HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION IN TEXAS: AN EXPLANATORY SEQUENTIAL MIXED METHODS INQUIRY

A Dissertation

by

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

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This dissertation meets the standards for scope and quality of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and is hereby approved.

Kamiar Kouzekanani, PhD Chair Karen McCaleb, EdD Co-Chair

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ABSTRACT

Homebound instruction is a rapidly growing alternative educational placement for students who become injured or ill and miss over four or more weeks of school during one calendar school year. While the Texas education system has put great effort on improving the quality and rigor of classroom instruction, little, if any, efforts have been made on improving the quality of homebound instruction.

The explanatory sequential mixed methods study was conducted to investigate the effectiveness of homebound instruction on the academic achievement of grade 6, 7, and 8 students. The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) was used to measure academic achievement in reading and mathematics. The characteristic-present group consisted of 50 homebound students. The comparison group consisted of 50 non-homebound students matched on the basis of race, gender, and at-risk status. External validity was limited to study participants and no causal inferences were drawn due to the non-experimental nature of the study.

Analysis of the data showed that non-homebound students outperformed the homebound students on all measures of mathematics and reading. The qualitative data, which were obtained from seven middle school teachers, resulted in three themes, namely, lack of teacher training, insufficient teaching time, and inadequate qualifications to instruct homebound students in all core subject areas.

Based on the quantitative results, it was concluded that homebound instruction is not as effective as is non-homebound instruction in influencing academic achievement in mathematics and reading. Based on the qualitative results, which complemented the quantitative results, it was concluded that teachers are not adequately trained to provide the homebound students with proper learning opportunities. The results of this study should persuade school administrators and personnel that homebound students need to be provided a type of instruction that is similar to that of what student receive in a daily classroom setting. The impact of quality instruction for homebound students on academic achievement is potentially valuable to educators as schools strive towards higher assessment scores and accountability ratings.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my family, especially...

to my mother, Carolyn McBee, for instilling in me the importance of achieving the highest level of education possible and to always be working at being the best that I can be;

to my husband for all his patience, understanding, and completely taking over everything while I travelled through this higher education journey, I can't thank you enough;

to my dad for all the encouragement, support, and love throughout these past few years;

to my son and daughter-in-law for all their patience, encouragement, and understanding for not always being readily available to watch my grandson near as much as needed or as much as I wanted;

to my dear brothers and their families, Doug & Chuck, and Robert & Dana, thanks for your years of encouragement;

to my son and daughter-in-law's mother, Gee, for her amazing energy and commitment to caring for my grandsons while everyone else is working, and her constant support and encouragement to me throughout this journey;

to, last but certainly not least, my dearest beloved Matthew Ryan Beveridge, who is the one true inspiration in my life and who encouraged me to not sit around in despair, but to step up and continue the journey of achieving my life-long dream of receiving a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership......

To Matt and my great God above, this one is for you!

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There were several times that I seriously considered dropping the program because I struggled so much with statistics. Had it not been for the amazing and sincere encouragement of two esteemed colleagues, Alyssa Mejia and Patricia Chastain, I would have dropped out altogether. I will never forget the many, many long hours of study time we all put into Statistics I and II and studying for our comprehensive exams. I would not trade this doctoral experience with anything else I have done in my life.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS	PAGE
ABSTRACT	v
DEDICATION	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	viii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	x
LIST OF TABLES	xiv
LIST OF FIGURES	Xv
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	1
Background and Setting	1
Statement of the Problem	7
Theoretical Framework	7
Purpose of the Study	12
Operational Definitions	13
Glossary of Terms	14
Delimitations, Limitations, Assumptions	16
Significance of Study	17
CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	18
Introduction	18
A Nation at Risk/No Child Left Behind	18
No Child Left Behind Act	19
Homebound Instruction	21

Factors Influencing Academic Achievement	24
Why Study Grades 6, 7, & 8	27
History of the Texas Assessment Program	
ADA, IDEA, and Section 504	
Summary	
CHAPTER III: METHOD	
Introduction	
Research Design	
Subject Selection	
Instrumentation	40
Data Collection	43
Data Analysis	44
CHAPTER IV: RESULTS	46
Quantitative Results	47
Grade 6 Results	47
A Profile of Subjects	47
Outcome Measures	48
Mathematics Achievement	48
Reading Achievement	49
Grade 7 Results	50
A Profile of Subjects	50
Outcome Measures	51
Mathematics Achievement	

Reading Achievement	
Grade 8 Results	53
A Profile of Subjects	53
Outcome Measures	54
Mathematics Achievement	54
Reading Achievement	55
Grade 6, 7, & 8 Results	56
Summary of Quantitative Results	
Qualitative Results	
A Profile of Subjects	58
Focus Group Process	
The Coding Process	59
Focus Group Results	60
Summary of Qualitative Results	65
CHAPTER V: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND DISCUSSION	66
Introduction	66
Summary of Results	67
Quantitative Results	
Qualitative Results	68
Conclusion	69
Discussion	69
Synthesis of Quantitative Results	
Synthesis of Qualitative Results	70

Implications	71
Recommendations for Further Research	
Final Remarks	
REFERENCES	
APPENDIX A	
TAMUCC IRB Application	91
TAMUCC IRB Approval	
School District Approval	
Focus Group Consent Form	
APPENDIX B	
Focus Group Transcript	

LIST OF TABLES

TA	BLES	AGE
1	A Profile of Subjects, Grade 6	48
2	Mathematics Achievement, Grade 6	49
3	Reading Achievement, Grade 6	50
4	A Profile of Subjects, Grade 7	51
5	Mathematics Achievement, Grade 7	52
6	Reading Achievement, Grade 7	53
7	A Profile of Subjects, Grade 8	54
8	Mathematics Achievement, Grade 8	55
9	Reading Achievement, Grade 8	56
10	All Subjects Grade 6, 7, & 8 Mathematics and Reading	57
11	Codes and Categories Developed from Participants Perspectives, Qualitative Data	60
12	Themes Developed from Participants Perspectives, Qualitative Data	61
13	Participants Perspectives, Theme 1: Lack of Teacher Training	63
14	Participants Perspectives, Theme 2: Instruction Time	64
15	Participants Perspectives, Theme 3: Instructor Qualifications and Communication	64

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE		PAGE	
1	Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development	10	
2	Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design	37	

Chapter I

Introduction

Background and Setting

Since the publication of *A Nation at Risk*, written by the National Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEE) in 1983, American schools have strived and been urged to continue to improve schools and academic achievement of every student. All across the country school districts are concerned with improving student test scores on standardized tests, raising the level of accountability in the classroom, increasing the graduation rate, and closing the achievement gaps, which are enormous tasks when a large number of students do not regularly attend the school (Chang & Jordan, 2010). Schools in the United States are regulated by the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) which was designed to ensure that all children achieve academic proficiency in language arts and mathematics (U.S. Department of Education, 2002a). Schools have been experiencing an increased emphasis on students' academic achievement as assessed by standardized testing. This expectation of all students achieving proficiency becomes increasingly difficult if and when all are not in school. However, according to the Texas Education Agency (TEA), there are times when a child cannot attend school due to some type of acute or chronic illness, disease, accident, or other health impairment which would require the student to be out of school for a period of four or more weeks of the academic school year (TEA, 2010). In this case, a student could qualify to receive homebound instruction.

Homebound instruction is a type of program that has received negligible attention in the education literature regarding the best practices and theories of learning, overall effectiveness, and its impact on academic achievement on standardized tests (Patterson, 2008). Homebound instruction is a type of educational service provided to students that become injured or ill and are

expected to be confined for a minimum of four consecutive weeks, as documented by a physician licensed to practice in the United States (TEA, 2010). There are two types of homebound instruction programs, namely, general education homebound (GEH), and special education homebound (SEH). If a student was attending all general education services prior to becoming injured or ill, this student would apply for GEH instructional services. This placement requires documentation from a U.S. licensed physician, indicating the type and severity of the condition as well as the anticipated length of confinement to the home or designated location (TEA, 2014). The GEH application must be reviewed and approved by the individual school district's superintendent or designee before any services can be provided. After approval, the student would qualify for homebound services under what school personnel call a 504. Section 504 is part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which is a national law protecting qualified individuals from discrimination based on the disability (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014). This law applies to any organization that receives federal financial assistance. Homebound instruction is developed by a 504 Committee, which is responsible for designing and writing an individual education plan, 504 Plan, for the homebound student that must contain all aspects of the students' academic needs (TEA, 2010). The school nurse serves as a liaison between the family, the school, and the medical team. The nurse assists in planning for the child's return to school (The Texas Guide to School Health Programs, 2010).

If a student receives special education services prior to becoming injured or ill, this student will apply for the SEH instructional services by completing the required application form, which is usually available at his/her home campus (TEA, 2014). The SEH student's application goes through the district's office of Special Education Services and must be signed by the district's superintendent or designee from the Office of Special Education (TEA, 2014).

The instructional arrangements for the SEH student are made by the school's Admissions, Review, and Dismissal Committee, often referred to as the ARD Committee. The ARD Committee is responsible for determining the necessary services in accordance with all state and federal laws (TEA, 2014). It is the responsibility of the school nurse to serve as a liaison between the family, the school, and the medical team. The nurse also assists in planning for the child's return to school (The Texas Guide to School Health Programs, 2010). Regardless of the physical location, situation, or setting of the student, every student in grades 6, 7, and 8 is expected to take and pass the state mandated State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) test in mathematics and reading (TEA, 2014).

Currently, U.S. is facing a rapidly growing problem with student absenteeism (Ginsburg, Jordan, & Chang, 2014). Regardless of whether the student is receiving homebound or general education instruction, regular attendance in academic instruction is a critical factor on academic achievement (Ginsburg et al, 2014). Although the NCLB Act of 2001 compels states to report attendance, there are no mandates to report chronic absenteeism to anyone (Utah State Office of Education, 2012). There is a general agreement among researchers that being chronically absent places students at risk of negative academic consequences (Chang & Romero, 2008; Moonie, Sterling, Figgs, & Castro, 2008; University of Utah: Research Briefs, n.d.). A study conducted by the National Network of Partnership of Schools at Johns Hopkins University from 1999 to 2001 showed that, on average, 6.60% of all secondary students in the 39 participating schools were chronically absent from school (Sheldon & Epstein, 2004). Sheldon and Epstein (2004) defined chronically absent students as those who miss 20 or more days of school in an average school term. In a more recent study, Chang and Jordan (2014) stated that an estimated 5 to 7.5 million, approximately 10%, of U.S. students, miss over one month of school each year. Across

the country, school districts are mandated by the NCLB Act of 2001 to make sure all students achieve academic proficiency in language arts and mathematics (Towards a New Golden Age in American Education, 2004). Achieving proficiency becomes much more difficult when students are not attending school on a consistent basis. The 2010, Texas Education Code § 25.085(a) requires that a child attends school daily for the entire period that school's program of instruction is provided. Attendance is compulsory for a child who is at least six years of age, younger than six but has been previously enrolled in first grade, or has not yet reached the age of 18. The Education and Family Codes contain "truancy" laws to enforce this compulsory attendance requirement (Texas Education Code § 25.085(a), 2014). In one of the provisions written by the Department of Education (2010), it is stated:

Every parent, guardian, or other person having custody and/or control of a child between six and sixteen must ensure that such child regularly attends the public schools of the district or day school in which there is given instruction equivalent instruction elsewhere other than at that school (Chapter 22).

A new state by state analysis of national testing data demonstrated that students who miss more school than their peers score lower on the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) (Ginsburg, Jordan, & Chang, 2014). The finding applied to every age, grade level, racial and ethnic group, state, and city. The study also showed that while students from lowincome families are more likely to be chronically absent, the ill effects of missing too much school hold true for all socio-economic groups (Ginsburg et al, 2014). "The success of the school in carrying out its primary charge of educating and socializing students is contingent on students attending school regularly" (Schaps, 1998, p.1). Schaps (1998) also emphasized that attendance is a priority for a student's overall academic growth and success. Students must be present in school in order to benefit from the academic program in its entirety to achieve academic success (DeKalb, 1999; Rothman, 2001).

Theoretically, effective homebound instruction should match the general education instruction program as much as possible (Hocutt, 1996). Characteristics of effective schools include improved academic achievement, strong educational leadership, an orderly environment, high achievement expectations, systematic monitoring of student performance, motivation, parental support, and high student self-efficacy (Hocutt, 1996). According to Patterson (2008), the goal of homebound instruction is to provide a well prescribed educational service, as equal as possible to the regular instruction program, offered through a multidisciplinary team effort to keep students current with classroom instruction and facilitate the student's return to the classroom setting. Unfortunately, students placed in homebound settings are typically served for only a few hours per week by a teacher that is licensed and certified in only one subject area (Lustig, 2009). Hocutt (1996) indicated that in order for a one-on-one type instruction program to be successful, a considerable investment of resources, including time and effort, as well as having highly motivated teachers willing to assist students on a regular basis, and a sufficient amount of instructional time are needed. According to the NCLB Act, all teachers, including homebound teachers must be highly qualified in the subject area they are teaching (TEA, 2010). Teachers who are assigned to teach homebound instruction must be certified in at least one core content area but are not required to have any other type of specialized training (TEA, 2014).

Research shows that the single most important factor in determining a student's academic success is the academic preparation s/he receives and the rigor of the coursework to which the student is exposed (Research Briefs, 2009). The report also stated that while rigorous academic preparation was the most important factor in academic success, there were a number of other

factors that strongly correlated to academic success, namely, parental involvement and academic expectations, regular attendance, motivation, engagement, discipline, and self-efficacy.

The purpose of selecting middle school grade levels of 6, 7, and 8 for this study was due to the recent debate between school reconfiguration and academic achievement. Over the past 20 years, the state of Texas has transitioned sixth grade classes, which once were located at the elementary schools, to the middle school setting, which were previously called Junior High Schools (Bedard & Do, 2008). Currently, there are a number of researchers studying the impact of transitioning and grade configuration on student academic success (Gordon, Peterson, Gdula, & Klingbeil, 2011). School districts across the country prefer to go back to the K - 8 and 9 - 12grade configuration because of impressive study results (Cook, MacCoun, Muschkin, & Vigdor, 2007). Although academic success was the primary focus of the study, other outcome measures were shown to be statistically significant, namely, improved behavior, increased self-efficacy, improved psychological and socio-emotional outcomes, higher grades, and higher scores on standardized tests (Cook et al., 2008). A group of researchers conducted a large scale investigation on the differences in academic achievement among elementary, middle, and junior high school grade configurations and after school transitions; they found that elementary school students performed better than did the middle and junior high school students in GPA, mathematics, reading, and composite test scores (Gordon et al., 2011). The research supported the movement back to the grade configuration of K - 8 over the current middle school configuration of 6-8, especially considering the current era of high stakes testing and higher accountability on increased academic achievement.

Statement of the Problem

The NCLB Act mandated that 100 % of students must show proficiency on state standardized tests by 2013 – 2014 (Sunderman & Orfield, 2006). In 2011-12, Texas replaced the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test with The State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR). The new STAAR test is meant to be significantly more rigorous than previous tests and measures a child's performance as well as academic growth. The grade 3-8 STAAR test in reading and mathematics, by law, must be linked from grade to grade to performance expectations according to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) (TEA, 2014). All homebound students are required by law, and if physically capable, to take and pass the same STAAR test as the students who are receiving regular instruction on a daily basis. Currently, there is no concrete or consistent direction from the Texas Department of Education or the Texas Education Agency on an instructional plan that ensures homebound students cover the state mandated performance standards called TEKS. However, the homebound students are still expected to achieve the same proficiency as those students in the classroom (TAC, 19, Chapter 74, 2009). Each school district in the state of Texas is responsible for developing and implementing its own homebound instruction polices. However, with the new and more rigorous STAAR assessment tool and the limited research findings pertaining to homebound students, the overall effectiveness of homebound instruction on the basis of academic achievement, compared to regular instruction, has not been systematically studied.

Theoretical Framework

Lev Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory provided the study's theoretical framework, which can be incorporated into both the homebound instruction and the general education settings. The overarching theme of this theoretical framework is that social interaction plays a fundamental role in the development of cognition. The theory is based on the premise that "Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level (Zone of proximal development, n.d). First between people and then inside the child. This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57). These interactions can be seen in a variety of ways such as between the student and the teacher, the student with another student, or a combination of several students (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). The Sociocultural Theory has significant implications in teaching, schooling, homebound schooling, cognitive growth, and education in general (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). Social interaction is therefore fundamental to the development of cognition and higher order thinking (Kearsley, 1996, 2005; MacGillivray & Rueda, 2012; Subban, 2006). The lack of consistent social interaction that homebound students experience supports the study's aims.

The Vygotskian theory explores human interaction, cognitive learning, and sociocultural influences. Valenzuela (n.d.) stated that Vygotsky's theory of learning takes place through the social interactions that students have with their peers, teachers, and other experts. Consequently, teachers can create a learning environment that maximizes the learner's ability to interact with each other through discussion, collaboration, one-on-one discussion, and feedback. According to Vygotsky (1978), the sociocultural environment presents the child with a variety of tasks and demands, and engages the child in his/her world through the tools.

The Vygotskian theory supports a somewhat new type of instructional strategy that meets the diverse needs of the children in classrooms all over the world today called differentiated instruction (Subban, 2006). Differentiated instruction is a type of instruction that allows teachers to deliver instruction in a variety of ways that meet the needs of all the different learning styles of the children within the classroom and can even be used in individual settings like homebound instruction (Willoughby, 2005). Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of learning supports differentiated instruction and recognizes the student-teacher relationship as collaborative, with the learning experience becoming reciprocal (Subban, 2006). The teacher designs the lesson so that the instruction is just above the student's current development level, building on what the student already knows, and encouraging the student to move ahead into areas of greater challenge (MacGillivray & Rueda, 2001). In this regard, scaffolding would be an appropriate strategy to access the zone of proximal behavior (Riddle & Dabbagh, 1999). The aim of Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of learning weaves together key ideas with pressing and contemporary concerns that are needed to shape and deliver instruction to meet the needs of all students, especially the linguistically and culturally diverse students who have been marginalized by the traditional models of pedagogy (John-Steiner, 1995).

One of the most important contributions of this theory is the distinction Vygotsky made between the child's actual and potential level of development and what he called the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). This theory suggests that the potential for cognitive development depends upon the ZPD, that is, a level of development is attained when children engage in social behavior. He argued that to understand the relationship between the development and the learning, the actual and the potential levels of development must be distinguished (Scott & Palincsar, 2013). Figure 1 illustrates Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development.

9

Figure 1

Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development



In the figure, Vygotsky illustrated that every child is in a state of perpetual potential, capable of learning whatever a more knowledgeable person can teach him/her. As long as instruction takes place along a logical line of progression which the child is following, there is no limit to what a child can learn at a particular age or stage. There are elements of learning that the child can grasp without assistance based on factors such as the prior knowledge and the environment. This learning is at the lower end of the ZPD. At the upper end is the learning that can take place through teaching by a knowledgeable person. A very optimistic view of education is that a learner is a mass of potential, rather than being limited by the independent ability of the learner.

Constructivism was also explored as a potential theoretical framework to guide the study. Constructivism consists of a broad learning theory of knowledge regarding how people learn by constructing their own understanding and knowledge of the world through engaging in various experiences and reflecting on the outcome (Hall, 2007). Constructivism is a catchword in education circles which is applied to both the learning theory and epistemology in discussing how people learn (Hein, 1991). The core ideas of constructivism go back to John Dewey, suggesting that learners construct knowledge for themselves (Hein, 1991). Constructivist learning theories, as proposed by Bruner and others, developed out of Piaget's theories of cognitive development (Hall, 2007). The basic assumption is that the learner is active in the learning process and that learning is the result of interaction with a problem context where the learners construct their own knowledge (von Glasersfeld, 1992). Constructivism operates on the premise that perspectives of the world are constructed through individual experiences and schema (Schuman, 1996). Teachers following a constructivist's perspective base their instruction on what the students already know and that learning should be meaningful and related to real life situation as much as possible (Duhaney & Duhaney, 2000). Therefore, to introduce new material and new concepts, the teacher needs to first discuss some related ideas that are already familiar to the student. The reason for not selecting this framework had to do, in part, because the homebound teacher would have difficulty in relating ideas to concepts with what the student already knows when the amount of time s/he spends with the student is minimal. Also, this theoretical framework does not support study's goal where there is a large gap of learning through meaningful experiences.

The other theoretical framework considered for this study was a progressive instructional model, called Interactive Multimodal Learning Theory (IMLT), developed by Mayer and

Moreno (2003). Multimodal learning environments use two modes to represent the content knowledge: verbal and non-verbal (Paivio, 1990) and refers to the use of pictures and words in presenting the material (Springer, 2008). In multimodal learning environments, students are presented with verbal and visual representations of the content (Fletcher & Tobias 2005; Mayer 2001). This model could incorporate the traditional or general classroom setting and the homebound instruction setting where the instructors must first present material in two different modes, a verbal manner and then follow it with a visual cue (Moreno & Mayer, 2007). According to Moreno and Mayer (2007), presenting information in two different manners enhances student learning and understanding. This progressive instructional model is designed to consider the use of computers or other electronic devices for visual images. The problem with this type of theoretical framework is that not every student has access to the electronic devices needed to pull up pictures at the fast pace of instruction. Also, currently there is no instructional plan of curriculum for homebound teachers to consistently prepare lesson plans for all the students they service.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of the study was to test the hypothesis that students in grades 6, 7, and 8 who received homebound instruction would score differently than their peers who received regular instruction on the basis of academic achievement in mathematics and reading. For the purpose of the study, academic achievement was measured by the state mandated regular STAAR test scores in mathematics and reading. The secondary purpose of the study was to document the perspectives of grade 6, 7, and 8 teachers regarding the effectiveness of homebound instruction. The study was guided by the following research questions: 1. Do grade 6, 7, and 8 students who participate in a homebound instruction program differ from grade 6, 7, and 8 students who participate in a non-homebound instruction program on the basis of achievement in mathematics?

2. Do grade 6, 7, and 8 students who participate in a homebound instruction program differ from grade 6, 7, and 8 students who participate in a non-homebound instruction program on the basis of achievement in reading?

3. Do grade 6, 7, and 8 students who participate in a homebound instruction program differ from grade 6, 7, and 8 students who participate in a non-homebound instruction program on the basis of total mathematics and reading proportion scores?

4. What are the perspectives of grade 6, 7, and 8 teachers on the effectiveness of homebound instruction?

Operational Definitions

Homebound instruction was operationally defined as a type of educational service provided to students that become injured or ill and are expected to be confined for a minimum of four consecutive weeks as documented by a physician licensed to practice in the United States (TEA, 2010). Homebound or hospital bedside instruction may also be provided to chronically ill students who are expected to be confined for any period of time totaling at least four weeks throughout the year. For the purpose of the study, regular instruction was defined as the regular classroom instruction children receive daily based on state standards, called the Texas Essential Knowledge and skills (TEKS), and evaluated by the annual state educational standardized tests called the STAAR tests. Academic achievement in grade 6, 7, and 8 mathematics was measured by the proportion of correct answers on six STAAR reporting categories of 1) Numbers, operations, and quantitative reasoning; 2) Patterns, relationships, and algebraic reasoning; 3) Geometry and spatial reasoning; 4) Measurement; and 5) Probability and statistic; and 6) Underlying processes and mathematical tools. Academic achievement in grade 6, 7, and 8 reading was measured by the proportion of correct answers on three STAAR reporting categories, namely, 1) Understanding/Analysis across genres; 2) Understanding/Analysis of literary texts; and 3) Understanding/Analysis of informational texts.

Glossary of Terms

For the purpose of the study, the following definitions were adopted to clarify meaning and understanding:

Acute Illness – Medical conditions such as injury, contagious illness, infection, or a disease with an abrupt onset (Shaw, Clyde, & Sarrasin, 2014).

Admissions, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) - An annual meeting held to review and plan the educational needs of students with disabilities or special needs (TEA, 2010).

Chronic illness – Medical conditions such as sickle cell disease, asthma, or compromised immune system that persist over a long period, affecting physical, emotional, intellectual, vocational, social, or spiritual functioning (Shaw, Clyde, & Sarrasin, 2014).

Differentiated Instruction – Different teaching approaches with keeping student variance in mind. It means starting where the teachers are and utilizing different strategies and approaches when teaching a concept in many different forms (Tomlinson, 2003).

Explanatory Sequential Design – A mixed methods research design that consists of collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell & Clark, 2011).

General/Regular Education – The plan of instruction delivered to students in the classroom on a daily basis, following the mandated curriculum adopted by the state of Texas (TEA, 2010).

Homebound Instruction – The continuation of instruction provided at the student's home and delivered by a certified teacher employed by the local independent school district while the student is too ill to attend school (Patterson & Tullis, 2008).

IDEA of 2004 – Refers to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation (U.S. Department of Education, 2002a).

Individual Education Plan (IEP) - An educational plan determined by a committee that encompasses an umbrella of mutually agreed upon list of services provided to assist a student in order to meet their maximum educational needs (TEA, 2010).

Interpretivism – A theoretical framework in which the researcher is interested in understanding of one's individual perspective of some certain phenomena, that is, those exhibiting quantifiable, empirical regularities (Crotty, 1998).

Mixed Method Research – A design developed to utilize both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies in one study (Creswell & Clark, 2007).

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 – A law which mandated schools to intensify their efforts to improve the quality of academic achievement of public schools and provision for schools that are failing to meet the requirements (No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 2002).

Section 504 – A part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that stands as the broad civil rights law designed to eliminate discrimination against any individual on the basis of his or her physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity or education program receiving federal financial assistance (IDEA, 2004).

Sociocultural Theory of Learning – A theory of human learning which describes learning as a social process and the basis of human intelligence (Vygotsky, 1978).

Special Education Services - An inclusive term under which required services are provided to students with disabilities free of charge and determined by an ARD committee (TEA, 2010).

Standardized Test – A type of assessment that is administered under standard or controlled conditions that specify when, where, how, and for how long students will have to respond or complete the test (TEA, 2010).

State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) - The standardized testing program, including tests for students in grades 3-12 and measures the readiness for success in subsequent grades and courses and ultimately for college and career. Students are tested in the core subject areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies (TEA, 2010).

Delimitations, Limitations, and Assumptions

The study was delimited to 1) grade 6, 7, and 8 students across the state of Texas, 2) the independent variable of homebound instruction, 3) the outcome measures of academic achievement in mathematics and reading (measured by scores from regular STAAR tests), and 4) the perspectives of teachers regarding the pros and cons of homebound instruction. Due to the of non-probability nature of sampling, external validity was limited to the study's participants. Due to the non-experimental nature of the study, no causal inferences were drawn. It was assumed that the 1) qualitative data from the focus groups represented honest opinions, 2) quantitative data from the TEA were accurate, 3) truth and realities could not be triangulated because such occurs when multiple data sources are combined to contribute to verification and validations, and 4) the researcher remained academically rigorous with objectivity and subjectivity in both the quantitative and qualitative portions of the study, respectively.

Significance of the Study

The significance of the study, which supports the literature, reinforces the need to bring immediate attention to school districts, policy makers, school administrators, educators, and parents the lack of effectiveness of homebound instruction and the responsibility that educators have on adequately servicing homebound students. First, the study results can provide some baseline evidence on the need to develop an instructional plan that covers all aspects of the TEKS that are required to be taught in the regular classroom. Second, the study may assist educators and policy makers on the real need to consider revising the amount of time allotted to homebound students. Third, the study may provide evidence on using other instructional options and technology available in which students can access lessons and communicate regularly with their homebound teachers. There is a scarcity of research evidence evaluating the effectiveness of homebound instruction on the basis of STAAR test results. The study participants' perspectives were consistent with the literature regarding homebound instruction. The educators indicated that there is little to no professional development or education for the teachers involved in homebound instruction, the widespread lack of instructional time provided for homebound students, and the concern regarding the qualifications of the teachers to know all subjects well. Results from this study could prove helpful to school leaders and administrators when planning homebound instructional plan.

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

Introduction

A systematic review of the literature was conducted to better understand the study's major variables of interest. The literature review was organized in seven sections: 1) A Nation at Risk/No Child Left Behind, 2) Homebound Instruction, 3) Factors Influencing Academic Achievement, 4) Why Studying Grades 6, 7, and 8?, 5) History of Texas Assessment Program, 6) ADA, IDEA, and Section 504, and 7) Summary. In retrieving the literature, the following search engines, literature databases, and sites were utilized: EBSCO, ERIC-Education Resources Information Center, ProQuest, Google, and Google Scholar, SAGE, Del Mar College Library, and the Mary and Jeff Bell Library at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

A Nation at Risk/No Child Left Behind

In the early 1980s, throughout the United States, there appeared to be a widespread public perception that the education system was in serious trouble and eroded by mediocrity, serious enough that could potentially threaten the future of the nation (Borek, 2008). In 1981, the National Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEE), formed by Terrel H. Bell, was directed to examine the quality of education in the United States and to prepare a report to the nation and to the President of its findings. After 18 months of investigation, research, and studies, the committee presented its results regarding the practical recommendations for the needed educational improvements in a report called *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* (Editorial Projects in Education Research, 2004). This landmark publication asserted that our current American education system was failing and needed immediate reform at all levels, including local, state, and federal efforts to meet the future needs

of our children and American workforce. The report called for elected officials, educators, parents, and students to reform our public school systems because they were in serious need of urgent attention (U.S. Department of Education, 1983).

A *Nation at Risk* called for placing the topic of 'quality of education' on the top of the national political agenda and for our nation to renew its commitment to schools and colleges throughout the American education system (Editorial Projects in Education Research, 2004). The report called for strengthening the curriculum for all students, setting clear and reasonable high school graduation requirements that demonstrate students' readiness for postsecondary education or the workplace and setting clear college entrance requirements. The report also called for improving the quality of textbooks and tests, demanding students to spend more time on school work, establishing higher requirements for new teachers, and increasing teacher compensation (Ravitch, 2010).

A *Nation at Risk* drew widespread attention and launched a call for supporting a rigorous testing system, a back-to-basics curriculum, higher standards, more homework, more science and mathematics curricula, more phonics, serious teacher accountability, and a host of other daunting initiatives (Ansary, 2007). The entire document called for more mathematics, science, art, humanities, homework, school days, basics, higher-order thinking skills, creativity, and teacher credentials. This massive reform in education set out to achieve educational goals never before attempted in the United States.

The No Child Left Behind Act

Another historical landmark in education occurred when President George W. Bush and Congress authorized the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), which was designed to improve student achievement and change the culture of America's schools (Dee & Jacob, 2011). The NCLB reform was an after-effect of the publication of *A Nation at Risk* report that had kickstarted the tough talk about public school reform and accountability. President Bush emphasized his deep belief in public education and the fact that too many of the neediest children were being left behind (Dee & Jacob, 2011). Under the NCLB, schools must use their federal funds to make all necessary requirements to ensure the highest quality learning environment and to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education (U.S. Department of Education, 2004).

The law reflected a remarkable consensus on how to improve the performance of America's elementary and secondary schools, while at the same time ensuring that no child is trapped in a failing school (Jorgensen & Hoffmann, 2003). The NCLB strengthened Title I accountability by requiring all states to implement statewide formalized testing for all students (Dee & Jacob, 2011). The assessment must be based on challenging standards in reading, mathematics, annual testing for all students in grades 3 through 8, and annual statewide progress objectives ensuring that all groups of students reach proficiency within 12 years (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). The NCLB required that all assessment results and state progress objectives be classified on the basis of poverty, race, ethnicity, disability, and limited English proficiency to ensure that no group was being left behind (Jorgensen & Hoffmann, 2003). The NCLB supported standards-based education based on the premise that setting high standards and establishing high measurable testing goals can improve individual outcomes in education (Dee & Jacob, 2011). In order to receive federal funds, the NCLB required that students must be making progress toward the standards set by each state, and called for federally mandated testing to a wide range of student groups from K-12. Technically, it dramatically

increased the role of the federal government in guaranteeing high quality public education for all children in the United States (U.S. Department of Education, 2004).

The NCLB Act's goal was to reach 100% Adequate Yearly Proficiency (AYP) for all students by the year 2014 (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). The NCLB established sanctions for schools in which students in racial, ethnic, income, and special education subgroups fail to meet the AYP goals for acceptable performance set by each state. The Texas Education Agency is responsible for the state-level administration of all the specific programs under the NCLB and Ed-Flex Partnership (TEA, 2014).

Homebound Instruction

According to Patterson (2008), one educational option that receives scant attention in the literature is homebound instruction. According to the TEA's 2014 - 2015 Student Attendance Accounting Handbook and the Texas Administrative Code, homebound instruction is separated into two different and distinct categories (TEA, 2014). Under the Texas Administrative Code 3.7 and General Education Homebound (GEH), "any student who is served through the GEH program must meet the following three criteria: 1) the student is expected to be confined at home or hospital bedside for a minimum of four weeks. The weeks need not be consecutive, 2) the student is confined at home or hospital bedside for medical reasons only, and 3) the student's medical condition is documented by a physician licensed to practice in the United States" (TEA, 2014, p. 67). "A student served through the GEH program at home or hospital bedside must be served by a certified general education teacher. Over the period of his or her confinement, the student must be provided instruction in all core academic subject area courses in which the student is enrolled. In addition, over the period of confinement, the student should be provided instruction in all other courses the student is enrolled in, if possible" (TEA, 2014, p. 67). To

qualify for GEH funding, the school district must have policies and procedures for the implementation of general education homebound instruction that has been approved by the local school board (TEA, 2014). Before a GEH student receives any type of academic instruction, a designated campus committee must make decisions regarding the GEH placement. Members of the committee are either called the GEH Committee or the 504 Committee and should include but are not limited to a campus administrator, a teacher of the student, and a parent or guardian of the student. Most schools include the school nurse to assist in making adaptions for the medical condition and the student's re-entry back into the school environment upon returning.

The role of the GEH Committee is to review and consider the necessity of providing instruction to a general education student at home/hospital bedside. If instruction is to be provided at home or hospital bedside, the GEH Committee determines the type(s) and amount of instruction to be provided. In making these decisions, the GEH Committee must consider information from the student's physician. However, the physician's note is not the sole determining factor in the Committee's decision-making process (TEA, 2014). Included in the GEH, with special alerts and considerations, are services for students with chronic or acute illnesses or other major health impairments or problems. The federal definition for Other Health Impairments, OHI found in 34 CFR, §300.8(c)(9)(i)(ii), is: "Other health impairment means having limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment that: 1) is due to chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and Tourette syndrome, and 2) a condition that adversely affects a child's educational performance" (U.S. Department of
Education, 2005). After a student receiving the GEH services returns to his or her campus, s/he is required to take the state STAAR test and must have a medical release from a licensed physician stating s/he has been released to go back to school.

The second type of homebound instruction that falls under the Special Education Section of the Texas Administrative Code 4.6 is titled Special Education Homebound (SEH) (TEA, 2014). Special Education has come a long way in the past 30 years. After the passage of PL 94-142 (1975), The Education of All Handicapped Children Act, its subsequent reauthorizations in recent year, and the great strides made after litigation of schools not following special education laws, special education has evolved as a major equalizer of protection and services for students with special needs (Zigmond & Matta, 2004). Currently, all special education programs are closely monitored by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) that works to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability (U.S. Department of Education, 2014).

"To be placed in the special education homebound instructional arrangement/setting, a student must: 1) be eligible for special education and related services as determined by an ARD committee, 2) be expected to be confined at home or in a hospital for a minimum of 4 weeks, the weeks need not be consecutive, 3) be confined for medical reasons only (unless the child is 0 to 5 years of age), and 4) have a medical condition that is documented by a physician licensed to practice in the United States" (TEA, 2014, p. 100). Students who are already receiving special education services prior to becoming injured or ill would not be required to go through step one of the process. "In making eligibility and placement decisions, a placement committee called an Admissions, Review, and Dismissal Committee, often called an ARD committee, must consider the physician's information. Just like the GEH service, the physician's note should not be the sole consideration in the committee's decision-making process and a student served in the

special education homebound instructional arrangement/setting must be served by a highly qualified special education teacher (as defined by the No Child Left Behind Act)" (TEA, 2014, p. 100).

According to the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the teacher serving a SEH student at home or hospital bedside must be highly qualified in special education and capable of providing high quality instruction in the core academic subject areas; the teacher that services a GEH student does not have to be certified in special education (TEA, 2014, p. 100). However, according to the *TEA Guidance for the Implementation of NCLB Highly Qualified Teacher Requirements*, the GEH teachers must be certified as highly qualified in their subject areas (TEA, 2014, p. 101).

Factors Influencing Academic Achievement

"Our society and its educational institutions seem to have lost sight of the basic purposes of schooling, and of the high expectations and disciplined effort needed to attain them" (U.S. Department of Education, 1983, p. 1). Our education system appears to be in a state where the students are doing the minimal requirements while the educators and policy-makers are expecting maximum outcomes in academic achievement. The idea of academic excellence as the primary goal of education seems to be fading in the American Education system (The National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). Researchers today are spending an enormous amount of time and money studying the factors that are influencing students' academic achievement.

For many years, research has shown that students that come from lower-income families lag behind in standardized test scores and other measures of academic achievement than those of wealthier families (Trafton, 2015). And for years, researchers have been studying factors associated with academic success and academic achievement. One particular group of the student population that has been left out of much of the research on the factors impacting academic achievement is the ill and/or injured homebound student (Kaffenberger, 2006). Kaffenberger (2006) stated that for every classroom of 25 students, five would have some kind of chronic illness and as many as three would require some type of academic intervention and medical support during the school year. A chronic illness is one that has no cure, but does not necessarily result in death. The most prevalent chronic illnesses among children and adolescents include asthma, allergic disorders, digestive disorders, heart conditions, diabetes, cancer, hemophilia, sickle-cell anemia, and epilepsy (Shaw, Clyde, & Sarrasin, 2014). Depending on the research and the researchers, the literature shows a variety of factors that could impact academic achievement of students on standardized test.

A recent study conducted jointly by researchers at MIT and Harvard University offers another dimension to what educators called "achievement gap" (Trafton, 2015). After magnetic resonance imaging, MRI, testing of the brains of high and low income students, the researchers found that the higher-income students had a thicker brain cortex in areas associated with visual perception and knowledge accumulation. These differences were also correlated with one measure of academic achievement, namely, performance on standardize tests (Trafton, 2015).

Breakthrough Collaborative (2011) stated that the single most important factor in determining a student's academic success is the academic received through rigorous coursework. While rigorous academic coursework appears to be the most important factor in academic success, the literature has consistently listed several leading factors that have proven to impact academic achievement, such as absenteeism (homebound students), peer relations, student motivation, student engagement and/or academic discipline, parental expectation and/or involvement, and self-efficacy (Breakthrough Collaborative, 2011).

Johnson and Birkeland (2003) reported a study conducted by the National Assessment of Educational Progress concluded that the "peer effect" showed to be the strongest influence on academic achievement in adolescences in the middle grades, especially in fourth graders. The study also suggested that the child's family, mostly mothers, academic expectation was also an important factor in academic achievement in fourth through eighth grades. According to a report, one of the strongest predictors of academic success is the student's academic engagement/discipline, which is the amount of time and quality of effort students devote to schoolwork and the degree to which students engage themselves into new learning experiences and exploring ideas and problems on their own (Johnson and Birkeland, 2003).

As stated earlier, there are a variety of reasons students can be placed in general education homebound instruction. Kaffenberger (2005) reported the largest group of homebound students is the chronically ill category. Forty-five percent of students with chronic illnesses fall behind in their schoolwork, which in turn affects not only their grades but also their self-esteem, self-efficacy, motivation, and peer relations which adversely affect academic achievement (Theiss, 1999). Over the past decade, educational researchers have been able to identify a growing number of programs and interventions that impact student achievement as measured by standardized tests but the impact has been the least for homebound students (Trafton, 2015).

An important factor to keep in mind when discussing academic achievement for homebound students is that the greater the illness that the child is experiencing, the greater the probability the student will suffer academically (Boonen & Petry, 2012). Medications, treatments, fatigue, illness, pain, and a variety of other emotional difficulties and treatmentrelated effects can be instrumental in causing weaker school performances among homebound students (Boonen & Petry, 2012; Patterson, 2008; Petit, 2013).

Why Studying Grades 6, 7, and 8?

There is a new debate in education about the effectiveness of the middle school grade configuration in relation to academic achievement and school accountability (Bedard & Do, 2008), which affected the delimitation of the current study to grades six, seven, and eight. One of the most common requests made by superintendents, principals, teachers, parents, and policy-makers is for more research to determine what grade configuration is the best for student success (Education Northwest, 2011). According to Carolan and Chesky (2012), after school districts spending the last 30 years on structuring middle schools to span from grades six through eight, the research is showing a movement back to K through eight. There is a growing body of research which shows K - 8 schools to be effective in improving academic achievement (Look, 2011). Another study on grade configuration conducted in the Philadelphia school systems showed that students in K - 8 schools performed better on standardized tests than did students who followed the grade six through eight configuration (Look, 2011).

Some educators think the arrangement of grades six through eight has distracted schools from providing academic rigor and raising student achievement (Alspaugh, 1998). Robert Gaudet, a senior policy analyst at the Donahue Institute at the University of Massachusetts, reported that "Middle schools are the great disaster of the education system" (Jonas, 2007, p. E1). Another research article stated that middle schools have been called the Bermuda Triangle of education in which increase in behavior problems, teen alienation, disengagement from school, and low academic achievement are noted (Alspaugh, 1998). Although the review of the literature suggested controversy in grade configuration, it was noted that researchers do agree with the notion that the biggest drops in academic performance can be seen in the grade levels that are making the actual transition into the new environment.

History of the Texas Assessment Program

In the late 1960s, the Governor of Texas appointed a "blue ribbon" committee to conduct an in-depth study of the status of the public education program and to develop policy statements which would provide a basis for improving the state system of public education (Cruse, 1985). According to Cruse (1985), the study reported that the traditional norm-referenced testing system was useful in evaluating how well students were compared to one another and the nation; however, it did not measure the academic achievement of individual objects or standards.

In 1973 and 1974, the Texas State Department of Education conducted, for the first time, statewide assessments in reading and mathematics, using criterion-referenced tests. Results provided useful information on student performance and showed major discrepancies on the basis of academic achievement among various subpopulations in different learning areas (Cruse, 1985). Cruse (1985), reported that in 1975, TEA began to explore assessment strategies for developing state testing policies. In another study by Cruse and Twing (2000), in affiliation with TEA, the authors updated their review of the history of testing in Texas and reported a chronological summary of the evolution of the so-called "high-stakes" assessments in Texas. In 1979, the Texas Legislature passed a bill amending the Texas Education Code (TEC) to require the Texas Education Agency to adopt and administer a series of criterion-referenced assessments to examine minimum basic skills competencies in mathematics, reading, and writing for students in grade three, five, and nine (TEA, 2004). This first criterion-referenced test was called The Texas Assessment of Basic Skills (TABS). The TABS was not a diploma-denial test; however, 9th graders who did not pass the test were required to retake the exam each year thereafter while

in school (TEA, 2004). As part of this new testing requirement, the legislature required that schools must provide remedial support for students that are not meeting minimal requirements (TEA, 2010). According to the open record laws, schools were required to publish their campus and district results of student performance on the TABS which, in turn, became the tipping point and beginning of high-stakes testing accountability for assessments in the state of Texas (TEA, 2010).

In 1984, the Legislature changed the Texas Education Code, requiring the state assessment program to measure "minimum skills" rather than "minimum basic skills competencies" (TEA, 2004). The Texas Education Agency made this change in accordance with the new legislative mandates from the State Board of Education rules and laws which required an increase in academic rigor and a higher rate of accountability on student performance (Cruse & Twing, 2000). In 1985, this test became the Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS), which replaced the TABS as the new state-mandated, criterion-referenced achievement test in the subject areas of reading, mathematics, and writing (TEA, 2004). In the fall of 1990, more changes were made in the state law, requiring the implementation of a new criterion-referenced program, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), which shifted the focus of the word "minimum" to be replaced by the term "academic" skills (TEA, 2004).

The introduction of TEAMS reflected an increased emphasis on educational reform, as required by changes in the law, raising the overall expectations of student academic achievement (Cruse & Twing, 2000). Cruse and Twing (2000) indicated that in addition to the new laws to increase academic achievement, the biggest impact resulted from the publication of the campus and district summary reports. TEA (2010) stated that the TAAS testing program reflected the desires of both the State Board of Education and the Commissioner of Education that students

should attain higher levels of academic achievement and that the primary purpose of all testing must be raise the accountability of student performance.

In the 2002-03 school year, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) replaced the TAAS to assess students' attainment of skills of reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies (TEA, 2010). These basics were required under the Texas education standards, which were developed and scored by Pearson Educational Measurement, and in close supervision with TEA. In the spring of 2012, the replacement of the TAKS test with a new and more comprehensive and rigorous test, the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR), was announced (TEA, 2014).

The Texas Senate Bill 1031 called for secondary schools for grades 9-11 to take end-ofthe- course assessments every time a student was at the end of a course, instead of taking general "core subject" tests at the end of the year. The STAAR replaced the TAKS, but students who had entered 10th grade before the 2011-2012 school year took the TAKS end-of-the- year test (TEA, 2014). By the year 2015, the last group of students took the TAKS test. For grades 3 through 8, the STAAR measures the same subject and grades that were assessed by the TAKS except at the high school level in which grade specific assessments are replaced with 12 end-ofcourse (EOC) assessments (TEA, 2014). Clark (2011) indicated that the STAAR would be more rigorous in assessing knowledge and skills at a greater depth and higher level of complexity than the previous assessment procedures. The Texas Legislature expressed the goal that by the year 2020, Texas students would place among the top 10 states in terms of college readiness, without significant achievement gaps among racial and economic subgroups and underrepresented populations (Clark, 2011). All schools or school districts that receive federal and state funding are required to ensure that all students take these assessments. "All means all" is the message that the federal officials have made clear to schools, that is, all students, even those with a disability or receiving some type of special education (e.g., homebound instruction) must be included (Olson & Robelen, 2004).

ADA, IDEA, and Section 504

Being homebound means that the student must exhibit some type of disability that would require him/her to be out of school (e.g., sickness, injury, illness); thus, entitling such students to special protections under certain laws. Regardless of whether the student is receiving GEH or SEH services, it is the nature of the disability that allows him/her to be protected by one or more of three specific laws, namely, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Henderson, 2015).

The ADA is a civil rights law designed to prohibit discrimination solely on the basis of a disability in an employment, public service, public education, and accommodations (Henderson, 2015). For example, in Wisconsin "there is no law that specifically requires a school district to provide homebound instruction to a student that is unable to attend school. However, different requirements apply to special education students, i.e., students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs). In some situations, federal laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 may impact a school district's obligation to homebound instruction" (Evers, 2013, p. 1).

On December 3, 2004, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act was amended and reauthorized as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, which is

known as IDEA 2004 (Wright. 2007). This statute can be found in Volume 20 of the United States Code (Wright, 2007). The IDEA is to provide federal financial assistance to state and local education agencies to guarantee special education and related services to eligible individuals between kinder and 21 years old who are determined by a multidisciplinary team to be eligible within one or more of 13 specific disability categories and who need special education services (Henderson, 2015). The IDEA requires states to form and establish goals for performance of children with disabilities that are consistent with the goals and standards for nondisabled children (Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, 2004). Under this Act, all states are required to improve the graduation rates and dropout rates, and to report the progress of children with disabilities on state and district assessment.

After the reauthorization of the IDEA of 2004, Congress placed an increased focus on accountability and improved outcomes by emphasizing reading, mathematics, early intervention, and research-based instructional techniques, requiring all special education teachers be highly qualified and meet certification requirements (Wright & Wright, 2007). The primary purpose of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 was to provide an education that meets child's unique needs and prepares the child for further education, employment, and independent living, followed by protecting the rights of both children with disabilities and their parents (Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, 2004). Under Special Education Homebound law, homebound students are qualified for educational services to be provide at home, hospital or public school setting, depending on each individual case.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a national law that protects qualified individuals from discrimination based on disability (U.S. Department of Health and Human

32

Services, 2014). The nondiscrimination requirements of the law apply to employers and organizations that receive financial assistance from any federal department or agency, including the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Section 504 is a broad civil rights law that protects the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive financial support from the U.S. Department of Education (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Section 504 mandates that a team of knowledgeable participants develop an individual accommodation plan for a qualified student. Elements of an individual accommodation plan may include the provision for medical homebound instruction. However, some kids with special needs do not receive services under IDEA, but are served under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This statute does not require the federal government to provide additional funding for students identified with special needs (deBettencourt, 2015).

The major differences between IDEA and Section 504 are in the flexibility of the procedures. For a child to be identified as eligible for services under Section 504, there are less specific procedural criteria that govern the requirements of the school personnel. Schools may offer a student less assistance and monitoring with Section 504, because there are fewer regulations by the federal government to instruct them, especially in terms of compliance. Students who receive the GEH services are also protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students receiving the SEH services are protected by the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), and, after several reauthorizations, the Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act (IDEIA) (TEA, 2014).

Summary

The literature review included the distinction between the two types of homebound instruction and the criteria used to assign the eligible students into the appropriate setting.

With the publication of *A Nation at Risk* and the legislation of the NCLB, expecting 100% student proficiency, the literature showed that the focus has been on increased accountability and academic achievement. Boonen and Petry (2012) indicated that due to tremendous improvements in medical technology, more students survive chronic or long term illnesses, which will continue to increase the number of homebound or hospital instruction students. Petit (2013) indicated that due to the limited research on homebound instruction, further investigations are necessary for the development of instructional models to improve the effectiveness of homebound instruction. For example, teacher training and preparation for homebound instructor, research suggests that being trained to teach homebound instruction is associated with increased effectiveness of the intervention (Pettit, 2013; Patterson & Tullis, 2008; Patterson, 2008; Patterson & Petit, 2008).

The literature review included the discussion of the three laws that protect and support the disabled student. Because of the ADA, IDEA, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, disabled homebound students are protected and receive federal financial assistance. Grade configuration was reviewed to answer the question: "Why Study Middle Grades 6, 7, and 8?" According to Breakthrough Collaborative (2011), "the single most important factor determining a student's academic success is the academic preparation a student receives and the rigor of the course work to which he is exposed" (p. 1). While rigorous academic achievement is the most important factor in academic success, there are a number of other factors that support academic success. Understanding the affects these factors have on the academic achievement of homebound instruction is needed for further research. While school districts across the state are typically slow to change, research involving homebound instruction and technology are years behind (Breakthrough Collaborative, 2011). In conclusion, the review of the literature showed that homebound instruction is a teaching/learning intervention which can be effective if provided adequate and sufficient educational opportunities which are as similar as possible as those in which students receiving regular education receive.

Chapter III

Method

Introduction

The primary purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of homebound instruction on mathematics and reading academic achievement of grade 6, 7, and 8 students. The secondary purpose of the study was to investigate the perspectives of grade 6, 7, and 8 teachers regarding the effectiveness of homebound instruction. This chapter describes the methods, including the design, subject selection, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis. The theory-based and data-based study was guided by the following research questions:

1. Do grade 6, 7, & 8 students who participate in a homebound instruction program differ from grade 6, 7, & 8 students who participate in a non-homebound instruction program on the basis of achievement in mathematics?

2. Do grade 6, 7, & 8 students who participate in a homebound instruction program differ from grade 6, 7, & 8 students who participate in a non-homebound instruction program on the basis of achievement in reading?

3. Do grade 6, 7, & 8 students who participate in a homebound instruction program differ from grade 6, 7, & 8 students who participate in a non-homebound instruction program on the basis of total mathematics and reading proportion scores?

4. What are the perspectives of grade 6, 7, & 8 teachers on the effectiveness of homebound instruction?

Research Design

The study employed an explanatory sequential mixed methods model to collect, analyze, interpret, and synthesize quantitative and qualitative data to answer the research questions

(Creswell & Clark, 2011). Ex post facto studies are retrospective in nature, that is, the researcher attempts to establish antecedents or causes from known consequences or results (Meltzoff, 2008). Due to the non-experimental nature of ex post facto research studies, no causal inferences may be drawn. Using the quantitative data, comparisons were made between the homebound and non-homebound students. Using the qualitative data from the focus group interview, the researcher attempted to identify relationships that may occur between the two groups while speculating about possible reasoning for any observed variations in the collected data for both groups (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007).

The explanatory sequential mixed methods design is a two-step process (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). In the first phase, quantitative data are collected and analyzed, followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data during the second phase of the study. The second phase is utilized for the purpose of explaining the quantitative results in more detail and greater depth. The quantitative and qualitative results are synthesized to discuss the findings, draw conclusions, and propose practical and theoretical implications. The rationale for this approach is that the quantitative results and the subsequent qualitative results provide a better and more in-depth understanding of the full research problem. Figure 1 illustrates the study's explanatory sequential model.

Figure 2

Explanatory Sequential Design



Quantitative

The quantitative component of the study used an ex post facto causal-comparative research design (Gall, Gall, & Bourg, 2007) in an attempt to identify a relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The relationship between the homebound and non-homebound instruction was suggestive since the researcher did not have control over the independent variable (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2011). Causal-comparative research designs do not permit conclusions about cause-and-effect, but are useful for initial exploratory investigations (Gall, Gall, & Bourg, 2007). For the purpose of the study, the characteristic-present group consisted of grade 6, 7, and 8 students that qualified and received homebound instruction. The comparison group consisted of grade 6, 7, and 8 students that attended school all year and received regular daily classroom instruction. The outcome measures were measured by grade 6, 7, and 8 STAAR mathematics and reading achievement scores from the academic year of 2014. The independent variable was not manipulated by the researchers; thus, no causal inferences were drawn.

Qualitative

The qualitative component of the study utilized a focus group interview. The primary purpose of conducting a focus group is to pull out the respondents' feelings, attitudes, and beliefs within a group (Gibbs, 1997). Creswell (2007) suggested that the focus group is designed to be nonthreatening so participants can express and clarify their views in ways that are less likely to occur one-on-one. A focus group allows participants to relate experiences and reactions among presumed peers with whom they likely share some common frame of reference (Kidd & Parshall, 2000). Focus groups provide a low cost and quick method to gain information through interviewing few people at one point in time (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The focus group is typically conducted under the theoretical perspective of interpretivism. According to Crotty (1998), interpretivism is an attempt to look at and understand an individual or individuals' social reality of how they see the world and their meanings and experiences as individuals in this world. In this study, the researcher attempted to gain an understanding of the views of a sample of teachers regarding homebound instruction, specifically, their perspectives of the effectiveness of homebound instruction. At the conclusion of the interview, the focus groups transcript was coded, categorized, and analyzed utilizing the components of the qualitative coding system created by Saldana (2009).

Subject Selection

Quantitative

The study was delimited to grades 6, 7, and 8 (middle school). At the time of conducting the study, across the state of Texas, there were 348,024 grade 6, 337,118 grade 7, and 305,174 grade 8 students. The characteristic-present sample consisted of all grade 6, 7, and 8 homebound students. The reason for being classified as homebound (e.g., severity of illness) was unknown. The comparison group, non-homebound, was selected by a matching process on the basis of demographic characteristics of race, gender, ethnicity, and at-risk status. The nature of the risk status was unknown. Both groups had taken the regular STAAR tests in mathematics and reading in 2014.

The characteristic-present group consisted of 10 grade 6, 15 grade 7, and 25 grade 8 students. According to the TEA (2014), this was one of the smallest homebound testing groups ever to have taken the regular STAAR tests. The number of non-homebound students, after matching, consisted of the same number of students as the homebound groups. There was a total of 20 grade 6, 30 grade 7, and 50 grade 8 students in the study.

Qualitative

A non-probability sample of 10 middle school teachers from a rural South Texas middle school was invited to participate in the focus group, of which seven voluntarily accepted the invitation. Permission to conduct the focus group was obtained from the middle school's independent school district and the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi. In order for the teachers to participate in the focus group, they were required to sign a consent form. Documents are included in Appendix A.

Instrumentation

Quantitative

In 2011, the new State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) standardized testing system was implemented with the intent to test students in the core subject areas of mathematics, writing, reading, social studies, and science in grades 3 - 12 (TEA, 2012). The STAAR test is constructed and designed to measure the readiness ability for future success in subsequent grades and courses, and ultimately for college and future careers (TEA, 2012). For the purpose of the study, the results of the 2013-2014 STAAR spring scores in mathematics and reading in grades 6, 7, and 8 students were used. The proportion of correct answers to the total number of test items measured academic achievement in each STAAR category.

Achievement in STAAR grade 6 mathematics was measured by five categories with a total of 52 items. Reporting Category 1 contains 16 items and assesses numbers, operations, and quantitative reasoning. Reporting Category 2 includes patterns, relationships, and algebraic reasoning with 12 items. Reporting Category 3 consists of 8 items associated with geometry and spatial reasoning. Reporting Category 4 targets measurement with 8 items. Reporting Category 5 assesses Probability and Statistics with 8 items.

Achievement in STAAR grade 6 reading was measured by three categories and a total of 48 items. Reporting Category 1 consists of 10 items, including the understanding/analysis across genres. Reporting Category 2 concentrates on the understanding/analysis of literary texts with a total of 20 items. Reporting Category 3 consists of 18 items associated with the ability to measure understanding/analysis of informational texts.

Achievement in grade 7 STAAR mathematics was measured by five categories and a total of 54 items. Reporting Category 1 contains 13 items and assesses numbers, operations, and quantitative reasoning. Reporting Category 2 includes patterns, relationships, and algebraic reasoning with 13 items. Reporting Category 3 consists of 10 items associated with geometry and spatial reasoning. Reporting Category 4 targets measurement with 8 items. Reporting Category 5 assesses Probability and Statistics with 10 items.

Achievement in grade 7 STAAR reading was measured in three categories with a total of 50 items. Reporting Category 1 contains 10 items related to the understanding/analysis across genres. Reporting Category 2 contains 21 items, measuring the understanding/ analysis of literary texts. Reporting Category 3 has 19 items that are designed to measure understanding/analysis of informational texts.

Achievement in grade 8 STAAR mathematics was measured in five categories with 56 test items. Reporting Category 1 contains 11 items and assesses numbers, operations, and quantitative reasoning. Reporting Category 2 contains 14 items, assessing targeted patterns, relationships, and algebraic reasoning. Reporting Category 3 contains 8 items, focusing on geometry and spatial reasoning. Reporting Category 4 contains 13 items that assess measurement. Reporting Category 5 contains 10 items to measure probability and statistics.

Achievement in grade 8 STAAR reading was measured in three categories with

41

52 test items. Reporting Category 1 contains 10 items, assessing the understanding/analysis across genres. Reporting Category 2 contains 22 items related to the understanding/analysis of literary texts. Reporting Category 3 contains 20 items that measure understanding/analysis of informational texts.

The STAAR Standard Setting Policy Committee process established the expectations for external validity. TEA (2010) reported that the writers and reviewers of the STAAR tests verified the alignment of test items with their subsequent objectives to ensure that the item measures the appropriate content through each stage of the development. Other committees set the passing criteria for the reporting levels and any phase-in of criteria that are used. In order to have a solid scale, TEA related the difficulty of the tests from grade level to grade level. This ensured that the test difficulty increased somewhat systematically from one grade to the next in each subject area (TEA, 2010).

TEA (2014) reported several different research studies in which empirically correlated performance standards on the STAAR assessments with scores on other related measure or external assessments were conducted and used to align with the standard-setting process. Qualitative

In alignment with the explanatory sequential mixed methods research model, the qualitative phase of the mixed method study consisted of a focus group interview. The quantitative results were used to formulate the following lead questions/statements: 1) Describe any experience that you have encountered with either homebound students or homebound instruction, 2) Would you expect a difference between homebound and non-homebound students on the basis of academic achievement in mathematics and reading, as measured by STAAR scores?, 3) When you hear the words homebound instruction or homebound student, please

42

describe what comes to your mind, 4) In your opinion, what would you consider to be the benefits or positive effects of homebound instruction?, 5) In your opinion, what would you consider to be the negative effects or negative impact of homebound instruction?, 6) In what ways, positive or negative, do you see homebound instruction affecting student's academic achievement in mathematics and reading, as measured by STAAR scores?, 7) What changes, if any, would you like to see in the education system that could improve the academic achievement in homebound students, defined by state testing scores? The lead questions were used to collect the qualitative data.

Data Collection

Quantitative

Quantitative data were obtained from the Texas Education Office of Assessment and Accountability, providing STAAR data on all grade 6, 7, and 8 grade homebound and nonhomebound students in the state of Texas. The STAAR data included raw scale scores for each of the categories in mathematics and reading. Data on age, gender, at-risk status, and ethnicity were also provided to the researcher by the TEA. The data for all 50 homebound students were used. There were 50 non-homebound students who were matched on the basis of grade level, age, gender, at-risk status, and ethnicity with the homebound students and their data were extracted from a large data file that the researcher had received from TEA. The data for the two groups were merged.

Qualitative

Qualitative data were collected from the focus group. The researcher conducted and facilitated the focus group on April 8, 2015. The focus group was audio-taped, transcribed, and coded. Transcript of the focus group can be found in Appendix B.

Data Analysis

Quantitative

The raw data were exported into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), which was used for the purpose of data analysis and manipulation. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize and organize the data. Specifically, frequency and percentage distribution tables, and appropriate measures of central tendency and variability were reported. To measure academic achievement in mathematics and reading, the proportion of the total number of test questions answered correctly to the total number of questions in each of the STAAR categories was used. At each grade level, the two groups were matched on the basis of race, gender, at-risk status, and ethnicity; thus, the four attributes were ruled out as potential confounding variables.

At the grade level, due to small sample sizes, no null hypothesis testing was performed. Instead, mean difference effect sizes were computed and analyzed to examine the group differences. To do so, the mean difference was divided by the pooled standard deviation and was characterized as .20 = small effect, .50 = medium effect, and > .80 = large effect (Cohen, 1988). A series of *t*-test for independent samples (Field, 2013) were performed to compare the homebound and non-homebound students on the basis of total mathematics and reading proportion scores. Levene's F was used to test the homogeneity of variances assumption. <u>Qualitative</u>

The focus group audio-taped interviews were transcribed, coded, and categorized into identifiable themes. Theme identification is one of the most fundamental and mysterious techniques of qualitative research (Bernard, 2000). Qualitative analysis begins with coding the data, dividing the text into small units (e.g., phrases, sentences, and paragraphs), and assigning of labels to each different unit (Creswell & Clark, 2007). The researcher used the following steps

to systematically guide the analysis of the qualitative data: (1) getting a sense of the whole by reading the transcription carefully; (2) identifying text segments with brackets; (3) assigning a code word or phrase to describe the meaning of the text segment; (4) making a list and grouping the code word; (5) reviewing the transcription; and (6) reducing the codes to themes, which are similar codes put together, forming the major ideas of the transcription (Creswell & Clark, 2011).

In accordance with the explanatory sequential mixed methods model, the quantitative and qualitative results were synthesized in order to draw conclusions, discuss the findings, and offer theoretical and practical implications.

Chapter IV

Results

The purpose of the explanatory sequential mixed methods study was to compare academic achievement in mathematics and reading objective test scores of 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students in homebound instruction programs to the academic achievement in mathematics and reading objective test scores of 6th, 7th and 8th grade students in non-homebound programs. Due to the paucity of evidence in the literature regarding homebound instruction and academic achievement, the hypothesis was non-directional in nature. The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. Do grade 6, 7, & 8 students who participate in a homebound instruction program differ from grade 6, 7, & 8 students who participate in a non-homebound instruction program on the basis of achievement in mathematics?

2. Do grade 6, 7, & 8 students who participate in a homebound instruction program differ from grade 6, 7, & 8 students who participate in a non-homebound instruction program on the basis of achievement in reading?

3. Do grade 6, 7, & 8 students who participate in a homebound instruction program differ from grade 6, 7, & 8 students who participate in a non-homebound instruction program on the basis of total mathematics and reading proportion scores?

4. What are the perspectives of grade 6, 7, & 8 teachers on the effectiveness of homebound instruction?

Quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed to answer the research questions. The raw quantitative data were obtained from TEA, coded, entered into a computer, and analyzed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Achievement in mathematics and reading was measured by the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) test. The proportion of the correct answers to the total number of items in each category was used to measure the academic achievement. The researcher collected the qualitative data, using a focus group of teachers from a South Texas middle school, which was audio-taped and transcribed.

Quantitative Results

At the grade level, due to small sample sizes, no null hypothesis testing was performed. Instead, mean difference effect sizes were computed and analyzed to examine the group differences. To do so, the mean difference was divided by the pooled standard deviation and was characterized as .20 = small effect, .50 = medium effect, and > .80 = large effect (Cohen, 1988). A series of *t*-test for independent samples were performed to compare the homebound and nonhomebound students on the basis of total mathematics and reading proportion scores. At each grade level, the two groups were matched on the basis of gender, ethnicity, and at-risk status; thus, the three attributes were ruled out as potential confounding variables.

Grade 6 Results

A Profile of Subjects

The characteristic-present group (n = 10) included 6th grade students who had participated in the homebound instruction program and the comparison group (n = 10) consisted of 6th grade students who had participated in the regular instruction program. There were five females and five males; five Hispanics, three Whites, and two African Americans; and six at-risk and four not-at-risk students in each group. Results are summarized in Table 1.

	Homebound Group $(n = 10)$		Non-Homebound Grou $(n = 10)$	
Demographic Characteristics Gender	F	%	F	%
Female	5	50.00	5	50.00
Male	5	50.00	5	50.00
Ethnicity				
Hispanic	5	50.00	5	50.00
White	3	30.00	3	30.00
African American	2	20.00	2	20.00
At-Risk Status				
At-Risk	6	60.00	6	60.00
Not At-Risk	4	40.00	4	40.00

A Profile of Subjects, Grade 6

Outcome Measures

The outcome measures were STAAR mathematics and reading category scores. Mathematics included Category 1: Numbers, Operations and Quantitative Reasoning (16 items), Category 2: Patterns, Relationships, and Algebraic Reasoning (12 items), Category 3: Geometry and Spatial Reasoning (8 items), Category 4: Measurement (8 items), and Category 5: Probability and Statistics (8 items). Reading included Category1: Understanding across Genres (10 items), Category 2: Understanding and Analysis of Literary Texts (20 items), and Category 3: Understanding and Analysis of Informational Texts Analysis (18 items). Mathematics Achievement

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data. The means, standard deviations, and effect sizes for the six mathematics category scores are presented in Table 2. The effect sizes were large, favoring the non-homebound group.

Mathematics Achievement, Grade 6

Mathana tina Dana stina	Homeb $(n = 1)$	ound Group 10)	Non-Hom (<i>n</i> =	nebound Group 10)	
Category	M*	SD	M*	SD	ES**
Category 1	.26	.32	.60	.15	1.45
Category 2	.28	.30	.54	.21	1.05
Category 3	.25	.37	.59	.24	1.13
Category 4	.35	.39	.59	.22	.88
Category 5	.35	.37	.63	.22	1.05

* Proportion of correct items to the total number of items

** .20 = small effect, .50 = medium effect, > .80 = large effect

Note: Category 1: Numbers, Operations, and Quantitative Reasoning Category 2: Patterns, Relationships, and Algebraic Reasoning Category 3: Geometry and Spatial Reasoning Category 4: Measurement Category 5: Probability and Statistics

Reading Achievement

The means, standard deviations, and effect sizes for the three reading category scores

are presented in Table 3. On the basis of the effect sizes, the non-homebound group

outperformed the homebound group on all category scores.

Reading Achievement, Grade 6

	Homet (<i>n</i> =	Homebound Group $(n = 10)$		Non-Homebound Group $(n = 10)$	
Reading Reporting Category	M*	SD	M*	SD	ES**
Category 1 Category 2 Category 3	.39 .38 .34	.39 .36 .33	.61 .62 .70	.21 .14 .23	.85 1.10 1.32

* Proportion of correct items to the total number of items

** .20 = small effect, .50 = medium effect, > .80 = large effect

Note: Category 1: Understanding Across Genres

Category 2: Understanding and Analysis of Literary Texts

Category 3: Understanding and Analysis of Informational Texts Analysis

Grade 7 Results

A Profile of Subjects

The characteristic-present group (n = 15) included 6th grade students who had participated in the homebound instruction program and the comparison group (n = 15) consisted of 7th grade students who had participated in the regular instruction program. There were eight males and seven females; seven Hispanics, six Whites, one African American, and one Other; and eight at-risk and seven not-at-risk students in each group. Results are summarized in Table 4.

A Profile of Subjects, Grade 7

	Homebound Group $(n = 15)$		Non-H (n	lomebound Group = 15)
Demographic Characteristics	F	%	F	%
Gender				
Female	7	47.00	7	47.00
Male	8	53.00	8	53.00
Ethnicity				
Hispanic	7	47.00	7	47.00
White	6	40.00	6	40.00
African American	1	6.50	1	6.50
Other	1	6.50	1	6.50
At-Risk Status				
At-Risk	6	60.00	6	60.00
Not At-Risk	4	40.00	4	40.00

Outcome Measures

The outcome measures were STAAR mathematics and reading category scores. Mathematics included Category 1: Numbers, Operations and Quantitative Reasoning (13 items), Category 2: Patterns, Relationships, and Algebraic Reasoning (13 items), Category 3: Geometry and Spatial Reasoning (10 items), Category 4: Measurement (8 items), and Category 5: Probability and Statistics (10 items). Reading included Category1: Understanding across Genres (10 items), Category 2: Understanding and Analysis of Literary Texts (21 items), and Category 3: Understanding and Analysis of Informational Texts Analysis (19 items).

Mathematics Achievement

The means, standard deviations, and effect sizes are presented in Table 5. The effect sizes, ranging from .46 to 1.02, showed that the non-homebound group outperformed the homebound group on all category scores.

Table 5

Mathematics Achievement, Grade /						
	Homebo	ound Group	Non-Hon	nebound Group		
	(<i>n</i> =	15)	(<i>n</i> =	15)		
Mathematics Reporting	M*	SD	M*	SD	ES**	
Category						
Category 1	.34	.25	.55	.29	.80	
Category 2	.28	.24	.56	.29	.76	
Category 3	.34	.27	.57	.25	.89	
Category 4	.29	.25	.53	.22	1.02	
Category 5	.36	.28	.68	.26	.76	

Mathematics Achievement, Grade 7

* Proportion of correct items to the total number of items

** .20 = small effect, .50 = medium effect, > .80 = large effect

Note: Category 1: Numbers, Operations, and Quantitative Reasoning

Category 2: Patterns, Relationships, and Algebraic Reasoning

Category 3: Geometry and Spatial Reasoning

Category 4: Measurement

Category 5: Probability and Statistics

Reading Achievement

The means, standard deviations, and effect sizes are presented in Table 6. The non-

homebound group outperformed the homebound group on all category scores. The effect sizes

ranged from .27 to .68.

Reading Achievement, Grade 7

	Homebound Group $(n = 15)$		Non-Homebound Group $(n = 15)$		
Reading Reporting	M*	SD	M*	SD	ES**
Category					
Category 1	.43	.27	.59	.23	.68
Category 2	.49	.26	.65	.23	.77
Category 3	.48	.23	.65	.23	.77

* Proportion of correct items to the total number of items

** .20 = small effect, .50 = medium effect, > .80 = large effect

Note: Category 1: Understanding Across Genres

Category 2: Understanding and Analysis of Literary Texts

Category 3: Understanding and Analysis of Informational Texts Analysis

Grade 8 Results

A Profile of Subjects

The characteristic-present group (n = 25) included 8th grade students who had

participated in the homebound instruction program and the comparison group (n = 25) consisted of 8th grade students who had participated in the regular instruction program. There were thirteen males and twelve females; eleven Hispanics, ten Whites, three African Americans and one Other; and twenty at-risk and five not-at-risk students in each group. Results are summarized in Table 7.

A Profile of Subjects, Grade 8

	Homebound Group $(n = 25)$		Non-Homebound Group $(n = 25)$	
Demographic Characteristics	F	%	F	%
Gender				
Female	12	48.00	12	48.00
Male	13	52.00	13	52.00
Ethnicity				
Hispanic	11	44.00	11	44.00
White	10	40.00	10	40.00
African American	3	12.00	2	12.00
Other	1	4.00	1	4.00
At-Risk Status				
At-Risk	20	80.00	20	80.00
Not At-Risk	5	20.00	5	20.00

Outcome Measures

The outcome measures were STAAR mathematics and reading category scores. Mathematics included Category 1: Numbers, Operations and Quantitative Reasoning (11 items), Category 2: Patterns, Relationships, and Algebraic Reasoning (14 items), Category 3: Geometry and Spatial Reasoning (8 items), Category 4: Measurement (13 items), and Category 5: Probability and Statistics (10 items). Reading included Category1: Understanding across Genres (10 items), Category 2: Understanding and Analysis of Literary Texts (22 items), and Category 3: Understanding and Analysis of Informational Texts Analysis (20 items).

Mathematics Achievement

The means, standard deviations, and effect sizes are summarized in Table 8. The large effect sizes showed that the non-homebound group outperformed the homebound group on all category scores.

Mathematics Achievement, Grade 8

	Homebound Group $(n = 25)$		Non-Homebound Group $(n = 25)$		
Category	M*	SD	M*	SD	ES**
Category 1	.34	.20	.52	.27	.75
Category 2	.37	.15	.58	.23	1.17
Category 3	.30	.19	.61	.29	1.43
Category 4	.33	.19	.54	.21	1.08
Category 5	.40	.19	.59	.26	.91

* Proportion of correct items to the total number of items

** .20 = small effect, .50 = medium effect, > .80 = large effect

Note: Category 1: Numbers, Operations, and Quantitative Reasoning Category 2: Patterns, Relationships, and Algebraic Reasoning Category 3: Geometry and Spatial Reasoning Category 4: Measurement Category 5: Probability and Statistics

Reading Achievement

The means, standard deviations, and effect sizes are shown in Table 9. The effect

sizes, ranging from .56 to .83, showed that the non-homebound group outperformed the

homebound group on all category scores.

Reading	Achievement,	Grade	8
			-

	Homet (<i>n</i> =	Homebound Group $(n = 25)$		Non-Homebound Group $(n = 25)$	
Reading Reporting Category	M*	SD	M*	SD	ES**
Category 1 Category 2 Category 3	.54 .51 .45	.30 .29 .30	.68 .69 .63	.22 .21 .19	.56 .72 .83

* Proportion of correct items to the total number of items

** .20 =small effect, .50 =medium effect, > .80 =large effect

Note: Category 1: Understanding Across Genres

Category 2: Understanding and Analysis of Literary Texts

Category 3: Understanding and Analysis of Informational Texts Analysis

Grades 6, 7, and 8 Results

A series of t-test for independent samples was performed to compare the homebound and non-homebound students on the basis of total mathematics and reading proportion scores. To do so, the three grade levels were combined into two groups, homebound and nonhomebound, and were compared on the basis of the two total scores. The means, standard deviations, and effect sizes are presented in Table 10. In mathematics, the non-homebound instruction students (M = .55, SD = .21) outperformed the homebound instruction students (M = .33, SD = .21), the difference was statistically significant, t(98) = 5.366, p < .01), and the effect size was large (d = 1.08). On the basis of reading scores, the non-homebound instruction students (M = .63, SD = .19) also outperformed the homebound instruction students (M = .46, SD = .29), the difference was statistically significant, t(98) = 3.413, p < .01, and the effect size was .74.

	Homeb (<i>n</i> =	ound Group 50)	Non-Ho (<i>n</i> =	mebound Group 50)	
Category	M*	SD	M*	SD	ES**
Mathematics Total Reading Total	.33 .46	.21 .29	.55 .63	.21 .19	1.08 .74

All Subjects Grade 6, 7, & 8 Mathematics and Reading

* .20 = small effect, .50 = medium effect, > .80 = large effect

Summary of Quantitative Results

At the grade level and on the basis of the effect sizes, the non-homebound group outperformed the homebound group on all category scores. All grades combined, nonhomebound group outperformed the homebound group on total mathematics and reading achievement scores and the differences were statistically significant.

Qualitative Results

The qualitative component of the explanatory sequential mixed methods model was utilized to address research question three, identifying the perspectives of middle school teachers on the effectiveness of homebound instruction. The quantitative data were analyzed and the results were used to formulate the lead questions for the focus group discussion. The following were used to lead the focus group discussion:

- Describe any experience that you have encountered with either homebound students or homebound instruction.
- Would you expect a difference between homebound and non-homebound students on the basis of academic achievement in mathematics and reading, as measured

by STAAR scores? (count hands)

- When you hear the words homebound instruction or homebound student, please describe what comes to your mind.
- In your opinion, what would you consider to be the benefits or positive effects of homebound instruction?
- In your opinion, what would you consider to be the negative effects or negative impact of homebound instruction?
- In what ways, positive or negative, do you see homebound instruction affecting student's academic achievement in mathematics and reading, as measured by STAAR scores?
- What changes, if any, would you like to see in the education system that could improve the academic achievement in homebound students, defined by state testing scores?

The researcher asked the lead questions and encouraged open dialog among the participants. The transcript of the focus group is in Appendix B.

A Profile of Subjects

The focus group was conducted in a semi-structured format and consisted of seven participants (five females and two males). The years of teaching experience ranged from one to 29 years. Six had professional experience with homebound instruction. The ethnicity of the seven participants consisted of three Hispanics, three Whites, and one African American.

Focus Group Process

The focus group was conducted on April 8, 2015, after regular school hours, in a campus classroom of a large urban South Texas middle school. Prior to the beginning of
the interviews, the PI discussed and provided a review of the research study. All participants provided the PI with their signed voluntary consent forms, were assured of the confidentiality of their identities, and were informed that they could withdraw from participation at any time. The PI served as the facilitator and asked the lead questions and encouraged dialog in an effort to promote theme development. The focus group discussion lasted just under one and one half hours and produced a wide range of discussion.

The Coding Process

The focus group discussion was audio-taped and transcribed by the PI. The researcher analyzed the transcript of the qualitative data, utilizing a coding process. The coding process consisted of coding words, categorizing words and phrases, and then identifying common themes that arose from the categorized words and phrases. The process of structural coding is "designed to start organizing the data around specific research questions" (Saldana, 2009, p.51). The first step required reading and transcribing the entire focus group discussion. The next step involved assigning codes to the texts. Saldana (2009) stated that a code is a word or short phrase that assigns a summative attribute to that portion of the language based data. After the initial step of coding, the PI categorized the data from coded words into categories of common words. After developing categories of similar words, the PI looked for common reoccurring themes. According to Creswell (2007), themes are clusters or clumps of meaning that form the central ideas from the focus group. The final stage of the coding process involved a deep and thorough review of the resulting themes that systematically lead to the development of several common themes or theories. Sipe and Ghiso (2004) indicated that "All coding is a judgement call since all researchers bring in their

59

own subjectivities, personalities, and predispositions, and even quirks" to the process (pp. 482-

3). Table 11 shows some of the coded and categorized words used to develop the themes that

emerged from the focus group discussion.

Table 11

Codes and Categories Developed from Participants Perspectives, Qualitative Data			
Code 1	Homebound Teacher Trainings		
Code 2	Teacher Education or Professional Development		
Code 3	Instruction Time		
Code 4	Time Students Works Alone		
Code 5	Instructor Qualifications		
Code 6	Communication Chain		

Focus Group Results

The focus group participants were asked to respond to several questions aimed at exploring their perspectives regarding homebound instruction or homebound students and its impact on academic achievement. Three main themes emerged from analyzing the focus groups qualitative data, namely, Lack of Teacher Preparation or Training, Insufficient Time Spent on Homebound Instruction, and Instructor Qualifications and Communication. Table 12 illustrates the overall themes developed from the focus group interview.

Table 12

Themes Developed from Participants Perspectives, Qualitative Data

Theme 1	Lack of Teacher Preparation or Training
Theme 2	Insufficient Time Spent on Homebound Instruction
Theme 3	Instructor Qualifications and Communication

The first theme, Lack of Teacher Trainings, emerged as the participants discussed their experiences, or lack of, with homebound instruction or homebound student in general. The focus group was asked to take a show of hands if any participant had ever received any type of teacher preparation, in-service training, or professional development in the area of homebound instruction or homebound student and not one participant raised his/her hand. Participants shared that not only they had never received any professional or staff development, no one could even recall having any type of campus discussions or meetings regarding homebound instruction or homebound student. One participant stated, "I have been teaching in this area for over 17 years and not one time have I received any training or staff development regarding homebound instruction or procedures for homebound students." Another participant stated, "I have had several homebound students in my classes over the years and still never received any type of training or professional development on the teacher's roles of servicing homebound students." The lack of training or education on homebound students and homebound instruction was such a reoccurring word or phrase that rather quickly emerged as the leading theme of the focus group discussion. Several other participants' responses that contributed to the development of this theme are summarized in Table 13.

As the participants discussed their experiences with homebound instruction or homebound students, the second theme, Instruction Time, emerged from two different but similar categories. One category consisted of instruction time, which was defined by the group as the actual amount of time the homebound teacher was teaching or presenting a lesson. The second category of this theme was student time, in which the participants defined as the actual amount of time the student spends alone doing school work. The two categories merged together to form the second theme labelled Instruction Time. One participant stated, "One of my homebound instructors told me that she never gets close to the four hours per week of teaching time of homebound instruction with the student that she works with." She also stated, "Only a few of the students do any of the classwork sent from their teachers." Another participant stated, "When one of my homebound students returned to school, he indicated that he did not do any school work except for a few times when the instructor showed up." Several other responses from the focus group participants regarding the amount of instruction time provided by the homebound instructor and the amount of time students actually spend working on assignments at home are summarized in Table 14.

The third theme, Instructor Qualification and Instructor Communication, emerged as participants discussed their perspectives of attempting to teach students on subject matter outside their certification areas. A long discussion began when one participant asked, "Now what exactly are the qualifications necessary to be a homebound instructor?" Another participant answered that question by responding, "Nothing specific other than your normal Texas teaching certification license. Other than that, anyone can teach homebound instruction, it would just depend on your district policies. So, imagine how that would be trying to teach students subject matter outside your certification area?" As the discussion continued on Instructor Qualifications,

62

the theme of Communication began to emerge because it was being mentioned frequently. Six of the participants indicated they had no idea on the qualifications necessary to being a homebound instructor. They agreed that there was an extreme lack of communication regarding the homebound programs in general. The lack of communication was interwoven by responses such as, "There is a terrible lack of communication about the entire process of dealing with my homebound students, like it's either some big secret or no one has a clue, one or the other." Another participant stated, "Even the people on our campus in charge of the homebound program seem to be inconsistent or uncertain of the homebound processes. Additional responses are listed in Table 15.

Table 13

Participants Perspectives, Theme 1: Lack of Teacher Training

Theme: 1 Lack of Teacher Training

Teacher Trainings/ Professional Development

- "I have never had any kind of training pertaining to homebound instruction"
- "I have never received any training on homebound instruction"
- "Most of the other teachers that I work with have no experience at all"
- "little to no training or professional developments"
- "We appear to have this widespread lack of teacher training"

Teacher Education

- "not at any time did I have training on homebound students or homebound instruction"
- "no training or staff development on homebound instruction"
- "There seems to be a huge lack of teaching training about the homebound process"
- "no one teacher can know all subjects well enough"
- "homebound teachers have no training or certification to teach all subjects"

Table 14

Participants Perspectives, Theme 2: Instruction Time

Theme: 2 Instruction Time

Instruction Time

- "way too little instructional time with the homebound student"
- "very little instruction time spent with her homebound students"
- "instruction time is far below what a typical student receives while they are at school"
- "There is just way too little home instruction time"
- "way too little instruction time"

Time Students Works Alone

- "how much time are the homebound teacher and student actually spend working"
- "I wonder how long the student is actually working on their own doing the work"
- "I also wonder how much, if any, the student does on his own time?"
- "her homebound students do not spend much time at all on their own doing their work"
- "Who monitors and keeps track of the time students work alone, anyone"

Table 15

Participants Perspectives, Theme 3: Instructor Qualifications and Communication

Theme: 3 Instructor Qualifications

Instructor Qualifications

- "no specific qualifications necessary to teach homebound students"
- "There is no special certification requirement to teacher homebound students"
- "Homebound instructors are not required to have any special training whatsoever"
- "Anyone who holds a Texas Teacher Certificate can teach homebound students"
- "surely there would have to be some kind of homebound training required"

Communication

- "terrible lack of communication"
- "Nothing about the entire process was clear or consistent"
- "all parties were confused with the entire process"
- "the homebound program communication was so disorganized"
- "There is such a horrible communication gap"

Summary of Qualitative Results

All focus group participants agreed that there was a widespread lack of teacher training or teacher preparation regarding homebound instruction. All participants indicated they had never received any type of formal or informal education, training, or professional development regarding homebound instruction or homebound students. Only one out of the seven participants had any background knowledge pertaining to the district policy regarding homebound instruction and homebound teacher qualifications. Six out of seven participants indicated that, at some time in their teaching career, they had homebound students in their classes. All participants indicated that they were not surprised by the large effect size differences between homebound students and non-homebound students in mathematics and reading category scores in which all non-homebound students outperformed the homebound students. The participants were also not surprised that, when placed together regardless of the grade, the non-homebound students outperformed the homebound students on all outcome measures. The focus group participants felt that the quantitative results could be described by all qualitative themes in general and the lack of education and awareness regarding homebound instruction and the homebound program in particular.

65

CHAPTER V

Summary, Conclusions, and Discussion

Introduction

Homebound students with medical needs or some type of chronic illness are a growing population in schools today, and schools must find better ways to balance these students' social and academic needs with the legal mandates of STAAR testing (Shaw, Glasner, Stern, Sferdenschi, & McCabe, 2010). What once might have been a terminal illness is now considered a chronic illness, meaning more children are surviving, yet needing extended medical services. The rapid changes being made in medicine and health care are posing challenges for school leaders to find more effective ways to service homebound students in ways that will better prepare them for the required end-of-the-year STAAR assessments (Shaw et al., 2010). All students' STAAR scores, including the homebound students', reflect the school's annual accountability performance rating (TEA, 2014). The state of Texas is in need of a responsive and reactive plan of instruction to better serve the quality of life and chances of academic success for homebound students (Shaw et al., 2010). The state of Texas measures academic achievement based on the annual STAAR assessment scores. This information set the stage for the need and desire to conduct this study.

The primary purpose of the mixed method study was to determine the effectiveness of homebound instruction of grade 6, 7, and 8 students on the basis of academic achievement based on 2014 STAAR assessment scores in mathematics and reading. The secondary purpose was to document the perspectives of grade 6, 7, and 8 teachers regarding the effectiveness of

homebound instruction. The gap of information identified in the review of the literature contributed to the use of the explanatory sequential mixed methods design.

The theoretical framework that guided the study was the Vygotskian sociocultural theory of learning. Vygotsky (1978) believed that all higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals, and indicated that these relationships or interactions can be seen in a variety of ways such as between the student and the teacher, the student with another student, or a combination of several students. The Sociocultural Theory has significant implications in teaching, schooling, homebound schooling, cognitive growth, and education in general (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). Social interaction is therefore fundamental to the development of cognition and higher order thinking (Kearsley, 2005; MacGillivray & Rueda, 2011). The lack of consistent social interaction that homebound students must include efforts by educators to create a learning environment that mimics the homebound environment under the guidelines of the sociocultural theory of learning. Above all, planning, advanced communication with educational and medical professionals in the community, and the development of a comprehensive homebound policy are required to overcome the challenges inherent in homebound instruction (Shaw et al., 2014).

Summary of the Results

Quantitative Results

In an effort to rule out potential confounding variables, pre-experimental equivalence was established by matching the homebound and non-homebound students on the basis of race, gender, and at-risk status. At the grade level and on the basis of the effect sizes, the non-homebound group outperformed the homebound group on all STAAR scores in mathematics and reading. A series of *t*-test for independent samples was performed to

compare all three grade levels of homebound and non-homebound students on the basis of total mathematics and reading proportion scores. To do so, the three grade levels were combined into two groups, homebound and non-homebound, and were compared on the basis of the two total scores. The non-homebound instruction students outperformed the homebound instruction students on both the mathematics and reading scores, the differences were statistically significant, and effect sizes were large. The effect sizes pertaining to reading scores were smaller than the mathematics scores', which could have been due to the fact that homebound students must have had access to reading opportunities, formally and informally, throughout home instruction. For mathematics, access was limited to receiving formal instruction.

Qualitative Results

The key findings from the qualitative portion of the study indicated that grade 6, 7, and 8 teachers who participated in the study perceived a disparity between the education in the traditional classroom and the one provided for homebound students. All focus group participants reported that they had never received any type of formal or informal education, training, or professional development with regards to homebound instruction. Only one out of the seven participants had any background knowledge pertaining to the district policy regarding homebound instruction and homebound teacher qualifications. Six out of seven participants indicated that, at some time in their teaching career, they had homebound students in their classes. All participants were not surprised by the study's findings, showing that the non-homebound students outperformed homebound students on all outcome measures. The focus group participants felt that the quantitative and qualitative results complemented each other.

Conclusions

Based on the quantitative results, it was concluded that homebound instruction is not as effective as is non-homebound instruction in influencing academic achievement in mathematics and reading. Based on the qualitative results, which complemented the quantitative results, it was concluded that teachers are not adequately trained to provide the homebound students with proper learning opportunities.

Discussion

Synthesis of Quantitative Results

Due to the paucity of information in the literature regarding homebound instruction and academic achievement, the study's hypothesis was non-directional. In the quantitative phase of the study, results showed large differences between the homebound and non-homebound students' mathematics and reading STAAR scores, favoring the non-homebound students. The results support Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of learning in that social interaction among classmates and the teacher play a fundamental role in the successful development of cognition and learning (Vygotsky, 1978). The sociocultural theory of learning indicates that learning is related to a student's cultural, institutional, and historical background. The focus of the sociocultural perspective is on the roles that participation in social interaction and culturally organized activities play in influencing cognitive development. The students that are homebound are void of the social interaction that non-homebound students experience on a daily basis at school. According to Vygotsky's sociocultural learning theory, homebound students do not get the social stimulation from their peers and make no connections with students or their teachers; therefore, they do not experience the connectedness and sense of belonging that nonhomebound student's experience.

Synthesis of Qualitative Results

The researcher used the qualitative portion of the study to expand on the quantitative findings. The focus group participants were asked if they believed there would be any differences in academic achievement, measured by the STAAR scores in mathematics and reading, between homebound and non-homebound students. All agreed that the non-homebound students would outperform the homebound students. Focus group participants were asked if they had ever serviced any homebound students and if so, did they consider the homebound instruction to be effective. Six out of seven participants indicated that they had serviced at least one, some more than one homebound student within their teaching career. All agreed that there was a terrible breakdown of communication and an overall lack of effective instruction. The only participant that did not have any experience with a homebound student was a first year teacher. This participant indicated she had never received any type of lessons or learning regarding homebound instruction or homebound students.

Homebound instruction and Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of learning weave together. Thus, theoretically speaking, homebound instruction must closely resemble the actual classroom setting of general instruction on the basis of the amount of teaching time, quality of teaching, and expertise of subject matter while developing a social relationship between the teacher and the homebound student. Vygotsky believed that homebound or one-on-one instruction can be most successful if it can resemble the general classroom's instruction and by taking steps to meet the homebound child's social and cultural needs. The practical reality behind homebound instruction and Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of learning indicate that most school districts are unable to mimic the general classroom instruction, hire highly qualified teachers for the core subjects, pay for more teaching time, and pay hourly teacher wages to allow the instructors to learn, plan, and communicate in order to meet the sociocultural cultural needs of each homebound student.

Implications

The intent of the study was to determine if homebound instruction was an effective method of instruction for students in grades 6, 7, and 8 as measured by regular STAAR assessment scores in mathematics and reading. During the literature review, several concerns and implications became apparent. The biggest concern was the lack of available data regarding the academic achievement of homebound students. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (2014), although they receive data and statistics on the placement of students outside the general education classrooms, the data for homebound students are inaccurate due to the differing amount of days students are in and out of school. Therefore, not having sufficient data prevented the researcher from proposing a directional hypothesis on the impact of homebound instruction on academic achievement.

The theoretical implication that tie Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and homebound instruction imply that for students to reach their maximum cognitive development, learning in the language of their culture with adult and peer socialization or communication are needed for the learning to become internalized. Vygotsky assumed cognitive development varies across cultures and stems from social interactions from guided learning within the zone of proximal development as children and their partners co-construct knowledge. According to Vygotsky (1978), the student's environment should be the starting point for learning and the student-centered learning should be designed with the Zone of Proximal Development in mind. The homebound teacher must be able to invest a significant amount of time to understand, as much information as possible, the homebound student's academic

and personal history to know his/her zone of proximal development and what the child is capable of attaining. If the homebound teacher is able to find and work within the child's zone of proximal development, it must be noted that the child still lacks the social development that the typical classroom environment provides. For this reason, the practical implications would indicate that schools and school districts must make major financial adjustments to create a homebound atmosphere similar to the regular classroom or just accept the fact that homebound instruction lacks many of the necessary tools to provide an adequate instructional environment for successful academic learning.

The purpose of selecting Vygotsky's sociocultural theory was to take into consideration the totality of the study results in an attempt to support the notion that social development is necessary for maximum cognitive growth. The lack of social development and possibly cultural awareness and understanding may account for the study's results, showing that students in the regular daily classroom outperformed the homebound students on academic achievement in mathematics and reading. The legal enactments, such as PL 94-142 and extending into the IDEA and NCLB, are supported by this sociocultural philosophy, affecting people who have been devalued, ignored, overlooked, and disenfranchised within our society that can greatly impact academic growth and progress (Stidham-Smith, 2013).

In theory, due to the factors associated with being homebound, students who are absent four or more weeks of school because of some type of injury or illness, miss academic instruction, and social interaction are likely to be outperformed in mathematics and reading by non-homebound students. Homebound students who receive instruction that more closely mimics that of the regular classroom instruction and benefit from some type of

72

face-to-face interaction (e.g., Skype or face time) are more likely to be successful on STAAR assessments than those who do not. The results of this study should persuade school administers and personnel that homebound students need to be provided a type of instruction that is similar to that of what student receive in a daily classroom setting. Recommendations for Further Research

The study's delimitations, limitations, and assumptions offer opportunities for further research. Specifically, external validity was limited to the study participants; the study was delimited to grades 6, 7, and 8 students; academic achievement in mathematics and reading was measured for students who had taken the regular version of the STAAR test; the nature of the atrisk status and severity of illness could not be ruled out as confounding variables; and the perspectives of a focus group of seven educators regarding their experiences with the effectiveness of homebound instruction were documented. To enhance the generalizability of the study results, the researcher recommends: 1) replication of the study in other states that have rigorous state mandated assessments; 2) replication of the study with other grade levels; 3) conducting an in-depth qualitative case study, comparing the actual instructional strategies and techniques for a student showing high academic achievement compared to a student that did not perform well; 4) conducting a qualitative case study involving the perspectives of the students regarding the effectiveness of their homebound experience; and 5) the examination of other measures of academic achievement, such as science, social studies, or writing.

Final Remarks

During the course of this study, news reports emerged regarding the devastating potential effects of infectious diseases, specifically Ebola, and the public concern of the disease entering the United States. Such diseases can impact school districts all across the country. The U.S. government made a proactive call to action that all school districts in all states must reassure the public that schools are safe and clean environments for children and staff (Texas Association of School Boards, 2014). The TEA required every school district in the state to develop a thorough and well-developed plan of action for academic instruction if a child were to develop some type of infectious disease. In May of 2014, the TEA reported and posted an academic action plan for every region in Texas, indicating specifically how all the schools in that region would handle educating any student that may come in contact with an infectious disease. This was the first time that the TEA had ever posted a specific regional plan of action for all students that were unable to attend school. Several months later, the TEA changed the wording on the instructional plan from what once only consisted of the words "infectious diseases" to also include "all students unable to attend school" and included the wording, "such as homebound students" (TEA, 2014). By the completion of this study, the TEA had posted an academic instructional plan of education for any and all students unable to attend school. Each region now has very specific plans, depending on the length of time the student is absent, for continuing educational services that may be as simple as sending an assignment home to as elaborate as creating a home learning environment with several types of instructional technologies (e.g., laptop, tablet, and home internet access), with the option for live instruction via teleconference or videoconferencing software (e.g., Skype or Face Time) or distance learning through the Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN). This information was not available at the beginning phase of this study. Unfortunately, it took the scare of the contagious disease of Ebola before anyone took a serious look at the need to provide effective academic instruction for students requiring education at home.

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TAMUCC IRB Application TAMUCC IRB Approval School District Approval

FOR COMPLIANCE OFFICE USE ONLY: IRB# Date Received:	Application for Review of Research Involving Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (IRB)	TEXAS ARM UNIVERSITY CORPUS		
Revision	Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi	CHRISTI RESEARCH COMMERCIALIZATION OUTREACH		
INSTRUCTIONS				
IRB protocol application forms are ONLY accepted in electronic format. Please utilize digital signatures and email form with the IRB Protocol Application Form to irb@tamucc.edu.				
1. Complete CITI Training CITI training is required for all researchers and faculty advisors listed on the protocol. Note: The Certificate of Completion will be automatically emailed to the Research Compliance Officer upon completion.				
2. Complete Form All sections of the form are required. The protocol review will not begin if any section is incomplete. The form must be complete and free of typographical/grammatical errors.				
3. Submit Application & Completed Supplemental Documents Review of application will not begin until all required documentation is received.				
If you have any questions or need assistance completing this application, please contact Kassandra Brown at (361)825-2892 or kassandra.brown@tamucc.edu or Erin Sherman at (361)825-2497 or erin.sherman@tamucc.edu.				
Check which of the following d Any other documents reference payment schedule, etc.)	<i>ocuments are submitted with the protocol application:</i> ed in this application as applicable (survey instrument, interview questions, debri	efing form,		
Grant/contract proposal as app	licable			
Permission from site of study as applicable Image: Constraint of the second study o				
 Consent Documentation as applicable: Informed Consent Form, Assent Form, *Translated Informed Consent Form, and *Translated Assent Form *See Translator/Interpreter Guidelines on the IRB forms page Conflict of Interpret Displacements on applicable 				
INVESTIGATOR INFORMATION				
A. Principal Investigator Info	rmation:			
Name: Laurie L. Beveridge				
Address: 6626 Clarion Dr.				
Please include unit number if address is on campus.				
Phone Number: (361) 548-8089				

Page 1 of 11

Department: Educational Leadership
College of Education
○ Faculty ○ Staff Member ○ Undergraduate Student ○ Graduate Student ○ Faculty Advisor ○ Other
Specify Other:
B. Co-Principal Investigator or Faculty Advisor Information:
Name: Kamiar Kouzekanani, Ph. D.
Address: 6300 Ocean Drive, Unit 5818, FC 223 Corpus Christi, TX 78412-5818
Please include unit number if address is on campus.
Phone Number: (361) 825-2318
Email Address: kamiar.kouzekanani@tamucc.edu
Department: Educational Leadership
College of Education
● Faculty C Staff Member C Undergraduate C Graduate Student ○ Faculty Advisor ○ Other Student
Specify Other: Dissertation Chair
C. Co-Principal Investigator or Faculty Advisor Information:
Name:
Address:
Address: Please include unit number if address is on campus.
Address:
Address:
Address: Please include unit number if address is on campus. Phone Number: Email Address: Department:
Address: Please include unit number if address is on campus. Phone Number: Email Address: Department: College:
Address: Please include unit number if address is on campus. Phone Number: Email Address: Department: College: College: C Faculty C Staff Member C Graduate Student C Faculty Advisor
Address: Please include unit number if address is on campus. Phone Number: Email Address: Department: College: O Faculty O Staff Member Specify Other: Specify Other:
Address: Please include unit number if address is on campus. Phone Number: Email Address: Department: College: College: College: Specify Other: D. Co-Principal Investigator or Faculty Advisor Information: Name:
Address: Please include unit number if address is on campus. Phone Number: Email Address: Email Address: Department: College: College: College: College: College: Specify Other: D. Co-Principal Investigator or Faculty Advisor Information: Name: Address:
Address: Please include unit number if address is on campus. Phone Number: Email Address: Department: College: O Faculty O Staff Member O Faculty O Staff Member Culdergraduate Specify Other: D. Co-Principal Investigator or Faculty Advisor Information: Name: Address: Please include unit number if address is on campus.

Page 92 of 11

College:					
C Faculty	C Staff Member	C Undergraduate Student	🗖 Graduate Student	C Faculty Advisor	🔿 Other

Specify Other:

CONFLICT OF INTEREST CERTIFICATION

All Principal Investigators and Co-Investigators must certify the Conflict of Interest Statement below and comply with the conditions or restrictions imposed by the University to manage, reduce, or eliminate actual or potential conflicts of interest or forfeit IRB approval and possible funding. This disclosure must also be updated annually (for expedited and full board reviews) when the protocol is renewed.

Carefully read the following conflict of interest statements and check the appropriate box after considering whether you or any member of your immediate family* have any conflicts of interest.

*Immediate family is considered to be a close relative by birth or marriage including spouse, siblings, parents, children, in-laws and any other financial dependents.

Financial conflicts of interest include:

- A financial interest in the research with value that cannot be readily determined; a)
- A financial interest in the research with value that exceeds \$5,000.00;
- Have received or will receive compensation with value that may be affected by the outcome of the study;
- りいめいり A proprietary interest in the research, such as a patent, trademark, copyright, or licensing agreement; Have received or will receive payments from the sponsor that exceed \$5,000.00 in a specific period of time;
- Being an executive director of the agency or company sponsoring the research;
- g) h) A financial interests that requires disclosure to the sponsor or funding source; or
- Have any other financial interests that I believe may interfere with my ability to protect participants.

ORIGINAL SIGNATURES REQUIRED

PLEASE NOTE: SIGNATURE PAGES MAY BE SUBMITTED EITHER (1) SCANNED ORIGINAL SIGNATURE(S) ON SIGNATURE PAGE EMAILED AS AN ATTACHMENT WITH FORM (2) SUBMITTED AS PRINTED HARD COPY

Principal Investigator (Typed): Laurie L. Beveridge					
Principal Investigator (Signature):					
Date:	11.05.14				
Conflict of Interest Certification: ••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••		O I have a non-financial conflict of interest related to this project**	I have a financial conflict of interest related to this project**		
B. Co-Pri	ncipal Investigator	or Fac	ulty Advisor Certification:		
Co-Princ Advisor	cipal Investigator/ (Typed):		Kamiar Kouzekanani		
Co-Princ Advisor	cipal Investigator/ (Signature):				
Date:	11.05.14			Check	cone: Co-PI • Faculty Advisor
Conflict Certifica	of Interest tion:	● ^{I ha} rel	ave no conflict of interest ated to this project.	I have a non-financial conflict of interest related to this project**	I have a financial conflict of interest related to this project**

Page 3 of 11

Co-Principal Investigator/ Advisor (<i>Typed</i>):	
Co-Principal Investigator/ Advisor (Signature):	
Date:	Check one: Co-PI Check one: Co-PI Check one:
Conflict of Interest Certification:	C I have no conflict of interest related to this project. I have a non-financial conflict of I have a financial conflict of interest related to this project**
D. Co-Principal Investigator	or Faculty Advisor Certification:
Co-Principal Investigator/ Advisor (Typed):	
Co-Principal Investigator/ Advisor (Signature):	
Date:	Check one: Co-PI C Faculty Advisor
Conflict of Interest Certification:	C ^I have no conflict of interest related to this project. C ^I have a non-financial conflict of interest related to this project ^{**} C ^I have a financial conflict of interest related to this project ^{**}
,	**PROVIDE DETAILS AS ATTACHMENT FOR ANY NON-FINANCIAL CONFLICT OR FINANCIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST RELATED TO THIS PROJECT
PROIECT CLASSIFICA	TION
- Research - Masters	Class Doctoral
O _{Project} O _{Thesis}	C ^{Project} • Dissertation Offer
Specify Other:	
REVIEW REQUESTED	
Please thoroughly review the	Human Subject Research Categories and Notes at the end of the protocol form before completing this section.
Exempt Review *Are you requesting exemp Oves • No	t status for the project?
If yes, based on which categ	gory outlined at the end of the application?
Category 2	
Expedited Review (Expedited review does NG *Are you requesting an expe)T mean rushed approval . Please allow at least three weeks for the expedited review process.) edited review of the project?
⊙ Yes ĈNo	
If yes, based on which categ	30ry outlined at the end of the application?
Category 7	
Full Board Review Are you requesting full boa	rd review for the project?
,	
O Marill 🛞 Na	
" You may only select one o	f the above choices. A protocol cannot qualify for more than one category of review.

Page 4 of 11
EXTERNAL FUNDING			
Is the project externally funded? 🔿 Yes 💿 No <mark>If yes, complete the remainder of the External Funding Section. If no, go to next section.</mark>			
External Funding Submissi	ion Deadline/Award Date:		
Funding Agency:			
PROJECT TITLE			
Title of Project: The Effect Methods I	tiveness of Homebound Instruction among Grade 6 Students in Texas: An Explanatory Sequential Mixed Inquiry		
PROJECT DATES			
Starting Date: Upon IRB ap	pproval		
The starting date CANNOT be a da	te before IRB approval is received. If you will start as soon as approval is received, enter "Upon IRB Approval" for the starting date.		
Estimated Completion Date	e: May 2016		
The above is an estimated date of a	completion. A Completion Report is due at the conclusion of the project noting the actual completion date.		
PROJECT PURPOSE &	OBJECTIVES		
Describe Project Purpose: '	The primary purpose of the quantitative portion of the study is to test the hypothesis that 6th grade students who receive homebound instruction will score differently than students who receive regular instruction on the basis of academic achievement in mathematics and reading. The secondary, qualitative, purpose of the study is to examine the perspectives of general education teachers, regular education teachers, counselors, and campus administrators regarding the effectiveness of homebound instruction?		
Describe Project Objectives and/or Research Questions: <i>Be specific and thorough.</i>	The study is an explanatory sequential mixed methods design guided by quantitative and qualitative research questions: Quantitative: 1. How do 6th grade homebound students differ from regular instruction students on the basis of the STAAR reading scores? 2. How do 6th grade homebound students differ from regular instruction students on the basis of the STAAR mathematics scores? Qualitative: 1. What are the perspectives of special and non-special education teachers, counselors, and campus administrators on the effectiveness of homebound instruction relative to STAAR achievement outcomes? 2. In what ways would school personnel describe the challenges of homebound instruction?		
RESEARCH SUBJECTS			
Description and Source of Research Subjects: MINIMUM information to include: 1. Target number of participants 2. Location of participants (on campus or specifically provide names for other locations - permission needed from other locations)	Students will NOT be contacted for any data. For the quantitative portion of the study all data information on sixth grade students in Texas and all sixth grade homebound students on STAAR scores in mathematics and reading will be obtain from the Texas Education Agency in the form of a data disc. The participants for the qualitative portion of the study will consist of a non-probability sample consisting of general education teachers, special education teachers, counselors, and campus administrators who will volunteer to participate in a focus group by signing a letter of consent to participate form. A recommended sample size consisting of 6-10 participants to form the focus group. A focus group with fewer than six members may have difficulty sustaining discussion. However, a focus group discussion		

3. Manner in which participants 3. Manner in which participants will be identified from a larger pool of individuals 4. Inclusion & Exclusion criteria for participants (ex. age, physical characteristics, learning

Page 5 of 11

characteristics, professional criteria, etc.)

1. Minimum age for participants 2. How participants will be contacted (ex. online. through a faculty member, through a social networking site, through a professional in a specific field, etc.)

participant feel obligated, in any way, to agree or disagree to participate.

The consent form to participate in the qualitative portion of the study as participants in the focus group will be asked to sign a letter of consent (see attached).

RESEARCH DESIGN, METHODS, & DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

Describe Research Design. An explanatory sequential mixed methods design will be used to collect, analyze, interpret, and synthesis quantitative and qualitative data to answer the research question. The quantitative component of the Methods and Data **Collection Procedures for** study is an expost facto causal-comparative research design. The qualitative component of the study Human Subject employs a focus group. Interactions: For the purpose of this study, the characteristic-present group will consist of 6th grade students that Be specific and thorough. qualified and received homebound instruction during the 2012-2013 academic school year. The comparison group consists of all 6th grade students that attended school all year and received regular Be specific to your study. daily classroom instruction during the 2012-2013 school year. The dependent variables, outcome Describe the methods and measures, are 6th grade STAAR mathematics and reading scores that will be obtained from the Texas procedures step-by-step in Education Agency. The 6th grade is chosen because grade 6, indicated by Bedard and Do (2008) as the common terminology. Describe most critical crossroad in a student's educational development due to the enormous environmental and each procedure, including instructional changes that occur. Although all students, including those who receive homebound frequency duration and location of each procedure. Describe how nstruction, are still expected to take and pass the state mandated STAAR exams. data will be stored and protected how long data will be kept The lead questions for the focus groups are: following the study, etc.

1. What are the perspectives of special and non-special education teachers, counselors, and campus administrators on the effectiveness of homebound instruction relative to STAAR achievement outcomes? 2. In what ways would school personnel describe the challenges of homebound instruction?

The quantitative and qualitative data will be kept confidential. All will be kept in a secure place by the PI. The audio-tape of the focus group will be destroyed once it is transcribed. The PI will do the transcription herself. The raw quantitative data and transcripts of the focus group will be kept for 2 years. Only the PI and her dissertation chair will have access to raw data.

RISKS & PROTECTION MEANS

You do not need to describe the

statistical methods for analyzing

data once it is collected or other elements of the study not

involving human subjects.

Describe the Specific Risks The research team cannot think of any risks. This study involves minimal risk to participants. However, and Protection Means for the participants in the focus group will be asked to discuss the challenges they might have faced as school Human Subject personnel in regards to homebound instruction. In doing so, they may experience emotional distress. Participants: They will be protected from this minimal risk by the following ways: they will be made aware, via consent forms, that their participation is voluntary, that their responses will be kept confidential, and that they Be specific and thorough. If no may opt out of the study at any time.

96

risk, state "No risk." If risks associated with the study are minimal and not greater than risks ordinarily encountered in daily life, state: Minimal Risk and describe risks. The risk levels provided in the protocol and the consent forms must be consistent

Describe each potential risk and the steps taken to protect human subject participants from the risk (ex. breach of confidentiality, data protection, possibly injury, psychological distress, pressure to conform, pressure to participate, etc.) Describe the protection means specifically and how participants will gain access to any necessary outside assistance

(ex. medical care, counseling, etc.) if available.

Consider whether there are physical, emotional, social, legal, etc. risks if participants' participation were to become public.

BENEFITS VS. RISKS

Describe Benefits & Risks to Human Subject Participants:	The study is not of any direct benefits to the participants. The findings of the study shall result in theoretical and practical implications for the PI in particular and nursing profession in general.
Address benefits reasonably expected to the research participant and potential benefits to society. Any possible monetary compensation is not to be categorized as a benefit. Be specific and thorough.	

INFORMED CONSENT METHODS

Describe Methods for Obtaining Informed Consent from Human	The quantitative data will be provided by Texas Education Agency (TEA). The permission to use the data is attached.
Subject Participants:	Focus group participants will sign a consent form (see attached). The permission to conduct the focus group at CCISD has been obtained (see attached).
Be specific and thorough. Describe how researcher(s) will gain access to participants, how participants will be provided the consent documentation, in what format the consent will be provided, any discussion that will take place with participants, and methods of communication utilized to keep participants, and methods of communication utilized to keep participants aware of their rights throughout the study, if applicable. Points to remember: (1) Participants must be given time to review the consent/ informational documents and ask questions (2) minors must have a separate assent for participants, and parents must be given a separate parental consent form. (3) Information sheets should be utilized for exempt studies in which the only record of participants would be signed consent forms. (4) The online consent template should be utilized as a guide for online survey consent.	

Check if waiver of signed informed consent is requested. Justification must be provided for waiver. See waiver criteria at end of form.

Justification:

INVESTIGATOR(S) QUALIFICATIONS

Qualifications of the

The principal investigator is a Doctoral candidate in Educational Leadership at TAMUCC & has completed

Investigator(s) to Conduct the CITI course on protection of human research participants. The study is supervised by Dr. Kamiar Research: Kouzekanani, Professor of Quantitative Methodology at TAMUCC, who has completed the CITI course on protection of human research participants.

Describe the qualifications of each investigator to conduct human subject research or attach CV/ biosketch.

FACILITIES & EQUIPMENT

Facilities & Equipment to be Used in the Research:	A classroom on a South Texas Middle School campus in Corpus Christi will be used to meet with focus group participants. An audio-tape recorder will be used. The PI's personal computer will be used. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) will be used to analyze the data
Describe any equipment that will be used, including audio/video equipment.	
* Specifically list (by name) any off-campus locations that will be used.	
List any on-campus locations where the study will occur.	

* Investigators must submit permission from all off-campus study locations and/or organizations providing data, specimens, access to participants, etc. Permission must be submitted with the IRB protocol application.

INVESTIGATOR(S) RESPONSIBILITIES & SIGNATURES

By complying with the policies established by the Institutional Review Board of Texas A & M University-Corpus Christi, the principal investigator(s) subscribe(s) to the principles stated in "The Belmont Report" and standards of professional ethics in all research, development, and related activities involving human subjects under the auspices of Texas A & M University-Corpus Christi. The principal investigator(s) further agree(s) that:

A. Approval will be obtained from the Institutional Review Board before making ANY change in this research project.

B. Development of any unexpected risks will be immediately reported to the Institutional Review Board.

C. An annual continuation application will be completed and submitted annually for expedited and full review studies. The study will CEASE once approval expires.

D. Signed informed consent documents will be kept for the duration of the project and for at least three years thereafter at a location approved by the Institutional Review Board and as described in the protocol.

ALL INVESTIGATOR(S) AND ADVISOR(S) MUST SIGN THE PROTOCOL. The Principal Investigator should save a copy of the IRB Protocol Form after emailing the form to the Research Compliance Officer for review. Type the name of each individual in the appropriate signature line. Add additional signature pages if needed for all Co-Principal Investigators, collaborating and student investigators, and faculty advisor(s).

ORIGINAL SIGNATURES REQUIRED

PLEASE NOTE: SIGNATURE PAGES MAY BE SUBMITTED EITHER (1) SCANNED ORIGINAL SIGNATURE(S) ON SIGNATURE PAGE EMAILED AS AN ATTACHMENT WITH FORM (2) SUBMITTED AS PRINTED HARD COPY

A. Princ	ipal Investigator Certific	ration:
Principa	ll Investigator (Typed):	Laurie L. Beveridge
Principa	ll Investigator (Signature)	:
Date:	9.22.14	
B. Co-Pri	incipal Investigator or F	aculty Advisor Certification:
Co-Prin	cipal Investigator/	Kamiar Kouzekanani
		Page 8 01 11

Advisor	(Typed):		
Co-Prin Advisor	cipal Investigator/ (Signature):		
Date:	9.22.14	Check one: Co-PI	C Advisor
C. Co-Pr	incipal Investigator or Fac	ulty Advisor Certification:	
Co-Prin Advisor	cipal Investigator/ ·(<i>Typed</i>):		
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D. Co-Pr	incipal Investigator or Fac	ulty Advisor Certification:	
Co-Prin Advisor	cipal Investigator/ · (<i>Typed</i>):		
Co-Prin Advisor	cipal Investigator/ (Signature):		
Date:		Check one: O Co-PI	Faculty Advisor
		Human Subject Research Categories	

Please Note

Research involving special or protected populations, such as children, prisoners, pregnant women, mentally disabled persons, or economically or educationally disadvantaged persons, does not qualify for exempt review and is subject to full review.

The following types of studies do not qualify for exempt reviews and are subject to expedited or full reviews:

1) Studies involving a faculty member's current students

2) Studies supported by external funding

3) Studies involving the following and similar sensitive subject matters which can potentially cause discomfort and stress to the participant: Abortion, AIDS/HIV, Alcohol, Body Composition, Criminal Activity, Psychological Well-being, Financial Matters, Sexual Activity, Suicide, Learning Disability, Drugs, Depression

Studies involving audio taping and/or videotaping <u>DO NOT</u> qualify for exempt review.

Exempt Research Categories

Certain categories of research are exempt from the Protection of Human Subjects policy in the Code of Federal Regulations 45 CFR 46. The IRB Chair will determine, based on the federal guidelines, whether a research activity qualifies for exemption. Although exempt research is not regularly reviewed by the IRB, the exempt research form (and the informed consent form, if applicable) must be on file with the IRB, and the research may be reviewed at the committee's discretion. If the committee deems necessary, it may require a full review.

Unless otherwise required by federal departments or agencies, research activities in which the only involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the following categories are generally exempt from full review by the IRB:

 Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal education practices, such as (i.) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or (ii.) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.

Page 9 of 11

Advisor	(Typed):		
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Date:	9.22.14	Check one: Co-PI	Faculty Advisor
C. Co-Pri	ncipal Investigator or Fac	ulty Advisor Certification:	
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Date:		Check one: C Co-PI	Faculty C _{Advisor}
D. Co-Principal Investigator or Faculty Advisor Certification:			
Co-Prin Advisor	cipal Investigator/ (Typed):		
Co-Prin Advisor	cipal Investigator/ (Signature):		
Date:		Check one: C Co-PI	Faculty Advisor
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Page 10 of 11

interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless (i.) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii.) any disclosure of human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

- 3) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under the previous paragraph, if (i.) the human subjects are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office; or (ii.) federal statute(s) require(s) without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter.
- 4) Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.
- 5) Research and demonstration projects that are conducted by or subject to the approval of federal department or agency heads, and that are designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine (i.) public benefit or service programs (ii.) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under these programs (iii.) possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures; or (iv.) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs
- 6) Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies (i.) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed or (ii.) if a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below the level found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture

Expedited Review Categories

Expedited review procedures are available for certain kinds of research involving no more than minimal risk, and for minor changes in approved research. Specifically, research is eligible for expedited review if it involves no more than minimal risk (see 45 CFR as amended) to the subjects and the only involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the categories listed below:

- (1) Clinical studies of drugs and medical devices only when condition (a) or (b) is met.
 - a. (a) Research on drugs for which an investigational new drug application (21 CFR Part 312) is not required. (Note: Research on marketed drugs that significantly increases the risks or decreases the acceptability of the risks associated with the use of the product is not eligible for expedited review.)
 - b. Research on medical devices for which (i) an investigational device exemption application (21 CFR Part 812) is not required; or (ii) the medical device is cleared/approved for marketing and the medical device is being used in accordance with its cleared/approved labeling.
- (2) Collection of blood samples by finger stick, heel stick, ear stick, or venipuncture as follows:
 - a. (a) from healthy, nonpregnant adults who weigh at least 110 pounds. For these subjects, the amounts drawn may not exceed 550 ml in an 8 week period and collection may not occur more frequently than 2 times per week; or
 - b. from other adults and children⁷ considering the age, weight, and health of the subjects, the collection procedure, the amount of blood to be collected, and the frequency with which it will be collected. For these subjects, the amount drawn may not exceed the lesser of 50 ml or 3 ml per kg in an 8 week period and collection may not occur more frequently than 2 times per week.
- (3) Prospective collection of biological specimens for research purposes by noninvasive means.

Examples: (a) hair and nail clippings in a nondisfiguring manner; (b) deciduous teeth at time of exfoliation or if routine patient care indicates a need for extraction; (c) permanent teeth if routine patient care indicates a need for extraction; (d) excreta and external secretions (including sweat); (e) uncannulated saliva collected either in an unstimulated fashion or stimulated by chewing gumbase or wax or by applying a dilute citric solution to the tongue; (f) placenta removed at delivery; (g) amniotic fluid obtained at the time of rupture of the membrane prior to or during labor; (h) supra- and subgingival dental plaque and calculus, provided the collection procedure is not more invasive than routine prophylactic scaling of the teeth and the process is accomplished in accordance with accepted prophylactic techniques; (i) mucosal and skin cells collected by buccal scraping or swab, skin swab, or mouth washings; (j) sputum collected after saline mist nebulization.

(1) Collection of data through noninvasive procedures (not involving general anesthesia or sedation) routinely employed in clinical practice, excluding procedures involving x-rays or microwaves. Where medical devices are employed, they must be cleared/approved for marketing. (Studies intended to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of the medical device are not generally eligible for expedited review, including studies of cleared medical devices for new indications.)

Examples: (a) physical sensors that are applied either to the surface of the body or at a distance and do not involve input of significant amounts of energy into the subject or an invasion of the subject's privacy; (b) weighing or testing sensory acuity; (c) magnetic resonance imaging; (d) electrocardiography, electroencephalography, thermography, detection
Department:

naturally occurring radioactivity, electroretinography, ultrasound, diagnostic infrared imaging, doppler blood flow, and echocardiography; (e) moderate exercise, muscular strength testing, body composition assessment, and flexibility testing where appropriate given the age, weight, and health of the individual.

- (2) Research involving materials (data, documents, records, or specimens) that have been collected, or will be collected solely for nonresearch purposes (such as medical treatment or diagnosis). (NOTE: Some research in this category may be exempt from the HHS regulations for the protection of human subjects. 45 CFR 46.101(b)(4). This listing refers only to research that is not exempt.)
- (3) Collection of data from voice, video, digital, or image recordings made for research purposes.
- (4) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies. (NOTE: Some research in this category may be exempt from the HHS regulations for the protection of human subjects. 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) and (b)(3). This listing refers only to research that is not exempt.)
- (5) Continuing review of research previously approved by the convened IRB as follows:
 - a. where (i) the research is permanently closed to the enrollment of new subjects; (ii) all subjects have completed all research-related interventions; and (iii) the research remains active only for long-term follow-up of subjects; or
 - b. where no subjects have been enrolled and no additional risks have been identified; or
 - c. where the remaining research activities are limited to data analysis.
- (6) Continuing review of research, not conducted under an investigational new drug application or investigational device exemption where categories two (2) through eight (8) do not apply but the IRB has determined and documented at a convened meeting that the research involves no greater than minimal risk and no additional risks have been identified.

Criteria for Waiver of Consent

§46.116 General requirements for informed consent.

(c) An IRB may approve a consent procedure which does not include, or which alters, some or all of the elements of informed consent set forth above, or waive the requirement to obtain informed consent provided the IRB finds and documents that:

(1) The research or demonstration project is to be conducted by or subject to the approval of state or local government officials and is designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine: (i) public benefit or service programs; (ii) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs; (iii) possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures; or (iv) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs; and (2) The research could not practicably be carried out without the waiver or alteration.

(d) An IRB may approve a consent procedure which does not include, or which alters, some or all of the elements of informed consent set forth in this section, or waive the requirements to obtain informed consent provided the IRB finds and documents that:

- (1) The research involves no more than minimal risk to the subjects;
- (2) The waiver or alteration will not adversely affect the rights and welfare of the subjects;
- (3) The research could not practicably be carried out without the waiver or alteration; and
- (4) Whenever appropriate, the subjects will be provided with additional pertinent information after participation.

Page 11 of 11

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OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE Division of Research. Commercialization and Outreach

> 6300 OCEAN DRIVE, UNIT 5844 CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS 78412 O 361.825.2497 • F 361.825.2755

Human Subjects Protection Program Institutional Review Board		
APPROVAL DATE:	November 24, 2014	
TO:	Ms. Laurie Beveridge	
CC:	Dr. Kamiar Kouzekanani	
FROM:	Office of Research Compliance Institutional Review Board	
SUBJECT:	Initial Approval	
Protocol Number:	123-14	
Title:	The Effectiveness of Homebound Instruction among Grade (Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Inquiry	6 Students in Texas: An
Review Category:	Expedited	
Expiration Date:	November 24, 2015	

Approval determination was based on the following Code of Federal Regulations:

Eligible for Expedited Approval (45 CFR 46.110): Identification of the subjects or their responses (or the remaining procedures involving identification of subjects or their responses) will NOT reasonably place them at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the their financial standing, employability, insurability, reputation, or be stigmatizing, unless reasonable and appropriate protections will be implemented so that risks related to invasion of privacy and breach of confidentiality are no greater than minimal.

Criteria for Approval has been met (45 CFR 46.111) - The criteria for approval listed in 45 CFR 46.111 have been met (or if previously met, have not changed).

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies. (NOTE: Some research in this category may be exempt from the HHS regulations for the protection of human subjects. 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) and (b)(3). This listing refers only to research that is not exempt.)

Provisions:	
Comments:	The TAMUCC Human Subjects Protections Program has implemented a post-approval
	monitoring program. All protocols are subject to selection for post-approval monitoring.

This research project has been approved. As principal investigator, you assume the following responsibilities:

- 1. Informed Consent: Information must be presented to enable persons to voluntarily decide whether or not to participate in the research project unless otherwise waived.
- 2. Amendments: Changes to the protocol must be requested by submitting an Amendment Application to the Research Compliance Office for review. The Amendment must be approved by the IRB before being implemented.

- 1. Continuing Review: The protocol must be renewed each year in order to continue with the research project. A Continuing Review Application, along with required documents must be submitted 45 days before the end of the approval period, to the Research Compliance Office. Failure to do so may result in processing delays and/ornon-renewal.
- 2. Completion Report: Upon completion of the research project (including data analysis and final written papers), a Completion Report must be submitted to the Research Compliance Office.
- 3. Records Retention: All research related records must be retained for three years beyond the completion date of the study in a secure location. At a minimum these documents include: the research protocol, all questionnaires, survey instruments, interview questions and/or data collection instruments associated with this research protocol, recruiting or advertising materials, any consent forms or information sheets given to participants, all correspondence to or from the IRB or Office of Research Compliance, and any other pertinent documents.
- 4. Adverse Events: Adverse events must be reported to the Research Compliance Office immediately.
- 5. Post-approval monitoring: Requested materials for post-approval monitoring must be provided by dates requested.



Office of Assessment and Accountability

CORPUS CHRISTI INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

P. 0. Box 110 • Corpus Christi, Texas 78403-0110 3130 Highland Avenue • Corpus Christi, Texas 78405 Office: 361 44-0396 • Fax: 361-886-9371 Website: www.ccisd.us

October 29, 2014

Mrs. Laurie Beveridge 6626 Clarion Drive Corpus Christi, TX 78412

Dear Mrs. Beveridge:

Formal permission is granted to you to conduct your research entitled *The Effectiveness* of *Homebound Instruction among Grade 6 Students in Texas: An Explanatory Sequential Mix Methods Inquiry* in the Corpus Christi Independent School District. This permission indicates that your proposal meets all research/evaluation and FERPA standards.

We have received Principal Patti Heiland's signed consent form identified in your proposal. Teachers must also sign a consent form to participate. Copies of those forms must be sent to my office prior to your conducting the research on December 1, 2014.

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the District as you begin this significant research initiative. At the conclusion of your work, please provide my office with a copy of the results.

Should you need additional assistance during your study or have changes in the proposal, please contact me at 361-844-0396, ext. 44250 and/or via e-mail at <u>elda.garcia@ccisd.us</u>

}IL___

A aarcia Interim Executive Director Office of Assessment and Accountability

EG/tmm

cc: Dr.Roland Hernandez Dr.Bernadine Cervantes D.Kamiar Kouzkanani Ms.Patti Heiland

FOCUS GROUP CONSENT FORM

Homebound Instruction in Texas: An Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Inquiry

Introduction

The purpose of this form is to provide you information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to participate in this research study. If you decide to participate in this study, this form will also be used to record your consent.

You have been asked to participate in a research project studying all 6th grade students across Texas and the impact of homebound instruction on academic achievement (STAAR scores in mathematics and reading). The purpose of this study is to test the hypothesis that 6th grade students who receive homebound instruction will score differently than students who receive regular instruction on the basis of academic achievement in mathematics and reading. You were selected to be a possible participant because you have affiliation with 6th students and because you are an educator familiar with homebound instruction and STAAR testing.

What will I be asked to do?

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in a focus group and be directly involved with an interview that would take approximately 30-45 minutes in length to complete. This study will take place as soon as it has been reviewed and approved by the University and upon IRB approval. Possible expected starting date could be early August 2014. Your participation will be audio recorded. There is also a possibility that a follow-up interview could occur if needed.

What are the risks involved in this study?

The risks associated in this study are minimal, and are not greater than risks ordinarily encountered in daily life. Questions based on your perceptions of the effectiveness of homebound instruction and could cause thoughts displeasing to you. Please understand that all questions and answers will remain confidential.

What are the possible benefits of this study?

You will receive no direct benefit from participating in the study.

Do I have to participate?

No. Your participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without your current or future relations with Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi or Corpus Christi Independent School District being affected.

Who will know about my participation in this research study?

The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. Research records will be stored securely and only Laurie L. Beveridge, Dr. Kamiar Kouzehanani, and TAMUCC will have access to the records.

Whom do I contact with questions about the research?

If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Laurie L. Beveridge at <u>laurie.beveridge@ccisd.us</u> or <u>lauriebeveridge@yahoo.com</u> or my cell phone (361)548-8089,

Appendix B

Focus Group Transcript

Researcher	Respondent
First of all, I would like to thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to participate in this focus group. Today, we are meeting with seven educational professionals who agreed to share their perspectives on the effectiveness of homebound instruction.	
Our focus group consists of five females and two males. Three Hispanics, three Whites, and one African American.	
The first question I'd like to ask is what lacking soft skill is prevalent among new professional employees?	
The way a focus group operates, as part of my doctoral dissertation, I'm doing what's called, if you saw the title of my study - it's on your focus group [?] - The Effectiveness of Homebound Instruction Among Grade Six, Seven and Eight Students in Texas, and if you notice, it's called An Explanatory Sequential Mixed Method Inquiry. I'm going to ask you several questions regarding your perspective of why you think these results turned out the way they did, did it surprise you, and are you shocked at all and a few other questions. I will assure you that the confidentiality and anonymity your name will not be stated.	

I'm going to start with my first question and	I'll go first. I've been in this business for over 16
from this point on my talking is going to	years and I would say I can think of several. I've
dwindle. So my first question—	had someone that was pregnant, that was home-
	bound, I've had somebody that was just flat-out
	overweight, emotionally incapacitated, over age,
1. Describe any experience that you have	multiple excuses for home-bound not excuses,
encountered with either homebound instruction	reasons. I have no preconceived notion because I
or homebound student? Remember anyone and	have had such a vast array of different situations. I
all participants can answer.	don't know why I have had so many homebound
	students but I do know that compared to most of the
	other teachers that I work with have no experience at
	all. Not only that but I have never had any kind of
	training or staff development or even classes that
	pertained to nomebound instruction. Although I
(Cont.)	wish our district would have some kind of training
	for nomebound instruction.
	I had two different students throughout my career
	that qualified as homebound students. The best
	home-bound instruction was a relationship between
	me and a kid and the parent where I literally stood
	outside my door I would pass science equipment to
	parents to do labs, I would videotape, and those
	kinds .of things. So a home-bound student, it could
	be any one of our kids, for any second, for any
	reason. Although I never really knew how much
	instructional time the homebound teacher and
	student was actually working on my Science stuff.
	But I do feel it is not even comparable to what the
	student actually misses while out of school.
1	

I don't know if I would call it a good experience but
is was an experience. I was told that I had a home-
bound student, that I never met, and I needed to
provide some assignments for the student, so I did
the best I could. I tried to write out notes and give
instructions for his work, but I never even saw the
kid, ever. I never got back any of the work. So I
don't know how the student was getting grades.
There was just a huge lack of understanding about
the entire process. The communication, or lack of,
caused enormous uncertainly on how the student
was actually progressing. I was also under the
impression that he had a homebound teacher that
would go to his house to provide some type of
instructions. I don't know if the teacher gives the
grade. I never gave a grade, so that's all I did for my
student. Nothing about the entire process was clear
or consistent. It just seemed that all parties involved
were a little confused as to what was going on and
the whole process all together.

Well I had a homebound student several years ago
because he had some kind of serious illness just
can't exactly remember what it was though But I
was supposed to gather a weeks' worth of work for
him and give it to his counseler. The counseler was
asthering all his work to give to his homehound
instructor. Well I would always make some notes
instructor. Wen, I would always make some notes
and pass on some really important messages for the
counselor to give to his instructor. well, this went
on for a long time and it seemed that it would almost
take a month before I got any work back from the
student and then when I did get the work back I
would notice that none of the directions that I left for
his teacher were followed. I would contact my
counselor to see if I could get in touch with the
homebound teacher. But instead of them giving me
her number, they just wrote down my name and
number to have her call me back. Well, that never
happened. So, needless to say, I was completely
disgusted with the entire process or program. It
seemed that there was excessive communication
problems, lack of necessary processes to follow. I
heard several times that math was not her specialty
and that my homebound student really needs a math
tutor. So, I worried about her qualifications for
being a homebound teacher. It was just all a mess.
Veah this school year my only experience with
homehound is listening to a neighbor across the hall
talking about trying to send stuff home and they're
saving "Well this is too hard for him this is too
easy for him, this is too much, this is too little "
is the part of the second the sec
kid I overheard the teacher making some negative
comments like "I wonder just how much time the
homohound toochor and student actually grand doing
these Science activities and lobe that they are
supposed to be doing?" "I also wonder how work
supposed to be doing? I also wonder now much,
If any, the student does on his own time? I also
heard the teacher complain about the quality of work

	that she received back. Just listen to her talk about this situation, I remember walking away thinking that the homebound program was disorganized and more an effort of covering your butt by doing your part as opposed to truly servicing the needs of the sick or ill student.
	Well, I guess I could jump in now after hearing you say that because I have never had or even heard of anyone having a homebound student. I just recently graduated from the education program at Texas A&M Corpus Christi and not at any time during any of my education classes did I have one single lesson or training on homebound students or homebound instruction. I mean I have heard the term before because of one of my nieces but they actually live out of state. My niece has some kind of chronic illness in which she misses a lot of school each year and I have heard some serious horror stories of some of the things they have and have not been able to do for her. Almost to the point of me wanting to go online and research their state laws regarding homebound instruction. Well, for whatever reason, I just never followed up on it, but did hear some crazy stuff.
Okay, all great and interesting responses. Now, let's move on to the next question. This is just a question that I would like to have you raise your hands to get a hand count.	All seven participants raised their hands.
2. Would you expect there to be a difference between homebound students and non- homebound students on the basis of their academic achievement in mathematics and reading based on STAAR scores?	

3. Since everyone raised their hand, please elaborate on what type of difference would you expect to see between homebound and non- homebound students on the basis of their academic achievement in mathematics and reading based on STAAR scores?	Kids learned that from other students, and I believe they learn off one another. And they're not they don't get so myopic by getting one instructor, or one yes-or-no answer, which will be a student's only answer. There's no class discussions. That's my view. I believe that the teacher makes the impact on whether the students want to do well or not. The teacher must set high expectations and teach as if it
	incentive. I think that without the social component of a child's daily learning needs, the student severely suffers academically without it.
	Well, I have seen and been a part of homebound instruction and I would have to truthfully state that there is little to no training or professional developments or consistent guidelines for homebound teachers. Not only that, but there is no special certification requirement to teacher homebound students. Knowing that, how could they possibly be experts in every field? Or knowledgeable enough to adequately teach every subject. I also know that the actual amount of instruction time is far below what a typical student receives while they are at school. I mean, I understand the district has to do something to help out the children that must miss school, but you would think that more time spent in the planning and organization of homebound instruction would have evolved by now to better help students.

I believe that because of all of the different types of intelligences that are brought into the experience in the classroom, every class is different but the teacher places expectations on every student and provides motivation to get things completed and homebound students miss a huge part of that motivation when they are at home. I am also wondering if there illness itself impacts their motivation to do school work. But I do know that a teacher friend of mine has mentioned several times that she knows of a homebound instructor and claims that while although this teacher is extremely intelligent and probably an expert in every subject area, has like no personality or communication skills to motivate the students and/or communicate with the subject area teacher.
I agree with participant one, and also the more input in the classroom, whether it be wrong or right answers. It's almost deductive reasoning that students will work for the teachers that they feel a connection with and need that social interaction amongst their peers, especially at the middle grades that we are referring to in this discussion. Kids learned that from other students, and I believe they learn off one another. And I also feel like it's, again, the experience. But also, just the attention, one-on- one from a teacher who's passionate about that subject. Not one to two hours of a teacher giving them everything really fast.
There is so much that goes on in a classroom- group work, projects, lab activities - just being part of it is important for student success. And if you really think about a kid's education, it's as much their social education as it is their academic, especially in the middle school years. So much of that comes into play just with building their entire education. Yeah, maybe social stuff is not on the STAAR but it helps them to have that scaffolding to go to the next level.

I also know that the amount of instructional time is far greater when a student is at school as opposed to being homebound. And I agree with participant 3, in the lack of teacher training that is necessary for quality instruction for homebound students. I agree with participants six. I think it would make a huge difference if we were allowed just to meet the child and the parent and talk with them and see where are they versus where we are trying to get them to go. If they've been home-bound for several years they may already be behind, and they may just need, let me get you caught up to where I am, and then maybe the next home-bound teacher or next teacher will take it from there. There is such a horrible communication gap that stems from the student, teacher, counselor, administrator in charge
of homebound, then the homebound teacher, then parent and back. How can you expect a lesson to go through that many people and be successful or similar to the lesson taught in class? And how much time was actually given to the student?
Yeah, coming from student teaching for a Westside campus and as a substitute, I'll tell you that the way that teachers deliver the lesson plan and I've done it before where I've developed a lesson plan and my co-teacher delivered it. It was not the same lesson nor was the co-teacher near as motivated and energized as I was about the content being taught. I think that lack of motivation would cause some decline in academic achievement. And also as a substitute teacher going in and filling the shoes of a teacher doesn't relate to the students as well and most of the time the students don't even listen. Makes me wonder if homebound teachers have similar experiences. So, I believe, the method of delivery, the motivation of the teacher, the

	expectations of the teacher, the amount of time spent on the lesson, and the communication ability, - all these could have an impact of academic achievement of homebound students. When you have a homebound teacher out there that is not content specific, it kind of put some strain on the entire lesson or learning.
	I agree with everything that's been said right now. I think a lot of what happens, like particularly in a math class, there's a lot of building. Every day that you're in class, you're building on your prior knowledge, and then you're building the next day. That's when you start incorporating those higher level thinking skills, and they don't get to experience that. For me, for instance, I'm not the type of person that can read a piece of paper and really absorb it on just reading words, and so I think for a lot of times, even when a kid is absent one day, they lose so much, because they weren't there when we have a teachable moment, when we talked about, "Why?" and they make those connections. So, I think that's one big thing is they're just not there for the whole scaffolding to be able to build them up to the level being able to apply their knowledge. I know that homebound students do not get this type of instruction at home. That is where the homebound instructor's content qualifications come into question.
4. How much, if any, courses, trainings, staff developments, or professional developments, regarding homebound instruction have you participated in, give me your best estimate? (let's start by a raise of hands if you have participated)	Group vote: "Ok, let's just make this sweet and simple, raise your hand if any of you have had any kind of training, whatsoever, regarding homebound instruction. Answer : None

	I would even turn that into another question, how many times have you ever seen 'Homebound Instruction' on the list of possible professional development topics in the past ten years??? Everyone in the discussion also said, "Not one".
	And how are teachers supposed to know anything regarding homebound students and homebound instruction.
	If everyone in this focus group, with the exception of participant 1, has had some kind of dealings with homebound instruction, why is it that we have had no professional development, training, or staff development regarding homebound instruction? How or why is this happening??
	Well, I'm guessing the mighty dollar. I guess each district has to make decisions on where all their money will be spent and I'm guess the least amount of money will probably go to the program with the least amount of students. And since homebound students are such a small group of the overall population of students, it is very likely this group has been overlooked and underfunded.
	Well, even though there may not be a large number of homebound students, each student in important and we should invested in them the same amount of time, money, and effort as we do every other kid.
5. In your opinion, how would you describe, the overall effectiveness of home-bound instruction?Just the overall effectiveness of it could be delivery, it could be the teaching itself, whether it be the teacher getting it to the home-bound	The word effectiveness is a bit vague to me in this moment. To me, effectiveness would mean not losing momentum on your performance on STAAR. So if that was no matter what the situation that creates that down slide, I would have to say no, not well organized. As we have already mentioned, there seems to be a huge gap or just flat out lack of teaching training about the entire homebound

instructor, or whether it be the home-bound	process. Seems to be poor communication or
instructor.	expectations from our district leaders on how our
	homebound program runs and the procedures
	expected from the teachers.
	-
	Yes, I agree. Teachers are so unaware of the
	expectations of what to provide and also feeling as if
	you're shooting in the dark on what would be the
	best approach for a student, if you have not met.
	Which you don't necessarily have to meet, but just
	an understanding of some kind of background.
	Basically what are the expectations? So as a teacher,
	personally, I can feel like yeah, I can meet that. This
	is what I can do to really provide for this student the
	best that I can. I think it all just stems from not
	knowing what is expected from you. Then I feel for
	the homebound child because by the time it gets
	to the child, there's been a lot of gaps along the way
	that it's not going to be very effective for them in the
	whole learning process. Also, who monitors the
	amount of time in "actually" spent per subject area
	each week for each homebound student? I would
	love to see that number if it is even calculated.
	Well, I think there is a significant lack of
	transparency in our homebound program. I would
	even go so far as to say it seems like it is being run
	in the dark on purpose. I would bet our district is in
	violation of state mandates on what it should be
	doing for homebound students.

	Yes, I am right there with you on that. I was thinking that earlier but there was not an appropriate time to say it. If you were to ask me what our district policies are regarding homebound instruction I would have to admit that I have no clue. Not only that, I don't even know how the process begins. Whose responsibility is it to begin with? I mean does the school call the parent or does the parent contact the school? What's the process? I have never heard a word about any of these basic questions.
 Okay guys, last question. 6. In your opinion, what do you think could be done to close the gap and improve the effectiveness of homebound instruction that could increase student's academic achievement measured by STAAR scores? 	Wait, can I ask, again, just to clarify, what exactly are the qualifications to become a homebound teacher?
If you are a certified teacher – in the state of Texas and hold a valid teaching certificate, you qualify as candidate to be a homebound teacher.	So, basically any certified teacher in Texas can be a homebound teacher in Texas. Okay, that is what I thought we said earlier, just wanted to make sure.
	Well, I think the first problem is they're expecting one teacher to know everything. I think also, two, the amount of time that they're getting taught, and too little instruction time. I think something that they may do that would be better would be maybe get a generalist teacher for middle school and maybe a generalist teacher for elementary and a generalist teacher for high school - not that I really think that would be 100% effective. I think there needs to be some kind of maybe a meeting of the teachers that are going to be involved with the student and who are responsible for this child's grades, that they should I think, like participant four said earlier, that we would need to meet the students so we can at least figure out where they are.

I think everyone has brought up some really great points today. I think it has become clearly obvious that we appear to have this widespread lack of teacher training or teacher professional developments in the area of homebound students and homebound instruction. I do believe that we have mentioned that there really needs to somehow be more instructional time allocated or required to give to the homebound students, especially in the core classes in which students will be STAAR tested in. And last but certainly not least there has got to be some kind of way that the homebound instructors could rotate in areas of expertise or at least be broken down into ways that students can get the highest quality instruction in the areas that they will be STAAR tested in. Passing and/or failing these state mandated tests have huge, potentially devastating outcomes, on student's lives. So, the education system in Texas should keep that in mind when planning and organizing homebound student's instructional plan.
I totally agree with everything you just said. I also ponder on the fact that we have had technology available long enough now for it not to be part of connecting homebound students to high quality education. I mean, how have we talked over an hour now and not one person has mentioned technology. This to me seems so crazy when I know how far we have come in the world of computer technology. We live in an era of answering any sort of question that you may have in an instant. What I want to

know is why the state or district does not already have some type of instructional plan developed from using the TEKS for every grade level and core subject? How is this possible?
Yes, I agree, my biggest concern immediately when you ask, "Well, how can you improve this," I thought more time for the student, more time for instruction, and then when everyone brought up technology, that's the perfect way to have more time.
The state of Texas has Texas Virtual School. [They could go, and they're responsible to get off the individual teacher because the virtual gives grades, all that kind of stuff. And guess what, the state owns it, I'm pretty sure - I'm pretty sure it's free. I don't know, the district might have to kick something in. But number two, this is the biggest thing. They have to have expectation for how many hours that kid is going to be teaching or being [crosstalk]. How many hours are you expecting this kid, because right now there is no hours. So if I go, "Oh, I don't feel good today." Nothing happens. "Oh, you came back." Oh, I don't feel good today." Oh, you can just miss the whole week of school and for us that's really more time. And so there has to be clear, standard operating procedures. And some kind of standard or acceptable guidelines.
Middle school is not just about the academics, but about social. And so I think all of that together just knowing just expectations I believe. I just feel from my experiences like I didn't do enough and I feel it just it weights so heavy on me because I feel like that is a child if that was my child. There is a child at home that is struggling with things that there are not I'm sure there's times where they're not thinking about what I am doing in my math class

	today. But they're thinking about, I'm a student and I want [crosstalk] What I am I going to how do I feel that I want to learn and I'm curious and I want to experience. You would think that there would be some kind of teacher training or professional development specifically designed to discuss all this.
Again, I just wanted to say "thank you" very much for agreeing to participate on this focus group interview. I will get back with you upon the completion of my dissertation for a copy of my completed paper.	
I greatly appreciate your time and opinions.	