

An Analysis of the De La Salle North Catholic's Corporate Internship Program

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June 1, 2010



An Action Research Proposal Presented to

The Graduate Program in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of Masters in Education/Continuing Teaching License

2010

### Abstract

The goal of this action research project was to investigate the success of the unique Corporate Internship Program at the research site. This was done by answering the questions: What are the advantages and disadvantages of the Corporate Internship Program (CIP) at the research site? How does the program improve students' education and preparedness for the future? The researcher collected data through surveying, interviewing, and observing graduates, current students, and teachers of the program. Results of the study provided evidence that the main advantages of the Corporate Internship Program are "real-world work experience" and the opportunity to build a résumé. The main disadvantages of the CIP include the loss of class time each week, the program not being a good fit for everyone, and the inadequate number of corporate internships available this year. Though these are significant disadvantages, the researcher found most individuals to feel the advantages of participating in the Corporate Internship Program outweigh the disadvantages. The researcher has concluded that the Corporate Internship Program prepares students for the future by helping them mature and be more prepared in a variety of ways to be successful in college and life beyond high school. The researcher believes these results are valuable and will allow the research site to make improvements to the program.

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## Chapter One – Introduction

As one drives west on a busy thoroughfare in a major metropolitan city, one will see a large red brick structure just past a sports field. The historic 1913 school has been updated to modern standards and now houses the unique, private, college-preparatory high school in which the researcher will be conducting her investigation.

With the “vroom” of the max train regularly passing the intersection and a frequent stop in front of the school property, there is always a colorful array of faces present on the sidewalk. People from all walks of life congregate at the intersection, wait for mass transit, or pass by on their way to the gas station, grocery store, or the variety of fast food franchises and other businesses along the busy street. The area is also home to many transients due to the congested intersection and to a freeway close by. Litter lines much of the street and there is the regular sight of disheveled individuals pushing overflowing shopping carts full of pop cans and beer bottles to deposit at the grocery store. There is never a dull moment in this neighborhood with heavy traffic, a multitude of bikers, and a regular police presence. But amidst the chaos, there is the calm presence of a unique high school that is making a difference in the lives of its students and in the nature of its community.

The setting of this action research project is a private, college-preparatory high school in the largest metropolitan area in Pacific Northwest. This city is located in the state's smallest, yet most populous county with over 710,000 residents (State's Official

Website). According to the most recent census, the population of this metropolis is around 557,706 and growing, making up most of the county's population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007).

Approximately 76% of the city's residents are Caucasian, eight percent are Hispanic, seven percent are Asian, six percent are African American, and Native American along with a variety of other ethnicities make up the other three percent of the city's population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007). These statistics are fairly representative of the lack of diversity across the state as well as in this major city. The racial diversity that is present is primarily concentrated on one area of the city, though there are small pockets of minorities living in other areas as well. The median family income is \$61,100 for a family of four, though according to State Center for Public Policy estimations, approximately 25% of families across the city are living at or below the poverty line of \$22,050 annual income (\_CPP, 2009).

Since the high school in which the researcher is conducting her research serves primarily a low-income, minority population, the author will share city statistics relating to minority teenagers. Of the six percent of the population which is African American, approximately 2,938 are of high school age, though only 82% of them are known to be attending school. About 60% of these students live in households with only a mother present, 17% are in single father homes, and 19% are in two-parent households (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007). Of the eight percent of the city's population that are of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, approximately 2,928 are of high school age, only

84% of them are known to be enrolled in school. About 36% percent of these students - live in households with a single mother and 10% percent have only a father in the home, while 46% are in two-parent families (2007). These statistics are very depressing with the large numbers of students not enrolled in school and the lack of two parent families at such a pivotal time in a teen's life. It is, however the reality of life for many of the minority students served by the school in which the research is being conducted. By way of comparison to the African American and Hispanic statistics, there are approximately 20,646 Caucasians of high school age living in the city with 90% registered in school. About 24% of these students live in households with only a mother present and 9% have a single father present, nearly 60% are in two-parent households (2007).

The school does not have a specified attendance area because as a private school it draws its students from across the metropolitan area. Thus any demographic information the author includes comes from the public school district from which most of the students come when attending this private school.

This public school district was founded in 1851, and is the most urban school district within the state. With approximately 46,000 students in more than 85 schools, it is one of the largest school district in the Pacific Northwest (\_\_\_\_\_ Schools Website, 2009). The racial makeup of the district is 55% Caucasian, 15% African American, 14% Hispanic, 11% Asian/Pacific Islander, two-percent Native American, and three-percent other nationalities ( \_\_\_\_\_ Schools Website, 2009). There are 111

spoken in the district, and 10% of the students are English language learners (ELL). Of the 46,000 students in the district, 45% percent qualify for free or reduced lunch, which is evidence of the high population of students living in poverty (2009). It will become evident to readers through subsequent paragraphs that the school in which the research is being conducted has a minority population which exceeds that of the Caucasian population and also has a majority of students receiving free or reduced lunch. This is due to the fact that part of the private school's mission is to reach racially diverse students from lower income situations.

This unique school opened in 2001 with 71 ninth graders and now has four classes in 9th through 12th grade with a current population of 250 students (\_\_\_\_\_Website, 2009). It is an inner-city high school that prides itself in transforming urban youth one student at a time. There are 80 freshman, 68 sophomores, 70 juniors, and 47 seniors. The ethnic diversity of the scholars plays out in the following ways: 33% Caucasian, 30% African American, 14% Hispanic, and 13% Multi-Racial, six percent Asian /Pacific Islander, one percent Native American, & one percent African. Sixty-two percent of the student population is eligible for and receive free or reduced lunch and only three current students are technically English Language Learners (ELL). A program for ELL students is one aspect of student services that this school feels inadequate in providing for.

The school was started with the hopes of developing tomorrow's community leaders through making quality education accessible to aspiring and motivated young

people from ethnically diverse backgrounds. This is accomplished through small class sizes, high expectations, individual attention, regular participation in the Corporate Internship Program, a prolonged school day, and a 10 1/2 month long school year (\_\_\_\_\_Website, 2009). Not only does this college preparatory school have high expectations for student education and for respect, but scholars are to wear professional uniforms. The strict dress code not only encourages an attitude of respect, but is also necessary for participation in the Corporate Internship Program (Student Handbook, 2008).

The inner-city school's approach to learning is the belief that the classroom is only one place where education occurs, and this is why students are expected to participate in athletics or in other extracurricular activities, to do service the community, and to work in a local business through the Corporate Internship Program. This distinctive program allows the high school to be known as the "School that Works." The Corporate Internship Program, which was only the second of its type in the nation, promotes self-sufficiency through the development of career and life skills, as well as personal mentoring and paid employment (\_\_\_\_\_Website, 2009). With the assistance and support from sponsoring corporations and non-profit organizations, each student works one full day each week to offset the cost of his or her education. Through their employment, students earn 70% of the tuition themselves. An added bonus is that it gives the students experience in a real-world work environment. (\_\_\_\_\_ Website).

Students at this school not only receive a college preparatory education and assistance with the college admission process, but also support for themselves and for their families in meeting the demands of high school while dealing with problems that may arise for them in school, their home, or the community. Caring counselors and teachers are there to assist students in these areas while encouraging parental involvement both at home and in school (\_\_\_\_\_ Website, 2009).

Since the researcher is not employed in this academic setting, her action research and analysis of the Corporate Internship Program will solely be accomplished through observation, interview, survey, and examination of artifacts. The researcher lives in the community in which the school is located and is currently working toward her Masters of Education in Curriculum and Instruction with endorsements to teach Middle School and High School Language Arts. Her research will focus on analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of the Corporate Internship Program at the research site, as well as analyzing how the program has improved students' education and preparedness for the future beyond high school. The research results should allow people to better understand this unique program and any benefits it provides its graduates.

## Chapter Two – The Issue

Preparing students for life beyond high school is the ultimate goal for most secondary educators, but how and if this goal is accomplished is dependent upon many variables. Unfortunately, a large percentage of adolescents drop out of high school prior to graduation, while others may graduate but never pursue a college education. Specifically, low-income and minority populations have a high rate of dropping out or not going to college (Swanson, 2004). This issue is especially prevalent in urban settings where poverty levels are high and racial segregation still exists.

The urban high school in which the researcher is conducting her investigation has 62% of its students coming from low-income situations, and 67% are ethnic minorities (Jacobson, 2009). Most of these students come from an inner-city public school district in which the graduation rate is only 68.5% (LPS, 2009). This graduation crisis does adversely affect the city's population as a whole. Without a high school diploma it is difficult to earn a living wage and thus these adults often remain in the low-income situations from which they came, continuing the cycle of poverty and its dependence on public assistance (Orfield, 2004; Swanson, 2004).

The national epidemic of high school students dropping out of school happens for a variety of reasons. Some of these include: "A lack of connection to the school environment; a perception that school is boring; feeling unmotivated; academic challenges; and the weight of real world events" (Bridgeland, 2006, p. iii). Students

from low-income backgrounds often do not have the parental involvement or support pushing them toward academic success. Many teenagers face real world challenges like the need to get a job in order to financially support themselves or family members, teen pregnancy, or the necessity to physically care for a family member. Students at the research site are not insusceptible to these same challenges and must have supportive teachers and programs to assist them in overcoming the obstacles. The researcher will investigate the unique combination of variables implemented to assist students in becoming successful graduates bound for college.

With these things in mind, the questions to be researched are: What are the advantages and disadvantages of the Corporate Internship Program at the research site? How does the program improve students' education and preparedness for the future?

### *Literature Review*

With a multitude of high school students dropping out of school each day, we have a nationwide epidemic on our hands. According to the 2001 statistics, only 68% of public high school students actually graduate (Swanson, 2004). The urban school district in which the researcher is conducting her investigation mirrors that of the national graduation statistics. Only 68.5 % of its students graduated in the 2007-2008 school year (PS, 2009). Unfortunately a higher proportion of the students who fail to graduate come from poverty or disadvantaged minority groups (Swanson, 2004). The calculations of the 2001 report show that: "only 50% of all black students, 51% of Native Americans, and 53% of all Hispanic students graduated from high school. Black, Native

American, and Hispanic males fare even worse: 43%, 47%, and 48% respectively” (Orfield, 2004, p. 2).

The failure of our society's young people does have a detrimental effect on our communities and on our nation as a whole. “Dropouts are much more likely than their peers who graduate to be unemployed, living in poverty, receiving public assistance, in prison, on death row, unhealthy, divorced, and single parents with children who drop out from high school themselves” (Bridgeland, 2006, p. i). He further states that as a nation will also suffer from the loss of productive workers, and the increased costs associated with incarceration, health care, and social services; which are all possible consequences of this epidemic.

The inner-city high school in which the researcher will be completing her investigation makes a quality education accessible to aspiring and motivated young people from ethnically diverse backgrounds who would not otherwise be able to receive one. Many of these students are those who would normally be categorized 'at high-risk' for being high school dropouts, but prove to be successful through this unique education model. The high school incorporates faith-based instruction, college-preparatory curriculum, and a unique Corporate Internship Program to produce graduates who will become productive members of society.

*Faith-Based Education*

Research shows that “students who feel cared for and who have supportive teachers who mentor them tend to do better in school, both academically and socially” (Bempechat, 2007, p. 174). Though these positive traits can be found in the public schools, they are qualities often associated with faith-based institutions such as the school in which the researcher is implementing her investigation. These often smaller schools have the opportunity to give students more individualized attention from teachers who are genuinely care about their well-being and ability to learn. An example of such an institution is Rice Catholic High School in Harlem, NY. All students, regardless of their individual issues, are taught in the same manner through a demanding curriculum, discipline, and much parent-teacher interaction (Kirkus, 2008). Students are not expected to convert to Catholicism, but moral values and social justice are important aspects of the education model.

“At the root of true teaching must lie an authentic love for the students and for the vocation of teaching” (Brothers, 2009, p. 20). This quotation comes from the founding father of the school system under which the research site exists. He believed that it is only through a genuine love for students that teachers can truly make a difference. This love is the love of God which educators must practice. In his 16<sup>th</sup> century schools, the teachers worked as a community for the glory of God and the salvation of the poor (Brothers). Where society insisted on class distinctions and educational limitations based on economic status, this educational pioneer brought education to those without status. Though not all schools in this sector teach students

living in poverty any longer, it is still the ultimate goal and is part of the mission of the research site. "The spirit of faith is the spirit that lets us look at situations from God's viewpoint rather than from our own" (Brothers, 2009, p. 31).

### *College Preparatory Curriculum*

"Even the most well-intentioned efforts to improve student performance will fail without sufficient attention to two particularly critical problems: student disengagement from the traditional academic curriculum and the disconnection of young people from adults" (Steinberg, 1998, p. 2). In creating an effective educational program which prepares students for college, student engagement in the curriculum and connection to adult role models is crucial. Without these things, college preparatory curriculum is fairly ineffective. Steinberg further states that often the most effective learning comes from combining the academic and the practical. This theory is evident within the philosophy of the research site and the school in which it is modeled after. College preparatory curriculum is being combined with hands-on learning in the school-to-work model.

Evidence of the success of this unique system of private high schools and how it prepares students for college is that 92 % of the class of 2006 graduated, and 99% of those graduates were accepted into a college (Cech, 2007). It is believed that the work-study program implemented in these non-profit schools actually motivates young people to go to college. It is not the program alone, but this combination of intense curriculum, high expectations, and the school-to-work program which significantly

improves students' likelihood of getting a high school diploma and a four-year college degree (Neumark, 2001).

A growing literature has documented that low-income students of color in Catholic high schools tend to outperform their peers in public schools in virtually every measure of pre- and post-secondary achievement, including GPA, SAT scores, enrollment in higher-track coursework, and high school completion. (Bempechat, 2008, p. 168)

Research also shows that students who graduate from Catholic schools are more likely to attend college and are often admitted to more selective universities. Specifically, inner-city Catholic schools such as the research site achieve the greatest success with often the most disadvantaged students (Bempechat, 2008). These are often the ethnic minority students living in poverty who are largely at risk for school failure. An example of such a college preparatory school is the Cristo Rey Jesuit High School in Chicago, Illinois, whose population is almost completely low-income Hispanic students. Rather than just expecting their students to absorb the knowledge of the teacher as is traditionally thought, Cristo Rey believes in teaching students to actually create knowledge (Kearney, 2008). The idea is that through learning how to create knowledge, students will be prepared for the rigors of the college level experience. For example, the Cristo Rey curriculum for a capstone class would involve a forensic investigation and criminal trial rather than the typical multiple choice exam. This hands-on approach to college preparatory education is evidently successful as Cristo Rey's model has now

been replicated around the country, and currently there are twenty-four schools including the research site.

### *School -to-Work Programs*

“We should continue push for alternatives to the very traditional high school classroom that is organized around lectures,” said Thomas Bailey, the president of the Institute for Education and the Economy in New York City. “School-to-work has been very useful for people to realize that combining the theoretical and the practical has a lot of exciting potential” (Gehring, 2001, p.2). School-to-work programs are exactly that practical alternative to the traditional lecture style of education necessary to reach our nations at risk students. Dropout rates are reduced, students have an improved readiness for college, and teachers and business leaders get good reviews when school-to-work programs are implemented.

In 1994, the School-to-Work Opportunities Act legislation was established. The focus of the legislation was to help students transition from school to work, especially students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Each School-to-Work system was expected to include three core elements (Guest, 2001; Joyce, 2001):

- School-Based Learning
- Work-Based Learning
- Connecting Activities

In implementing a school-to-work program, teachers are expected to collaborate with employers in the development of a curriculum that motivates students through its association with specific occupational skills. Students contribute weekly to an actual work environment where they learn teamwork, problem solving, and a host of other job skills.

Though not all school-to-work programs stem from the national legislation, all provide benefits to students, to schools, and to employers. Employers involved in such programs usually receive financial benefits, improved employee morale, and an improved public image (Guest, 2001). According to the *Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 25% of United States companies participate in a school-to-work partnership in some manner (Cappelli, 1998).

These school-to-work partnerships are twice as likely to be offered in private schools than in public schools due to their often smaller and more manageable size, though they are most often established in schools with a high dropout rate (Joyce, 2001). The Cristo Rey system of Catholic High Schools is an example of a school-to-work success story. The research site is part of this system of schools. Their students rotate in teams of four to collectively fill one 40-hour-per-week job slot, and the school calendar stretches over 10 months in order to accommodate all the hours (Cech, 2007). The various companies that employ students pay the school directly. The money then goes to cover students' annual tuition dues, allowing individuals who would not otherwise be able to attend a private school the opportunity (Kearney, 2008).

The researcher will investigate the Corporate Internship Program at the research site and find out whether it is successful in preparing students for their future that lies beyond high school. Research states that students who participate in school-to-work programs similar to that of the research sites' Corporate Internship Program are more likely to achieve better grades, complete high school, and go immediately on to college (Bottom Line, 1999). These programs often assist individuals in approaching life and work with a more positive attitude since they are better prepared for the real world (Bottom Line).

In this action research, the researcher will examine whether the research statement holds true with this specific program by observing, interviewing, and surveying students and teachers, as well as graduates of the program.



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### Chapter Three – The Goal of the Action Research Project

The questions to be investigated at the research site are: What are the advantages and disadvantages of the Corporate Internship Program at the research site? How does the program improve students' education and preparedness for the future?

The goal of this action research project is to determine how the research site takes at risk inner-city students from being possible drop-outs to productive members of society. Though the literature review took an in depth look at three variables present at the research site including faith- based instruction, college preparatory curriculum, and a school-to-work program, the focus of the research project is the Corporate Internship Program. Research states that students who participate in school-to-work programs similar to that of the research site's Corporate Internship Program are more likely to achieve better grades, complete high school, and go immediately on to college (Bottom Line, 1999). The researcher's intention is to analyze the impact this unique program has on preparing students for their future and their further education.

During the research process, data will be collected using a combination of three different methods: surveying, interviewing, and observation note taking. Data will be collected on students, teachers, employers, and graduates of the program. First, the researcher will provide a survey for current students to fill out regarding their feelings about the Corporate Internship Program, whether they think it is preparing them for the future, and whether they are planning to attend college (Appendix A). Graduates of the program who can be located, specifically those of the first graduating class of 2005,

will be asked to fill out surveys concerning their experience in the program and its impact on their life and future beyond high school (Appendix B). Teachers will be surveyed as well regarding their feelings about the program and its impact on students' performances and behaviors in the classroom (Appendix C). After analyzing the surveys, the researcher will spend time interviewing a few specific students, graduates, teachers, and employers to get more in-depth information on the advantages and disadvantages of the program and how it prepares students for the future. This should elicit more specific information than was revealed by the survey (Appendixes D, E, F, & G). Finally, the researcher will spend time observing students both in the classroom and at their places of employment. These observations will allow the researcher to observe students' attitudes, behavior, and overall performance, and reflect on the Corporate Internship Program's overall effect on its students. This combination of three research methods should provide valuable information for assessing the success of the research site's unique program.

The researcher will determine the value of the research site's Corporate Internship Program through survey, interview, and observation of program graduates, current students, and teachers. Ultimately, the reader should be able to understand the advantages and disadvantages of the Corporate Internship Program, how it prepares students for the future, and whether it is a program that would be worth implementing in other educational settings.

At the end of the research cycle, the data collected will be presented to the principals and staff involved in administering the Corporate Internship Program at the research site. The hope is that the information gained through this action research project will be of benefit to them as they continue to refine their program and its long-term impact on students.



## Chapter Four - Action Plan

The questions to be investigated at the research site are:

- “What are the advantages and disadvantages of the Corporate Internship Program at the research site”? and
- “How does the program improve students’ education and preparedness for the future”?

The questions are significant because the research site takes at risk inner-city students from being potential high school drop-outs to successful high-school completers and successfully starting them on the road to be productive members of society. In order to better understand how they are able to accomplish this, the researcher wants to determine the advantages and disadvantages of their Corporate Internship Program, as well as how it prepares students for their future and for further education. The information gained through the research will be of benefit to the school’s administrators as they continue to improve their program and its long-term impact on students.

In this chapter, the researcher will examine other possible solutions to the research questions, as well as explain the steps which will be taken to implement the action research this coming spring.

*Possible Solutions*

The passing of the Career Education Incentive Act in 1977 provided a possible solution for preparing students for life beyond high school. This act stemmed from the need for the scope of career education to broaden since the concept of a career was beginning to be understood in terms of possible personal choices. At the time of the passage of the Career Education Incentive Act, career education was seen as a means of connecting the professional aspects of human development to all levels of learning (Naylor, 1988).

The concept of infusing career education in classrooms, which began with the Career Education Incentive Act, has been enthusiastically received over the years. Many outstanding materials for use in incorporating career instruction in vocational and academic classrooms have been produced. The goal was for work to be a meaningful part of the total life-style. It was determined that career educators needed to incorporate the following if a program was going to be successful (Naylor, 1988):

- Shifting the focus of instruction in work values away from factors enhancing worker satisfaction to 'employment productivity indicators'.
- Recognizing the human need to work and helping students discover ways of meeting this need in other life roles.
- Recognizing the need to retain the concept of the work ethic and applying it in conjunction with an emphasis on work values.
- Taking advantage of the expertise being accumulated regarding the quality of working life movement. (p.3)

These process-oriented approaches are necessary for lasting educational reform in which career education is a thoroughly tested and validated approach (Naylor, 1988). But, this takes time, money, and resources which have not always been available. The needs of career education have also changed as society has changed over the years. Approaching the year 2010, the Career Education Incentive Act of 1977 is outdated and is no longer the means used in preparing students for life beyond high school. For these reasons, the researcher rejects it as a solution for use in the research site.

Another possible solution to the research question is the general implementation of school-to-work programs stemming from the 1994 School-to-Work Opportunities Act. This act authorized the allocation of national resources for initiatives that would help young people make the transition from school to work (Brown, 1998). With the job market requiring more extensive skills, as well as advanced academic knowledge and training, young entrants into the work force were often not meeting the necessary criteria. Then there are "a substantial number of youth--especially the economically disadvantaged, racial and ethnic minorities, and the disabled – who do not complete high school and are not enrolled in school" (Brown, 1998, p. 4). For these reasons national funding was allotted for school-to-work programs.

The initiatives of the School-to-Work (STW) Opportunities Act do not reflect a single model, but rather the conditions of the settings and contexts in which they should be implemented. Effective school-to-work practices are those that provide students with job-related experiences and connect them to an authentic work environment.

Through STW efforts that involve job shadowing and mentoring, students learn about job possibilities and conditions of employment. Volunteer work, internships, and work experiences allow students to experience the work environment firsthand. Through engagement in work-based learning, students have the opportunity to apply academic knowledge and vocational skills to solve real world problems and perform job-related tasks (National School-to-Work Learning and Information Center, 1996b).

Though the School-to-Work Opportunities Act provides funding for programs similar to that of the research site's Corporate Internship Program, the researcher does not believe they fund that of the research site. Also, despite the Act's existence, such programs are few and far between. This may be for a variety of reasons including the lack of employer cooperation and parent supportiveness, but the researcher would rather support a program that is already proving to be successful. Therefore, the researcher does not fully reject the School-to-Work Opportunities Act as a solution to the research question, but prefers the Corporate Internship Program model which is already in place.

A current solution in preparing high school students for further education beyond high school is the Career Related Learning Standards adopted in 2002. These Career Related Learning Standards (CRLS) are thought to be the essential skills necessary for success in employment, college, family, and community life beyond high school. The CRLS are most meaningful when implemented through integrated, interdisciplinary approaches and hands-on activities such as accomplishing an

assignment or discovering an answer to a question in the classroom or in career-related learning experiences (ODE, 2009).

The goal for the CRLS is to provide standards for high schools to use in better preparing students for post high school success. The standards were first adopted as a graduation requirement for the class of 2007 and were to be applied across the curriculum in a variety of settings (ODE, 2009). Specific proficiency levels and assessments are to be determined locally though the CRLS are provided by the state of Oregon.

These standards are compiled in the categories of Personal Management, Problem Solving, Communication, Teamwork, and Employment Foundation (ODE, 2009). The skills listed under Personal Management are intended to develop competence in fulfilling responsibilities of multiple life roles such as an individual, learner, producer, consumer, family member, and citizen while exhibiting appropriate work ethic and behaviors in the school, the community, and the workplace. Standards set for Problem Solving are intended to develop responsible approaches for decision making and conflict resolution in multiple settings. The skills listed under Communication are to assist students in selecting and demonstrating appropriate communication strategies in family, school, community, and workplace settings. Standards set for Teamwork are to assist students in developing and using interpersonal skills in working toward common goals in family, school, community, and workplace settings. Last but not least, the skills listed for Employment Foundations

integrate academic, technical, and organization knowledge and skills to work successfully in a variety of settings (ODE).

Though all of these Career Related Learning Standards are important skills for individuals to learn in order to be successful in college and beyond, the researcher does not believe the standards provide a clear method for implementing them with high school students. Also, by leaving specific proficiency levels and assessments strategies to be determined by the individual district or school, there is much room for inconsistency across the state. Though the research site is not specifically incorporating these CRLS with their students, they are giving their students hands-on experience and responsibility through actual employment in the corporate setting. Actual job experience is something that does not seem to necessarily be incorporated into schools using the CRLS. For these reasons, the researcher rejects the Career Related Learning Standards as a solution to the research questions.

#### *Action Plan*

In order to determine the advantages and disadvantages of the research site's Corporate Internship Program, and how it improves students' education and preparedness for the future, the researcher has created an action plan. The action plan is comprised of a 13-week study to be implemented in January through March of 2010. Throughout the three months, students, teachers, and employers, as well as graduates of the program, will be surveyed, interviewed, and observed. The following explains the timeline in detail:

- Weeks 1 – 2 (January 4<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>): The researcher will gain consent from the research site's principal and administrator of the Corporate Internship Program to follow through in implementing this action research proposal. The researcher will also finish creating her surveys and interview questions, as well the logs on which to record observations.
- Week 3 (January 18<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>): Through assistance from school administrators, the researcher will get contact information from as many 2005 and 2006 graduates of the research site as possible. The researcher will then distribute surveys to them via mail or e-mail, and hopefully set up phone or in-person interviews with five or six of them. The researcher will need to budget money for stamps to mail and include return address envelopes with any surveys that are mailed to graduates.
- Weeks 4 – 5 (January 25<sup>th</sup> – February 5<sup>th</sup>): With guidance from school administrators, the researcher will determine a focus group of students (possibly all juniors and seniors) to implement surveys with. The researcher will then get permission from these teachers to implement surveys during their class-time. Along with the student surveys, the researcher will provide surveys for all of the junior and senior teachers to fill out.
- Weeks 6 - 8 (February 8<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>): The researcher will spend time analyzing the surveys and get permission from administrators to interview a few

specific students and teachers. Interviews will then be set up and conducted throughout the month of February allowing the researcher to gain more specific information then can be gained through surveying.

- Week 9 (March 1<sup>st</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup>): The researcher will spend some time this week observing students in a few classes, taking notice of their overall attitudes, behavior, and performance. With assistance from program administrators, this week will also be used to set up observations shadowing several students at their places of employment throughout the month of March. The researcher will call the employer ahead of time to get their permission as well to shadow the student employee.
- Weeks 10 - 11 (March 8<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup>): During this two-week period, the researcher will be observing five or six students at their places of employment. These observations will be for 45 minutes to an hour each, and will hopefully allow the researcher to have a brief interview with the student's employer to discuss student performance and their thoughts on the program.
- Weeks 12 - 13 (March 22<sup>th</sup> - April 2<sup>nd</sup>): This final two weeks of the action plan is when the researcher will wrap up any last minute details and finish analyzing and interpreting her results, before completing the final project to be turned into her faculty advisor by April 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The researcher is looking forward to implementing her action research plan this spring. The project will be time consuming to complete, but necessary in answering the research questions. The hope is that the information gained through this action research project will be of benefit to principals and staff involved in administering the Corporate Internship Program at the research site.



## Chapter Five – The Results

The goal of the action research project was to investigate the success of the Corporate Internship Program at the research site. This was done by answering the questions: What are the advantages and disadvantages of the Corporate Internship Program at the research site? and How does the program improve students' education and preparedness for the future?

The researcher used the research methods of survey, interview, and observation to investigate the Corporate Internship Program at the research site over a twelve week period after being granted written permission from school administration. The researcher surveyed 21 graduates of the high school's first graduating class, 79 current junior and senior students, and 10 teachers at the research site. The graduates were primarily surveyed and interviewed over the phone throughout a three week time period in which the researcher attempted to contact all 55 of the 2005 graduates. Rather than attempt to contact graduates via mail or e-mail as had been originally planned, the researcher ended up making contact by means of the phone to accomplish both surveying and interviewing.

The researcher chose a focus group of all current junior and senior students to survey since most of them have been in the Corporate Internship Program three to four years. Surveys were completed by these students amidst one of their core classes and

returned to the researcher. The 79 surveys completed represent all junior and senior students who were present on the days of implementation. Teacher surveys were passed out physically in a staff meeting after the researcher was introduced, and then also via e-mail in hopes of getting as many filled out and returned as possible. Ten of the 16 teachers at the research site ended up completing the survey. Though the researcher originally intended to survey only junior and senior teachers, in realizing there were only 16 teachers at the school, it made sense to include all of them in the research process since they are all educating students within the Corporate Internship Program.

The next phase of the research process included the selection and interviewing of current students and teachers. The researcher interviewed six students, two of which were recommended by an administrator and four that were randomly selected. Interviews were then conducted with five teachers who had been at the school different lengths of time and each taught different subject areas. Two of these individuals volunteered after completing the survey and the other three were approached by the researcher upon recommendation.

The final aspect of the research process included the completing of observations both in classes at the research site and out in the field at the corporate work sites. The researcher had the opportunity to observe in three junior classes, taking notice of overall attitudes, behavior, and performance of students. The researcher then visited five different corporate work sites over a two week period, shadowing students and

interviewing them and their supervisors regarding their performance and thoughts on the Corporate Internship Program.

The researcher completed the action research process with fidelity, following the plan described in chapter four. With the above description of the research methods completed, the researcher will now describe the research results and how they answer the research questions. The researcher will begin with a detailed description of the surveys and their results, followed by thorough analyses of the interviews, and finally summaries of the observation results.

#### *Graduate Survey Results*

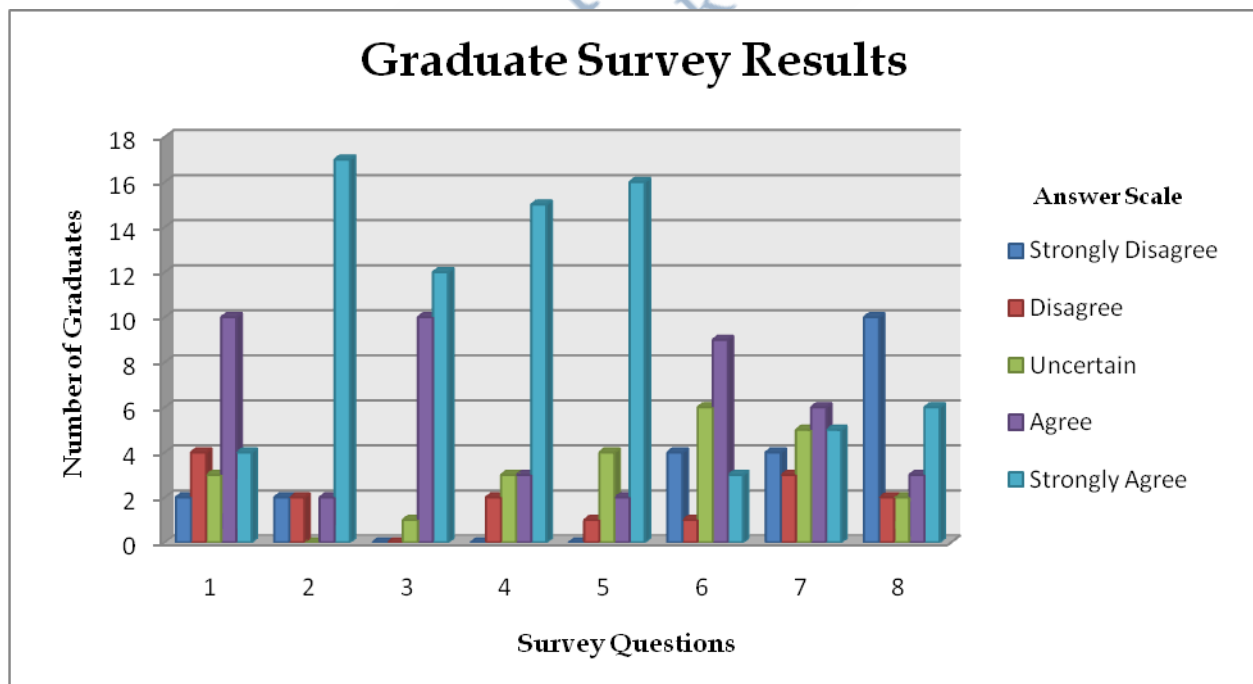
The first section of each of the surveys consisted of a series of statements that were to be answered using the scale: **5** = Strongly Agree **4** = Agree **3** = Uncertain **2** = Disagree **1** = Strongly Disagree. Each statement was to assist the researcher in understanding the individuals' experience with the Corporate Internship Program.

The first section of eight questions on the anonymous graduate survey was as follows:

- The first question asked if the graduate attended the research site because of their Corporate Internship Program.
- Questions two and three asked whether the internship was their first paid employment experience and whether it was enjoyable.

- The fourth and fifth questions asked about whether the program taught them responsibility and prepared them for life beyond high school.
- Question six asked whether job experience was helpful in choosing a career path of college major.
- The seventh question asked whether the employment experience was helpful in getting their first job.
- Question eight asked whether the Corporate Internship Program played a role in whether they chose to attend college after.

The researcher has condensed the results from the first section of all graduate surveys into a graph. The survey results are as follows:



As evidenced by questions one and two on the above graph, nearly half of the surveyed graduates attended the research site because of their Corporate Internship Program and for the majority; it was their first paid employment experience. Nearly all of the graduates responded to question three with either "Agree" or "Strongly Agree," meaning they enjoyed their opportunity for work experience. Most of these individuals that the researcher surveyed also "Strongly Agreed" that the CIP taught them responsibility and prepared them for life beyond high school. These overwhelmingly positive responses to the first five survey questions were encouraging for the researcher to receive in her quest for feedback on the program.

The responses to question six were mixed as some graduates did feel the experience with the program had been helpful in choosing a career path or college, while others "Strongly Disagreed" about its helpfulness. Responses to question seven were evenly diverse as well. Though some found their unique experience at the research site to have been helpful in getting their first job, others did not and haven't even landed their first job yet. Question eight responses varied between a large number who did not feel the CIP played a role in their decision to attend college and others who did feel it had played a role. Through the researcher's conversations with graduates in the surveying process, it was apparent that the students who did not feel the Corporate Internship Program played a role in their decision to attend college were those who were already planning on going to college before participating in the program.

The second section of each survey consisted of several short answer questions in which for them to share their opinion of the Corporate Internship Program. The three questions on the second section of the graduate survey and their results are as follows:

- The ninth question asked what the graduate felt the biggest advantage was to having participated in the Corporate Internship Program and why.

Of the 21 graduates who were able to be surveyed, 11 answered question nine with “real world work experience” or something to that affect as being the biggest advantage to having participated in the Corporate Internship Program. The second most common response was “resume’ building” with five individuals addressing this. The researcher feels that both of these things are incredible benefits students receive through the CIP program and was encouraged to get this feedback from graduates. The surveys provided evidence that most graduates felt there were multiple advantages to having participated in the program. A few of the other benefits mentioned included gaining responsibility, professionalism, self-confidence, leadership skills, experience working with co-workers, exposure to the “adult world”, and opportunities for internships or future employment.

- Question ten asked whether they felt there were any disadvantages to having participated in the program and if so what they were.

Seven graduates responded to question ten with “none” in regards to disadvantages of the Corporate Internship Program. There were a variety of other

disadvantages mentioned including three statements about “less time in class or lack of class options”. An individual commented on there not having been many college credit courses available at the research site, which the researcher feels is a viable disadvantage that should be addressed though it may have changed in the four years since these graduates finished. Other disadvantages listed included two students' mentions of “being young” and thus not being prepared for the corporate environment or as respected by co-workers, longer hours each day and a longer school year, missing out on sports and extra-curricular activities, coordination and communication issues within the program, rotation difficulties when students are ill, and being overqualified for most other high school jobs due to CIP experience.

- The eleventh question asked the individual to give a brief overview of their life since high school including whether they went to college, graduated from college, had any employment, or other important life information.

This final question on the anonymous graduate survey provided information on what this group of 2005 graduates has been up to since finishing out their time at the research site. Being the first graduating class from the unique Corporate Internship Program, these individuals could have potentially graduated from college by now. Question eleven allowed the researcher to assess what percentage of graduates have accomplished this or attained their first post-high school job. Twelve of the 21 surveyed graduates have completed their undergraduate degree at a four-year university. Eight

others are currently attending college, three of which will graduate in 2010. Of those college graduates; eight are employed, two are working as Lasailian volunteers, and one is attending graduate school. Only one of these college graduates is not employed, volunteering, or in graduate school. All 21 of these graduates of the research site have attended at least some college and there is only one who does not plan on finishing. The researcher feels these statistics are good, but is aware that no adequate conclusions can be drawn from the them because only 21 of the 55, 2005 graduates were able to be surveyed, though the researcher attempted to contact all of them.

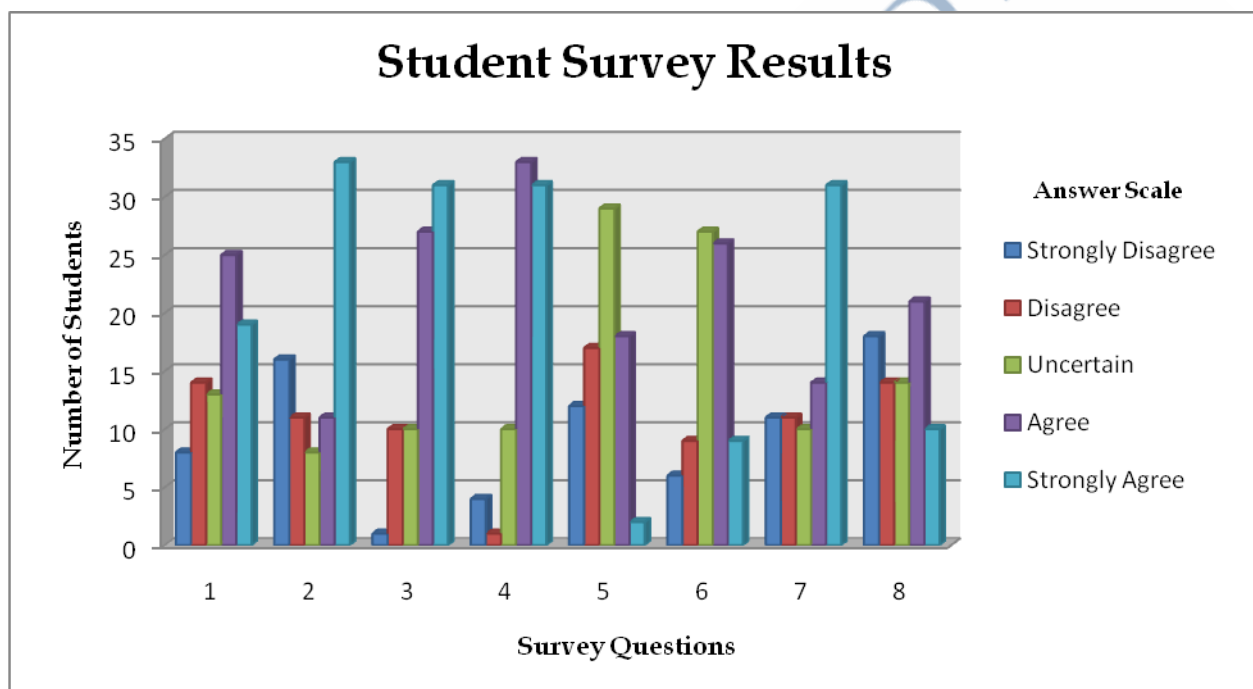
#### *Student Survey Results*

The first section of the anonymous student survey consisted of the following eight questions:

- The first question asked if the student attends the research site because of their Corporate Internship Program.
- Questions two and three asked whether the program was their first paid employment experience and whether it was enjoyable.
- The fourth and fifth questions asked about whether the program is teaching the student responsibility and whether the responsibility they are learning is assisting them in getting better grades.
- Question six asked whether their self-confidence is boosted by the employment opportunity.

- The seventh and eighth questions asked whether the Corporate Internship Program changed their outlook about the future or what profession to go into, or a role in their decision to attend college.

The researcher has condensed the results from the first section of all student surveys into a graph. The survey results are as follows:



As evidenced by questions one and two on the above graph, over half of the surveyed students attended the research site because of their Corporate Internship Program which was their first paid employment experience. A majority of students also responded with "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" to question three, meaning they do enjoy their position with the Corporate Internship Program. In question four we see that current students do feel that the program is teaching them responsibility, though

question five reveals that about two-thirds are "Uncertain," "Disagree," or "Strongly Disagree" as to whether the responsibility they are learning assists them in getting better grades. The researcher finds this to be unfortunate because if responsibility is truly being learned it should translate from one area of the students' education to another.

Question six provided mixed results, though a majority of students marked either "Uncertain" or "Agreed" in answering whether their self-confidence was boosted through the employment opportunity. Responses to question seven were also varied with over half saying they "Agreed" or "Strongly Agreed" to the Corporate Internship Program having changed their outlook about the future or what profession they may go into. In responding to whether the program played a role in their decision to attend college, question eight probably brought out the widest range of responses. The researcher feels this is based on the varied life experiences and family backgrounds students have when coming into the Corporate Internship Program. Those who come from a college educated background or at least have parents encouraging them towards college were probably less influenced by their experiences with the program, while their peers who may never have thought about college before are more driven to attend due to their experience with the program.

The two questions on the second section of the student survey are as follows:

- Question nine asked what the student felt the biggest advantage was to participating in the Corporate Internship Program and why.

Of the 79 junior and senior students at the research site who were surveyed, 38 answered question nine with "real world work experience" or something to that affect as being the biggest advantage to participating in the Corporate Internship Program. The second most common response was "resume' building" with 13 individuals addressing this. The researcher feels that both of these things are incredible benefits students receive through the CIP program and was encouraged to get this same feedback from students as she had received from graduates. The surveys provided evidence that most students felt there were at least one, if not more advantages to participating in the program. A few of the other benefits mentioned included receiving an advantage over their peers in other schools, meeting influential people, saving on school tuition at the research site, gaining life skills, seeing what jobs are like in the real world, providing a change from the school routine, building a reservoir of knowledge, experience working with co-workers, getting opportunities for summer employment positions with their CIP employers; and building connections for future internships, employment, references or scholarships.

There were two student quotes listed as advantages to the Corporate Internship Program in response to question nine that the researcher thought were worth sharing: "Preparing for life after college because we will all have to work eventually." and "Learning to enjoy life while I'm young because when I grow up it's not going to be peaches and cream." These are interesting perspectives, but both are ways to look at the CIP as a benefit.

- Question ten asked whether they felt there were any disadvantages to participating in the program and if so what they were.

Thirty-eight of the 79 students responded to question ten with either “none” or by leaving it blank in regards to disadvantages of the Corporate Internship Program. There were a variety of other disadvantages mentioned including twelve statements to the effect of “less time in school or class” and six statements regarding the “increased homework load.” Other disadvantages listed included two students’ mentions of “being young” and thus not as respected by co-workers, and two statements about “not being able to dress according to the job environment,” which is due to the professional dress-code the research site requires that is sometimes more professional than what the corporate internship sites requires. Students also mentioned increased stress, having to stick with a job you may not enjoy through the whole school year, feeling like you have to “sell” yourself to donors/employers, getting charged \$100 for any day that is missed even when you’re sick, having to complete simplistic work such as filing, missing out on sports and extra-curricular activities, and coordination and communication issues within the program as additional disadvantages to participation in the CIP. The researcher was impressed with how many of the disadvantages listed by students matched those listed by graduates of the program.

There were two student quotes listed as disadvantages to the Corporate Internship Program in response to question ten that the researcher thought were worth sharing: “CIP at De La Salle is unorganized, they forget to pick students up or pick us

up more than an hour late and that affects my ability to participate in sports and makes me late for my own job." This individual's comment was a concern to the researcher who has noticed some disorganization in her own observation of the research site and feels that if this quotation is accurate, it is very unprofessional for the program that desires to improve students' education and preparedness for the future. The second quotation was: "The whole thing is a disadvantage because it's not teaching us anything. It's just a way for the school to get money. Basically the school pimps us out!" The researcher believes this is probably coming from a dissatisfied student who does not yet realize the benefit the program will provide in the long run, which is not a reflection on the CIP as a whole!

#### *Teacher Survey Results*

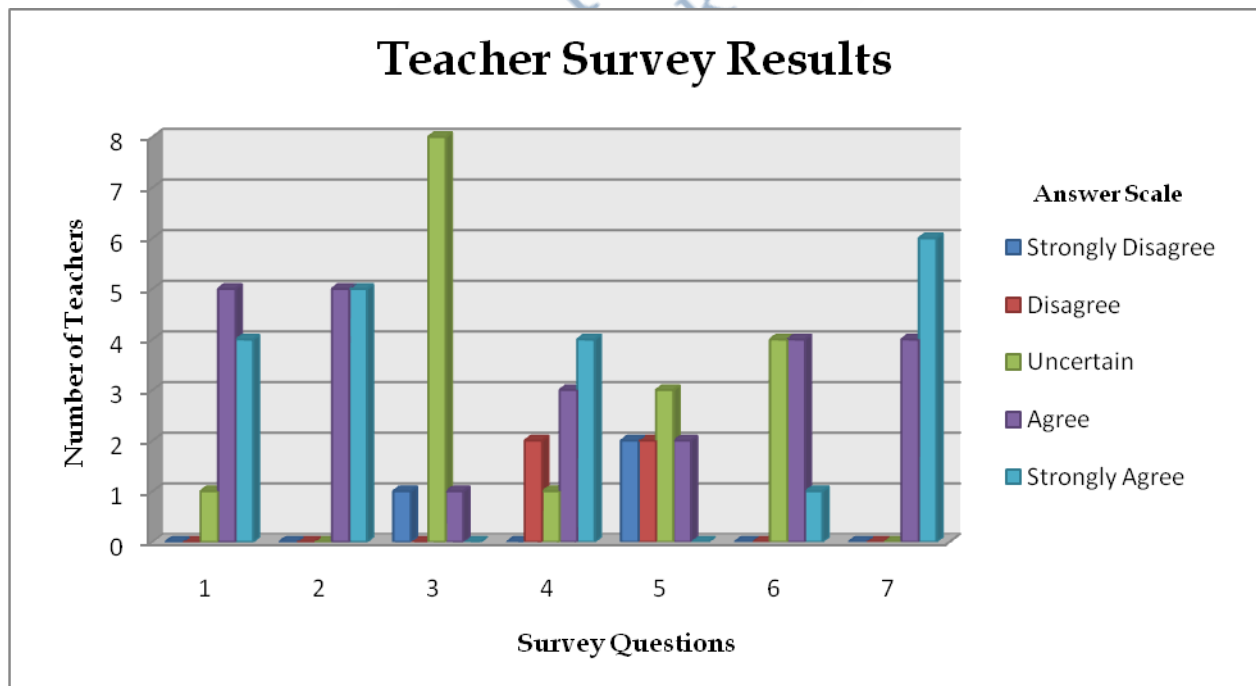
The first section of the anonymous teacher survey consisted of the following seven questions:

- The first and second questions asked if the teacher felt the Corporate Internship Program taught students responsibility and prepared them for life beyond high school.
- Question three asked whether they felt the program improved students' classroom behavior.
- The fourth and fifth questions asked whether the Corporate Internship Program provided the teacher with "real world" teaching opportunities or

lesson plans to integrate into their classroom, and whether they were able regularly do so.

- Question six asked whether the teacher felt there was enough class time each week to cover the necessary core curriculum when students miss class one day a week for work.
- The seventh question asked whether they felt the Corporate Internship Program provides students with an advantage over students from other schools, when it comes to receiving a “well-rounded” education.

The researcher has condensed the results from the first section of all teacher surveys into a graph. The survey results are as follows:



As evidenced by question one of the above graph, nine out of the 10 teachers who completed the survey felt the Corporate Internship Program teaches students responsibility. All 10 responded in question two that they believed the program prepares students for college and life beyond high school. Question three asked teachers whether the CIP improves students' classroom behavior. Though most teachers responded with "Uncertain" to this question, it became apparent through the researcher's interviews that the unanimous feeling among educators is that the Corporate Internship Program does not actually improve classroom behavior. This is something the researcher will address in detail when reflecting on the teacher interviews.

Questions four and five of the teacher survey provided very mixed results. A majority of teachers do feel the Corporate Internship Program provides them with more "real world" teaching opportunities or lesson plans to integrate in their classroom, though several do not agree. There was not a consensus as to whether these individuals are able to regularly implement work-related curriculum into their classrooms. A couple may do so, but it seems most probably do not regularly implement work-related curriculum. Question six responses proved that educators at the research site mostly feel there is enough class time each week to cover the necessary core curriculum when students miss one day a week for work, though a few answered with "Uncertain," The final question on the survey revealed a unanimously positive feeling among teachers regarding whether the Corporate Internship Program provides students with an

advantage over students from other schools when it comes to receiving a “well-rounded” education. The research agrees with these teachers, after all her surveying, interviewing, and observing, there is no doubt that the CIP provides students with a more complete education than they would get in a mainstream classroom.

The three questions on the second section of the teacher survey are as follows:

- Question eight asked what the teacher felt the biggest advantage was for students participating in the Corporate Internship Program and why.

Of the 10 teachers at the research site who filled out the survey, seven answered question eight with “real world work experience” or something to that affect as being the biggest advantage to participating in the Corporate Internship Program. The researcher is amazed at how similar these responses were to the graduate and student survey responses regarding advantages of the CIP. There is no doubt that the opportunity to receive “real world work experience” at such a young age is valuable! Other advantages teachers mentioned were “résumé building,” immersion into the “adult world”, gaining the ability to deal with adults, increased maturity level, introduction to professionalism, being better prepared for college and adult responsibilities, the opportunity to gain responsibility and a work ethic, as well as understand the advantages of getting an education.

- The ninth question asked whether they felt there were any disadvantages to students participating in the program and if so, what they were.

In reflecting on the teacher responses to question nine, only one of the 10 did not list a disadvantage at all. Four responded with something to the effect of "loss of class time," expressing that there is less time to implement required curriculum than teachers in other school's have. This was similar to many of the student survey responses to disadvantages of the program.

A significant concern mentioned by two teachers is the lack of corporate internship positions available this year causing some students to have to "work" at school. These individuals feel that the students without jobs are doing nothing one day a week, but sit in the library. This disadvantage is a definite concern to the researcher who feels it would be better for the research site to have their students out volunteering in the community rather than sitting at the school if there are not enough corporate internship positions available. Though the economy is depressed and part of the reason less student jobs are available, the research site really needs to work harder to find corporate sponsors/internship positions for their students if they are going to admit more students to their school each year. Having students "working at school," even if they really are working, is a poor reflection on the program as a whole.

Another valuable disadvantage multiple teachers listed was that the Corporate Internship Program is not a good fit for all students. Students who struggle with academic concepts and skills, with organization, or who are placed in jobs that do not open their eyes to anything interesting often aren't successful in the program. Even some students who are good students may not fit the corporate environment, and thus

their poor job performance causes them to be asked to leave the school since their involvement with CIP is linked with funding. The researcher finds this situation to be unfortunate, but understands that there is not necessarily a better approach as this type of school set-up is just not the right fit for all students.

- Question ten asked the teacher to share their personal thoughts on teaching at the research site, where the Corporate Internship Program was such an integral part of the program?

In reviewing teacher responses to question ten, there was one individual who left it blank, though eight of the ten answered with words of affirmation on behalf of the research site and its' Corporate Internship Program. Multiple individuals stated that they either like, love, or embrace the school and its program. One teacher mentioned the research site as being unique; while another feels it is "amazing." The researcher was excited by this positive feedback from educators at the research site and is thankful they stand behind this valuable program.

There was only one of the ten teachers who responded negatively to question ten. This individual brought up the fact that students who are fired from their Corporate Internship position or who have not been assigned a position are often spending the "work day" just hanging out with friends. This response goes along with the disadvantage mentioned in regards to survey question nine. The situation is a concern to the researcher who will address it with the administrator of the research site. The other frustration mentioned by this teacher was the fact that most students do not

show the same respect to their teachers as they show to their employers at their corporate work sites. With this in mind, it is something that the researcher addressed in her interviews with teachers and will reflect upon when reviewing those interviews.

### *Student Interview Results*

The researcher will now move into analyzing the anonymous interviews. The six student interviews represented students from every grade level and consisted of the following five questions. After each question, the researcher will reflect on data collected from that interview question.

- The first question asked whether the student felt “real-world experience” was the biggest advantage of participating in the Corporate Internship Program.

All six students interviewed agreed that “real-world experience” is the biggest advantage to participating in the Corporate Internship Program, though they had different reasons for feeling this way. Two students stated feeling like the program was preparing them for the future. A junior mentioned the benefit of knowing what to expect when you enter the adult world and feeling more comfortable with adults while still in high school. “Learning how to gain respect from supervisors” was an answer provided by a sophomore to question one. A second sophomore commented on the CIP allowing students to be a step ahead of their peers in other schools.

- Question two asked whether they felt the research site did a good job of preparing individuals for the corporate work environment and supporting them while there.

Responses to question two of the student interview were varied, but multiple individuals mentioned the two-week Corporate Internship Training that the research site provides their students with during the summer to be helpful in preparing individuals with skills for the corporate work environment, along with the Employment Foundations Class that freshman are required to take. Three of the six students interviewed feel the training provided by the research site is adequate and also feel supported while in their places of employment. Unfortunately, this was not the case with everyone. A junior mentioned that after the training provided in the summer and the one-day training provided at the beginning of the year by the specific employer, students are “completely on their own.” The researcher does not know how accurate this statement is, but believes the research site should make an effort to make sure all their students feel supported in order to provide the highest rate of success in the program.

The second half of question two asked how the student feels the research site could improve. Two sophomores the researcher interviewed felt the research site could improve by matching students to their Corporate Internship positions based on interest. Though this would seem to be the ideal situation, the researcher has discussed it with the head of the CIP and became aware that the school does take student interest into

consideration but is not always able to place students accordingly due to what sponsors are available.

- The third question asked how the student felt the Corporate Internship Program had prepared them for college and life beyond high school.

Two students responded to the third interview question with statements about being more mature and prepared to be successful in college and life beyond high school due to their experience with the Corporate Internship Program. Along with those things, a sophomore discussed how the program has “taught him how to act professionally, and provided him with references and a good résumé to assist in the college and career search.” A freshman mentioned learning how to interact with those in authority and a junior felt she has been prepared by becoming more outgoing as a leader and less shy. Another junior discussed feeling like the CIP has shown her what field she doesn't want to go into as she looks ahead to her future.

- Question four asked whether the student felt there were any disadvantages to having participated in the program, and if so what they were and whether they felt the experience they were gaining outweighed them.

Three of the six students interviewed responded to question four with “none” in regards to disadvantages of having participated in the Corporate Internship Program. This was not a surprise to the researcher since many graduates and students responded the same way on the surveys. The freshman interviewed felt that a disadvantage was

not necessarily working in a field they were interested in having a career in, but believes that the privilege of having a job definitely outweighs that disadvantage. Similar to that, a sophomore feels that having a "boring job" is definitely a disadvantage of the CIP, but it is offset the overall experience gained! The final student interviewed was a junior who felt that missing out on sports because of work was definitely a disadvantage, though she also agrees that the disadvantage is outweighed by the good experience. The researcher was encouraged that even though there were a few disadvantages students felt to participating in the Corporate Internship Program, all those interviewed felt the advantages outweighed any disadvantages!

- The fifth question asked if they had any other feedback.

Only two of the six students interviewed had any extra feedback to give the researcher. A junior feels it is unfair to have to be treated differently than other employees at the company (in having to dress professionally when coworkers do not and in not being able to listen to an iPod as she works) just because she is an internship student from the research site. She mentioned that it feels like she is not treated as an "adult" even though she is working in the adult world. The researcher understands this young woman's perspective, but is aware that the research site must enforce school-wide professionalism for the success of the CIP even if not all of the work sites have those same standards. The freshman interviewed provided the positive feedback of: "More schools should do this type program!" This was good for the researcher to hear coming from a student because she is in agreement.

*Teacher Interview Results*

The five teacher interviews were with educators from a variety of different subject areas teaching different grade levels, and consisted of the following five questions. After each question, the researcher will reflect on data collected from that interview question.

- The first question asked whether the teacher felt “real-world experience” was the biggest advantage student participation in the Corporate Internship Program.

Each of the six teachers interviewed agreed with question one, but expanded with other more specific advantages they feel their students are receiving through participation in the Corporate Internship Program. The first teacher stated that, “Emersion in the professional setting allows a student to mature in their thinking and ability to interact with adults. Even when they are doing a mindless task like filing, they are still immersed in the corporate/adult world!” The researcher agrees with this individual’s insight and the benefit of students just being in a professional environment. Other teachers listed advantages to the CIP as: learning job skills and about different types of careers, working with coworkers, practicing interview and communication skills, gaining responsibility and professionalism, building a résumé, and realizing the privilege of having a job when others are losing theirs. Seeing these benefits, one teacher mentioned wishing he had a Corporate Internship opportunity when he was in

high school. The researcher agrees with these advantages and desires to see similar programs in other educational settings.

- Question two asked whether they felt the program makes students more prepared for college and life beyond high school.

The six teachers interviewed responded to question two with similar ideas as they had to question one. They feel students will be more prepared for college and life beyond high school because they will have a resume', take college more seriously and be motivated to work hard in getting through in order to get a better job, know how to work with coworkers, and possibly even have connections for potential future jobs. One teacher pointed out that the stronger requirements the school has with the corporate internship sites for students who are late or absent having to pay monetary fines provides a higher likelihood of success in college and future employment due to their high school experience. The researcher agrees that the monetary consequences make students feel a more "adult-like" penalty for their choices that may assist them as they enter the adult world.

A valid point that one teacher made was that most college students have to "balance both college and work" at the same time, so the Corporate Internship Program allows students to learn those skills of balancing time while still in high school. The researcher feels this is such a valuable thing for students to learn as no matter where you are at in life you will have to "balance" multiple commitments, so why not learn those skills while you are young.

- The third question asked whether the teacher felt student participation in the Corporate Internship Program improves their classroom behavior, and to explain why or why not.

After reading the comments teachers had written on their surveys to a similar question, the researcher was interested to get more feedback from teachers in an interview setting regarding their feelings on the issue. All six teachers interviewed responded to question three with “no” the program does not improve students’ classroom behavior, though students are more capable of grown-up things (interviews and presentations, etc.). Each teacher had a different philosophy for why this is, though everyone seemed to agree that students are more disrespectful in the classroom than they would ever be at their internship sites. Students act like “adults” in the work environment, though they are more like “kids” at school.

One teacher pointed out that students don’t seem to see the parallel between “school as work” and work, but rather as two completely different situations. This individual also mentioned that students are surrounded by their peers at school who easily influence them, while they are surrounded by adults in the work environment making it more natural to act mature. The researcher completely agrees with this philosophy, though it is something that she believes should be addressed as teachers deserve to be shown the same respect students are able to show their employers.

Another teacher mentioned the lack of strict accountability for school and class absences or disrespect, as there is in the CIP where students pay fines and can potentially get

fired. The researcher believes more accountability must be established on the research site side in order to improve the level of student respect.

- Question four asked whether they felt there were any disadvantages to students participating in the program, and if so, what they are and any ideas they had for improving that aspect of the program.

Only one of the six teachers interview answered “no” to whether there were any disadvantages to students participating in the Corporate Internship Program. The other five teachers listed a variety of disadvantages including: the lack of training students receive for the work environment; students often being tired while balancing school, work, and other activities; the difficult class schedule at the research site; students without job placements who are “hanging out” on their work days; and the loss of classroom lesson time. Three teachers’ main concern was the loss of class time for students, though one mentioned that the benefits outweigh it. Another suggested that the research site implement either Saturday school or summer school to make-up for the missed school days. Since the researcher is not aware of students test scores or whether there is evidence that they are lacking educationally due to the missed class days for work, she feels she would need to do more research before siding with any of these teachers on the topic. The researcher’s main concern is that the research site finds enough internship positions so that students are not just “hanging out” as that defeats the purpose of the Corporate Internship Program.

- The fifth question just asked if the teacher had any other feedback.

Two of the six teachers interviewed did not have any feedback to contribute in response to question five of the interview. One teacher commented that teacher pay is low. Another mentioned the need for a corrective measure to assist those students with a lack of work ethic. The researcher thought this was interesting feedback, but definitely something that would be helpful. Another teacher commented on the challenge of having kids come into their class two or three grades below in math and reading. This feedback is a concern that the researcher will address with administrators because to really have a successful Corporate Internship Program, students need to be able to be successful academically as well in order to be properly prepared for the future. The researcher is curious what the research site is doing to assist these academically behind students in catching up to the appropriate grade level?

#### *Classroom Observation I Reflection*

After reviewing the survey and interview results, the researcher will now move into analyzing the observations. In hopes of gaining a well-rounded perspective on the research site and their unique Corporate Internship Program, the researcher chose to do several classroom and work-site observations. The researcher will first reflect on her observations of three junior classes, two of which were math and one which was chemistry. The researcher used the "wide-lens technique" as an observation method to observe the overall attitudes, behavior, and performance of the students in each class.

Each classroom observation will be reflected on individually in the following paragraphs.

The researcher first observed in a pre-calculus class where 13 students were present and seated in table groups of four. As the teacher taught a lesson on “angles of fractions” using the overhead projector, students took notes. The researcher sat towards the back of the room and noticed two boys nearby who continued to chat throughout all of the instruction time. The researcher was bothered by the boys’ level of disrespect, but unsure whether the instructor even noticed. Students called out questions and comments throughout the lesson without raising their hands, but it seemed to be something the teacher encouraged as if they were having an open discussion. The researcher also noticed a girl towards the front of the room who leaned down next to her desk multiple times throughout the half hour observation to check her cell phone or discreetly text someone. This disrespectful behavior bothered the researcher, though she is unsure of what the research site’s policy is on cell phone usage. Overall, the researcher was impressed by the instructor’s clear method of explaining things, warm demeanor, and the way he encouraged open student participation in the lesson.

#### *Classroom Observation II Reflection*

The second classroom observation was in a chemistry class where 14 students were present and seated in two-person desks arranged in rows facing the instructor.

The researcher was present as the class period began and the teacher took role, and was disappointed by how very talkative the students were. The instructor seemed light hearted and joked around with kids before reciting a prayer and handing out papers. Even during the prayer time, some students were fairly disrespectful. As the lesson begins most students quiet down and were respectful as the instructor used the overhead projector to teach the handout. Some students take notes and others just listened. The instructor used the white board to teach the bulk of the lesson, and periodically asked questions or referred to the periodic table posted on the wall. Though most students seemed focused on the lesson, on-task, and respectful throughout the observation, one girl sitting near the front of the class occasionally checked her cell phone or texted.

#### *Classroom Observation III Reflection*

The final classroom observation was in an Algebra II class where 14 students were present and seated in two-person desks arranged in rows facing the instructor. When the researcher arrived, the room was quiet and some students were busy finishing up a quiz. Most students seemed respectful of their peers finishing up the quiz, though there was some whispering and apparent texting messaging by a pair at the front of the room. The teacher provided a couple different warnings for students who were still working on the quiz to wrap it up and then asked them to it in so the class could move onto the assignment. After a warm-up was handed out, students had the opportunity to work on it together as the instructor went around and helped several

students at their desks. Students were fairly respectful and participated as the warm-up was corrected aloud. Then in moving into the assignment, some students became more chatty and disrespectful, and one student at the back of the class checked his cell phone. As the period continued, students continued to be talkative and impolite, not paying attention to the teaching. A couple boys even passed a drawing back and forth. Overall, the researcher was disappointed with the disrespectful behavior of students in this class.

Through the classroom observations, the researcher was impressed with the small class sizes at the research site and the individualized attention it allows students to receive. She was also amazed by the warm, welcoming feeling that each classroom and instructor seemed to provide their students with. In reflecting upon the students, the researcher was not impressed by their overall attitude or behavior! It was just like the teachers stated in their surveys and interviews, the students are fairly disrespectful to their teachers, acting much like their peers in the public schools despite their opportunity with the Corporate Internship Program. They may be professional and respectful in the working environment, but they are not exhibiting it in their classes at the research site.

#### *Work Site Observation Reflections*

After completing the classroom observations, the researcher then visited five different corporate work sites over a two week period. These student work sites that

the researcher had the opportunity to visit included two banks, a medical office, and two different types of distribution companies. At the work sites, the researcher shadowed students, and interviewed them and their supervisors in regards to their performance and thoughts on the Corporate Internship Program. The following is a summary of the data collected at each of the five corporate work sites.

#### *Work Site Observation I Reflection*

The first student work site that the researcher visited was On Point Community Credit Union. Upon arrival, the researcher spoke to the interns' supervisor who explained what positions the students fill and her overall feelings on the program. The supervisor explained that they have two and a half full-time positions at the credit union that are filled by ten students, meaning three interns from the research site work in their building each day. She has been supervising students from the Corporate Internship Program now for eight years, and is impressed by the great experience and growth that happens among them each year. Freshmen usually come in struggling to be professional and full-fill their job requirements, and by their senior year some students are able to run a whole department. One graduate of the research site and previous intern with On Point is now employed there.

There were three Corporate Internship students working at On Point on the day the researcher visited, one senior in the Accounting Department, and another senior and a freshman in the Title & Insurance Department. The first young man the

researcher spoke with was the senior working in the Accounting Department who had been with On Point for three years. He primarily works in a cubical where he matches checks and invoices to be sent out, files check stubs, labels and files reports. This young man says it is sometimes challenging work, but that he is thankful for the experience he's getting and how it will benefit him in the future.

The second corporate intern the researcher had the opportunity speak to at On Point was a hard-working senior working in the Title & Insurance Department. She primarily works in a cubical where her duties include entering titles in the computer, alphabetizing, copying, making a charge list, attaching checks, pulling and labeling titles, and updating various systems. This intern no longer feels that the work is challenging after having been in the position for three years. She took notes on the various tasks and responsibilities she learned along the way and has them to refer back to when necessary. This young woman was very positive about the program and enjoys the opportunity to work at her On Point position over most school breaks and in the summer, as well the maturity she has gained earlier than her peers in other school settings.

The third intern at On Point that the researcher spoke to was a freshman working in the Title & Insurance Department. This young woman sits in a cubical where she pulls deeds and modifications, enters information into the computer, puts documents in order, checks loans and numbers, prepares documents for imaging and to be sent out to members, and makes sure document bar codes are in the computer. She shared about

how challenging a few of her assigned tasks can be, but was positive about the experience she is getting and feels it will open doors for her in the future. Her hope is to stay in the same position at On Point through all four years of high school.

#### *Work Site Observation II Reflection*

The second student work site that the researcher visited was Key Bank. Upon arrival, the researcher spoke to the interns' supervisor who explained what positions the students fill and her overall feelings on the program. This supervisor manages the Corporate Giving for the Executive Office at Key Bank and has had corporate interns from the research site for the past two years. They only employ two students a week, one junior and one senior, because the bank has a policy against hiring anyone under age 16. The supervisor feels the program works well overall and provides students with great experience, but stated that teens require a lot of "catch-up" in order for them to be able to keep up with the position.

On the day the researcher visited Key Bank, a senior intern was working in the Executive Office for the Oregon District. She explained that she was a transfer student to the research site as a junior and has been with Key Bank both years. This young woman works primarily for the community relations director working with non-profit organizations and fundraisers such as "March for Babies" and "United Way." When employees purchase tickets, she tracks the checks and assigns stickers for free-dress Fridays. She also makes copies, distributes mail, does judgment processing, and puts packets together and sends them out. This intern finds it challenging to learn new

concepts, but came in with computer knowledge from courses she took at her previous school that has been helpful. She enjoys the Corporate Internship Program and the opportunity to be treated as an adult by coworkers and supervisors, though she is not a fan of the research site's uniform policy.

#### *Work Site Observation III Reflection*

The third student work site that the researcher visited was a Providence Medical Group office. Upon arrival, the researcher spoke to the interns' supervisor who explained what positions the students fill and her overall feelings on the program. The supervisor explained that they have one position at the medical office that is filled by four students, meaning there is one intern from the research site working in their building each day. They have a detailed schedule written out where the interns spend half their day working in the front office and the other half doing back office work. The Corporate Internship Program has had students at this Providence office for six or seven years, but this supervisor has only been there about three. In that amount of time, she has had to "let go" three students who did not fit in the office environment. The supervisor was fairly negative about the program and the amount of time a she must spend organizing the position for the students.

On the day the researcher visited the Providence work site, a senior intern was working. She was a very nice young woman who explained that she had been working in the position for two years, after spending her freshman and sophomore years in other internship positions. This intern desires to ultimately work in the medical field, so she

feels that Providence is a good fit, though the tasks she must do can be very repetitive. In the mornings, the interns' duties include: stocking rooms, sterilizing instruments, opening mail, making copies, cleaning x-ray machines and the reception area. In the afternoons, her duties primarily include making reminder calls for the next day's appointments which require the individual to be alert, pay attention to details, and think through how they are representing the company. This young woman definitely feels the Corporate Internship Program is preparing for the future and making her motivated, though she finds it frustrating to be fined when she misses work because of being sick.

#### *Work Site Observation IV Reflection*

The fourth student work site that the researcher visited was Grand & Benedicts, a large manufacturer and global distributor of store fixtures, some of which are custom made. Upon arrival, the researcher spoke to the interns' supervisor who happens to be the company's Purchasing Manager. She explained to the researcher what the company does, what positions the intern students fill, and her overall feelings on the Corporate Internship Program. The supervisor explained that they have one full-time position at the company that is filled by four students, meaning there is one intern from the research site working in their building each day. Two interns work in the Purchasing Department, one in the Marketing Department, and one in the Accounting Department. This supervisor was very positive about the CIP, though it is the company's first year of working with the program. She said she tries to give students a variety of detail-

oriented projects to work on and is impressed with how well the interns work with their coworkers.

On the day the researcher visited the Grand & Benedicts work site, a junior intern was working in the Purchasing Department. He was a very nice young man who explained that he had had two different Corporate Internships his freshman and sophomore years of high school, and definitely feels this position has been the best experience. The intern said he feels like he's actually a "real employee" of Grand & Benedicts and that the position has helped him become more organized. He primarily works in cubical from which he does purchasing orders, assists on projects, and mails advertising, though he also stocks items.

#### *Work Site Observation V Reflection*

The fifth student work site that the researcher visited was Swagelok, an industrial distributor of fluid system technologies for the Northwest. Upon arrival, the researcher spoke to the interns' supervisor who happens to be the company's Operations Manager. He explained to the researcher what the company does, what positions the intern students fill, and his overall feelings on the Corporate Internship Program. The supervisor explained that they have one full-time position at the company that is filled by four students, meaning there is one intern from the research site working in their building each day. Different than other work sites, Swagelok has each intern work in three different departments throughout the day. Four hours are spent in the Customer Service Department, two hours are spent in the warehouse, and

two hours are spent in the Accounting Department. The supervisor shared that this schedule may need to be refigured as it makes it difficult for students to be productive in such short periods of time, though the company is still trying to figure out what is best since they have only had Corporate Interns since January. He was fairly positive about the CIP, and feels Swagelok will get out of it what they put in!

On the day the researcher visited the Swagelok work site, a junior intern was working in the warehouse. He explained that he had had two different Corporate Internships his freshman and sophomore years of high school, and enjoys the variety that Swagelok provides. Depending on what department he is working in, the intern's job looks different, but it can include: scanning packing slips, pulling orders, locating items to be mailed out, mailing items, and looking up orders to determine payments due.

### *Conclusion*

In the opinion of the researcher, the goal of her action research project was met and her research questions answered, though there is always further study that could be done. She was able to investigate the success of the Corporate Internship Program at the research site through the use of survey, interview, and observation. Using those methods, the researcher determined what the advantages and disadvantages are of the Corporate Internship Program at the research site, as well as how the program improves students' education and preparedness for the future.

Results from all research methods found the main advantages of the unique Corporate Internship Program to be “real-world work experience” and the opportunity to build a resume’, though there are many other advantages including gaining responsibility, immersion in the “adult world,” and students seeing the advantages of furthering their education. The researcher learned that most individual’s feel one of the main disadvantages of the CIP is loss of class time each week, which often translates into a greater homework load for students. Other major disadvantages included students “being young” in the corporate environment and thus not necessarily respected by coworkers, missing out on sports or other extracurricular activities due to the longer work day, the CIP not being a good fit for all students, and the lack of corporate internship positions available this year causing some students to have to “work” at school. Though these are significant disadvantages, most individuals who participated in the research feel the advantages of participating in the Corporate Internship Program outweigh the disadvantages.

Through completing the research, the researcher has concluded that the Corporate Internship Program prepares students for the future by helping them mature, know how to work with coworkers, build references and a resume’, and be more prepared in a variety of ways to be successful in college and life beyond high school. The program may also help students take college more seriously and be motivated to work hard in getting through in order to get a better job, while potentially providing them with connections for future jobs.

*Suggestions for Further Study*

If this study were to be replicated, the researcher may want to take a more in-depth look at possible improvements that could be made to the Corporate Internship Program. Though the unique program has many advantages, there are improvements that could be made in order to overcome some of the disadvantages. This was not the intent of this research project, but another research undertaking could provide valuable insight into how to improve this already successful program. Looking at how to provide students with a sufficient amount of classroom time along with the CIP, how to adapt the program to better fit the needs of a diverse group of students, or how to always have an adequate number of corporate sponsors to fulfill the growing student population at the research site may be viable questions for further research.



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## Appendix A

**Informed Consent Form****For Student Participation in Survey and Interview**

Due to the fact that De La Salle North Catholic students names will not be included in the research data, this form is for administrative purposes.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ give permission for Rebecca Snyder to involve De La Salle North Catholic students and teachers in her Action Research Study entitled: *An Analysis of the De La Salle North Catholic's Corporate Internship Program*.

I understand that Rebecca's research is to be done as a part of her Masters of Education program at Concordia University, and will involve the surveying, interviewing, and observing of program graduates, current students, and teachers with guidance from administrators.

I understand that Rebecca's ultimate research goal is to answer the questions:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of the Corporate Internship Program at the research site?
- How does the program improve students' education and preparedness for the future?

I understand that the results of the study may or may not directly benefit De La Salle North Catholic High School, though the objective is that they will.

I understand that at no time during the research will my name or the names of my graduates, students, or faculty be used in connection with the results. All personal data and outcomes will be kept confidential.

I understand that DLSNC's participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw our involvement in it at any time.

Rebecca will keep us up-to-date on her research, show us potential surveys, and work with administration in scheduling interviews and classroom observations.

I have read the above information and agree for my graduates, students, and faculty to take part in Rebecca Snyder's Action Research Study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix B

**Corporate Internship Program - Anonymous Graduate Survey**

**Directions:** Hi, my name is Becca Snyder. I am a student at Concordia University doing important research for my Master's Degree. I am interested in your opinion about your participation in the Corporate Internship Program while attending De La Salle North Catholic High School. Please take a few moments and respond to the statements within this survey. Your opinion is very important.

Please circle the number that works best for you using the following scale:

5 = Strongly Agree 4 = Agree 3 = Uncertain 2 = Disagree 1 = Strongly Disagree

**Statements:**

1. I attended De La Salle North Catholic because of the Corporate Internship Program.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

2. My position with the program was my first paid employment experience.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

3. I enjoyed the opportunity to go to work at my Corporate Internship Job.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

Please explain:

4. I feel the Corporate Internship Program taught me responsibility.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

5. The responsibility I learned by having a job assisted me in being prepared for life beyond high school.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

6. My job experience with the Corporate Internship Program was helpful in choosing a career path or college major.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

7. My employment experience with De La Salle North Catholic helped me get my first job.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

8. I feel that my participation in the Corporate Internship Program played a role in whether I chose to attend college after graduation.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

**Directions:** Please share your opinion on the Corporate Internship Program by answering the following short-answer questions.

9. Please share what you feel was the biggest advantage of having participated in the Corporate Internship Program and why?

10. Please share whether you feel there were any disadvantages to having participated in the Corporate Internship Program and if so, what are they?

11. Please give a brief overview of your life since graduating from De La Salle North Catholic...Did you attend college? Graduate from college? Any employment? Or other important life information?

Thanks for participating! Please return the survey to [rebeccaesnyder@gmail.com](mailto:rebeccaesnyder@gmail.com)

## Appendix C

**Corporate Internship Program - Anonymous Student Survey**

**Directions:** Hi, my name is Becca Snyder. I am a student at Concordia University doing important research for my Master's Degree. I am interested in your opinion about your participation in the Corporate Internship Program at De LaSalle North Catholic High School. Please take a few moments and respond to the statements within this survey. Your opinion is very important.

Please circle the number that works best for you using the following scale:

5 = Strongly Agree 4 = Agree 3 = Uncertain 2 = Disagree 1 = Strongly Disagree

**Statements:**

1. I attend De La Salle North Catholic because of the Corporate Internship Program.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

2. My position with the program was my first paid employment experience.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

3. I enjoy the opportunity to go to work at my Corporate Internship Job.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

Please explain:

4. I feel the Corporate Internship Program is teaching me responsibility.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

5. The responsibility I am learning by having a job is assisting me in getting better grades.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

6. My self-confidence is boosted through this employment opportunity.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

7. The Corporate Internship Program changed my outlook about the future or what profession I may go into.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

8. I feel that my participation in the Corporate Internship Program has played a role in my decision to attend college?

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

**Directions:** Please share your opinion on the Corporate Internship Program by answering the following short-answer questions.

9. Please share what you feel is the biggest advantage of participating in the Corporate Internship Program and why?

10. Please share if you feel there are any disadvantages to participating in the Corporate Internship Program?



**Thanks for participating! Please return the survey to your classroom teacher.**

## Appendix D

**Corporate Internship Program - Anonymous Teacher Survey**

**Directions:** Hi, my name is Becca Snyder. I am a student at Concordia University completing my Action Research Study for my Master's Degree. I am interested in your opinion about the Corporate Internship Program students are enrolled in while attending De La Salle North Catholic High School. Please take a few moments and respond to the statements within this survey. Your opinion is very important.

Please circle the number that works best for you using the following scale:

5 = Strongly Agree 4 = Agree 3 = Uncertain 2 = Disagree 1 = Strongly Disagree

**Statements:**

1. The Corporate Internship Program teaches students responsibility.  
5                      4                      3                      2                      1
2. The program makes students more prepared for college and life beyond high school.  
5                      4                      3                      2                      1
3. The student's participation in the Corporate Internship Program improves their classroom behavior.  
5                      4                      3                      2                      1
4. The program provides me with more "real world" teaching opportunities or lesson plans to integrate into my classroom.  
5                      4                      3                      2                      1
5. I am able to regularly implement work-related curriculum into my classroom.  
5                      4                      3                      2                      1

6. There is enough class time each week to cover the necessary core curriculum when students miss class one day a week for work.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

7. The Corporate Internship Program provides students with an advantage over students from other schools, when it comes to receiving a "well-rounded" education.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

**Directions:** Please share your opinion on the Corporate Internship Program by answering the following short-answer questions.

8. Please share what you feel the biggest advantage is for students participating in the Corporate Internship Program and why?

9. Please share whether you feel there were any disadvantages to students participating in the Corporate Internship Program and if so, what they are?

10. Please share with me your personal thoughts on teaching at De La Salle North Catholic, where the Corporate Internship Program is such an integral part of the program?

Thanks for participating! Please return the survey to [rebeccaesnyder@gmail.com](mailto:rebeccaesnyder@gmail.com)

## Appendix E

**Corporate Internship Program - Anonymous Student Interview**

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**Questions:**

1. Most express “real-world experience” to be the biggest advantage of participating in the Corporate Internship Program, what are your thoughts?
2. Do you feel DLSNC does a good job of preparing you for the corporate work environment, and supporting you while there? How could they improve?
3. Specifically, how do you feel the Corporate Internship Program has prepared you for college and life beyond high school?
4. If you feel there are any disadvantages to having participated in the program, please share what they are and whether you feel the experience you are gaining outweighs them?
5. Please share any other feedback?

## Appendix F

**Corporate Internship Program - Anonymous Teacher Interview**

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**Questions:**

1. Most express “real-world experience” to be the biggest advantage of student participation in the Corporate Internship Program, what are your thoughts?
2. Specifically, how do you feel the program makes students more prepared for college and life beyond high school?
3. Do you feel student’s participation in the Corporate Internship Program improves their classroom behavior? Why or why not?
4. If you feel there are any disadvantages to students participating in the program, please share what they are and any ideas you have for improving this aspect of the program.
5. Please share any other feedback?