

RUNNING HEAD: Retention

**UNIVERSITY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
GRADUATE PROGRAM-DIVISION OF EDUCATION**

An Investigation into Whether First and Second Graders Who Were Retained Improved in the Intermediate Grades at the Charles H. Emanuel Elementary School on St. Croix, Virgin Islands

A Thesis
Submitted to:

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether or not first or second graders who were retained improved their academic standing in the intermediate grades in comparison to their chronological peers at Charles H. Emanuel School on St. Croix, Virgin Islands. This was a quantitative research study which consisted of 21 students. The sample size of this study included seven retainees, all of whom were male and retained in first or second grade, seven male chronological peers, and seven female chronological peers. Report cards were reviewed for all 21 students. Data were collected from retainees' report cards to compare grades and to measure their performance in academic subject areas. The results of this study indicated that the retainees' grades were not significantly higher in the intermediate grades than their grades earned in the primary grades. The results indicated that the retainees also did not significantly improve their academic standing in comparison to their chronological peers. The results also indicated that most students do not benefit from retention because they did not significantly improve their skills in academic subject areas. This study supports previous research on retention, which indicates that retention is a negative practice for students.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

For many years, grade retention has been one of the most controversial topics in education. Many educators, principals, teachers, students, and critics have their own individual perception about the topic. Each year, many teachers face the problem of where to place children who do not seem to fit into the rest of the class. In many school districts, retention is considered for children who appear to lag behind (Robertson, 1997). Jim Grant, a former classroom teacher, holds seminars for many teachers and encourages them to think of retention as “additional learning time” for misplaced students (Kelly, 1999).

Grade retention is a policy of repetition. Students who have failing grades at the end of the school year are retained. They are given an additional year to repeat a grade to go over the same academic skills, often taught the same way that they failed to master the previous year (American Federation of Teachers, 1999). “A retaineer is a pupil who has failed to be promoted to the next higher grade at a regular promotion period” (*Dictionary of Education*, 1973, p.7).

Johns Hopkins researcher Alexander tracked students’ progress before they were retained and found that retention was beneficial for students and also halted failure which had begun in previous years (Kelly, 1999). Some evidence also suggests that retention provides positive academic benefits to some students which decreases the likelihood of dropping out. A study by the National Center for Education Statistics (1995) has provided evidence that retention can help elementary children perform better in classes, and improve their attitudes about themselves and school. “Common sense confirms, that

passing on students to the next grade when they are unprepared neither increases student achievement nor properly prepares students for college and future employment” (American Federation of Teachers, 1999, para. 2). However, research on retention asserts that retention increases the students’ likelihood of eventually dropping out, lowers students’ self-esteem and self-confidence, and that students who are retained are likely to remain below grade-level proficiency levels (Education Commission of the States, 2005).

Caprara (1995) states,

“Retention in grade has no academic benefit. At-risk students who are promoted achieve as well or better than those children retained. Retained students are worse off on all measures of personal psychological adjustment, self-concept, attitude, and attendance. Self-reports of children indicated that there is lasting hurt from retention no matter how young the age of the retention” (para.1).

The majority of studies conducted over the last few decades suggest the practice of retention does more harm than good. Kelly (1999) also states, “Retention harmed students’ achievement, attendance record, personal adjustment in school, and attitude toward school” (para. 8).

The National Center for Education Statistics (NAES) 1991, 1993, and 1995 indicated that 11 percent of second-grade children in 1991 repeated kindergarten and/or first grade and eight percent in 1993 and 1995 repeated either or both of these grades. According to Kelly (1999), “a 1996 study done by the National Center for Education Statistics found that 16.8 percent of seniors had repeated at least one grade since kindergarten. The most frequently repeated grades were kindergarten through second”

(para. 7). Research shows that in the early grades, first graders are retained more than children in other grades (Kelly, 1999).

Recent studies also indicate that males are likely to be retained more than females (Grade Level Retention, 1996). Girls are more socially comfortable in group situations. As a result, girls are likely to be more productive in situations involving group instruction. According to the 1998 NAES reading results, females outperformed males in 4th, 8th, and 12th grade (Thomas, 1996).

Giving a student a year to “catch up” and improve academic skills sounds like a positive alternative (Schwab & Schwab, 2001). However, “critics say children who are retained do not significantly improve their academic skills, but instead can become alienated from school, develop emotional and behavioral problems, and be at greater risk of dropping out. They also say that retention hurts taxpayers who must pay for an additional year of school” (Westchester Institute for Human Services Research, 1998, para. 8).

According to Bryan (1998), the policy of the United States Virgin Islands Board of Education (1996) stipulates that:

1. Each child shall be placed in the group where he/she can best work and receive the most benefit-socially, emotionally, physically, and cognitively.
2. Each child progresses at a different rate and shall not attempt any work that he/she is not ready for.
3. Grades shall not be the only criteria for promotion. Such factors as the child’s age, social development, physical maturity, cognitive ability, work habits, and emotional behavior shall be considered also.
4. The greatest responsibility of the teacher is to the individual child and his/her needs.

5. To be successful, a child should live and work with children whose cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development are as near to his/her level as possible (p. 8).

According to Johnson and Rudolph (2001), the U.S. Department of Education reported,

“Both being promoted without regard to effort or achievement or retained without extra assistance sends a message to students that little is expected from them, that they have little worth, and that they do not warrant the time and effort it would take to help them be successful in school” (Johnson & Rudolph, 2001, para. 9).

Statement of the Problem

Students who are retained in the primary grades are considered to be unsuccessful. They tend to lag behind their peers when they are promoted to the intermediate grades. The problem being studied is whether or not retention is beneficial academically to students who were retained in the first or second grades at the Charles H. Emanuel Elementary School on St. Croix. This specific issue has not previously been studied.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether or not first or second graders who were retained improved their academic standing in the intermediate grades in comparison to their chronological peers at Charles H. Emanuel Elementary School.

Research Questions

- 1) Do first-grade or second-grade retainees earn a GPA significantly higher in the intermediate grades than the GPA they earned in the grade in which they were retained?

- 2) Do first-grade or second-grade retainees earn at least an 85% in Reading, Language, and Mathematics in the intermediate grades?
- 3) Do first-grade or second-grade retainees remain low achievers in comparison to their chronological peers?

Definition of Terms

Academic achievement- the knowledge attained or skills developed in the school subject, usually designated by test scores or marks assigned by teachers, or both (Good, 1973)

Grade level- a measure of educational maturity stated in terms of the school grade attained by an individual pupil during the year or a group of pupils at a given time (Good, 1973).

Grade retention- “a policy that holds back students who have failing grades at the end of a school year” (American Federation of Teachers, 1999, para. 10).

Promotion- “the act of shifting a pupil’s placement from a lower to a higher grade” (Bryan, 1998, p. 10).

Retainee- a pupil who has failed to be promoted to the next higher grade at a regular promotion period (Good, 1973).

Limitations of the Study

The population studied included only those students in fifth and sixth grades at Charles H. Emanuel School on St. Croix, U. S. V. I. It is not intended to be generalized to the whole school population or to any other population.

While social and emotional aspects of retention are understood to be important, only academic success of retainees will be considered within this research. Socio-

economic status, family, and culture contribute substantially to the global development of children. These issues were not being investigated relative to student success following retention.

Significance of the Study

This study could be significant for policy makers within the Department of Education in the U.S.V.I. and for teachers, the facilitators of instruction. Policy makers could use the results of this study to inform the policy regarding retention and remediation offered in schools for children who do not perform successfully. After reviewing the findings, teachers will be better positioned to make the critical decision to retain or promote borderline achieving students. The findings will also encourage teachers to review their grading practices and their evaluation strategies.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of the Literature

A review of the literature offers an opportunity to peruse the research that contributes to the debate about the efficacy of retaining students. While many studies have shown that grade retention can be ineffective for students, proponents support the idea that students should be retained in a grade to master the skills they have not mastered during their first attempt. As a result, thousands of students are held back in a grade each year. Bryan (1998) states that the practice of retaining a child is based on the following assumptions:

1. Students should acquire skills or minimal competencies to eventually become citizens who benefit the community, either the money they earn or other services they perform.
2. Children can and should learn certain skills at certain age levels. Thus, school districts develop curricula that outline what those skills and age levels are.
3. It's the child's responsibility to learn, rather than the teacher's responsibility to teach.
4. Another year in the same grade level will help students overcome whatever deficiencies they may have. (p. 14)

Though these assumptions may be logical in regards to retention, there are many who disapprove of this practice. "Education research repeatedly shows that retention does not work. Requiring students to repeat a grade because they have not met expected performance standards, assuming no changes in instructional strategies, leads to continued low achievement, and increases the likelihood of retained students dropping out" (p. 7).

Benefits of Retention

Proponents of retention believe that retention is beneficial for students and that it encourages students to improve in academic subject areas. There is evidence that suggests that retention provides positive academic benefits to some students which decreases the likelihood of dropping out of school (Kelly, 1999). The National Center for Educational Statistics has also provided evidence that retention can help elementary children perform better in classes, and improve their attitudes about themselves and school. Researchers have tracked students' progress before they were retained and found that retention was beneficial for students and halted failure in previous years (Kelly, 1999).

Negative Effects of Retention

Grade retention has been practiced in American schools for a number of years, and has been one of the most widely researched practices in the history of schooling (Lange, 2004). However, around the 1930s, many educators began to realize that the practice of retaining a student was detrimental to his or her social and emotional development (Bryan, 1998). Studies by Roderick (1995) have established the relationship between retention and later dropout rates. Studies in both New York and Chicago showed that retained students were more likely to dropout than those who had been promoted. Results are echoed in other studies as well. Regardless of the grade in which retention occurs, it drastically increases the likelihood that children will drop out of school (Johnson, 2001).

According to Bryan (1998), many believe that grade retention in the early grades results in academic gains, but research indicates that students do not outperform students

who are at their age-appropriate grade level. Critics say that children who are retained do not significantly improve their academic skills, but instead develop emotional and behavioral problems. According to Westchester Institute for Human Services (1998), “Retention hurts taxpayers who must pay for an additional year of school” (p.8). In addition, Bowman (2005) states, “There is also a hefty price to pay for student grade retention. That is, students are affected personally as well as society” (para. 9). In addition, many researchers and educators who have studied the results of retention are truly amazed about the continued use of a practice that has more negative results than positive. The practice of retention does more harm than good. According to Bryan (1998), “When low achieving pupils are retained, they remain low achievers—when promoted they continue to be low achievers” (p.18).

In its 2003 ‘Position Statement on Student Grade Retention,’ the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) reported:

- 1) Academic achievement of kids who are retained is poorer than that of peers who are promoted.
- 2) Achievement gains associated with retention fade within two to three years after the grade repeated.
- 3) Kids who are identified as most behind are the ones “most likely harmed by retention.
- 4) Retention is associated with increased behavior problems.
- 5) Grade retention has a negative impact on all areas of a child’s achievement (reading, math, and language) and socio-emotional adjustment (peer relationships, self-esteem, problem behaviors, and attendance).
- 6) Students who are retained are more likely to drop out of school compared to students who were never retained. In fact, grade retention is one of the most powerful predictors of high school dropout.
- 7) Retained students are more likely to have poorer educational and employment

outcomes during late adolescence and early adulthood.

- 8) Retention is more likely to have a benign or positive impact when students are not simply held back, but receive specific remediation to address skills and/or behavioral problems and promote achievement and social skills” (Schwab & Schwab, 2001, p. 2).

Course failure is a major predictor of student dropout. The National Education Longitudinal Study documents some of the reasons given by 8th - 9th - , and 10th - grade students for dropping out of school. Two of the most frequently cited reasons were (a) students were failing in school and (b) students could not keep up with their school work (Bowman, 2005).

Gender and Retention

According to recent studies, gender has a role to play in the issue of retention. Girls appear to be more attentive and have a more positive attitude than boys at all grade levels. Studies indicate that there is a high correlation between gender and reading achievement. According to the 1998 National Assessment for Education Progress (NAEP) reading results, females out performed males in 4th, 8th, and 12th, grade (Thomas, 1999). Research also indicates that males are more likely to be retained than females. At every grade level, the percentage of males retained is higher than females (Grade Level Retention, 1996).

Factors That Contribute to Retention

Research indicates that grade retention does not increase performance. However, it is practiced in schools. Some arguments for retaining a child may include (a) student immaturity, (b) the belief that an extra year of schooling will provide successful academic gains, and (c) failure to meet academic criteria for promotion (Bowman, 2005). In

addition, many teachers mentioned a fear of being criticized by the teachers in the next grade for passing students who are not academically prepared (Anderson, 1998).

According to Lange (2005), grade retention continues to be a common practice due to large class sizes (20 or more students). He states,

“Large class sizes have made it difficult for teachers to meet the learning needs of students functioning at widely different levels and with widely different learning styles. Schools have been forced to operate a one size fits all program. Schools focus on ‘grade level’ teaching and have ignored the needs of some students” (Lange, 2005, para. 14).

Many students are facing the possibility of retention due to not achieving test scores necessary for promotion (Schwab & Schwab, 2001). Grade retention is a difficult and emotionally charged decision. It may be considered when a child:

- 1) Has significant struggles making progress in reading, writing, or math.
- 2) Fails to reach performance levels for promotion to the next grade.
- 3) Appears to be “immature” or “young” for his/her age (p.1).

Retention is viewed as a practice to ensure greater accountability and to guarantee that the school is doing its job. It’s the “get tough” policy to stop or reduce “social promotion” (Schwab & Schwab, 2001). However, researchers have reported that repeating a grade in school has no positive benefit for children. For most children, retention results in serious long-term damage to their academic achievement (Lange, 2005). In addition, the impact of grade level retention has been overlooked by parents, the general public, school teachers and school administrators.

Lange (2005) states, “Grade level retention is one of those common social evils that most people just don’t want to acknowledge” (para. 7).

Alternatives to Retention

Alternatives that prevent student failure should always be considered. They are effective systematic instructional alternatives that can prevent much student failure and keep students learning. Kaplan and Owings (2001) state, “All students can achieve standards if educators vary the time, pace, curriculum, learning style, and assessment techniques and tailor students’ learning experiences to their needs” (p. 18).

Research has indicated a strong correlation between retention and long-term negative academic and social experiences for students. Though retention has been thought to be a remedy for student failure, there are practices that can be used as alternatives to retention. Before the decision to retain students, the following alternatives should be considered:

- 1) Measure students’ success using a variety of methods.
- 2) Encourage parent involvement.
- 3) Vary instructional approaches for repetition of lessons.
- 4) Provide individualized instruction for students in need of remediation.
- 5) Offer mentoring (Regional Educational Laboratory, 1999).

Research tells us that grade retention is not the best decision for students. However, some administrators tend to overlook and ignore the body of research on retention. Therefore, they continue to perform negative administrative practices. (Natriello, 1998).

The following recommendations have been offered to schools with regards to retention:

- 1) Use retention sparingly and only after other intervention efforts have proven ineffective.
- 2) If used, grade retention should include changes in instructional delivery method personnel.
- 3) Intervention should be implemented as soon as a child is identified as being at risk of failure.
- 4) Parents must be involved at all points in student instruction.
- 5) There must be a connection between research and practice regarding retention decisions.
- 6) Various methods of assessment should be factored into potential retention decisions (Regional Educational Laboratory, 1999).

Kaplan and Owings (2001) indicate that the best alternative to retention is to ensure that all students learn successfully, this includes help for at-risk learners to become competent learners. At-risk learners often need extra time and extra help in order to meet high achievement standards. Some strategies for providing extra time and help include academic tutoring, mentoring, increased learning time during the school day, increased days in the school year, and alternative schools.

Conclusion

Most studies reviewed indicated that retention is a negative practice for students in the primary grades. Specifically, retention is a detrimental practice because it may result in students dropping out of school. There is a relationship between students who were retained and later school failure and/or dropping out. Even in light of the overwhelming findings, some teachers proclaim that students who are retained attain

more leadership skills, become more comfortable with routines, become more cooperative, become more a part of the social group, have greater self-confidence, and achieve more academic success (Anderson, 2005).

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether or not students who had been retained in first or second grade achieved significantly better grades in fourth and fifth grade at the end of year. In addition, the study also investigated whether or not first-grade or second-grade retainees remained low achievers in comparison to their chronological peers at the Charles H. Emanuel Elementary School on St. Croix, United States Virgin Islands.

Design of the Study

Data were collected from students' report cards to measure achievement. The grades earned by students in the primary grades (first or second) were compared to the grades earned by students in the intermediate grades (fourth and fifth).

Participants

There were no interactions with human subjects for this study. Archived grade cards were collected for all students who were in fifth and sixth grades who had been retained in first or second grades at the Charles H. Emanuel School. This population was made up of seven male students. Retainees' grades were also compared to randomly selected chronological peers. Since all retainees were males, their grades were compared to two samples of chronological peers, one male and one female. Chronological peers were selected by removing all students from the sample who were age anomalies (students who are over age for their grade level). The anomalies were excluded from the sample because their age ranged from 13 to 14 years in fifth and sixth grade.

Data Analysis

This was a quantitative research study. The descriptive statistics that were used were measures of central tendency, percentages, and ANOVA (analysis of variance). Data were collected from the archived grade cards of the population of fifth- and sixth-grade students. The population consisted of 21 students (seven retainees, seven male chronological peers, and seven female chronological peers). The researcher compared the grades attained by fifth- and sixth-grade students who were retained in the first or second grades with those of the non-retained students (chronological peers). The researcher also reviewed and compared the retainees' GPA for the end of the year for eleven major subject areas (Reading, Language, Math, Spelling, Handwriting, Science, Health, Social Studies, Art, Music, and Physical Education) to those of the non-retained students (chronological peers).

CHAPTER 4

Data Analysis

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether or not first and second graders who were retained improved in the intermediate grade at the Charles H. Emanuel Elementary School on St. Croix. In order for the researcher to complete the study, parental agreement forms were signed by parents giving consent for their child's academic record to be reviewed. (See Appendix A).

The sample size consisted of 21 students. The sample size included seven retainees, all of whom were male and retained in first or second grade, seven male chronological peers, and seven female chronological peers. Report cards were reviewed for all 21 students. Data were collected from retainees' report cards to compare grades and to measure their performance level in three subject areas (Reading, Language, and Math) for promotion, as well as other subjects. The mean for Reading, Language, and Math when students were in the first or second grades, depending on the year they were retained, was compared to the level of performance when they were in fourth and fifth grades, depending on the grade they completed during the previous academic year. The GPA was also used to compare the academic achievement of students who were retained in first or second grade to those of the non-retained students (chronological peers).

As would be expected, the retainees' average for promotion was below grade level. Their average ranged from 44% to 69%. The average for promotion for the three subject areas must be 70% or above. The researcher calculated the grade for each subject area to obtain the end of the year average for promotion. The scores earned for Reading, Language, and Math were combined to determine the promotion or retention of these students (See Table 1).

Table 1

Grades Earned by Retainees in the Primary and Intermediate Grade

Student's ID	Reading	Language	Mathematics	Average
1	50% 61%	45% 81%	36% 66%	44% 69%
2	68% 71%	54% 74%	61% 71%	61% 72%
3	63% 73%	72% 70%	59% 72%	65% 72%
4	60% 59%	64% 55%	51% 76%	61% 63%
5	67% 53%	64% 50%	77% 56%	69% 53%
6	65% 71%	63% 74%	75% 84%	68% 76%
7	59% 71%	65% 73%	75% 75%	66% 75%

The table above displays the scores earned by retainees for Reading, Language, and Mathematics in the primary grades in black and in the intermediate grades in blue. One can see that these seven male retainees' average for promotion in the primary grades was less than 70%.

The researcher then looked at the grades earned by the retainees in the intermediate grade for Reading, Language, and Math. The researcher calculated the grade for each subject area to obtain the average. However, Reading, Language, and Math were not the only subjects that determined the promotion of these students at this point in their academic careers. Social Studies and Science grades were also included to determine promotion. This applies to all students in the intermediate grades.

The researcher also compared the retainees' primary and intermediate average for Reading, Language, and Math to find out if there was a statistically significant difference between the retainees' primary average and intermediate average.

(See Table 2).

Table 2

Comparison of Retainees' Primary and Intermediate Average

Primary Average Intermediate Average t – Test of Averages

1	44	69	0.205031218
2	61	72	
3	65	72	
4	61	63	
5	69	53	
6	68	76	
7	66	75	
Averages	62	69	

The table above shows that there was no statistically significant difference between the retainees' primary average and intermediate average for Reading, Language, and Math. This table indicates that the retainees' averages in the primary and intermediate grades were below 70%.

The intermediate scores for the retainees were then compared with the scores earned by their chronological peers (non- retainees), which included 7 boys and 7 girls. The subject areas that were used to measure the academic performance for the three

groups were Reading, Language, Mathematics, Spelling, Handwriting, Science, Social Studies, Health, Art, Music, and Physical Education. The ANOVA (analysis of variance) was calculated to compare the means between the three groups, and also to determine if there was a statistically significant difference. The results of the ANOVA indicated that there was a significant difference between the three groups for the following subject areas: Reading, Language, Spelling, Handwriting, Science, Math, Social Studies, and Art (See Table 3).

Table 3

ANOVA (analysis of variance) for Three Groups

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
current grade (Reading)	Between Groups	1208.667	2	604.333	7.419	.004
	Within Groups	1466.286	18	81.460		
	Total	2674.952	20			
current grade (Language)	Between Groups	1863.238	2	931.619	16.344	.000
	Within Groups	1026.000	18	57.000		
	Total	2889.238	20			
current grade (Spelling)	Between Groups	1941.714	2	970.857	16.117	.000
	Within Groups	1084.286	18	60.238		
	Total	3026.000	20			
current grade (Handwriting)	Between Groups	999.238	2	499.619	7.944	.003
	Within Groups	1132.000	18	62.889		
	Total	2131.238	20			
current grade (Science)	Between Groups	820.667	2	410.333	7.738	.004
	Within Groups	954.571	18	53.032		
	Total	1775.238	20			
current grade (Math)	Between Groups	750.857	2	375.429	9.913	.001
	Within Groups	681.714	18	37.873		
	Total	1432.571	20			
current grade (Social Studies)	Between Groups	972.667	2	486.333	6.552	.007
	Within Groups	1336.000	18	74.222		
	Total	2308.667	20			
current grade (Health)	Between Groups	78.000	2	39.000	.394	.680
	Within Groups	1782.286	18	99.016		
	Total	1860.286	20			
current grade (Art)	Between Groups	550.381	2	275.190	4.347	.029
	Within Groups	1139.429	18	63.302		
	Total	1689.810	20			
current grade (P.E.)	Between Groups	50.000	2	25.000	.350	.709
	Within Groups	1286.286	18	71.460		
	Total	1336.286	20			
current grade (Music)	Between Groups	350.000	2	175.000	2.609	.101
	Within Groups	1207.143	18	67.063		
	Total	1557.143	20			

The table above shows that there was a statistically significant difference between the three groups for certain subject areas. However, the differences were not found to be

statistically significant for Health, P.E., and Music. Results are indicated as being statistically significant at the .05 level or less (such as .01 or .001).

The researcher wanted to find out how the groups differed from each other. The mean was used to determine how the groups differed from each other. The researcher compared the mean of the retainees to their chronological peers. (See Table 4 and 5)

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations for Retainees and Non-Retainees (girls) for Three Subject Areas

	retainee	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Reading	retainees	7	65.5714	7.80720	2.95084
	chronological peers/girls	7	84.1429	9.28132	3.50801
Language	retainees	7	68.1429	11.27576	4.26184
	chronological peers/girls	7	90.7143	4.71573	1.78238
Math	retainees	7	71.1429	8.64925	3.26911
	chronological peers/girls	7	87.7143	6.49908	2.45642

The table above indicates that there was a major difference between the mean (average) for Reading, Language, and Math for the retainees and non-retainees (chronological peers- girls). One can see that the mean for the seven male retainees is quite poor in comparison to their female chronological peers.

Table 5

Means and Standard Deviations for Retainees and Non-Retainees (boys) for Three Subject Areas

	retainee	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Reading	retainees	7	65.5714	7.80720	2.95084
	chronological peers/boys	7	75.4286	9.86335	3.72800
Language	retainees	7	68.1429	11.27576	4.26184
	chronological peers/boys	7	83.5714	4.64963	1.75739
Math	retainees	7	71.1429	8.64925	3.26911
	chronological peers/boys	7	76.5714	8.46280	3.19864

The table above indicates that there was also a difference between the average for Reading, Language, and Math for the retainees and non-retainees (chronological peer-boys). One can see that the mean for the seven male retainees is quite low in comparison to their male chronological peers.

The researcher also wanted to find out if there was a major difference between the means for three major subject areas (Reading, Language, and Math) of the three groups in the intermediate grades.

(See Table 6).

Table 6

Multiple Comparisons (Scheffe Test)

Dependent Variable	(I) retainee	(J) retainee	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
current grade Reading	retainees	chronological peers/boys	-9.85714	4.82435	.153	-22.7203	3.0060
		chronological peers/girls	-18.57143(*)	4.82435	.004	-31.4346	-5.7083
	chronological peers/boys	chronological retainees	9.85714	4.82435	.153	-3.0060	22.7203
		chronological peers/girls	-8.71429	4.82435	.223	-21.5774	4.1488
		chronological retainees	18.57143(*)	4.82435	.004	5.7083	31.4346
current grade Language	retainees	chronological peers/boys	8.71429	4.82435	.223	-4.1488	21.5774
		chronological peers/boys	-15.42857(*)	4.03556	.005	-26.1885	-4.6686
	chronological peers/boys	chronological peers/girls	-22.57143(*)	4.03556	.000	-33.3314	11.8115
		retainees	15.42857(*)	4.03556	.005	4.6686	26.1885
	chronological peers/girls	chronological peers/girls	-7.14286	4.03556	.236	-17.9028	3.6171
		retainees	22.57143(*)	4.03556	.000	11.8115	33.3314
		chronological peers/boys	7.14286	4.03556	.236	-3.6171	17.9028
		chronological peers/boys	-5.42857	4.23890	.456	-16.7307	5.8736
current grade Math	retainees	chronological peers/girls	-16.57143(*)	4.23890	.004	-27.8736	-5.2693
		chronological retainees	5.42857	4.23890	.456	-5.8736	16.7307
	chronological peers/boys	chronological peers/girls	-11.14286	4.23890	.054	-22.4450	.1593
		retainees	16.57143(*)	4.23890	.004	5.2693	27.8736
		chronological peers/boys	11.14286	4.23890	.054	-1.1593	22.4450

* The mean difference is significant at .05 level

The scores earned by retainees and their chronological peers are displayed in Appendix D. Most of the retainees maintained a better score in Handwriting, Music, Art, and Physical Education than in academic subject areas (Reading, Language, and Math).

Based on the results of this study, retention in primary grades appears to be an ineffective practice for the students at Charles H. Emanuel Elementary School. The majority of students who were retained in the first or second grades at Charles H. Emanuel Elementary School did not improve substantially in academic subject areas (Reading, Language, and Math) in the intermediate grades. The retainees in this study scored lower than an 85% in Reading, Language, and Math. Most retainees' GPAs in the intermediate grades were lower than their chronological peers (See Appendix D). The results of this study also indicated that most of the retainees were low achievers in comparison to their chronological peers. Retention was not beneficial academically for these students. Results also indicated that girls maintained significantly better scores than boys in academic subject areas, and their GPAs were slightly higher.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether or not students who had been retained in first or second grade achieved significantly better grades in fourth and fifth grade at the end of the year. In addition, the study also investigated whether or not first-grade or second-grade retainees remained low achievers in comparison to their chronological peers at the Charles H. Emanuel Elementary School on St. Croix, United States Virgin Islands.

Discussion

Retention is a practice believed to significantly improve students' academic skills and improve students' attitude about school. However, this study has determined that students who were retained in first or second grade at the Charles H. Emanuel Elementary School on St. Croix did not benefit substantially from the practice of retention. These students did not significantly improve in major academic subject areas (Reading, Language, and Math) in the intermediate grades. The sample size of the study conducted consisted of 21 students, which included seven retainees all of whom were male, seven male chronological peers, and seven female chronological peers. Results of this study are consistent with numerous studies conducted on retention that were previously cited.

The retainees in this study achieved better grades in Health, P.E., and Music. Most studies have indicated that females out perform males in academic subject areas. The researcher believes that this often occurs because males and females have different learning styles. Some females are more attentive in a classroom setting which allows them to be more productive than boys in a classroom. On the other hand, some males are

less attentive which allows them to be unproductive in the classroom. Most males are easily distracted from a lesson being taught.

Most research indicated that retention is a negative practice that is not beneficial for students. The results of this study are consistent with many studies on retention because the results indicated that the students who were retained did not benefit from the practice of retention. The researcher believes that all schools that utilize this practice should make proper accommodations for students before the decision is made to retain students. Schools should implement transitional classes that would help students who are below grade level. The researcher also believes if after school programs are conducted, some students would benefit by increasing their academic performance and reduce their risk of being retained.

In addition, to prevent retention, this researcher believes schools must have a paraprofessional in K-6 classrooms to better meet the needs of all students included in classrooms. If this is practiced, the percentage of students who are retained each year may likely decrease. It is quite difficult for teachers to meet the needs of all students without sufficient support.

The researcher believed that retention was indeed beneficial for students before this study was conducted. However, the researcher has discovered that the “results” of this study were more accurate than a “belief.” The researcher was informed about the educational research and findings on retention.

The following research questions were answered after reviewing the findings of this study.

Research Questions

1. Do first-grade or second-grade retainees earn a GPA significantly higher in the intermediate grades than the GPA they earned in the grade in which they were retained?

The results of this study indicated that the retainees' GPA was not significantly higher in the intermediate grades than their GPA earned in the grade in which they were retained. The skills of these students did not improve drastically. This result coincides with the body of research which asserts that children who are retained do not significantly improve their academic skills (Westchester Institute for Human Services, 1998).

2. Do first-grade or second-grade retainees earn at least an 85% in Reading, Language, and Mathematics in the intermediate grades?

The retainees also did not score at least an eighty five percent in Reading, Language, and Math in the intermediate grades. Instead, overall they scored lower in these subject areas. (See Appendix D).

3. Do first-grade or second-grade retainees remain low achievers in comparison to their chronological peers?

The researcher concluded that the retainees also did not significantly improve their academic standing in the intermediate grades in comparison to their chronological peers. The grades earned by their chronological peers in significant subject areas are higher than retainees' grades earned. This finding relates to the research which indicates that students who are retained do not outperform students who are at their age-appropriate grade level (Bryan, 1998). The researcher also concluded that the retainees remained low achievers in comparison to their chronological peers. This result definitely relates to the research that states low achieving students who are retained continue to remain low achievers even when they are promoted (Bryan, 1998).

Important Findings

1. The seven male retainees in this study remained low achievers in comparison to their chronological peers.
2. The seven male retainees did not earn at least an 85% in Reading, Language, and Mathematics in the intermediate grades.
3. The retainees' GPAs were not significantly higher in the intermediate grades than the GPAs they earned in the grade in which they were retained.

4. The retainees achieved better grades in Health, Music, and P.E. than in academic subject areas (Reading, Language, Math).
5. The grades of the females in this study were slightly higher than the males. They out performed the males in academic subject areas consistently.
6. The results of this study are consistent with many studies on retention previously cited, which indicate that retention is a negative practice for students.
7. The seven male retainees in this study did not benefit significantly from retention.
8. Approximately 42 % of students served in the intermediate grades at Charles H. Emanuel Elementary School are between one and three years older than is generally appropriate for the grade in which they attend.

Recommendations for Further Study

It is recommended by the researcher that:

1. Charles H. Emanuel School design an after school program for at-risk learners who need extra time and extra help in order to meet high achievement standards.
2. Students who are retained should not be taught by the same teacher with the same instructional delivery method in the grade in which they are retained.
3. Administrators, teachers, and parents should carefully review studies on retention prior to recommending or accepting a retention recommendation. While some studies support retention, they are dramatically outnumbered by those that indicate it has grave consequences for the children affected with few potential benefits.
4. A program should be implemented to help males increase their academic performance and improve their attitude about school and help teachers support them effectively.

5. Charles H. Emanuel school should be equipped with a developmentally appropriate transitional class to meet the needs of students who perform below average academically.
6. The Department of Education of the Virgin Islands should mandate that all public schools place a paraprofessional/teacher's assistant in each class (K-6).
7. A placement test should be given to all students at the beginning of the school year to identify students' strengths and weaknesses in academic subject areas.

Final Conclusion

Retention is a practice which exists in many schools. Most students do not benefit from retention because it does not significantly improve their skills in academic subject areas. Evidence of this study revealed that first and second graders who were retained did not out perform the students who are at their age-appropriate grade level. In fact, these students remained low achievers in comparison to their chronological peers. A program should be implemented to help all at-risk learners become competent learners to prevent retention. Before the decision to retain students is made, administrators, teachers, and parents should carefully review the literature and findings on retention. Serious consideration must be given to the results of this study.

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Appendix A

University of the Virgin Islands PARENT'S AGREEMENT FOR CHILD'S REPORT CARD REVIEW

Title of Study: A Study on the impact of retention in the primary grades at Charles H. Emmanuel Elementary School

Investigators: Renice Rogiers, Graduate Student
Kelly Ross Kantz, Ph. D., Assistant Professor
University of the Virgin Islands, St. Croix Campus

This is a research study. Please take your time in deciding if you would like your child's records to be reviewed. Please feel free to ask questions at any time.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to determine if retention in the primary grades had a positive impact on the grades of students in the intermediate grades.

DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURES

If you agree, your child's grades will be reviewed.

RISKS

There are no foreseeable risks from participating in this study.

BENEFITS

If you decide to participate in this study it is hoped that the information gained will benefit the children who attend public schools by providing information about ways to promote higher academic achievement, and increase student educational outcomes.

COSTS AND COMPENSATION

You will not have any costs from participating in this study. You will not be compensated for participating in this study.

PARTICIPANT RIGHTS

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate in the study at any time. If you decide not participate in the study, it will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Records identifying participants will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by applicable laws and regulations and will not be made publicly available. However, federal government regulatory agencies and the Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves human subject research studies) may inspect and/or copy your records for quality assurance and data analysis. These records may contain private information.

To ensure confidentiality to the extent permitted by law, following measures will be taken. Children will be assigned unique codes that will be used instead of their name. Identifiers will be kept separate from the data. Study records will be kept confidential in a locked filing cabinet and/or password protected computer files. The data will be destroyed by August 16, 2009. If the results are published, your identity will remain confidential.

QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS

You are encouraged to ask questions at any time during this study. For further information about the study contact Renice Rogiers at (340) 7XX-XXXX or XXXXXX@yahoo.com.

SUBJECT SIGNATURE

Your signature indicates that you voluntarily agree to review of your child's grade reports in this study, that the study has been explained to you, that you have been given the time to read the document, and that your questions have been satisfactorily answered. You will receive a copy of the signed and dated written informed consent prior to your participation in the study.

Participant's Name (printed) _____

(Participant's Signature) (Date)

INVESTIGATOR STATEMENT

I certify that the participant has been given adequate time to read and learn about the study and all of their questions have been answered. It is my opinion that the participant understands the purpose, risks, benefits and the procedures that will be followed in this study and has voluntarily agreed to participate.

(Signature of Person Obtaining Informed Consent) (Date)

VIRGIN ISLANDS BOARD OF EDUCATION

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS AND GRADING SYSTEM FOR GRADES K - 6

PERTINENT LAW AND INFORMATION

Virgin Islands Code Title 17 Section 21, authorizes the Virgin Islands Board of Education to prescribe general regulations and orders and in general to do anything necessary for the proper establishment, maintenance and operation of the public schools of the Virgin Islands.

Virgin Islands Code Title 3 Section 912, states that each regulation adopted, to be effective, must be within the scope of authority conferred and in accordance with standards prescribed by other provisions of law. Title 17, Section 21, confers the authority and jurisdiction on the Virgin Islands Board of Education to prescribe these rules and regulations as hereby set forth.

In compliance with Virgin Islands Code Title 3 Section 933, an original and two duplicates of these regulations are filed with the Lieutenant Governor for publication in the Virgin Islands Rules and Regulations.

The promotional policies of the Public Schools of the Virgin Islands were developed on the premise that students shall be engaged in instruction for a minimum of 180 days as mandated in the Virgin Islands Code Title 17 Section 61. A school calendar reflective of a minimum of 180 days of instruction is mandatory for promotion of students from one grade to the other.

The promotional policies of the Public Schools of the Virgin Islands are based as closely as possible on the philosophy of education of the Virgin Islands Department of Education. Since the philosophy of Education is democratic, the promotional policies must serve democratic purposes.

1.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In considering the question of promotion and retention, the following guiding principles shall be considered (in each individual case) to determine which will be best for the child, for the group of which he is a member, and for the community in which he lives.

1.1 Each child shall be placed in the group where he/she can do the best work and receive the most benefit - socially, emotionally, physically and cognitively.

Promotion Policies 1.1 Continued

1.2 Each child progresses at a different rate according to ability.

1.3 The question of the promotion or retention of each child is a unique problem. Grades shall not be the only criteria for promotion. Such factors as the child's age, English language fluency, social development, physical maturity, cognitive ability, work habits and emotional behavior shall be considered in determining promotion.

1.4 Each child has possibilities for growth and development. He/she must experience success. Encouragement from an understanding teacher can be a great incentive for him/her to achieve to the fullest potential.

1.5 Teachers are responsible for the progress of the students. The greatest responsibility of the teacher is to the individual child and his/her needs. Therefore, teachers must provide instruction which incorporates a child's learning styles and interdisciplinary teaching of the concepts in the Virgin Islands curriculum guides and curriculum supplements.

1.6 Parents are also responsible for the progress of their children and are encouraged to attend conferences, contact teachers, and/or request information about their children's academic and social development.

1.7 When a child is promoted, the new teacher shall accept the child as he/she is. The teacher shall find out all the facts to determine the child's present level of development. The teacher shall work with the child at that level and stimulate his/her growth to higher levels.

1.8 For students in grades 4 through 6, if, after all factors of the child's development are considered, and it is determined that it would be unwise for the child to be promoted to the next grade, the child and his/her family should be prepared in such a way that no feeling of shame or punishment is felt. All concerned should be helped to realize that, for well established reasons, the child may be a happier and more efficient worker if he/she spends a longer time in reaching certain grade standards.

1.9 Promotion or retention shall not be based on a child's race, sex, or national origin or because he/she comes from a home that uses or speaks another language other than English.

Promotional Policies Continued

2.0 PROMOTIONAL POLICIES

2.1 PROMOTION FROM KINDERGARTEN THROUGH THIRD GRADE

Early childhood education classrooms - kindergarten through third grade shall follow the developmentally appropriate design including hands on learning centers developed to enhance independent learning skills. Failure shall be non-existent in these classrooms. Each child must experience daily success even though individual children may require an additional variety of innovative teaching techniques and strategies to address their unique learning styles.

A child, who is unable to achieve success by the end of the second marking period shall have a meeting of the basic child team to discuss his/her progress. The team shall include the school administrator (s), classroom teachers, guidance counselor, parent and a special subject teacher. A complete program shall be developed for the child which includes:

- identifying his/her learning style,
- listing strengths and weaknesses in all academic areas,
- multiple assessments, and
- enrichment and after school assistance.

A child who cannot successfully complete the required skills for each grade level by the end of each school year, inspite of documented extra efforts of the teacher, shall be placed in a developmentally appropriate primary transitional class setting. The emphasis and focus of this class will be specialized instruction in a small setting (class size shall not exceed 16). If a student shows considerable progress during the year, he/she shall be returned to the regular class placement.

A checklist of skills (developed from the content and performance standards) mastered for each grade level shall be completed and maintained for each child. This checklist shall be turned over to the next teacher, who in turn will plan a developmental program to address and correct deficiencies and build on strengths. The checklists shall be completed based upon:

- anecdotal records of the child's activities
- a cumulative writing folder with a minimum of 10 samples of varied writings of stories, recipes, poems, paragraphs, lab experiments, letters, journal entries etc.)
- pictures, diagrams etc. of the child's work
- projects completed by the child
- other assessments

Promotional Policies Continued

NOTE: Limited English Proficiency modifications as specified in the (PLALEP) policy manual Procedures for Identification, Assessment and placement of LEP (Limited English Proficient) students shall apply. In the case of the LEP students, any test administered should be in the home language of the student, and interpretations should take into consideration cultural factors that influence the student's responses.

3.0 RETENTION AND ACCELERATION

3.1 A child shall be retained for one year only from grades 4 to 6 except in cases of prolonged unexcused absences. A retaineo who, during his second year does not show progress by the end of the first marking period shall be administered an assessment battery and appropriate placement determined. The child shall be placed in a developmentally appropriate transitional class setting on the intermediate level if he/she does not require placement under Special Education.

3.2 Should it be necessary to retain or accelerate a child in a grade, the final decision shall be made by the Basic Child Study Team and the parent shall be consulted as part of the decision making process. They shall determine whether retention or promotion is in the best interest of the child. The following procedure shall be followed:

1. The teacher advises the principal in writing by the middle of the second marking period of the possible retention of the child.
2. The principal arranges a conference with the Basic Child Study Team and parent to discuss the child's work.
3. Parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be notified in the home language of the child's possible retention by the end of the second marking period.
4. A child who has been identified as a possible retaineo, shall be provided with a comprehensive assistance plan which includes a minimum of three (3) days of after school assistance by the teacher. All efforts to assist each possible retaineo shall be documented, reviewed and approved by the principal at the beginning of the third making period. However, if there is noticeable improvement or lack thereof in the child's performance, the parent or guardian(s) shall be informed of the committee's decision to promote or retain the child by the middle of the fourth marking period. The check list of skills for the grade level, cumulative writing folder, anecdotal records, examples of the child's work - pictures, diagrams, and projects completed by the child shall be available to the parent/guardian when discussing the final decision.

Promotional Policies Continued

5. A child who excels above grade level in all subject areas shall be accelerated upon the recommendation of the teacher, guidance counselor, supervisors and principal. A complete assessment battery that measures all aspects of development shall be administered for proper placement within the elementary system. The principal shall arrange for a Basic Child Study Team conference with the parent(s) or guardian(s) to discuss their child's proposed placement.

Provisions shall be made for children who are performing above grade level through such programs as the School Wide Enrichment Model, individual tutoring, talent pool, research projects, curriculum compacting and advancing to higher grade level (s).

3.3 TRANSITION TO REGULAR CLASSES FROM CLASSES OFFERED UNDER SPECIAL EDUCATION

A handicapped child shall be assigned to a special education program according to indications of how he/she can best achieve success in learning.

Whenever possible, a handicapped child shall be grouped with and/or participate with nonhandicapped children in activities that are part of the child's educational program. This grouping and/or participation will be programmed so as to allow the child to spend as much of the school day as is feasible for the child within the regular classroom. This does not apply, for example, to trainable mentally retarded, certain educable mentally retarded, severely emotionally disturbed or any other handicapped child established by medical, psychological, social (adaptive behavior) and other educational data as not being able to function outside of a self contained classroom.

3.31 A handicapped or exceptional child shall be returned to an appropriate regular class on a trial and/or part time basis, if, after evaluation, it is the opinion of the Basic Child Study Team that the child can function adequately with support from the special teacher to meet the grade level requirements. The trial period shall be six to eight weeks.

3.32 Promotion of special education elementary students within special classes is based primarily on chronological age.

3.33 A child in a special education class at the end of the sixth grade (or 12 to 13 years of age) will be reevaluated by the Basic Child Study Team. If, after evaluation, it is decided that the child must remain in a special class, he will proceed to a secondary level special education class and be enrolled in a prevocational core-study type program.

Promotional Policies Continued

If, in the opinion of the Child Study Team, the child is able to reenter a regular class or special core class on a trial and/or part time basis, the child will go into that seventh grade class and continue to receive the support from the seventh grade special education teacher.

A checklist of skills mastered for the elementary program shall be presented for certification by the Insular Superintendent and the Division of Special Education indicating that a handicapped child has completed the offerings of the elementary special education programs. The child's program then becomes the responsibility of the secondary school (seventh to twelfth). Transition from the elementary to the secondary shall be determined by many factors including years in school, social and vocational development, chronological age, mental age, need for social, vocational and varied instructional opportunities of the secondary school and achievement in keeping with the child's abilities and needs.

No LEP student should be placed in special education without a specific referral from the CIP committee as required in the PIALEP policy manual.

3.4 DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE TRANSITIONAL CLASSES

A child shall be admitted to a developmentally appropriate class if he/she is failing and after testing, results indicate that his/her cognitive ability is below average and serious perceptual problems exist.

No LEP student should be placed in these classes without specific referral from the CIP committee as required in the PIALEP policy manual. Testing must be in accordance with the policy manual and tests should be normed for children from other languages and cultural backgrounds.

4.0 SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Every teacher shall keep a record indicating concepts and/or skills for each child. Each teacher will utilize a variety of assessment tools and will use an appropriate code to indicate the type of assessment tool; for example, E for essay, T/F for true and false, MC for multiple choice, PR for project, RES for research, EX for experiment etc.

On these check lists of skills and/or concepts the teacher shall indicate the skills and/or concepts each child mastered during the school year. This checklist shall be turned over to the next teacher who shall utilize the information to plan a successful program for each child.

4.2 An LEP child shall receive grades with a special notation.

Promotional Policies Continued

4.3 Additional courses - Physical Education including Cultural Dance, Art, Music, shall be graded as:

- A - Outstanding
- B - Good
- C - Satisfactory
- F - Unsatisfactory

4.3 In recording grades the following grading system shall be used:

LETTER	NUMERICAL VALUE
A +	98 - 100 (98 to 100% of Checklist of Skills mastered)
A	94 - 97 (94 to 97% of Checklist of Skills mastered)
A-	90 - 93 (90 to 93% of Checklist of Skills mastered)
B+	87 - 89 (87 to 89% of Checklist of Skills mastered)
B	84 - 86 (84 to 86% of Checklist of Skills mastered)
B-	80 - 83 (80 to 83% of Checklist of Skills mastered)
C+	77 - 79 (77 to 79% of Checklist of Skills mastered)
C	74 - 76 (74 to 76% of Checklist of Skills mastered)
C-	73 - 70 (73 to 70% of Checklist of Skills mastered)
FAILURE	Below 70

APPROVED May 14, 1998
Date

Charles A. Tomblin
Chairman
Virgin Islands Board of Education

RESEARCH APPLICATION

Office of Testing, Planning, Research and Evaluation
 Department of Education
 44-46 Kongens Gade
 St. Thomas, USVI 00802

NAME Renice RogiersDATE October 24, 2005MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. Box 402 Christiansted, VI 00821

PHONE: Home 773-5716 Office _____ FAX _____ E Mail _____
 Address renicerogiers@yahoo.com _____

A. IDENTIFICATION OF APPLICANT

1. Your Professional Position (check one)

Graduate Student UVI Faculty Teacher Independent Researcher
 School/Central Office Administrator Other _____
 (Please Specify)

2. Are you employed by the VI Department of Education? Yes No

If yes, indicate your job title and work site

Job Title: Teacher Work Site: Charles H. Emanuel Elementary School

3. Which of the following best describes your proposal study?

(a) A VI Department of Education project
 (b) An independent study to fulfill degree requirements
 (c) A Master's thesis project
 (d) A federally funded study
 (e) A collaborated project between/among government agencies
 (f) A doctoral dissertation project
 (g) Other (please specify) _____

4. Is the proposed study in connection with the degree requirements of a college or a university?

 No (Go to question "5".) Yes (If yes, answer parts "a", "b", "c", and "d" of this question)

a) What degree requirements?

Masters Thesis Doctoral Dissertation Independent
 Other _____

(Please Specify)

b) Who is your advisor or committee chairperson?

Name Dr. J. Jeannette Lovern, Telephone Number 692-4142Institution UVI Department in Institution Education

c) Indicate your current degree status:

Non-degree Baccalaureate Master's Doctoral

- d) If you are applying as an individual, briefly describe your area of research specialization and your credentials. .
My research will focus on the retention of students in grades first and second. I am an elementary school teacher who has a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education.

5. How are the costs of this proposed study being financed?

- By applicant
 By government foundation, or other research grant
(identify source):

6. List the name(s), position(s) related to this study, institutional affiliations, and all persons who will (to the best of your knowledge) use the data generated by this study for higher education: degrees, grant applications, or publication purposes:
(Attach additional sheets if necessary)

N/A

B. ATTACHMENTS

Check the required items attached to this application:

- Application Form
 Research Proposal
 Data Collection
 Instruments
 Study Recommendation Form/Thesis Proposal Approval Form
 Statement of Confidentiality Form
 Rights of Human Subjects Form
 Statement of Non-disclosure
 Signed signature of approval sheet
 Adherence to due date to ensure timely processing

7. REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENT SUBJECTS

Will pupils be required as subjects for this study?

Yes (If yes, answer parts "a", "b", "c" and "d" of this question.

* No (If no, skip to question "8".)

- a) Enter grade(s) and number of students requested.
Grade(s) _____ No. of Students _____
- b) Check and describe any specific criteria for selection of students to take part in the study.

Ability level (specify) _____
 Socioeconomic level(s) _____
 Ethnic, racial background _____
 Physical Characteristics _____
 Clinically identified conditions _____
 History of personal problems _____
 Other (specify) _____

- c) Procedures which will be used to gather data from students:

Group testing
 Individual testing
 Interviews- face to face
 Interviews - telephone

Questionnaires
 Observations
 Inventories
 Other _____
(Specify)

- d) Are file data on students required?

Yes

No

If yes, specify tests, scores, type(s) of other information and the period for which data are needed:

8. REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBJECTS OTHER THAN STUDENTS

Will V.I. Department of Education personnel, parents, or former students be subjects in the study?

Yes (If yes, answer parts "a", "b", and "c" of this question)
 No (If no, skip to question "9")

a) Indicate category by number requested

Teachers

School-Based Administrators

Central Office Administrators

Counselors

Parents

Other _____

(Specify)

b) Are file data on staff requested?

Yes

No

If yes, specify and discuss how data will be used.

c) Are file data on parents requested?

Yes

No

If yes, specify and discuss how data will be used.

9. REQUIREMENTS FOR ARCHIVAL DATA

Will archival data on students or staff be needed to complete the proposed study?

Yes

No

If yes, check sources requested:

Reports

Handbook

Research Studies

Policies

Charts/Graphs/Tables

Other Students' Report Cards

(Specify)

10. INSTRUMENTS, EQUIPMENT AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

What tests, observation guides, questionnaires, attitude scales, interest inventories, and other typed or printed instruments will be used? Specify below and enclose copies. None

- Group Test (specify) _____
- Individual Test _____
- Questionnaire _____
- Interview Protocol _____
- Observation Guide _____
- Attitude/Interest Inventory _____
- Other (specify) _____

What instructional materials will be used for research purposes? _____

(Specify or indicate "None".) None

11. DESCRIBE THE DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION FEATURES OF THE RESEARCH

(Include description of statistical tests, quantitative/qualitative factors, correlation factors- where applicable)

The research will be quantitative research. The descriptive statistics that will be used are measures of central tendency and percentages. The researcher will compare the grades attained by fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students who were retained in first and second grade with those of the non-retained students. T-tests for paired samples will be used to compare the child's grades in the retention year to his most recently completed grade. T-tests for non-paired samples will be used to compare retained children's current outcomes with their peers.

C. APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE

I understand that acceptance of this request for approval of a research proposal in no way obligates VI Department of Education schools or central offices to participate in this research. I also understand that approval does not constitute commitment of resources or endorsement of the study or its findings by the VI Department of Education.

I acknowledge that participation in research studies by students, parents, and school staff is voluntary. I will preserve the anonymity of all participants in the reporting of research results. I will not reveal the identity or include identifiable characteristics of schools or of the school system unless authorized by the VI Department of Education.

If approval is granted, I will abide by the VI Department of education policies and regulations and will conduct this research within the stipulations accompanying any document of approval.

At the completion of the study, I will provide the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation with one (1) bound copy of the research results.


Applicant's Signature


Date

CONTACT PERSON:

***Rita J. Howard, Ph.D.
Assistant Commissioner
Office of Testing, Planning, Research and Evaluation
Department of Education
44-46 Kongens Gade
Charlotte Amalie, VI 00802
(340) 774- 8505***

RESEARCH PROPOSAL

NOTE: This form MUST be completed in its entirety. Failure to do so WILL DELAY the processing of your research application.

APPLICANT'S NAME Renice Rogiers DATE OF SUBMISSION Oct. 24, 2005

Part I: INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 TITLE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY
An Investigation Into Whether First and Second Graders Who Were Retained Succeeded In The Intermediate Grades At The Charles H. Emanuel Elementary School on St. Croix, Virgin Island.
- 1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM
The success of retained students at the Charles H. Emanuel Elementary School on St. Croix has not been studied.
- 1.3A STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESIS/HYPOTHESES

- 1.3B STATEMENT OF RESEARCH QUESTION (S) Do first-grade and second-grade retainees become successful in the intermediate grades ?
Do first-grade and second-grade retainees who are successful remain low achievers in comparison to their chronological peers?

PART II: METHOD

- 2.1 DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECTS
- A. Definition of Population from which Sample will be selected
All fourth, fifth, and sixth graders who were retained in the first or second grades.
- B. Technique for Selecting Sample (*Random, stratified, cluster, etc*) _____
All members of the population will be used.
- C. Basis for Determining Sample Size N/A

2.2 INSTRUMENTS

A) Instrument(s) to be utilized (name and include a copy of each) None

B) Provide a Rationale for the selection of Instrument(s) _____

2.3 MATERIALS/APPARATIONS TO BE USED

A) Describe special materials to be developed and/or used in carrying out study. _____
None

B) Describe special apparitions to be utilized in carrying out study (E.g. computers, graphing calculators, manipulatives, etc.) Data computational software will be used.

2.4 DESIGN

A) Number of Groups to be Used None

B) Basis for Assignment to Groups (i.e., random assignment, use of pretest, matching on key variables, etc.) _____

C) Type of Research Design (i.e., correlational, experimental, casual-comparative, etc.)
Descriptive research

2.5 PROCEDURE (Describe exactly how the proposed study will be implemented. Description should be in list form and should be sufficiently clear for the reader to conduct the proposed study!) (Attach)

PART III: DATA ANALYSIS

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED TO ANALYZE DATA

- A) **Descriptive Statistics to be Reported Measures of Central Tendency and Percentages.**

Statistical Tests to be Used N/A

- B) **Inferential Statistics to be Reported T-tests**

PART IV: TIME SCHEDULE *(Identify Major Activities & Indicate Time Frame for completion. Thought not required, a GANTT or PERT chart can be used.)*

Review Report Cards - November 2005 - January 2006

Analyze Data - February 2006

Complete Report - March 2006

METHODOLOGY

Data will be collected from the archived grade cards of the population of fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade students at the Charles H. Emanuel Elementary School who were retained in the first or second grades. In this study, the researcher will use a descriptive design. The statistics that will be used are measures of central tendency, percentages, and t-tests. Data will be collected from the students' report cards to measure the performance level of those students in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades who had been retained in the first or second grades. The mean for the five major subject areas (Reading, Language, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies) will determine the level of students' performance when they were in the first or second grade (and were retained). This will be compared with the grades they received in the most previous year they completed in the intermediate grades. The GPA will also be used to compare the academic achievement of students in the intermediate grades who were retained in first or second grade with those of the non-retained students. A computational data software will be used to analyze the data accurately.

Statement of Non-Disclosure of Release of Education Record Information

I understand that upon receipt of the information provided by the Virgin Islands Department of Education regarding Retention the re-release is prohibited by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. I acknowledge that I fully understand that the release by me of this information to any unauthorized person could subject me to criminal and civil penalties (where applicable) imposed by law.

Name: Renice Rogiers

Signature: Renice Rogiers

Organization: UVI Master's Program

Date: 10/24/05

Research Advisor: [Signature] Date: 10/24/05

The items listed below are designated as Education Record Information by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act:

- Date and place of birth, parent(s) and/or guardian addresses, and where parents can be contacted in emergencies;
- Grades, test scores, courses taken, academic specializations and activities, and official letters regarding a student's status in school;
- Special education records;
- Disciplinary records;
- Medical and health records that the school creates or collects and maintains;
- Documentation of attendance, schools attended, courses taken, awards conferred, and degrees earned;
- Personal information such as a student's identification that would make it easy to identify or locate a student.

Personal notes made by teachers and other school officials that are not shared with others are not considered education records. Additionally, law enforcement records created and maintained by a school or district's law enforcement unit are not education records.

Part of the education record, known as directory information, includes personal information about a student that can be made public according to a school system's FERPA policy. Directory information may include a student's name, address, and telephone number and other information typically found in school yearbooks or athletic programs. Other examples are names and pictures of participants in various extra-curricular activities or recipients of awards, pictures of students, and height and weight of athletes.

Statement of Non-Disclosure of Release of Education Record Information

I understand that upon receipt of the information provided by the Virgin Islands Department of Education regarding Retention the re-release is prohibited by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. I acknowledge that I fully understand that the release by me of this information to any unauthorized person could subject me to criminal and civil penalties (where applicable) imposed by law.

Name: Renice Rogiers

Signature: Renice Rogiers

Organization: UVI Master's Program

Date: 10/24/05

Research Advisor: [Signature] Date: 10/24/05

The items listed below are designated as Education Record Information by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act:

- Date and place of birth, parent(s) and/or guardian addresses, and where parents can be contacted in emergencies;
- Grades, test scores, courses taken, academic specializations and activities, and official letters regarding a student's status in school;
- Special education records;
- Disciplinary records;
- Medical and health records that the school creates or collects and maintains;
- Documentation of attendance, schools attended, courses taken, awards conferred, and degrees earned;
- Personal information such as a student's identification that would make it easy to identify or locate a student.

Personal notes made by teachers and other school officials that are not shared with others are not considered education records. Additionally, law enforcement records created and maintained by a school or district's law enforcement unit are not education records.

Part of the education record, known as directory information, includes personal information about a student that can be made public according to a school system's FERPA policy. Directory information may include a student's name, address, and telephone number and other information typically found in school yearbooks or athletic programs. Other examples are names and pictures of participants in various extra-curricular activities or recipients of awards, pictures of students, and height and weight of athletes.

SIGNATURE OF APPROVAL SHEET

Practices will comply with ethical and confidential considerations of the study/research.

Renee Rogers

Signature of Requesting Party

RECOMMENDED/NOT RECOMMENDED

Basil A. [Signature] 10/26/05
Principal/Director Date

RECOMMENDED/NOT RECOMMENDED

Principal/Director Date

RECOMMENDED/NOT RECOMMENDED

Principal/Director Date

RECOMMENDED/NOT RECOMMENDED

Principal/Director Date

RECOMMENDED/NOT RECOMMENDED

Principal/Director Date

RECOMMENDED/NOT RECOMMENDED

Principal/Director Date

RECOMMENDED/NOT RECOMMENDED

Principal/Director Date

RECOMMENDED/NOT RECOMMENDED

Principal/Director Date

RECOMMENDED/NOT RECOMMENDED

Principal/Director Date

RECOMMENDED/NOT RECOMMENDED

Principal/Director Date

RECOMMENDED/NOT RECOMMENDED

T. T. Joseph 10/22/05
Insular Superintendent Date

RECOMMENDED/NOT RECOMMENDED

Insular Superintendent Date

RECOMMENDED/NOT RECOMMENDED

[Signature] 11/7/05
Assistant Commissioner of Education Date

APPROVED/DISAPPROVED

[Signature] 11/21/05
Commissioner of Education Date

NOTE: All parental permission forms must be completed and submitted to Principal prior to study commencing.

[Signature]
11-21-05

STATEMENT OF
CONFIDENTIALITY AND SAFETY

I Renice Rogiers hereby verify that confidentiality will be maintained in the conduct of this research activity. Every effort will be given to conceal the identity of the students, teachers, schools and other education related subjects of this study; and the research will do no mental, physical or emotional harm to the participants involved in the study.

Renice Rogiers
RESEARCHER

10/24/05
DATE

Jeanette Lov
RESEARCH ADVISOR

10/24/05
DATE



Government of the United State Virgin Islands

Department of Education

Office of the Commissioner
1834 Kongens Gade

St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands 00802-6346

RECEIVED

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EDUCATION
COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

Tel: (340) 774-0100

Fax: (340) 779-7153

November 4, 2005

Noreen Michael, Ph. D.
Commissioner
Department of Education
44-46 Kongens Gade
St. Thomas, V.I. 00802

RE: Research Proposal Request – Renice Rogiers

Dear Dr. Michael:

Please find the attached research proposal application submitted for your review and authorization. Endorsements appear on the necessary (1) Signature of Approval Sheet, (2) Statement of Non-Disclosure of Release of Education Record Information, and (3) the Statement of Confidentiality and Safety form.

Sincerely,

Anya C. Sebastien, Ed. D.
Assistant Commissioner

drm

ATTACHMENT:

APPROVED/DISAPPROVED

N Michael 11/21/05

Noreen Michael, Ph. D.
Commissioner

Appendix D

Figure 1

Scores Earned by the Three Groups in the Intermediate Grade

				Reading	Language	Math
				Current grade	current grade	current grade
retainee	retainees	1		61.00	81.00	66.00
		2		71.00	74.00	71.00
		3		73.00	70.00	72.00
		4		59.00	55.00	76.00
		5		53.00	50.00	56.00
		6		71.00	74.00	84.00
		7		71.00	73.00	73.00
		Total	N	7	7	7
	chronological peers/boys	1		73.00	84.00	81.00
		2		94.00	89.00	93.00
		3		76.00	80.00	75.00
		4		64.00	75.00	66.00
		5		76.00	86.00	74.00
		6		79.00	86.00	73.00
		7		66.00	85.00	74.00
Total		N	7	7	7	
chronological peers/girls	1		89.00	89.00	94.00	
	2		76.00	90.00	84.00	
	3		95.00	95.00	92.00	
	4		71.00	83.00	80.00	
	5		83.00	93.00	79.00	
	6		95.00	97.00	92.00	
	7		80.00	88.00	93.00	
	Total	N	7	7	7	
Total		N	21	21	21	

Handwriting

Spelling

Science

				current grade	current grade	current grade	
retainee	retainees	1		91.0	75.00	72.00	
		2		70.0	75.00	71.00	
		3		83.0	78.00	72.00	
		4		100.0	55.00	65.00	
		5		100.0	60.00	65.00	
		6		100.0	77.00	89.00	
		7		76.0	60.00	66.00	
		Total	N	7	7	7	
		chronological peers/boys	1		74.0	88.00	79.00
			2		84.0	91.00	90.00
			3		78.0	92.00	76.00
			4		97.0	78.00	74.00
			5		97.0	85.00	71.00
			6		88.0	86.00	79.00
			7		87.0	88.00	79.00
		Total	N	7	7	7	
		chronological peers/girls	1		90.0	84.00	83.00
			2		96.0	93.00	82.00
			3		77.0	97.00	96.00
			4		99.0	76.00	80.00
			5		86.0	93.00	82.00
	6			90.0	99.00	98.00	
	7			100.0	92.00	86.00	
	Total	N	7	7	7		
	Total	N	21	21	21		

Soc. Stud

Health

Art

				current grade	current grade	current grade	
retainee	retainees	1		86.00	85.00	80.00	
		2		74.00	75.00	90.00	
		3		68.00	72.00	98.00	
		4		61.00	73.00	70.00	
		5		56.00	71.00	70.00	
		6		67.00	88.00	88.00	
		7		63.00	75.00	95.00	
		Total	N	7	7	7	
		chronological peers/boys	1		72.00	84.00	80.00
			2		93.00	90.00	80.00
			3		81.00	80.00	90.00
			4		72.00	76.00	84.00
			5		78.00	78.00	95.00
			6		78.00	87.00	85.00
			7		70.00	86.00	75.00
		Total	N	7	7	7	
		chronological peers/girls	1		85.00	82.00	98.00
			2		78.00	85.00	90.00
			3		94.00	94.00	98.00
			4		74.00	94.00	90.00
			5		78.00	89.00	95.00
	6			94.00	97.00	95.00	
	7			88.00	100.00	100.00	
	Total	N	7	7	7		
	Total	N	21	21	21		

Phys. Ed.

Music

			current grade	current grade	
retainee	retainees	1	79.00	80.00	
		2	85.00	90.00	
		3	95.00	70.00	
		4	83.00	70.00	
		5	90.00	80.00	
		6	95.00	85.00	
		7	85.00	75.00	
	Total	N	7	7	
	chronological peers/boys	1		100.00	85.00
		2		95.00	100.00
3			70.00	75.00	
4			79.00	80.00	
5			90.00	80.00	
6			79.00	85.00	
7			79.00	80.00	
Total		N	7	7	
chronological peers/girls	1		95.00	100.00	
	2		80.00	90.00	
	3		95.00	80.00	
	4		75.00	90.00	
	5		89.00	80.00	
	6		95.00	80.00	
	7		88.00	100.00	
	Total	N	7	7	
Total	N		21	21	

Figure 2

Students' Grade Point Average (GPA) for Intermediate Grade

Retainees

1	79
2	77
3	70
4	70
5	70
6	83
7	73

Mean = 74.6

Chronological Peers/Boys

1	81
2	91
3	79
4	79
5	83
6	82
7	79

Mean = 82.0

Chronological Peers/Girls

1	90
2	86
3	86
4	75
5	86
6	93
7	92

Mean = 86.9