would be easier.”

- 1 Strongly Agree
2 Agree Somewhat
3 Disagree Somewhat
4 Disagree Strongly

11. Are you currently attending a two (2) year junior college?

- 1 Yes
2 No

12. Are you currently attending a four (4) year college/University?

- 1 Yes
2 No

13. Have you ever received vocational/trade school education (not junior college or college/university) after high school? Vocational/trade school education is training such as plumbing, electricity, computer training, etc...

- 1 Yes
2 No

14. Are you currently enrolled in vocational/trade school, college, or university?
- 1 Yes
2 No
15. How many years have you spent in school after high school?
- 1
2
3
4
5 or more
16. If you are in school, in terms of credits completed, are you now a:
- 1 First year student
2 Sophomore
3 Junior
4 Senior
5 Don't know.
17. In terms of your major, how definite are your plans?
- 1 Very definite
2 Somewhat definite
3 Not at all definite
4 Haven't thought about
18. Have you completed college/university?
- 1 Yes
2 No
19. Have you completed vocational/trade school?
- 1 Yes
2 No

APPENDIX B

Table B10

Degree School and School Type

	College/University Name	PUBLIC/ PRIVATE	School Type		
			2	4	VOCATIONAL/ TECHNICAL
1.	ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE	PRIVATE	0	0	x
2.	ARMSTRONG ATLANTIC STATE UNIVERSITY	PUBLIC	0	x	0
3.	BERGEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE	PUBLIC	x	0	0
4.	BLOOMFIELD COLLEGE	PRIVATE	0	x	0
5.	BOSTON UNIVERSITY	PRIVATE	0	x	0
6.	BROOKDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE	PUBLIC	x	0	0
7.	CALDWELL COLLEGE	PRIVATE	0	x	0
8.	CEDAR CREST COLLEGE	PRIVATE	0	x	0
9.	CENTENARY COLLEGE	PRIVATE	0	x	0
10.	CHUBB INSTITUTE - JERSEY CITY – NJ	PRIVATE	0	0	x
11.	COLLEGE OF SOUTHERN IDAHO	PUBLIC	x	0	0
12.	CORNELL UNIVERSITY	PRIVATE	0	x	0
13.	DELAWARE STATE UNIVERSITY	PUBLIC	0	x	0
14.	ECPI COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY	PRIVATE	0	0	x
15.	ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE	PUBLIC	x	0	0
16.	FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON UNIVERSITY – MADISON	PRIVATE	0	x	0
17.	FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON UNIVERSITY - TEANECK	PRIVATE	0	x	0
18.	HIGH-TECH INSTITUTE	PRIVATE	0	0	x
19.	HOWARD UNIVERSITY	PRIVATE	0	x	0
20.	HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	PUBLIC	x	0	0
21.	JOHNSON C. SMITH UNIVERSITY	PRIVATE	0	x	0
22.	KATHERINE GIBBS SCHOOL-MONTCLAIR	PRIVATE	0	0	x
23.	KEAN UNIVERSITY	PUBLIC	0	x	0
24.	LINCOLN COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY	PRIVATE	0	0	x
25.	LINCOLN UNIVERSITY-MISSOURI	PUBLIC	0	x	0
26.	LINCOLN UNIVERSITY-PA	PUBLIC	0	x	0
27.	LONG ISLAND UNIVERSITY	PRIVATE	0	x	0
28.	MONROE COLLEGE	PRIVATE	0	x	0
29.	MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY	PUBLIC	0	x	0
30.	NEW JERSEY CITY UNIVERSITY	PUBLIC	0	x	0
31.	NORTH CAROLINA A&T STATE UNIV	PUBLIC	0	x	0
32.	NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY	PUBLIC	0	x	0
33.	PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY	PUBLIC	0	x	0
34.	QUINCY UNIVERSITY	PRIVATE	0	x	0
35.	RIDER UNIVERSITY	PRIVATE	0	x	0
36.	RUTGERS - THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NJ - NEWARK	PUBLIC	0	x	0
37.	RUTGERS -THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NJ -NEW BRUNSWICK	PUBLIC	0	x	0
38.	SETON HALL UNIVERSITY	PRIVATE	0	x	0
39.	SPELMAN COLLEGE	PRIVATE	0	x	0

40.	ST PETERS COLLEGE	PRIVATE	0	x	0
41.	SUNY COLLEGE AT PURCHASE	PUBLIC	0	x	0
42.	SUNY FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY	PUBLIC	0	x	0
43.	SUNY HUDSON VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	PUBLIC	0	x	0
44.	TEMPLE UNIVERSITY	PUBLIC	0	x	0
45.	TOURO COLLEGE	PRIVATE	0	x	0
46.	UMDNJ SCHOOL OF HEALTH RELATED SCIENCES	PUBLIC	0	x	0
47.	UNION COUNTY COLLEGE	PUBLIC	0	x	0
48.	UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD	PRIVATE	0	x	0
49.	UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EASTERN SHORE	PUBLIC	0	x	0
50.	UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA-TWIN CITIES	PUBLIC	0	x	0
51.	VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY	PUBLIC	0	x	0
52.	VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY	PRIVATE	0	x	0
53.	WILKES UNIVERSITY	PRIVATE	0	x	0
54.	WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY	PUBLIC	0	x	0
TOTAL			5	43	6

Table B11

Attended School and School Type

College/University Name		School Type			
		PUBLIC/ PRIVATE	2	4	VOCATIONAL/ TECHNICAL
1.	ALABAMA A&M UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
2.	ALABAMA STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
3.	ALBRIGHT COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
4.	AMERICAN ACADEMY MCALLISTER INSTITUTE	Private	x	0	0
5.	AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
6.	AMERICAN UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
7.	ARCADIA UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
8.	ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
9.	ASHFORD UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
10.	ATLANTA METROPOLITAN COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
11.	ATLANTIC CAPE COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
12.	AUGUSTA STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
13.	BALTIMORE CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
14.	BARTON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
15.	BARNARD COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
16.	BARTON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
17.	BECKER COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
18.	BENEDICT COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
19.	BENNETT COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
20.	BENTLEY UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
21.	BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
22.	BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
23.	BRIARWOOD COLLEGE	Private	0	0	x
24.	BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
25.	BROOKHAVEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
26.	BROWARD COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0

27.	BROWN UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
28.	BUNKER HILL COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
29.	BURLINGTON COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
30.	CABRINI COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
31.	CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY - FRESNO	Public	0	x	0
32.	CAMDEN COUNTY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
33.	CANISIUS COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
34.	CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
35.	CATAWBA COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
36.	CENTRAL CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
37.	CENTRAL FLORIDA COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
38.	CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
39.	CENTRAL PIEDMONT COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
40.	CENTRAL STATE UNIVERSITY-OH	Public	0	x	0
41.	CENTRAL TEXAS COLLEGE-TRADITIONAL	Public	x	0	0
42.	CHEYNEY UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA	Public	0	x	0
43.	CHUBB INSTITUTE - NORTH BRUNSWICK – NJ	Private	0	0	x
44.	CITY COLLEGE OF SAN FRANCISCO	Public	x	0	0
45.	CITY OF CHICAGO - MALCOLM X COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
46.	CITY OF CHICAGO - RICHARD J. DALEY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
47.	CITY OF CHICAGO - WRIGHT COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
48.	CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
49.	COASTAL CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
50.	COCHISE COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
51.	COLLEGE OF LAKE COUNTY	Public	x	0	0
52.	COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY	Public	0	x	0
53.	COLLEGE OF NEW ROCHELLE- UNDERGRADS	Private	0	x	0
54.	COLLEGE OF ST ELIZABETH	Private	0	x	0
55.	COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS	Private	0	x	0
56.	COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO	Private	0	x	0
57.	COLUMBIA COLLEGE-EV SESSION	Private	0	x	0
58.	COLUMBIA UNION COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
59.	COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF BALTIMORE COUNTY	Public	x	0	0
60.	COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF DENVER	Public	x	0	0
61.	COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF PHILADELPHIA	Public	x	0	0
62.	COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF RHODE ISLAND-WARWICK	Public	x	0	0
63.	CONTRA COSTA COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
64.	COPPIN STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
65.	COUNTY COLLEGE OF MORRIS	Public	x	0	0
66.	CUMBERLAND COUNTY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
67.	CUNY BERNARD M. BARUCH COLLEGE	Public	0	x	0
68.	CUNY BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN	Public	x	0	0
69.	CUNY BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
70.	CUNY CITY COLLEGE	Public	0	x	0
71.	CUNY COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND	Public	0	x	0
72.	CUNY HUNTER COLLEGE	Public	0	x	0
73.	CUNY JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE	Public	0	x	0
74.	CUNY KINGSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0

75. CUYAHOGA COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
76. DAEMEN COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
77. DAYTONA STATE COLLEGE	Public	0	x	0
78. DAVIS & ELKINS COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
79. DEAN COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
80. DELAWARE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
81. DELGADO COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
82. DES MOINES AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
83. DEVRY UNIVERSITY - ALPHARETTA	Public	0	x	0
84. DEVRY UNIVERSITY - DUPAGE	Public	0	x	0
85. DEVRY UNIVERSITY - N. BRUNSWICK	Public	0	x	0
86. DEVRY UNIVERSITY - ORLANDO	Public	0	x	0
87. DICKINSON COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
88. DREW UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
89. DREXEL UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
90. DURHAM TECHNICAL COMM. COLL.	Public	x	0	0
91. EASTERN UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
92. EDISON COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
93. EL CAMINO COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
94. ELIZABETH CITY STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
95. EMBRY-RIDDLE AERONAUTICAL UNIV.- WORLDWIDE CAMPUS	Private	0	x	0
96. EMBRY-RIDDLE AERONAUTICAL UNIVERSITY – DAYTONA	Private	0	x	0
97. FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON UNIVERSITY - MADISON	Private	0	x	0
98. FAYETTEVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
99. FAYETTEVILLE TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
100. FELICIAN COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
101. FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
102. FLORIDA COMMUNITY COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE	Public	x	0	0
103. FLORIDA MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
104. FLORIDA SOUTHERN COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
105. FORDHAM UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
106. FORT VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
107. FRANCIS MARION UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
108. FRANKLIN PIERCE UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
109. FRESNO CITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
110. GEORGETOWN COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
111. GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
112. GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
113. GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY	Public	0	x	0
114. GEORGIA PERIMETER COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
115. GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
116. GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
117. GEORGIAN COURT UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
118. GLOUCESTER COUNTY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
119. GRAMBLING STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
120. GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
121. HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
122. HAMPTON UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
123. HARFORD COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
124. HARRISBURG AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
125. HARVARD UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
126. HEALD COLLEGE-HAYWARD	Private	x	0	0
127. HESSER COLLEGE - MANCHESTER SCHOOL 30	Public	0	0	x
128. HIGHLINE COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0

129. HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
130. HOLYOKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
131. HOPKINSVILLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
132. HORRY-GEORGETOWN TECHNICAL COLLEGE	Private	0	0	x
133. HOWARD COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
134. HUSSON COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
135. INDIAN RIVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
136. INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA	Public	0	x	0
137. IONA COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
138. ITT TECHNICAL INSTITUTE	Public	0	0	x
139. IVY TECH-INDIANAPOLIS	Public	x	0	0
140. J.SARGEANT REYNOLDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	0	x	0
141. JACKSON STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
142. JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY ARTS,SCIENCES ENGINEERING	Private	0	x	0
143. JOHNSON & WALES UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
144. JULIARD SCHOOL	Private	0	0	x
145. KEENE STATE COLLEGE	Public	0	x	0
146. KENT STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
147. KEUKA COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
148. KEYSTONE COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
149. LABORATORY INSTITUTE OF MERCHANDISING	Private	0	0	x
150. LA SALLE UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
151. LACKAWANNA COLLEGE	Private	x	0	0
152. LAS POSITAS COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
153. LATTER-DAY SAINTS BUSINESS COLLEGE	Private	0	0	x
154. LEHIGH CARBON COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
155. LEHIGH UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
156. LINCOLN COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY	Public	0	0	x
157. LOCK HAVEN UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
158. LONG ISLAND UNIV - BROOKLYN	Private	0	x	0
159. LOUISBURG COLLEGE	Private	x	0	0
160. LUZERNE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
161. MANHATTAN COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
162. MARIETTA COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
163. MARYMOUNT MANHATTAN COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
164. MCCANN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY	Private	0	0	x
165. MERCER COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
166. MERCY COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
167. MERRITT COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
168. MIDDLESEX COUNTY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
169. MIDLANDS TECHNICAL COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
170. MID PLAINS COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
171. MODESTO JUNIOR COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
172. MONTGOMERY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
173. MOREHEAD STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
174. MOREHOUSE COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
175. MORRIS COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
176. MOUNT SAN JACINTO COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
177. NEUMANN COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
178. NEW JERSEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY	Public	0	x	0
179. NEW YORK UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
180. NORFOLK STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
181. NORTHHAMPTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
182. NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL OF THE ARTS	Public	0	x	0
183. NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
184. NORTH CAROLINA WESLEYAN COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0

185. NORTHAMPTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
186. NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
187. NORTHERN MAINE COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
188. NORTHWEST FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE	Public	0	x	0
189. NORWICH UNIVERSITY-TRADITIONAL	Private	0	x	0
190. NYACK COLLEGE - MANHATTAN UG	Private	0	x	0
191. NYACK COLLEGE - ROCKLAND UG	Private	0	x	0
192. OAKLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
193. OAKWOOD UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
194. OCEAN COUNTY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
195. OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
196. OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
197. PACE UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
198. PAINE COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
199. PALO ALTO COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
200. PARK UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
201. PASSAIC COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
202. PIEDMONT TECHNICAL COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
203. PIERCE COLLEGE - MILITARY PROGRAM	Public	x	0	0
204. PITTSBURGH TECHNICAL INSTITUTE	Private	0	0	x
205. PONTIFICAL CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO	Private	0	x	0
206. PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
207. PRINCE GEORGES COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
208. PRINCETON UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
209. QUINEBAUG VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
210. QUINSIGAMOND COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
211. RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY	Public	0	x	0
212. RARITAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
213. RICHARD STOCKTON COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY	Public	0	x	0
214. RIO HONDO COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
215. ROANOKE COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
216. ROBERT MORRIS UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
217. ROBESON COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
218. ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY	Private	0	x	0
219. ROWAN UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
220. ROXBURY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
221. SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
222. SALEM COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
223. SALISBURY UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
224. SAN DIEGO MESA COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
225. SAN JACINTO COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
226. SAVANNAH STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
227. SEATTLE CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
228. SCHOOL OF VISUAL ARTS	Private	0	x	0
229. SEMINOLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
230. SHAW UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
231. SMITH COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
232. SOUTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
233. SOUTHERN UTAH UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
234. SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
235. SOUTHSIDE VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
236. ST FRANCIS COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
237. ST JOHNS UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
238. ST JOSEPH COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
239. ST PETERSBURG COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0

240. STANFORD UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
241. STEVENS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY	Public	0	x	0
242. STRAYER UNIVERSITY-WASHINGTON D.C.	Private	0	x	0
243. SUNY BINGHAMTON	Public	0	x	0
244. SUNY BUFFALO	Public	0	x	0
245. SUNY COLLEGE AT BUFFALO	Public	0	x	0
246. SUNY DUTCHESS COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
247. SUNY ERIE COMMUNITY COLLEGE-CITY CAMPUS	Public	x	0	0
248. SUNY HERKIMER COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
249. SUNY MORRISVILLE	Public	0	x	0
250. SUNY WESTCHESTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
251. SUSSEX COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
252. SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
253. TACOMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
254. TEACHERS COLLEGE COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
255. TECHNICAL CAREER INSTITUTES	Public	0	0	x
256. TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
257. THE NEW SCHOOL	Private	0	x	0
258. THIEL COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
259. TIDEWATER COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
260. TUFTS UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
261. TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
262. TYLER JUNIOR COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
263. UNION COUNTY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
264. UNIVERSITY OF BRIDGEPORT	Private	0	x	0
265. UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-LOS ANGELES	Public	0	x	0
266. UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO	Private	0	x	0
267. UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT	Public	0	x	0
268. UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE	Public	0	x	0
269. UNIVERSITY OF DETROIT MERCY	Private	0	x	0
270. UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON	Public	0	x	0
271. UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY	Public	0	x	0
272. UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND - UNIVERSITY COLLEGE	Public	0	x	0
273. UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-ST LOUIS	Public	0	x	0
274. UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA-RENO	Public	0	x	0
275. UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAVEN-SEMESTERS	Private	0	x	0
276. UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA	Private	0	x	0
277. UNIVERSITY OF PHOENIX	Private	0	x	0
278. UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH	Public	0	x	0
279. UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND	Private	0	x	0
280. UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA	Public	0	x	0
281. UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA	Public	0	x	0
282. UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA	Public	0	x	0
283. UNIVERSITY OF TAMPA	Private	0	x	0
284. UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS - PAN AMERICAN	Public	0	x	0
285. UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO	Public	0	x	0
286. UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS	Private	0	x	0
287. UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO	Public	0	x	0
288. UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT & STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE	Public	0	x	0
289. UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
290. UTICA COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
291. VALENCIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
292. VAUGHN COLLEGE OF AERONAUTICS AND TECHNOLOGY	Private	0	x	0
293. VINCENNES UNIVERSITY	Public	x	0	0

294. VIRGINIA WESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
295. WAKE TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
296. WASHINGTON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
297. WASHTENAW COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
298. WESLEY COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
299. WEST HILLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
300. WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
301. WEST VIRGINIA WESLEYAN COLLEGE	Private	0	x	0
302. WESTERN INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
303. WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
304. WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
305. WESTERN OKLAHOMA STATE COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
306. WIDENER UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
307. WILMINGTON UNIVERSITY	Private	0	x	0
308. WILSON COMMUNITY COLLEGE	Public	x	0	0
309. WINSTON SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY	Public	0	x	0
310. XAVIER UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA	Private	0	x	0
TOTAL		106	192	12

Table B17

Degree School and Assessment

	College/University Name	Assessment	
		SRA	HSPA
1.	ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE	1	0
2.	ARMSTRONG ATLANTIC STATE UNIVERSITY	1	0
3.	BERGEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE	0	1
4.	BLOOMFIELD COLLEGE	2	1
5.	BOSTON UNIVERSITY	0	1
6.	BROOKDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE	0	2
7.	CALDWELL COLLEGE	1	0
8.	CEDAR CREST COLLEGE	0	2
9.	CENTENARY COLLEGE	1	0
10.	CHUBB INSTITUTE - JERSEY CITY – NJ	1	0
11.	COLLEGE OF SOUTHERN IDAHO	1	0
12.	CORNELL UNIVERSITY	0	1
13.	DELAWARE STATE UNIVERSITY	1	0
14.	ECPI COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY	0	1
15.	ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE	27	19
16.	FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON UNIVERSITY - MADISON	1	0
17.	FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON UNIVERSITY – TEANECK	1	1
18.	HIGH-TECH INSTITUTE	1	0
19.	HOWARD UNIVERSITY	2	1
20.	HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	2	2
21.	JOHNSON C. SMITH UNIVERSITY	2	0
22.	KATHERINE GIBBS SCHOOL- MONTCLAIR	2	0
23.	KEAN UNIVERSITY	9	2
24.	LINCOLN COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY	1	0
25.	LINCOLN UNIVERSITY-MISSOURI	0	1
26.	LINCOLN UNIVERSITY-PENNSYLVANIA	0	1
27.	LONG ISLAND UNIVERSITY	0	2

28. MONROE COLLEGE	1	0
29. MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY	3	8
30. NEW JERSEY CITY UNIVERSITY	0	3
31. NORTH CAROLINA A&T STATE UNIV	1	1
32. NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY	0	1
33. PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY	0	3
34. QUINCY UNIVERSITY	0	1
35. RIDER UNIVERSITY	0	1
36. RUTGERS - THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NJ - NEWARK	2	7
37. RUTGERS -THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NJ -NEW BRUNSWICK	1	11
38. SETON HALL UNIVERSITY	0	2
39. SPELMAN COLLEGE	0	1
40. ST PETERS COLLEGE	0	1
41. SUNY COLLEGE AT PURCHASE	0	1
42. SUNY FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY	0	1
43. SUNY HUDSON VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	0	1
44. TEMPLE UNIVERSITY	0	3
45. TOURO COLLEGE	1	2
46. UMDNJ SCHOOL OF HEALTH RELATED SCIENCES	1	0
47. UNION COUNTY COLLEGE	6	1
48. UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD	0	1
49. UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EASTERN SHORE	0	1
50. UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA-TWIN CITIES	1	0
51. VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY	4	0
52. VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY	0	1
53. WILKES UNIVERSITY	0	2
54. WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY	0	1
TOTAL	78	92

Table B18

Attended School and Assessment

	College/University Name	Assessment	
		SRA	HSPA
1.	ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE	1	0
2.	ALABAMA STATE UNIVERSITY	3	2
3.	ALBRIGHT COLLEGE	0	1
4.	AMERICAN ACADEMY MCALLISTER INSTITUTE	1	0
5.	AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE	0	1
6.	AMERICAN UNIVERSITY	0	1
7.	ARCADIA UNIVERSITY	0	1
8.	ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY	0	1
9.	ATLANTA METROPOLITAN COLLEGE	0	1
10.	BALTIMORE CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	0
11.	BARNARD COLLEGE	0	1
12.	BARTON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	0
13.	BECKER COLLEGE	1	0

14. BENEDICT COLLEGE	5	8
15. BENNETT COLLEGE	2	2
16. BENTLEY UNIVERSITY	0	1
17. BERGEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE	11	6
18. BLOOMFIELD COLLEGE	89	115
19. BOSTON UNIVERSITY	0	3
20. BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY	0	1
21. BRIARWOOD COLLEGE	1	0
22. BROOKDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE	3	4
23. BROWARD COLLEGE	0	1
24. BROWN UNIVERSITY	0	1
25. BUNKER HILL COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	0
26. BURLINGTON COLLEGE	3	0
27. CABRINI COLLEGE	0	1
28. CALDWELL COLLEGE	11	18
29. CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY - FRESNO	1	0
30. CANISIUS COLLEGE	0	1
31. CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY	0	2
32. CATAWBA COLLEGE	0	1
33. CEDAR CREST COLLEGE	0	1
34. CENTENARY COLLEGE	7	5
35. CENTENARY COLLEGE CAPS	0	1
36. CENTRAL FLORIDA COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	0
37. CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE	0	2
38. CENTRAL STATE UNIVERSITY-OH	0	2
39. CENTRAL TEXAS COLLEGE-TRADITIONAL	1	1
40. CHEYNEY UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA	4	7
41. CHUBB INSTITUTE – JERSEY CITY, NJ	17	0
42. CHUBB INSTITUTE - NORTH BRUNSWICK – NJ	1	0
43. CITY COLLEGE OF SAN FRANCISCO	1	0
44. CITY OF CHICAGO - MALCOLM X COLLEGE	1	0
45. CITY OF CHICAGO - RICHARD J. DALEY COLLEGE	1	0
46. CITY OF CHICAGO - WRIGHT COLLEGE	1	0
47. CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY	0	14
48. COASTAL CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE	0	1
49. COCHISE COLLEGE	0	1
50. COLLEGE OF LAKE COUNTY	1	0
51. COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY	0	32
52. COLLEGE OF NEW ROCHELLE- UNDERGRADS	0	1
53. COLLEGE OF SOUTHERN IDAHO	1	0
54. COLLEGE OF ST ELIZABETH	12	25
55. COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS	1	2
56. COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO	0	2
57. COLUMBIA COLLEGE-EV SESSION	1	0
58. COLUMBIA UNION COLLEGE	0	1
59. COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF BALTIMORE COUNTY	1	1
60. COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF DENVER	1	0
61. CONTRA COSTA COLLEGE	1	0
62. COPPIN STATE UNIVERSITY	1	7
63. CORNELL UNIVERSITY	0	5
64. COUNTY COLLEGE OF MORRIS	2	2
65. CUMBERLAND COUNTY COLLEGE	3	0
66. CUNY BERNARD M. BARUCH COLLEGE	0	1

67. CUNY BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN	4	0
68. CUNY BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE	0	1
69. CUNY CITY COLLEGE	0	1
70. CUNY COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND	1	0
71. CUNY HUNTER COLLEGE	0	1
72. CUYAHOGA COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	0
73. DAEMEN COLLEGE	1	0
74. DAYTONA STATE COLLEGE	0	2
75. DEAN COLLEGE	0	1
76. DELAWARE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	4	0
77. DELAWARE STATE UNIVERSITY	11	13
78. DES MOINES AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE	0	1
79. DEVRY UNIVERSITY - ALPHARETTA	1	0
80. DEVRY UNIVERSITY - DUPAGE	1	2
81. DEVRY UNIVERSITY - N. BRUNSWICK	11	15
82. DEVRY UNIVERSITY - ORLANDO	0	1
83. DICKINSON COLLEGE	0	2
84. DREW UNIVERSITY	0	17
85. DREXEL UNIVERSITY	0	3
86. DURHAM TECHNICAL COMM. COLL.	1	0
87. EASTERN UNIVERSITY	0	1
88. EPCI COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY	1	0
89. EL CAMINO COLLEGE	0	1
90. ELIZABETH CITY STATE UNIVERSITY	0	1
91. EMBRY-RIDDLE AERONAUTICAL UNIV.- WORLDWIDE CAMPUS	0	1
92. EMBRY-RIDDLE AERONAUTICAL UNIVERSITY – DAYTONA	0	1
93. ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE	1,455	688
94. FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON UNIVERSITY- EDWARD/WILLIAMS	3	0
95. FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON UNIVERSITY - MADISON	6	24
96. FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON UNIVERSITY- TEANECK	4	47
97. FAYETTEVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY	1	0
98. FAYETTEVILLE TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	1
99. FELICIAN COLLEGE	13	8
100. FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY	0	1
101. FLORIDA COMMUNITY COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE	1	0
102. FLORIDA MEMORIAL COLLEGE	1	1
103. FLORIDA SOUTHERN COLLEGE	0	1
104. FORDHAM UNIVERSITY	0	1
105. FORT VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY	0	1
106. FRANCIS MARION UNIVERSITY	0	1
107. FRANKLIN PIERCE UNIVERSITY	0	1
108. GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY	0	2
109. GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY	0	1
110. GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY	1	0
111. GEORGIA PERIMETER COLLEGE	1	1
112. GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY	0	2
113. GEORGIAN COURT UNIVERSITY	14	10
114. GRAMBLING STATE UNIVERSITY	2	0
115. GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	0
116. HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE	1	0
117. HAMPTON UNIVERSITY	0	8
118. HARFORD COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	1
119. HARRISBURG COMM. COLLEGE	1	0
120. HARVARD UNIVERSITY	0	1

121. HESSER COLLEGE - MANCHESTER SCHOOL 30	1	0
122. HIGH-TECH INSTITUTE	3	2
123. HIGHLINE COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	0
124. HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY	1	1
125. HOLYOKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE	0	1
126. HOWARD COLLEGE	1	0
127. HOWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE	0	1
128. HOWARD UNIVERSITY	2	21
129. HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	22	11
130. HUSSON COLLEGE	2	0
131. INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA	0	1
132. IONA COLLEGE	0	1
133. ITT TECHNICAL INSTITUTE	5	0
134. J.SARGEANT REYNOLDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	0
135. JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY ARTS,SCIENCES ENGINEERING	0	1
136. JOHNSON & WALES UNIVERSITY	5	1
137. JOHNSON C. SMITH UNIVERSITY	7	12
138. KATHERINE GIBBS SCHOOL-MONTCLAIR	29	5
139. KEAN UNIVERSITY	87	141
140. KEENE STATE COLLEGE	1	0
141. KENT STATE UNIVERSITY	0	1
142. KEUKA COLLEGE	1	0
143. KEYSTONE COLLEGE	5	0
144. LA SALLE UNIVERSITY	1	0
145. LATTER-DAY SAINTS BUSINESS COLLEGE	1	0
146. LEHIGH CARBON COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	0
147. LEHIGH UNIVERSITY	0	2
148. LINCOLN COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY	1	0
149. LINCOLN UNIVERSITY	4	10
150. LOCK HAVEN UNIVERSITY	1	0
151. LONG ISLAND UNIV - BROOKLYN	0	1
152. LOUISBURG COLLEGE	1	0
153. LUZERNE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	0
154. MANHATTAN COLLEGE	0	1
155. MARIETTA COLLEGE	1	0
156. MARYMOUNT MANHATTAN COLLEGE	0	2
157. MCCANN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY	0	1
158. MERCER COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	4	1
159. MERCY COLLEGE	0	1
160. MERRITT COLLEGE	0	1
161. MIDDLESEX COUNTY COLLEGE	7	8
162. MIDLANDS TECHNICAL COLLEGE	1	0
163. MODESTO JUNIOR COLLEGE	1	1
164. MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY	0	2
165. MONROE COLLEGE	3	0
166. MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY	20	175
167. MOREHEAD STATE UNIVERSITY	1	0
168. MOREHOUSE COLLEGE	0	5
169. MORRIS COLLEGE	3	0
170. MOUNT SAN JACINTO COLLEGE	0	1
171. NEUMANN COLLEGE	0	1
172. NEW JERSEY CITY UNIVERSITY	22	74
173. NEW JERSEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY	1	83
174. NEW YORK UNIVERSITY	0	4
175. NORFOLK STATE UNIVERSITY	2	10
176. NORTH CAROLINA A&T STATE UNIV.	1	4
177. NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL UNIV.	0	1

178. NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL OF THE ARTS	0	2
179. NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY	0	1
180. NORTH CAROLINA WESLEYAN COLLEGE	0	1
181. NORTHAMPTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE	2	4
182. NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY	0	1
183. NORTHWEST FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE	0	1
184. NORWICH UNIVERSITY-TRADITIONAL	0	1
185. NYACK COLLEGE - MANHATTAN UG	3	3
186. NYACK COLLEGE - ROCKLAND UG	3	1
187. OAKLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE	0	1
188. OAKWOOD UNIVERSITY	0	1
189. OCEAN COUNTY COLLEGE	2	0
190. OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY	0	1
191. OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY	0	1
192. PACE UNIVERSITY	0	2
193. PAINE COLLEGE	0	1
194. PALO ALTO COLLEGE	1	0
195. PARK UNIVERSITY	0	2
196. PASSAIC COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	8
197. PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY	3	18
198. PIEDMONT TECHNICAL COLLEGE	0	1
199. PIERCE COLLEGE - MILITARY PROGRAM	1	0
200. PITTSBURGH TECHNICAL INSTITUTE	1	0
201. PONTIFICAL CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO	1	0
202. PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY	0	1
203. PRINCE GEORGES COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	1
204. PRINCETON UNIVERSITY	0	1
205. QUINCY UNIVERSITY	0	1
206. QUINEBAUG VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	0
207. QUINSIGAMOND COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	0
208. RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY	8	25
209. RARITAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	1
210. RICHARD STOCKTON COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY	1	10
211. RIDER UNIVERSITY	2	16
212. RIO HONDO COLLEGE	1	0
213. ROANOKE COLLEGE	0	1
214. ROBERT MORRIS UNIVERSITY	0	1
215. ROBESON COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	0
216. ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY	0	2
217. ROWAN UNIVERSITY	4	8
218. ROXBURY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	0
219. RUTGERS-THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NJ- NEWARK	11	178
220. RUTGERS-THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NJ- NEW BRUNSWICK	9	202
221. SALEM COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	0
222. SAN DIEGO MESA COLLEGE	0	1
223. SAN JACINTO COLLEGE	0	1
224. SAVANNAH STATE UNIVERSITY	0	1
225. SCHOOL OF VISUAL ARTS	0	1
226. SEMINOLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE	0	1
227. SETON HALL UNIVERSITY	4	39
228. SHAW UNIVERSITY	6	5
229. SMITH COLLEGE	0	3
230. SOUTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY	0	1
231. SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY	0	3
232. SOUTHSIDE VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE	0	2

233. SPELMAN COLLEGE	0	4
234. ST FRANCIS COLLEGE	1	0
235. ST JOHNS UNIVERSITY	0	4
236. ST JOSEPH COLLEGE	0	2
237. ST PETERS COLLEGE	7	23
238. ST PETERSBURG COLLEGE	0	2
239. STANFORD UNIVERSITY	0	1
240. STEVENS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY	0	2
241. SUNY BINGHAMTON	0	1
242. SUNY BUFFALO	0	1
243. SUNY COLLEGE AT BUFFALO	1	0
244. SUNY COLLEGE AT PURCHASE	0	1
245. SUNY DUTCHESS COMMUNITY COLLEGE	4	1
246. SUNY ERIE COMMUNITY COLLEGE-CITY CAMPUS	1	0
247. SUNY FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY	0	4
248. SUNY HERKIMER COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	0
249. SUNY HUDSON VALLEY COMMUNITY	5	2
250. SUNY MORRISVILLE	2	0
251. SUNY ORANGE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	0
252. SUSSEX COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE	0	2
253. SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY	1	1
254. TACOMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	0
255. TEMPLE UNIVERSITY	1	18
256. TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY	1	0
257. THE NEW SCHOOL	0	2
258. THIEL COLLEGE	1	0
259. TIDEWATER COMMUNITY COLLEGE	2	0
260. TOURO COLLEGE	1	1
261. TUFTS UNIVERSITY	0	1
262. TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY	2	1
263. TYLER JUNIOR COLLEGE	1	0
264. UNION COUNTY COLLEGE	149	106
265. UNIVERSITY OF BRIDGEPORT	1	1
266. UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-LOS ANGELES	0	1
267. UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO	0	1
268. UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT	0	2
269. UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE	0	1
270. UNIVERSITY OF DETROIT MERCY	1	0
271. UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD	0	4
272. UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON	1	0
273. UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY	0	1
274. UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND - UNIVERSITY COLLEGE	0	2
275. UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EASTERN SHORE	13	21
276. UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA-TWIN CITIES	1	0
277. UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-ST LOUIS	0	1
278. UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA-RENO	1	0
279. UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAVEN-SEMESTERS	0	3
280. UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA	0	1
281. UNIVERSITY OF PHOENIX	20	4
282. UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH	1	1
283. UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND	0	1
284. UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA	1	0
285. UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA	0	1
286. UNIVERSITY OF TAMPA	0	2
287. UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS - PAN AMERICAN	1	0

288. UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO	1	0
289. UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS	0	5
290. UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO	1	0
291. UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT & STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE	0	2
292. UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY	1	0
293. UTICA COLLEGE	0	1
294. VALENCIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	1
295. VAUGHN COLLEGE OF AERONAUTICS AND TECHNOLOGY	1	1
296. VINCENNES UNIVERSITY	0	1
297. VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY	6	11
298. VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY	1	3
299. VIRGINIA WESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	0
300. WAKE TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE	0	1
301. WASHTENAW COMMUNITY COLLEGE	1	0
302. WESLEY COLLEGE	1	3
303. WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY	0	1
304. WEST VIRGINIA WESLEYAN COLLEGE	0	1
305. WESTERN INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY	0	1
306. WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY	0	1
307. WESTERN OKLAHOMA STATE COLLEGE	1	1
308. WILKES UNIVERSITY	0	1
309. WILLIAM PATTERSON UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY	20	107
310. WILMINGTON UNIVERSITY	1	1
311. WINSTON SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY	2	2
312. XAVIER UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA	0	1
TOTAL	2,326	2,675

CURRICULUM VITAE

Vincent André Keeton, J.D., Ph.D.

EDUCATION

<u>Date</u>	<u>Major</u>	<u>Degree</u>
2005 to 2009, Rutgers University-Newark, Newark	Urban Education	Ph.D.
1994 to 1998, University of Texas, Austin-School of Law	Law	J.D.
1994 to 1998, University of Texas, Austin-LBJ School	Public Policy	M.A.
1990 to 1994, University of Texas, Austin	History/Spanish	B.A.
1991 to 1993, PONTIFICIA UNIVERSIDAD CATOLICA MADRE Y MAESTRA	Spanish Language/History	

EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Fall, 2009 to Present, School of Management and Labor, Rutgers University-New Brunswick. Post-Doctoral Associate

Fall, 2008 to Present, Rutgers University-Newark. Doctoral Dissertation Fellow

Fall, 2005 to Fall, 2008, Rutgers University-Newark. Doctoral Teaching Assistant

Fall, 2004 to Fall, 2005, The American International Group. Departmental Counsel

Fall, 1998 to Summer, 2004, Bronx District Attorney's Office. Assistant District Attorney

Fall, 1996 to Spring, 1998, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals-Hon. Morris Overstreet. Clerk

Summer, 1996 Mehaffy, Weber, Keith and Gonsoulin. Summer Associate