STATE TAKEOVERS OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS: A CORRELATIONAL STUDY

A Doctoral Thesis Presented to the
Faculty of the College of Education
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctorate of Education
Professional Leadership

By

James D. Troutman

May 2014

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Abstract

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to investigate federal and state accountability policies and the relation between school district accountability and school district resources. No Child Left Behind (2001) (NCLB) and Public Law 107-110 developed a federal accountability system that basically compared historically marginalized students with affluent students (Mintrop & Trujillo, 2005). Therefore, NCLB sets high achievement rates equal to the ability of affluent students (Mintrop & Trujillo, 2005). In addition, NCLB required State Education Agencies (SEA’s) to develop a state plan with standardized assessments as in the case for the North Forest Independent School District and other unacceptable school districts taken over by the Texas Education Agency.

The study answered the following two research questions:

1. How are federal and state school and district accountability policies defined?
2. What is the relation between school district accreditation and school district resources?

During the process of answering questions one and two, the relation between school district accountability and student economic backgrounds emerged as an important finding. Chapter four added the following research questions:

3. What is the relation between school district accountability and economically disadvantaged students?

4. What are the relation s between school district accountability and the enrollment percentage of race?
    a. African American
    b. Hispanic
    c. White

To answer the first research question a literature review was conducted on federal and state accountability policy theory. The review of federal policy focused on the No Child Left Behind used to define federal accountability policy and the effects of federal policy on school takeovers (Elmore, 2010, 1996; Fowler, 2008; Fuhrman, 1999; Garfield, Garfield, & Willardson, 2003; Kingdon, 2011; O'Day, 2002; Public Law 107-110; Wirt & Kirst, 2009). The literature on state school accountability policy was reviewed to define state accountability policy and the effects of state accountability policy on school closures (TEC 39, 2011). The answer to the first research question lies in the framework and a timetable for federal school accountability polices that were developed. However, state policies are based on federal accountability policies requiring states to develop state assessment instruments (NCLB, 2011); consequently state accountability polices were grounded in the Texas Education Code, Chapter 39 (TEC).

To answer research question two, correlational methods were used to identify the relation between school district accountability and school district resources. In addition, the relation s between school district accountability and student economic backgrounds and school district accountability and race were explored

Archival data for Texas accountability were retrieved from the Texas Education Agency Accountability Rating System (AEIS). School district resource data were retrieved from the Texas Education Agency School Finance Reports and Data. Correlational analyses were conducted between the 45 Texas Exemplary school districts and the 50 Texas Academically Unacceptable school districts. Correlational relations were measured for accountability ratings and Weighted Average Daily Attendance (WADA), accountability ratings and the percentage of disadvantaged students, and accountability ratings and race. The most significant relation found was a -0.745 between the accountability ratings and economically disadvantaged students. Generally, the findings may imply that poverty continues to be the major source of the achievement gap as measured by school district accountability ratings.

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Chapter I

Introduction

In Texas, according to the Academic Excellence Indicator System and to the Texas Education Agency's website, there are a total of thirteen public school districts (non-charter) facing closure (AEIS, 2011, TEA 2012). The number of school districts and schools facing closure continues to grow across the nation including in Chicago and Philadelphia. School closures are largely districts comprised of majority Latino and Black students. The public schools in Chicago were closed due to a $1 billion budget deficit. In many districts, efficiency is cited as the reason for school closures. For example, Chicago cited a 1 billion dollar budget deficit exacerbated by underutilization of school facilities (Zubrzycki, 2013). In addition, the Chicago Teacher's Union responded by filing several civil rights lawsuits in federal court on behalf of local parents to stop, or at least stall, the school system's plans to close 53 elementary schools at the end of the school year (Maxwell, 2013). Additional closings included schools in Washington, Philadelphia, and New York (Zubrzycki, 2013). In all of these cases, community advocates reacted by raising concerns about safety, racial equity, and school quality (Zubrzycki, 2013). In Kansas City, the district lost accreditation due to poor student performance and student failure to meet state standards. Additionally, the Missouri Board of Education cited the continued failure to improve academic performance and the continued instability in district leadership as driving its decision to remove accreditation (Sulzberger, 2011). In Massachusetts, four schools faced takeovers for poor performance on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System. These takeovers would mark the first time the Massachusetts state education agency had ever

seized control of individual schools without putting the entire district into receivership (Ujifusa, 2013; Vaznis, 2013). Finally, takeovers in urban schools have often been takeovers enacted by the mayor as in the case of Boston in 1992 under the leadership of Superintendent Thomas Payzant (Hechinger & Sataline, 2009).

In Texas, several school districts, primarily minority school districts have been taken over by the Texas Education Agency. In 1989, the Westminster Independent School District (ISD) voted to merge with Allen ISD. Premont ISD and North Forest ISD were taken over by the state for poor student performance (Smith, 2012). The Wilmer-Hutchins ISD had an elected board of education removed and later the district was taken over by the state (Korosec, 2005). This district was annexed with the Dallas ISD (Smith, 2012).

For many decades, educational policy and accountability laws have had the goal of closing the achievement gap between minority and White affluent students (Coleman, 1966; NCLB, 2001). In 1966, the Coleman Report concluded that money did not have an effect on increasing achievement levels of low-income and minority students. Coleman (1966) reported that only family background made a difference in increasing student achievement. In 2012, Texas school accountability data show that minority student achievement remained the lowest of all student groups (AEIS, 2012). National accountability data mirror Texas data. In 2005-2006, from a national standpoint, NCLB identified 5,000 failing schools that in 2010 would become chronically failing (Calkins, Guenther, Hess, Kendrick, 2008). According to the Center on Education Policy (2010) about one-third of U.S. public schools did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) based on tests administered in 2008-09. According to No Child Left Behind (NCLB) policy schools that miss AYP for six consecutive years are to be taken over by the state (NCLB, 2001). NCLB required State Education Agencies (SEA) to develop a state plan with

standardized assessments for approval to the United States Department of Education (USDOE). Once the NCLB state education plan was approved, the authorized state assessment instruments including AYP policies were mandated policy for the state Local Education Agencies. (AYP) (NCLB, 2001). If schools did not meet AYP there were punitive measures set in place. If the measures are not met in three consecutive years then restructuring of the school is required.

Background/Need for the Study

Nationally, thirty-three states have state takeover policies of school districts for academic and for fiscal reasons (Bowman, 2013). State takeover laws specify trigger factors for state involvement, escalating types of state involvement, the extent of the state's authority at various levels, and provide provisions for terminating state takeover involvement (Bowman, 2013). In 2009, there were 76 state takeovers of school districts (Oluwole & Preston, 2009). While takeovers generally produce greater fiscal stability, they consistently are unable to produce academic gains (Bowman, 2013; Dela Torre & Gwynne, 2009; Wong, 2009). In Texas the Commissioner of Education took over the North Forest Independent School district and ordered Houston Independent School District to annex North Forest Independent School District (NFISD) effective July 1, 2013. On this date, approximately, 7,000 North Forest students became Houston students (Williams, 2013). In Texas there are 13 districts that have been identified for accreditation closure, including the NFISD.

Closing the achievement gap extended over two major periods recognizing poverty and achievement. In 1965, as a part of The War on Poverty, Congress passed the ESEA (1965). In 2001, NCLB was signed into national policy, citing its goal to close the achievement gap. According to Sec. 1001, the purpose of NCLB was to "ensure that all children have a fair, equal,

and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments," (NCLB, 2001, p. 1). NCLB developed an accountability system that basically compared historically marginalized students with affluent students (Mintrop & Trujillo, 2005).

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) (2011), an achievement gap is defined as when children from the minority groups perform at lower levels than the children from the majority population on the same test or using the same criterion. In 2009 the gap between White and Hispanic students in 4th grade math was 21 points and in 8th grade math it was 26 points according to the NAEP data (NCES, 2011). The gap between white and Hispanic students in reading was 25 points in the 4th grade 24 points in the 8th grade. White and Black students showed an achievement gap of 26 points in 4th grade math and 31 points in 8th grade math (NCES, 2011).

"Achievement gaps occur when one group of students outperforms another group and the difference in average scores for the two groups is statistically significant (that is, larger than the margin of error). The NAEP reports on the Hispanic-White achievement gap and the Black-White achievement gap use NAEP scores in mathematics and reading for these groups to illuminate patterns and changes in these gaps over time" (NCES, 2012, pg. 1). According to Odden and Picus (2013), in order to increase student achievement and close the achievement gap, equity must also increase.

Statement of the Problem

Current Texas achievement data show that education of Black and Latino students (Mexican American) continue to lag behind majority students in Texas. Today in Texas, state

AEIS data shows that the five-year extended graduation rate for African American, and Hispanic students remain at the bottom when compared to White students (AEIS, 2012). In fact, data for African American students indicated they had a graduation rate of 80.9% and Hispanic students had a graduated rate of 81.8% as compared to the graduation rate of White students was 92.0%. Further investigation shows that Higher Education Readiness Component – Texas Success Initiative (TSI) shows an even larger gap between Texas minority students in English Language Arts and in Mathematics. In reading, African American students measured at 51% and Hispanic students measured at 55% as compared to their White counterparts who measured at 71% on the Texas Success Initiative (TSI). In mathematics, African American students measured at 59% and Hispanic students measured at 68% as compared to White students who measured at 82% on the TSI. According to the 2012 State AEIS Report for College Readiness, test scores for graduates in both reading and Math for African American students for the class of 2011 was as follows: 36% for African American students and 42% for Hispanic students as compared to 65% for White students. According to the Houston Endowment (2012), the data are more disturbing for Texas students who successfully completed a college education. According to the Houston Endowment, of all the Texas kids who were in eighth grade in 1996, 1997 and 1998, only about 20 percent had received any sort of post-high-school degree six years after they were expected to graduate from high school. The data were more severe for African Americans and Hispanics. For African Americans, only 11.4 percent and for Hispanics, 11.6 percent had received any sort of post-high-school degree six years after they were expected to graduate from high school. (Houston Endowment, 2012).

In today's society, federal, state and local educational agencies have emphasized the importance of increasing student achievement, reducing the dropout rate, and establishing a

college and career-ready culture. Due to these mandates, a number of public schools and school districts are faced with accreditation sanctions because of failure to meet mandates from NCLB to state accountability standards (Toppo, 2013). The federal and state accountability policies have produced many schools and school districts that have missed AYP for six consecutive years which were taken over by the state (NCLB, 2001).

In addition to the state policies for academic accountability the state also has fiscal or financial accountability (Texas Education Code (TEC), §39.201-204). Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST) is used by the Texas Education Agency system to rate the Local Education Agency (LEA) on their financial integrity. TEA uses the following ratings: Superior Achievement; Above Standard Achievement; Standard Achievement; Substandard Achievement; Suspended – Data Quality. The Texas legislature created the system in 2001 to communicate information and improve the management of school districts' financial resources. The system requires the Texas Education Agency to review the audited financial reports from all districts and assign financial management ratings based on how the data conform to 20 established indicators. Every school district in Texas is required to prepare an annual financial management report that includes the district's financial management performance rating from TEA, the district's previous performance on the rating indicators, and information that the Board of Trustees deems useful. In addition, state law requires that school districts hold a public discussion/hearing on the report and publish notice of the hearing at least two times prior to the meeting. School Districts are required to report certain financial data to TEA and the Commissioner Of Education must assign a rating to each district. LEAs provide the information to TEA through various financial reports, audit reports, and data reported through the Public Education Information Management System

(PEIMS). School Districts may be sanctioned if they are consistently rated "Substandard Achievement" (Texas Education Code, Chapter 39, 2011).

School districts are required to pay the costs of the COE sanctions imposed on low-performing campuses and districts. The sanctions increase in severity based on numbers of continuous years of low student performance. Sanctions include but are not limited to: development of a multi-year school improvement plan, appointment of a campus intervention team, contracts of professional services to address the performance related deficiencies and all of the costs related to campus reconstitution and/or hiring of a conservator, management team, which are appointed to oversee the district's operations (TEC, Chapter 39, 2011). The road to district closure happens when the district receives an accountability rating from the state. After a District receives its accountability rating from TEA, the district Site-based Decision-making Committee (SDMC) must hold at least one public meeting to discuss the performance of the school / district and performance objectives (TEC §11.253{g}). Most times districts taken over by the state are also poorly funded schools and districts (Wong, 2009).

Equitable funding of schools and districts with high low-income and minority students has been a problem throughout the United State (U.S.) (Augenblick, Myers, and Anderson, 1997; Odden & Picus, 2014). According to several federal and state cases the United States (U.S.) has failed to provide equitable policy and school finance legislation to help improve the education of African American and other minority students (Brown v. Board of Education, 1954, San Antonio v. Rodriguez, 1968). In 1954, the landmark case, *Brown v Board of Education (Topeka, Kansas) 347 U.S. 483*, attempted to ensure equitable learning for all students. In 1973, the United States Supreme Court in the case of *San Antonio ISD v. Rodriguez, 411 U.S. 1, 20-38* refused to

recognize education as a fundamental right under the U.S. Constitution. The Court rejected the argument that discrimination on the basis of wealth in the provision of public education deserved heightened scrutiny for socioeconomic status. The Court did not recognize socioeconomic status as a "suspect" classification. Thus, the Rodriguez decision completely closed all federal constitutional claims regarding public education resources and equality. The case determined that funding and equality were "states' issues" that did not need to be addressed by the Federal government.

In 2014, Texas courts are still debating equity issues in school finance. According to the *Dallas Morning News*, (December 25, 2013) the Texas case for fiscal equity is not mute. In 2014, District Judge John Dietz reissued the February 2013 ruling that ordered dramatic changes in funding of schools. The judge declared that funds are distributed unfairly. The Texas Constitution requires that there be adequacy and efficiency of funding, as it "shall be the duty of the state legislature of the state to establish and make suitable provision for the support and maintenance of an efficient system of public free schools" (Texas Constitution, Article VII, Section 1, 18). Equity in school funding and school resources make a difference in increasing student achievement and closing the achievement gap (Odden & Picus, 2014). Property poor school districts appear more likely to be targets of state takeover. In Texas, districts that have a property wealth value of $350,000 per pupil or more are considered to be property rich. Districts like North Forest ISD with a per-pupil property wealth of $247,758 and Wilmer-Hutchins ISD with $126,000 per pupil are considered property poor school districts (TEA, 2012; AEIS, 2001).

If the achievement gap converges in schools and districts with high minority student enrollments, then it is more likely that the schools and districts that do not meet accountability

ratings and will be taken over by the state will be high minority schools and school districts with low funding rates. However there is little or no research to prove this theory. The research does show that schools and school districts with high enrollments of minority and low-income student enrollments are also the same school districts with lower resources (Augenblick, Myers, and Anderson, 1997; Odden & Picus, 2013; Reyes, 2006; Valencia, 2012).

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relation between school accountability/accreditation and district resources. It will investigate federal and state accountability policy and the relation between school district accountability and school district resources.

Research Questions

In 2002, as the achievement gap continued to increase, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was passed to close the achievement gap. This research was grounded in the theory that if the achievement gap converges in schools and districts with high minority student enrollments then it is more likely that the schools and districts that do not meet accountability ratings and will be taken over by the state will be high minority schools and school districts with low funding resources.

This mixed method study focused on policy research methods and quantitative correlational research methods. It addressed the following research questions.

1. How are federal and state school and district accountability policies defined?

2. What is the relation between district accreditation and school resources?

In the process of this study two additional research questions emerged from the data analyses and were added to chapter 4. The following questions were added to this study and to the quantitative data analyses:

3. What is the relation between school district accountability and economically disadvantaged students?
4. What are the relation s between school district accountability and the enrollment percentage of race?
    a. African American
    b. Hispanic
    c. White

This study was conducted in two parts.

1. Part I examined and defined federal and state policies for closing schools and school districts in Texas, including accountability standards and district accreditation;
2. Part II of the study investigated and identified Texas high performing districts and low performing school districts to conduct correlations between accreditation and school resources.

This study used a mixed method research design using policy analyses and quantitative methods. Correlational methods were used to show the relation between accountability/accreditation and resources. Participants were all school districts in Texas with a focus on exemplary school districts and unacceptable districts. Archival state data were retrieved from the Texas Education Agency website.

For purposes of this study district accountability/accreditation was defined as the independent variable. WADA, student economic background and race were defined as the dependent variables.

Definitions

Accreditation Status – is a process in which certification of competency, authority, or credibility is presented: Accredited, Accredited Warned, Accredited Probation, Non-Accredited Revoked

AEIS – Academic Excellence Indicator System – Texas Education Agency Data Tables outlining student and staff demographic and student performance data.

Brown vs. The Board of Education (Topeka, KS) 347 U.S. 483 (1954) Landmark Supreme Court Case whereby Linda Brown had previously been denied access to her school because she was Black. It overruled the "separate but equal" policy of Plessy v. Ferguson holding for the first time that de jure segregation in public schools violated the principle of equal protection under the law guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. In 1955 the court declared that all schools must be desegregated "with all deliberate speed." - Argued by NAACP and Thurgood Marshall.

Critical Race Theory (CRT) - CRT recognizes that racism is engrained in the fabric and system of the American society. The individual racist is separate from the institutional racism that is a part of the dominant culture.

Desegregation - the elimination of laws, customs, or practices under which different races, groups, etc., are restricted to specific or separate public facilities, neighborhoods, schools, organizations, or the like. The ending of racial segregation in a school or other public institution.

Edgewood v. Texas (Kirby) - Edgewood ISD on the west side of San Antonio, Texas argued a landmark case concerning public school finance. MALDEF filed suit against the commissioner of education William Kirby in May 1984 in an Austin, TX court on behalf of Edgewood ISD. They charged that the state's method of funding public schools violated at least four principles of the Texas constitution. It obliged the State legislature to provide an efficient and free public school system. They argued that the Texas system was unfair because the dependence on local property values was intrinsically unequal due to the variance of property values from district to district thus creating an unbalance in funds available to educate students on an equal basis throughout the state. Thus producing disparity in the District's ability to hire good teachers, build appropriate facilities, offer a sound curriculum, and to purchase such important equipment such as computers. MALDEF declared that such gaps amounted to the denial of equal opportunity in an "increasingly complex and technological society," and asserted that this was contrary to the intent of the constitution's Texas Education Clause.

ESEA of 1965 - Elementary and Secondary Education Act - ESEA was passed in 1965 under President Johnson. Prior to that the Federal government provided funding or land for schools and special programs. However, it was careful not to intrude on state's rights to make decisions on curriculum and general school operations. NCLB (No Child Left Behind) is the latest reauthorization of ESEA, which is typically reauthorized every five years.

Equity - Equity theory in school finance is defined as a belief in fair treatment in the distribution of state funding resources as it applies to districts rich in property value and districts poor in property value.

FIRST – Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas – Texas Education Agency system which also rates the Local Education Agency on their financial integrity: Superior Achievement; Above Standard Achievement; Standard Achievement; Substandard Achievement; Suspended – Data Quality.

HQ – Highly Qualified Teachers - The status is required of teachers who are teaching core subject academic areas: English, Reading or Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Foreign Languages (Languages Other Than English), Civics and Government, Economics, Arts, History and Geography. The teachers must meet specific competency and educational requirements. Teachers who meet these requirements are considered "highly qualified."

LEA – Local Education Agency – Local school districts in Texas are known as local education agencies.

MALDEF - Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund incorporated in Texas in 1967. Its first national case was in San Antonio. In 1968 along with the NAACP it received a $2.2 Million grant from Ford Foundation to implement a series of legal-service programs. Its goals include litigation in Education, employment, and police-brutality cases.

NAACP - National Association for the Advancement of Colored People - (The state's first chapter was established in El Paso in 1915) Organized and financed landmark civil-rights lawsuits, the NAACP in Texas became an important component of the national organization. It had the financial resources and organizational talent to press for racial equality through litigation.

PROPERTY POOR Districts such as Edgewood ISD only had $38,854 in property wealth per student vs. PROPERTY RICH Districts such as Alamo Heights ISD had $570,109 per student.

PUBLIC LAW 107-110 - No Child Left Behind (NCLB)- It is based on four principles: Accountability for results, Local Control and flexibility, Expanded parental choice, Use of research-based instruction that works. NCLB requires that all children be at the proficient level on state testing by the 2013-2014 school year. Each school and district must publish its report card. Each school and district will be judged as a whole and individually by four subgroups: children with disabilities, limited English proficiency, racial minorities and children from low-income families. The report cards will be comparable from school to school and district to district. The U. S. Secretary of Education in the form of policy letters has issued several clarifications to the public.

San Antonio ISD v. Rodriguez, (1971) 411 U.S.1 - asked the courts to address unfairness in Public School aid. According to the case; the reliance on property taxes to fund public schools does not violate the Equal Protection Clause even if it causes disparities between districts and expenditures. The absolute equality of education funding is not required and a state system that encourages local control over schools bears a rational relation to a legitimate state interest. The District Court of Texas reversed the *Rodriguez* case. The Supreme Court ruled five to four against *Rodríguez* (1973), stating that the system of school finance did not violate the federal constitution and that the issue should be resolved by the state of Texas. It also held that the state would not be required to subsidize poorer school districts. This ruling in effect produced additional legal barriers to equalization. The court denied a rehearing during the same year. Justice Thurgood Marshall, however, called the decision "a retreat from our historic commitment to equality of educational opportunity." Rodríguez responded to the decision, "The poor people have lost again." Later in the same year 1973 José A. Cárdenas, superintendent of the Edgewood Independent School District, organized Texans for Educational Excellence (later called the

Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA). The IDRA devoted attention to school-finance reform. The battle for educational equity continued with *Edgewood ISD v. Kirby* in 1984.

SEA – State Education Agency – The Texas Education Agency is the SEA for Texas. It is the recipient of all Federal Title and Grand Funds that are then distributed to the LEA.

SES – Socio Economic Status – is an economic and sociological combined total measure of a person's work experience and of an individual's or family's economic situation.

TABS - Texas Academic Basic Skills Test - The Texas Legislature decided in 1979 that all public schools should administer a test to measure student learning. TABS began the era of accountability. The test came about because community leaders were complaining that students were graduating high school without skills necessary to succeed at work.

TEAMS - Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills - The Texas Legislature in 1984 increased the rigor of the test. The emphasis changed from "basic skills" to "minimum skills" that students should have in order to graduate from high school. The number of Texas students increased to include students in grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11. All students were tested using the TEAMS minimum skills test. Remediation of students who failed the test became mandatory and retesting occurred after the remediation.

TAAS - Texas Assessment of Academic Skills - The Texas Legislature in 1991 declared that students needed to achieve more than just minimum skills. The new test became even more rigorous as compared to the previous TABS and TEAMS. TAAS was developed to measure the performance of schools teaching the new "Essential Elements." The TAAS test was given to

students in grades 3, 5,7, 9 and 11. Students in grades 3 through 8 were tested in Reading and Mathematics. In addition, students in grades 4 and 8 were tested in Writing.

TAKS - Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills - In 2001 after almost a decade of TAAS the Texas Legislature decided to make the state exam more rigorous than the previous TAAS exam. This was now the fourth test for the children of Texas and for accountability. The first TAKS tests began in the spring of 2003. The test measured student learning on the TEKS - Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. The TEKS replaced the previous EEs. Texas was moving the standards movement in the United States. The TAKS included tests in mathematics, reading, writing, English language arts, social studies and science. Social promotion officially ended for students in grades 3,5 and 8 before they could move on to the next grade.

TEA – Texas Education Agency – is a branch of the government of the State of Texas that provides leadership, guidance, and resources to help local education agencies and schools meet the educational needs of their students. TEA is also the recipient, as the State Education Agency, of Federal funds that are distributed to the various local and charter education agencies.

United States Constitution 14th Amendment - (Reconstruction Amendment) (Ratified in 1868) Grants citizenship (citizenship clause) to "all persons born or naturalized in the United States" which includes former slaves who had just been freed after the Civil War. It forbids any state to deny any person "life, liberty, or property, without due process of law" (due process clause) or to "deny any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." (equal protection clause) It further grants equal protection under the law and was crucial in dismantling racial segregation, and for many other decisions rejecting irrational or unnecessary discrimination against people belonging to various groups (privileges or immunities clause).

United States Constitution 10 Amendment - (Part of Bill of Rights) The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

The study investigated federal and state accountability policy and the relation between equity in school closures and historical school finance equity. The study explored the research that examines federal and state policies used in closing schools and school districts. This study explored the relation between equity in school resources and equity in school accountability as evident in district accreditation. The study defined federal and state accountability policy and the relation between equity in school closures and historical school finance equity.

Chapter two reviewed three stands of literature. The first strand of literature reviewed was the NCLB federal policy used to define federal accountability policy and the effects of federal policy on school district takeovers. The literature on state school accountability policy was reviewed to define state accountability policy and the effects of state accountability policy on school closures. The second stand of literature reviewed was the research on school and district takeovers in the U.S. The third major strand of literature reviewed for this study was the literature on equity as grounded in school finance and school accountability.

Defining Accountability

In defining accountability this section also defined-theory for this study. The theory is grounded in NCLB and in federal statute. Three key features of school accountability were derived from research by Elmore (2010), Fuhrman (1996), and O'Day (2002): Standards and tests: Educational standards are established as statements or goals of what the individual students should learn, alongside tests that measure the students' progress towards those standards;

1. The school is the unit of accountability. A general level of student performance is established for a cohort of schools with consideration of demographic factors. The performance level is aggregated across the school, though targets may include disaggregated benchmarks as well. The evaluation of the school's performance is based, at least in part, on the average of the students' performance. The results are made available to policy makers and often to parents; and
2. Consequences in accountability: Based on its performance relative to the target, each individual school is faced with consequences, which may include awards, sanctions, or assistance (Elmore et al., 1996; Fuhrman, 1999; O'Day, 2002).

Accountability for all public schools was codified in Public Law 107-110 in NCLB, formerly the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). The purpose of the act was "to close the achievement gap with accountability" (NCLB 2001). The purpose of Title I of NCLB was to improve the academic achievement of the disadvantaged (NCLB, 2001). Title I provided the policy of the United States government for children in poverty. Title I is the equalizer for poor and low achieving children and ensures "that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and state academic assessments" (NCLB, 2001). While NCLB provided a national policy, it also gave states the right to develop a state plan for implementing NCLB (Reyes, 2013). In recognition of the states' rights in education under the 10th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, NCLB, Title I, Part A, Section 1111 (2002), required that states who want to receive grants under NCLB must develop a plan for implementing NCLB (Reyes, 2013). This puts NCLB in the hands of the states that provide the procedures for implementing NCLB (Reyes, 2013).

NCLB, Title I Part A, Section 1116, Academic Assessment and Local Education and School Improvement offer a comprehensive, step-by-step national policy for taking-over low-performing schools using state policy and procedures. The NCLB accountability cycle is a six to eight year process for schools. The accountability clock is based on school failure or the school's inability to make adequate yearly progress on the state's accountability plan grounded in state standards and academic assessments that the LEA will use in developing the LEA accountability plan (Reyes, 2013). The state approves the LEA accountability plan. NCLB, Sec. 1116 generally provides three stages in the federal policy, school improvement, corrective action, restructuring, and alternative governance (Reyes, 2013). Schools are required to publicize and disseminate the results of local annual review to parents, teachers, and the community of state standards and assessments. They are also required to review the effectiveness of the actions and activities the schools are carrying out under this part with respect to parental involvement, professional development, and other activities assisted under this part (Reyes, 2013). The State Education Agency (SEA) shall ensure that districts have results before the beginning of the next school year (Sec. 1116, 2002). According to Elmore et al., 1996, Fuhrman, 1999, O'Day, 2002 and Reyes, 2013, the following definitions are critical to NCLB accountability.

Technical Assistance - The statute gives states and local educational agencies (LEA's) flexibility in how they can direct Title I school improvement funds to schools that need the most improvement. States can differentiate their responses based on the degree to which a school has not made adequate yearly progress (AYP). However, LEAs must take some action to address the needs of each school needing improvement, regardless of the degree to which it has missed AYP.

- AYP Definitions - The Department of Education will not define AYP. As the law directs, states will define AYP.

- States must submit their definitions of AYP for review at the beginning of 2003, although states applying for State-Flex must submit definitions this fall. Any state can submit AYP definitions during the fall.

- Sub-group Size - Each state determines the minimum size of a student subgroup, below which assessment results would not be statistically reliable for determining AYP. States must make a reasonable determination of that number based on the technical specifications of their assessments.

- School Improvement Requirements - After the second straight year of low-performance (year one of school improvement), the LEA must: provide technical assistance; offer all students public school choice, and; require that the school develop or revise a two-year school improvement plan (Reyes, 2013).

After the third straight year of low-performance or year two of school improvement, the LEA must take the following actions:

- provide technical assistance;
- offer all students public school choice, and;
- require that the school develop or revise a two-year school improvement plan, and;
- offer all students from low-income families supplemental services (NCLB, Sec. 1116, 2002).

After the fourth straight year of low-performance year one of corrective action, the LEA must continue offering technical assistance, public school choice, and supplemental services. LEAs must also take at least one of the following actions.

- Replace school staff.
- Implement a new curriculum based on scientifically based research.
- Significantly decrease school-level management authority.

- Extend the school day or school year.
- Appoint an outside expert to advice the school on making progress towards AYP
- Reorganize the school internally.

After the fifth straight year of low-performance, or the first year of restructuring, the LEA must continue offering public school choice and supplemental services. The LEA must also prepare a plan to carry out one of the following options:

- Reopen school as charter school.
- Replace principal and staff.
- Contract for private management company of demonstrated effectiveness.
- State takeover.
- Any other major restructuring of school governance (NCLB, 2001).

After the sixth straight year of low-performance or the second year of restructuring, the LEA must implement the restructuring plan no later than the first day of the school year. The LEA must plan for restructuring the school and make necessary changes to the school governance up to and including reopening the school as a charter school, following the requirements described in the Texas Education Code, Chapter 39.

State Accountability Policy

While NCLB provides a federal policy and funding for closing the achievement gap for low-income children, the policy was only instituted in 2002 with the passage of Public Law 107-110 NCLB, formerly ESEA of 1965 (NCLB, 2001). The Texas Accountability policy was

instituted in 1984 when the Texas Legislature passed House Bill 72. HB 72 enacted major reforms of the public school system. It provided a pay raise for teachers, revamped the system of public school finance to funnel more money to property-poor school districts. In addition it passed the first major accountability policies in Texas.

In 1979, the Texas Legislature decided that all public schools should administer a test to measure student learning. Texas Academic Basic Skills Test (TABS) began the era of accountability. The test came about because community leaders were complaining that students were graduating high school without skills necessary to succeed at work. In 1984, Texas Legislature increased the rigor of the test in the Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills. (TEAMS) The emphasis changed from "basic skills" to "minimum skills" that students should have in order to graduate from high school. The number of Texas students increased to include students in grades one, three, five, seven, nine and eleventh. All students were tested using the TEAMS minimum skills test. Remediation of students who failed the test became mandatory and retesting occurred after the remediation. In 1991, the Texas Legislature declared that students needed to achieve more than just minimum skills. The new test became even more rigorous as compared to the previous TABS and TEAMS. The Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) was developed to measure the performance of schools teaching the new "Essential Elements." The TAAS test was given to students in grades three, five, seven, nine and eleventh. Students in grades 3 through 8 were tested in Reading and Mathematics. In addition, students in grades 4 and 8 were tested in Writing. In 2001, after almost a decade of TAAS, the Texas Legislature decided to make the state exam more rigorous than the previous TAAS exam. This was now the fourth test for the children of Texas and for accountability. The first Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) tests began in the spring of 2003. The test

measured student learning on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The TEKS replaced the previous EE's. Texas was moving the standards movement in the United States. The TAKS included tests in mathematics, reading, writing, English language arts, social studies and science. Social promotion officially ended for students in grades three, five and eight before they could move on to the next grade.

Research on School and District Takeovers in the United States: A History of School and District Takeovers.

The second stand of literature to be reviewed for chapter two is the research on school and district takeovers in the United States, a review of the state policy for each state in the U.S. will be conducted as part of chapter three. Interestingly enough, there are few major studies on school takeovers. There are some studies from the legal community and some from selected economists and political scholars.

In an article by a legal scholar, Bowman (2011) focuses on the issues of the fiscal crises of schools, municipalities, and businesses. Bowman cites 56,282 businesses and 1.5 million individuals who in 2010 filed bankruptcy. She also cites that 27 municipalities have filed for bankruptcy. While no school districts have filed for bankruptcy, in 2009-2012, school districts experienced some of the biggest cutbacks in decades. School districts laid-off teachers, administrators, and staff. They closed schools and cut where possible. The financial crisis created concerns for districts that were near the point of not being able to pay their bills and fulfill state education mandates. Bowman recommends that federal and state policies be enacted to include fiscal accountability provisions to help districts to create immediate and additional cost savings. She also recommends that districts be publicly monitored for fiscal health while creating

escalating involvement with near or in fiscal crisis. Finally she recommends that states assist in stabilizing districts' revenues on a long-term basis. While bankruptcy may work for municipalities because of the limitations of the Tenth Amendment, there is no way to transform federal government municipal bankruptcy so that it is a better fit for school districts' needs. The article examines the legal options available for states to assist school districts in fiscal crisis (Bowman, 2011).

Bowman (2011) recommends that states use the legal options available in receiverships for taking over school districts. In corporate receivership, overseen by the courts, a receiver assumes control of a company in order to maximize the short-term returns from the corporation's assets and in order to financially stabilize the company before a long-term plan is recommended (Bowman, 2011). In business, the receiver may decide to liquidate the assets and close the business. In the case of school districts closing the schools is not an option, unless the school district is consolidated with one or more contiguous districts (Bowman, 2011).

Receivership is not new. According to Bowman (2010), in 1870 Missouri was the first state to pass a municipal receivership law. This law was also common during the Great Depression. State municipal receivership laws exist in 48 states. Only two states, Kentucky and Pennsylvania have school district receivership laws for school districts. Arizona has a takeover law overseen by the state education agency, not the courts in Arizona. School district receivership like Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) assistance requires that expert consultants be assigned to the trouble school district.

Receivership is not without expenses. There is the cost of outside counsel. Receivership under the oversight of the court can be expensive. Receivership is rarely using in the United States. Receivership is only recommended for school district financial crisis.

State school district takeover laws are over 30 years old. In 2011 there were 33 states with state or mayoral takeover laws for academic and fiscal reasons. This list will be updated and completed as a part of chapter three. Seventeen states authorized school district takeovers for district fiscal crisis. Sixteen states limit takeovers for academic reasons only (Bowman, 2011). (See attached list). School district takeovers are rare but there have been 73 school district takeovers in the past 30 years. This list will be updated and completed as a part of chapter four. Of all the current school district takeovers, 43 percent were for fiscal crisis, 33 percent were for academic, management and fiscal problems, and four percent started as fiscal only but progressed to comprehensive focusing on fiscal, academic, and management. Thirty-three percent did not directly focus on fiscal health but focused on academic or management problems. Historically prior to 1990 takeovers were for fiscal reasons only. Since 1990 takeovers are more comprehensive.

State takeover laws have the five following common factors: 1. They list specific factors that can trigger state investigation or involvement, such as running a deficit, not having a plan to remedy the deficit, failing to pay employees' wages or retirement benefits, failing to pay bond debt service, or declaring a fiscal emergency 2. Initial state involvement is in an advisory capacity helping to solve fiscal problems. The state may recommend a consultant to help the district develop an acceptable plan. 3. Takeover laws have a framework in which state involvement escalates if the fiscal crisis continues. 4. The laws clearly designate who will have

authority to intervene in the district's affairs at ever point and how that agent will be selected. The method for selecting the agent is spelled out as the governor, the legislature, the state board of education, or the commissioner of education. 5. The laws or regulations spell out the agent's authority and how the agent will be selected. The agent could recommend that district be dissolved or consolidated with an adjacent district; or it could take other actions (Bowman, 2011).

The Texas Education Code § 39.131 (2000): provides that if a district does not satisfy the accreditation criteria set forth in TEC § 39.131 , the commissioner shall take any of the following five actions, in order of severity: 1. issue a notice of the deficiency to the board of trustees; 2. order a hearing conducted by the board of trustees in order to inform the public of the districts unacceptable performance as well as the expected improvements in performance and the sanctions that may be imposed if there is failure to improve; 3. appointment of a special intervention team to conduct an on-site evaluation of the school to determine the cause for low performance, recommend actions, assist in the development of a CIP and to assist in the monitoring of the school; 4. appointment of a board of managers from residents in the district to acts as the board, and 5. an order to close the school. Schools are held accountable for student performance, attendance and dropout rate. These indicators must meet acceptable standards as determined by the applicable measurement systems.

The advantages of takeovers include the following;

1. Are a necessary extension of a state's constitutional responsibilities
2. Provide a good opportunity for state and local decision-makers to combine resources and knowledge to improve children's learning

3. Allow a competent executive staff to guide an uninterrupted and effective implementation of school improvement efforts

4. Are a catalyst for creating the right environment for the community to address a school district's problems

5. Allow for more radical, and necessary, changes in low-performing school districts

6. Place school boards on notice that personal agendas, nepotism and public bickering have severe consequences

7. Use achievement data collected from school districts and schools to bolster accountability efforts. (Institute of Education, Law, and Policy, (Rutgers, 2011)

The disadvantages of takeovers include the following:

1. Represent a thinly veiled attempt to reduce local control over schools and increase state authority over school districts.

2. Imply that the community has the problems and the state has the answers, and thus falsely assume that states have the ability to effectively run school districts.

3. Place poorly prepared state-selected officials in charge, with little possibility of any meaningful change occurring in the classroom.

4. Use narrow learning measures (i.e., standardized test scores) as the primary criterion for takeover decisions.

5. Usually focus on cleaning up petty corruption and incompetent administration and do not go to the root of the social problems facing disadvantaged students in urban school districts.

6. Foster negative connotations and impressions that hinder the self-esteem of school board members, administrators, teachers, students and parents.

7. Produce showdowns between state and local officials that slow the overhaul of management practices, drain resources from educational reforms and reinforce community resentments (Rutgers, 2011).

Effects of State Takeovers:

There is limited research on the effects of state takeovers. For the most part, they seem to be yielding more gains in central office activities than in classroom instructional practices. As evidence, state takeovers are credited with the following: 1. The state takeover eliminates nepotism within the school decision-making process. 2. The school district's administrative and financial management practices are improved. 3. The threat of teachers' strikes with a school district is removed. 4. Upgrading the physical condition of schools within a school district. 5. Implementing innovative programs within a school district, such as small schools programs and cooperative arrangements between schools and social service agencies. However, student achievement oftentimes falls short of expectations after a state takeover (Rutgers, 2011). A list of Texas school and district takeovers will be provided in chapter three.

In a case study on the closure of one school in Southern California, Valencia (2012) attributes school closures to educational inequality. Valencia concludes that when school districts are experiencing budget deficits they are forced to close schools to improve economies of scales. These economically stressed school districts resort to school consolidation and closing schools. School boards will often chose to close low enrollment minority schools with high Mexican American and low income or other Latino students who before they close low enrollment White schools.

Economists Davidson, Reback, Rockoff, and Schwarts (2013) indicate that much of the school failure in federal and state accountability is attributed to state actions in developing initial proficiency rate targets and future benchmarks designed to lead students to 100 percent proficiency on state exams by 2014. Each year that schools fail to meet predetermined targets across all students or by subgroups of students, the school does not make Adequate Yearly

Progress (AYP). On the one hand federal policy provided a framework for NCLB implementation, but on the other it also gave states flexibility in their interpretation of many NCLB components, and school failure rates ranged from less than one percent to more than 80% across states. According to Davidson, Reback, Rockoff, and Schwarts (2013) wide cross-state variation in failure rates resulted from how states' decisions on issues like confidence intervals applied to proficiency rates, numerical thresholds for a student subgroup to be held accountable) interacted with each other and with school characteristics like enrollment size, grade span, and ethnic diversity. According to this study subtle differences in policy implementation led to dramatic differences in measured outcomes (Davidson, Reback, Rockoff, & Schwarts, 2013).

The third strand of literature reviewed will be literature on equity as grounded in school finance and school accountability. When issues of equity as related to school finance, as related to school finance we must first look at the U.S. Constitution and particularly the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, which states that no state shall "deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." The Fourteenth Amendment was put into place after the Civil War for the purpose of baring states from treating African Americans differently from whites. The impact of the clause has not been limited to that purpose. Equal protection cases arose and over time the Supreme Court created tests for determining whether, and how, government actions might violate the Equal Protection Clause (Odden & Picus, 2007); however, because of the Tenth Amendment on states' rights, the Fourteenth Amendment does not apply to state school finance issues. According to the Tenth Amendment issues not identified in the U.S. Constitution belong to the states as in the case of education. Since school finance is a state responsibility the fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution does not apply to Texas School finance issues.

Definition of Equity and Adequacy

Equity is defined (Odden & Picus, 2007) in multidimensional terms dependent upon which group we are referring. If we are referring to children then the definition is discussed in terms of an educational opportunity framework. If we are referring to taxpayers then the definition is discussed in financial context of tax burden. The term "equal educational opportunity" has become known as fiscal neutrality. Fiscal neutrality for children specifically refers to the state's resources without regard to local fiscal capacity, property wealth per pupil, property value per pupil or household income.

Adequacy in school finance refers to a certain standard of education, which the state has failed to supply because the school finance system provides insufficient resources to the schools (Odden & Picus, 2007). The US Constitution lacks an education clause; therefore, adequacy cases arise from the constitution of the particular state, which are referenced and detailed below for Texas.

Equity Theory

According to Wikipedia (2013, p.1) "In addition, it is a theory that attempts to explain relational satisfaction in terms of perceptions of fair/unfair distributions of resources within interpersonal relationships. The equity theory was first developed in 1963 by John Stacey Adams, a workplace and behavioral psychologist, who asserted that employees seek to maintain equity between the inputs that they bring to a job and the outcomes that they receive from it against the perceived inputs and outcomes of others (Adams, 1965). The belief is that people value fair treatment which causes them to be motivated to keep the fairness maintained within the relationships of their co-workers and the organization. The structure of equity in the

workplace is based on the ratio of inputs to outcomes. Inputs are the contributions made by the employee for the organization."

Equity in school finance is defined by three equity principles: horizontal, vertical and equal opportunity (Odden & Picus, 2007). The following definitions were offered by Reyes (2006):

1. Horizontal equity means that all members of the group are equal. For example the Texas school finance system considers that at the basic level all the children in Texas are the same; consequently every school district gets a per student basic allotment of $4,765 times the result of the district's compressed tax rate. Horizontal equity is also known as a flat grant. Horizontal equity is associated with the equal protection argument that education is a fundamental interest. According to Odden and Picus, 2014, the general legal argument is that core or regular education should be provided equally to all students, or that all children should have equal access to an adequate education.

2. Vertical equity discusses the differences or the legitimate use of unequal resources among members of the group. For example, special education students have different needs that require greater resources, so a formula is developed to asses those needs and provide a higher level of funding for different levels of student needs. Vertical equity provides categories of need equalization or formula adjustments to compensate for needs of low income students, English Language Learners, special education students, and other categories of learners. The theory is that it takes more resources to close the achievement gap for these students. Odden and Picus (2014) provide three categories of characteristics to identify vertical equity students: (1) characteristics of children, (2). characteristics of districts, (3) characteristics of programs.

3. Equal opportunity is identified with variables such as property wealth per pupil and should not be related to resource distribution.

A person will consider that they are being treated fairly if they perceive that the ratio of their work inputs to their outcomes is equivalent to those around them. If all else is equal, then it would be acceptable for a more senior colleague to receive higher compensation, since the value of his experience (and input) is higher. The way people base their experience with satisfaction

for their job is to make comparisons with themselves to people with whom they work. If an employee notices that another person is getting more recognition and rewards for their contributions, even when both have done the same amount and quality of work, it would persuade the employee to be dissatisfied. This dissatisfaction would result in the employee feeling under-appreciated and perhaps worthless (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Equity_theory, 2013).

In equity theory, the idea is to have the rewards/pay (outputs) to be directly related with the quality and quantity of the employee's contributions (inputs) while being fair. Perhaps if both employees are rewarded the same, the workforce would consider that the organization is fair, observant, and appreciative. The equity theory directly relates to the school finance equity in that the perception of the stakeholders or the parents of the students is that their schools are not being sufficiently financed by the State in property poor Districts as compared to the schools of children in property wealthy Districts.

A feeling of injustice from the property poor Districts is manifested and is what has caused numerous court cases including the following: (a) *Rodriguez v. San Antonio ISD* (1968), (b) *Edgewood ISD v. Kirby* (1984), (c) *Edgewood I* (1989), (d) *Edgewood II* (1991), (e) *Carrolton Farmers Branch ISD v. Edgewood* (1991), (f) *Edgewood III* (1993), (g) *Edgewood ISD v. Meno* (1993), (h) *Edgewood IV* (1995), (i) *West Orange Grove ISD v. Neely* (2001), (j) *Texas Taxpayer and Student Fairness Coalition v. Robert Scott, Susan Combs and the State Board of Education* (2011). In the *Texas Taxpayer and Student Fairness Coalition case*, there were over 360 Districts, including North Forest ISD, charging that the school finance system was inadequate, inequitable and that the $1.17 maintenance and operations (M&O) rate cap is an

unconstitutional state property tax. Mexican American Legal Defense Educational Fund (MALDEF) (2011) files a suit charging that the school finance system is unfair to school districts with large numbers of minority students who are English Language Learners (ELL) and that the school finance system is inadequate and inequitable and that the $1.17 Maintenance and Operations (M & O) rate cap is an unconstitutional state property tax. Thompson and Horton filed suit on behalf of 60 school districts charging that the school finance system is inadequate, inequitable and that the $1.17 M&O rate cap is an unconstitutional state property tax. The system was determined to be inequitable by Judge Dietz of Travis County in February 2012.

The following is a review of The Texas Equity cases:

- *Rodriguez v. San Antonio ISD* (1968) claimed that the state's school finance system discriminated against poor districts. The Texas Supreme Court ruled that education is not a fundamental right and that the state system must be judged on the state constitution. It urged the Texas legislature to create a more equitable system. However, it did not mandate a more equitable system. Legislature followed up with improved teacher salary, increased instructional days. (Stipeche, 2013;Reyes, 2013)

- *Edgewood ISD v. Kirby* (1984). MALDEF - Mexican American Legal Defense Education Fund - filed suit charging that the state school finance system was inequitable. The Texas Supreme Court ruled in Edgewood I (1989) was unconstitutional and declared that an efficient system must provide substantially equal access to similar levels of revenue per pupil at similar levels of tax effort. SB1 (1990) increased the basic allotment and guarantee yield to achieve the 95th percentile of wealth by 1995. The wealthiest school district was excluded from the equalized system. (Stipeche, 2013; Reyes, 2013)

- *Edgewood II* (1991) was an Advisory Opinion and was ruled unconstitutional to exclude the wealthiest districts. SB351 (1991) Created 188 County Educational Districts to consolidate the tax bases of property wealthy districts with other districts in the county and or neighboring counties if necessary. Under Edgewood II (1991) the CED may authorize unequal local enrichment if property owners approve additional property tax. (Stipeche, 2013; Reyes, 2013)

- *Carrollton Farmers Branch ISD v. Edgewood* (1991) charges that the CED tax was an unconstitutional state property tax and violated Love v. Dallas because it transferred tax revenue from one school district to another. (Stipeche, 2013; Reyes, 2013)

- *Edgewood III* (1992) was ruled unconstitutional. It declared the CED Tax as a State Property Tax because the rate is set in statute and is controlled by the state. The legislature (1993) passed a constitutional amendment to authorize the re-creation of the CED, levy a tax by CEDs, and recapture up to 2.75% of total revenue. Voters reject it. SB7 (1993) creates a local option plan that mandates property wealthy districts to choose 1 to 5 options to limit access to property value in excess of the equalized wealth level. (Stipeche, 2013; Reyes, 2013)

- *Edgewood ISD v. Meno* (1993) Poor and wealthy districts challenge the system under SB7 as inequitable and recapture was unconstitutional. (Stipeche, 2013; Reyes, 2013)

- *Edgewood IV* (1995) is declared constitutional as financially efficient and it meets the legislature's constitutional obligation "for general diffusion of knowledge." HB1 (2006) provides a minimal $0.17 that taxing authority that districts can assess at their own discretion. (Stipeche, 2013; Reyes, 2013)

Districts with lower wealth are unable to properly maintain their facilities. Heating Ventilation Air Conditioning (HVAC), electrical, plumbing, lawn, and general maintenance often become secondary concern for property poor districts. Instruction for students becomes a financial burden for the district as the funds for proper professional development of teachers is costly and since teachers lack proper professional development student achievement drops to below acceptable levels. The Commissioner of Education in Texas is charged with declaring ratings for school districts and is the lowest districts that receive the unacceptable ratings and the low acceptable ratings by the Commissioner due to their lack of property wealth.

When comparing the 2008-2009 Wealth per ADA and when you compare the poorest Texas property district of San Elizario ISD ($33,354) compared wealth the wealthiest property district of Fort Elliott CISD ($10,348,175) there is a disparity ratio of 1:310 of wealth per ADA. There is a disparity of 1 to 183 when comparing the poorest six districts ($41,783) based on average wealth per ADA with the wealthiest six districts ($7,634,686) based on average wealth per ADA.

The cases all arose from a sense of unfairness in the school financing system. *Prior to SAISD v. Rodriguez* property poor districts were funded as much as 1:600 compared to the property rich districts. Today the system is considered fair with the application of an equalization formula that takes money from property rich school districts and transfers it to property poor districts (Reyes, 2006). Property rich districts have the option of selecting a property poor district to which they will transfer equity funding. As noted from Stipeche (2013) class: "The Court declares that the school finance system violates the "efficiency" provisions of Article VII of the Texas Constitution in that it fails to provide substantial equal access to revenues necessary to provide a general diffusion of knowledge;" Stipeche (2013). In the 2013 decision for the *Texas Taxpayer and Student Fairness Coalition v. Robert Scott, Susan Combs and the State Board of Education* (2011), the Judge decided not to sign a final order until after the Texas legislative session of 2013. The Final Order is pending for January 2014.

According to Odden and Picus, (2007) the U.S. Supreme Court uses three tests to make the determination if different treatments violate the U. S. Constitution and whether those different treatments are acceptable. Two of the three tests which apply to school finance cases. The two tests differ in terms of amounts of deference the courts give to the legislature that enacted the law: The Strict Scrutiny Test and the Rational Basis Test. The Strict Scrutiny Test will apply if a fundamental right is involved or when the state law discriminates against people from a suspect classification. Fundamental rights are those given to us in the U.S. Constitution: Rights of free speech, free press, assembly and due process. Suspect classifications are those based on religion, national origin, race and/or national origin. However, certain classifications are not considered suspect classifications from an educational perspective and they include gender and wealth.

Comparing school districts as if they are totally dependent on local property taxes (local property wealth) and as if they did not receive a state guaranteed yield, as equalization aid would show be much funding disparity. In addition to Hockberg (2010), when considering their accountability ratings, the ratings of property poor districts are also lower ratings and often unacceptable. The ratings are based on both their financial soundness as well as on their student academic performance. The state average is 40.7% of the funding is from local revenue and has a taxable value of $350,982.00, 43.4% of the funding is from state revenue and only 11.9% of funding is from federal revenue. According to the Texas Education Agency 2011-2012 District Performance Reporting tables, property wealthy districts such as Spring Branch receive 64.5% of funding from local revenue and have a taxable value of $582,689.00 per pupil. The AEIS for Houston ISD indicates that the district receives 56.2% of funding from local revenue and has a taxable value of $527,642.00 per pupil (Property Wealth Comparisons Data, Property Wealth Comparisons Data, 2011). Katy ISD receives 50.2% of funding from local revenue and has a taxable value of $329,130.00 per pupil.

The disparity between property wealthy districts in Texas as compared to the disparity of property poor districts in Texas is enormous when one compares the poorest property wealth per ADA with the wealthiest property wealth per ADA districts. In Texas the school finance system has been declared equitable since it is considered "fair" and there is sufficient funding to provide an adequate education for the children of the property poor districts when the state equity formula is applied.

In conclusion, my research will analyze data from the Texas Education Agency, which shows numerous minority majority and property poor districts in Texas that have been

sanctioned and closed by the state since 1980. This study will investigate the relation between historically property poor school districts and state district takeovers.

Summary of Literature Review

The theory on how takeovers were created and the policy for takeovers comes from Bowman's (2011) Business Theory and federal NCLB policy. Bowman (2011) recommends that states use the legal options available in receivership for taking over school districts. She explains how in corporate receivership which is overseen by the courts, a receiver assumes control of the organization to maximize the short-term returns from the organizations assets in order to financially stabilize the company before a long term corrective action plan is recommend. In the case of school districts closing the schools is not an option, unless the district is consolidated with one or more contiguous districts (Bowman, 2011). According to Bowman's theory on receivership, one finds a lawyer, files for bankruptcy, goes to court and finally a Judge assigns a receiver. This compares to the state school district takeovers as defined in the NCLB yearly steps. The first year there are no consequences. During the second year the school is identified for school improvement and then after the second year a two-year school improvement plan must be created in consultation with parents, school staff and the school district. The plan must include data analyses, professional development, and instructional strategies that are scientifically based. The plan also impacts the budget and ten percent (10%) of the funds made available under Section 6313 and must be earmarked for school improvement. Valencia's work (2012) contends that from 1960 to 1970 as white students started to decrease in population, it was the minority majority schools that were closed. He further states that much of the research on school closures has been about the process rather than the "policy implications." Valencia

(2012) investigated the issues of race and equity in school closures through his research and in research conducted by others. The theory on equity is grounded in multidimensional terms dependent children, taxpayers, and equal educational opportunity.

Chapter three will discuss the research methods to be used by this study.

Chapter III

Methods

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to investigate federal and state school district accountability policies and the relation between school district accountability accreditation and school district resources. It addressed the following research questions.

1. How are federal and state school and district accountability policies defined?
2. What is the relation between district accreditation and school resources?

In the process of this study two additional research questions emerged from the data analyses and were added to chapter 4. The following questions were added to this study and to the quantitative data analyses:

3. What is the relation between school district accountability and economically disadvantaged students?
4. What are the relations between school district accountability and the enrollment percentage of race?
    d. What is the relation between school district accountability and the percentage of African American students?
    e. What is the relation between school district accountability and the percentage of Hispanic students?
    f. What is the relation between school district accountability and the percentage of White students?

In answering research questions 2, 3, and 4, the following definitions were used.

1. *WADA:* The weighted average daily attendance figure used as the state funding formula to calculate the amount of state and local funds to which a district is entitled.
2. *Economically Disadvantaged:* The percentages of economically disadvantaged students is calculated as the sum of the students who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch or are eligible for other public assistance, divided by the total number of students. Economically Disadvantaged is the measure used for student poverty. This measure is based on the 2011 U.S. Department of Agriculture income of $40,793 for a family of four to qualify for Free-and-reduced priced lunch (Southern Education, 2014). It should be noted that the U.S. Census Bureau (USCB) poverty rate may be different from the district free-and-reduced priced lunch poverty rate because USCB does not include data for children under the age of 15 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014).
3. *Race:* Race/Ethnicity is one of the demographic categories that are reported for each student at the time of enrollment. Correlations were conducted for Accreditation and African American, Accreditation and Hispanic, and Accreditation and White.

Research Design

This study used a mixed method research design using accountability policy analyses and quantitative research methods. To answer the first research question a policy review was

conducted on federal and state accountability policy theory using policy documents that express the intentions of government actors and the political system usually in the form of rules, regulations, laws, court decisions, and other government documents (Fowler, 2008 & Kingdon, 2013). Public Law 107-110 and NCLB were the primary sources for federal school and school accountability policies and school district takeovers. State policy was defined using the Texas Education Code (TEC), Texas Administrators Rules (TAC), and administrative correspondence from the Commissioner of Education (COE). The federal and state school and district accountability policies are provided in a policy table in Chapter 4.

The second part of the study analyzed data using correlational methods. Correlational methods were used to show the relation between accountability/accreditation and resources. Researchers define correlational research as research that involves collecting data in order to determine the degree to which a relation exists between two or more variables. Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2012) contend that quantitative variables exist in some degree along a continuum from less to more. Numbers can be assigned to different individuals or objects to indicate how much of the variable school districts possess. Correlational research allows us to make more intelligent predictions. Correlational research is completed for two basic purposes: to explain human behaviors or to predict likely outcomes.

This study determined whether or not there was a significant relation between two variables. The variable used to make the prediction was called the predictor variable (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2012). The variable about which the prediction made was called the criterion variable.

The variable for this study was the district accountability rating given to the LEA by the Commissioner of The Texas Education Agency. In 2000, the Texas Accountability Manual adopted the policy for the Commissioner of Education Rule 19 of Texas Administrative Code §97.1001, Accountability Rating System. The rule gave legal standing to the rating process and procedures. The state assigns one of the four rating labels from highest to lowest - Exemplary, Recognized, Academically Acceptable, and Academically Unacceptable. According to the *Texas Education Agency Accountability Manual* (2011) the following are the definitions of the Pre HB 5 District Accountability Ratings.

Exemplary: The LEA must meet the following criteria as set forth by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) in order to be rated as Exemplary by the State of Texas. The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and the State District Alternative Assessment (SDAA) must be passed by 90 percent of the students. The completion rate must be at 95 percent. The completion rate means that each of the subgroups listed under the TAKS have completed their education or they are continuing with their education four years after entering high school. Commended Performance levels for reading and math must be at 25 percent for Reading/ELA and Mathematics. The English Language Learner (ELL) progress indicator on Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) must be at or above 60 percent criteria. In addition, the dropout rate shall not exceed 1.6% standard.

Recognized: The LEA must meet the following criteria as set forth by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) in order to be rated as Exemplary by the State of Texas. The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and the State District Alternative

Assessment (SDAA) must be passed by 80 percent of the students. The completion rate must be at 85 percent. The completion rate means that each of the subgroups listed under the TAKS have completed their education or they are continuing with their education four years after entering high school. Commended Performance levels for reading and math must be at 15 percent for Reading/ELA and Mathematics. The English Language Learner (ELL) progress indicator on Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) must be at or above 60 percent criteria. In addition, the dropout rate shall not exceed 1.6% standard.

Academically Acceptable: The LEA must meet the following criteria as set forth by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) in order to be rated as Exemplary by the State of Texas. The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and the State District Alternative Assessment (SDAA) must be passed by 70 percent of the students in Reading/ELA, Writing, and Social Studies. The passing rate in Mathematics must be at 65 percent and Science must be at 60 percent or meets Required Improvement (RI). The completion rate must be at 75 percent or meets RI. The completion rate means that each of the subgroups listed under the TAKS have completed their education or are continuing with their education four years after entering high school. Commended Performance is not a requirement to meet the Academically Acceptable level. The English Language Learner (ELL) progress indicator on Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) is not an indicator at the Academically Acceptable level. In addition, the dropout rate shall not exceed 1.6% standard.

Academically Unacceptable: The Districts that fail to meet the Academically Acceptable standard or to meet Required Improvement are rated Academically Unacceptable. Required Improvement (RI) has been a part of the state accountability system since 1994. RI may be used to elevate a rating to Academically Acceptable or Recognized, but cannot elevate a rating to Exemplary. In order for RI to move a campus or district rating up a level, the campus or district must show that within two years there is enough improvement on the deficient measure from the prior year to be able to meet the current year accountability standard.

The state accountability system assigns a rating to every campus and district in the Texas education system. This study originally focused on 1,028 Texas school districts, excluding the charter schools. In addition, a correlation was made between the variable of the district accountability rating label from highest to lowest - Exemplary, Recognized, Academically Acceptable, and Academically Unacceptable. The final analysis focused on 95 Texas school districts, of which 45 were exemplary and 50 were unacceptable. A table was developed showing a listing of the districts rated Exemplary and the districts rated Academically Unacceptable. The table contained the district name, district accountability rating, Wealth per Average Daily Attendance (WADA), economically disadvantaged/poverty rate and the three major ethnic groups by percentages of enrollment according to student population.

The criterion variables for purposes of this study were WADA, the percentages of economically disadvantaged, percentage of African American students, percentage of Hispanic students and the percentage of White students. The data for all of the variables were collected from the Texas Education Agency AEIS website. The WADA figure is used in several state

funding formulas to calculate the amount of state and local funds allocated to the local district. The poverty percentage or the economically disadvantaged percentage was determined by the sum of the number of students who qualify for free lunch and the number of students who qualify for reduced lunch. These two percentages were added together to determine the percentage of economically disadvantaged students or students of poverty. The percentage of African American, Hispanic and White students represented the actual percentage of students as compared to the total district student population.

Moreover, the study discussed the relation between school district accreditation and school resources. It identified Texas high-performing school districts and school district resources and Texas low-performing school districts and school resources to conduct a comparison of current school district accountability ratings and school district resources.

Participants

According to Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2012), participants are defined as individuals (or organizations) whose involvement in a study can range from providing data to initiating and designing the study. The participants in this study are all school districts in Texas (1048) with a focus on school district accountability. The major focus of the study was on 95 Texas school districts, of which 45 were exemplary school districts and 50 were unacceptable school districts. The students of the 95 Texas school districts were also participants, including low-income students, African American students, Hispanic students and White students.

Instrumentation

Data for this study were collected from the state AEIS data, Instructional Facilities Allotment Program (IFA), and the state school district accountability data (TEA, 2013). The instruments used in this study were from the State District Property Wealth Comparisons: Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) data provided by The Texas Education Agency (TEA) website.

Procedures

Data for school district resources, including accreditation data and student demographic data were gathered from the AEIS for the 2010-2011 school year. All the data for the study were gathered from TEA. The 2010-2011school year were selected since that was the last official year for TAKS to be administered in the Texas Schools prior to mandating the new STAAR state assessment. Additionally, it was the last year that the state would assign an accountability rating on the Texas local education agencies (LEA) or school districts. This allowed the use of common data years.

The AEIS website provided data for the variable of school resources for each of the 1,028 school districts in the state. The data for the study were generated using the radio or option buttons on the website for the type of report format, the district name, and data. Some of the 1,028 Texas school districts share the same name, and for those districts it was necessary to complete the search using the appropriate school district number.

After gathering the state data, a data table was created to organize the data used by TEA Weighted Average Daily Attendance (WADA) and located on the Texas Education Agency

website. The data included the District Number, 2010-2011 accountability data, 2010-2011 WADA, 2010-2011 Revenue per WADA at the Compressed Rate, Economically Disadvantaged percentages, and the ethnic percentages for African American, Hispanic and White students for each of the 1,028 Texas districts.

A second round or the most important data gathered was conducted for 95 school districts, of which 45 was the universe of Texas exemplary school districts and 50 were the universe of unacceptable Texas school districts. After gathering the state data for the 95 school districts, a data table was created to organize the data used by TEA Weighted Average Daily Attendance (WADA) and located on the Texas Education Agency website. The data included the District Number, 2010-2011 accountability data, 2010-2011 WADA, 2010-2011 Revenue per WADA at the Compressed Rate, Economically Disadvantaged percentages, and the ethnic percentages for African American, Hispanic and White students for each of the 1,028 Texas districts.

The quantitative methods used correlational methods, including the software program formerly known as Statistical Package for the Social Sciences and now known only as SPSS. Using SPSS allowed the option to identify the independent variable of 2010-2011 Accountability Rating and to run the correlations in SPSS with district resources and other variables.

Data Collection and Data Conversion

Data collected for this study were district resource data. In addition, district accountability data were gathered from the district accountability site from the state education agency (SEA). The data for this study were analyzed using correlation coefficients which measured the relation s between district accreditation and school resources, district accreditation

and student economics, district accreditation and race, including district accreditation and the percentage of African American students, district accreditation and the percentage of Hispanic students, and district accreditation and the percentage of White students.

Chapter four will discuss the findings of this study.

Chapter IV

Results

Overview

The purpose of this study was to investigate federal and state school district accountability policies and the relation between school district accountability accreditation and school district resources. This mixed method research study used federal and state policy analyses and quantitative methods. Quantitative correlational methods were used to study the relation between school district accreditation and school district resources. The study investigated federal and state accountability policy. Public Law 107-110 and NCLB (Title, Part A, Sec. 1111, 2001) requires State Education Agencies to develop a state plan and implement standardized assessments that may lead to the takeover of schools and school district throughout the United States. In Texas the state legislature developed a state plan with standardized assessments used to measure student academic performance and district accountability ratings. The following research questions were posed for this study:

1. How are federal and state school and district accountability policy defined?
2. What are the relations between district accreditation and school resources?

In the process of this study two additional research questions emerged from the data analyses and were added to chapter 4. The following questions were added to this study and to the quantitative data analyses:

3. What is the relation between school district accountability and the proportion of economically disadvantaged students?

4. What are the relations between school district accountability and the proportion of enrollment by race? This question was subdivided into the three major ethnic groups in Texas.
    (a) Relation between school district accountability and the enrollment proportion of African American students?
    (b) Relation between school district accountability and the enrollment proportion of Hispanic students?
    (c) Relation between school district accountability and the enrollment proportion of White students?

Research Question One: Federal Accountability Policy

This mixed methods study was divided into two parts. The first part researched and defined the federal and state school and district accountability policies in accountability reconstitution/takeovers. Question one of this study required that federal and state school and school district accountability policies for accountability takeovers be defined.

To answer the first research question a policy review was conducted on federal and state accountability policy theory using policy documents that express the intentions of government departments, agencies, offices and the political system usually in the form of rules, regulations, laws, court decisions, and other government documents (Fowler, 2008 & Kingdon, 2013). The following section will discuss findings of the federal accountability policy, including Public Law 107-110, (2001), NCLB, (2001), Title I, Part A, Section 1111 (2001), NCLB, and Section 1116 (b)[11], (2001). NCLB required State Education Agencies (SEA) to develop a state plan with standardized assessments for approval to the United States Department of Education (USDOE).

Once approved as an authorized state assessment the Local Education Agency (LEA) administers the assessment in order to measure Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) (NCLB, Title I, 2001). If schools do not meet the state-administered-AYP-standard there are punitive measures set in place. If the measures are not met in three consecutive years then restructuring of the school would be put in place. In year seven, the school district must implement restructuring, including removal of all staff (NCLB, Sec. 1116 (b) [11], 2001). Appendix 4.1: NCLB Accountability Cycle outlining the school and district NCLB accountability cycle is attached.

According to the U.S. Department of Education (2014) the NCLB definition for AYP is *the requirement that* each state is to define adequate yearly progress (AYP) for school districts and schools, within the parameters set by NCLB. In defining AYP, each state sets the minimum levels of improvement in measurable terms of student performance. The school districts and schools must achieve within certain time frames as specified in the law. Each state begins by setting a beginning point and is based on the performance of the lowest-achieving demographic group or the lowest-achieving schools in the state, whichever is higher. The state must then set the level of student achievement that a school must attain in order to make AYP. Subsequent thresholds must increase at least once every three years, until, at the end of 12 years, all students in the state are achieving at the proficient level on state assessments in reading and language arts, math and science (TEA, 19 TAC Chapter 97, 2011).

Impact of Federal Policy on State Policy

The state of Texas defines AYP in 2011 with special attention on low-performing, high-poverty, and minority students who are often left behind. Title I programs are designed specifically to meet the needs of low-performing, high- poverty, and minority students. Title I is the federal policy to close the achievement gap (NCLB, Title I, Part A, 2001). Texas' adequate yearly progress definition requires that 80 percent of students in a school reach proficiency on the state reading assessment and that 75 percent of the students in all subgroups reach proficiency on the mathematics state assessment (TEA, 2011). Additionally, 95 percent of the students must participate in the state assessments for reading/English Language Arts and Mathematics. Texas has a unique approach among the states. At 50 percent proficiency, a school would no longer be identified as in need of improvement (TEA, 2001). Eventually Texas plans to increase the 50 percent proficiency goal. However, there is a reasonable timeline for all students to reach proficiency in Texas. Other indicators to consider for AYP in Texas are four-year-graduation rates of 90 percent or five-year-graduation-rate of 80 percent. The attendance rate is also a consideration in meeting AYP. The attendance rate must be at 90% or it must show improvement. Texas 2011 AYP Guide provides guidelines to school administrators on AYP progress for each school (TEA, 2011*).*

Question One: State Accountability Policy

While NCLB provides a federal policy and funding for closing the achievement gap for low-income children, the policy was only instituted in 2002 with the passage of Public Law 107-110 NCLB, formerly ESEA of 1965 (NCLB, 2001). School district accountability history started in Texas in 1984 and has progress to 2011 and the passage of the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STARR). STARR increased the number of Texas schools failing to make

"adequate yearly progress" to 2,233 from 368 in 2010-2011 (TEA, 2014). The new STARR assessment increased the number of schools failing to make AYP as defined by NCLB. While NCLB did not change, the state assessment increased in rigor and increased the number of failing schools in Texas. The following is a table of the number of Texas schools not meeting AYP for 2009- 2014. The data were reported in December of each school year from the Texas Education Agency Department of Assessment, Accountability and Data Quality.

Table 4.1

Texas Schools Not Meeting AYP 2009-2014

Year	Number **not** meeting AYP
2009-2010	190
2010-2011	182
2011-2012	248
2012-2013	1,154
2013-2014	2,233

The state district accountability ratings were also explored by this study. Like the schools, the pre House Bill 5 School District Accountability Ratings for The State of Texas were: Exemplary, Recognized, Academically Acceptable, and Academically Unacceptable (TEC 39.051, 2011). The state ratings are defined in chapter 3.

The first set of data collected for this study was the school district accountability data for 1028 school districts. After collecting the data on the Texas school districts they were categorized by accountability ratings. The findings for 2011 were that 45 school districts or 4.4% were rated as Exemplary. Three hundred eighty one or 37.0% were rated as Recognized. Five hundred fifty three or 53.7% were rated as Academically Acceptable. Finally, at the bottom tier

of the Texas accountability system fifty or 4.9% of the districts were listed as Academically Unacceptable. The following table provides an overview of Texas district ratings by rating category exclusive of charter districts. This table provides 2010-2011 data which coincides with the data used for this study. See Table 4.2 District Ratings by Rating Category exclusive of Charter Operators 2010-2011.

Table 4.2

District Ratings by Rating Category Exclusive of Charter Operators 2010-2011

2011 Ratings	**Count**	**Percentage of Districts**
Exemplary	45	4.4%
Recognized	381	37.0%
Academically Acceptable	553	53.7%
Academically Unacceptable	50	4.9%
Total of Districts Rated	1029	100%

The assignment of Texas district accreditation status is mandated by the Texas Education Code (TEC), Chapter 39, *Public School System Accountability*. In TEC 39.052, the Texas Education Code indicates that the commissioner shall determine the accreditation status of each district. In determining the accreditation status of a school district, (1) the commissioner shall evaluate and consider: (a) performance on student achievement indicators described by Section 39.053(c); and b) performance under the financial accountability rating system; (2) may evaluate and consider: (a) the district's compliance with statutory requirements and requirements imposed by rule of the commissioner or State Board of Education. The rules for assigning district accreditation status are provided in the Texas Administrative Code (19 TAC), Chapter 97,

Planning and Accountability, Subchapter EE, *Accreditation Status, Standards, and Sanctions* (Williams, 22February 2012).

In addition to accountability ratings according to the Texas Education Code §39.056 and §39.057, each district is assigned an accreditation status. The following are the district accreditation statuses: Accredited, Accredited-Warned, Accredited-Probation, and Not Accredited-Revoked (19 TAC, Subchapter EE of Chapter 97, 2012). The accreditation status is designed to encourage the district or campus to improve its academic, fiscal, and/or compliance performance (19 TAC, Chapter 97, 2012).

This study identified a group of districts that lost their accreditation status and became the victims of state takeovers. Appendix 4.2 provides a list of consolidations, annexations, and name changes for Texas public Schools between 1983 and 2013. The list includes districts like Wilmer Hutchins ISD annexed by Dallas ISD by Order of Commissioner, July 2006. The list ends with North Forest ISD merged with Houston ISD also by Order of Commissioner effective July 1, 2013. The most current district identified for future takeover as accredited probation is the Beaumont ISD (COE Memo, 2014 April).

Findings: Relation Between School District Accreditation and School District Resources for 1028 school districts

Question number two asked, "*What is the relation between school district accreditation and school resources?"* This study used the academic school year of 2010-2011 as identified by TEA. All the data for the study were gathered from TEA (TEA, 2011). *AEIS Snapshot* (2011)

also provided downloadable data for this study. The 2010 - 2011 school year was selected because it was the last official year for TAKS to be administered in the Texas Schools. It was also the last year that the state would assign an accountability rating on the Texas local education agencies (LEA) or school districts using the TAKS data. This allowed the use of common data years. The following year was the first year for STAAR state assessment to be administered.

The AEIS website (2011) provided data for the variable of school resources using the weighted average daily attendance (WADA) compressed rate. According to AEIS (2011) WADA is defined as the weighted average daily attendance figure used as the state funding formula to calculate the amount of state and local funds to which a district is entitled. The data included the District Number, 2010-2011 WADA, 2010-2011 Revenue per WADA at the Compressed Rate, and 2010-2011 Accountability Rating. District numbers were used to distinguish between school districts with the same name. After gathering the state data, a data table was created to organize the data used by TEA Weighted Average Daily Attendance (WADA) (TEA, 2011).

The accreditation data, WADA, and demographic data for each of the 1,028 state school districts was downloaded into an excel sheet. The data were exported into SPSS. A bivariate correlation analysis was conducted to test the relation between WADA and the accountability rating for 1028 school districts (AEIS, 2011).

Five bivariate correlation procedures were computed using Pearson's correlation coefficient to measure the relation between Texas accountability rating for all 1028 school districts as follows:

1. Bivariate correlation for the relation between school district accreditation and district resources as calculated by WADA for 1028 Texas school districts;
2. Bivariate correlation for the relation between school district accreditation and the proportion of economically disadvantaged students for 1028 Texas school districts;
3. Bivariate correlation for the relation between school district accreditation and the proportion of African American students for 1028 Texas school districts;
4. Bivariate correlation for the relation between school district accreditation and the proportion of Hispanic students for 1028 Texas school districts; and
5. Bivariate correlation for the relation between school district accreditation and the proportion of Hispanic students for 1028 Texas school districts.

Correlation for the relation between school district accreditation and district resources as calculated by WADA for 1028 Texas school districts

A bivariate correlation analysis was conducted to test the relation between the accountability rating for 1028 school districts and WADA for 2010-2011. The bivariate correlations procedure computed Pearson's correlation coefficient to measure the relation between Texas accountability rating and district resources as calculated by WADA. See Table 4.3 for correlation results.

Table 4.3

Correlation of Relation Between Texas Accountability And WADA

		Accountability Rating	WADA Revenue
Accountability Rating	Pearson Correlation	1	0.126**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1028	1028

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Overall, the correlation between accountability rating and WADA while significant was low. r= 0.126, p <0.01 level (2-tailed). The value of .r = 0.126 shows a positive correlation. This means that the amount of WADA allocated per student to a Texas school district was related to the accountability rating for the district. The correlation for 1028 Texas school district accreditation and WADA or the proxy for school resources showed that there was significant but low relation between school district accreditation and resources. School accountability rating was related to school resources. The higher the WADA allocation per pupil the higher the district accountability rating will be.

Correlation for the relation between school district accreditation and the proportion of economically disadvantaged students for 1028 Texas school districts

In an effort to explore the relation between accreditation and the proportion economically disadvantaged students for 2010-2011 a correlation was conducted for the sample of 1028 Texas school districts. Table 4.4 shows the results of the correlation analyses. The sample size for this analysis was 1028 school districts or all the school districts in Texas.

Table 4.4
Correlation of Relation Between Texas Accountability And Economically Disadvantaged Students

		Accountability Rating	Economically Disadvantaged
Accountability Rating	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.428**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1028	1028
Economically Disadvantaged	Pearson Correlation	0.428**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1028	1028

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation for the relation between accountability rating and the proportion of disadvantaged students for 1028 school districts showed that the higher the percentage of economically disadvantaged was the lower the accountability rating was. $r=-0.428$, $p < 0.01$ level

(2-tailed). This inverse relation indicated that low-income students, as identified by the higher percentage of students receiving the free-and-reduced priced lunch, were related to lower school district accountability.

The correlation to explore the relation between school district accreditation and WADA or school district resources for a sample of 1028 school districts showed that there was a significant but weak relation. There was a predicted relation between the variable of 2010-2011 School District Accountability Rating and the variables of WADA, and the percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students. There was also a relation between the amount of WADA and the percentage of economically disadvantaged students and school district accountability rating for 2010-2011. The relation indicated that low-income students, as identified by the higher percentage of students receiving the free-and-reduced priced lunch, were related to lower school district accountability. The predicted relation between school district accountability rating and WADA was that the more money allocated per student or the WADA would equal a higher accountability rating.

Correlation of School District Accreditation and Proportion of African American Students

In an effort to explore the relation between accreditation and African American students for 2010-2011 a correlation was conducted for the 1028 school districts. Table 4.5 shows the results of the correlation analyses. The sample size for this analysis was 1028 school districts or all the Texas school districts for 2010-2011.

Table 4.5

Correlation of School District Accreditation and African American Students

		Accountability Rating	African American
Accountability Rating	Pearson Correlation	1	-0..243**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1028	1028
African American	Pearson Correlation	0-.243**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1028	1028

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation for the relation between accountability rating and the proportion of African American students for 1028 school districts showed that the higher the percentage of African American students was the lower the accountability rating. The value of r = - 0.243. The inverse relation indicated that African American students as identified by the higher percentage of students were related to lower school district accountability rating.

Correlations of School District Accreditation and Proportion of Hispanic Students

In an effort to explore the relation between state district accreditation and the proportion of Hispanic students for 2010-2011 a correlation was conducted for the 1028 school districts. Table 4.6 shows the results of the correlation analyses. The sample size for this analysis was 1028 school districts or all the Texas school districts.

Table 4.6

Correlation of School District Accreditation and Proportion of Hispanic Students

		Accountability Rating	Hispanic
Accountability Rating	Pearson Correlation	1	-.0.214**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1028	1028
Hispanic	Pearson Correlation	-.214**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1028	1028

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation for the relation between accountability rating and the proportion of Hispanic students for 1028 school districts showed that the higher the percentage of Hispanic students was related to the lower the accountability rating. The value of r=-0.214. The inverse relation indicated that Hispanic students as identified by the higher percentage of students were related to a lower school district accountability rating.

Correlations of School District Accreditation and Proportion of White Students

In an effort to explore the relation between accreditation and the proportion of White students for 2010-2011 a correlation was conducted for the 1028 school districts. Table 4.7

shows the results of the correlation analyses. The sample size for this analysis was 1028 school districts or all the Texas school districts.

Table 4.7

Correlations of School District Accreditation and Proportion of White Students

		Accountability Rating	White
Accountability Rating	Pearson Correlation	1	0.297**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1028	1028
White	Pearson Correlation	0.297**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1028	1028

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation for the relation between accountability rating and the percentage of White students for 1028 school districts showed that the higher the percentage of White students for 1028 school districts then the higher the accountability rating was. The value r = 0.297. The inverse relation indicated that lower the proportion of White students as identified by the lower percentage of White students were related to a lower school district's accountability rating.

Summary

While the overall statewide data provided useful analyses, it was concluded that the data analyses for this study would provide more useful data if it focused on the relation between the extremes-the accountability ratings for the exemplary districts versus accountability rating for academically unacceptable districts and the respective district resources for the 2010-2011 school year. There were 45 exemplary school districts and 50 unacceptable school districts using 2010-2011 TEA data. The data analyses were redirected to focus on these 95 school districts that became the primary data analysis for this study.

Appendix 4.3 provides a list of exemplary school districts.-Appendix 4.4 provides a list of low performing districts.

Primary Analysis:

The primary analysis for this study focused on the relation between the extremes-the accountability ratings for the exemplary districts verses accountability rating for academically unacceptable districts and the respective district resources. There were 45 exemplary school districts and 50 unacceptable school districts the 2010-2011. The data analyses were redirected to focus on these 95 school districts that became the primary data analysis for this study.

Correlation between School District Accreditation and WADA

In an effort to investigate the relation between state district accreditation and WADA a correlations was conducted for 95 Texas school districts, including the two subgroups of 45 exemplary districts and 50 academically unacceptable school districts. Table 4.8 shows the results of the correlation analyses.

Table 4.8
Correlation for Accountability Rating and WADA for 95 Texas School Districts

		Accountability Rating	WADA
Accountability Rating	Pearson Correlation	1	0.297**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	95	95
WADA	Pearson Correlation	0.297**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	95	95

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation between accountability rating and WADA is a positive correlation of r = 0.297. This means that the more money allocated per student in a district was related to a higher accountability rating for the district. The correlation is significant for the relation between the accountability rating and WADA for the sample of 45 Exemplary Districts and 50 Academically Unacceptable District.

The data analysis for the relation of Texas District Accountability and WADA showed that the higher the amount of money a school district was allocated in WADA the higher the accountability rating. Conversely the lower the amount of money a school district was allocated in WADA, the lower the district accountability rating.

Research Question Three: What is the relation between School District Accountability and Economically Disadvantaged students for the 95 school districts, including the two subgroups of 45 exemplary districts and 50 academically unacceptable school districts?

In an effort to investigate the relation between state district accreditation and Economically Disadvantaged Students a correlation was conducted for 95 Texas school districts, including the two subgroups of 45 exemplary districts and 50 academically unacceptable school districts. Table 4.9 shows the results of the correlation analyses.

Table 4.9
Correlation for Accountability Rating and Economically Disadvantaged for 95 Texas School Districts

		Accountability Rating	Economically Disadvantaged
Accountability Rating	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.745**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	95	95
Economically Disadvantaged	Pearson Correlation	-0.745**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	95	95

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation between Accountability Rating and the proportion of the Economically Disadvantaged students is significant. The value of r= -0.745 shows that there was a high negative correlation which meant the higher the percentage of economically disadvantaged is the lower the accountability rating.

The relation showed that as the higher the proportion of economically disadvantaged students enrolled in the sample districts, the lower the district accountability rating. As the proportion of economically disadvantaged students increased, the accountability rating decreased.

The relation shows that the higher the proportion of African Americans enrolled in a Texas school district the lower the school district accountability rating.

Research Question Four: What are the relations between school district accountability rating and race? This question was subdivided into the three major ethnic groups in Texas school districts.

(a) Relation between school district accountability and the proportion of African American students for the 95 Texas school districts, including the two subgroups of 45 exemplary districts and 50 academically unacceptable school districts.

(b) Relation between school district accountability and the proportion of Hispanic students for the 95 Texas school districts, including the two subgroups of 45 exemplary districts and 50 academically unacceptable school districts.

(c) Relation between school district accountability and the percentage of White students for the 95 Texas school districts, including the two subgroups of 45 exemplary districts and 50 academically unacceptable school districts.

Research question 4.a: What is the relation between School District Accountability and the proportion of African American students for the 95 Texas school districts, including the two subgroups of 45 exemplary districts and 50 academically unacceptable school districts?

In an effort to investigate the relation between state district accreditation and the proportion of African American Students a correlation was conducted for 95 Texas school districts, including the two subgroups of 45 exemplary districts and 50 academically unacceptable school districts. Table 4.10 shows the results of the correlation analyses.

Table 4.10

Correlations for School District Accountability and

Percent of African American Students

		Accountability Rating	African American
Accountability Rating	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.440**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	95	95
African American	Pearson Correlation	-0.440**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	95	95

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Correlations between Accountability Rating and proportion of African American students is r=- 0.440 showing that there is a negative correlation which means the high percentage of African American students are significantly related to low accountability ratings.

Research question 4.b: What is the Relation between School District Accountability and the proportion of Hispanic students?

In an effort to investigate the relation between state district accreditation and the proportion of Hispanic Students a correlation was conducted for 95 Texas school districts, including the two subgroups of 45 exemplary districts and 50 academically unacceptable school districts. Table 4.11 shows the results of the correlation analyses.

Table 4.11

Correlation of School District Accountability and Percent of Hispanic Students

		Accountability Rating	Hispanic
Accountability Rating	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.446**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	95	95
Hispanic	Pearson Correlation	-0.446**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	95	95

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation of school district accountability and the proportion of Hispanic students is significant with r=-0.446. High proportions of Hispanics in a district are related to low accountability ratings.

Research question 4.c: What is the Relation between School District Accountability and the proportion of White students?

In an effort to investigate the relation between state district accreditation and the proportion of White Students a correlation was conducted for 95 Texas school districts, including the two subgroups of 45 exemplary districts and 50 academically unacceptable school districts. Table 4.12 shows the results of the correlation analyses.

Table 4.12

Correlation for School District Accountability and Percent of White Students

		Accountability Rating	White
Accountability Rating	Pearson Correlation	1	0.637**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	95	95
White	Pearson Correlation	0.637**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	95	95

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Correlation of school district Accountability Rating and the proportion of White students is significant with r=0.637. There was a high positive correlation which means that the higher proportion of White students was related to higher accountability ratings.

Brief Overview of Findings for 1028 School Districts and 95 School Districts

The original purpose of this study was to explore the policy for school and district takeovers and closures. It was assumed that schools and school districts lost their accreditation because of federal and state policies that targeted high minority and poorly funded school

districts; however no funding patterns could be identified. It was decided more could be learned from exploring how district accountability ratings (i.e., the proxy for state accreditation) was related to WADA (i.e., the proxy for district resources). The relations for the sample of 1028 school districts using 2010-2011 TEA data was correlated for (1) Accountability Rating and WADA, (2) Accountability Rating and Economically Disadvantaged, (3) Accountability Rating and Race (i.e., African American, Hispanic, and White) and is presented in table 4.13. The correlations for all the variables in the sample of 1028 school districts were significant with the strongest significance of a value of r= 0.428 between Accountability Rating and Economically Disadvantaged.

While the overall statewide data provided useful information for analyses, it was concluded that a focus on the relations between the extremes-the accountability ratings for the exemplary and academically unacceptable districts and their respective district resources for the 2010-2011 school year, including the two subgroups of 45 exemplary school districts and 50 unacceptable school districts. Thus, the data analyses were redirected to focus on these 95 school districts that became the primary data analysis for this study.

The relations for the sample of 95 school districts using 2010-2011 TEA data were also correlated for (1) Accountability Rating and WADA, (2) Accountability Rating and Economically Disadvantaged, (3) Accountability Rating and Race (i.e., African American, Hispanic, and White). The correlations were much stronger and showed significant relations between accountability and all the variables in the sample of 95 school districts which included the two subgroups of 45 exemplary districts and 50 academically unacceptable school districts. The strongest significance was again between Accountability Rating and Economically Disadvantaged with a value of r = -0.745. In addition, the correlations between Accountability

Rating and White was much stronger among the subgroup sample of 95 school districts with a value of r = 0.637.

Table 4.13

Comparison of Correlation Coefficients (r values) for the Two Samples, N=1028 and N=95 for Accountability Rating and WADA and Demographic Variables

Accountability Rating	N=1028	N=95
WADA	0.126	0.297
Economically Disadvantaged	-0.428	-0.745
African American	-0.243	-0.440
Hispanic	-0.214	-0.446
White	0.297	0.637

The results of the aforementioned correlations are discussed in detail in Chapter 5 of this study.

Brief Overview of Findings for 1028 School Districts and 95 School Districts

The original purpose of this study was to explore the policy for school and district takeovers and closures. It was assumed that schools and school districts lost their accreditation because of federal and state policies that targeted high minority and poorly funded school districts; however no funding patterns could be identified. It was decided more could be learned from exploring how district accountability ratings or the proxy for state accreditation was related

to WADA or the proxy for district resources. The relation for the sample of 1028 school districts using 2010-2011 TEA data was correlated for the following variables: accountability rating and WADA; accountability rating and economically disadvantaged; accountability rating and race. The correlations for all the variables in the sample of 1028 school districts showed that there were significant relations.

While the overall statewide data provided useful analyses, it was concluded that the data analyses for this study would provide more useful data if it focused on the relation between the extremes-the accountability ratings for the exemplary districts verses accountability rating for academically unacceptable districts and the respective district resources for the 2010-2011 school year, including the two subgroups of 45 exemplary school districts and 50 unacceptable school districts. The data analyses were redirected to focus on these 95 school districts that became the primary data analysis for this study.

The relations for the sample of 95 school districts using 2010-2011 TEA data were correlated for the following variables: accountability rating and WADA; accountability rating and economically disadvantaged; accountability rating and race. The correlations were much stronger and showed significant relations between accountability and all the variables in the sample of 95 school districts, including the two subgroups of 45 exemplary districts and 50 academically unacceptable school districts.

Chapter V

Discussion

Overview

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relations between school resources and school accountability as evident in school district accreditation. The study investigated federal and state accountability policy. NCLB (Title, Part A, Sec. 1111, 2001) requires State Education Agencies to develop a state plan and implement standardized assessments that led to the takeover of Texas school districts by the Texas Education Agency. The following research questions were posed for this study:

1. How are federal and state school and district accountability policy defined?
2. What are the relations between district accreditation and school resources?

In the process of this study two additional research questions emerged from the data analyses and were added to chapter 4. The following questions were added to this study and to the quantitative data analyses:

3. What is the relation between school district accountability and the proportion of economically disadvantaged students?
4. What are the relations between school district accountability and the proportion of enrollment by race? This question was subdivided into the three major ethnic groups in Texas.

(d) Relation between school district accountability and the enrollment proportion of African American students?

(e) Relation between school district accountability and the enrollment proportion of Hispanic students?

(f) Relation between school district accountability and the enrollment proportion of White students?

Research Question One: Federal Accountability Policy

Question one of this study required that federal and state school and school district accountability policies for accountability takeovers to be defined. The following section will discuss findings of the federal accountability policy. While federal policy in NCLB (Sec. 1116 (b)[11], 2001) provided the policy framework for school and district takeovers after six years of unacceptable academic performance or Academic Yearly Progress (AYP), it also mandated that the state would develop an education plan with which to administer NCLB. In that plan the state developed and implemented standardized assessments that have led to an increase in the takeover of several Texas districts and an increase in the number of districts not meeting the state's AYP standards and cutoffs. The districts not meeting state mandated AYP assessments have increased from 190 schools in 2009-2010 to 2233 in 2013-2014. In addition approximately 59 school districts have been taken over by the state since the state's first accountability policy in 1983.

Research Question one: State Accountability Policy

NCLB provides a federal policy and funding for closing the achievement gap for low income children, the policy was only instituted in 2002 with the passage of Public Law 107-110 NCLB, formerly ESEA of 1965. While NCLB provides a federal policy and funding for closing

the achievement gap for low income children, the policy was only instituted in 2002 with the passage of Public Law 107-110 NCLB, formerly ESEA of 1965 (NCLB, 2001). School district accountability history started in Texas in 1984 and has progressed to 2011 and the passage of the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STARR). STARR increased the number of Texas schools failing to make "adequate yearly progress" to 2,233 from 368 in 2010-2011 (TEA, 2014). The new STARR assessment increased the number of schools failing to make AYP as defined by NCLB. NCLB did not change; the state assessment increased in rigor and increased the number of failing schools in Texas.

Summary

The state of Texas defines AYP in 2011 with special attention on low-performing, high-poverty, and minority students who are often left behind. Title I programs are designed specifically to meet the needs of low-performing, high-poverty, and minority students. Title I is the federal policy to close the achievement gap (NCLB, Title I, Part A, 2001). Texas' adequate yearly progress definition requires that 80 percent of students in a school reach proficiency on the state reading assessment and that 75 percent of the students in all subgroups reach proficiency on the mathematics state assessment (TEA, 2011). Additionally, 95 percent of the students must participate in the state assessments for reading/English Language Arts and Mathematics. Texas has a unique approach among the states. At 50 percent proficiency, a school would no longer be identified as in need of improvement (TEA, 2001). Eventually Texas plans to increase the 50 percent proficiency goal. However, there is a reasonable timeline for all students to reach proficiency in Texas. Other indicators to consider for AYP in Texas are four-year- graduation rates of 90 percent or five-year-graduation-rate of 80 percent. The attendance

rate is also a consideration in meeting AYP. The attendance rate must be at 90% or it must show improvement. Texas 2011 AYP Guide provides guidelines to school administrators on AYP progress for each school (TEA, 2011*).*

The assignment of Texas district accreditation status is mandated by the Texas Education Code (TEC), Chapter 39, *Public School System Accountability*. In TEC 39.052, the Texas Education Code indicates that the commissioner shall determine the accreditation status of each district.

Research Question Two: What are the relations between district accreditation and school resources?

While the overall statewide data provided information useful for analyses, it was concluded that the data analyses for this study would provide more useful data if it focused on the relation between the extremes-the accountability ratings for the exemplary districts verses accountability rating for academically unacceptable districts and the respective district resources for the 2010-2011 school year. There were 45 exemplary school districts and 50 unacceptable school districts during the 2010-2011 school year. Thus correlations were conducted for a total of 95 Texas school districts.

The result of the data analysis indicated that the WADA, per pupil allocation, from the State of Texas for the 95 school districts for the subgroup sample of 45 Exemplary Districts and 50 Academically Unacceptable Districts may be a factor that merits further study. The data indicated that the poverty rate as expressed through the proportion of economically disadvantaged students in Texas districts may also be significant in relation to school district

accountability rating. The correlation for Accountability rating and Economically Disadvantaged was a value of r=-0.745. The high negative r value shows that the higher the proportion of economically disadvantaged students in a school district the lower the accountability rating. The correlation is also significant for the relation between accountability rating and the WADA. The correlation for accountability rating and WADA was a positive correlation of r = 0.297. This means that the more money allocated per student in a Texas district was related to a higher accountability rating for the district.

The academic school year of 2010-2011 as identified by TEA provided all the data for the study which were gathered from TEA (TEA, 2011). *AEIS Snapshot* (2011) also provided downloadable data for this study. The 2010 - 2011 academic school year was selected because it was the last official year for TAKS to be administered in the Texas Schools for accountability. It was also the last year that the state would assign an accountability rating on the Texas local education agencies (LEA) or school districts using the TAKS data. This allowed the use of common data years. The following year was the first year for STAAR state assessment to be administered.

The AEIS website (2011) provided data for the variable of school resources using the weighted average daily attendance (WADA) compressed rate. According to AEIS (2011) WADA is defined as the weighted average daily attendance figure used as the state funding formula to calculate the amount of state and local funds to which a district is entitled. The data included the District Number, 2010-2011 WADA, 2010-2011 Revenue per WADA at the Compressed Rate, and 2010-2011 Accountability Rating.

The accreditation data, WADA, and demographic data for each of the 1,028 state school districts was downloaded into an excel sheet. The data were exported into SPSS. A bivariate correlation analysis was conducted to test the relation between WADA and the accountability rating for 1028 school districts (AEIS, 2011).

Summary

Overall, the correlation between accountability rating and WADA, for the 1028 Texas school districts, while significant was low r= .126, p <0.01 level (2-tailed). The value of r = 0.126 shows a positive correlation. This means that the higher the amount of WADA allocated per student to a Texas school district was related to a higher accountability rating for the district. The correlation is significant between accountability rating and WADA for the sample of 1028 Texas school districts.

The correlation for 1028 Texas school district accreditation and WADA or the proxy for school resources showed that there was a significant but low relation between school district accreditation and resources. However, when the correlation was conducted for the subgroup of 95 Texas school districts there was a higher value of r = 0.297. The data seems to indicate, the more money allocated per student in a district was related to a higher accountability rating for the district.

Research Question Three: What is the relation between school district accountability and the proportion of economically disadvantaged students?

The correlation for the relation between accountability rating and the proportion of disadvantaged students for 1028 school districts showed that the higher the percentage of economically disadvantaged was the lower the accountability rating was. r=-.428, p <0.01 level

(2-tailed). This inverse relation indicated that low-income students, as identified by the higher percentage of students receiving the free-and-reduced priced lunch, were related to lower school district accountability.

The correlation to explore the relation between school district accreditation and WADA or school district resources for a sample of 1028 Texas school districts showed that there was a significant but weak relation. There was a predicted relation between the variable of 2010-2011 School District Accountability Rating and the variables of WADA, and the percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students. There was also a relation between the amount of WADA and the percentage of economically disadvantaged students and school district accountability rating. The predicted relation between school district accountability rating and WADA was that the more money allocated per student or the WADA would equal a higher accountability rating.

However, the correlation between Accountability Rating and the percentage of the Economically Disadvantaged students is significant for the subgroup of 95 Texas districts. The r = - 0.745 shows that there was a high negative correlation which meant the higher the percentage of economically disadvantaged is the lower the accountability rating.

Summary

In the correlation between Texas school district accreditation and WADA the proxy for school resources, it was discovered that there was a greater relation between accreditation and the percentage of economically disadvantaged students. The value of r= -0.745 showed that

there was a high negative correlation which meant the higher the percentage of economically disadvantaged is the lower the accountability rating.

Research Question Four: What are the relations between school district accountability and the proportion of enrollment by race? This question was subdivided into the three major ethnic groups in Texas: African American, Hispanic and White.

The data also indicated that Race may also matter as it relates to the accountability ratings of Texas school districts for this study. The correlations for race were run in three parts: Accountability rating and the proportion Africa American students, Accountability rating and the proportion of Hispanic students, Accountability rating and the proportion White students. In all three cases there was significance. The data showed a relation for accountability ratings and African American students and accountability ratings and Hispanic students with a negative r value indicating that the higher the proportion of African American and Hispanic students the lower the accountability rating. Conversely when the correlation was studied for accountability rating and White students it indicated a positive r value indicating the higher proportion of White students was related to higher accountability ratings. The study seems to conclude that money, poverty, and race are all significant for Texas school districts when correlated with accountability ratings.

Research Question Four (a) Relation between school district accountability and the enrollment proportion of African American students?

The correlation for the relation between accountability rating and the proportion of African American students for 1028 school districts showed that the higher the percentage of African American students the lower the accountability rating. The value of r = - 0.243. The

inverse relation indicated that African American students as identified by the higher percentage of students were related to lower school district accountability rating.

The Correlations between Accountability Rating of the 95 Texas school district subgroup and the proportion of African American students shows r = - 0.440 showing that there is a negative correlation which means the high percentage of African American students are significantly related to low accountability ratings.

Research Question Four (b) Relation between school district accountability and the enrollment proportion of Hispanic students?

The correlation for the relation between accountability rating and the proportion of Hispanic students for 1028 school districts showed that the higher the percentage of Hispanic students was related to the lower the accountability rating. The value of r=-0.214. The inverse relation indicated that Hispanic students as identified by the higher percentage of students were related to a lower school district accountability rating.

The correlation of school district accountability rating of the 95 Texas school district subgroup and percentage of Hispanic students is significant with r=-0.446. High proportions of Hispanics in a district are related to low accountability ratings.

Research Question Four (c) Relation between school district accountability and the enrollment proportion of White students?

The correlation for the relation between accountability rating and the percentage of White students for 1028 school districts showed that the higher the percentage of White students for 1028 school districts then the higher the accountability rating was. The value r = 0.297. The

inverse relation indicated that lower the proportion of White students as identified by the lower percentage of White students were related to a lower school district's accountability rating.

The Correlation for the relation of Accountability Rating for the 95 Texas district subgroup and the proportion of White students is significant r = 0.637. There is a high positive correlation which means that higher percentages of White students are related to higher accountability ratings. Conversely the lower the proportion of White students in a Texas school district the lower the accountability rating.

Summary

The data indicated that race does matter when discussing school district accountability rating in Texas school districts.

Limitations

According to (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012, p.458) research limitations for quantitative studies are that the researcher is detached from the study and that facts and feelings are separate. According to the research, the limitations of correlative studies may be similar limitations to case studies. In addition, correlational research determines that a prediction from one variable to another variable may be made. It therefore establishes that the two variables are related. The researcher is cautioned that two variables can be associated without there being a causal relation between the variables. Therefore the researcher cannot make causal conclusions from correlational findings because all the alternative explanations for correlational findings cannot be ruled out (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012).

Conclusion

It was concluded that the data analyses for this study would provide more useful data if it focused on the relation between the extremes-the accountability ratings for the exemplary districts verses accountability rating for academically unacceptable districts and the respective district resources for the 2010-2011 school year. There were 45 exemplary school districts and 50 unacceptable school districts the 2010-2011 school year. The data analyses were redirected to focus on these 95 school districts that became the primary data analysis for this study. The findings for the relations between school accountability rating and school resources found a positive correlation r = 0.297 between WADA and the accountability; however, there was a difference of $784.91 on average between the amount of WADA of exemplary districts and academically unacceptable district.

In comparing the correlation between accountability ratings and the other the variables of race and poverty, while race showed a weak significance, the percentage of economically disadvantaged showed a strong significance at the level of -0.745. It is recommended that Future studies may want to investigate other TEA causal factors such as property value per pupil. Other non-TEA variables to consider for future research are single-heads-of household, level of parent education, parent time to work with children, and home literacy. Any correlation above 50 percent indicates a significant relation. Significant relations point us in the direction on which we should focus our attention. The study seems to conclude that money, poverty, and race are all significant for Texas school districts when correlated with accountability ratings.

Although these are not causal relations, it does provide areas of interest for investigations. Poverty whether or not it is the cause of low accountability is a factor that needs

to be addressed by educators (Bane, 2011; Duncan, Kalil, & Siol-Guest, 2013; Reardon, 2013; Southern Education Foundation, 2014).

Recommendations for Future Research

This study recommends that relations between school finance and school district accreditation be studied further using other variables like school district property wealth.

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Appendix A

NCLB Accountability Cycle

YEAR	NCLB, Title I Part A, Section 1116
	Title I Part A
20 USC 6316. **Year 1 AND 2**	Sec. 1116 Academic Assessment & LEA & School Improvement • LEA conducts yearly campus assessment • 1116 (a)(1) (A) LEA releases school Ach Data • Sec. 1116 (a) (1) (B) LEA Identifies schools for school improvement **with 2 consecutive years of not meeting AYP.** **(Definition: AYP** - Adequate Yearly Progress represents the minimum level of improvement that schools and school divisions must achieve each year as determined by NCLB.
Year 2	• **Sec. 1116 (b) (2) (A) identify AU schools for years to reach AYP** • Announce Public School choice Options • Provide Opportunity for school to respond • **Determine school's eligibility for targeted school assistance (Title I funding for school improvement under NCLB).** • **Year 1 of Missing AYP:** There are no consequences for the first year a school misses AYP. •
Year 3	• **Sec. 1116 (b) (3) (A) 3 mo. After announcement, Revised School Plan for 2 years (year 3 and year 4 or 4 and 5) is** developed 3 mo. in consultation with parents, school staff, LEA, and outside experts for LEA approval, consider 1. Scientifically-based 2. Budget 3. 10% of funds made available under 6313 (Title I School Improvement Funds) 4. Address academic achievement problem 5. Staff development that a. addresses academic problems; b. Sec. 6319 on SD (state plan for highly qualified); c. with increased opportunities to participate in SD; 5. etc LEA conditional approval of Revised Plan Within 45 days of receiving plan, LEA establishes a peer review process to assist with school plan Revised school plan must be implemented by Year 3:

YEAR 3	**Sec. 1116 (b) (4) Technical Assistance to provide:** 1. parental involvement, professional development, analyzing data, analyzing school budget, scientifically-based • May be provided by: LEA, SEA (the state commissioner of education (COE) provides consultants for technical assistance, from NPO or for Profit consultants, inst. Of higher ed; • Provides data analyses, professional development, instructional strategies, all scientifically based • **Sec. 1116 (b) (5) Failure to make AYP** at the end of year 1 (year 3) school needs to : • Provide transfer option; • Supplemental ed. Services (Districts are mandated to provide Supplements Services under Sec. 1116 (b) (5) of NCLB. Services include tutoring from private firms that have no accountability requirements other than to create a list of students recruited for tutor whether or not the students attended regularly. Many of these firms provide a phone or other gifts to high school students for signing with them for tutoring services. Some states have disallowed tutoring services because of the lack of accountability for service providers and money losers. • Provide technical assistance • Etc. • **Year 2 of Missing AYP:** If a school misses AYP for a second consecutive year, it is identified as **"in need of improvement."** The school must develop a two-year improvement plan in consultation with parents, school staff, and the school district. The plan should address core academic subjects and any specific subjects the school is struggling with. Students enrolled in the school now have the option to transfer to another school within the school district that has not been identified as "in need of improvement." Priority is given to the lowest achieving students from low-income families enrolled in the school. Schools in need of improvement are provided with Title I school improvement funding.
Year 4	**Sec. 1116 (b) (6)** Notice to parents of failure to meet AYP in Year 3 and need for corrective action • Options for transfers • Etc. • **Year 3 of Missing AYP:** If a school misses AYP for another consecutive year, the school must continue to offer students the option to transfer to another school, and must offer tutoring and other "supplemental education services" to students.
YEAR 4/5	**Sec. 1116 (b) (7) CORRECTIVE ACTION CONTINUED (School identified for corrective action in YEAR 5, except for DELAY** • Consistent academic failure • Underlying staffing, etc. • LEA continues to provide transfers, technical assistance • Identify the school for **corrective actio**n with one of the following: 1. Replace the school staff who are relevant to the failure; 2. Institute new curriculum & staff development; 3. Decreases management authority at the school level; 4. Appoint outside expert to advise the school on its progress to AYP; 5. Extend the school year or school day; 6. Restructure the internal organizational structure of the school. **DELAY: The LEA may delay corrective action (not to exceed 1 year) if: school makes AYP or for exceptional uncontrollable circumstances(IKE)**
Year 5/6	**Sec. 1116 (b) (8)Restructuring**: Only after 6 years of AU or not making AYP, is the school restructured. **(Definition) Restructuring/Alternative governance** - For Title I schools that move into year four of school improvement, this may include reopening the school as a charter school, replacing staff relevant to the school's failure to make progress, or turning the management of the school over to a private educational management company with a demonstrated record of effectiveness.) **(possible** closure, state takeover, privatization, or conversion to a charter school) • **Year 4 of Missing AYP:** If a school misses AYP for a fourth consecutive year, the school is identified for "corrective action." Corrective action involves more serious steps to improve the school's academic performance. Steps can include replacing staff, introducing new curricula, bringing in outside consultants to help with school performance, extending the school day or year, or changing the management structure of the school.

Year 6	**Sec. 1116 (b) (8)Restructuring** • After one year of Corrective Action**/Delay**, COE reserves the option to delay closure by one year • Continued transfers; • Supplemental ed services • NO AYP • Prepare ALTERNATIVE GOVERNANCE: • **Year 5 of Missing AYP:** If, after a full year of corrective action, a school misses AYP for a fifth consecutive year, the school will be placed under "restructuring." The school must prepare a plan for an alternative governance arrangement, which can include reopening the school as a charter school, contracting management to a private, outside management group, turning the school over to the state for reorganization, or any other changes to school governance that "make fundamental reforms."
Year 7	**Sec. 1116 (b) (8) (B) Restructuring: (RESCONTITUTION)** Alternative Governance or Implement ONE of the following: • Reopen as public school charter school; • Replace all or most of the school staff based on failure • Enter in contract with private management company (Edison) • Turn over to SEA, • Reconstitute School, repurpose, new school name, new school program, PROMPT NOTICE TO PARENTS, STAFF, TEACHERS,TRANSPORTATION
Year 7	**Sec. 1116 (b) (9)**FUNDS FOR TRANSPORTATION AND SUPPLEMENTAL ED SERVICES ARE PROVIDED UNDER NCLB
Year 7	**Sec. 1116 (b) (10)** FUNDS FOR TRANSPORTATION AND SUPPLEMENTAL ED SERVICES AND SUPPLEMENTAL ED SERVICES Budget amounts to be allocated to provide services
Year 7	**Sec. 1116 (b) (11): Cooperative agreement: if all the schools in the district are UA (the case of North Forest ISD) for transfer purposes the district can enter special arrangement with other district.** **Year 6 of Missing AYP:** If the school misses AYP for a sixth consecutive year, it must implement the restructuring plan developed in the prior year.
Year 7 **And year 8**	**Sec. 1116 (b) (12) Duration: (If the school does not achieve AYP for two consecutive years the LEA shall no longer subject school to:** • **School improvement** • **Correction action;** • **Restructuring;**
Year 9	**Sec. 1116 (b) (13) Special Rule**: for transferring students to complete school in transferred school
Year 9	**Sec. 1116 (b) (14) SEA responsibilities:** **1. Provide Technical assistance to reconstituted schools;** **2. Determines LEA failed responsibilities and broke State Law;** 3. ensure that academic assessment results under this part are provided to schools before any identification of a school may take place under this subsection; 4. Notify Sec. of Ed of low performing;
	Sec 1116 (c) State Review and LEA improvement

	1. General **A. annual Review of LEA and report AYP** **B. Publicize and disseminate to LEA, teachers and other staff** **2. Rewards** • **For 2 yrs of AYP** **3. Identification of LEA for Improvement** **When a school district is identified for improvement, it follows the same 7 year district improvement process that a school follows before it is taken over by the State.**

Appendix B

Consolidations, Annexations and Name Changes for Texas Public Schools

District	Action	Year
Eola ISD	Consolidated to Eden CISD	1983
Smiley ISD	Consolidated Nixon-Smiley	1983
South Park ISD	Consolidated with Beaumont	1984
Estelline ISD	Annexed Childress ISD	1985
McAdoo ISD	Annexed to Rusk ISD	1985
Old Glory ISD	Annexed to Aspermont ISD	1985
Delmar ISD	Consolidated as Delmar - West Lamar ISD	1985
Divide ISD	Consolidated with Blackwell ISD	1985
Rocksprings ISD	Annexed to Carta Valley	1985
Spur ISD	Annexed to McAdoo	1985
Crosbyton ISD	Annexed to McAdoo	1985
Talpa Centennial ISD	Consolidated with Mozelle ISD renamed Panther Creek CISD	1986
Wimberley ISD	Created from parts of Hays CISD and Dripping Springs ISD	1986
Lillian ISD	Annexed to Alvarado ISD	1986
Delmar – West Lamar CISD	Renamed Chisum ISD	1986
Dougherty ISD	Annexed to Floydada ISD	1987
Windom ISD	Consolidated with Honey Grove ISD and renamed Honey Grove CISD	1987
Plemons ISD	Consolidated with Stinnet ISD and Phillips ISD and renamed Plemons-Stinnet-Phillips CISD	1987
Estelline ISD	Declared Dormant	1987
Liberty Chapel ISD	Annexed to Cleburne ISD	1988
Three Way ISD	Reclassified ISD status	1988
South Plains ISD	Annexed to Floydada ISD	1988
Divide CSD	Reclassified to Divide ISD	1989
Westminster ISD	Annexed to Anna ISD	1989
Pottsville ISD	Annexed to Hamilton ISD	1989
Maydelle ISD	Annexed to Rusk ISD	1989
Estelline ISD	Annexed to Memphis ISD	1989
McCauley ISD	Consolidated with Roby ISD	1990
Weinert ISD	Consolidated with Haskell ISD	1990
Hobbs ISD	Annexed to Roby ISD, Rotan ISD and Snyder ISD	1990
Carbon ISD	Eastland ISD	1990
Waka ISD	Consolidated with Perryton ISD	1990
Santa Cruz ISD	Annexed to London ISD	1001
Wingate ISD	Annexed to Winters ISD	1991
Lela ISD	Closed	1991
Allamore CISD	Renamed Allamore ISD	1992
Alanreed CISD	Abolished	1993
Laureles ISD	Consolidated with Riviera ISD	1993
Port Neches ISD	Renamed Port Neches-Groves ISD	1993
Refugio ISD	Consolidated with McFaddin ISD	1994
Allamore ISD	Consolidated with Culberson County ISD	1995
Bledsoe ISD	Consolidated with Whiteface CISD	1996
Welman ISD	Consolidated intoWelman –Union CISD	1997
Santa Cruz ISD	Annexed to London ISD	1991
Lela ISD	Closed	1991
Mobeetie ISD	Consolidated with Briscoe ISD forming Fort Elliott CISD	1991
Juno ISD	Consolidated with Comstock ISD	1992
Alanreed ISD	Abolished	1993
Laureles ISD	Riviera ISD	1993
McFaddin ISD	Consolidated with Refugio ISD	1994
Jefferson State School	New district effective	1995
Allamore ISD	Culberson County-Allamore ISD	1995
Bledsoe ISD	Consolidated with Whiteface CISD	1996
Welman ISD & Union ISD	Merged to form Welman – Union ISD	1997
Lakeview ISD	Consolidated with Memphis ISD	2000
Three Way ISD	Merged with Sudan ISD	2002
Allison ISD	Merged with Ft. Elliott CISD	2003

Goree ISD	Merged with Munday CISD	2003
Masonic Home	Closed	2005
Rochester-County Line ISD	Consolidated -Haskell CISD	2005
Mirando City ISD	Commissioner ordered consolidated with Webb CISD	2005
Wilmer-Hutchins ISD	Commissioner ordered annexation to Dallas ISD	2006
Spade ISD	Consolidated with Olton ISD	2006
Megargel ISD	Consolidated with Olney ISD	2006
Kendleton ISD	Commissioner ordered merger with Lamar Consolidated ISD	2010
North Forest ISD	Commissioner ordered merger with Houston ISD	2013
Beaumont ISD	Identified for Takeover	2014

Appendix C

List of 45 Exemplary Texas School Districts

District Name	District Accountability Rating
Borden County ISD	Exemplary
Canton ISD	Exemplary
Carroll ISD	Exemplary
Crawford ISD	Exemplary
Dew ISD	Exemplary
Divide ISD	Exemplary
Dodd City ISD	Exemplary
Douglas ISD	Exemplary
Eanes ISD	Exemplary
Excelsior ISD	Exemplary
Falls City ISD	Exemplary
Friendswood ISD	Exemplary
Frisco ISD	Exemplary
Hallsburg ISD	Exemplary
Highland ISD	Exemplary
Highland Park ISD	Exemplary
Hubbard ISD	Exemplary
Huckabay ISD	Exemplary
Klondike ISD	Exemplary
Lake Travis ISD	Exemplary
Lindsay ISD	Exemplary
London ISD	Exemplary
Lone Oak ISD	Exemplary
Lovejoy ISD	Exemplary
Lovelady ISD	Exemplary
Mabank ISD	Exemplary
Malta ISD	Exemplary
McMullen County ISD	Exemplary
Miami ISD	Exemplary
Muenster ISD	Exemplary
Mumford ISD	Exemplary
Newcastle ISD	Exemplary
Palo Pinto ISD	Exemplary
Plains ISD	Exemplary
Prairie Valley ISD	Exemplary
Red Lick ISD	Exemplary
Ricardo ISD	Exemplary
Skidmore-Tynan ISD	Exemplary
Slocum ISD	Exemplary
South Texas ISD	Exemplary
Sundown ISD	Exemplary
Sunnyvale ISD	Exemplary
Vysehrad ISD	Exemplary
Walcott ISD	Exemplary
Wildorado ISD	Exemplary

Appendix D

List of 50 Academically Unacceptable Texas School Districts

District Name	District Accountability Rating
Amherst ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Big Spring ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Boys Ranch ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Burkeville ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Burton ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Carlisle ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Charlotte ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Cotton Center ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Darrouzett ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Dell City ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Freer ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Ft. Davis ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Grandfalls-Royalty ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Grapeland ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Greenville ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Hart ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Hermleigh ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Hitchcock ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Karnack ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Kingsville ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Kress ISD	Academically Unacceptable
La Marque ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Littlefield ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Lohn ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Loraine ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Luling ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Marlin ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Mexia ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Morgan ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Mount Calm ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Mullins ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Navasota ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Newton ISD	Academically Unacceptable
North Forest ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Northside ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Oakwood ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Pearsall ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Premont ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Reagan County ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Santa Maria ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Shamrock ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Snook ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Somerville ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Taft ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Trinidad ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Trinity ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Waelder ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Waskom ISD	Academically Unacceptable
West Rusk ISD	Academically Unacceptable
Winfield ISD	Academically Unacceptable