The Meaning of Educational Travel in the Lives of Urban Middle School Students in a Low-Income Neighborhood: A Transformative, Sequential Mixed Methods Study

Carrie Arlene Olson

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The Meaning of Educational Travel in the Lives of Urban Middle School Students in a Low-Income Neighborhood: A Transformative, Sequential Mixed Methods Study

A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of the Morgridge College of Education

University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment

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Doctor of Philosophy

by

Carrie A. Olson

August 2016

Advisor: P. Bruce Uhrmacher, Ph.D.
ABSTRACT

This transformative, explanatory, sequential mixed methods study addresses a gap in the literature regarding the meaning of educational travel in the lives of urban youth in a low-income neighborhoods. The framework for this study stems from educational travel, culturally responsive teaching, effective middle level education (AMLE), and experiential learning. First, a quantitative phase examined data from former travelers (n = 344) compared to non-travelers (n = 6,100) at Harold Middle School from 2003 to 2011. Academic achievement data examined consist of: American College Test (ACT) scores, Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) scale scores, and grade point averages (GPA). School engagement data examined include: graduation rates, attendance rates, and suspensions. The results indicated a statistically significant difference between the travelers and the non-travelers in all variables except CSAP. Next, a qualitative phase consisting of interviews with former travelers (n = 9), and an adult chaperone focus group (n = 8) provided insights into the meaning of travel. The findings of the qualitative phase provide design structures and outcomes for short-term educational travel with middle school youth. The data analysis and integration is viewed using the transformative paradigm (Mertens, 2009).
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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

“My dream has been to go to Europe. I’m positive my Europe experience will help me in high school and throughout life. I’ve already noticed that I’m not afraid to try new things anymore. I hope I continue to travel because this experience has left me wondering what else is out there in the world.” – Hazel P., a Europe student

For many in the northern hemisphere, the word “spring” conjures images of blooming flowers, sunshine, and longer days accompanied by a sigh of relief that winter is over. For me, however, it means travel. Inspired by a group of inquisitive fifth graders in an urban elementary school in a low-income neighborhood in May 1993, I began a lifetime of travel with children. Every year between 1993 and 2014, I traveled with a group of students to Washington, DC and with a group to Europe. For me, springtime meant traveling to Europe with Grade 8 students in March and to Washington, DC with Grade 6 students in May. Many times, I did not notice the flowers blooming or new leaves on the trees, but I did notice growth in my students. During those 34 trips, I asked many questions about growth and travel. I also thought about its role in formal and informal education with urban, non-White diverse middle school students, especially as I noticed that many of the student groups we saw on our travels

1 Per IRB guidelines, all identifying names are pseudonyms.
were White and appeared to be of a different socio-economic background than my students. This question accompanied me on my travels: What meaning, if any, does travel hold for my students? I embarked on this research journey to understand the meaning of travel for my urban middle school students in their low-income neighborhood. Along the way, I discovered other questions and topics I considered on my journey to find answers.

Traveling in the USA and to Europe often elicits quotes such as Hazel’s from students when they reflect on their travels. “Wondering what else is out there in the world” appears to take on different meanings depending on the student. Is it improved academic achievement? Is it an increased desire to graduate from high school, college, or both? Is it to understand the material learned in classrooms? Is it the opportunity to see things learned in the classroom come alive? Inspired by such questions, this study’s goal is to explore the meaning of travel in the lives of urban middle school youth using data generated by our school district and interviews with past travelers and a focus group of former trip chaperones.

This research is timely as the current focus in urban schools is on the determination of what works with youth in low income, urban neighborhoods. It is also relevant due to the gap in research on the effects of travel with students under the age of 18 (Stone, 2013, personal communication). As our nation’s classrooms become more diverse (NCES, 2014), culturally responsive pedagogy and teaching practices are more important than ever. Culturally responsive teaching views students’ diverse backgrounds as a source of strength, which is cultivated to create learning environments (Delpit,
As middle schools across the nation address this question, the Association of Middle Level Education (AMLE) provides a framework for effective middle level education (See Appendix K). Several researchers examine the effects of travel using a framework of experiential learning since travel is an example of learning through experience (Johnson, 2008; Saitow, 2009; Stone & Petrick, 2013). Study abroad research demonstrates the benefits of travel for college age students (see Forum on Education Abroad, 2012). The findings of study abroad are a starting point from which one can find parallels between older and younger student travelers. I believe that at Harold Middle School there are four areas combined in educational travel to create a powerful learning experience: (1) culturally responsive teaching; (2) experiential learning; (3) benefits of travel found in study abroad; and (4) middle level education. The purpose of this study is to ascertain the meaning educational travel in the lives of the Harold Middle School students using a framework from these four areas.

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the reader to the topic under study: the meaning of educational travel for urban, non-White, ethnically and linguistically diverse youth in a low-income neighborhood. The chapter begins with statements regarding the problem, purpose, and significance of this study. The research questions and rationale, the conceptual and theoretical framework, demographics of Harold Middle School, the relationship of the researcher to the site, and a definition of terms are also included in this chapter.
Statement of the Problem

The educational inequality between urban, non-White students living in a low-income neighborhood and their suburban, predominantly White, middle- to upper-income counterparts is well researched (Ayers, 2001; Kozol, 1991, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 2006). The educational gaps that result from such educational inequality are also apparent in current research (Ayers, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 2006, 2009; Gay, 2010; among others). These gaps are manifested in student travel. Little research (either quantitative or qualitative) has been done on the effects of educational travel with any students in middle school and high school (Stone & Petrick, 2013). This dissertation addresses this gap by examining the meaning of educational travel with urban, minority middle school students in a low-income neighborhood.

Educational travel is popular in the United States. The Student Youth Travel Association (SYTA) estimates that over one million teachers travel with their students both domestically and internationally each year (C. Assante, personal communication, July 2014). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), there were 3.7 million teachers in the US in 2012. This means that approximately 27% of teachers travel with their students.

Currently, no concrete numbers exist on how many students travel domestically and internationally. However, the one million teachers who travel each year and the plethora of youth travel companies would indicate that the number of students traveling is several million. According to SYTA, there are over 200 student travel organizations in operation, including EF Tours, Explorica, Putney Student Travel, World Strides, NETC.
Educational Travel to name a few (Student and Youth Travel Association, 2008). Secondary teachers are bombarded with brochures and emails from travel organizations advertising domestic and international travel deals.

According to SYTA (2008):

- Student and youth travel is the fastest growing major market in the travel industry.
- SYTA’s membership serves over 1.5 million youth travelers annually with combined revenues of more than $185 billion.
- Student and youth travel represents over 20% of all global tourism travel revenue.
- The majority of 12- to 18-year-olds in the United States takes at least one significant group trip each year without their parents, spending almost $10 billion a year.

SYTA recently released Student & Youth Travel Digest: A Comprehensive Guide to Student Travel Overview (2016). The lack of hard data representing the impact of travel inspired this research. The study examined three types of mobility in student travel: domestic US travel, outbound US travel, and inbound travel to the US. SYTA (2016) collected 2,143 responses that represented “1,162,000 students, 51 US states, and 70 countries internationally” (SYTA, 2016, p. 2-3). They asked the respondents to answer questions about why they travel with students and why they think students travel. They also asked what benefits students gain through travel and where they travel, how they travel, and who are the student travelers that are coming to the US. This study indicates that US teachers average 1.7 trips with students per year with 59.7 students (SYTA, p. 5). In addition, they found that travel has a 33% increase from 2013/2014 to 2014/2015 and a
54% increase in inbound student travel from abroad (SYTA, p. 5). This demonstrates growth in student youth travel in the US for both inbound and outbound student travel. Inbound travel refers to the youth who come to the USA and outbound refers to the youth who travel out of the USA.

Travel offers students a way to learn through experience. Stone and Petrick (2013) determine a variety of educational benefits from travel in their literature review. Educational travel is based on the idea that students learn through experiences in ways they otherwise would not learn (Dewey, 1938; Kolb, 1984; Mouton, 2002).

EF Tours, a popular student travel company, offers affordable, action packed tours for youth (ages 12 -18), mainly in the USA. In 2010, EF Tours hired a company, Mission Measurement (LLC), to conduct a Student Impact Survey. The findings indicated that 72% of all their travelers self-identified as White, 10.5% Hispanic, 6.9% Multiracial, 6.3% Asian, and 2.9% Black. Of those students, 43% are from households with a median income of $60,000, and 53.3% had a median GPA (grade point average) of 3.5 or higher (Mission Measurement for EF Tours, 2010, p. 17 –18). During 2010, The US Census reports that the median income for all the USA was $50,046 and nearly 22% of all children ages 18 and under were living below the poverty threshold of $22,113 median income for a family of four (“Poverty,” “Income Main,” US Census, 2010). When non-White students in urban, low-income neighborhoods are not offered the same access, they are denied this opportunity to learn outside of school while their suburban, mainly White, peers. White, middle- to upper-income students comprise the majority of student travelers get access to diverse learning opportunities.
From these statistics, one can see that minority students from low-income neighborhoods are less likely to be able to participate in educational travel. If students do not travel, either nationally or internationally, before they leave high school, they are less likely to participate in a study abroad experience in college (McLellan, 2011; Simon, 2007). Equity demands that all students have equal access to the opportunity and to the means to travel if they so desire.

**Statement of the Purpose**

The main purpose of this study is to examine quantitative and qualitative data to understand the meaning of domestic and international educational travel in the lives of urban middle school students in a low-income neighborhood. In doing so, I used the transformative paradigm an overarching filter for the study to move from a deficit-based perspective of families in an urban environment to a resilience-based perspective (Mertens, 2009). The quantitative data tests the theory that predicts that educational travel positively influences academic achievement and school engagement for three different groups of former travelers at Harold Middle School. Through interviews and focus group, the qualitative data explores the meaning of educational travel for the same participants and adult chaperones from the trips. The analysis of these data and interviews, using a transformative paradigm, gives priority to the voices of a community traditionally marginalized in scholarly literature about educational travel. This results in recommendations for leaders and institutions come from the participants’ voices.
Statement of the Significance

This study is significant because it provides the insights regarding the benefits of both domestic and international educational travel using quantitative and qualitative data. This is the strongest point of this study. No study to date has examined the effects of domestic and international educational travel on academic achievement and school engagement while also offering the participants the opportunity to provide their voices on the meaning of these data and of travel in their lives.

Additionally, the participants are divided into three groups: DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both. The DC-Only group and Both provide insights on domestic travel in the United States that is lacking in current research (Ritchie, 2003; Stone & Petrick, 2013). This study also has the potential to transform how middle (and possibly high) schools provide equity in student travel. By demonstrating the benefits of educational travel based in culturally responsive teaching for urban, ethnically, and linguistically diverse youth from a low-income neighborhood through data and interviews, more schools may use the findings from this study to seek support so that more minority students can travel, and travel in a manner that is educationally sound.

This study is also significant because it builds on the research that has already been conducted on effective middle level education. Middle school is a crucial time for students. Dr. Robert Balfanz, a prominent middle level education researcher, stated in a 2012 interview with PBS that middle school is a “make or break” period for students. This is when students form academic habits that can predict whether or not they will graduate (Balfanz, 2009). Children in low-income neighborhoods are at a particular risk
because of the demands placed on them due to their life circumstances (babysitting, translating, or helping with family businesses) or due to exposure to gangs, criminal activity, and substance abuse (Koughan & Robertson, 2012).

This study gives a voice to people who are often marginalized in conversations about what works in education. After searching the Internet, journal databases, and dissertation abstracts, I did not find any study that asks students what they think works or does not work for them in their schools. This study gives students the opportunity to comment on educational travel, the students’ academic achievement, and school engagement.

Education is encased in a culture of data with test scores dominating discussions and driving instruction in schools (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2010; Mertler, 2014). Therefore, examining quantitative data as part of this study is critical. However, the voices of the people who are affected by the decisions made by policymakers are vital. By asking former travelers to share insights into what educational travel has meant to them, their voices are heard in the world of academia. They share what lessons they learned from travel that have helped them succeed or rebound from missteps in their lives. Sharing data and telling the stories of lives of students that represent that data has the power to transform educational travel for others.

**Audience**

First, students in this study benefit from this work. Often, urban, minority students in a low-income neighborhood are defined in light of what they cannot do. These are some common misperceptions: their test scores are low; they do not care about
academics; they do not read on grade level; they cannot do math; they do not speak “standard English” well; their parents “do not care”; and the list continues (Delpit, 2006; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Nieto, 2010; among others). This study address these incorrect assumptions, shedding light on the efforts of students and their families to make educational travel possible. Through interviews, the students and their families demonstrate their perseverance and intelligence.

Secondly, this study will contribute to the growing body of knowledge of what works in education. Administrators, teachers, and coordinators of programs for urban youth who are looking for alternative ways to provide sound, culturally responsive, quality education for their middle level learners will benefit from the results of this study.

Thirdly, educational professionals wishing to travel with their students can benefit from this study. Domestic and international travel is the focus of this study, but the implication for local trips might also be useful. Many urban schools are cutting elective classes, after-school clubs, and local field trips due to both budget constraints and the need to spend more time on subjects that are tested in state standardized tests (Greene, Kisida, & Bowen, 2014). Some allow no field trips due to liability concerns and the inconvenience of forms that must be filled out before the trip can take place (Mawsely, 1999). In the 2010-2011 school year, 51% of school districts nationwide reported the elimination of field trips from their school districts (Greene, Kisida, & Bowen, 2014). The April 2012 issue of the Middle Level Insider cites teachers “rethinking” traditional field trips due to budget cuts, security concerns, and pressures to increase standardized
test scores (Association for Middle Level Education, 2012). Therefore, this work might be of interest to those wishing to revisit field trips in schools.

Oftentimes, urban schools in low-income neighborhoods where test scores are the lowest in the city are the least likely to offer travel outside of school (travel company representative, personal communication, June 2014). The students who are least likely to have the financial resources to join clubs, hire music instructors, or to travel around their city or state are the ones who are denied such opportunities. Budget constraints and testing concerns have increased with the adoption of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) as schools struggle to implement new standards and prepare for the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) test. Schools are budgeting for the technological needs of online testing thus possibly pulling money away from other areas. Many times, field trips and excursions are the cut to provide these extra funds (Association for Middle Level Education, 2012). This study indicates that providing experiences outside the classroom fosters a deeper understanding of subjects taught in school. This study also provides suggestions for how to make educational travel a reality for ethnically and linguistically diverse, urban students in a low-income neighborhood.

Lastly, educational travel companies and study abroad programs (both high school and college level) will benefit from understanding what makes educational travel significant for urban, ethnically and linguistically diverse youth from low income neighborhoods. As more youth participate in educational travel opportunities in high
school and college, a greater understanding of the barriers to and benefits of travel is needed.

**Conceptual and Theoretical Framework**

There are four areas I discuss in examining meaning of educational travel in the lives of urban, ethnically and linguistically diverse, middle school students in a low-income neighborhood: the educational benefits of travel (via study abroad), experiential education, AMLE’s *This We Believe Framework* for effective middle level education, and culturally responsive teaching.

In order to understand how people learn from experience, I first examine the theoretical underpinnings of experiential education. Several researchers have previously connected the underpinnings of experiential education to travel (Johnson, 2008; Saitow, 2009). Next, I explain what these studies suggest about the benefits of educational travel (the few that I could find with pre-college age students). Scholars have written extensively about educational benefits of travel in study abroad programs and travel with college age students and other adults (AIFS, 1988; Chieffo, 2007; Dwyer, 2004; Miller-Perrin & Thompson, 2010; Paige et al., 2009). Following a discussion of travel, I examine the AMLE’s *This We Believe Framework* (2010) as a way to understand how effective educational experiences for middle school youth are organized. I provide a discussion of culturally responsive teaching and how this plays an important role in educational travel with low-income, non-White diverse youth. It is my hope that this discussion, combined with the quantitative and qualitative data, will provide ways to improve the current state of educational travel in the United States of America for a
population that does not have equal access to educational travel. Finally, a discussion of how these four areas are related concludes my investigation.

**Research Questions**

This transformative, explanatory sequential mixed-methods research study will answer these four main questions:

1. **Mixed Methods Question:**
   a. What is the meaning of educational travel in the lives of middle school students in a low-income, urban neighborhood as measured by academic achievement, school engagement, interviews, and one focus group?

2. **Quantitative Data Question:**
   a. What are the differences in student academic achievement, and school engagement between DC-Only travelers, Europe-Only travelers and students who traveled to both DC and Europe as compared to non-travelers from Harold Middle School?
      i. Academic Achievement: What is the difference in ACT scores, CSAP scale scores, and cumulative GPA?
      ii. School Engagement: What is the difference in attendance, graduation, and suspension rates?

3. **Qualitative Data Question:**
   a. What is the meaning of being a part of the educational travel program at Harold Middle School as interpreted by:
      i. DC-Only travelers (3 individual interviews)?
ii. Europe-Only travelers (3 individual interviews)?

iii. Student who traveled to both DC and Europe (3 individual interviews)?

iv. Adult chaperones’ view of the meaning for the students (one focus group of 8)?

4. Transformative Question
   a. How can educational institutions and leaders enhance and provide increased access to educational travel for urban middle school youth based on the voices of the participants?

Rationale for Research Questions

Research question one reflects the all-encompassing, mixed methods question that guides the study. The meaning of educational travel is examined in light of quantitative data generated by the district and through the voices of the students, their families, and the adult chaperones of the trips.

Research question two proposes the use of the quantitative data to assess whether educational travel positively influences academic achievement and school engagement for former travelers at Harold Middle School. The proposed analysis compares former travelers (n = 344) to non-travelers (n = 6,100) at Harold Middle School from the academic years 2003 to 2011. Additionally, each sub-group (DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both Washington, DC and Europe) are compared to one another. Academic achievement data examined consists of the following: CSAP scale scores, GPA, and ACT results. School engagement data examined consists of the following: graduation
rates, attendance rates, and suspensions. Harold’s school district tracks these six data points, making them available for this study. The inclusion of quantitative data is important given the culture of data in education today (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2010). The culture of data refers to the trend to use data to frame classroom instruction. *Driven By Data: A Practical Guide to Improve Instruction* by Bambrick-Santoyo (2010) is an example of this. Bambrick-Santoyo’s book encourages leaders and teacher to take four steps: assess students, analyze the data, teach more effectively using the results of the assessment to drive instruction, and create a culture of data analysis in professional development. The principals and instructional leaders in Harold’s school district read this as part of their professional development during the 2012 to 2014 school years (S. Linkous, personal communication, September, 2012).

Research question three highlights the people involved in the study by asking a small group of travelers to tell their story of the meaning of travel. If only test scores were used in this study, then it would be privileging test data over the voices of the participants and would not adequately assess the “effectiveness of interventions in culturally complex communities” (Mertens, 2009, p.31). This qualitative phase consists of interviews of former travelers (n = 9) and an adult chaperone focus group (n = 8) to provide insights into the meaning ascribed to educational travel. Through the thoughts of the participants in this qualitative section, the meaning of educational travel in their lives is illuminated. Their responses inform the answers to research question four.

Research question four speaks specifically to the transformative nature of the study. In analyzing all the information, what are the implications for widening
educational travel to marginalized groups? The participants of the interviews and focus
group provide the basis for answering this question when their insights are combined
with CRT, experiential education, educational travel research, and AMLE’s framework
for what works in middle school. These findings can open the world of educational travel
to groups of students traditionally marginalized from this learning experience.

Educational Travel Harold Middle School

It is vital to understand the demographics of the Harold Middle School
neighborhood, where the trips took place in order to understand how important travel is
to the community. The demographics I describe pertain to the 2011 – 2012 and the 2012
– 2013 school years as they represent the neighborhood before the school district changed
the boundaries for Harold in 2012. Harold’s demographics through the 2013 – 2014
school year remained similar to 2003 to 2011.

During the years of this study, Harold Middle School was the largest middle
school in its school district and in the state of Colorado (C. Pham, personal
communication, April 12, 2013). National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) shows
an average of 92% of the households qualified for free and reduced lunch for Harold
Middle School’s neighborhood for 2011-2013. Of the students attending Harold Middle
School, 1% was American Indian, 2% were Asian, 2% were Black, 10% were White, and
85% were Hispanic (NCES, 2014). Ninety-one percent of the students came from homes
where English was not the primary language spoken (Harold Middle School, Colorado
Unified Improvement Plan or CUIP, 2013). Seventy-two percent of the students were
English Language Learners (ELLs) and 15% were special education students (SpEd)
This percentage of ELLs and SpEd students are only the ones who are currently receiving services from the English Language Acquisition or special education. From Harold’s Colorado Unified Improvement Plan for Schools for 2012-2013 (CUIP, 2013) there were 561 non-natives English speakers, 265 of which were at or above proficiency in English. During the time of this study, Harold School was the only Transitional Native Language Instruction (TNLI) middle school. Being a TNLI school means that some of teachers were hired to teach content area classes in students’ native language of Spanish while providing English as a Second Language classes. As students progressed in learning English, they gradually transitioned to classes taught all in English at varying levels. Harold Middle School tested 750 students on ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners), which is more than any school in the large urban district and in the state of Colorado (M. Harmon, personal communication, April 11, 2012).

Harold Middle School’s scores on the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) consistently showed that the majority of students were below the proficiency rating needed to be on grade level (Colorado Department of Education, 2016). From Harold’s CUIP 2013, “74% of our students currently lack proficiency in reading, 78% of our students currently lack proficiency in writing, 79% of our students currently lack proficiency in math, 95% of our student currently lack proficiency in science” (p. 15). Harold was targeted to improve the number of students who show academic growth, no matter what percentile their scores, indicating the students are improving in the skills
measured by CSAP. Harold was targeted to improve academic growth medians by 69% in reading, 83% in writing, and 90% in math. The actual growth from 2012 to 2013 was 43% in reading, 51% in writing, and 36% in math, far short of the goals. Harold Middle School has fluctuated little in academic growth through the years of this study (F. Gonzales, personal communication, April 11, 2012).

According to SchoolDigger.com (2012), Harold had 62 teachers, and therefore a ratio of 17.8 students to every 1 teacher. The 2012 staff email lists 103 recipients that include lunchroom staff, paraprofessionals, custodians, and Colorado Health staff for the school-based clinic and mental health center (M. Harmon, personal communication, April 11, 2013). The teacher turnover rate at Harold Middle School was 75%, which is higher than the 55% average for the district (SchoolDigger, 2014). Teacher turnover is the rate at which teachers leave the school to teach somewhere else. The higher the turnover rate, the fewer teachers are staying to teach consecutive years. Teachers were also less experienced (9.7 years of teaching) than the district average (11.7 years of teaching) and less educated (39% held a Master’s Degree) than the district average (44) (Piton Foundation, 2014). According to both the Piton Foundation (2014) and School Digger (2014), the demographics for Harold changed little from 2003 – 2013.

Because of these statistics and characteristics, the Colorado Department of Education classified Harold Middle School as a “turnaround school” starting in 2011 (Colorado Department of Education, 2016). According to the Institute of Education Sciences, a turnaround school is one where chronically low-performing schools create strong leadership, improve instruction, and build a committed staff to make
improvements quickly (Herman, Dawson, Dee, Greene, Maynard, Redding, & Darwin, 2008). According to the School Performance Framework distributed by the Colorado Department of Education, for the 2011 – 2012 school year Harold Middle School scored 41.7 points out of a possible 100 which placed it in the lowest quartile (Colorado Department of Education, 2016).

Harold Middle School is similar to other urban schools in low-income neighborhoods. Urban schools grapple with a variety of issues that rural and suburban schools do not such as segregation, sociodemographic, structural and cultural factors (Abram, Stembridge, Fergus, & Noguera, n.d.). Large groups of ethnically and linguistically diverse students, who live in low-income, segregated neighborhoods, make up the sociodemographics of urban schools, such as Harold Middle School. This context creates a challenge for urban education when it is combined with structural challenges such as: (1) persistently low student achievement, (2) lack of instructional coherence (i.e. programs, initiative, and grants that are not coordinated in their approach to education), (3) inexperienced teaching staff, (4) poor data management systems, and (5) low expectations of students (Abram, Stembridge, Fergus, & Noguera, n.d.; Kincheloe 2004, 2010). Many teachers in urban schools understand that all students need rigor in their subjects and need the support to meet this high standard. They also believe in their students. However, when faced with the factors mentioned above, teaching seems daunting at best.
In addition, to these challenges, Abram, Stembridge, Fergus, and Noguera (n.d.) identify the following elements of “cultural dissonance” that inhibit effective urban education:

- Perceptions of race and class as limiting predictors of school achievement;
- Perceptions of different learning styles versus intellectual deficiencies; and
- Lack of cultural responsiveness in current policies and practices.

Teachers in urban schools are often the least experienced and are often White (NCES, 2014). Therefore they are often ill prepared to teach students who differ from them ethnically and culturally. Because of the lack of cohesiveness in support and programs, they may not receive the training they need to meet the needs of their students. Even veteran teachers in urban schools are often seen as ineffective and the turnover rate is higher (Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2002).

Given these factors, urban middle school students are the most likely to drop out of both high school and college (NCES, 2012). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), from all the dropouts in 16- to 24- year olds, the dropout rate for Black students (12.7%) is almost three times higher than for White students (4.3%). Hispanics are almost twice as likely to dropout (7.5%) as their White peers. These statistics speak to the fact that most urban middle schools where there is poverty and a large percentage of minorities are not meeting the needs of their students. This study demonstrates the meaning of educational travel and how it assisted students academically and in their lives, despite the challenges put before them.
In summary, Harold School is similar to other large, urban schools with many challenges facing the students and the staff. With so many demands placed on the teachers and the students to improve academic performance, the perceived extras such as travel are often overlooked. For that reason, travel becomes even more important to the Harold neighborhood.

**About the Researcher and the Trips at Harold Middle School**

I began teaching in the school district where Harold is located in 1985 as a brand new teacher fresh out of college. My involvement with travel and the students of the Harold Middle School neighborhood in our large city began in 1989 when I transferred to Herbert Elementary School, a feeder school for Harold, to teach Grade 5. I had already taught for four years in the same district but was selected to move to a new model bilingual school. In 1993, I took my first group of students from Grade 5 from Herbert to the opening of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. We continued these trips for seven years. In 2000, two other teachers, two paraprofessionals, and I moved to the Harold Middle School where the majority of our elementary students attended middle school. There we continued our Washington, DC trips for students in Grade 6. In 2003, we began a trip to Europe for students in Grade 8. With a team of adults, I organized the trips, taught the elective travel classes for the trips, helped fundraise, and held parent meetings. I have been a part of 33 out of the 34 trips to Washington, DC and Europe. In 1997, I missed a Washington, DC trip when I was pregnant. Therefore, I have been involved with the people I am studying for most of my professional life.
In 2004, my team and I created a nonprofit, Harold Educational Excellence Program (HEEP), to assist in raising money to travel with our students. It was during my fundraising endeavors that many people asked for me to demonstrate that travel changes the lives of our students. I responded with anecdotal stories of individual students but it left me wondering what the data would say about the effects of travel.

In 2005, I began my PhD work in order to answer that question. My coursework while attending the University of Denver reflects the quantitative and qualitative skills practiced through class projects. During this time, I refined the details of my topic and my interest in educational travel never wavered. My desire to find a way to understand the meaning the students ascribe to travel and to validate the hard work of the families to provide this for their children remains unchanged.

In 2014, I left Harold Middle School to teach at another school in the same district whose students come from the same neighborhood as Harold’s. In January 2014, the school district announced that it would be closing Harold over a three-year period. In June 2014, it was decided that a charter school would be co-locating at Harold with traditional portion of Harold. I chose to leave Harold at the end of the 2014 school year.

Being intimately involved in the community since 1989, I have unique access to an insider’s view of the families and their children. They are not merely research subjects: I consider them my family in many ways – having attended baptisms, quinceañeras, graduations, weddings, and funerals throughout the years. The families trust me because I am not an outside researcher but a partner. With that trust comes a
great responsibility to be ethical in my research. Because of this close connection, I need
to address questions of validity and bias. This I will discuss in Chapter Three: Method.

While some might see quality urban education as an ideal never to be achieved, I
agree with Palmer (2004) and Boechler (2004) when they discuss a professional’s ability
to stand in “the tragic gap.” Boechler states,

In A Hidden Wholeness (2004) Parker Palmer speaks of the “tragic gap” that we
stand in today in our world. The tragic gap can be described as holding the tension
between two opposites, or the gap between the way things are and the way we
know things ought to be. (p. 7)

In fact, it is this tragic gap that inspired me in 1993 to take a group of students to
Washington, DC. I saw other schools traveling with their students in wealthier
neighborhoods and I thought “why not?” I saw the possibility of educational travel for
my students but there was a gap from how things were (no travel) to how things ought to
be (educational travel for low-income students).

It is through educational travel with my students that I have found the ability to
push toward creating a learning environment where I see the way things are and can push
to what I know they ought to be as Boechler states. West (1989) argues that there is
always room to push toward an ideal. I agree: I believe that I can push others and myself
to create a challenging, equitable, empowering, and developmentally appropriate place
where all children can learn. This place is educational travel. I believe this study not only
provides some answers as to why educational travel is important, but also illuminates
effective middle school education practices and the dedication of the students and their
families to these trips.
Philosophical Foundation for Using Mixed Methods Research

Presently, there is no standard template for mixed methods dissertations. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) remind researchers of this when they address whether dissertations should have a section on paradigms, assumptions, worldviews, etc. Another dilemma is where to place one’s views on the philosophical foundations of mixed methods. I address this in Chapter Three where I provide the reader with a short definition, characteristics, and rationale for choosing mixed methods and the transformative paradigm.

Definition of Terms

Academic achievement. This term refers to the extent to which students achieve their education goals. In this study, this will refer to CSAP scale scores, ACT scale scores, and GPA as measures of academic achievement.

ACT vs. CO ACT. ACT (American College Test) is a national multiple choice test which measures students’ problem solving skills and knowledge in English, mathematics, reading, and science. The CO ACT is the Colorado version of the ACT. In this study, I use ACT to refer this test.

Adult chaperones. For the purposes of this study, the chaperones are defined as the adults who helped plan the trips at Harold Middle School, assisted in raising money for the students, and were in charge of a small group (3-8) of students while in the trip.

Asian. (For this study, I will use the race and ethnicity codes that Harold’s school district uses). “A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands. This area includes, for
example, China, India, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Islands, and Samoa” (Denver Public Schools, 2009, p. 3).

*Association for Middle Level Education.* The Association for Middle Level Education an international organization designed to address the educational needs of all students ages 10 to 15 and their teachers, administrators, families, and support staff.

*Black.* “Not Hispanic” and “A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa” (Denver Public Schools, 2009, p. 3).

*CSAP.* The CSAP (Colorado Student Assessment Program) is a standards-based, multiple choice and constructed response test that measured students’ academic achievement from 1996 – 2011.

*CUIP & UIP.* In 2009, the Education Accountability Act was passed and it required that each Colorado district and school to create an annual improvement plan referred to as the Unified Improvement Plan or Colorado Unified Improvement plan. Colorado Department of Education created a template for schools that includes all state, federal, and program accountability requirements.

*Culturally responsive pedagogy (teaching).* Ladson-Billings (2009), defines culturally responsive pedagogy as, “a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes” (p. 20).

*DC.* Sometimes the participants talk about “DC.” This refers to the Washington, DC trip, the capital of the USA.
**Ethnically and Linguistically Diverse.** I struggled to find a word that accurately describes the student population of Harold. The use of this terms includes students from a variety of linguistic and ethnic backgrounds represented at Harold during the time of the study including.

**Europe.** Sometime the participants talk about “Europe.” This refers to the 10 to 12 day trip to Amsterdam, Brussels, Paris, and London. Some years we also went to Cologne and Frankfurt, Germany.

**Grade point average (GPA).** When grades are given for course work in the USA, each letter grade corresponds to a number on a scale. The average obtained by dividing the total number of grade points earned by the total number of grade points attempted.

**Hispanic.** “A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race” (Denver Public Schools, 2009, p. 3).

**Low-income, Middle-income, and Upper-income.** Many ways of defining levels of income are to be found based on region, household size, and self-perception. For this research study, low-income is defined as living at or below the poverty level of the USA. Middle-income is defined as those living above the poverty line but in the top one-third of Americans who could be considered upper-income. The yearly income for each is difficult to earn because of location (Simpson & Booth, 2010).

**Middle school, Middle level learning.** This refers to education of students who are in their middle years, between 10 and 15 years of age.
*Minority.* This refers to the population frequently found in low-income, urban schools that is ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse. In the case of Harold, the population was similar in ethnicity and culture. Linguistically, the students spoke mainly Spanish and English with some students who spoke several African dialects, Vietnamese, and Cambodian.

*Non-White.* (same as *Minority*). I struggled with the use of this term as well, not wanting to define people for what they are not however it best fit in the places I chose to use it. I vary the use of “ethnically and linguistically diverse,” “minority,” and “non-White.”

*Sociodemographics.* This refers to characteristics such as age, ethnicity, gender, location, socioeconomic status, and family size.

*Study abroad.* When students travel to another country to engage in educational opportunities and activities that vary in academic objectives, length, location, and price.

*School engagement.* This refers to the relationship students have with school as evidenced by their participation in school-related activities and coursework. It also refers to the relationships between and among administrators, teachers, staff, and fellow students. This study use graduation rates, attendance, and suspensions as measures of school engagement.

*Transformative.* This is one of the design structures and outcome of educational travel with students. It is inspired by one of the characteristics Gay (2010) describes as a necessary component to culturally responsive teaching. I define it as “In under-
represented travel groups, educational travel transforms students as they confront and transcend the boundary of “who travels” of traditional educational travel experiences.

Transformative Paradigm. This paradigm is described by Mertens (2010) as follows “The paradigm is a framework of belief systems that directly engages members of culturally diverse groups with a focus on increased social justice” (p. 10). Research through this lens places importance on people traditionally pushed to the margins of society and in research. It also promotes linking the findings of a study to social change.

Transformative learning. This type of learning as it is linked to travel is not a part of this study. I mention it because it is often discussed with learning and travel. See Mezirow (1997) for a more complete description.

Urban. The US Census Bureau defines Urbanized Areas (Uas) as having 50,000 or more people in a city or area.

White. “Not Hispanic” and “A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East” (Denver Public Schools, 2009, p. 3).
CHAPTER TWO

Review of the Literature

The purpose of this chapter is to present a detailed review of the literature on student educational travel, experiential education (as it relates to travel), middle level education, and culturally responsive teaching. The rationale behind this combination is based on several factors. It is important to understand what is already known about educational travel with students and the role experiential education plays in travel learning. The site of this study is Harold Middle School so an examination of effective middle level education is critical. In addition, Harold’s student population is ethnically and linguistically diverse and located in a low-income neighborhood.

Before I discuss these areas, I will share why it is important to understand educational travel with middle school students and how I searched for the literature regarding this topic. I will then provide a brief overview of each of the four concepts.

Importance of Educational Travel with Students Before College

There are several reasons why educational travel is an important research topic with middle school students. Generally, travel is thought of as leisure rather than education (Beeton, 2006). However, the implications of not traveling before college reach beyond just failure to expose middle school students to new places. This section examines the implications of not participating in educational travel before college.
First, “what makes travel educational?” is one of the most important questions to examine as one thinks of educational travel. This question is one Stone & Petrick (2013) ask as well. Many middle and high school students travel domestically and internationally, yet little is understood about the effect of travel. Every fall, thousands of parents across the US attend meetings regarding their children’s trips. Yet, the research on the effects of these travels is little researched.

As the large bibliographies of study abroad program research in college demonstrate, study abroad has increased in popularity since the 1990s (see Comp, n.d.; Wilson and Richards, 2003; United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2008; Forum on Education Abroad, 2012). This indicates that there is an interest in uncovering the effects of travel on students. The same is not true for students under the age of 18. Considering the more than one million students believed to travel each year, and the approximate one third of all teachers who accompany them, it is important to understand the impact of travel.

If students, especially minority youth, do not travel before college, they are less likely to participate in college study abroad programs (Simon, 2007; McLellan, 2010). This means that ethnically and linguistically diverse students will be less likely to access to the skillsets learned through travel, which may affect their ability to obtain a job when they graduate. Studies indicate students will need the global skills learned while traveling in their future professions (Asia Society, 2011; Farrugia & Bhandari, 2013). Of the approximately 22 million students in college, approximately 300,000 (less than 1%) study abroad, though that number is growing (NCES, 2014; Farrugia & Bhandari,
The 2013 Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange, reports an increase of 3.4% in study abroad by college students from 2012 to 2013. However, Farrugia and Bhandari (2013) indicate a disparity between non-White groups and White groups in college that study abroad. Of the 283,332 college students in the United States studying abroad in 2013, only 24% were non-White students (Farrugia & Bhandari, 2013). Minority students are clearly underrepresented in study abroad groups and that can affect their future employment prospects.

Stone and Petrick (2013) recommend studies focusing on short-term travel and domestic travel. The implementation of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) requires many teachers to demonstrate how they are meeting Common Core standards in their lessons (Council of Chief State School Officers & National Governors Association, 2011). The thought of planning extended international educational travel might take too much time and resources in a teachers’ already full day. However, if there are proven benefits to domestic travel and short-term travel with students, teachers might be more inclined to plan excursions for their students.

Middle school is a pivotal time in students’ lives (Balfanz, 2009). Finding ways to engage students to assist them in developing the skills they need to graduate is crucial. Conk (2012) states, “Unless educators can engage the minds, the imaginations, and the curiosity of young adolescents, they will not be able to help them make connections to the curriculum and may derail them from the path to graduation and life-long learning.” Educational travel, or travel learning, is thought to engage children and help them make connections to the world around them (Byrnes, 2001). While Byrnes did not present any
empirical evidence, as a substitute, she provides suggestions and advice for families wanting to travel with their children during the school year. The article is one of the few works available addressing the benefits of educational travel with younger students. Her advice and insights correlate with a characteristic of middle school students: their growing curiosity about the world (Scales, 2010). Combining the inquisitive young adolescent mind with excitement of travel may help middle school students engage with school in a way that assists them in high school and college.

There is an interest in researching how academic achievement is related to educational travel. Holecek, Nicholls, and Collison (2008), EF Tours (2008), and Explorica (2011) conducted surveys, which linked GPAs (grade point averages) to travel. However, these studies focused on groups of students with low levels ethnic, linguistic, and economic diversity. Understanding how educational travel affects these marginalized groups is crucial to provide equity in educational opportunities for these students and understanding the effect of travel in their lives. Exploring the scores of only White, middle to upper income students only tells part of the story.

Examining the possible effects of educational travel on standardized test scores and graduation rates is another reason why this study is important. Over the years examined in this study, Harold Middle School’s overall CSAP and ACT scores were among the lowest in the state. From 2004 to 2011, Harold Middle School’s overall average test scores were as follows: 16% proficient or above in math, 24% proficient or above in reading and ranked in the bottom 2% of all schools in Colorado. According to the 2011 report Start With the Facts: Strengthening Denver Public Schools Education
Pipeline, the school district had a 46.6% graduation rate in 2006 and 51.8% rate in 2010 (p.15). Colorado Department of Education’s website lists a 51.6% graduation rate in 2010 (“Graduation Statistics,” 2014). Most of Harold Middle School students attend Harvey High School. The American College Test (ACT) is one of the national standardized tests that colleges in the USA ask student to take to understand a student’s academic ability.

The ACT scale score results range from 1–36 with 36 representing the maximum score, just as the ACT does. Tables 1a–1e show how composite ACT scores for students from Harvey High School (Harvey HS) compare to the school district, the state, and the nation. No data were found for the years prior to 2006 for the school district or Harvey.

Table 1a

*Composite ACT scores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<th>Colorado</th>
<th>School District</th>
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<td>2006</td>
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<td>20.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2011</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>17.6</td>
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*Note.* From the National Average Composite ACT Score, ACT; Colorado ACT – Data and Results, Colorado Department of Education.
Table 1b

*English ACT Subscores*

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<td>19.5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
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<td>19.3</td>
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<td>20.1</td>
<td>16.4</td>
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*Note.* From the National Average Composite ACT Score, ACT; Colorado ACT – Data and Results, Colorado Department of Education.

Table 1c

*Math ACT Scores*

<table>
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*Note.* From the National Average Composite ACT Score, ACT; Colorado ACT – Data and Results, Colorado Department of Education.
Table 1d

Reading ACT Scores

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Note. From the National Average Composite ACT Score, ACT; Colorado ACT – Data and Results, Colorado Department of Education.

Table 1e

Science ACT Scores

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</table>

Note. From the National Average Composite ACT Score, ACT; Colorado ACT – Data and Results, Colorado Department of Education.

From these data it is clear that Harvey High School students’ test scores are low and indicate that Harold Middle School students’ scores would also be low since the majority of them attend Harvey. These scores are used to provide access to college programs and scholarships, however they do not provide a clear picture of what students are able to do (Gay, 2010). This study tells us what students learn that is not measured by
tests and we learn what students say they learn from educational travel that helps them with standardized tests thus helping to understand what may, and may not, work in educating middle school youth.

Educational travel is an important area for study due to access to study abroad programs, implications for future employment, equity in travel among under-represented populations, the need for research on short-term travel and domestic travel, and the effects of travel on academic achievement, especially for low-income and ethnically and linguistically diverse students.

**Literature Search Method**

I searched for articles on the benefits of educational travel from 2009 to 2014. Using the words *benefits, childhood, domestic education, experiential learning, excursion, experience, international, learning, low-income, middle school, middle level, minority youth, outcomes, student*, and *youth*, I conducted searches pairing these words with *travel*. When the results were too numerous, I searched using three or more indicators at a time. For example, I paired *benefits + middle school + travel* to narrow the results for relevancy. To ensure I was searching appropriately, I attended three individual appointments with the research librarian at the University of Denver. She assisted me in searching Academic Search Complete (EBSCO), Dissertations and Theses (PQDT), ERIC (ProQuest), PsycINFO, and SocINDEX.

I also searched using Google and Google Scholar for items that might have been missed in the previous searches. I created several Google Scholar alerts for articles pertaining to educational travel. One alert contains the words *travel, education, youth,*
and benefits. Another alert consists of the words educational travel together as one indicator. A third alert contains middle level youth, low-income neighborhood. Finally, after reading the Stone and Petrick (2013) literature review, I created another one for new citations using Petrick’s name. I have found a majority of the references listed in Stone and Petrick’s (2013) literature review and have read the references from those sources for new material.

I searched the websites of the Asia Society, EF Tours, Explorica, the Student Youth Travel Association (SYTA), Student Marketing (a youth travel consulting company in Europe), WorldStrides, and the World Youth Student and Educational (WYSE) Travel Confederation in search of other published resources. Wherever possible, I signed up to receive alerts regarding publications or news.

I am in contact with Carylann Assante, Executive Director of SYTA and its charitable organization, SYTA Youth Foundation (SYF). She gave me access SYTA’s research and development’s BaseCamp so that I can participate in discussions regarding youth travel research. (BaseCamp is a web-based project management tool similar to GoogleDrive for online discussions and file sharing). Randy Sinisi, director of Research and Development for EF Tours, has met with me several times to share insights regarding the research EF examines and would like to conduct in the future. I am in email contact with Matthew Stone from the Stone and Petrick (2013) literature review.
Education and Travel

“Ideally, travel broadens our perspectives personally, culturally, and politically. Suddenly, the palette with which we paint the story of our lives has more colors…But you can only reap these rewards of travel is you’re open to them” (Steves, 2009, p. 4).

The educational benefits of travel are under-researched (Ritchie, 2003; van’t Klooster, van Wijk, & van Rekom, 2008; Falk, Ballantyne, Packer, & Benckendorff, 2012; Stone & Petrick, 2013). Some have suggested, as Steves (2009) does, that travel is educational because of the ways it broadens our perspectives, in the ways the travelers learn from their experiences, and that all travel, in some ways, is educational (Casella, 1997; Smith & Jenner, 1997; LaTorre, 2001). How can we define these rewards? How does travel broaden our perspectives?

Definitions. To begin the discussion of education and travel, I will start some definitions. Merriam-Webster (n.d.) defines education as “the action or process of educating or being educated,” “the knowledge and development resulting from an educational process.” The word educate means “to provide schooling for,” “to develop mentally, morally, or aesthetically,” “to provide with information” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Education can take place in formal spaces such in schools with planned objectives and outcomes and in informal spaces such as what naturally occurs through one’s life, which oftentimes do not have objectives and outcomes. While many definitions of education exist, most contain the elements listed in the Merriam-Webster definition.

Travel is to go on a trip or journey, also “to go to a place and especially one that is far away; to go through or over (a place) during a trip or journey; to move from one place
to another” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Tourism is generally thought of as travel for pleasure in Merriam-Webster’s dictionary (n.d.) which states tourism is “the activity of traveling to a place for pleasure; the business of providing hotels, restaurants, entertainment, etc., for people who are traveling.” While this appears straightforward, it is not. Ritchie (2003) outlines the variety of ways tourism can be defined depended on one’s perspective: from that of a tourist, from that of the tourism industry, or from the point of view of the destination to name a few.

The word “youth” applies to a wide range of ages when discussing youth or student travel. According to United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (2008), it can refer to anyone aged 16-35. Others refer to student travelers as anyone aged 5-18 years old (Ritchie, Carr, & Cooper, 2003). SYTA defines student travelers as being 12 to 18 years old and youth travelers as aged 18 to 24 years old.

Ritchie (2003) agrees with Kidd (1973) and Smith (1982) regarding learning as a “product (where the outcome is important), a process (which occurs during learning) and a function (the actual steps to achieve learning)” (Ritchie, 2003, p. 10). Ritchie (2003) continues by relating this definition of education to educational travel. Educational travel can be a product where the outcome might be a diploma or a degree as a result of study or travel somewhere other than one’s home city. It can be a process where travel is “focused upon mastering or improving knowledge of what is already know about something” (Ritchie, 2003, p. 12). For example, a group of students might study communal living in ashrams in India and then travel to India and live on an ashram to learn more about ashram life. This is similar to viewing educational travel as a function
where students may study Van Gogh’s artwork before traveling to the Van Gogh museum to extend their knowledge and apply what they learned about his style and technique.

To pull together the concepts of educational youth travel and the above descriptions, an examination of definitions is in order. A variety of definitions exist due in part to four characteristics evident in all youth travel: age group, niche markets (style of travel or products), study travel as a primary focus, and travel as a vehicle for international exchange, peace, and understanding (UNWTO, 2008). Within each of these characteristics, the variability is enormous. Consider how different educational travel may be described as seen through a 25 year old who travels independently for six months through Eastern Asia to learn about the different cultures as opposed to a 16 year old that travels to Spain on an organized group travel company from her school for 10 days to practice her Spanish. Each one of these travelers would fit the definition of youth travel provided by WYSE as cited in and endorsed by UNWTO (2008).

Youth travel includes all independent trips for periods of less than one year by people aged 16-29 which are motivated, in part or in full by a desire to experience other cultures, build life experience and/or benefit from formal and informal learning opportunities outside one’s usual environment. (UNWTO, 2008, p. 1)

Ritchie, Carr, and Cooper (2003) define student travel through the lens of educational tourism. From their chapter on schools and educational tourism they state, “educational tourism is defined as incorporating all school/field trips organized by primary and secondary schools for children between 5 and 18 years of age, as well as language schools, where people travel abroad to a school to learn a foreign language” (Ritchie, Carr, & Cooper, 2003, p. 130). This definition covers domestic and international trips. They divide school trips into two groups. The first group is trips that
are specifically tied to lessons taught in the classroom and the second group is consider as extracurricular and not tied to a particular class or curriculum (Ritchie, Carr, & Cooper, 2003). Language study trips can be a part of either one of these types of school trips.

**Relationship between travel and learning.** For centuries, travel and learning have been connected. Brodsky-Porges (1981) provide a history of travel spanning the ancient philosophers who tout the merits of travel to the Grand Tour of the 17th to 19th centuries. Others have discussed the history of travel for learning languages, providing contact with other cultures, and gaining knowledge (Sell, 1983; Casella, 1997; Ritchie, 2003; Vande Berg, 2007). The idea that travel is educational continues today. The purpose of this section of the literature review is to explore the reasons students travel today and the outcomes of that travel. This discussion begins with two dissertations that address the relationship between learning and travel with adolescents.

The effect of domestic travel is an area where little research exists. Johnson (2008) adds to this area of research with a phenomenological study of ten rural Grade 8 students on a trip to Washington, DC and New York City to understand the experiences of the youth on an extended excursion. From this, he found four over-reaching themes and seventeen sub-themes that describe students’ growth in several areas. Johnson (2008) lists eight findings from this study (pp. 239-246):

- Students developed a greater awareness of self.
- Students identified academic and career interests.
- Students experienced intense relationships with others.
- Students increased their cultural awareness.
• Students felt a strong identification with U. S. history.
• Emotional experiences on the trip helped students learn.
• The trip required students to involve all their senses.
• Students identified a personal ambition to make the trip a reality.

This study also indicates that the students felt their personal connections to historical sites and people had increased by “virtue of being involved in the experience. Although most of the students said they did not gain large amounts of factual knowledge after taking the trip, all of them said the experience connected them to the places they visited and the people they learned about” (p. 249). This study is important because it examines Grade 8 students (13 to 14 years old) and there is little research on the effects of travel with younger students. Johnson (2008) uses the phenomenological approach so the participants’ voices are the ones guiding the findings. Therefore we learn from the travelers what meaning they ascribe to educational travel. It was not the study’s goal to provide measureable academic gains from traveling and this is something that is needed in today’s educational discourse.

The relationship between educational travel and meaningful learning behaviors is investigated in another study with adolescents. Saitow (2009) drew on her time as a former New York City teacher and administrator where she worked with “at-risk/culturally disadvantaged/underprivileged/students of need” (p. 6). In referring to her time with these children, she states that these, “… experiences that challenged (my) ability to effectively read students became the motivation and basis for this study” (p. 9). However, when conducting her research, she was only able to include white middle-
income youth, despite her realization that travel does, indeed, hold something for all youth from a variety of cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds.

Saitow (2009) posits “educational travel provides a positive learning environment that promotes healthy adolescent learning” (p. 259). Using a grounded theory approach and in-depth interviews with children, adults who had traveled (domestically or internationally) as teens, parents, and teachers, she concludes that educational travel holds these benefits for adolescents:

- Adolescents’ behavior is transformed into more mature emotional and cognitive conduct by educational travel.
- Adolescents retain the values and beliefs they learned from their educational travel experiences.
- Educational travel experiences engage adolescent attention and focus.
- Adolescents who participated in educational travel learn to adapt to new, unfamiliar situations, which is connected to growth in self-confidence.
- Educational travel entails delegating responsibilities that give greater meaning to the adolescents’ experience.
- Educational travel may provide the types of life experiences that adolescents of need will benefit from because of the exposure to other cultures and places (S, 2009).

Saitow (2009) offers some of the same findings as Johnson indicating that educational travel with adolescent can bring about life-enriching benefits for students. It was not the goal of her study to examine quantitative data related to travel which, again,
is needed in our educational climate today. Both of studies are dissertations. A thorough search revealed no articles authored by either one in peer-reviewed journals, conference papers, magazines, or social media.

As mentioned in the introduction, SYTA (2016) published *Student & Youth Travel Digest: A Comprehensive Guide to Student Travel*. SYTA collected 2,143 responses from US teachers, US group leaders, US tour operators, and international tour operators. One of the questions teachers were asked is why they organize travel. The following are the percentage of respondents that report each reason:

- 79%: Cultural awareness/broaden horizons
- 69%: Out of class experience
- 61%: Overall benefits of travel
- 54%: Useful for academic performance
- 53%: Useful for curriculum
- 39%: Establish tradition in a school
- 24%: Useful for students’ future employment (SYTA, 2016, p. 4).

It is apparent that teachers believe that students benefit from the exposure to something beyond their immediate surroundings. It is also interesting to note that roughly half of the respondents believe there is an academic connection.

When asked what social impact students receive from travel, they found ten characteristics that they believe the students gained form traveling. The following are the percentage of respondents who reported each social impact:

- 57%: Increased willingness to know/learn/explore
• 55%: Increased independence, self-esteem, and confidence
• 55%: Desire to travel more
• 53%: Intellectual curiosity
• 53%: Better cooperation/collaboration
• 46%: Increased desire to attend college/university
• 45%: Better adaptability and sensitivity
• 45%: Better self-expression
• 44%: Increased tolerance of other cultures and ethnicities
• 44%: Increased tolerance and respectfulness, (SYTA, 2016, p.4).

The respondents believe that students gain an increased desire to learn even though they did not state that as a top reason for teachers designing travel. SYTA (2016) interprets this statistic to mean that “student travel triggers a transformation, as a part of which students develop ambitions to know, learn, and explore” (p. 4). From these results, it does appear that the increase is in learning and personal development. It would be important to ask the students travelers the same questions to ascertain why they believed their teachers organized travel and what the students learned from those travels.

The racial and ethnic background of the respondents in the STYA survey was not available at the time of this study. In addition, neither dissertation included urban ethnically and linguistically diverse youth from a low-income neighborhood. Saitow (2009) was motivated by her time with students from these demographics but did not include them in her study. McLellan (2011) stresses the importance of examining these students in his article for Education and Urban Society, “International educational travel
and youth of color: “College is too late!” McLellan (2011) holds that educators must focus on motivating and reaching youth of color from urban neighborhoods before college. While travel holds the possibility to educate all who travel, urban students do not always enjoy the opportunities to travel as their suburban or rural counterparts (McLellan, 2011). Because of this, they also do not have equal access the many benefits of group travel as their suburban and rural counterparts. One of the benefits of travel is an increased understanding of the world nationally and globally (Asia Society, 2011). With the 21st century job market necessitating global awareness, the urban students are left at a greater disadvantage if they are not exposed to travel opportunities. Students from urban schools with an ethnically and linguistically diverse population are at greater risk for dropping out of high school, or if they enter college, not completing their studies much less traveling abroad (NCES, 2013). McLellan (2011) advocates for early preparation programs for ethnically and linguistically diverse urban youth that prepared them to higher learning, career choices, and the opportunity to study abroad.

Once students graduate and attend college, the next hurdle is understanding how to access study abroad opportunities. Simon’s work (2007) entitled, “It’s not just what you have, but how you use it: The impact of race and class on the usage and activation of cultural and social capital in the study abroad process,” suggests that race and class play the main role in the “activation and usage of cultural and social resources to study abroad” (p. 3). Not only are Black and students from a low-income neighborhood underrepresented in study abroad programs, they are thwarted by lack of knowledge of how to apply to programs, financial means to travel, and a lack of mentors to help them
along the way to gain access to information about international travel. While this study is conducted at a historically Black college, there are many similarities that can be extrapolated to travel in secondary education. Students who travel abroad are immersed in lives very different from their own and are pushed to examine their own beliefs (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004). In addition, travel participants may have a reduced propensity for ethnocentric and prejudiced behavior (Freestone & Geldens, 2008), improved cultural awareness (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004; Sutton & Rubin, 2004; Meyer-Lee & Evans, 2007), an expanded worldview (Carlson et al., 1990; Dwyer, 2004), and a critical view of their home city, state, and country. Alger (1980) predicted that students who travel abroad have the potential to impact future legislation regarding people different from themselves because they have traveled outside their neighborhood. As Simon’s (2007) study suggests, ethnically and linguistically diverse and students from a low-income neighborhood are missing out because they are not afforded the same travel opportunities (and support to make them a reality) as their White, middle- and upper-income counterparts.

**Study abroad.** Study abroad is available to students at most US colleges and universities. Students study in another country and receive credit at their home institution. Falk et al. (2012) suggest that study abroad might be a place to start exploring the benefits to educational travel. Since the 1990s, study abroad students have increased from 71,154 in 1991 to 1992 to 283,332 in 2011 to 2012 (Farrugia & Bhandari, 2013). The research on study abroad has continued to increase as well. Vande Berg, Connor-Linton, and Pagie (2009) state, “During the 1970s, 189 research studies were published;
that number had increased to 675 by the 1990s” (p. 3). Along with others, they predicted that this number will exceed 1,000 in the 2000s (Comp, Gladding, Rhodes, Stephenson, & Vande Berg, 2007; Vande Berg, Connor-Linton, & Pagie, 2009) This prediction appears have come true as evidenced by the literature review done for this study and from the one done by Stone and Petrick (2013). Because of the plethora of study abroad research, this study only will give an overview of study abroad. Stone and Petrick created this model as described in Figure 1.

![Figure 1. Study abroad: A process model (Stone & Petrick, 2013).](image)

From this model, the reasons why students decide to study abroad and the factors leading them to this decision are examined before the experience itself. Activities, classes, exposure to different cultures, and interaction with many people make up the study abroad experience. These two segments lead to the outcomes and benefits of studying abroad. Using this framework, I will examine several studies that highlight each segment. For this study, I am most interested in the outcomes and benefits of a study abroad experience so I will concentrate my review in this area.

Study abroad and tourism are inextricably linked (Stone & Petrick, 2013). When students are studying abroad, often excursions to museums, galleries, exhibits, cultural institutions, and surrounding areas are planned either independently from or with a group (Ritchie, 2003; Roppolo, 1996). Juvan and Lesjak (2011) expected that students enrolled
in a European exchange program had professional motives (passing exams, studying major program related topics, language experience, gaining experience for employment, etc.) for studying abroad. They found that the study abroad students were looking for new experiences, new friendships, and a new living environment. Sanchez, Fornerino, and Zhang (2006) surveyed U.S., Chinese, and French business students to analyze their motivations and intentions to study abroad. They found that generally all students had social goals, not professional ones. Generally they wanted to study abroad for a new experience, to travel, improve their social situation, and to search for freedom or pleasure (e.g. “have fun,” “increase my enjoyment,” “to realize my dream”) (Sanchez, Fornerino, & Zhang 2006, p. 37). Chieffo (2007) examined to motivating factors for freshmen and sophomores participating in study abroad. She found that students were motivated to study abroad to live in or learn about another culture and that pre-college travel plays a “large role” in whether or not students wanted to study abroad (Chieffo, 2007, slide 17).

The four categories of the study abroad experience from the Stone and Petrick (2013) model are travel and tourist activities; class activities; exposure to another culture; and interpersonal contact. It is a challenge to attribute the benefits and outcomes of study abroad to one of these categories and to what degree. For example, because study abroad participants “live” in a foreign place for an extended time, they participate in shopping (Smith & Jenner, 1997) and sightseeing (Carr & Axelsen, 2005) just as tourists do. Is what they learn from these forays into the life of another culture more educative for the study abroad participant than the tourist? Do study abroad participants learn more from their classroom learning or from the interaction with other cultures and travel? Or both?
It is difficult to separate out each section. Wanner (2009) refers to when he discusses how researchers “still cannot measure the desired effect on a student’s cognitive gain or effective educational achievement. Such targets remain at this point undefined and so far have escaped meaningful assessment” (p. 87). Just as with all learning, attributing one cause to one effect is difficult.

Nonetheless, some research exists informing us of what may constitute effective study abroad programs. Broomhall, Pitman, Majocha, and McEwan (2010) found that “Intentional, experiential, and structured learning are perceived by scholars, clients and companies as the defining features of educational tourism” (p. 5). This would indicate that structured activities while abroad would foster optimal conditions for learning. In their survey of educational travel participants and scholars, 83% believed that “learning” was the most important concept in educational tourism (Broomhall et al., 2010, p. 26). Broomhall et al. (2010) also learned that informed group leaders, teachers, or guides who accompanied the travelers were crucial for ensuring the participants learned. These experts also were important in making the most of an important feature of travel as noted by the academics in the survey. They noted that the travelers should take advantage of the “serendipitous learning moments: The tour group experiencing events that were unforeseen and which a good tour leader could turn to their advantage” (Broomhall et al., 2010, p. 26). Breese (2005) found that students learned the most about the culture of Ireland through this “serendipitous” type of travel (p. 317). Lamet and Lamet (1982) reported that 62% of their respondents to a survey listed out-of-class experiences as the most impactful, one valued the in-class experience, and the rest valued both. Gmlech
(1997) analyzed the behavior and routines of American college students who were studying in Austria were examined through observations, questionnaires, informal conversations, audiotaped travel logs, and detailed analysis of 51 student journals. He found that “Much of the personal benefit of travel comes not from what students learn about the places or cultures they visit, but from the need to continuously make decisions and deal with the demands of daily life in new and unfamiliar settings” (Gmlech, 1997, p. 475). He recommends students be encouraged to travel on their own or in small groups to foster this. Students may not have the skills to do this when they first arrive but with guidance and the passage of time in the host country, they should be encouraged to travel so that they can learn how to make decisions and enjoy daily life.

While the specifics of what affects educational travelers as they learn while abroad, characteristics of effective practices are important to recognize. From the literature, it appears that we know that study abroad participants engage in four types of activities as seen in Figure 1. We also can surmise that these should be organized and intentional, preferably with some type of guide to optimize learning. Travel and experiences in the host country are sometimes even more important than the in-class learning and teacher or guide in crucial to make this a success.

Much has been written about the benefits of study abroad as the large bibliographies of study abroad and travel program research in college demonstrate (see United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2008; n.d.; Wilson and Richards, 2003; Forum on Education Abroad, 2012). One example is a study complete of Antioch college students. Abrams (1979) prefers the term experience abroad rather than (study) abroad
students in the investigation of the long-term impact on participants from 1960s. In a questionnaire sent to former travel abroad students, Abrams and his colleagues wished to learn what lasting effects of studying abroad had on the participants. The former experience abroad students reported a change in their social and political values, an increase in academic motivation, and an impact in their field of work and jobs. Thirty-eight percent reported that the experience continued to influence their employment.

Another example is Paige, Fry, Stallman, Josic, & Jon (2009). They sampled 6,391 study abroad participants from 22 colleges and universities across the USA. From their respondents, 83.5% said study abroad had a strong impact on their collegiate lives as compared to only 73.8% reporting friendships/student peer interactions, as a strong impact on their lives and 66.2% reporting coursework as the strong impact. In addition, the American Institute for Foreign Study (AIFS, 1988) found in a longitudinal study that over 70% of their study abroad participants reported gains in maturity, knowledge of a culture, and an increase in adaptability.

Sutton and Rubin (2004) were part of a large project (GLOSSARI) in the state of Georgia to research the effects of study abroad. In the initial findings report, they address the difficulty of generalizing findings across the research on study abroad,

It is difficult to generalize across this work because of the variety of psychological instruments used and the differing patterns of findings. Taken as a whole, this body of research suggests that studying abroad has a salubrious effect on many psycho-social outcomes, although not all. (Sutton & Rubin, 2004, p. 68)
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Benefit Attributed to Study Abroad</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More adaptable</td>
<td>Gmelch, 1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased independence</td>
<td>Bachner and Zeutschel, 2009; Gmelch, 1997; Stitsworth, 1988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in perspective, worldview, and ability to see through others’ eyes</td>
<td>Carlson et al., 1990; Dwyer, 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in self-confidence</td>
<td>Bachner &amp; Zeutschel, 2009; Chieffo, 2007; Gmelch, 1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased understanding of geography</td>
<td>Sutton &amp; Rubin, 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased functional knowledge (e.g. what is needed to conduct daily life)</td>
<td>Chieffo &amp; Griffiths, 2004; Gmelch, 1997; Sutton &amp; Rubin, 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural development</td>
<td>Ingraham &amp; Peterson, 2004; Rexeisen, Anderson, Lawton, &amp; Hubbard, 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global engagement and understanding</td>
<td>Paige, Fry, Stallman, Josic, &amp; Jon, 2009; Kitsantas, 2004; Sutton &amp; Rubin, 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dismantling of stereotypes</td>
<td>Freestone &amp; Geldens, 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural (cross-cultural, cultural) competence</td>
<td>Chieffo &amp; Griffiths, 2004; Meyer-Lee &amp; Evans, 2007; Sutton &amp; Rubin, 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual growth, critical thinking</td>
<td>Carlson et al., 1990; Chieffo, 2007; Hansel, 1988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal growth</td>
<td>Chieffo &amp; Griffiths, 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in academic scores</td>
<td>Abrams, 1979; Ingraham &amp; Peterson, 2004; Perrin &amp; Thompson, 2010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some of the effects of studying abroad are displayed in Table 2. For ease in understanding outcomes of study abroad, similar terms have been combined. From this summary of study abroad research, there are many attributes that can be attributed to study abroad which forms a basis for understanding educational travel with younger students. For a general discussion of travel and learning, we now turn to learning through independent travel.

The benefits of travelers not affiliated with any study abroad program are similar to those affiliated with a program. Several studies reveal that travelers learn interpersonal communication skills (Inkson & Myers, 2003), personal growth skills (Coetzee & Bester, 2009), problem solving skills (Pearce & Foster, 2007), increased “soft skills such as confidence and self-esteem (Minnaert, 2007), cross-cultural skills (Inkson & Myers, 2003), a gain general knowledge (Pearce & Foster, 2007), improved academic performance (Kuh, 1995), and become more adaptable, and are better problem-solvers (Pearce & Foster, 2007). These benefits indicate what was previously discussed. It is difficult to ascribe benefits to which part of travel abroad assists in changes in the traveler and how these changes are measured.

With the exception of Johnson (2008) and Saitow’s (2009) dissertations, I have discussed only the effects of travel on people who are 18 years or older. Next, I will examine travel with children under the age of 18. Little research exists for children in elementary, middle, or high school. Generally, parents view travel as fun and educational for their children. Crompton (1979) found that parents tend to view vacations as learning experiences for their children and was a major consideration when selecting a destination.
**Youth and educational travel.** Two journal articles offer advice but no empirical evidence regarding youth and educational travel nevertheless they are still useful because they were published in peer-reviewed journals. Newman (1996) offers suggestions for parents in structuring travel so that the children gain from their travels. Newman (1996) suggests that children may learn subjects through travel that they have difficulty with in school such as spelling, mathematics, map reading, etc. She also promotes children being actively engaged in planning the trip and allowing children to select some of the sights and places to visit on the trip. Newman (1996) gives parents tips and book suggestions for making the most of travel with children.

Byrnes (2001) also believes that travel learning increases with planning. She defines travel learning or schooling as “education provided children who are traveling for days, weeks, or even months during the normal academic year” (Byrnes, 2001, p. 345). She wrote her article to assist teachers and families in planning for family educational travel. She outlines the steps for families in planning an itinerary with children and planning the curriculum while the children are away from formal schooling. She recommends, “reflecting on and recording the experience” so that the educational nature of the trip is increased and for children’s enjoyment (Byrnes, 2001, p. 347). She also provides a sample “travel contract” for the families and school to sign to formalize learning on the trip (Byrnes, 2001, p. 350).

In listing the benefits of travel learning, Byrnes (2001) lists ones similar to Newman’s (1996) insights cites study abroad research when she mentions the perceived outcomes of travel:
Travel also may expose children to different forms of transportation, language, food, art, architecture, religion, dress, and/or money. Therefore, travel is bound to broaden a child’s view of the world. Furthermore, travel invariably provides many opportunities to learn such life skills as problem solving, compromise, teamwork, patience, and flexibility. Travel can produce dramatic changes in an individual’s outlook; enhance personal development, and increase cross-cultural understanding and globalmindeness (Kottler, 1998; Stitsworth, 1994). (Byrnes, 2001, p. 345)

Byrnes (2001) completes her article by offering suggestions for teachers to incorporate the missing student’s itinerary while traveling or accounts of the travels when the student returns. She reminds the reader that the students will have missed classwork that may need to be completed and that not all other students will want to hear every detail of travel. Even though this article does not represent a study, it is important as it discusses travel learning with younger students.

Two studies conducted by US travel companies, Explorica and, EF Tours illuminate the understanding of the importance of travel with students under the age of 19. In an unpublished study undertaken by Explorica (2011), 600 respondents between the ages of 21 and 69 years old were divided into two groups: 300 people who traveled outside the US or Canada on a school sponsored tour when they were between the ages of 12-18 and 300 people who did not travel on a school tour. Their results found that the travelers were more likely to be educated as measured by a college degree or postgraduate work (67% vs. 34%) be more successful as measured by being employed fulltime (61% vs. 40%), and be more marketable as measured by the ability to put travel on their resumes (Business Wire, 2011). However, this study is not published and is not peer-reviewed so the results may be unreliable or invalid.
EF Tours is the largest private education company and was founded in 1965 (Mission Measurement, 2010, p. 1). Recognized by teachers as one of the main tour companies for students, they are ubiquitous in secondary schools. EF Tours hired two different independent companies to analyze the effects of travel on students. EF hired AdvancED in 2009 and Mission Measurement (LLC) in 2010. Both conducted a Student Impact Survey Post-Tour.

AdvancED is “the largest community of education professionals in the world.” They are a “non-profit, non-partisan organization that conducts rigorous, on-site external reviews of PreK-12 schools and school systems to ensure that all learners realize their full potential…our commitment is to help schools improve” (“We are AdvancEd,” n.d.). EF Tours provides high school and college credit for tours so they are considered a “school” therefore for are subject to accreditation reviews. It is possible that the report prepared by AdvancEd was prepared for EF Tours as part of this review. A survey was emailed to 19,393 international high school tour participants from 2004-2006 and they received 563 responses (2.9% response rate) (AdvancED, 2009, p.2). No more information was available regarding the methods, sampling, or instrument for the study. AdvancEd (2009) reported these findings (among others) from respondents:

- 84.9% report an increase interest in studying abroad in college.
- 74.9% have a college GPA above 3.0.
- Over 50% have career plans that involve international travel or international focus.
- 86.8% report an increased ability to be adaptable and flexible.
• 84.1% are more comfortable around people from other backgrounds.

• 92% are more comfortable in different cultural settings.

This research is published in its entirety and therefore cannot be reviewed but the findings are consistent with the demonstrated benefits of study aboard research.

Mission Measurement (“About,” n.d.) is a company committed to “measuring social outcomes…we leverage our collective experience in the corporate, government and nonprofit sectors to help organizations make better decisions and design better strategies.” EF Tours hired Mission Measurement to examine the influence travel had on three domains: “(1) Personal Development; (2) College and Career Readiness; and( 3) Global Competencies and Perspectives” (Mission Measurement, 2010, p. 1). In addition, EF Tours wanted to determine the answers to key questions related to the effect travel had on students. What skills and knowledge are gained on tour, what motivated students to travel, and what gains do students report as a result of their tour are three key areas EF Tours wanted Mission Measurement to explore. By sending travelers a pre-tour and post-tour survey, they were able to collect data through questionnaires to reflect what the participants thought about their tours during the 2010 summer tour season. The pre-tour survey has 18 multiple-choice questions and seven demographic questions with one open response question. This survey was sent to 14,100 travelers. Of these, 287 completed the survey. The post-tour survey consisting of 25 multiple choice questions, seven demographic questions, and four open-ended questions. This was sent to the 2010 group and travelers from the 2008-2009 academic year. This was sent to 73,026 from both groups and 1,028 responded.
Mission Measurement (2010) lists these key findings:

- The strongest impacts of the tours were related to personal skill development rather than academic or content development.
- Over 75% reported that international travel helped them develop leadership and group collaboration skills but little other strong development of skills or knowledge.
- 52% reported an increase in understanding of how others view the USA and 35% reported an increase in the ability to think critically (both of these skills are part of the 21st Century global skills development).
- 85% reported that their motivation to travel with EF Tours was a desire to learn about other cultures, 50% reported wanting to learn more about the history of the country, 42% were motivated by the opportunity to spend time with acquaintances (Mission Measurement, 2010, p. 2).

Mission Measurement (2010) recommended that EF Tours become more intentional about developing 21st Century Skills thought direct training of the tour conductors and by offering pre- and post-readings to students and teachers.

The students who responded to this survey were typical of the type of student who currently travels domestically and internationally. Of the students who responded to the survey, over 70% reported a GPA of 3.5 or higher; 72.5% identified as being White; 69.4% were female; 78.7% were in high school at the time of the tour; and 43.1% reported an income above $60,000 (79.3% reported above $40,000). This is similar to previous research, which has found that travelers tend to be academically high achieving,
White, female, middle- to upper-income high school students (SYTA, 2008; Farrugia & Bhandari, 2013). It leaves us to wonder what are the effects of travel the other students who do not fit the typical demographics of travelers.

Michigan State University and Student Youth Travel Association (SYTA) partnered in 2005 to create the Student and Youth Travel Research Institute to increase knowledge about student (12-18 years old) and youth (18-24 years old) travel. To that end, they conducted an Internet and US mail survey of household whose residents included children ages 12-18 years of age from 2005-2006. The survey mailings were followed up with phone calls when possible. The results from this survey were reported to have “captured about 400 overnight group trips taken by 12-18 year olds of which about 8% were to international destinations” (Holecek, Warnell, Langone, Bristor, Latkova, & Nicholls, 2006, p. 1). Because of this, the results will reflect mainly students who traveled domestically. Some of their key findings are

- Over 80% are “B” or better students.
- Parents/legal guardian provides 83.8% of the funding for travel.
- 52.1% of the trips were school related and of this, 31% are related to the curriculum.
- Organized sports are the leading primary purpose of travel (Holecek et al., 2006, p. 2).

Holecek et al. (2006) also report that 50.4% were female and 80% attended public schools (p.14). However, no information regarding family income or ethnicity was given.
In 2008, SYTA prepared a supplement to the previous research completed by Holecek et al (2006) and one completed by Holecek, Nicholls, and Collison (2008). The Holecek, Nicholls, and Collison (2008) report is based on a 2007 survey that was administered using revised questions from the 2006 one. It is a white paper could not be located for this literature review. Therefore, the methods, sampling, and results cannot be addressed. However, from the responses, it appears that they sampled parents in asking about the effects of domestic and international travel.

In this supplement, SYTA gives these key findings:

- 86.4% of the parents/guardians surveyed said that they believe travel is an essential part of their child’s educational experience.
- 58.9% report a positive perceived change in their child after travel.
- 44% of parents thought their child had adequate access to overnight educational travel.

   - The three impacts that parents believe domestic travel provides are opportunities to learn more about the USA, to see different things, and to learn more about the world.
   - The three impacts that parents believe international travel provides are opportunities to see different things, to learn more about the world, and to experience new cultures.

These studies shape the landscape of educational youth travel in the USA. It is an important starting point from which to take the next step: Examining educational travel for younger, non-White students from urban, low income neighborhoods.
Summary. Though travel and learning have been linked for centuries, we are just beginning to understand how students learn while they travel. Two dissertations describe descriptions benefits of travel for adolescents and the growth they experience from travel (Johnson, 2008; Saitow, 2009). From McLellan (2011) we learn that college is “too late” to begin to travel; he recommends travel in high school or earlier, especially for ethnically and linguistically diverse groups of students in urban, low-income neighborhoods. Simon (2007) discusses the implications of not being able to access study abroad programs in college and the skills they are missing out on learning because they do not travel. An examination the study abroad literature demonstrates how well-researched this area is and provides a starting place to examine the outcomes of educational travel for younger students. Two journal articles offer advice for traveling with children and several studies offer suggestions for traveling with younger children. Several studies that explore the effects of short-term domestic and international travel demonstrated that the majority of the travelers were female, White, middle- to upper-income high school students with a grade point average of 3.0 or higher. Some of the benefits of travel were an increased interest in studying abroad, an increased desire to work abroad, an increase in personal development skills, increased ability to think critically, and increased leadership skills.

Critical insights. The literature review from this section provides an important starting point from which to examine educational travel at Harold Middle School. The outcomes attributed to study abroad appear to also shape educational travel for younger students as Johnson (2008) and Saitow (2009) indicate. While their studies do not share
all of the same outcomes as study abroad, some are similar such as personal growth and increased independence. The studies conducted by the travel companies and SYTA describes the state of domestic and international travel for students under the age of 18.

This study adds to this body of literature by bringing two missing pieces: quantitative data for academic achievement and school engagement and the voices of ethnically and linguistically diverse, urban middle school students from a low-income neighborhood. Saitow (2009) mentions that she designed her study hoping to involve diverse groups of students but was unable to do so. I agree with Saitow that this is a missing piece in the puzzle of understanding educational travel for populations other than the mainstream.

Factors affecting Educational Travel at Harold Middle School

Educational travel at Harold Middle School contained elements of the educational travel and study abroad literature. However, experiential education, effective middle school educational practices, and culturally responsive teaching also form a part of educational travel at Harold. This section of my literature review will address each of these three areas.

I believe experiential education played a role in travel with Harold’s students because I believe the students built their understanding of their travel experiences based on their understandings of the world before they traveled and I believe their travel experience informed other experiences they had after their travels. Also while they traveled and when they returned, they reflected on the experience and the meaning that travel holds in their lives today.
Middle school students flourish when they are educated in an environment that is developmentally responsive to their unique needs while also presenting challenges to inspire learning. Education that is empowering and equitable gives them the tools to take control of their lives and their future. Because of these beliefs, I think effective middle level education as described in *This We Believe* (See Appendix K for full chart) forms a part of educational travel at Harold Middle School.

Finally, I believe culturally responsive teaching is an important factor because the participants move from “can’t to can” by building on students’ strengths, honoring their culture, and respecting their values in educational travel (Gay, 2010, p. 23). The students of Harold Middle School moved from a culture of what they could not do as defined by society to what they could do through travel.

**Experiential education.** Experiential education may provide a framework for understanding to explain how people learn by traveling (Stone & Petrick, 2013). Experiential education is often thought of in terms of outdoor education, however many of the central tenets may apply to travel and the ways it is educative. To examine this, I will discuss Dewey and Kolb’s ideas of experience and education.

John Dewey (1859-1952), one of the most influential American educators of the twentieth century wrote extensively about philosophy, education, and politics (Apple & Teitelbaum, 2004). In *Democracy and Education*, Dewey stresses the place that informal as well as formal education has in learning and in school (1916/1944). He states that formal education should transmit “all the resources and achievements of a complex society” (p. 8). Dewey cautions that the challenge of formal instruction is to keep a
balance; what is taught is schools should not be separated from the life experience of students. In fact, Dewey believes that “one of the weightiest problems with which the philosophy of education has to cope was the method of keeping a proper balance between the informal and the formal, the incidental and the intentions, modes of education” (p. 9).

In *Experience and Education*, Dewey (1938/1997) builds on his earlier thinking by addressing the dualism in education. On one hand, the “traditional” education of his day consisted of concerned with transmitting bodies of knowledge to learners without understanding the students’ experience and interaction with the knowledge handed down to them. On the other was the “progressive” education where dismissing the more traditional route of organized education might result in a lack of structure and organization that does not take into account the need to have some type of guide in education. Dewey states that the solution requires “a well thought-out philosophy of the social factors that operate in the constitution of individual experience” (Dewey, 1938-1997, p. 21).

Dewey’s theory of experience in education forms the basis of experiential education today. An experience must have two criteria in order to be educational. First, he stressed the idea of continuity in experience. This means that all experiences are connected to the previous and future experiences. Humans learn from all experience, either positive or negative, either educative or “mis-educative” (Dewey, 1938/1997, p. 25). Next, he introduced the idea of interaction and how it builds on continuity in learning. Interaction is the relationship between the learner’s subjective and objective experience. An individual’s experience is created when his past experiences and
interpretations (subjective) interact with the present experience (objective). Dewey believed that continuity and interaction are intertwined and cannot be separated. Dewey (1929) distinguished between two connected yet distinct phases of an experience. First, the primary experience can be described as immediate, moving, tangible, and raw. It is the starting point, which leads to the secondary, or reflective, experience where humans think about the experience in an attempt to order and refine it. The primary followed by the secondary is what makes an experience rich and is that from which the learner can connect ideas. Dewey (1997/1938) argues that the ultimate goal of education should be to take this into account. The process of how a student learns is just as important as the content the student learns. This thinking leads to another one of Dewey’s main ideas: that education should help people become more effective members of a democratic society. Students need educational experiences that will help them attain this goal. Experience in education will give them the tools to not simply learn the content but to think about what they are learning.

Kolb (1984) builds on Dewey’s ideas with his own framework for understanding experience in education. As note in Figure 2, Kolb adds “abstract conceptualization” and “active experimentation” to the theory of experiential learning.
In Kolb’s model, the individual starts with a concrete experience. In this experience, the learner must be actively involved in the experience; he cannot sit by and watch. The next stage is reflective observation, when the individual actively reviews and thinking about the experience. This stage can involve discussion with teachers, guides, and peers to describe the experience. Abstract conceptualization is the way a learner “creates concepts that integrate their observations into logically sound theories” (Kolb, 1984, p. 30). In other words, learners connect past experiences and the current experience to a larger idea. They make comparisons between what they have experienced and what they know with other ideas. Finally, in active experimentation, learners use what they have learned to make decisions, solve problems, or to test other
ideas. Experiences that are relevant to learners’ lives tend to lead to active experimentation.

In describing experiential learning, Kolb (1984) agrees with Dewey that learning is a process intended to build skills and inquiry processes not just the transmission of a body of knowledge. As an example of what experiential education is not, he cites Freire’s (1966) concept of “banking” in education where the pupils are mere receptacles of knowledge that receive, memorize, and repeat what has been told to them. Experiential education is grounded in a continual process of experience, again similar to Dewey. Learners must be actively involved in the experience Kolb (1984) states that “learning is a holistic process of adaptation to the world” (p. 31). As we learn, we adapt to our environment. All learning follows a process similar to the cycle of learning. Kolb cites Dewey, Lewin, and Piaget all using some form of this cycle. Understanding the importance of experiential learning is useful as it can provide bridges to understanding learning across school, work, hobbies, and a variety of life situations.

Falk, Ballantyne, Packer, and Benckendorff (2012) explore the relationship between travel and learning. In their position paper for Annals of Tourism Research they argue that educational travel extends learning beyond the “traditional school-based construct of knowledge transfer” (p. 922). In doing so, the authors argue, travel might develop Aristotle’s techne, episteme, and phronesis (skills, knowledge, and practical wisdom) in ways traditional learning cannot (p. 922). They provide these three ideas as a framework to understand how travel might foster the learning of these skills.
Summary. From Dewey’s (1938/1997) theory of experience in education comes the two criteria that an experience must have to be educational: continuity in experience and the interaction between the subjective and objective experience. All experiences are connected to previous and future experiences and it is the interaction between the two where education takes place. Students have an experience and then reflect on it to order and refine it. Kolb (1984) extends this by adding two more steps of conceptualization and experimentation to the cycle. Both Kolb and Dewey emphasize that learning is not just the transmission of knowledge but engages the student in reflecting, building skills, and applying knowledge to new situations. Learners are engaged in a cycle of experiencing, reflecting, concluding, and planning for new learning or testing a theory. Falk, Ballantyne, Packer, and Benckendorff (2012) add that travel develops the skills, knowledge, and practical learning that schools cannot.

Critical insights. Experiential education plays an important role in educational travel because of the cycle described by Dewey and Kolb in learning. All people who travel have an experience and probably reflect on that experience drawing conclusions about whether or not the trip was enjoyable. What differentiates educational travel for this study is the emphasis all four steps in the cycle and the addition of a pre-first step. The students at Harold Middle School engaged in learning about where they would travel before they had their concrete experience by attending a class I taught. Then they traveled (had the experience), reflected (in their Student Journals), concluded (created a scrapbook), and some planned or tested new ideas or added to this knowledge gained through travel. I saw this reflected in the interviews as we will see in Chapter Five. I call
this Enhanced Experiential Learning by adding the pre-learning to an experience. For some students, the opportunity to see things with their own eyes reflects the way they developed knowledge in ways they could not in traditional education as Falk, et al (2012) describe.

**Middle level education.** In the United States, middle school ages vary from 10 – 15 years old and due to the variety of configurations of ages and grade for middle schools in the US, the term “middle level” education is preferable to “middle school” (DeBose, 2012). The Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE, formerly known as the National Association for Middle School Association) is an organization “dedicated to improving the educational experiences of all students ages 10 to 15 by providing vision, knowledge, and resources to educators and leaders” (“Mission,” AMLE, 2014). This organization is the leader in middle level education in the United States and internationally. They publish books, articles, and a peer-reviewed journal, Research in Middle Level Education Online endorsed by Middle Level Education Research Special Interest Group of the American Educational Research Association (“Research,” AMLE, 2014).

Using the research available through AMLE, I will provide a brief overview of the psychological, intellectual, physical and social development of middle level learners to understand the possible meaning of travel for this age. This is important because the Harold Middle School travelers ranged in age from 11 to 14 during the years they traveled. Based on these characteristics, AMLE has created a chart delineating essential
characteristics and attributes based on research of effective middle level education. Finally, the implications of these two areas for educational travel will be discussed.

**Characteristics of middle school students.** Piaget (1977) developed a theory explaining how people understand their world from infant to adult. He described four stages of intellectual development: sensorimotor (ages birth to two years old), preoperational (two to seven years old), concrete operational (seven to eleven years), and formal operational (12 years to adulthood). Piaget argues that while all individuals pass through these stages, they do not pass through them at the same rate.

Important to middle level educators are the characteristics of concrete operation and formal operation. In the concrete stage of operations, a child can begin to use logic, classify and order objects, can combine objects into categories, and can distinguish between their thoughts and those of others (Piaget, 1977; Brown & Knowles, 2007). It is important to note students at this age can “only reason about those things for which they have had direct, personal experience” (Rice & Dolgin, 2005, p. 125). When considering that the concrete operational stage can last until age 14 in some students, one can see how experiential learning is an important factor in learning for this age.

As children move from the concrete operational state to the formal operational stage three important characteristics are developed: abstract thought, metacognition, and problem-solving skills (Piaget, 1977). Children being to be able to examine a problem from different aspects, can think and plan for the future, and can think about their thinking as they are learning. They become more curious as they longer rely only on what they can see and touch, they can understand ideals, possibilities, and different
realities (Brown & Knowles, 2007). Bridging the transition from one stage of
development to another is one of the tasks of middle level education. This transition also
provides for a wide and varied set of characteristics that define middle level learners.

Scales (2010) is known for his work with the Search Institute and the
developmental assets that assist students in succeeding in school and life. For This We
Believe (AMLE, 2010), he wrote a section regarding the generalized characteristics of
young adolescents. He is careful to note that not all children exhibit all these
characteristics and sociodemographics play a large role in the display of certain
characteristics. Nonetheless, it is worthwhile to understand how this age is different from
students in later adolescence. Some of the points are summarized in Table 3.
Table 3

*Characteristics of Middle-Level Learners*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Characteristic</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Development</td>
<td>• Experience rapid, irregular physical growth</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bodily changes causing awkward, uncoordinated movements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Experience restlessness and fatigue due to hormonal changes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Need physical activity because of increased energy and a need to release this energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Are concerned with physical changes and sexual maturation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cognitive-Intellectual Development</td>
<td>• Move from thinking concretely to abstractly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Are intensely curious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Prefer active rather than passive learning experiences</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Prefer peer interaction with learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Are inquisitive about adults and keen observers of them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moral Development</td>
<td>• Are moving from “what’s in it for me” to considering others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Are still influence by caring adults in their lives who can affirm their moral choices and actions and who can act as a guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Increasingly create their personal ideas about spirituality, morality, honesty, responsibility, and culture.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychological Development</td>
<td>• Seek to become increasingly independent but still need boundary setting from adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Can get involved with an interest or hobby that become the “spark” in their lived. Scales (2010) notes that students without the financial means might not have equal access to develop their “spark”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Desire recognition for positive efforts and achievements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Are psychologically vulnerable because at no other time in life are they likely to encounter and be aware of so many differences between themselves and others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social-Emotional Development</td>
<td>• Have a strong need for approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Are increasingly concerned about peer acceptance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Increasingly welcome and benefit from close relationships with adults outside their families.
• Have a strong need to belong to a group
• Can be socially vulnerable as they see the value placed on money, fame, power, and beauty.

At no other time in life do people go through so many developmental changes while also being cognizant of those changes. While a child undergoes a great deal of change from birth to the age of five, he or she does not have the mental ability to process all that is happening. The implications of these characteristics for learning at the middle level are vital to understanding what makes education effective for middle level learners.

*Effective middle level education.* Since 1982, NMSA and AMLE have published three editions of *This We Believe*, a series of books based on the mission, vision, and values of effective middle level education entitled, *This We Believe*. In 2010 AMLE revised the books in this series: *This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents*, *This We Believe in Action: Implementing Successful Middle Level Schools*, and *Research & Resources in Support of This We Believe*. This first book listed is a position paper in which AMLE’s vision for successful schools for 10- to 15-year-olds is described using 16 characteristics in three categories and four essential attributes. AMLE’s website states, “Research and cumulative, empirical evidence have confirmed that these characteristics when present over time lead to higher levels of student achievement and overall development” (“This We Believe,” AMLE, 2014). AMLE created a chart explaining how these all combine to create successful schools for middle level learners (See Appendix K).
*This We Believe* (2010) outlines the five indicators of solid curriculum, instruction, and assessment for middle level learners. The indicators are listed next with the research on which they are based after each one;

1. Educators value young adolescents and are prepared to teach them (Mertens, Flowers, & Mulhall, 2002; Anfara & Beaumont-Schmidt, 2007; Van Zandt Allen, Ruebel, Greene, McDaniel, & Spencer, 2009).

2. Students and teachers are engaged in active, purposeful learning (Bransford, Brown, Cocking, 2003; Nesin, 2005)

3. Curriculum is challenging, exploratory, integrative, and relevant (Dowde, 2007; Virtue, 2007).


5. Varied and ongoing assessments advance learning as well as measure it (Heritage, 2007; Chappuis & Stiggins, 2008).

*This We Believe* (2010) outlines the five indicators effective leadership and organization for middle level learners. These are listed below with the research supporting their importance in middle level education:

1. A shared vision developed by all stakeholders guides every decision (George & Anderson, 1989; Mulhall, Mertens, & Flowers, 2001).

2. Leaders are committed to and knowledgeable about this age group, educational research, and best practices (Valentine, 1993; Brown, Claudet, & Olivarez, 2002; Zepeda & Mayers, 2002; Marks & Printy, 2003).


5. Organizational structures foster purposeful learning and meaningful relationships (Flowers, Mertens, & Mulhall, 1999; Daniel, 2007; George & Lounsbury, 2000; Mertens & Flowers, 2004; Roney, Anfara, & Brown, 2008; Wallace, 2007).

Finally, This We Believe (2010) offers these characteristics of culture and community along with the research base that supports each one:

1. The school environment is inviting, safe, inclusive, and supportive of all (Jackson & Davis, 2000; Morocco, Clark-Chiarelli, Aquilar, & Brigham, 2002; Nelson & DeBacker, 2008).

2. An adult advocate guides every student’s academic and personal development (Galassi, Gulledge, & Cox, 1997; Anfara, 2006).

3. Comprehensive guidance and support services meet the needs of young adolescents (American School Counselor Association, 2005; Akos & Kingsley, 2008).

4. Health and wellness are supported in curricula, school-wide programs, and related policies (Schults, 2005; Mertens, 2006).
5. The school actively involves families in the education of their children (Musser, 2004; Pate & Andrews, 2006; Epstein, 2008).


Each section of these characteristics is based on research pertaining to middle level education. AMLE synthesized this research and published a companion volume, *Research and Resources in Support of This We Believe* (Caskey, Andrews, Bishop, Capraro, Roe, & Weiss, 2010). In addition, AMLE continually examines the expanding research base on middle level education and updates their material as needed. To stay current, they have updated their recommendations in 1980, 1995, 2003, and in 2010 (AMLE, 2010).

**Summary.** Understanding the psychological, intellectual, physical and social development of middle level learners is critical to understanding the stage of development of the travelers at Harold Middle School when they engaged in educational travel. As we have seen, this is a time of incredible growth as they move from one stage of development to another. AMLE (2010) has created a comprehensive, research-based framework that delineates all the characteristics necessary for successful schools for young adolescents.

**Critical insights.** This brief summary of effective middle level education is important to this study because the students traveled when they were in Grade 6 (11 to 12 years old) or when they were in Grade 8 (13 to 14 years old). Middle level education generally includes students aged 10 to 15 years old so the Harold students fell into this
category at the time of their travels. Understanding the learning characteristics of this age and what they need to succeed academically and socially is a good starting point to determine how educational travel addressed each of these needs.

Another reason why middle level education is important is the lack of mixed methods studies in this area. Caskey et al (2010) state this in Resources & Resources in Support of This We Believe, “The combination of these two methodological approaches can lead to benefits such as better triangulation of data, validation of findings, and richer contextual information” (p. 62). This study uses the framework of This We Believe to examine the meaning of travel for middle school student through the use of qualitative and quantitative data thus meeting this need.

**Culturally responsive teaching (CRT).** The underlying principal of culturally responsive teaching is that students are viewed in light of what they can do, not what they cannot, and their teachers build on these strengths. “Culturally responsive teachers have unequivocal faith in the human dignity and intellectual capacities of their students” (Gay, 2010, p. 45). This statement forms basis for culturally responsive teaching.

This section of the literature review defines culturally responsive teaching, discusses the characteristics of CRT, and summarizes how this is relevant for travel with urban youth from a low-income neighborhood. This is important because the students from Harold Middle School are over 90% non-White, are ethnically and linguistically diverse, and share characteristics similar to the ones addressed in culturally responsive teaching. It is also significant because travel has not been examined via culturally responsive teaching previously.
**Definition.** Teachers who practice culturally responsive teaching are able to move between the students’ culture and the culture of the school to teach mainstream concepts. Ladson-Billings (2009), the founding theorist of culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) states,

> Specifically, culturally relevant teaching is a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes. These cultural referents are not merely vehicles for bridging or explaining the dominant culture; they are aspects of the curriculum in their own right. (p. 20)

When teachers demonstrate this, the students are empowered and experience greater academic success. The characteristics discussed in the next section lead to similar outcomes for students, as we will see when we examine CRT more closely.

**Characteristics.** Culturally responsive pedagogy forms the basis for culturally responsive teaching. At the heart of CRP is making classroom instruction learning more culturally congruent for students from diverse ethnic, cultural, and linguistic background. Geneva Gay, a prominent CRP theorist, lists six characteristics of culturally responsive teaching (2010). Each of these characteristics are discussed in the next section using Gay’s (2010) definition as a basis and supplementing it with the writings of other CRP theorists: Delpit (2006); Ladson-Billings, (2009), and Nieto (2010).

**Culturally responsive teaching is validating (Gay, 2010, p. 31).** It is validating because it uses the knowledge and previous learning of ethnically and linguistically diverse students to make learning more relevant. CRT teaches “to and through” students strength and understandings. Students’ cultural heritages are validated and recognized as an asset. This type of teaching and learning takes academic abstractions and connects
them with students’ lived experiences. Students reflect on their learning and make connections to their experiences and knowledge. Nieto (2010) believes that this type of learning is actively constructed. “Learner agency is thus at the heart of the active construction of knowledge” (Nieto, 2010, p. 35). CRT emphasizes that students seeing education with a set of cultural reference points that enhance their education rather than inhibit it.

**Culturally responsive teaching is comprehensive (Gay, 2010, p. 32).**

Comprehensive CRT teaching cultivates a sense of community amongst the students. There is a sense of shared responsibility to the group where no one is left behind in learning and classroom thrives on a sense of camaraderie.

As part of the comprehensive nature of CRT, the “culturally relevant teacher encourages students to learn collaboratively” (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 60). Students are expected to teach each other and be responsible for each other. The teacher is also a part of this as she teaches the whole child and is a learner herself (Ladson-Billings, 2009).

The teacher also helps minority students make connections with their ethnic groups and explore their identity through their culture. The students’ family members and the neighborhood community are seen as critical companions in educating students (Nieto 2010). Families are invited to take an active part in their children’s education.

Different styles of learning also form part of the comprehensive nature of CRT. As Nieto (2010) reminds us, “Learning is influenced by cultural differences” (p. 40). Intelligence is no longer viewed as a single concept but rather as a set of skills and
aptitudes as indicated in Garner’s (1983) multiple intelligences. The difference intelligences are honored and encouraged.

*Culturally responsive teaching is multidimensional (Gay, 2010, p. 33).* Gay (2010), Ladson-Billings (2009), and Nieto (2010) agree that CRP involved the all dimensions of teaching and learning; curriculum content, learning context, classroom climate, student-teacher relationships, instructional techniques, classroom management, and performance assessments. They also suggest that it encompasses the attitudes, values, beliefs, knowledge, and skills of the teachers and the students. CRT examines all of these when introducing units of study to students connecting as many indicators as possible to enhance learning.

*Culturally responsive teaching is empowering (Gay, 2010, p. 34).* The heart of empowering students in CRT is cultivating self-confidence. This is created through academic competence and the power for students to choose their own definition of success and the skills to reach this goal. They have “the will to act” to take charge of their learning and of their dreams. Together with their teachers, they gain the competencies needed to apply this knowledge own lives (Gay, 2010). Nieto (2010) describes empowerment through the philosophy of Freire, as “the feeling of being changed.” It is through this change that students gain self-confidence. Ladson-Billings (2009) concurs, “The ultimate goal is to ensure that they have a sense of ownership of their knowledge – a sense that it is empowering and liberating” (p. 84). Because of this “liberation” through empowering learning students are transformed which is the next characteristic.
Culturally responsive teaching is transformative (Gay, 2010, p. 36). The characteristics “empowering” and “transformative” are closely linked. Banks (1991) argues that if education is to empower students, it must be transformative. Gay (2010) and Ladson-Billings (2009) believe that empowerment leads to transformation. CRT demands that education include both.

Traditional education is not designed to meet the needs of ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse students. CRT aims to change that through transformative teaching. At core of transformative teaching has two purposes:

One is to confront and transcend the culturally hegemony nested in much of the curriculum content and classroom instruction of traditional education. The other develops social consciousness, intellectual critique, and political and personal efficacy in students so that they can combat prejudices, racism, and other forms of oppression and exploitation. (Gay 2010, p. 37)

CRT provides a learning environment where students’ cultures and heritages are respected and incorporated into academics. Teachers make academic success a non-negotiable outcome in transformative teaching. They also help students make the necessary connections between their backgrounds to the larger society, the nation, and the world (Ladson-Billings, 2009). This transforms students because they see their place in the world and how they can work to change the status quo. The students gain “self-determination” and demand that things be different in their lives (Ladson Billings 2009, p. 150). They push the boundaries of what is possibly in their communities.

Culturally responsive teaching is emancipatory (Gay, 2010, p. 37). Naturally, students who are empowered and transformed are also emancipated. This characteristic of CRT addresses the way this style of education can release the minds of ethnically and
culturally diverse students from the confining bounds “mainstream canons of knowledge and ways of knowing” (Gay, 2010, p. 37). CRT also frees teachers to create curriculum that incorporates the students’ cultural and ethnic heritage to define a new measure of academic success. This frees the students to examine what being a leader means in light of their background. In turn, they can lead others on this journey. Ladson-Billings (2009) provides this summary, “Students whose educational, economic, social, political, and cultural futures are most tenuous are helped to become intellectual leaders in the classroom” (p. 126). Banks (1991) concurs, “They have the knowledge, skills, and values needed to become social critics who can make reflective decisions and implement their decisions in effective personal, social, political and economic action” (p. 131). The end result of CRT is for empowered, transformed students to be free to become intellectual leaders in their own right to change injustices they see in their world.

These six characteristics of CRT are ways that teachers assist students in moving from “cannot” to “can” in school (Gay, 2010). They are intertwined in their quest to foster academic success while cultivating the students’ cultural identity, which leads, empowers students to become agents of change as demonstrated in the transformative characteristic.

Gay (2010) also develops four critical aspects of CRP: culturally responsive caring, culture and communication in the classroom, ethnic and cultural diversity in curriculum, and cultural congruity in instruction. Gay (2010) cites these because they are how CRP is carried out in the classroom. Ultimately, it is the interaction between a student and a teacher where “learning success or failure is determined” (Gay, 2010, p.
Culturally responsive teaching is vital to education in the USA today as many classrooms are filled with ethnically and linguistically diverse students from urban low-income neighborhoods. However, more importantly, CRP is just. Educators should not embrace culturally responsible pedagogy simply because it seems effective but also because it achieves justice in education.

**Summary.** Culturally responsive teaching demands academic achievement. However, CRT also demands that students develop a positive ethncial, linguistic, and cultural identity. In addition, it transforms and empowers students to offer critiques of and changes to the status quo. Gay’s (2010) six characteristics provide a starting place from which to examine the attributes necessary to provide this type of education to ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse student populations. The role of the teacher in creating this type of place for students is crucial (Delpit, 2006, Nieto, 2010).

**Critical insights.** Inequity exists not only in public education but also in educational travel in the USA today. Culturally responsive teaching theorists have written extensively about why this may be and what can be done to change this (Delpit, 2006; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Nieto, 2010; among others). By providing a short summary of CRT, some suggestions might be found for how to change the composition of student travelers. Applying the principles of CRT to educational travel might open the doors for the ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse students in the USA to the world of educational travel. Currently, White, middle- and upper-income students dominate educational travel (Mission Measurement for EF Tours, 2010, p. 17 – 18). Perhaps CRT can provide the support and opportunity necessary for students who
want to travel to do so. This brings equity to the realm of educational travel. Singleton (2015) suggests that equity can be thought of this way: “Equity does not mean that every student receives equal level of resources and support toward his or her educational goals. Rather, equity means that the students of greatest need receive the greatest level of support to guarantee academic success” (p. 56). This is what CRT offers educational travel to ethnically and linguistically diverse urban students in a low-income neighborhood. They receive the tools necessary to make their desire travel a reality if that is where their dreams lead them.

In addition, it is through CRT that I was called design this study. I practice CRT, therefore I must work for equity. Since educational travel is my passion, I must start here. Delpit (2006) reminds culturally responsive teachers of this charge:

But I don’t think that I let the onus of change rest entirely with the students. I am also involved in political work both inside and outside of the educational system, and the political work demands that I place myself to influence as many gatekeeping points as possible. And it is there that I agitate for change, pushing gatekeepers to open their doors to a variety of styles and codes. (p. 40)

By bringing CRT to educational travel and elevating this idea to the doctoral level, it is my goal to “agitate for change” as mentioned above so that “gatekeepers” open the travel doors to all students so that they experience the wonders our world has to offer if that is where they are called to go.

**Educational Travel, Experiential Learning, Young Adolescents, and Culturally Responsive Teaching**

In this chapter, the benefits of educational travel with students, mainly through study abroad were highlighted. From this, we learned that there are many outcomes of
educational travel for students, some of which are based in the findings from study abroad research. How people learn when they travel can be explained through the ideas of Dewey (1938) and Kolb (1984). Their ideas suggest that having an experience and reflecting on it while applying it to another area of one’s life is at the heart of experiential learning. The section on how young adolescents learn builds the case of thoughtful, organized, developmentally appropriate learning for students aged 11 to 15. Finally, Gay (2010) and other culturally responsive theorists provide insights on characteristics needed to make educational travel more accessible for ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse students.

In addition, Gay (2010) calls on teachers to engage in more research that examines culturally responsive teaching:

My guess is that many teachers are doing culturally responsive teaching to some degree but these practices are not recorded systematically or reported regularly in educational scholarship. Much more empirical research, observational studies, and documentation of practice are needed to support theoretical claims. In compiling this evidence, emphasis should be on specifying curriculum content effects on different types of achievements, such as grade point averages, test scores, participation in classroom discourse and students’ self-esteem and feelings of efficacy… (p. 172)

This study aims to achieve this by combining quantitative and qualitative data in an academic study. Use of the transformative paradigm (Mertens, 2009) compliments this goal as it honors and empowers participants. I hope to provide an intersection of educational travel and CRT that begins to provide a more equitable world for ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse non-White students.
CHAPTER THREE

Method

This mixed methods study investigates the meaning of educational travel in the lives of urban middle school students in a low-income neighborhood using a transformative, explanatory sequential mixed methods design. It answers the all-encompassing mixed methods research question: What is the meaning of educational travel in the lives of non-White, ethnically and linguistically diverse middle school students in a low-income, urban neighborhood as measured by school district data and interviews and focus groups?

First, I provide an overview of mixed methods and the transformative paradigm, followed by my rationale for using both in this study. Next, I describe the steps in an explanatory sequential design. Finally, I describe the procedures for the quantitative and qualitative portions.

Mixed Methods

Mixed methods research is gaining popularity as evidenced by newly formed groups such as the Mixed Methods International Research Association. This group held its first conference in June 2014 in Boston, Massachusetts and brought top researchers from all over the world to discuss mixed methods. In addition, the SAGE Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social & Behavioral Research (2003) was updated and published as a
second edition in 2010. The *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, Quality and Quantity,* and *Field Methods* are examples journals that foster the growing interest in mixed methods.

What can account for the increase in mixed methods research? Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) suggest a possible reason; “One answer is that it is an intuitive way of doing research that is constantly being displayed in our everyday lives” (p. 1). Multiple ways of understanding data are present in our day-to-day lives. This is the heart of mixed methods.

**History.** While a detailed description of the history of mixed methods is beyond the scope of this dissertation, it is important to note the history of mixed methods dates back to ancient times. Some might be tempted to believe that mixed methods research is a result of the “paradigm wars” of the last three decades (e.g. Datta, 1994; Guba & Lincoln, 1994), but debates over knowledge and meaning can be traced to ancient years (470 BCE – 347 BCE) during the time of Plato, Socrates, and the Sophists (Creswell, 2010). Plato and Socrates can be described as absolutists, believing there are absolute, unchanging laws and truths about the world, and the Sophists, as relativists, believing truths and knowledge can differ depending on the time, place, group, or individual. Quantitative ideas about have been in contrast with qualitative ideas ever since (adapted by Creswell, 2010, from Johnson, 2008).

The evolution of mixed method continues to the present. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2008) document the evolution of mixed methods from the nineteenth century through the 1990s. They cite three periods: Period I marks the Monomethod or “purist” era form the
nineteenth century to the 1950s with the beginning of the paradigm wars; Period II is the Emergence of Mixed Methods from circa the 1960s to 1980s; and Period III is the Emergence of Mixed Model Studies, circa 1990s. They conclude the overview by stating that mixed methods has grown rapidly since the 1990s due to new technologies, methods, and an increase in communication across sciences (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2008). Mixed methods research is one way to bridge the divide between the quantitative and qualitative research.

Perhaps an efficient path to discussing the differences among the three methods is through a discussion of paradigms. Merriam-Webster (n.d.) defines paradigm as “a philosophical and theoretical framework of a scientific school or discipline within which theories, laws, and generalizations and the experiments performed in support of them are formulated.” Kuhn’s notable work on the philosophy of science, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, (1962) defines a paradigm as “an agreed upon theory, worldview, or methodology embodied in the beliefs, practices, and products of a group of scientists” (cited in Creswell, 2010, p. 85). Morgan (2007) and Descombe (2008) built on the idea that a paradigm represents the shared values, beliefs, and practices from a community of researchers. Table 4 provides a summary of the fundamental differences among the three research paradigms.
Table 4

_Fundamental Differences between Three Major Paradigms of Research_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paradigm Element</th>
<th>Positivism</th>
<th>Constructivism</th>
<th>Pragmatism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ontology</strong> (Nature of reality)</td>
<td>Single reality</td>
<td>Multiple, constructed realities</td>
<td>Singular and multiple realities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epistemology (The relationship of the knower to the known)</td>
<td>Distance and impartiality; knower and the known are independent</td>
<td>Closeness; knower and the known are inseparable</td>
<td>Practicality, “what works” drives the data collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Axiology</strong> (Role of values in inquiry)</td>
<td>Unbiased; Inquiry is value-free</td>
<td>Biased; Inquiry is value-bound</td>
<td>Multiple stances; Both biased and unbiased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Generalizations</strong></td>
<td>Time-and context-free generalizations are possible</td>
<td>Time-and context-free generalizations are not possible</td>
<td>Agree with constructivists, add elements from the positivists to answer the “what works” question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Causal linkages</strong></td>
<td>Real causes are temporally precedent to or simultaneous with effects</td>
<td>Impossible to distinguish causes from effects</td>
<td>Possible to accept some causal relationships but it may difficult to isolate them. Causality is context dependent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Method</strong></td>
<td>Deduction</td>
<td>Induction</td>
<td>Abduction (combining)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rhetoric</strong></td>
<td>Formal style</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Formal or informal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Adapted from Cherryholmes, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1990, 1994; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2008; Sammons, 2010; and Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011.
As Table 4 presents, methodological pragmatists in mixed methods research consider “what works” for practicality of research and consider philosophical conflicts between paradigms unimportant. Peirce (1893/1998) provides a concise summary of this view. He uses synechism to describe the antidualistic nature of mixed. He states,

The word synchism is the English form of the Greek (synchismos), from (synchedes), continuous…. Thus, materialism is the doctrine that matter is everything; idealism is the doctrine that ideas are everything; dualism is the philosophy, which splits everything in two. In the like manner, I have proposed to make synechism mean the tendency to regard everything as continuous. (Peirce, 1893/1998, p. 1)

With this brief history of mixed methods, I will now discuss the definition and the characteristics of mixed methods, as most researchers currently understood.

**Definition and characteristics.** The definition of mixed methods has evolved through the years. Greene, Caracelli, and Graham (1989) were the first to provide a definition of mixed methods. Since then, other scholars have added to the initial definition (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, 2010; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007; Greene, 2007; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, 2011). In the *SAGE Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social & Behavioral Research* (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010), Leech interviewed scholars (Julia Brannen, Alan Bryman, John Creswell, Jennifer Greene, David Morgan, and Janice Morse) who are pioneers in mixed methods research. In part, the purpose of this interview was to ascertain the definition of mixed methods from the point of view of early developers of mixed methods. From their answers, the different aspects of mixed methods are apparent, making it difficult to define. Creswell and Greene both refer to the researcher’s philosophy as playing a primary role in deciding to undertake a mixed methods study. As the study is analyzed from both qualitative and
quantitative perspectives, a researcher’s personal worldview affects how he views the results (Leech, 2010). Morse defines mixed methods as having one core component and a second component that is weaker, but still complements the first (cited in Leech, 2010, p. 257). Bryman suggests that neither philosophy nor paradigms play an important role because mixed methods is purely a method and nothing else (cited in Leech, 2010, p. 257). No mention is made of the other scholars’ definitions. The *SAGE Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social & Behavioral Research* (2010) offers other various definitions, similar to the previous definitions. It appears that there is not one accepted definition of mixed methods. Because of the lack one common definition, I will use essential characteristics to provide the mixed methods definition used in this study.

Several prominent mixed methods researchers provide core characteristics of mixed methods as a definition. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2010) offer nine characteristics and Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) offer seven. Owing to their similar nature, I have chosen to use the ones offered by Creswell and Plano Clark (2011). In mixed methods, the researcher

- Collects and analyzes persuasively and rigorously both qualitative and quantitative data (based on research questions);
- Mixes (or integrates or links) the two forms of data concurrently by combining them (or merging them), sequentially by having one build on the other; or embedding one within the other;
- Gives priority to one or to both forms of data (in terms of what the research emphasizes);
• Uses these procedures in a single study or in multiple phases of a program of study;

• Frames these procedures within philosophical worldviews and theoretical lenses; and

• Combines the procedures into specific research designs that direct the plan for conducting the study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 5).

These main characteristics of mixed methods provide the basis in choosing mixed methods for this study. In the following section, I will expand on how these characteristics demonstrate my choice of this of mixed methods by explaining my rationale.

**Rationale for using mixed methods.** One data set is not enough to tell a comprehensive story of travel at Harold Middle School. Sequentially collected qualitative and quantitative data play an integral, connected role to each other in answering the research questions in this study. I link the two data sets to provide an overall picture of the meaning of educational travel in the lives urban middle school youth at Harold School. In the years I have traveled with students, many returned to visit me after the trips to share with me what the trip has meant to them. I heard many stories from the students about the meaning of travel and it left me wondering about the quantitative side of the impact. What would I find if I could examine their test scores, GPA, attendance, suspensions and graduation rates? What story would these data tell? I was curious about the stories the data sets would tell.
Due to my curiosity, I explored rationales for mixed methods research. Collins, Onwuegbuzie, and Sutton (2006) give four major rationales for mixing methods: participant enrichment, instrument fidelity, treatment integrity, and significance enhancement. The main rationale for mixing methods in this research proposal is significance enhancement which is appropriate when a researcher wants to “facilitate thickness and richness of data; augment interpretation of findings” (Collins, Onwuegbuzie, & Sutton, 2006, p. 76). I provide a thorough description of the data to augment the findings by using mixed methods. Interviewing the participants during the qualitative portion provides a deeper understanding of educational travel through personal stories, which in turn frames the findings of the quantitative portion in a more significant way.

Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) list six “needs” that are especially suited to a mixed method approach. I have selected four of the six to further expand on my choice of mixed methods research.

“A need exists because one data source may be insufficient” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 8). Quantitative data is not enough to tell the whole story of the meaning of educational travel. Before I began my research, I suspected that some former travelers may have data that appear to show travel had little or no meaning on their school engagement or academic achievement rate (or both). Therefore, if I were to only collect these data, I would not know the meaning they ascribe to the trips and the meaning the trips had in their lives. Conversely, if I were to only collect the qualitative data, I would not be able to ascertain the statistical significance, if any, that the quantitative data may
indicate. Additionally, by privileging one type of data over the other, I would not accurately represent the educational culture in which we live today. Generally, people who create educational policies and programs are more apt to examine quantitative data because of the current culture of data-driven instruction and evaluation. However, no study of education is complete without adding the human side of data. Banks (1995) reminds us that all knowledge reflects the power and social relationships within a society, including our schools. If the knowledge I gain from the quantitative portion would be the only data I use to describe what may be happening with the travel students, I would not allow the knowledge the participants hold to be told which is critical to understanding a group traditionally marginalized in academia. Therefore, the use of both quantitative and qualitative data in this study is mutually illuminating.

“A need exists to explain initial results” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 9). The first portion of this study involves an analysis of quantitative data regarding academic achievement and school engagement. The voices of the participants and the adult chaperones offer their explanations of the quantitative results. Without this next qualitative step, the study would only offer my interpretation of the quantitative data thus weakening the validity.

“A need exists to enhance a study with a second method” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 10). The qualitative and quantitative data in this study creates a new understanding regarding the meaning of educational travel with urban middle school youth in a low-income neighborhood because the data enhance each other. The
advantages and disadvantages of quantitative and qualitative balance each other with the use of both in one study thereby enhancing this study.

“A need exists to best employ a theoretical stance” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 10). While not all researchers who hold a transformative view of research use mixed methods, it is a good fit because it allows for a variety of voices to be heard, presents a need for community involvement, and can benefit the participants. In addition, it allows the theoretical stance to guide the researcher in every step of the way thus lessening of the marginalization, misrepresentation, or any further harm to the participants. On the contrary, the use of the transformative paradigm, or stance, is undertaken with the hopes of creating a more just environment to explore educational travel.

Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) also list “A need exists to generalize exploratory findings” (p. 9) and “a need exists to understand a research objective through multiple research phases” (p. 11) as other reasons why one would choose mixed methods. These two other “needs” are not applicable to this study and do not affect my decision to use mixed methods.

There are several other considerations regarding the data in this study. I examine both sets of data in one study framing this analysis in the transformative paradigm. The quantitative analysis was first, followed by the qualitative. The participants were offered the opportunity to comment on the quantitative results. The meaning of educational travel is found in these two phases and is explained by the participants. The framework of culturally responsive teaching, experiential learning, and effective middle level
education is used as a way increase travel opportunities for ethnically and linguistically diverse students. In doing so, it also advocates for a group that has been “pushed to the societal margins throughout history and who are finding a means to bring their voices into the world of research” (Mertens, 2009, p. 3). These research methods bring their missing voices to the world of educational travel.

**Benefits of mixed methods design.** For this study, mixed methods does not just provide an analysis of the school district data on school engagement and academic achievement, it also allows participants’ voices to be heard. As demonstrated in the rationale section of this proposal, mixed methods is the best choice for both data sets to interpret the meaning of educational travel. The quantitative data address the need to show the effect of educational travel on school engagement and academic achievement. The qualitative data provide the opportunity for the participants to share their views on this meaning. It is important to have both to honor the voices of a group of people frequently left out of the discussion about effective educational practices with non-White diverse students in a low-income neighborhood.

Mixed methods research also provides a way to combine numbers and stories in educational research. Sammons (2010) argues that the field of educational effectiveness research (EER) has been mainly quantitative (QUAN) research and that the field of school improvement (SI) research has been mainly qualitative (QUAL). She highlights how mixed methods has the potential to bridge the “unhelpful QUAL versus QUAN paradigm divide that often separates the EER and SI research communities” (Sammons, 2010, p. 701). Citing work of others (Spalter-Roth, 2000; Teddlie & Sammons, 2010),
Sammons (2010) continues to emphasize the benefits of mixed methods by stating, “the combination of the general statistical findings and thick descriptions of specific cases exemplifying those findings has the potential to generate new insights and increase understanding of EER topics that neither can achieve alone” (p. 699). Sammons (2010) also suggests that mixed methods researchers are looking for these “thick” interpretations of topics rather than an absolute truth about what happens in education. This is particularly important in a study of education in an urban, low-income neighborhood where nuanced inequity is common in traditional methods that favor large-scale quantitative evaluations. For example, the overall standardized test scores analyzed in this study of Harold Middle School shows the majority of the students as below proficiency in academic achievement. However, that does not tell the story as to why they demonstrate lower levels of achievement than their peers in suburban, mainly White, middle- or upper-income neighborhoods. One of the goals of this study is to examine the large-scale quantitative data of school engagement and academic achievement while also adding a qualitative portion where the participants whose data are being examined offer their interpretation of these data and what meaning educational travel had on those scores.

**Challenges of mixed methods design.** Mixed methods is a newer method of research. As such, questions may arise regarding the definition, purpose, and feasibility of such a study, necessitating education of the methods to advisors, professors, and others involved in the project. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), the primary challenges in using mixed methods are “the question of skills” (p. 13); “the question of
A researcher undertaking a mixed methods project needs skills in quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research. In addition, she should possess an understanding of the history of mixed methods and characterize current trends in this type of research design. A researcher must ensure that there is enough time available to collect and analyze two types of data. Using two different forms of data also requires separate collection and analysis such as institutional review board approval, recording, transcription, and analysis software (if needed).

In preparation for this study, I developed my skills as both a quantitative and qualitative researcher through the coursework I took at the University of Denver. I supplemented my learning with online courses, extensive reading, and membership in the Mixed Methods International Research Association. Additionally, one of my professors guided the qualitative portion and one guided the quantitative portion. Conducting a mixed methods research project took more time than I expected. Yet, several circumstances made it easier as I had a school district contact that provided me with quantitative data and I had contact information for the possible participants of the qualitative portion along with procedures to find other participants. I used a transcription service for the interviews and focus groups. Lastly, my advisors and others involved in my study are familiar with mixed methods research design. To ensure a common understanding, I provided a description of the characteristics of mixed methods in the beginning of this section.
Notation system in mixed methods. This section presents the notations used in this study. Morse (1991) first developed a notation system for mixed methods research. Other researchers have added to the repertoire of notations used in this method (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998; Plano Clark, 2005).

QUAN and QUAL refer to quantitative and qualitative respectively; the capitalization refers to an emphasis on one over the other or, in the case of this study, equal weight of the letters signifies equal weight in the data (Creswell, 2014, p. 228-229).

An arrow, →, signifies a sequential flow of data collection (Creswell, 2014, p. 229). Using this notation, the following notation represents this study:

```
QUAN → QUAL
```

Transformative Paradigm in Mixed Methods Design

Use of the transformative paradigm for this mixed methods study answers this transformative research question: How can the participants’ voices be combined with culturally responsive teaching and research-based practices to enhance and provide increased access to educational travel for urban middle school youth? In order to explain how this paradigm aligns with this question, I will describe how it provides an overarching view that guides the study.

The transformative paradigm is integral to this study. “Practical for whom and to what end?” is the question that extends pragmatic perspective of research to a transformative one (House & Howe, 1999). Mertens (2003, 2008) suggests that the transformative paradigm and design are a good fit for mixed methods studies. She offers
a way to bridge paradigms and the practice of research together to benefit society as a whole, with an emphasis on communities traditionally marginalized, misrepresented, or otherwise excluded from the research community (Mertens, 2003, 2008). This section provides a definition and characteristics of the transformative paradigm, my rationale for choosing this paradigm, the benefits, and challenges of the transformative paradigm.

**Definition and characteristics of the transformative paradigm.** Each step of the research process, the transformative paradigm calls on the researcher to examine the injustices and inequalities of society while working to ensure the study increases social justices. “The transformative paradigm is a framework of belief systems that directly engages members of culturally diverse groups with a focus on increased social justice” (Mertens, 2010, p. 10). To further understand this definition, I will examine the place philosophical assumptions have in the transformative paradigm.

Philosophical assumptions play an important role in mixed methods because they will determine how the researcher interprets her results. These assumptions are even more important in the transformative paradigm due to its purpose of increasing social justice and equality. When discussing the history of mixed methods research earlier, I created a table based on various authors’ view of the paradigms of positivists, constructivists and pragmatists. Table 5 provides a summary of the transformative paradigm’s philosophical assumptions.
### Table 5

**Transformative Paradigm**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paradigm Element</th>
<th>Transformative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ontology</strong> (Nature of reality)</td>
<td>Multiple realities concerning social realities within political, cultural,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>historical, and economic value systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Epistemology</strong> (The relationship of</td>
<td>Interactive closeness. An interactive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the knower to the known)</td>
<td>relationship of trust is crucial;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>knowledge, power, and privilege are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>socially and historically positioned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Axiology</strong> (Role of values in</td>
<td>Takes precedence and guide; emphasis on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inquiry)</td>
<td>cultural norms of interaction; beneficence is defined in terms of human rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and increase in social justice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Generalizations</strong></td>
<td>Time and context are as important as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>looking at power relationships, dynamics triggering certain responses, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>reporting results that generate change for the participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Causal linkages</strong></td>
<td>Causal relationships, examined through</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axiology may exist; value and knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of power and privilege in the situation of the participants is crucial.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methodology</strong> (What is the process</td>
<td>Dialogic qualitative, quantitative or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of research?)</td>
<td>mixed methods also; considerations of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>marginalization, oppression, or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>misrepresentation drive the choice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Methods are adjusted to accommodate cultural complexity” (Mertens, 2008, p.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rhetoric</strong> (What is the language</td>
<td>Informal or formal as they accommodate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of research?)</td>
<td>the cultural norms of the participants; care is taken to accurately describe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>people, situations, and ideas based on the interactive relationship of trust.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In the transformative design, the voices of the community are reflected in each step of the research process. Indeed, it demands that a study is not conducted solely for the researcher but instead to provide benefit for those being studied. In a transformative
paradigm, the central belief is “that power is an issue that must be addressed at each stage of the research process” (Mertens, 2007a, p. 213). This view is apparent in each assumption in the transformative paradigm.

The ontological assumption of transformative research assumes that reality is socially constructed. The transformative paradigm demands that the researcher be aware of the position one group may have over the other due to “unearned privilege associated with characteristics of participants and researchers” (Mertens, 2007a, p. 216). In order to know the reality, an awareness of this imbalance of power and an interaction between the researcher and the community is critical. In addition, the researcher and the community decide what is researchable to determine how best to describe the community’s reality.

The epistemological view of the transformative paradigm demands the research be involved in the community affected by the variable under study. This intimate, interactive relationship with the community must also base itself on an awareness of power relations between the researcher, the community, and other aspects of diversity (Mertens, 2010). Transformative researchers recognize that knowledge is socially and historically situated, therefore, they need to address issues of power and trust (Mertens, 2014)

The main tenet of the axiological assumption in the transformative paradigm is the “recognition of power differences and ethical implications that derive from those differences” in terms of marginalization, discrimination, oppression, and misunderstandings (Mertens, 2010, p. 195). As the study evolves and the researcher is in contact with the community, the study may evolve to ensure the ethics and power
differences are not further discriminating the participants. A mixed methods study with a transformative paradigm provides an excellent avenue for addressing issues of social justice. In any research, three basic principles define axiology: respect, beneficence, and justice (Mertens, 2007). In a transformative mixed methods study, these three principals become even more important due to how the community being studied is honored. Respecting the values of the community and defining issues of power is fundamental to ensure all voices are heard. The aim of a transformative study is to uphold justice for the community being studied to guarantee they benefit from the research, or at the very least, guarantees they are not further marginalized by the study.

Methodology in the transformative paradigm is mainly dialogic qualitative however quantitative or mixed methods can be used as long as they study meets the needs of the participants and that they are involved in the research. Mertens (2009) states, “Methods are adjusted to accommodate cultural complexity” (p. 49). Issues such as marginalization, oppression, or misrepresentation in the community need to be addressed in whichever method is chose so that human rights and social justice is promoted in the study.

Researchers need to consider a wide array of conditions in which the data was collected and the implications of the results. Use of the transformative paradigm in data collection, analysis, and interpretation is a “thinking person’s game” (Mertens, 2009, p. 191). Researchers need to consider the time and context in which the data is collected along with an awareness of power relationships and group dynamics. Researchers need to critically examine the results of data collection and need to carefully consider how to
reporting results that generates change for the participants and their community. In summary, Mertens (2008), states that the transformative paradigm is useful in

a) Raising hypotheses concerning the dynamic that underlie the quantitative results
b) Conducting subgroup analyses to look at the differential impact on diverse groups in the study,
c) Improving understanding of the results from the perspective of power relationships, and
d) Reporting the results in such a way as to facilitate change. (p. 93)

Rhetoric in the transformative paradigm reflects the researcher’s desire to communicate clearly, effectively, and in a manner that is respectful of community. This includes accurate translations into languages other than English, an awareness of the languages used in which parts of the community, and explanations of the research that are comprehensible to the community without being condescending. Non-verbal cues are important when communicating as well. A researcher needs to employ appropriate gestures and body language when interacting with the community.

**Rationale for choosing the transformative paradigm.** Test scores, school improvement plans, and the media traditionally define the students and families of Harold Middle School by what they cannot do regarding academic travel, academic achievement and school engagement instead of what they can do. This misrepresentation of their strengths leads to their further marginalization in education and lower academic standards. I chose a transformative paradigm because I am interested in, “advancing the needs of underrepresented or marginalized populations” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 96). With this study, I illuminate the meaning of educational travel in students’ lives by illuminating their strengths and the work the families have done for their children since
I use the transformative paradigm to guide each stage of the research process as suggested by Mertens (2003, 2009).

Moreover, Mertens has suggested that the transformative paradigm is a good fit for my study. A professor at my university was doubtful that the transformative paradigm was a fit and had the opportunity to share with her what I was proposing. Mertens responded by saying,

I think many of the problems we encounter in schools and school programs still can be viewed through a social justice and human rights lens. Everyone has a right to a quality education in a safe environment etc. Does everyone have that right respected? No. So, from my perspective, everyone has rights – and discrimination happens everywhere, so the transformative paradigm has applicability…If I am busting barriers, I am upsetting the status quo in the interest of change that will be transformative. (A. Olmos-Gallo, personal communication, June 2014)

With this endorsement, I felt comfortable in my choice of using the transformative paradigm for this mixed methods study. It is my hope that the results shared in Chapter Six “upset the status quo” to provide more equity in educational travel.

**Benefits of the transformative paradigm.** Using a transformative paradigm allows the participants a position of privilege. Indeed, my desire to enter in the doctoral program in the first place came from wanting to know how to tell the story of our students and families who work to make learning through travel possible. Frequently, all one hears of urban, low-income middle schools are stories of low-test scores, belligerent
and unmotivated students, uncaring parents, and crime. In my 31 years of teaching, that
is not what I see. Conversations with families and students have led me to wonder, how
do I get the story out about the meaning of educational travel in their lives and have their
voices heard? I have chosen to include data from CSAP and ACT scores with GPAs as
well as graduation, suspension, and attendance rates in an attempt to address the
obsession for data in the US public education institutions. However, as the
transformative paradigm stresses, I ask the participants to offer their view on the meaning
of these data and on educational travel. Through interviews and a focus group, I bring
the voices of the travelers and their adult chaperones to the front of the study. As they
share how they came to travel with Harold Middle School, what it was like on the trip,
and what it has meant to them in their lives, the data are no longer be composed of
isolated facts and figures. It is my hope that the reader will see these data come alive
through their voices. In doing so, this study validates the thoughts, insights, and
recommendations of a group of people not previously recognized in the discourse on
what works in education.

The transformative paradigm focuses on the strengths of the community rather
than the perceived deficits. This is important because this research will not further
marginalize families from a low-income, urban neighborhood. Gay’s (2010) description
of culturally responsive teaching reflects the benefit of using a transformative lens for
examining the numbers and the stories of educational travel at Harold Middle School.
Gay (2010) also describes culturally responsive teaching as “validating and affirming”
due to five characteristics, two of which are listed here:
• It acknowledges the legitimacy of the cultural heritages of different ethnic groups, both as legacies that affect students’ dispositions, attitudes, and approaches to learning and as worthy content to be taught in the formal curriculum.
• It builds bridges of meaningfulness between home and school experiences as well as between academic abstractions and lived sociocultural realities. (p. 31).

The transformative paradigm and culturally responsive teaching will come together in this study to “validate and affirm” the participants travel experiences and the insights they, and their families, ascribe to it.

Finally, another important benefit to using the transformative paradigm is how it focuses on educational travel with urban, ethnically and linguistically diverse students who live in a low-income neighborhood whose face is often left out of literature and research on educational travel. From this, I provide recommendations, based on these students’ thoughts and ideas, for future researchers to begin the process of providing equity in educational travel that reaches beyond the White, middle- and upper- income, and suburban students. (*Note: The transformational research design does not exclude participants from the study who have been traditionally represented however, the purpose of this study is to explore an area of travel previously unexplored.)

Challenges of the transformative paradigm. Because I am an outsider due to my ethnicity and I am an insider due to my involvement in the trips, I am aware of the obstacles of these both may bring to this study. I am an outsider because I am a White, middle-income, woman from rural northern Minnesota. As a teen, I traveled to Spain on a study abroad program and lived in Madrid and Sevilla while attending college to become fluent in Spanish. I speak, read, and write Spanish fluently as a second language, but not
as a first, as do many of my participants. Therefore, in many ways, I am similar in
demography to the study abroad students about whom so much has already been written.
It is my desire to offer another view of educational travel. I have designed a study that
allows multiple perspectives to be brought forth. In its design, I have been cognizant of
the need to address issues of power and misrepresentation when working with the
participants. The questions, the type of data I have gathered, the way I conducted the
study, and my hope of it benefiting not only the Harold School community but also other
similar communities is my attempt to counterbalance my White privilege. McIntosh
(1988) describes White privilege as follows “I have come to see white privilege as an
invisible package of unearned assets which I can count on cashing in each day, but about
which I was ‘meant’ to remain oblivious” (p. 1). As I conduct this study, I kept my
awareness of being White in the forefront of my thoughts and actions. Kim (2012) states,
“If a White educator is not aware or comfortable with her ‘Whiteness,’ she may
inadvertently privilege White cultural ways of learning, knowing, writing, telling, and
doing” (p. 45). This is something I kept in mind as I conducted this study.

I was the coordinator of the trips at Herbert Elementary School and Harold
Middle School from 1993 to 2014. I planned the trips, taught the classes, fundraised
along with the families, established the nonprofit (Harold Educational Excellence
Program or HEEP), and traveled with the students. Through these experiences, I am, to
some extent, an insider in the community. Quantitative research values the outsider or
etic perspective. Qualitative research values the insider or emic perspective. Developing
an etic perspective challenged me in this study and I am not sure I achieved true outsider
status. It was be impossible to view the trips, the students, and the families from an outsider, or etic, standpoint. However, while it was a challenge, it also provided incredible insights from the emic view. As evidenced by their willingness to send their children with me on 34 trips (22 domestic, 12 international) and our mutual dedication to monthly evening meetings to ensure the trips happen, families trust me, as do the students. Over the past 22 years of travel in the same community, our mutual trust runs deep. Along with this trust, knowledge of cultural norms and sensitivities along with an awareness of communication strategies and power relationships within the community will provide me with unparalleled access to my participants. This is a responsibility I did not take lightly.

To balance my insider position, several people (educators and non-educators) read drafts of this dissertation to ensure I was drawing logical conclusions. In addition, a former head of research and development for a student travel association met with me regularly and read drafts of my work to check for bias.

This study give the Harold community an opportunity to provide their voices to the discourse of what works in effective educational travel as evidenced by their stories and interpretation of the school engagement and academic achievement data. In addition, I have crafted this study carefully to better advocate for this population and better understand the meaning of educational travel on the lives of urban, low-income middle school youth.
Research Design

William Bruce Cameron (1963) stated, “Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts” (p. 13). To that end, I would like to conduct a study using a transformative, explanatory sequential mixed methods design (see Figure 1). The transformative theoretical paradigm guides the quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis in of this mixed methods study. Mertens (2009) writes, “The transformative paradigm does not have a specific set of methods or practices of its own… (rather) it leads us to reframe not only the understanding of our worldviews but also our methodological decisions” (p. 59). This study will examine culturally responsive teaching (CRT), experiential learning, previous research on educational travel, and effective middle level education from the Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE) as the framework for examining the meaning of educational travel in the lives of urban, ethnically and linguistically diverse youth in a low-income neighborhood.

Figure 3 displays the research design for this study.

Figure 3. Research design. Adapted from Creswell, 2014, (pp. 220–221).
First, I collected and analyzed quantitative data. Next, I did the same with the qualitative data; hence, the study is a sequential design (see Appendix A for a more detailed model). The quantitative portion consisted of analyzing academic achievement and student engagement data from the school district where the trips took place. The qualitative phase investigated how the student travelers and the chaperones view the meaning of the trips. Qualitative data collection in the form of interviews and focus groups was important to provide an opportunity for the participants to explain their interpretation of travel and the results of the quantitative data. It also allowed for detailed responses and the emergences of themes across trips that quantitative data cannot provide. This portion provides the explanatory nature of the study.

**Explanatory Sequential Design**

**Definition and characteristic of the explanatory sequential design.** The explanatory sequential design is a two-phase design where these two phases provide insights regarding the interaction of the variable being studied through quantitative and qualitative data. Creswell, Plano-Clark, Gutmann, and Hanson (2008) label it the “most straightforward” of the major mixed methods designs as it calls for one data collection and analysis, typically quantitative, followed by the other data collection and analysis, typically qualitative (p. 178). Typically, the qualitative portion assists in explaining the results from the quantitative data analysis. From the quantitative phase, the researcher selects either participants, types of questions, certain variables or results for further illumination in the qualitative phase. This interactive relationship between the two phases is key to understanding the data from each phase. For example, this study first
collected and analyzed quantitative data. Then, I created questions to ask the participants in the qualitative portion.

**Rationale for the explanatory sequential design.** Creswell (2014) offers several choices for consideration in selection of mixed methods design; what are outcomes expected, how the data will be used together, what is timing of the data collection, what is emphasis is placed on each dataset, which design is best suited for the field of study, and the researcher’s characteristics (p. 231-232). I will discuss each of these in defending my rationale for choosing the explanatory sequential design.

I offer explanations of quantitative data with interviews and focus group (qualitative data). This offers a “more in-depth understanding of the quantitative results” within a transformative lens as what the participants, say illuminate the meaning of the data (Creswell, 2014, p. 231. Therefore, the outcomes fit an explanatory sequential design where the researcher and the participants interpret the quantitative data.

The explanatory sequential design corresponds with my vision for the integration and timing of the data collection. The qualitative interviews build on the results from the quantitative data. I analyzed quantitative data first to present to the participants during the interviews and focus group. No other design would allow for the participants themselves to offer their understanding of the quantitative data as part of the analysis. (Note: the quantitative data was presented at the end of the interview as to not skew the thinking of the participants). The quantitative data was collected and analyzed first in order to present it to the participants.
While Creswell (2014) recommends a convergent design when a researcher wishes to emphasize both datasets equally, he admits there are exceptions. Because of the transformative approach in this study, both datasets are afforded equal weight. If I emphasized the quantitative results, then I would have yielded to the culture of data rampant in our schools today. The culture of data refers to the data-driven instruction and evaluation prevalent in current education trends (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2010). If I emphasized the qualitative results, then this study would not be offered a place at the table of academic discourse in many arenas because it would ignore the culture of data. If I used the convergent design where the two data sets came together only at the interpretation stage, then I would not have been able to afford the students the opportunity to comment on the data gathered about them which would not be transformative. I wanted the participants to have opportunity to comment on the data gathered about them in this research study to add depth and meaning.

Therefore, the explanatory sequential design is the best choice to offer the participants the opportunity to weigh in on the data that is used to evaluate them. In addition, it afforded them the opportunity to make recommendations for future travelers and the adults involved with travel. As previously mentioned, the culture of data is pervasive in the field of education. In fact, at Harold Middle School (and the district in which this study was conducted), teachers were required to meet daily to discuss data in Professional Learning Communities (DuFour, DuFour, Easker, & Many, 2010). From a school-wide presentation, one can see the plethora of acronyms based on quantitatively evaluating students. The assistant principal informed the teacher the PLCs’ purpose was
the following, “In practice, PLCs create ELGs aligned to CCSS and/or CAS to create CFAs to address gaps identified by TCAP (formerly CSAP) for achievement and MGP data” (personal communication, August 2013). Definitions of the acronyms are as follows: ELG (essential learning goals), CCSS (Common Core State Standards), CAS (Colorado State Standards), CFA (common formative assessments), TCAP (Transitional Colorado Assessment Program), CSAP (Colorado Student Assessment Program), and MGP (median growth percentile). Data is prevalent in setting the tone for teachers for the entire school year. Yet, these data do not tell the whole story of a child and his abilities. Conducting a study that includes quantitative and qualitative data meets the need of both data and personal insights needed when studying educational settings (Sammons, 2010).

Finally, Creswell (2014) mentions the explanatory sequential approach as one manageable for single researchers. Rather than gathering data from multiple sites or sources at one time or engaging in a study that is protracted over a long period of time, the explanatory sequential approach requires collection of two sets of data. While Creswell (2014) does promote an embedded design for researchers short on time, I did thought the explanatory sequential design was more appropriate.

It is for these reasons that the explanatory sequential design is the most effective and appropriate for the data I collected, the population I interviews, and for the transformative aims I have. The explanatory sequential design provided the opportunity to examine the quantitative data so prevalent in the world of education while at the same time offering the participants the opportunity to share their interpretation and
recommendation. This led to advice for future travelers, school groups, teachers, travel companies, and adult chaperones.

**Benefits of the explanatory sequential design.** The sequential, straightforward process of this design is one of its strengths. Each section is analyzed separately making data analysis clear-cut until the final portion when the combination of the two strands provides a rich analysis of the topic under study. This design traditionally appeals to researchers most familiar with quantitative research who are looking to expand the possibilities of qualitative research. However, the inverse is also strength. Given the increase in mixed methods designs, as cited in the section discussing its history in this chapter, using the explanatory sequential design is a helpful starting place. In addition, this design fits well with the transformative paradigm because it uses two types of research thereby providing two ways to report the findings increasing the ability of the researcher to provide avenues for underrepresented populations to accurately describe their views.

**Challenges of the explanatory sequential design.** Despite the strong benefits to the explanatory sequential design, Creswell (2014) and Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) outline several weaknesses. The main weaknesses of the explanatory sequential design are the amount of time needed to collect, analyze, interpret and combine two sets of data. Another weakness is planning exactly what data are significant from the first phase to examine in the second phase is a challenge. Participants who inform the second phase should ideally be the same participants about whom the researcher collected data in the first phase. This can be an obstacle when the researcher does not know what the results
of the first phase when writing the proposal thereby making it difficult to obtain approval from institutions review boards.

While time was a factor in this study, I had established a contact in the research department in the school district where this study was conducted thus minimizing the time needed to establish contact and provide an overview of my plan. I am no longer teaching at Harold Middle School but am still teaching the same part of town where I am in close proximity to the participants which made it easier to recruit and meet with them. My participants for the second phase came from the students who traveled from 2003 to 2011 to Washington, DC, Europe, and both. It was not possible for me to select participants based on their results from the quantitative portion because I received their data already coded by the school district. However, their insights, views, and opinions were still valid as they are part of the group I examined in relation to the meaning of travel on their lives, not only the quantitative data reflecting their academic achievement and school engagement. Use of the transformative paradigm in all phases of this design assisted me in ensuring that I did not overlook important aspects of either phase of data that might provide valuable insights, which can also be problematic in the explanatory sequential design.

Procedure

Christ (2010) states “Procedures clarify what was/will be done and should be sufficiently explicit to replicate” (p. 672). In this section, I outline these procedures in this transformative, explanatory sequential mixed methods study. Appendix A provides a diagram of the procedures.
**Timing.** The sequential explanatory study design calls for two distinct phases of data collection. The first phase involved collection and analysis of quantitative data and the second phase involved collection and analysis of qualitative data. The quantitative data analysis took place during March to July 2015. The qualitative interviews and focus group took place from July to September 2015. The analysis took place from October 2015 to March 2016.

**Weighting.** Both sets of data will carry equal weight. This study is designed based on the belief that both data sets provide information that one set alone.

**Integration.** Integration, or mixing, refers to the point where the researcher explicitly connects the two phases of a mixed methods study. Because this because uses a transformative paradigm, both phases are mixed to some degree during the entire study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 68). This study is based on the premise that both sets of data have to be mixed in order to reveal the meaning of educational travel in the lives of urban middle school youth.

One set of data is not adequate to understand the meaning of educational travel for urban youth. The quantitative data do not allow the participants’ voices and the qualitative data do not for measure the effects of academic achievement and student engagement.

I mixed the data in two places. First, I shared the findings of the quantitative data with the participants and asked them to comment on these findings. Secondly, in Chapter Six, I give an explicit integration of the two data sets through the participants’ comments on the quantitative findings.
**Validity as it relates to data in mixed methods.** Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) identify thirteen potential validity threats when connecting data in mixed methods studies. Eight of these apply to this study. I have replicated the chart from pages 242-243 with my strategies for minimizing the threat. Table 6 indicates the potential threats to validity and how I addressed each one in designing this study.

Table 6  

*Potential Validity Threats When Connecting Data Related to This Study*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Threats to Validity</th>
<th>Strategies for Minimizing the Threat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>Selecting inappropriate individuals for the qualitative and quantitative data collection</td>
<td>The individuals I have selected are the correct ones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using inappropriate sample sizes for the qualitative data collection</td>
<td>The sample size is appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Choosing inadequate participants for the follow-up who cannot help explain significant results</td>
<td>The participants who participated in the qualitative portion are from the quantitative portion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not designing an instrument with sound psychometric (i.e., validity and reliability) properties</td>
<td>I used quantitative data that have already been tested for reliability and validity or are the only data tracked by the school system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>Choosing weak quantitative results to follow up on qualitatively</td>
<td>The district data are as strong as they can be given the obstacles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Choosing weak qualitative findings to follow up on quantitatively</td>
<td>Use of interviews and focus group addressed this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation Issues</td>
<td>Comparing the two data sets when they are intended to build rather than merge</td>
<td>Because of the timing and different types of data, I did not compare them. They measure different aspects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not interpreting the mixed methods results in light of the advocacy or social science lens</td>
<td>Transformative paradigm guided my interpretation of the findings and incorporated the participants’ comments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Role of researcher.** My paradigmatic stance as it relates to this research project is transformative. As detailed in the previous section, my relationship to the research is both emic and etic while consciously incorporating the transformative worldviews.

**Bounding the overall study.** This mixed methods study uses quantitative data from an urban middle school in a low-income neighborhood in a large city in the Western United States. These data are measures of academic achievement (grade point averages, Colorado Student Achievement Program scores, and American College Test scores) and school engagement (attendance, graduation, and suspension rates) from Harold Educational Excellence Program approximately 344 students who traveled to Washington, DC, Europe, or both DC and Europe during the 2003 to 2011 school years while attending Harold Middle School. This represents approximately 54% of the total number of trip (n = 784) students from 1993 to 2014. The same data from 6,144 students who did not travel will be used as a comparison. The school district provided coded, de-identified data for the four groups of students from the 2003 to 2011 school years.

The qualitative portion includes individual interviews with participants from the same data in the quantitative portion. I have the lists of travelers from the DC-Only,
Europe-Only, and Both groups for the 2003 to 2011 school years. I did not interview any non-traveling Harold Middle School students as this was beyond the scope of this research. I also conducted one focus group of eight adult chaperones from the trips during the same time as the quantitative data. The interviews were conducted at a mutually agreeable place and time. I selected the participants through an appeal for volunteers by the use of social media, email, and word of mouth. From the pool of possible interviewees, I randomly selected three from each travel group ensuring that a balance of age, gender, and ethnicity was represented. I used the same method for the focus groups. At the end of the interview, I asked all the participants for their interpretation of the findings from the quantitative section.

Sample characteristics. The sample for both the quantitative and qualitative is drawn from an urban middle school low-income neighborhood in a large city in the Western United States from the years 2003 to 2011. The meaning of educational travel in the lives of a sample of 344 students will be examined. The gender of these students is 34% male and 66% female. The ethnic classification according to the codes their adult caregivers gave them upon registering them for school are 2% Asian, 2% Black, 7% White, and 89% Hispanic. I do not have information on their socioeconomic status, however, during the years of this study Harold Middle School’s FRL status varied from 90% to 97% of families living below the poverty line (NCES, 2014). The students from this sample vary in age from 15 years old to 25 years old. Table 7 describes this sample from the information I have.
There were 40 adult chaperones from all the trips. From 2003 – 2011, there were 26 chaperones. Fourteen were male (54%) and 12 (46%) female, which includes myself. Seven (3 male, 4 female) of these chaperones traveled both to Washington, DC and Europe; twelve (7 male, 5 female) traveled only to Washington, DC; and seven (4 male, 3 female) traveled only to Europe.

There were fewer females who chaperoned all the trips because I chaperoned 33 of 34 trips and a female colleague, Ruth Córdova, chaperoned 32 of 34 trips. Therefore, there was more turnover in male chaperones than female chaperones. I was not a participant in the focus groups and neither was Ruth. I created a focus group among 14 males and 10 females representing those who traveled to Washington, DC, Europe, or both.
Phase I: Quantitative Procedures

This section outlines the quantitative procedures I used in this study. It is organized into seven parts. The first part introduces the research question and hypothesis. The second part explains the participants and sampling. The third part describes the data and measures to be used. The next three parts describe the dependent and independent variables, data collection, and data analysis. The last part is a discussion of the transformative paradigm and its implications for quantitative data analysis.

Research Question and Hypothesis

This phase addresses the following research question: What is the difference in student academic achievement and school engagement between DC-Only travelers, Europe-Only travelers and students who traveled to both DC and Europe (n = 344) as compared to each other and to non-travelers from Harold Middle School (n = 6,100) between 2003-2011?

a. Academic Achievement: What is the difference in ACT scores, CSAP scale scores, and cumulative GPA?

b. School Engagement: What is the difference in attendance, graduation, and suspension rates?

This question data addresses whether or not educational travel is related to academic achievement and school engagement for former travelers at Harold Middle School. The data compared former travelers (n = 344) to non-travelers (n = 6,100) at Harold Middle School from the academic years 2003-2011. Additionally, each sub-group (DC-Only, Europe-Only, and both Washington, DC and Europe) was compared to the
others. Academic achievement data to be examined consist of the following: CSAP scale scores, cumulative grade point averages (GPA), and ACT scores. School engagement data examined consisted of the following: graduation, attendance, and suspensions. My hypothesis was that educational travel is positively related to these academic achievement variables.

**Participants and Sampling**

The participants are from a middle school (Harold Middle School) in a low-income, urban neighborhood in a large city in the Western United States. For the purposes of this study, the students are divided into four groups: Washington, DC-Only travelers, Europe-Only travelers, both DC and Europe travelers, and non-traveling Harold Middle School students. The comparative group of non-traveling students at Harold Middle School from 2003 to 2011 is presumed to be representative of the statistics from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) for this neighborhood during this time since they describe the place where the students lived during the years of this study. From 2003 – 2011, NCES cites that 92% of the households qualified for free and reduced lunch in Harold Middle School’s neighborhood and of the students attending Harold Middle School, 1% were American Indian, 2% were Asian, 2% were Black, 7% were White, and 90% were Hispanic.

I have the lists of travelers from the DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both groups for the 2003 to 2011 school years. According to my records, 418 students traveled to DC-Only, Europe-Only, or both DC and Europe during the 2003 to 2011 school years while...
attending Harold Middle School. This represents approximately 54% of the total number of trip \((n = 782)\) students from 1993 to 2014.

The number of traveling students \((n = 418)\) is different from the cases to be examined \((n = 344)\) due to missing data for many students. Because the data is de-identified, I do not know whose data has been removed due to missingness. The remaining student from the following trips: 135 from Washington, DC, 135 from Europe, and 74 from Both.

The gender of the 418 student travelers from 2003 – 2011 is 34% male and 66% female. The ethnic classification according to the codes their adult caregivers gave them upon registering them for school are 2% Asian, 2% Black, 7% White, and 89% Hispanic. I do not have information on their socioeconomic status, however, during the years of this study, 90% to 97% of Harold Middle School’s families lived below the poverty line (NCES, 2014). I assume that this is representative of the students.

There were 175 who traveled to just Washington, DC, 146 who traveled only to Europe and 97 students who traveled to both DC and Europe. During the DC 2009 trip, nine students from another school came on the trip with Harold students. These nine students are not included in this sample and not counted in the overall total. In this sample, there are seven students who traveled to DC twice and two who traveled to Europe twice as junior chaperones. Older siblings who traveled with us but still had not graduated from high school at the time of the trip are not included in this study.
Complications to the Dataset

The original data set from the school district had 6,560 students. Because 116 students attended Harold but had no data, they were eliminated from the sample. This leaves 6,444. However, a great deal of data are missing for the remaining cases.

According to the exit codes provided by the school district, only 45.6% (n = 2,790) of the students remained in school at the time the data were complied. Of those students, not all have data for all the years they were in school. Permanent withdrawals account for 30.8% (n = 1,983) of the students for whom I only have partial data. Students who left due to expulsion, incarceration, critical illness, or who dropped out account for 12.4% (n = 796) of the data and I do not have complete data for this group. Of the 13.3% (n = 860) who graduated or obtained a GED (General Equivalence Diploma) with the district, I also only have partial data due to mobility (i.e., some may have entered Harold in eighth grade and stayed in the system to graduate but do not have scores for fifth – seventh grade). Some scores also may be missing due for second language learners, as I do not have the Spanish CSAP scale scores. I only have scores for the English version of CSAP. It is possible that some students took the test in Spanish in their early school years and progressed to English in high school so they would not have scores listed for their early school years.

Measures

From the data I received from the school district where Harold is located, I have test data and other indicators for each participant. I asked for the following on each student: traveler status (DC-Only, Europe-Only, both DC and Europe, or non-traveler),
gender, ethnicity, English Language Learner status, special education status, suspensions, attendance, graduation information, grade point average, ACT and CSAP scale scores for reading, writing, science, and math. However, I opted not to include English Language Learner status or special education status for this study.

I used a non-experimental comparative design (causal-comparative) to allow for comparisons of independent variables categories (DC, Europe, both, and no travel) on the dependent variable (e.g., CSAP scale score). The group differences in this study were investigated using one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) and repeated measures ANOVA. A one-way ANOVA was appropriate for this study because it permitted the researcher to assess the statistical significance of group differences (Gliner, Morgan, & Leech, 2009). In this case, I determined whether any statistically significant differences exist between the means for the dependent variable for the four independent variable categories. A repeated measures ANOVA (specifically a mixed design with a repeated factor and a between-subjects factor) is a test to discover any overall differences between related mean scores over time by group. I used this to test for differences in CSAP test scores in each subject by year by group. For graduation and suspension variable, I used a Pearson chi-square because I have categorical variables from a single population and it is used to evaluate how likely it is that any observed difference between the sets arose by chance.

In summary, I used a one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) with ACT scores and GPA. I used a repeated measures ANOVA with CSAP scale scores. A one-way
ANOVA was used for attendance scores and a Pearson chi-square was used for graduation and suspension rates.

I used SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 21 to run these tests.

**Variables**

In this section, I describe the independent variables and dependent variables for the study. As I discuss each one, I also address validity and reliability of each variable.

**Independent variables.** The independent variable chosen for this study divides the students into four groups from Harold Middle School during the 2003 – 2011 school years. The groups are students who traveled to Washington, DC-Only; traveled to Europe-Only; traveled to both Washington, DC and Europe; or did not travel. The Washington, DC trip was offered to sixth graders (ages 11-12) and the Europe trip was offered to eighth graders (ages 13-14) at Harold School. The trip was open to all students who were willing to work for the money for their trip through fundraising, improving academic achievement, or through a job at the school (such as assisting teachers after-school, selling concessions, sweeping, etc.) for which they were paid. In 2004, the creation of a supporting 501(c)3 institution, Harold Educational Excellence Program (HEEP), allowed for students to earn scholarships toward the cost of the trips based on personal learning or behavior goals. A 501(c)3 supporting organization is exempt from federal income taxes, is run as not-for-profit organization, and supports an educational institution (“Exemption Requirements,” 2014, IRS.gov). HEEP was established solely to raise money to support travel programs, professional development, and to provide mini-
grants for teachers. HEEP had a board president and 6-8 board members who worked to raise money for the students.

The price of the trip included all meals, lodging, transportation, entrance fees, and some souvenirs. It also included a backpack, a water bottle, and rain gear for each student. The organizers felt it was important to tell parents the full price of the trip from the onset so that they could plan accordingly.

Monthly evening parent meetings were held to help families raise money and get to know the chaperones. There were between 8-12 fundraisers offered to families throughout the year. Students and their families could earn money selling chocolates and other school sponsored items, host dances at Harold, work at sporting events, and sell food to the staff of Harold. For families struggling to get involved in these efforts, an individualized plan was created with help from the HEEP work program coordinator who was also a teacher at Harold and who also traveled with the students. The trip chaperones and the HEEP board members worked diligently to ensure as many children as possible could travel. Students who had extreme hardship situations where no adult was able to assist them in raising money or families who could not partake of the fundraising opportunities could receive a full or partial scholarship for their trips providing the students kept with their individual scholarship contract and worked at their job. Each student had two “accounts” where his money was kept (at Harold and at HEEP) ensuring that the money each child earned went only to his own account. HEEP and the organizers of the trips created these opportunities to ensure that as many students as possible could travel with the Harold group.
The Washington, DC trip took place in May of each year. The trip was open to all sixth graders at Harold School regardless of academic achievement, past behavior incidents, or income status. At the start of each school year, the students decided whether to attend this trip after hearing a presentation about the trip, viewing a slideshow of former travelers, and attending an informational parent meeting. The potential trip chaperones, Ruth Córdova, and I, ran these presentations and meetings. The students had to take the Washington, DC travel class as one of their elective classes during the year to learn about what they would see on the trip and how to travel. At Harold Middle School, the students had classes in math, science, social studies, language arts, and two elective classes. These elective classes included physical education, vocal music, band, orchestra, etc. The Washington, DC travel class took the place of one of these two classes. Students could enroll in the DC class up until February each year.

The DC students left on a Friday morning and returned on a Thursday evening. They flew on commercial airlines, stayed at Embassy Suites (a national hotel chain), rode the DC metro, and ate in a wide variety of restaurants. Some of the sights they saw included the National Mall, several Smithsonian museums, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the US Capitol, the Supreme Court, and the White House. While on their trip, they kept records of their thoughts in a teacher-created DC Student Journal. They also took pictures and gathered memorabilia to create a scrapbook for a class grade when they returned.

The Europe trip took place in the end of March through the beginning of April each year during the 2003 to 2011 school years. The students began raising money and
attending the Europe elective class in January of their Grade 7 year. The students decided to enroll on the trip after attending an informational student meeting and an informational parent meeting. Fundraising efforts and meetings were the same as those for Washington, DC. The elective class was similar as well, the students learned about the places they would see and how to travel internationally.

The Europe trip varied in length from 11 to 13 days. The group traveled with one of the student group travel companies in the USA. The price for the trip included the price paid to the travel company and an extra amount to cover the meals, tipping, optional excursions, and transportation not included in the travel company price. All the trips included stops in Amsterdam, Brussels, Paris, and London. Several years included stops in Frankfort and Koblenz, Germany, which the travel company removed from the itinerary in the late 2000s. The students saw the Anne Frank House, rode bicycles, took canal boat rides, visited a cheese and clog factory, and ate frites with a variety of sauces in Amsterdam. In Brussels, they saw the Atomium, the Grand Place, and ate mussels, waffles, and chocolates. In Paris, they went to the top of the Eiffel Tower, visited the Louvre, walked down Champs Elysées, explored Montmartre, visited Notre Dame, and visited Sacré Coeur. After a ride on the Eurostar, the students enjoyed typical London sites: the London Eye, the Tower of London, Piccadilly Circus, St. Paul’s Cathedral, went horseback riding in Hyde Park, saw a soccer match, saw art at the Tate Modern, and visited the British Museum. While each year the places students visited varied, the trips generally covered famous places. The students kept track of their thoughts in a Europe
Student Journal, similar to the DC Student Journal. When they returned to Harold, they created scrapbooks to record their memories as the DC students did.

In the sample, there is a group of students who opted to travel to both Washington, DC and Europe with Harold School. They traveled to DC in sixth grade and traveled to Europe in eighth grade.

The non-traveling group consists of all other students enrolled at Harold during the 2003 to 2011 school years. This group includes students who may have enrolled in the travel classes but later left the class. Some realized they were not ready to leave their families for a week or more. Some did not want to work to raise the money. Some of their families decided not to let them travel due to fears of terrorism. Some left for reasons unknown to me.

I created the lists for the three travel groups based on my archival records and based on the school district rosters for the travel classes. I had to keep lists of the travelers with their date of birth, student identification number, parent/guardian information, and addresses for the school when we traveled. For a University of Denver class in 2009, I began the long process of attempting to collect the data for this study from the school district. In 2012, I received all the permissions I needed from the University of Denver’s Institutional Review Board and the school district’s review board. I gave the student information to the Research and Development department of the Harold’s school district and they returned student data to me in 2014.

One confounding factor in analyzing data from the three travel groups is that they all had me for a teacher. Some have suggested to me that I am not able to distinguish
between teacher effectiveness and the travel itself as having an impact on the students. However, I was not their core subject teacher during the years they traveled with me; I was an elective teacher. Therefore I did not teach the subjects tested by CSAP: reading, writing, math, or science. And, as the design for this study involved no random assignment of students to travel category, there are many potential confounding variables that preclude drawing clear causal conclusions from analyses of data in this study. Analyses of the quantitative data suggest variables pertinent to benefiting from travel but no definitive causal explanation will be forthcoming.

**Dependent variables.** The dependent variables chosen for this study are divided into two groups: academic achievement and school engagement. The academic achievement data measured are by the students’ GPAs and the students’ scores from two state mandated standardized tests, Colorado ACT and CSAP. The school engagement data are the students’ graduation, attendance, and suspensions.

**ACT (American College Test).** The purpose of the ACT is “to measure students’ problem solving skills and knowledge in particular subject areas” (ACT, 2007, p. 62). The ACT is a multiple-choice test that assesses students’ academic preparedness in the subjects of English, mathematics, reading, and science. Students receive scale scores that range from 1-36 with 36 representing the maximum score a student can earn, indicating a superior level of academic achievement. The results act as an indicator of college preparedness and as such can be submitted to colleges and universities of the student’s choice as part of the college application process. The CO ACT is the state version of the ACT given to all eleventh grade (ages 16 – 17) students in public school students.
Colorado every spring in place of CSAP and tests the same areas as the national ACT with the exception of the writing section that is administered in other states.

The ACT in Colorado (CO ACT) differs from the national ACT in two ways. First, all eleventh grade students take the CO ACT, in other states it is optional (Galuszka, 2010). According to the ACT website, twenty-two states in the US use some form of the national ACT test in high school. Teachers, administrators, and other academic leaders can identify progress toward college entrance for all students, instead of obtaining this information for the ones who self-select to take this test. Secondly, the CO ACT also asks for personal information in order to assist students in planning for postsecondary educational opportunities (“About Colorado ACT,” 2014, Colorado Department of Education). Students answer questions regarding their interests, complete a student profile, and enter information regarding their courses and grades. When students receive their reports, they receive their scale scores for the subject areas, a composite score, and a report with their student profile information to assist them with postsecondary planning. Finally, Colorado does not use the ACT Plus Writing that some states include. This test adds a 30-minute essay test that measures a student’s writing skills.

The multiple-choice section of the ACT is the same for CO ACT. The scores for this section are calculated in the same manner for both tests. For clarity, I will use the term ACT instead of CO ACT when referring to these test results.

Based on the performance of students who were already in college, ACT created College Readiness Benchmarks which indicate the minimum ACT score required for students to have “a high probability of success in first-year, credit bearing college courses
Using the range of ACT’s scale scores from 1 to 36, the minimum College Readiness Benchmark score for English is 18, mathematics is 22, reading is 21, and science is 24 (p. 24, ACT, 2007). From the 90,000 students across 98 postsecondary institutions used to create these benchmarks, ACT states that students who meets their College Readiness Benchmark will “...have about a 50 percent chance of earning a B or better and approximately a 75 percent chance or better of earning a C or better in the corresponding entry-level college course or courses” (ACT, 2007, p. 24).

Validity in educational testing refers to whether or not a test “examines” or measures what it says it does. ACT designed the test to examine students’ knowledge and problem-solving skills as they relate to college preparation. In responding to issues of validity, ACT does so through five of the most common uses of the ACT results:

- measuring college-bound students’ educational achievement in a particular subject areas, making college admissions decisions, making college course placement decisions, evaluating the effectiveness of high school college-preparatory programs, and evaluating students’ probable success in high school and beyond. (p. 62, ACT, 2007)

Chapter 5, “Validity Evidence for the ACT tests,” presents 71 pages of information relevant to the validity of the ACT. The Technical Manual offers this advice, “It is unlikely that ACT scores will measure all aspects of students’ readiness for all first-year college course. Therefore, it is advisable to consider using additional measures” (ACT, 2007, p. 112). As with all educational testing, a standardized test is only one indicator of a student’s abilities.
The ACT Technical Manual also states that “differential performance on the ACT results from differential academic preparation, regardless of race/ethnicity or gender” (ACT, 2007, p. 71). Noble, Davenport, Schiel, and Pommerich (1999) found that high school coursework, GPA, and high school attendance were closely associated with ACT scores (as cited in ACT, 2007). These researchers posit, as does ACT, that these factors are more influential in differential ACT performance than are gender, ethnicity, or family income.

**CSAP (Colorado Student Assessment Program).** The Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) is a standards-based assessment program that measured the Colorado content standards for all Colorado public school students in grades three through ten in reading, writing, and math (CTB/McGraw-Hill, 2011). Science is measured in grades five, eight, and ten. House Bill 93-1313, passed in 1993, required the creation of state and district content standards. The standards were created in 1996. In 1997 the first group of fourth grade students were tested to measure their performance in relation to the Colorado Model Content Standards. All districts in Colorado were required to give the CSAP test until 2011 when the state changed to the Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP) to better reflect the new Colorado Academic Standards. It is “transitional” as it bridges measurement of the old Colorado Model Content Standards and the new Colorado Academic Standards (“About CSAP/TCAP,” n.d.). It is also “transitional” as the state school districts begin implementation of the Common Core State Standards in English language arts and mathematics. At the time of this proposal, Colorado is scheduled to use the Partnerships for Assessment of Readiness
for College and Careers (PARCC) test in the spring of 2015. This test will replace the TCAP.

CSAP was a multiple choice and constructed response test in English or Spanish given to students annually in February or March, depending on the grade level. This paper-and-pencil test was administered in a group setting over a one to two week testing window depending on the grade and subjects tested. It varied in length from 60 – 75 minutes.

CSAP test scores were divided into four groupings using scale scores: Unsatisfactory, Partially Proficient, Proficient, and Advanced. In the reports schools and families receive, each scale range is assigned a high, middle and low range to delineate where each child scores within each range. Table 8, adapted from *Performance Level Scale Ranges for CSAP Assessments* (2008), shows the range of scores within each category (See Appendix B for full document).
From 2007 to 2011, CTB/McGraw Hill prepared a technical manual in cooperation with the Colorado Department of Education. Each of the technical manuals (2007 – 2011) uses the same chapter “Test Development” to address the validity and reliability of each year’s test. The sections in this chapter change minimally over the years: Test Development and Content Validity, Test Configuration, CSAP Content Validity and Alignment Review, along with sections on language, linking items from year to year, and “poor-fit” items on the test. The first paragraph of the 2011 Technical Manual states, “Content-related validity can be demonstrated through consistent adherence to test blueprints and through a high-quality test development process that
includes review of items for accessibility by various subgroups, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities” (CTB/McGraw Hill, 2011, p. 8). According to the authors, they provide all this information so that the consumers may make informed decisions once they understand the way the test was designed to test students’ abilities.

In the “CSAP Content Validity and Alignment Review” section of each manual, the procedures for reviewing items for the tests are delineated (CTB/McGraw Hill, 2011). Each June, the items for the following year’s test were reviewed for bias, content, alignment to standards, and appropriateness of each item. The review committees were drawn from a diverse audience in Colorado to ensure that many viewpoints were presented in the test revision.

Each technical report also has a chapter, “Scoring and Scaling Design” where procedures for looking at overall scores are explained. Next, a section delineating the procedure for scoring the constructed response items along with rater and interrater reliability presents more evidence of the care taken to ensure the test is valid. There are sections concerning item analysis for each grade and scale score distribution analysis for each grade. These reports end with a section “Reliability and Validity Evidence” which indicates how CTB/McGraw Hill and the Colorado Department of Education have attempted make the CSAP both reliable and valid.

**GPA.** Grades are used to convey to students, families, and others how well a student is achieving in a class and final grades demonstrate the student’s overall achievement in that class. Students receive credit for classes based on their grades and
grades can be used to either accelerate a child’s learning or identify her for placement in intervention classes. Grading practices should reflect a student’s achievement towards the academic standards for a class. Grading should also be consistent across the school district. The *High School Procedures* manual encourages each school to decide how the teachers will calibrate their grading procedures in an effort to provide consistency across the school in grading regarding the process of learning and the products the work done in that class. The manual also lists other suggestions for grading policies such as team meetings, school grading policies, percentage of process and product work, etc.

When schools use weighted grades, based on a 5.2 scale rather than a 4.0 scale, students receive two GPAs: one using weighted points and one using unweighted points. For this study, all students’ grades were averaged using unweighted points.

Table 9 gives a description of what each grade means for this school district. It also aligns the value of each grade, weighted and unweighted, and provides the percentage points for each.
According to the school district’s manual, *High School Procedures*. Grade point averages are computed in the following manner:

- Multiply each point value by the number of semester hours earned or attempted at the point value to obtain total point value for each grade.
- Add total semester hours earned or attempted in courses counted toward the grade point average.
- Add the total point values earned.
• Divide the sum of the total point value by the sum of semester hours earned or attempted in courses counting toward the grade point average (*High school procedures*, 2012, p. 33).

GPAs are determined by the grades (calculated as points) multiplied by the semester hours over the years.

The validity of the grades given is questioned as grades can be subjective. An A at one school may not be an A at another school. The district acknowledges this in the guide.

Grade point average is an interpretation of the pupil's achievement in terms of the marks received in the course taken. It does not take into consideration the varying nature of courses ranging from academic to non-academic nor does it show the relative difficulty of courses within any particular department. (*High school procedures*, 2012, p. 33, emphasis in original)

Grading is subjective as is the difficulty of courses. The majority of the students in this study graduated from Harvey High School so the cumulative GPA could be assumed to possess less fluctuation than if the students were from a variety of schools in the district. However, the fluctuation from across departments will still affect the GPA.

Despite these drawbacks to reliability of GPAs, GPA is included in this study as one more piece of puzzle to understanding academic achievement with students in an urban, low-income neighborhood. GPAs are used when students apply for college and they are commonly understood in secondary education in the USA.

*Attendance.* The introduction to a NCES (National Forum on Education Statistics) report on school attendance begins by stating, “A missed school day is a lost opportunity for students to learn” (NCES, 2009). Poor attendance can lead to lower academic achievement, loss of credits needed to graduate, and, eventually dropout rates
(NCES, 2009). Keeping students on track to graduate from high school is dependent on daily attendance and begins in middle school (Balfanz, Herzog, & MacIver, 2007; Balfanz, 2009; and ACT, 2008). Examining student attendance data for travel and non-travel students examines whether or not travel was associated with students’ school attendance.

Harold’s school district requires that each school and teacher keep precise records of student absences, tardies, and truancies through an online portal. Attendance rates are based on a student’s minutes enrolled and minutes attended (C. Pham, personal communication, July 2014). This information is sent daily through the district’s data system where it is automatically analyzed for individual, grade, and school attendance rates. These data are sent back to the school. Teachers may forget to take attendance, or the substitute teachers do not report attendance in a timely manner so that it can be recorded electronically which may make this information inaccurate at times (K. Quig, personal communication, March 2014).

There are several problems with the validity and reliability of these data. One, the school district did not start the above-mentioned procedure until the 2008 to 2009 school year. Therefore, I have data for only three years (2008 to 2009, 2009 to 2010, and 2010 to 2011) of the seven I examine. Two, the attendance data may be unreliable due to human error in entering the data. In the beginning years of electronic attendance reporting, teachers were unfamiliar with logging on to the portal to record attendance, which affected the accuracy of the information (T. Fitzgerald, personal communication,
October 2008). Because of these challenges, reliable data may be unavailable for this variable.

**Graduation rate.** In the school district where this study takes place, students receive credits for most of the classes they take in high school. Each student needs 240 credits to graduate from high school. Presently, each high school calculates this number for each student by hand using course information from the school online portal. This total is turned in to the main district office that submits a list of graduates to the state department of education. The state education department requires that this information be turned into their office where it calculates the graduation rate based on a student cohort indicator, which is also known as the Anticipated Year of Graduation, which is assigned to a student in Grade 9 (C. Pham, personal communication, July 2014). The school district and the individual schools receive their graduation rates based on what is returned to them from the state department of education.

Due to hand calculation of graduation credits, it is possible that some of these data are incorrect. However, graduation is included as another indicator of academic achievement.

**Suspension rate.** Suspension rate reflects the time students have spent out of school for violation of school rules. This variable is similar to attendance variable regarding importance. Students who attend school are more likely to graduate than those who do not. Suspension rates are also important because they are indicators of which students may have problems in school. Losen and Skiba (2010) examined suspension data and they state “Concerns about high suspension rates should be treated with the
same level of concern often expressed for low test scores, poor attendance, and high dropout rates” (p. 8).

Schools in the Harold and Harvey school district are required to enter all disciplinary incidents daily, including suspensions, through the school online portal. The information is available for people in the central offices of the district to examine, just as is the attendance data. While the district has violation codes for types of incidents such as drug and alcohol violations, bullying, dangerous weapons, assault, etc., they may not be tracked similarly for each school (for more details see Policy JK-R-Student Conduct and Discipline, Denver Public Schools). For example, in one school, a student who comes to school under the influence of alcohol might be sent home whereas in another school that same student would be suspended. As one school district employee related to me, “Sometimes the same kind of violation may result in suspension in one school, but may not in the other” (personal communication, July 2014). Therefore, these data may not be valid or reliable. They are included in this study as another indicator of school engagement. However, caution was used in examining the data.

**Data collection.** The dataset was originally given to me by the school district for a class project. I did not analyze it because it took three years (2009 to 2012) to receive it. All data have been coded with identifiers removed.
Data analysis. The first step in data analysis is the use of descriptive statistics. I describe several characteristics common to the four groups in the sample for each of the dependent variables. Mean and standard deviation are reported in this section as described in *APA Publication Manual* (APA, 2010).

The second step was to generate and report the inferential statistics, including reporting results of tests of assumptions. The results of the one-way ANOVAs and repeated measures ANOVAs are reported using the *F*-statistic to report statistical significance (if any) and *p* value. The *p* value is probability of getting the results I did given a true null hypothesis.

The third step discusses the findings and what they may indicate about the effect of travel or no travel on academic achievement and school engagement.

Finally, the highlights from these findings are explained in language and graphs that the interviewees and the focus group participants can understand so that they will be able to offer their opinions and insights regarding these results.

**Transformative Paradigm Implications**

All 50 states use some form of standardized testing to evaluate, diagnose, place, and describe students, teachers, and schools (*Digest of Education Statistics*, 2012). These results are added to GPA, attendance rates, suspensions, and other data gathered by districts in an effort to keep up with the data driven culture of education (Gay, 2010).

While test makers go to great lengths to dispel any ideas of test bias for ethnicity, gender, disabilities, socioeconomic status, etc., many students still struggle to achieve passing scores on these tests (ACT, 2005; ACT 2007; CTB/McGraw Hill 2008, 2009, 2010,
2011; Gay, 2010). This achievement gap in testing is well documented (Ladson-Billings, 2006).

The use of transformative paradigm allows these data to be analyzed from a different perspective. Instead of buying into the argument that students from a low-income, urban, ethnically and linguistically diverse neighborhood are inferior academically to their White, suburban peers from middle- to upper-income neighborhoods, I analyzed these data in light of factors that might cause these data points to be lower. It is beyond the scope of this study to investigate the test scores of the non-traveling students in depth. However, some of the reasons I suspect these students’ data points are not as high as their White peers are: high mobility rates (i.e. families who have to move frequently due to housing or work issues); possible cultural bias in test items; cultural incoherence between home and school; family circumstances affecting attendance rates; unequal grading procedures affecting GPAs; and English language acquisition rates for the sample.

Finally, I endeavored to not further marginalize the participants. In fact, my goal is the opposite. The scores, GPAs, and rates by which the students are judged through the eyes of the school district do not explain why they are not performing at an appropriate level (as measured by standards). Gay (2010) sums it up best:

These (test scores) are symptoms of, not the causes of or remedies for, the problem. Unless teachers understand what is interfering with student’s performance, they cannot intervene appropriately, to remove the obstacles to high achievement. Simply blaming students, their socioeconomic background, a lack of interest in and a lack of motivation for learning, and poor parental participation in the educational process is not helpful. The question of “why” continues to be unanswered. (p. 17)
This study analyzes the data available with a motivation to avoid simple answers to the complex questions that test data analysis raises in education. In doing so, I am reminded of the medical precept, “First do no harm” (Hippocrates, ca. 460-ca. 377 B.C). The transformative paradigm demands that a researcher constantly think of how her participants are portrayed and strive to illuminate ways that they are marginalized so that changes can be made to further social justice.

**Phase II: Qualitative Procedures**

This section outlines the qualitative procedures I use in this study. It is organized in to seven parts. The first part introduces the research question and hypothesis. The second part explains the participants and sampling. The third part describes the measures, which include the interview and focus group protocol. The next three parts describe the data collection, data analysis, reliability and validity. Finally, I end with the discussion of the transformative paradigm and its implications for this section.

**Research Question and Hypothesis**

Qualitative Data Question:

What is the meaning of being a part of the educational travel program at Harold Middle School as interpreted by:

i. DC-Only travelers (n = 3)? (individual interviews)

ii. Europe-Only travelers (n = 3)? (individual interviews)

iii. Student who traveled to both DC and Europe (n = 3)? (individual interviews)
iv. Adult chaperones’ view of the meaning for the students (n = 8)? (one focus group)

This research question highlights the people involved in the study by asking a small group of travelers to explain the meaning of travel in their lives. This qualitative phase consists of interviews with former travelers (n = 9) and a chaperone focus group (n = 8) to provide insights into the meaning ascribed to educational travel. I hypothesized that the participants and the chaperones would share that educational travel positively influenced the student travelers’ lives. I based this hypothesis on the informal conversations with former travel participants. I learned this was true, as we will see in Chapter Five when the participants reveal the meaning they ascribe to educational travel.

**Participants and Sampling**

The qualitative phase student participants came from the same sample measures in the quantitative phase. The students I interviewed ranged from 18 years old to 25 years old. The interviewees were be selected from three groups of former travelers: Washington, DC-Only, Europe-Only, and participants that traveled to both Washington, DC and Europe. I used the following eligibility criteria to select three from each group:

- An equal representation from trips through the years, i.e. taking care to select participants from 2003 to 2011, not just one year.
- A proportional balance between males and females (1 male and 2 females for each group);
• A proportional representation of the various ethnic groups comprised within the trip, i.e. the participants were all Latino due to over 90% of the participants in the sample identifying as such; and

• Monolingual Spanish speakers were invited to participate. All of the interviewees spoke both languages.

My aim in the selection process was to create a representative cross-section of the travelers from 2003 to 2011. In seeking out a variety of ways to find participants, I made every attempt to represent a variety of different voices.

There were 40 adult chaperones from all the trips during 2003 to 2014. From 2003 to 2011, there were 26 chaperones. Fourteen were male (54%) and 12 (46%) female, which includes myself. Seven (3 male, 4 female) of these chaperones traveled both to Washington, DC and Europe; twelve (7 male, 5 female) traveled only to Washington, DC; and seven (4 male, 3 female) traveled only to Europe. I was not a participant in the focus groups and neither was Ruth Córdova that brought the number of potential focus group participants to 24. Other adults who traveled with us on the trips who were not directly involved in the care of the students are not included in this group nor are this study. This group was called the “secondary chaperone” group and consisted of aunts, uncles, sisters, grandparents, and parents. I only selected participants from the 24 “primary chaperone” group who were purposely selected to travel with us to care for the children on the trips. I created a focus group of 8 participants from the 14 males and 10 females representing those who traveled to Washington, DC, Europe, or both.
The interviews and focus groups took place during July 2015 to September 2015, after IRB (Institutional Review Board) approval. The interviews and focus groups were conducted at a mutually agreeable place and time. The participants received an informed consent letter (Appendix C). The interview participants each received $40 for DC-Only and Europe-Only. The Both interview participants each received $60 because the interviews were longer. The focus group participants received $40 as an incentive for their time. I provided the money for these interviews.

I used convenience sampling from the participants I reached through social media, email, and word of mouth (see Appendix D). This appeal was in English and Spanish. As possible participants responded, I used “snowball sampling” to ask them to recommend others for the study. As names came in, I matched them to the specific group: DC-Only, Europe-Only, or both DC and Europe. I noted ethnicity, year, and gender. From this pool of possible interviewees, I selected three from each travel group ensuring that a balance of age, gender, and ethnicity is represented.

The same method was for the adult chaperone focus groups. I advertised in English and Spanish for participants by means of social media, email, and word of mouth. (Appendix D).

**Protocols**

I used interviews and focus groups to collect data. I conducted three interviews with students who only traveled to Washington, DC-Only, three interviews with students who only traveled to Europe-Only, and three interviews with students who traveled to DC and Europe. I conducted one focus group with adult chaperones.
Interviews. An interview consists of open-ended questions with prompts that a researcher asks a participant. Generally, interviews are in-depth because of the amount of information gained with such focused conversation. Seidman (2006) states, “At the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience” (p. 9). Interviews acknowledge the views of participants in an event. The participants’ voices bring meaning to facts and figures that may be a part of a study.

Burke and Christensen (2014) describe three types of qualitative interviews: informal conversational interview, interview guide approach, standardized open-ended interview (p. 234). The interview guide approach is the type I plan on using because the interviewer can the questions in any order that seems natural to the follow of conversation and has probes written ahead of time to ask for more information about an answer. The interviewer writes specific open-ended questions based on an interview protocol before the interview yet retained the flexibility to discuss the questions and probes in an order that is natural to the flow of conversation.

The purpose of the interviews for this proposed study is to understand student perceptions, insights and understandings about:

- How they came to travel to Washington, DC, Europe, or both.
- What it was like to travel to Washington, DC, Europe, or both.
- What meaning (if any) the trip(s) have held over the years.

The three sets of questions come from Seidman (2006). The first is focused life history up to the event (p. 17), details of the experience (p. 18), and reflection on the
meaning of the event (p. 18). While Seidman recommends conducting three separate interviews, in the essence of time, I conducted all three parts in one sitting. I did the same thing for a project at the University of Denver with no ill effects on the participants. I offered the interviewees the opportunity to add to what they said via email. In addition, I sent them the transcript of their interview and the final version of Chapter Five. I gave them two weeks to respond with any corrections or additions.

At the end of each interview, I shared the quantitative data and ask for the interviewees’ thoughts and opinions about the findings. I also asked them to comment on their ethnicity or race, gender, and the urban low-income neighborhood to discover what their thoughts were with regard to these descriptors so often used to describe the students from this neighborhood. The interviews lasted between 51 to 90 minutes each.

**Focus group.** A focus group is a type of group interview where a moderator asks a small group of participants for their thoughts, opinions, and feelings about a topic (Krueger & Casey, 2009; Johnson & Christensen, 2014). A group moderator, the person leading the discussion, keeps the group focused on the topic being discussed. Focus groups do not rely on questions and answers as interviews do; rather they rely on the interaction within the group to draw out the participants’ responses to the topic (Mertens, 2014). A researcher uses focus groups when she wants to understand how people think and feel about an issue in a relaxed discussion setting (Krueger & Casey, 2009). Focus groups can be an effective way of gathering thoughts and opinions from a group of people (6 – 8 participants) at one time. They have gained in popularity since Mertens
(1956) first introduced the practice. Now researchers find that focus groups can produce useful results in a cost-effective manner.

According to Krueger and Casey (2009), there are several situations when focus groups are appropriate. Some of the situations when focus groups are appropriate are

- The researcher is looking for a range of ideas or feelings people have about something.
- The researcher wants to understand differences in perspectives between groups or categories of people.
- The researcher is looking for ideas to emerge from the group.
- The researcher needs information to help shed light on quantitative data already collected. (adapted from Krueger & Casey, 2009, pp. 19 -20)

The focus group I held was similar to these four situations. I wanted to gather a range of ideas and feelings about educational youth travel and urban. I expect that both of this group would hold different views from the student interviews but I discovered that they were similar. At the end of the focus group, I shared the quantitative data to gather insights regarding the data that was used to evaluate the students.

Krueger and Casey (2009) offer several situations when focus groups are not appropriate. Several of these are

- The researcher wants people to come to consensus.
- The researcher wants to educate people.
- The researcher wants to give the appearance of listening.
- The environment is emotionally charged.
- The researcher will not have control over the study.
- The researcher cannot maintain confidentiality of sensitive information. (adapted from Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 20)

I did not want people to reach consensus about any of the questions I asked. I was not educating people nor did I expect this topic to be emotionally charged. I care deeply
about this topic so I listened attentively. I was the only researcher involved in this study so I had control over the study and the data, which I kept confidential.

The focus groups I conducted aimed to draw out the participants’ thoughts about the students who traveled during 2003 to 2011 and what insights they gained regarding the students as part of the trips. I created a group of eight members which was small enough to share insights but large enough to have a variety of opinions. I gathered qualitative data based on what was said in response to the open-ended questions I asked during the time we were together. Krueger and Casey (2009) suggest that the researcher serve several roles during this time: “moderator, listener, observer, and eventually analyst” (p. 7). I created a questioning route to stay on topic in a natural sequence so that we had an open-ended discussion regarding travel. No pressure was placed on the participants to reach consensus during the discussion and the participants were encouraged to share differing opinions. All these points combined to help me gain a better understanding of educational travel with middle school students in a low-income neighborhood.

Most researchers recommend two to six focus groups on one topic (Krueger & Casey, 2009; Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Mertens, 2014). Due to time constraints, I only help one focus group. The participants were 11 to 14 years old at the time while the focus group participants were adults. I believed that the adults may have memories and insights that would assist me in understanding the effects or lack thereof, educational travel and I was right.
The purpose of the adult chaperones’ focus group was to gain perceptions, insights and understandings about their perspectives of the influence of educational travel on the students they chaperoned and what that has meant to them. I asked questions regarding:

- How they came to chaperone Washington, DC, Europe, or both.
- What they remember about was it was like for students before the trip.
- What they remember about what it was like for the students on the trip.
- Through their observations and conversations with former travelers, what meaning the trip(s) has held for the student travelers since the trips

Data Collection

I created interview protocols for the three groups of student travelers (See Appendices G to I). These protocols are based on the three interview questions inspired by Seidman (2006): How did you come travel to DC, Europe or both? What was it like to travel to DC, Europe, or both? What has it been like since you traveled to DC, Europe, or both? At the end of the interview, I also asked them for their interpretation of the data from the quantitative section. It gave them a chance to provide their thoughts to the data used to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. To wrap up, they had the opportunity to make recommendations for future travelers and the adults involved with travel.

I created focus group protocol for the adult chaperones (See Appendix J). This protocol is based on the same questions as the interview protocols. I asked the group to interpret the data from the quantitative section asking for their thoughts and advice.
All interviews and focus groups were be audio-recorded using two different electronic devices to ensure all that is said is captured. I took notes. I read the main question from each section, using the prompts as necessary. Participants were reminded to say at least one negative thing about the trips with Harold, which many did not comment on. They were also asked to select a pseudonym. I summarized any answers that might not have been clear and ask the participant for clarification. The last 10 minutes of the interview and focus group time was used summarized the points by clarifying, grouping, prioritizing, etc. in regards to the answers the interviewees and participants gave. I gave them the opportunity to comment on anything I did not ask. They were invited to follow up with me on anything they wish they would have said or anything they wanted to delete. I did this three times: right after I interviewed them, when I sent the transcript, and when I sent Chapter Five. No one wanted to change or add anything.

**Data Analysis**

Data analysis in qualitative research often continues over several months. This study is no exception. I completed all of the interviews before I started the focus group. To keep interviews and focus group clear in my mind, I used the process of memoing to capture my initial thoughts, questions, and impressions of what I am learning through the interviews (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Maxwell, 2013). I memoed both immediately following each interview and focus group and also as I listened to transcripts and reflect on the data.
Creswell (2014) list six steps to data analysis in qualitative research. I use these six steps to describe my plan for data analysis. I start each section listing what he recommends followed by how I carry out his recommendations in my study.

“Step 1. Organize and prepare the data for analysis” (Creswell, 2014, p. 197). TigerFish is a transcription company that other researchers at the University of Denver have used. I used them as they offered a three to five day turnaround time for transcripts of interviews and focus group. The cost for this will be $2,300, which I paid for using my own funds. I created back-up copies of all data and stored them in a secure location.

“Step 2. Read or look at all the data” (Creswell, 2014, p. 197). During this step I gathered an overall idea of what my participants were saying and what their tone was. I made note in the margins of transcripts, wrote memos, and sketched out ideas on plain paper.

“Step 3. Start coding all of the data” (Creswell, 2014, p. 197). Coding is where a researcher looks for words and phrases that represent an idea based on chunks of data and label these categories with a term. Frequently this is based on a term the participants use, or an in vivo term (Creswell, 2014, p. 198). Using the process outlined by Tesch (1990), I found codes that are based on themes one would expect to find, codes that were surprising, and codes that were unusual. From these codes, I created a codebook that is a table that contains all the definitions of the codes I used with a brief description.

“Step 4. Use the coding process to generate a description of the setting or people as well as categories or themes for analysis” (Creswell, 2014, p. 199). I used the codes to describe the participants in the interviews and focus groups. Creswell (2014)
recommends five to seven themes for a research study (p.199). I used research memos during this step to assist in narrowing the themes to this number however I ended up with more than what is recommended. Chapter Five contains a discussion of this.

“Step 5. Advance how the description and themes will be represented in the qualitative narrative” (Creswell, 2014, p. 200). I used the descriptions and themes to highlight the participants and their thoughts by creating a table and then a framework for meaningful educational travel. Chapter Six contains this discussion.

“Step 6. A final step in data analysis involves making interpretation in qualitative research (bold original) of the findings or results” (Creswell, 2014, p. 200). In Chapter Six, I share what I have learned from the interviews and focus groups. I also make connections to themes that emerged in the literature review. The transformative paradigm guided this section as I aimed to accurately represent the voices of the participants in what they say regarding educational travel. In addition, I highlighted their responses to the quantitative data results from the first phase in the findings.

Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability in qualitative research are often discussed together. In this section I discuss two concerns with qualitative research and provide a table with how I addressed validity and reliability in this study.

Familiarity with the participants. Seidman (2006) warns the researcher of the “perils of easy access” (p. 40). These perils refer to situations when the interviewer knows her participants well. I knew my students well when they traveled with me. Some of them kept in touch with me through visits, emails, texts, and social media. Before I
started recruiting for participants, I purposely did not discuss this research study with any
former travelers to prevent possible interviewees from thinking about this study ahead of
time. I no longer teach the students who formed the sample for this study and I am no
longer a teacher at Harold Middle School.

The adult chaperones of the trips and I knew each other well when we traveled
together. From the pool of possible focus group participants, I kept in touch with only
two women. These friendships are casual and I only gave a few details of my research to
them. All of the chaperones left Harold Middle School during the 2010 to 2013 school
years except for Ruth Córdova and myself. In the fall of 2014, I started work at a new
school, Walter School. There I work with Grace Carrington and Armando Salazar, two
of the adult chaperones, but we are not in the same department.

In the introduction to this research proposal, I discussed my relationship with
Harold Middle School (“About the Researcher and Harold Middle School”). I knew that
my researcher bias had the potential to affect the validity of this study. I knew all the
participants in some way. To mitigate these effects, I engaged in what Burke and
Christiansen (2009) term “reflexivity” (p. 299). I actively reflected upon, monitored, and
controlled my biases to lessen the chance that they tainted the study. I consulted with my
professor and IRB when one situation arose where I had a concern. They both assured
me that there was no need to be concerned.

“Whose meaning is it? Is it anybody’s meaning?” Seidman (2006) addresses
these two questions in the section on validity and reliability in Interviewing as
Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers in Education and Social Sciences (pp. 22
-23). He points out that interviewers can strive to lessen their effect on the participants’ responses yet the interviewers are still part of the process. They ask the questions, interpret and describe the answers, and analyze what was said. What the interviewee shares is, in part, a consequence of the interaction with the interviewer. Rather than see this as a validity issue, Seidman (2006) advocates embracing the humanness of the interviewer as an instrument that can react and respond to the interviewee as a fellow human in ways a survey or questionnaire cannot.

All of points apply to other qualitative measures, such as focus groups. Krueger and Casey (2009) suggest that qualitative researchers “worry less about the traditional concerns of validity and instead be ready to answer the following question, ‘What are you doing to ensure that you have followed the steps associated with quality research?’” (p. 203). They contend that if a researcher follows sound procedures in constructing qualitative research, listens carefully to the participants, asks for clarification and verification of understandings, and engages in thoughtful analysis, then validity will take care of itself in the research process.

Another question Seidman (2006) asks is whether or not one can trust that what the participants are telling us it true. Some of the criticisms of focus groups involve the humanness of the participants: they tend to intellectualize, they may make up answers, and some individuals can influences others. Those qualities, however reflect genuine human interaction. I can trust that what the participants tell me to be true by using some of the strategies for research validity that I discuss next.
Strategies for research validity. Burke and Christensen (2014) suggest a researcher add a table to delineate the common methods used to address issues of descriptive, interpretive, theoretical, internal and external validity. Therefore, Table 10 explains the common strategies used and how I apply them to this study.
Table 10  

*Research Validity Strategies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical friend</td>
<td>Throughout this process, a group of one other PhD student and two PhDs acted as critical friends by providing feedback and asking probing questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended fieldwork</td>
<td>The data collected for this research were from 2003 to 2011 and the interviews and focus groups occurred during 6 months in 2014 to 2015, which reflects a 12-year period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External audit</td>
<td>One educational travel expert and one former teacher who traveled with her students who read and discussed my work as needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-inference descriptors</td>
<td>Data analysis used participants’ descriptions to explain themes as much as possible while retaining clarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple data sources</td>
<td>I used six independent variables in the quantitative data. I gathered information from at least 17 people for the qualitative data, which provided a way for the participants’ voices to be heard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple methods</td>
<td>I used quantitative and qualitative methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple theoretical perspectives</td>
<td>To explain and interpret the data, I used the transformative paradigm as an overarching perspective and experiential education, effective middle school education, and culturally responsive teaching as ways to examine the effects of educational travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant feedback</td>
<td>I gave participants the opportunity to ensure that I understood what they said and to offer feedback regarding my understandings. Again, in the transformative paradigm, it is critical to ensure that people who are marginalized in society voice their thoughts and opinions and that the researcher adequately represents them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer review</td>
<td>I sought another researcher who was not directly involved to become my “disinterested peer” (Burke &amp; Christensen, 2009, p. 301). I asked this person to challenge me on my actions and interpretations. In addition, I shared my progress with my dissertation committee.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reflexivity

I assumed my bias is that travel positively influenced the participants and they reported this as well. Also, I had a close relationship with all of the participants at one point. I was continually aware of these biases and engaged in critical self-reflection. In the process of memoing, I reflected on the interviews and focus groups to reduce this bias. In these memos, I examined my cultural lens as a female, White, middle-income researcher and looked for any biases that resulted from it.

Rule out alternative explanations

In the data analysis, I sought alternate explanations for the best possible explanations for the relationship between educational travel and its significance in the lives of the participants. I listed other factors that might have influenced the explanation.

Note. Adapted from Burke & Christensen, 2014, p. 301.

By incorporating these strategies into my proposed research study, I am confident that I created a study that reduces the threats to reliability and validity.

**Transformative Paradigm Implications**

Mertens (2009) outlines three points when discussing the rationale for using the transformative paradigm in research studies

1. Ongoing challenges in the world;
2. The need to acknowledge that addressing issues of power, discrimination, and oppression can play a key role in redressing inequities; and
3. Supportive evidence from illustrative studies of the potential for social change when researchers and evaluators operate within the assumptions of the transformative paradigm. (p.3)

My rationale for including interviews and focus groups are similar to Merten’s points one and two. The ongoing challenge for equality in educational opportunities for students who come from low-income, ethnically and linguistically diverse, and urban backgrounds is well documented (Delpit, 2006; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2009, Nieto, 2010, among others). This inequality is often described using a deficit perspective
This study provides an asset view of the participants in the study in terms of what they can accomplish and what they can recommend to the world of educational travel. The insights they provide about the scores and other quantitative data show us that this is not the whole story of the lives of these participants.

The ongoing nature of oppression, discrimination, and unequal power structures in education today is another area that continues to create unequal access to quality learning environments for minority, urban students in a low-income neighborhood (Delpit, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Gay, 2010; Nieto, 2010, among others). This also extends to educational travel (Simon, 2007; McLellan, 2011). This research study offers new ideas and new ways that educational travel’s doors can be opened up to more students and that the effects of travel on school engagement and academic achievement can be explored for them.

Through the qualitative data I collected, I privilege the voices of those who often remain voiceless and powerless in the discourse of effective educational practices and educational travel. The transformative paradigm provides the necessary overarching lens needed to do this. The voices of the people who make up this sample give a clearer and more in-depth explanation of the quantitative data in this study.

**Mixed Methods Data Analysis Procedures**

The researcher analyzes one data set in the first phase of the explanatory sequential mixed methods design. From that analysis, he decides which findings to
follow up on in the second phase. Then he interprets how the connected results of the two phases answer the research questions (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 218).

I analyzed the data at the end of each phase. At the end, I offer meta-inferences (i.e., the combination of both sets of inferences to a whole) at the end to provide a better understanding of how quantitative and qualitative data together address the meaning of educational travel with urban middle school youth.

**Answering the Transformative Question**

The transformative aims for interpreting both phases of this research project together are to give the participants in educational travel an opportunity to tell of their travel experiences and what it has meant to them. It also gives them an opportunity to comment on the influence of educational travel on their academic achievement and school engagement. Their adult chaperones also contributed to an understanding of the students’ experience. By combing the two phases, this research study builds a picture of youth and travel in an urban middle school.

Ultimately, through the data analysis and the voices of the participants the goal of this study was to make recommendations to educators, administrators, and travel companies for finding ways for more urban youth in a low-income neighborhood to experience educational travel if they desire. This brings more equality to an area that is dominated by White, middle- and upper-income students.

**Limitations**

There are limitations to this study. The data I received from the students who attended Harold School at the time of the study had many missing scores due to student
mobility rates. Consequently I did not have enough students to measure CSAP scale score growth of individual students from Grade 5 to Grade 10. Instead I examined the means of the students for whom I did have data. Only 17% of all the No Travel students in the study had ACT scores (See Table 11). The travel students were represented at a higher rate: 33% of DC-Only, 59% of Europe-Only, and 58% of Both. This trend is repeated for all the academic achievement and school engagement variables (See Appendix M, Interview Binder, for all tables). Since the results reflect only 17% of the students who did not travel, one might surmise that the results would be different if this percent were higher; thus reflecting more of the non-travelers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Total in Study</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Travel</td>
<td>1010</td>
<td>6100</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1178</td>
<td>6444</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, the total number of travelers compared to the total number of non-travelers in the entire study is small. Only 5% of the 6,444 in this study were travelers. This is very small group to examine and from which to draw conclusions.

Another limitation is the other factors affecting the academic achievement and school engagement variables. There are possibly other reasons for the statistical significance found in these variables. Perhaps the students who self-selected to travel were pre-destined to do better in school because they wanted to travel. This might speak to a desire to explore, to see something new that the non-travelers did not possess.
Conceivably it might be difficult to imagine that a short-term travel experience in Grade 6 or Grade 8 could affect a test score in Grade 11 even though that is what some of the participants report.

All of the DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both travel groups had me for a teacher. Therefore a limitation is that it cannot be determined where my (assumed) effectiveness as a teacher ends and the effect of the educational travel experience begins. Did they score higher due to my teaching methods or due to the class in general? Was it because they received more literacy instruction that their scores were higher and not because of travel? In addition, none of the non-travelers who also had me for a teacher in other classes were interviewed for this project nor were there scores examined. Students who started out wanting to travel and then dropped out and non-traveling students from the general Harold population were not interviewed for this project nor were their scores examined. This is a limitation as they might have shared insights or their scores might have revealed information useful in understanding the results of this study. In addition, of the students I did interview, I had to rely on their memories of the trips. While I constructed my interview protocols to ask the participants to “reconstruct, not remember,” I know that I was dependent on their recall (Seidman, 2006, p. 88).

Another limitation is the manner in which I recruited the nine interviewees. I posted announcements via social media and emailed the former travelers for whom I had addresses. This precludes the participants who do not use social media and who do not have an email address or for whom I do not have that address. Some of the former chaperones did not respond to my requests or I did not have their contact information. It
is possible that if I had been able to include more participants and adult chaperones, my conclusions would be different. Also, I was the interviewer and the focus group host. I was the teacher of the participants and the leader of the trips. It is possible that the comments and reflections were more positive and guarded because they recalled I had a position of power in their lives at one point.

Ruth Córdova and I were the head organizers of the trips and I was the Executive Director of HEEP during the years of this study. Therefore, I know that I am intimately involved with the trips, which could mean my perceptions are biased. I have diligently tried to control for this in the validity section of this proposal. I realize that eliminating all bias is not possible.
CHAPTER FOUR

Quantitative Results

Introduction

This section details the results of the quantitative analyses that addressed this study’s quantitative research question: What is the difference in student academic achievement and school engagement between Washington, DC travelers (DC-Only), Europe travelers (Europe-Only), and students who traveled to both DC and Europe (Both) \( n = 344 \) as compared to each other and to non-travelers from Harold Middle School \( n = 6,100 \) between 2003 to 2011?

a. Academic Achievement: What is the difference in ACT scores, CSAP scale scores, and cumulative GPA?

b. School Engagement: What is the difference in attendance, graduation, and suspension rates?

This question aimed to ascertain whether educational travel is related to academic achievement and school engagement for former travelers at Harold Middle School. The data compared former travelers \( n = 344 \) to non-travelers \( n = 6,100 \) at Harold Middle School from the academic years 2003 to 2011. Additionally, each sub-group (No Travel, DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both) was compared to the others. Academic achievement data examined consisted of the following: ACT scores, CSAP scale scores, and
cumulative grade point averages (GPA). School engagement data examined consisted of the following: attendance, graduation, and suspensions. The results in this section address the hypothesis is that educational travel is related to these academic achievement and school engagement variables.

The academic achievement data were analyzed using a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for ACT scores and GPA and repeated measures ANOVA for CSAP math, reading, science, and writing scale scores. The school engagement data were analyzed using a one-way ANOVA for attendance and a Pearson chi-square for graduation and suspension rates.

**Academic Achievement Findings**

**ACT Scores**

**ACT composite scores.** An analysis of the descriptive data revealed that composite ACT scores were available in all four samples (No Travel, DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both). Descriptive information for the composite ACT score is presented in Table 12. The distribution of composite ACT scores for the No Travel Group (1.04) was slightly positively skewed while the DC-Only (0.10), Europe-Only (0.65), and Both (0.52) Travel Groups were approximately normal. Normality was violated to a small degree as skewness between -1.0 and +1.0 is considered relatively normal.
A one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the effects of travel on the ACT composite score for participants who participated in the trips to DC-Only, to Europe-Only, and Both as well as those who did not participate in any educational travel at Harold Middle School. The Levene’s test for homogeneity of variance between the groups was violated ($p = 0.014$); therefore a Brown-Forsythe robust test for equality of means was used. There was a statistically significant effect of travel on the composite ACT score, $F(3, 144.91) = 6.69, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.02$ with a small effect size.

A one-way ANOVA does not indicate which travel groups differ so I used the Games-Howell test (Table 13) to assess pairwise group differences because it is a post-hoc test used with unequal sample sizes in the presence of a violation of homogeneity of variance. Results are shown in Table 13.
Table 13

Games-Howell Test of Pairwise Comparisons for ACT Composite Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(I) Travel (J) Travel</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No travel DC-Only</td>
<td>-1.65</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>-0.89</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>-1.58</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC-Only No travel</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe-Only No travel</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC-Only Both</td>
<td>-0.76</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe-Only No travel</td>
<td>-0.68</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.698</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC-Only Both</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.698</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of this test indicate a statistically significant difference between the No Travel Group and the DC-Only Group \( p < 0.05 \), with a higher mean composite ACT score for the DC-Only Group compared to the No Travel group, and between the No Travel Group and the Both Group \( p = 0.02 \) with a higher mean for the Both group compared to No Travel.

**ACT English subscores.** An analysis of the descriptive data revealed that ACT English subscores were available in all four samples. One outlier was deleted from the DC-Only travel group. Descriptive information for the ACT English subscores is presented in Table 14. The distribution of English subscores for the No Travel Group
(0.66), DC (0.02), Europe-Only (0.24), and Both (0.14) Travel Groups were approximately normal.

Table 14

*Descriptive Statistics for ACT English Subscores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>13.20</td>
<td>1011</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>15.05</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>5.07</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>14.34</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>-0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>15.26</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>-0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13.42</td>
<td>1179</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the effects of travel on the ACT English subscores for participants who participated in the trips to DC-Only, to Europe-Only, and Both as well as those who did not participate in any educational travel at Harold Middle School. The Levene’s test for homogeneity of variance between the groups was not significant ($p = 0.13$) indicating that this assumption underlying the application of ANOVA was met. The one-way between subjects ANOVA of ACT English subscore revealed a statistically significant main effect $F(3, 125.99) = 6.77, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.02$ with a small effect size. Results are shown in Table 15.
Table 15

One-Way Analysis of Variance for ACT English Subscores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>377.98</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>125.99</td>
<td>6.80</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>21,765.02</td>
<td>1174</td>
<td>9.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22,143.00</td>
<td>1787</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test to assess the significance of pairwise differences in mean ACT English subscore indicated a statistically significant difference at $p < 0.05$ in the means between the DC ($M = 15.04$, $SD = 5.01$) and No Travel ($M = 13.20$, $SD = 4.28$) groups and the Both ($M = 15.26$, $SD = 4.62$) and No Travel Groups.

**ACT mathematics scores.** Descriptive information for the ACT mathematics subscores is presented in Table 16. The distribution of mathematics sub-scores for the No Travel Group (1.63), DC-Only (0.88), Europe-Only (1.50), and Both (1.75) Travel Groups non-normally distributed.

Table 16

Descriptive Statistics for ACT Mathematics Subscores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>16.20</td>
<td>1011</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>3.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>16.98</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>16.95</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>17.02</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>3.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16.29</td>
<td>1179</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the effects of travel on the ACT Mathematics subscores for participants who participated in the trips to DC-Only, to Europe-Only, and both trips as well as those who did not participate in any educational travel at Harold Middle School. The Levene’s test for homogeneity of variance between the groups was not significant ($p = 0.38$) indicating that this assumption underlying the application of ANOVA was met. The one-way between subjects ANOVA of ACT mathematics subscore did not reveal a statistically significant main effect $F(3, 1175) = 2.29$, $p = 0.08$. Results are shown in Table 17.

Table 17

One-Way Analysis of Variance for ACT Mathematics Subscores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>62.10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20.70</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>10,636.78</td>
<td>1175</td>
<td>9.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10,698.87</td>
<td>1787</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**ACT reading scores.** Descriptive information for the ACT reading subscores is presented in Table 18. The distribution of reading subscores for the No Travel Group (1.01.), DC-Only (0.19), Europe-Only (0.50), and Both (0.16) Travel Groups were approximately normal.

Table 18

*Descriptive Statistics for ACT Reading Subscores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>14.87</td>
<td>1010</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>17.40</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>-0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>16.36</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>17.02</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15.14</td>
<td>1178</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Levene’s test for homogeneity of variance between the groups was violated ($p < 0.001$); therefore a Brown-Forsythe robust test for equality of means was used. There was a statistically significant effect of travel on the ACT Reading score, $F(3, 132.67) = 8.71, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.03$ with a small effect size.

The Games-Howell test was used (Table 19) to assess pairwise group differences because it is a post-hoc test used with unequal sample sizes in the presence of a violation of homogeneity of variance. Results are shown in Table 19.
The results of this test indicate a statistically significant difference between the No Travel group and all three of the other travel groups: the DC-Only group ($p = 0.019$), the Europe-Only group ($p = 0.004$), and Both group ($p = 0.028$), with a higher mean ACT Reading sub-score for the all three travel groups compared to the No Travel group.

**ACT science subscores.** Descriptive information for the ACT science subscore is presented in Table 20. The distribution of ACT science subscore for the No Travel Group (0.66), DC-Only (0.31), Europe-Only (0.24), and Both (0.14) Travel Groups were approximately normal.
Table 20

*Descriptive Statistics for ACT Science Subscores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>15.88</td>
<td>1009</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>17.18</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>-0.22</td>
<td>-0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>16.31</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>17.21</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16.01</td>
<td>1177</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Levene’s test for homogeneity of variance between the groups was not significant ($p = 0.293$) indicating that this assumption underlying the application of ANOVA was met. The one-way between subjects ANOVA of ACT Science subscore revealed a statistically significant main effect $F(3, 1173) = 3.36, p = 0.018$. Results are shown in Table 21.

Table 21

*One-Way Analysis of Variance for ACT Science Subscores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>146.54</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>48.85</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>0.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>17,046.315</td>
<td>1173</td>
<td>14.52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17,192.86</td>
<td>1176</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test to assess the significance of pairwise difference in main ACT science subscore indicated no statistically significant difference between the group means.
CSAP Scale Scores

**CSAP mathematics scale scores.** Data were analyzed using a repeated measures mixed design ANOVA with a within-subjects factor of CSAP mathematics scale scores (Grades 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10) and a between-subjects factor of travel (no travel, DC-Only, Europe-Only, DC and Europe). The Levene’s test for homogeneity of variance between the groups was not violated for any of the groups; since the Greenhouse-Geisser estimate of ε was 0.91 that exceeds a .70 standard sphericity was assumed.

A repeated measures ANOVA of CSAP mathematics scale scores showed that there was a statistically significant main effect of grade, $F(5, 6685) = 404.48, p = .001, \eta^2 = 0.23$. The interaction between time and travel was not significant, $F(15, 6685) = 1.65, p = 0.055, \eta^2 = 0.004$ indicating no difference in pattern of changes in CSAP mathematics scores over time by travel group. There was a statistically significant main effect of travel on the CSAP mathematics scale scores, $F(3, 1337) = 5.87, p = 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.013$. Table 22 is the ANOVA summary table.
Table 22

Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance for CSAP Mathematics Scale Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>$\eta^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Within-Subjects Effects</strong></td>
<td>Math Scale Score</td>
<td>1,743,450.88</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>348,690.175</td>
<td>404.483</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math Scale Score * Travel</td>
<td>21,276.169</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1,418.411</td>
<td>1.645</td>
<td>0.055</td>
<td>0.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>5,762,891.67</td>
<td>6685</td>
<td>862.063</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Between-Subjects Effects</strong></td>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>383,170.071</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>127,723.357</td>
<td>5.867</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>29,103,813.7</td>
<td>1337</td>
<td>21,767.998</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 23

Descriptive Statistics for CSAP Mathematics Scale Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>456.66</td>
<td>66.57</td>
<td>1138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>480.40</td>
<td>70.34</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale Score</td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>479.51</td>
<td>63.59</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>483.98</td>
<td>65.52</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>460.34</td>
<td>67.02</td>
<td>1341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>475.94</td>
<td>71.58</td>
<td>1138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>499.00</td>
<td>75.99</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale Score</td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>492.88</td>
<td>59.80</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>505.05</td>
<td>62.06</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>479.29</td>
<td>71.12</td>
<td>1341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>501.34</td>
<td>66.10</td>
<td>1138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>522.13</td>
<td>70.75</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale Score</td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>512.09</td>
<td>61.95</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>523.58</td>
<td>59.44</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>503.90</td>
<td>66.05</td>
<td>1341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>524.69</td>
<td>65.01</td>
<td>1138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>540.11</td>
<td>64.80</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale Score</td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>531.90</td>
<td>59.75</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>550.87</td>
<td>52.27</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>526.94</td>
<td>64.43</td>
<td>1341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 9</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>533.34</td>
<td>64.60</td>
<td>1138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>557.00</td>
<td>54.83</td>
<td>62</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scale Score</td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>543.62</td>
<td>52.33</td>
<td>86</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>555.76</td>
<td>62.61</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>536.01</td>
<td>63.68</td>
<td>1341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>544.54</td>
<td>65.36</td>
<td>1138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>562.06</td>
<td>66.39</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale Score</td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>550.48</td>
<td>59.41</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>567.64</td>
<td>54.25</td>
<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>546.68</td>
<td>64.82</td>
<td>1341</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 23 provides the means, standard deviations, and sample sizes of CSAP mathematics scale scores by year and by travel group.

Figure 4 shows the means of mathematics scale scores by year by travel group.

**Figure 4.** Means of CSAP mathematics scale scores by year by travel group.

**CSAP scale scores for reading.** Data were analyzed using repeated measures ANOVA with a within-subjects factor of CSAP reading scale scores (Grade 5, Grade 6, Grade 7, Grade 8, Grade 9, Grade 10) and a between-subjects factor of travel (no travel, DC-Only, Europe-Only, DC and Europe). The Levene’s test for homogeneity of variance between the groups was violated for Grade 5 reading scale scores ($p = 0.001$), Grade 7 reading scale scores ($p = 0.024$), and for Grade 10 reading scale scores ($p = 0.016$); since the Greenhouse-Geisser estimate of $\varepsilon$ was 0.80, sphericity was assumed.

A repeated measures ANOVA of CSAP reading scale scores showed that there was a statistically significant main effect of grade, $F(5, 6560) = 407.06, p = .001, \eta^2 = 0.24$; the interaction between time and travel was also significant, $F(15, 6560) = 1.94, p = 0.016, \eta^2 = 0.004$, indicating a different pattern in CSAP reading scale score change by
travel group. However, the effect was very small. There was also a statistically significant main effect of travel on the CSAP reading scale scores, $F(3, 1312) = 9.99$, $p = 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.022$. Table 24 is the ANOVA summary table and Table 25 provides the means, standard deviations, and sample sizes of CSAP reading scale scores by year and by travel group.

Table 24

**Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance for CSAP Reading Scale Scores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>$\eta^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Within-Subjects Effects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Scale Score</td>
<td>2,062,384.16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>412,476.83</td>
<td>407.060</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Scale Score * Travel</td>
<td>29,482.77</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1,965.52</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>0.016</td>
<td>0.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>6,647,296.36</td>
<td>6560</td>
<td>1,013.31</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between-Subjects Effects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>553,032.68</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>184,344.23</td>
<td>9.99</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>24,209,052.24</td>
<td>1312</td>
<td>18,452.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 25

Descriptive Statistics for CSAP Reading Scale Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>547.44</td>
<td>73.45</td>
<td>1116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Scale Score</td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>560.63</td>
<td>104.48</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>572.26</td>
<td>53.27</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>580.91</td>
<td>59.21</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>551.12</td>
<td>73.95</td>
<td>1316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>563.12</td>
<td>73.77</td>
<td>1116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Scale Score</td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>577.32</td>
<td>75.79</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>586.94</td>
<td>60.40</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>602.04</td>
<td>63.42</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>566.94</td>
<td>73.23</td>
<td>1316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>582.26</td>
<td>66.57</td>
<td>1116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Scale Score</td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>598.62</td>
<td>78.98</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>606.52</td>
<td>53.50</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>622.95</td>
<td>53.82</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>586.28</td>
<td>66.64</td>
<td>1316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>602.07</td>
<td>58.16</td>
<td>1116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Scale Score</td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>624.51</td>
<td>63.87</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>623.47</td>
<td>46.20</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>629.85</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>605.63</td>
<td>58.57</td>
<td>1316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 9</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>623.55</td>
<td>48.91</td>
<td>1116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Scale Score</td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>638.53</td>
<td>55.82</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>637.47</td>
<td>38.69</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>644.51</td>
<td>49.26</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>626.00</td>
<td>48.97</td>
<td>1316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>645.42</td>
<td>53.34</td>
<td>1116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Scale Score</td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>666.44</td>
<td>52.00</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>662.42</td>
<td>35.02</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>668.95</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>648.46</td>
<td>53.00</td>
<td>1316</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 5 shows the means of reading scale scores by year by travel group.

**Figure 5.** Means of CSAP reading scale scores by year by travel group.

**CSAP scale scores for science.** Data were analyzed using a repeated measures ANOVA with a within-subjects factor of CSAP science scale scores (Grade 5, Grade 8, Grade 10) and a between-subjects factor of travel (no travel, DC-Only, Europe-Only, DC and Europe). The Levene’s test for homogeneity of variance between the groups was violated for Grade 8 ($p = 0.004$); since the Greenhouse-Geisser estimate of $\epsilon$ was 0.937, sphericity was assumed.

A repeated measures ANOVA of CSAP science scale scores showed that there was a statistically significant main effect of grade, $F(2, 950) = 66.46$, $p = 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.123$. The interaction between time and travel was not significant, $F(2,950) =0.47$, $p =0.83$, $\eta^2 = 0.003$. There was a statistically significant effect of travel on the CSAP
science scale scores, \( F(3, 475) = 6.01, p = 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.04 \). Table 26 is the ANOVA summary table and Table 27 provides the means, standard deviations, and sample sizes of CSAP science scale scores by year and by travel group.

Table 26

*Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance for CSAP Science Scale Scores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>( \eta^2 )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Within-Subjects Effects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science Scale Score</td>
<td>124,471.348</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>62,235.674</td>
<td>66.464</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science Scale Score * Travel</td>
<td>2,619.126</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>436.521</td>
<td>0.466</td>
<td>0.834</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>889,561.326</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>936.380</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Between-Subjects Effects</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>143,441.314</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>47,813.771</td>
<td>6.005</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>378,221.51</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>7,962.551</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 27

Descriptive Statistics for CSAP Science Scale Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>489.14</td>
<td>56.08</td>
<td>421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>534.84</td>
<td>46.17</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>490.19</td>
<td>51.19</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>522.70</td>
<td>31.25</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>492.60</td>
<td>55.65</td>
<td>479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>453.29</td>
<td>60.70</td>
<td>421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>493.26</td>
<td>34.58</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>446.50</td>
<td>56.61</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>483.09</td>
<td>39.52</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>456.08</td>
<td>59.62</td>
<td>479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>449.77</td>
<td>58.77</td>
<td>421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>489.42</td>
<td>38.78</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>442.88</td>
<td>71.82</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>471.09</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>452.13</td>
<td>58.55</td>
<td>479</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 6 shows the means of science scale scores by year by travel group.

Figure 6. Means of CSAP science scale scores by year by travel group.

**CSAP writing scale scores.** Data were analyzed using a repeated measures ANOVA with a within-subjects factor of CSAP writing scale scores (Grade 5, Grade 6, Grade 7, Grade 8, Grade 9, Grade 10) and a between-subjects factor of travel (no travel, DC-Only, Europe-Only, DC and Europe). The Levene's test for homogeneity of variance between the groups was not violated for any of the groups; since the Greenhouse-Geisser estimate of $\varepsilon$ was 0.85, sphericity was assumed.

A repeated measures ANOVA of CSAP writing scale scores showed that there was a statistically significant main effect of grade, $F(5, 5835) = 321.02, p = .001, \eta^2 = 0.22$. The interaction between time and travel was not significant, $F(15, 5835) = 1.53, p$
=0.085, $\eta^2 = 0.004$. There was a statistically significant main effect of travel on the CSAP writing scale scores, $F(3, 1167) = 11.52, p = 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.03$. Table 28 is the ANOVA summary table and Table 29 provides the means, standard deviations, and sample sizes of CSAP writing scale scores by year and by travel group.

Table 28

Repeted Measures Analysis of Variance for CSAP Writing Scale Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>$\eta^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Within-Subjects Effects</td>
<td>Writing Scale Score</td>
<td>1,175,866.59</td>
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<td>235,173.317</td>
<td>321.020</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Writing Scale Score *Travel</td>
<td>16,827.802</td>
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<td>1,121.853</td>
<td>1.531</td>
<td>0.085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Error</td>
<td>4,274,607.16</td>
<td>5835</td>
<td>732.580</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between-Subjects Effects</td>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>537,649.061</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>179,216.354</td>
<td>11.518</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Error</td>
<td>18,158,897.8</td>
<td>1167</td>
<td>15,560.324</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Table 29

**Descriptive Statistics for CSAP Writing Scale Scores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>No travel</td>
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<td>988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5 Writing Score</td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>464.91</td>
<td>58.18</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>475.70</td>
<td>48.85</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>481.90</td>
<td>48.05</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>457.16</td>
<td>51.62</td>
<td>1171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>475.17</td>
<td>53.40</td>
<td>988</td>
</tr>
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<td>Grade 6 Writing Score</td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
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<td>56.71</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>501.11</td>
<td>49.66</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>509.33</td>
<td>48.29</td>
<td>52</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>478.95</td>
<td>53.89</td>
<td>1171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>496.64</td>
<td>58.87</td>
<td>988</td>
</tr>
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<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>519.26</td>
<td>69.40</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>516.81</td>
<td>57.69</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>532.19</td>
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<td>510.89</td>
<td>56.91</td>
<td>988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8 Writing Score</td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>529.50</td>
<td>62.74</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>525.55</td>
<td>50.92</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>546.77</td>
<td>51.40</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>514.32</td>
<td>57.23</td>
<td>1171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>514.74</td>
<td>56.06</td>
<td>988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 9 Writing Score</td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>537.67</td>
<td>63.09</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>533.30</td>
<td>48.17</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>548.02</td>
<td>54.28</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>518.51</td>
<td>56.56</td>
<td>1171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>523.15</td>
<td>63.36</td>
<td>988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10 Writing Score</td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>547.67</td>
<td>69.16</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>542.32</td>
<td>53.11</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>552.02</td>
<td>60.76</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>526.84</td>
<td>63.49</td>
<td>1171</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 7 shows the means of CSAP writing scale scores by year by travel group.

**Figure 7.** Means of CSAP writing scale scores by year by travel group.

**Cumulative Grade Point Averages (GPA)**

Descriptive information for the cumulative GPA is presented in Table 30. The distribution of cumulative GPA for the No Travel Group (-0.05), DC-Only (-0.12), Europe-Only (-0.40), and Both (-0.19) Travel Groups were approximately normal.
Table 30

*Descriptive Statistics for Cumulative GPA*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>3952</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>-0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>-0.40</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>-0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>4282</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the effects of travel on the cumulative GPA for participants who participated in the trips to DC-Only, to Europe-Only, and Both trips as well as those who did not participate in any educational travel at Harold Middle School. The Levene’s test for homogeneity of variance between the groups was violated \( p < 0.001 \); therefore a Brown-Forsythe robust test for equality of means was used. There was a statistically significant effect of travel on the cumulative GPA, \( F(3, 336.51) = 22.02, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.01 \).

The Games-Howell test was used (Table 31) to assess pairwise group differences because it is a post-hoc test used with unequal sample sizes in the presence a violation of homogeneity of variance. Results are shown in Table 31.
Table 31

Games-Howell Test of Pairwise Comparisons for Cumulative GPA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(I) Travel</th>
<th>(J) Travel</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>-0.37</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>-0.35</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>-0.43</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.891</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of this test indicate a statistically significant difference between the No Travel group and all the travel groups \((p < 0.001)\), with a higher mean cumulative GPA for all the travel groups compared to the No Travel group. The travel group means did not differ significantly.

**Summary of Academic Achievement Findings**

The results of the academic achievement findings indicate that students who were in the DC-Only and Both Travel Groups had higher means for the ACT Composite Score than those who were in the Europe or No Travel Group. Students who were in the DC-
Only, Europe-Only, or Both Travel Groups had higher means for the ACT reading subscores than those who were in the No Travel Group.

Generally, students who were in the DC-Only, Europe-Only, or Both Travel Groups scored higher in all CSAP subjects in Grade 5 before they were exposed to travel with Harold Middle School than those in the No Travel Group. They continued to score higher than their No Travel peers in all subjects with no statistically significant difference in any subject except science. The CSAP science scale scores declined for all travel groups from Grade 5 to Grade 10.

School Engagement Findings

Attendance Rates

Attendance rates were available for travel groups for Grades 6 to 9. The school district tracked attendance through Grade 9 but not in Grades 10 to 12. There were fewer than two groups for Grade 5 so no statistics were computed. Therefore, attendance rates for Grades 6 to 9 were examined. Descriptive information for attendance rates is presented in Tables 32 to 35 for Grades 6 through Grade 9.

Table 32

*Descriptive Statistics for Grade 6 Attendance*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>2362</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>2399</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 33

Descriptive Statistics for Grade 7 Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>2213</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe-Only-Only</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>2283</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 34

Descriptive Statistics for Grade 8 Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>2046</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe-Only-Only</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>2155</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 35

Descriptive Statistics for Grade 9 Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>1827</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe-Only-Only</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the effects of travel on the attendance rates for participants who participated in the trips to Washington, DC, to Europe, and both trips as well as those who did not participate in any educational travel at Harold Middle School for Grades 6 through 9.
The results of the one-way ANOVA for Grades 6 and 7 were similar. The Levene’s test for homogeneity of variance between the groups was not violated for Grade 6 \((p = 0.04)\) and Grade 7 \((p = 0.02)\). There was no statistically significant effect of travel on attendance in Grade 6, \(F(3, 2395) = 1.46, p = 0.222\) or for Grade 7, \(F(3, 2279) = 2.57, p = 0.053\), so no further tests were conducted.

The results of the one-way ANOVA for Grade 8 indicate the Levene’s test for homogeneity of variance between the groups was violated \((p = 0.001)\); therefore a Brown-Forsythe robust test for equality of means was used. There was a statistically significant effect of travel on the attendance rate in Grade 8, \(F(3, 129.57) = 33.82, p = 0.001\). The Games-Howell test (Table 36) was used to assess pairwise group differences because it is a post-hoc test used with unequal sample sizes with a violation of homogeneity of variance. Results are shown in Table 36.
Table 36

Games-Howell Test of Pairwise Comparisons for Grade 8 Attendance Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(I) Travel</th>
<th>(J) Travel</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of this test indicate a statistically significant difference between the No Travel group and each of the travel groups \( (p = 0.001) \) for Grade 8 with higher attendance for all travel groups compared to the No Travel group.

The results of the one-way ANOVA for Grade 9 indicate the Levene’s test for homogeneity of variance between the groups was violated \( (p = 0.003) \); therefore a Brown-Forsythe robust test for equality of means was used. There was a statistically significant effect of travel on attendance in Grade 9, \( F(3, 161.12) = 3.24, p = 0.024 \). The Games-Howell test was used to assess pairwise group. Results are shown in Table 37.
Table 37

Games-Howell Test of Pairwise Comparisons for Grade 9 Attendance Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(I) Travel</th>
<th>(J)Travel</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.915</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of this test indicate a statistically significant difference between the No Travel group and the Both travel groups ($p = 0.018$) with higher attendance for the Both travel group.

A means plot for Grades 6 through 9 attendance rate can be found in Appendix L.

Graduation Rates

Of the 6,444 students with available data 4,781 did not meet the criteria for analysis of graduation rates. Students in Grades 6 to 11 and who were enrolled in school at the time of the study were not eligible to graduate because they were not old enough to do so. These 2,790 (43%) students were removed from the study. Of the remaining students, 1,991 (31%) transferred to other districts, moved out of the state, went to other
facilities, etc. Of the 6,444 students in the original dataset, 1,663 (26%) remained for analysis.

The remaining students were categorized as graduated or did not graduate. According to Denver Public Schools’ policy, students who earn the GED (General Equivalency Diploma) are not considered to have graduated from high school. Of the 1,663 students, there were 830 (50%) in the graduated category. In the “did not graduate” category, I included 833 students (50%) were included from the following categories: reached the maximum age (6), extended illness (8), dropped out (737), expelled (3), GED (76), and received a certificate of attendance (2). In this sample, the No Travel Group had 1,499 students and the travel groups had the following numbers of students: 56 DC travelers, 76 Europe travelers, and 32 who traveled on both trips.

A chi-square test of association was performed to examine the relationship between graduation from high school and travel category. Results revealed that there was a statistically significant association, $X^2 (3, N = 1,663) = 67.07, p < .001$. Students who participated in travel to DC, Europe, or Both were more likely to graduate that those who did not travel with Harold Middle School. Table 38 provides the percentages of graduation status by travel category.
Table 38

*Graduation and Non-graduation Comparisons for Travel Groups*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduation</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>No Travel</th>
<th>DC-Only</th>
<th>Euro-Only</th>
<th>Both</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>769</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>816.7</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>906.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>730</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>757.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>graduate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>682</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>757.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>-1.9</td>
<td>-4.7</td>
<td>-2.8</td>
<td>1499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1499.0</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>76.0</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>1663.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Because the sample size for each travel category was small, travel was then categorized as travel or no travel. This resulted in 1,499 non-travelers and 164 travelers.

A chi-square test of association was performed to examine the relationship between graduation from high school or not and travel or no travel. Results revealed that there was a statistically significant association, \(X^2 (1, N = 1663) = 61.94, p < .001.\)

Students who participated in travel were more likely to graduate that those who did not travel with Harold Middle School. Table 39 provides the percentages of graduation status by travel category.
Table 39

*Graduation and Non-graduation Comparisons for Travel and No Travel Groups*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduation</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>No Travel</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>769</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>906</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>816.7</td>
<td>89.3</td>
<td>906.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not graduate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>757</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>682.3</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>757.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>-5.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1499</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>1663</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>1499.0</td>
<td>164.0</td>
<td>1663.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Suspension Rates**

All of the 6,444 students had available data for suspensions from Grade 5 through Grade 9. For these students during this time, the district did not have data available on suspensions from Grades 10 to 12 therefore only Grades 5 to 9 are included in the following cross tabulations. The school district coded “no suspensions” and “no information on suspensions” as a 0.0 (C. Pham, personal communication, June 9, 2015). Therefore, it is not known if the students who had a zero in their suspension category were true “no suspensions” or not. It is possible that some zeros were due to students not being enrolled in the district at the time of the study. It is also possible that a student might have transferred into the district with suspensions in another district that were not reported. Suspension data reflect either no suspensions or one or more suspensions for ease in understanding.

A chi-square test of association was performed to examine the relationship between the rate of suspension in Grades 5 through 9 grade and travel category. Results revealed that there was a statistically significant association, $X^2$ (3, $N = 6,444$) = 13.68, $p$
 Students who participated in travel to DC, Europe, or Both were less likely to have been suspended than those who did not travel with Harold Middle School. Table 40 provides the percentages of suspension status by travel category for grade 5 and Table 41 provides that information for grade 6.

Table 40

Suspension Rate Comparisons for Travel Groups in Grade 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suspensions</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No Travel</td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>Europe-Only</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No suspensions</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>5804</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>6146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>5817.9</td>
<td>128.8</td>
<td>128.8</td>
<td>70.6</td>
<td>6146.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One or more</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suspensions</td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>282.1</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>298.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>-2.1</td>
<td>-2.5</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>6100</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>6444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>6100.0</td>
<td>135.0</td>
<td>135.0</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>6444.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results revealed that there was a statistically significant association, $X^2 (3, N = 6444) = 16.60, p = .001$ in Grade 6. Students who participated in travel to DC, Europe, or Both were less likely to have been suspended than those who did not travel with Harold Middle School. Table 41 provides the percentages of suspension status by travel category.
Results revealed that there was no statistically significant association between suspensions and travel category in Grade 7: $X^2 (3, N = 6444) = 2.04, p = .564$. Table 42 provides the percentages of suspension status by travel category.

Results shown in Table 43 reveal that there was no statistically significant association between suspensions and travel category in 8th grade: $X^2 (3, N = 6,444) = 5.06, p = .167$.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suspensions</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>No Travel</th>
<th>DC-Only</th>
<th>Europe-Only</th>
<th>Both</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Suspensions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>5401</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>5739</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>5432.6</td>
<td>120.2</td>
<td>120.2</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>5739</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Travel</td>
<td>88.7%</td>
<td>94.8%</td>
<td>97.0</td>
<td>94.6%</td>
<td>89.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>84.0%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>89.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>705</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>667.4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>705.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Travel</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>-2.0</td>
<td>-2.8</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>6100</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>6444</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>6100.0</td>
<td>135.0</td>
<td>135.0</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>6444.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results revealed that there was a statistically significant association in Grade 9, $X^2(3, N = 6,444) = 8.49, p = .037$. Students who participated in travel to DC, Europe, or
Both were less likely to have been suspended than those who did not travel with Harold Middle School.

Table 44 shows results for grade 9.

Table 44

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suspensions</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No Travel</td>
<td>DC-Only</td>
<td>Euro-Only</td>
<td>Both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No suspensions</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>5498</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>5484.7</td>
<td>121.4</td>
<td>121.4</td>
<td>66.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Travel</td>
<td>90.1%</td>
<td>83.0%</td>
<td>87.4%</td>
<td>89.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>85.3%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>602</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>615.3</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Travel</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One or more suspensions</td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>6100</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>6100.0</td>
<td>135.0</td>
<td>135.0</td>
<td>74.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>6100.0</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>135.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Because the sample size for each travel category was small, travel was categorized as travel or no travel. This resulted in 5,804 non-travelers and 342 travelers.

A chi-square test of association was performed to examine the relationship between the rate of suspension in Grade 5 through Grade 9 and travel category. Results revealed that
there was a statistically significant association, $X^2 (1, N = 6,444) = 13.47, p = .001$ in Grade 5 (Table 45). Students who participated in travel to DC-Only, Europe-Only, or Both were less likely to have been suspended before than those who did not travel with Harold Middle School.

Table 45

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suspensions</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Travel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No suspensions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>5804</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>5817.09</td>
<td>328.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 or more suspensions</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>282.1</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>6100</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6100.0</td>
<td>344.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results revealed that there was a statistically significant association, $X^2 (1, N = 6,444) = 16.15, p = .001$ in Grade 6. Students who participated in travel to DC, Europe, or Both were less likely to have been suspended than those who did not travel with Harold Middle School. See Table 46 for results for Grade 6.
Table 46

Suspension Rate Comparisons for Travel vs. No Travel Groups in Grade 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suspensions</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>No Travel</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No suspensions</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>5410</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>5739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>5432.6</td>
<td>306.4</td>
<td>5739.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 or more</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suspensions</td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>667.4</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>705.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>-3.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>6100</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>6444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>6100.0</td>
<td>344.0</td>
<td>6444.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results revealed that there was not a statistically significant association in Grade 7 (see Table 47), $X^2 (1, N = 6,444) = 0.78, p = .38$. There was no significant association between suspension rates for students who did not travel and those who did.

Table 47

Suspension Rate Comparisons for Travel vs. No Travel Groups in Grade 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suspensions</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>No Travel</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No suspensions</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>5252</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>5554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>5257.5</td>
<td>296.5</td>
<td>5554.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 or more</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>848</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suspensions</td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>842.5</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>890.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>6100</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>6444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>6100.0</td>
<td>344.0</td>
<td>6444.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results revealed that there was no statistically significant association in Grade 8, $X^2 (1, N = 6,444) = .61, p = 0.43$ (see Table 48). There was no significant association between suspension rates for students who did not travel and those who did.
Table 48

Suspension Rate Comparisons for Travel vs. No Travel Groups in Grade 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suspensions</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>No Travel</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No suspensions</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>5218</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>5507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>5213.0</td>
<td>294.0</td>
<td>5507.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 or more suspensions</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>882</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>887.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>937.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>6100</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>6444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>6100.0</td>
<td>344.0</td>
<td>6444.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results revealed that there was a statistically significant association in Grade 9 (see Table 49), $X^2 (1, N = 6,444) = 5.99, p = .014$. Students who participated in travel to DC, Europe, or Both were less likely to have been suspended than those who did not travel with Harold Middle School.

Table 49

Suspension Rate Comparisons for Travel vs. No Travel Groups in Grade 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suspensions</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>No Travel</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No suspensions</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>5498</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>5794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>5484.7</td>
<td>309.3</td>
<td>5794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One or more suspensions</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>602</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>615.3</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>650.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>6100</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>6444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>6100.0</td>
<td>344.0</td>
<td>6444.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of School Engagement Findings

The results of the school engagement findings indicate that students who were in the DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both Travel Groups had higher mean attendance rates in Grade 8 than those who did not travel. Students who were in the Both Travel Group had higher mean attendance rates than those who were in the DC-Only, Europe-Only, or No Travel Group.

The findings also indicate that students in the DC-Only, Europe-Only, or Both Travel Groups were less likely to have been suspended in Grade 5 or Grade 6 than those in the No Travel Group. Students in the No Travel Group were less likely to be suspended in Grade 9 than the DC-Only, Europe-Only or Both Travel Groups.

Finally, students who were in DC-Only, Europe-Only, or Both Travel Groups were more likely to graduate from high school than those who were in the No Travel Group.
CHAPTER FIVE

Qualitative Results

“Thank you so much for your dedication to our community. Thank you for caring. I don't think there's enough people that do. Especially in this day and age, in this education system, like me being one of them working at a high school, it's really easy to get lost in the data.” –Laura

Introduction

As Laura mentions above, it is “easy to get lost in the data” in education. This chapter aims to highlight the thoughts of seventeen people who participated in educational travel at Harold Middle School. To do so, this chapter details the results of the qualitative analyses that addressed this study’s qualitative research question: “What is the meaning of being a part of the educational travel program at Harold Middle School?” as interpreted by:

b. DC-Only travelers (3 individual interviews)

c. Europe-Only travelers (3 individual interviews)

d. Student who traveled to both DC and Europe (3 individual interviews)

e. Adult chaperones’ view of the meaning for the students (one focus group)

This question aimed to ascertain meaning former travelers at Harold Middle School ascribe to the educational travel experiences in which they participated during
their time at Harold Middle School from the academic years 2003 to 2011. During July, August, and September of 2015, I interviewed nine participants, three from each category of educational travel: DC-Only travelers, Europe-Only travelers, and participants who traveled to both DC and Europe. In September 2015, I held a focus group consisting of eight former chaperones: two DC-Only chaperones, three Europe-Only chaperones, and three Both chaperones.

First, I discuss the interview protocol and revisit the rationale explained in Chapter Three. Next, I explain the process I used to develop the qualitative themes. I provide tables for each of the four major themes along with the characteristics for each one with a description. Next, I share the participants’ meaning of educational travel as they recall how they came to travel, what it was like on the trip, and the meaning it has held for them in their lives. DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both are the three travel groups I interviewed for this study. For each travel group, I highlight one participant with an in-depth analysis of his or her travel experience. I selected the participant whose interview I believed painted a complete picture of the trips. I selected portions of the interview where the participants reported certain characteristics of design structure, outcomes, or both. These characteristics are listed with definition I gave them based on the participants’ words and the literature review in Chapter Two. At times, I discuss more than one characteristic for a section. The reader should note that I use the present tense to share what the participants tell me in the interview and the past tense when they share their recollections of their educational travel experience.
The others participants from each group are presented after the main participant with an abbreviated analysis of their experience. All nine participants’ interviews are preceded by a short biography to give the reader a description of each one. Finally, I present a summary of the participants’ comments regarding the quantitative results. Also, I summarize the participants’ comments regarding ethnicity, gender, and living in an urban, low-income neighborhood.

**Interview Protocol**

As discussed in Chapter Three, I chose an interview guide approach for the individual interviews because of the open-ended nature of the questions I wished to ask (Burke & Christensen, 2014). In designing the questions, I used the three sets of questions suggested by Seidman (2006). I asked them a set of questions focused on life history up to the event (p. 17), another set focused on the details of the experience (p. 18), and the last set on their reflection on the meaning of the event (p. 19). I chose Seidman (2006) because I wanted to ensure I gained an understanding of the participants’ understanding of the educational travel experience and the meaning they ascribe to this experience.

In addition, this style of interviewing allows for interpretation of the participants lived experience through the transformative paradigm (Mertens, 2010). The participants describe the meaning of educational travel in their lives in a manner that privileges their view. Their insights and understandings are presented in an academic setting via their strengths, not through the perceived deficits often ascribed to low-income, urban schools. Culturally responsive teaching also informs educational travel as it “acknowledges the
legitimacy of the cultural heritages of different ethnic groups” and “builds bridges of meaningfulness between home and school experiences as well as between academic abstractions and lived sociocultural realities” (Gay, 2010, p. 31). As discussed in Chapter Two, there are few studies that focus on educational travel with students aged 12 to 18 and even fewer that focus on ethnically and linguistically diverse, urban students living in a low-income neighborhood. This style of interview privileges these participants’ voices to provide recommendations for educational travel with underserved populations.

Qualitative Themes

At the end of each interview, I used memoing to ensure I captured my initial thoughts, questions, and impressions of each interview (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Maxwell, 2013). I followed Creswell’s (2014) six steps for data analysis.

“Step 1. Organize and prepare the data for analysis” (Creswell, 2014, p. 197). I sent the audio file to TigerFish, a transcription company. When they returned it to me, I immediately listened to the recording while reading the transcription to check for accuracy. I changed all the names to the pseudonyms and edited any identifying places.

“Step 2. Read or look at all the data” (Creswell, 2014, p. 197). I read through each transcript several times after I checked it for accuracy. In the margins, I made notes regarding emerging themes, thoughts, and questions I had.

“Step 3. Start coding all of the data” (Creswell, 2014, p. 197). After I read through all nine interviews and completed steps one and two, I began to code the interviews. To do so, I used terms the participants used, in vivo coding (Creswell, 2014, p. 198) as the primary method, using codes related to the literature review as a secondary
method. For example, for *in vivo* coding, I used “seeing things with my own eyes” as several participants reported this as something they recall when discussing the meaning of the trip. From the literature review, I used the term, “Enhanced Experiential Learning” to describe the process of learning about something, seeing it, reflecting on it and then incorporating it into one’s life.

“Step 4. Use the coding process to generate a description of the setting or people as well as categories or themes for analysis” (Creswell, 2014, p. 199). As they emerged, I experimented with combining and separating codes to determine which ones best described the thoughts of the participants and the meaning the assigned to educational travel. Standard practice for creating themes often requires that researchers create ones that are parallel in form, i.e. Empowering, Transforming instead of Empowering and Transformative (Foss & Waters, 2007, p. 208). I deliberately chose not to follow this practice because some of my themes are related to pre-existing ones in culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2010) and I wanted to be sure this connection is explicit. One will also note that at times one quote from a participant covers several characteristics in different themes. I wanted to stay true to the participants’ words. Therefore, I opted to credit the quote with several characteristics instead of separating it as standard practice dictates (Foss & Waters, 2007). In addition, one theme is tied so closely to another that it is impossible to separate, i.e. transformative leads to empowering. To create the characteristics and themes, I relied on the literature review and the participants’ words.

While Creswell recommends five to seven themes, I opted for more because I worried about losing the participants’ insights if I narrowed themes down to a few. This
is important for this study because I am employing the transformative paradigm (Mertens, 2009). As noted in Chapter Three, this requires a conscious effort to showcase the voices of the community that is traditionally marginalized in society.

“Step 5. Advance how the description and themes will be represented in the qualitative narrative” (Creswell, 2014, p. 200). After experimenting with several different charts and tables to represent the themes, I decided to model my themes and characteristics after the Association for Middle Level Education’s (AMLE) figure (See Appendix K). First, I created four different tables to categorize the findings by themes and characteristics. Next, I reread all the interviews to ensure these themes and characteristics represented the participants. As I wrote this chapter, I began to see how I could create my own figure based on AMLE’s figure to represent educational travel. (See Appendix K) These findings are explained in this chapter.

Step 6. “A final step in data analysis involves making interpretation in qualitative research (bold in original) of the findings or results” (Creswell, 2014, p. 200). My interpretation will follow in Chapter Six.

Curriculum and instruction. As I examined the interviews, I noticed that the participants mentioned several characteristics related to curriculum and instruction. Exposure to New Ideas, Active Purposeful Learning, Enhanced Experiential Learning, Increased Academics, and Academic Achievement emerged as themes when examined the interviews. When reflecting on the meaning of educational travel in their lives, the students emphasized the learning that took place and the impact this had on their
academic lives. Table 50 explains the characteristics and descriptions from the Curriculum and Instruction theme.

Table 50

*Meaningful Educational Travel: Characteristics and Descriptions of Curriculum and Instruction*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exposure to new ideas</td>
<td>Educational travel offers the opportunity for exposure to new ideas. This “opens doors” to new possibilities thereby expanding travelers knowledge of the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Active purposeful learning</td>
<td>Students and adults are engaged in active, purposeful learning before, during, and after the trip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum and Instruction</td>
<td>Enhanced Experiential Learning</td>
<td>Students are engaged in a cycle of learning, experiencing, reflecting, and applying new ideas or concepts to their lives. (Dewey/Kolb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increased academics</td>
<td>Educational travel provides multiple opportunities to connect classroom learning and academic subjects to lived experiences thereby increasing interest and achievement in academics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Academic achievement</td>
<td>As a result of having multiple pathways to and increased engagement with academics, educational travel may offer higher standardized test scores, increased probability of high school graduation, and an increase in grade point averages.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Leadership and organization. In the interviews, I encountered comments regarding the leadership and organization of educational travel. The participants commented on the adults who influenced their educational travel experience and the organizational structures. Some also mentioned characteristics related to early adolescent development although they did not use these terms per se. Educational travel at Harold always included a strong group of adult leaders who recognized the importance of organizational structures and understood the developmental aspects of middle school students. Therefore, Table 51 explains the characteristics of Organizational Structures, Adult Advocate, and Developmentally Responsive that comprise the theme of Leadership and Organization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership and Organization</td>
<td>Organizational Structures</td>
<td>Organizational structures foster purposeful learning, create a safe environment, and meaningful relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adult Advocate</td>
<td>An adult advocate guides every student’s educational travel experience every step of the way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Developmentally responsive</td>
<td>Adult advocates are committed to and knowledgeable about this age group. In addition, leaders anticipate and plan for the challenges and strengths of this age before, during, and after travel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Culture and community. Gay (2010) described culturally responsive teaching (CRT) as validating, comprehensive, multidimensional, empowering, transformative, and emancipatory. I suspected that some characteristics would also be present in the stories the participants told me about their travels. I believed this from past conversations from
former travelers. Therefore, I combined what I found from AMLE (2012) and Gay (2010) to create the next table describing the characteristics and descriptions I found in the theme of *Culture and Community*. Table 52 describes the characteristics I found in the participants words: *Family Involvement, Safe Environment, Empowering (CRT), Transformative (CRT), Validating (CRT), and Comprehensive (CRT)*. I denote the connection to CRT by adding it in parenthesis after the characteristic.

Table 52

*Meaningful Educational Travel: Characteristics and Descriptions of Culture and Community*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Involvement</td>
<td>Educational travel actively involves families in preparing their children to travel.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe Environment</td>
<td>The environment of educational travel is inviting, safe, inclusive, and supportive for all.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowering (CRT)</td>
<td>Educational travel empowers students by increasing and developing self-confidence, courage, and the belief they can succeed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformative (CRT)</td>
<td>In under-represented travel groups, educational travel transforms students as they confront and transcend the boundary of “who travels” of traditional educational travel experiences.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validating (CRT)</td>
<td>Educational travel connects academic abstractions with students’ lived sociocultural realities. This connection builds bridges of meaning between home, school, and travel, thus validating students’ understandings and experiences. When students see things with their own eyes, they bring their own meaning to educational travel and their own understanding to academics.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive (CRT)</td>
<td>Educational travel cultivates a sense of community, camaraderie, and a shared responsibility to the group. It helps students of color maintain identity and connections to their ethnic group while exploring the world.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Personal development. Table 53 represents the characteristics and descriptions of the Personal Development theme. In reading the interviews and thinking about the participants’ stories, I discovered that they referred to personal growth when describing the meaning educational travel had in their lives. Pride, Privilege, Change in Perspective, and Engagement are characteristics of this development.

Table 53

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>Educational travel cultivates a sense of pride in accomplishing a task.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privilege</td>
<td>Educational travel represents that opportunity to do something special that makes one feel proud.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in perspective</td>
<td>Educational travel provides the opportunity for students to experience a change in perspective to the world around them and to themselves.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td>When students take part in meaningful educational travel, they experience a deeper level of engagement with school and with travel that assists with one or more of the following: personal development, attendance, behavior, goal-setting, and academic achievement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants

Individual interviews. To recruit participants for the individual interview, I advertised on Facebook and sent emails to former travelers inviting them to apply via an online survey tool, Qualtrics (See Appendix E). In addition, I talked to former travelers, colleagues, family members of travelers, etc. and asked them to spread the word to former travelers. As a result, I had 65 former travelers apply via the survey.
Approximately 20 more expressed interest but never completed the survey. From the 65, I selected the participants based on gender, travel group, travel year, and contact with me. I needed three from DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both travel groups. One of the three participants needed to be male and the other two female to represent the gender distribution in overall travel group. I aimed to represent as many years of travel from 2003 – 2011 as I could. In addition, I ensured that I selected travelers who had kept in touch with me such as Camila, travelers with siblings who had traveled like Lilac, and ones who I had not been in touch with at all like América. Tables 54 and 55 provide some characteristics of the selected participants.

Table 54

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>DC-Only</th>
<th>Europe-Only</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>Documented</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>América</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>MX</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Latina Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucas</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>MX</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angelina</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliot</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Latino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camila</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mexican American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lilac</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Latina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beto</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Hispanic Latino</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interview details. I interviewed the nine participants from July to September 2015. Each participant chose the place where we met, as I wanted him or her to feel comfortable (listed in Table 54). There was time before and after the interview where I talked in a more informal manner with each one, sometimes with family members, to help the participants feel at ease. Several asked me questions about my life since we last saw each other. This time was generally 5–15 minutes before and after the recording began or ended. I spent 626 minutes (10 hours, 26 minutes) conducting interviews. Table 56 provides more information about each interview and the order in which each occurred.
Focus group. To recruit participants for the focus group, I advertised on Facebook and sent emails to former chaperones inviting them to apply via an online survey tool, Qualtrics (See Appendix E for survey). Of the 22 eligible chaperones for the study, I was able to contact all but six chaperones from the years 2003–2011. I had no contact information for those six. Of the remaining 16, five did not respond to my emails or phone calls. Since this request took place during the summer, it is possible some were on vacation. I know several had left teaching and were possibly were not interested in participating. One participant just found out she was pregnant and was not feeling well. This left ten who responded they were interested. I wanted to ensure a balance of Latino and White chaperones to reflect the makeup of the group. Eight of the 22 chaperones were Latino therefore I selected the one Latino male and one Latino female who completed the survey. Fourteen of the 22 chaperones were White: 7 males and 7 females. I had six slots to fill and I needed three males and three females. There were three males and seven females who completed the survey. I selected the three males and
chose three females who each striving for a balance from the travel categories. The two who were not selected were both DC-Only and I had one Latina female already from this category. In selecting the participants, I also wanted to be sure I selected chaperones that had traveled on one or two trips and others who had traveled on more. Table 57 provides information about the focus group participants.

**Table 57**

*Adult Chaperone Descriptors*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>DC-Only</th>
<th>Europe-Only</th>
<th>Number of Trips</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Current Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ray Allegro</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>2010, 2012</td>
<td>3 DC</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Middle school music teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace Carrington</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>2008, 2009,</td>
<td>2 DC</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>High school language arts teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2010, 2011,</td>
<td>5 Europe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Douglas</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>1 Europe</td>
<td>1 Europe</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Attorney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyle Jameson</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>2005, 2006,</td>
<td>2 DC</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Teacher at detention center school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>2007, 2008,</td>
<td>10 Europe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2009, 2010,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2011, 2012,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2013, 2014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyn Salamanca</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>2 DC</td>
<td>Latina</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Family academic liaison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armando Salazar</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>2006, 2007</td>
<td>3 Europe</td>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Middle and high school technology teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patty Samuels</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>2006, 2007,</td>
<td>5 Europe</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Secretary for the school district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2008, 2009,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2009</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erin Timson</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>1 DC</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Digital courseware representative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The focus group began after about 15 minutes of introductions and catching up between the people who knew each other. It lasted for one hour and 41 minutes.

**DC-Only: América**

“So it was like me standing there (looking at the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence) felt like all doors were open for me. I think out of the whole trip what stuck to me the most was being there, and feeling like I had a good future ahead of me.”

In my efforts to pull from a wide group of people from whom to interview, I found América’s email address in my work emails as I was going through looking for former students to notify of the interview process. I realized she would be a perfect candidate because she was a traveler of the gender and year for which I was looking. I had found several others who fit the criteria but I reached out to her as well.

When I selected América, she was very excited. We set up an interview via Skype for early September because she was the only one selected who did not live in my state. She would be my last participant. I was excited to hear from her because we had lost touch with her and I wondered what had happened to her.

América participated in the DC 2006 trip in Grade 6 at Harold Middle School. She is now 21 years old and lives in a small town in California. She moved with her family after her 6th grade year in Denver. She still lives with her mother. Her father left the family after the move to California in the summer of 2006. Her parents brought her and her younger sister to the USA in 1998 from Chihuahua, Mexico in search of work
and a better life for their daughters. They came to Denver where they stayed until 2006. They came as undocumented workers.

América attended middle school and high school in the same city in California after moving from Denver. She graduated from high school in 2012 and has been at the local community college since 2013 where she is studying psychology while also working as a special needs paraprofessional at a local high school, an associate at a clothing store, and an instructor in a dance studio. She would like to join the Air Force in June 2016. Recently, she received a renewal of her Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. Because of the ruling on Military Accessions in the National Interest, or MAVNI, she could be accepted as a DACA applicant for the Air Force. She credits her ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corps) teacher for inspiring her in high school. As we thought of a pseudonym for her, “América” seemed perfect due to her love of and devotion to the USA. She felt it fit perfectly.

When we connect via Skype I am surprised by how much América still looks like the Grade 6 student I remember. She still has beautiful curly light brown hair and dancing light brown eyes. I remember her as a happy student and little seems to have changed. Unmarried and without children, she eagerly shares her hopes and dreams for the future. She is charming and confident, keen to share what she remembers of her Grade 6 year. Her mom stops in briefly at the end of the interview to thank my colleague, Ms. Córdova, and me for all we did for América because she believes it changed América’s life. I am excited to hear what América remembers about the trip as I clearly remember an incident in the National Archives in particular. While I am curious
to see if our recollections are the same, I am careful not to mention it as our interview starts.

**Pre-educational travel to DC: América.** When I ask América to think about how she came to travel, she recalls her family’s involvement from the beginning. She also remembers fundraising, her behavior, the meetings for families in the evenings, and studying in class. América’s pre-travel experience marked a shift in her life because it was the first time she was aware of her undocumented status and her family’s changing economic status, and it was the first time she got in trouble at school. The characteristics she mentions are *Family Involvement, Developmentally Responsive, Transformative, Increased Academics,* and *Organizational Structures.*

**Family involvement.** *Educational travel actively involves families in preparing their children to travel.*

América heard about the trip in the beginning of her sixth grade year. América recalls that her mom was supportive right from the beginning and got her boss to make a deal with América to help raise money.

I remember coming home, and telling my mom that I had heard about the trip. And I remember one of her first reactions was, "You got fortunate enough to travel with the school, then you should take advantage of it now because you might not be able to in the future." Right away, my mom was supportive from the beginning, yes… I had my mom's boss help me. My mom used to work for [a cleaning company] when we lived in Denver. And, yeah, I remember telling him about my trip, and he made a deal with me that if I would help him clean the rags,
the towels that the ladies used to mop the floors that he would write me up a
check for my trip. So I remember working that on the side, and he helped me with
my trip.

Her mom’s boss did send in a donation on behalf of América to assist with her
fundraising, not just for the amount that she worked but also some extra money.
América’s mom and dad continued to assist her with raising money despite a change in
their family’s economic status, as we will see in the next section.

**Developmentally responsive.** Adult advocates are committed to and
knowledgeable about this age group. In addition, leaders anticipate and plan for the
challenges and strengths of this age before, during, and after travel.

The Washington, DC trip opportunity came at a tough time for América and her
family. She had been well behaved before sixth grade but now she started rebelling a bit.

I think the only time that I started rebelling was when we moved to a smaller
apartment. And I remember telling my parents, "There's no way I can have my
friends come here." And now that I think back, I was, "Wow, I was a real brat."

We used to have a house, and…my parents lost the house, and that's why we had
to move to an apartment.

This year also marked the first time América got suspended at school. She tells me that
the only teachers she remembers from sixth grade are the trip teachers and her math
teacher who reported her to the advisor who suspended her.

Because it was snowing outside, and we were doing a project inside the class, and
one of the boys grabbed snow from outside, and he was throwing it back at me.
And I remember telling Miss W., and it would be like, "Oh, sit down, you'll be fine." And then, I got upset, and I threw water back, and that's when she saw us, and she was like, "Okay, both of you to the office." I was like, "Oh, no, I was a good kid until now." … I had never been suspended, and I have never been suspended since… I remember being a good student for the most part. [But] I remember struggling a little bit in my behavior that year.

Developmentally, América was at an age when young adolescents begin to rebel as they test the boundaries. For América, this change happened at the time that her family fell on times financially. Regardless of this change in her behavior, América’s parents still helped her with her dream of traveling to Washington, DC. América also recalls that the adult chaperones helped her before the trip with her behavior. She believes that this helped her behavior at home and at school.

Transformative. In under-represented travel groups, educational travel transforms students as they confront and transcend the boundary of “who travels” of traditional educational travel experiences.

The transformation América experienced before she traveled to DC was influenced by this year of change for her family as she started to rebel and they lost their home. As they prepared and planned to send América on the trip, these events were on their minds when they realized they had another problem that worried them. For América, it was the first time she realized that her undocumented status might mean that she could not do some of the things the other children took for granted:
[About the parent meetings] I remember my mom being freaked out that I wasn't going to be able to get on the plane. That was one of the things that I remember the most… It is. It is funny. I think that was the first time that my legal status became something of my knowledge because before the trip it was really like I really didn't know that I couldn't travel or that I was going to have problems traveling in the future or anything like that. But that year it was like, "Oh, okay. I don't get to do the things that a lot of my friends get to do as easily," but I was fortunate enough.

Despite this new learning about her status, she clearly remembers Ms. Córdova and I telling her mom that América could travel so she wouldn’t worry. While it turned out to not be a problem, it was something that América kept in the back of her mind as she learned about DC and the trip that year.

**Increased academics.** Educational travel provides multiple opportunities to connect classroom learning and academic subjects to lived experiences thereby increasing interest and achievement in academics.

América recalls learning before she left for DC, reluctantly at times, “for a lot of my friends [and me] at that age, you just want to go on the trip. You don’t want to do anything extra.” However, she remembers having fun working with the other trip students at her HEEP job before school making and delivering coffee to teachers. Because of this connection she began to have with other students, she began to enjoy learning about DC more.
América recalls learning about US History, Washington, DC, New York, and the Lincoln Memorial. She remembers being interested in the 100 civics cards that the students memorized to prepare for the trip. When I ask her what it was like, she states, “I remember learning a lot about history. I remember the 100 questions and 100 answers on the civics cards…I think that’s why I liked the DC [trip elective] class the best.” She said she does not clearly remember any of her other classes or what she learned but she remembers learning about DC before we left, “I had a math teacher in 6th grade, Ms. W., and I had an English teacher, I want to say her name was Ms. M. but I don’t really remember [what I learned].”

**Organizational structures.** Organizational structures foster purposeful learning; create a safe environment; and meaningful relationships.

América remembers how we prepared the students to travel. She recalls:

Being involved with preparing for [the trip], like [learning about] our spending money and then…the handbook…that was really helpful because I was always scared that I was going to forget something…I was worried I was going to get lost…So that was helpful for me.

These lessons on spending money, packing, and how not to get lost helped her relax somewhat before we traveled. América believes the DC Student Handbook helped her remember all she needed to do on the trip and what to bring. This also helped her feel more confident about traveling.

**Summary of pre-educational travel to DC.** América’s journey to travel was marked by family involvement, tough times for her family, an increased interest in
academics, and a sense of security from the organizational structures we had in place to ensure her safety. She also was confronted with her undocumented status for the first time. This, combined with the family’s changing dynamics, led to the beginning of a transformation for América.

**Educational travel experience in DC: América.** When I ask América to recall what it was like for her on the Washington, DC trip, the first incident she remembers is the same one I do: her strong reaction to the charters of freedom in the National Archives. She mentions *Empowering, Transformative, Validating, Safe Environment, Active Purposeful Learning, Adult Advocate,* and *Organizational Structures* that created a meaningful educational travel experience.

*Empowering.* Educational travel empowers students by increasing and developing self-confidence, courage, and the belief they can succeed.

*Transformative.* In under-represented travel groups, educational travel transforms students as they confront and transcend the boundary of “who travels” of traditional educational travel experiences.

*Validating.* Educational travel connects academic abstractions with students’ lived sociocultural realities. This connection builds bridges of meaning between home, school, and travel, thus validating students’ understandings and experiences. When students see things with their own eyes, they bring their own meaning to educational travel and their own understanding to academics.

The first recollection América shares with me is the same one that has stuck with me throughout all the years of travel with students. América begins by saying, “I don’t
know if you remember this…” and proceeds to tell me about the most powerful moment she had on the trip. I am careful not to say anything as she tells the story, as I want to be sure I capture her recollections.

I remember being in front of the Declaration of Independence [and the Constitution] and getting really emotional…I just remember standing in front of it, and like just crying…sobbing. And I remember feeling you holding me. Like my shoulders. And it felt like so many things were being promised to me, especially because at that year, like I previously said that year was when I first realized, "Okay, my being here is considered illegal," but at the same time I felt like so many things were being promised to me just by standing in that same spot…So it was like me standing there felt like all doors were open for me…I think out of the whole trip what stuck to me the most was being there, and feeling like I had a good future ahead of me.

América’s strong reaction to being in the National Archives represent for her an empowering moment when she realized that she was standing in the capital of the USA, a place where she was not supposed to be, in fact, “illegal” for her to be there. Yet, she felt validated and transformed by this moment because she realized that those US charters of freedom were also offering her a “good future.” During the pre-travel experience, she had realized that she was not the typical traveler because of her undocumented status and she had made it to the very spot where the foundation of the government lay before her. She began to believe she had a good future ahead of her.
América recalls learning about places before we left and then seeing them with her own eyes. She was able to form her own opinions about what she was seeing when she was in front of the memorial or monument. She states:

I remember the Lincoln Memorial. I would see it in the pictures, and I thought to myself, "Yeah, it's going to be big," but when I was actually there it was bigger than I ever thought that it would be, and all the other things around it also...[I remember learning] about all the memorials, and then when I saw them it was like, oh yeah, I’ve learned about these in Ms. Olson’s class” I remember seeing the pictures and then, being there and being like, "Whoa." And you think this, "It's real.”

It was validating for her to be able to learn about something before she left and form her own opinions of it, and then see it with her own eyes. No longer did América trust just what she read about something, she was seeing it firsthand.

**Safe environment.** The environment of educational travel is inviting, safe, inclusive, and supportive for all.

América recounts how she felt safe on the trip despite feeling nervous before we left. She believes this responsibility was hers but that the adults were “on top of keeping” all the travelers safe:

I felt like I kind of had a responsibility to keep myself safe, but then, at the same time, I felt very safe with the adults that were there. I felt like you guys totally knew what you were doing, and my chaperone was really on top of keeping us all safe and accounted for...
América believes this helped her have a better trip because she was not always worried about her safety. She recalls that we went to New York for a day on the train and took the boat to the Statue of Liberty. She recalls never once feeling unsafe.

**Comprehensive.** Educational travel cultivates a sense of community, camaraderie, and a shared responsibility to the group. It helps students of color maintain identity and connections to their ethnic group while exploring the world.

One of the things América remembers clearly from the trip was the feeling of camaraderie that travel created with the group. While she did not stay in touch with them due to the move to California, she remembers clearly how much fun she had with them and how quickly they got close. This close group of girls with similar backgrounds helped América have a good trip.

I remember a lot of bonds being made. I felt like [because we were on the trip] I bonded with the girls that I was with really quick, especially because we knew that we were going to be staying in the same room together. And I do remember a couple of their names. I was with S., B., and…I think there was like three more girls, and I can't remember their names…But I remember getting really close to them really fast, and it was a friendship that we built on the trip that we wouldn't have built otherwise. So I remember feeling really lucky about that…I remember how we did each other’s hair on the train to New York and that was fun.
*Exposure to new ideas.* Educational travel offers the opportunity for exposure to new ideas. This “opens doors” to new possibilities thereby expanding travelers knowledge of the world.

América recalls being exposed to a variety of new ideas and experiences on the trip that she had never learned before she traveled. She adds that not only did she learn how to travel she also “added” the history lessons to the practicality of how to travel. This increased her enjoyment of the trip because she learned to do all these new things and could apply her knowledge of history to it.

I think everything that I learned during the trip was new to me because I had never traveled. I mean, other than road trips to California and back to Denver. I never really traveled anywhere so everything that I learned; everything about like the security that we had to go through before we went on the airplane, the traveling system, the restaurants that we went to. Everything was new to me… I was just adding a lot of the history, too.

América recalls the different food she ate on the trips that also exposed her to new cuisines that she had not previously considered such as a Mongolian restaurant and a southern barbeque restaurant among others.

*Adult advocate.* An adult advocate guides every student’s educational travel experience every step of the way.
Mrs. Carrington was América’s primary chaperone on the Washington, DC trip. América credits her with helping her have a good trip because she was “attentive” to the needs of her group. Also, América remembers that the whole group trusted her.

Mrs. Carrington was my chaperone, and I really liked her. I thought what made her really good chaperone was that she was always attentive to what we needed if we needed anything. But she was also really lenient with us. She wasn't too strict, but at the same time we knew that she was an adult, and we respected her as an adult. We knew that we could go to her if we had any problems, but at the same time we felt like she trusted us, too. It was a lot of fun.

From América’s comments, she believes that Mrs. Carrington was a good chaperone because she knew how to be friendly and kind yet established that she was the adult in charge. América shares with me that she had a better trip because of these characteristics of her adult advocate.

**Summary of América’s educational travel experience to DC.** The seeds of who América would become as an adult where planted on her Washington, DC trip. The most powerful experience for América is standing in the National Archives, knowing that she “had a good future” ahead of her. Feeling safe and knowing the trip was well organized also helped América have a good travel experience. América believes that the trip offered her opportunities to learn that were relevant to her because she got to see them. All of these characteristics stayed with América as we will see in the next section.

**Post-educational travel to DC: América.** Next, I ask América what it was like to return back home after traveling and what the trip has meant for her through the years.
América also mentions the following characteristics: *Family Involvement, Increased Academics, Academic Achievement, Comprehensive, Pride, Empowering, Transformative, Enhanced Experiential Learning, Adult Advocate, Change in Perspective, and Validating*. She also believes that she increased her self-confidence, learned from her adult chaperone, and experienced a change in perspective due to her educational travel experience.

**Family involvement.** *Educational travel actively involves families in preparing their children to travel.*

**Pride.** *Educational travel cultivates a sense of pride in accomplishing a task.*

First, América mentions seeing her family when we returned to Harold from the airport. She recalls feeling proud of what she had just accomplished and recalls beginning to understand that she experienced so much in one week that it seems like she had been gone for a longer time:

I remember seeing my parents, and then, for some reason it felt like I had been gone for a month even though we were only gone for a week. And I remember my mom. She is not a person to cry a lot, but I remember she did get teary-eyed when I came back, and she said how she felt really proud that I had gone on the trip, and that we had fundraised it together.

For América and her mom, they felt a sense of pride because as a family, despite experiencing tough times, they made this educational travel experience happen. She continues to mention this pride her family felt when she talks about developing her pictures.
I remember showing a lot of pictures. My mom bought these disposable cameras and then when she got them developed, she made my own little collage from Wal-Mart or something, and she gave it to me for my birthday. And I remember showing that to everybody. I'm like, "Oh, look, I went to Washington, DC, I went to Washington, DC." And it was like my showing off.

América recalls feeling happy that she and her family together worked to make this trip happen and were able to share this with other people. Being able to say, “Look América went to Washington, DC!” was something that made the whole family proud.

**Increased academics.** *Educational travel provides multiple opportunities to connect classroom learning and academic subjects to lived experiences thereby increasing interest and achievement in academics.*

América credits educational travel with improving her understanding of US History and with improving her English reading and writing skills. Not only did she feel like she “knew everything” she also believes she enjoyed history more as a result of traveling to DC. She recalls struggling with reading and writing in elementary school and believes that she grew to do better in these subjects as a result of the learning she did before, during, and after her trip to DC. América states:

I felt like when I was going to my history classes I already knew everything. Not knew everything, but it was kind of a review to me. Like the Preamble song. I remember them playing it, and I was like, "Shoot, I know this." To me, it just felt like a review in 8th grade history. US History was review for me, too in high school. But it was one of my favorite subjects, and I realized that I only like the
things that I'm good at so I think because of the DC trip, and me being able to take the class, I guess you could say several times it made me enjoy history a lot more…It helped me in English I think because all the reading and writing that I had to do before, [during, and after the trip]. And I remember actually struggling with reading and writing in elementary school. And although essays are not my favorite now I'll do them a little better than I would.

From América’s point of view, her increased interest in and enjoyment of two academic subjects is related to her educational travel experience. She enjoyed these subjects more because she was “good at” them due to her trip to DC.

_Academic achievement. As a result of having multiple pathways to and increased engagement with academics, educational travel may offer higher standardized test scores, increased probability of high school graduation, and an increase in grade point averages._

When I ask América to share what she recalls about her grades and test scores after the Washington, DC trip, she shares how she had a “downslope” in her grades and motivation to do well on standardized tests. Then she recalled what she had been able to do earlier in her life, regardless of being undocumented and “shook off” her negative thoughts to get back on track:

I care about tests. I cared about getting good grades. I think sophomore year I had a downslope because my counselor was trying to show me how to apply for scholarships, and then, she said something like, "You know, you can work as hard as you want, and you can graduate from wherever you want to graduate from, but
at the end of the day is, 'Are you going to get hired anywhere?''" Because of my legal status… And I remember feeling like no matter how hard I worked my future isn't promised here, and that I completely let myself go. But after that, I shook it off, and I remember going back to my grades being what they used to be. I did care about tests I took.

As we will see in the next section, América credits the Washington, DC trip with giving her the belief she can succeed which translated into reapplying herself in school after this setback. She finishes this section of the interview by telling me how she applied for and received Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals status with hopes of renewing this in 2016. She shares how she is glad she did not give up on herself as her future holds the promise of a military career and college.

**Empowering.** Educational travel empowers students by increasing and developing self-confidence, courage, and the belief they can succeed.

**Comprehensive.** Educational travel cultivates a sense of community, camaraderie, and a shared responsibility to the group. It helps students of color maintain identity and connections to their ethnic group while exploring the world.

América believes that educational travel assisted her by fostering a belief that she can succeed. She shares how the trip seemed out of her reach at one point but she found a way to make it work so that is a lesson she has carried with her. Being empowered by this experience means that now she sets her sights on “higher goals:”

I think that it set me up to reach for higher goals even if I thought that I wasn't going to be able to reach them because at one point the trip was one of my higher
goals that I might not have been able to reach, but I did reach it. So I was like, "If I can do that then there's a lot of things that I'm not aware that I can do, but I will do."…As I've gone through life the DC trip means that even though I'm not always aware of the things that I can fully do or not do I can always find a way to make it work. Not necessarily my way, but even if a lot of people say no to me I know that we'll find a way to work it out, especially with the people that I've learned to surround myself with, [people who will support me].

América believes that the comprehensive nature of educational travel taught her to surround herself with people who support her, just like she did in her Grade 6 year. The connections she had with the adults on the trip, the fellow travelers from her neighborhood, and the connections she had to her Harold community taught her to seek out people who will help her “find a way” to work out any obstacles she may encounter in her life.

América shares one final quote about empowerment when she discusses how she learned to be independent and “okay” no matter what.

I guess I learned that I can learn to be independent, and learn to be far away from my family and still be okay. Because that was one of the trips that I had taken that I had been furthest away from my mom. So I was like, "What? I'll be okay if I ever have to."

Learning to travel away from her mom built the confidence in América that gave her the belief to know she will be okay if she ever has to leave her family again. This inspired self-confidence in her ability to face a challenge and be “okay.”
Empowering. Educational travel empowers students by increasing and developing self-confidence, courage, and the belief they can succeed.

Enhanced experiential learning. Students are engaged in a cycle of learning, experiencing, reflecting, and applying new ideas or concepts to their lives.

América credits the trip with showing her all that the USA has done for “people like me,” undocumented immigrants. By studying history, government, and seeing places in DC she realized that educational travel taught her that she could do so much for herself because she lives in a country that, in her eyes, supports and accepts immigrant families. Learning about and reflecting on all that she learned through educational travel gave her the strength to face the challenges that came her way later in life:

I'd just like to add that it shows me a lot of what this country has done for people like me, and also, how much more I can do for myself. So that was really important for me to learn on the trip… Especially when I think if I would have known in 6th grade all the challenges that I was going to go through in high school, and preparing for college, and all that stuff I would have said to myself, "That's why." In high school it was really a lot of retracing like, "Oh, now I remember, and now I remember." So that's one of the things the trip helped me learn.

América believes her behavior and academics improved after she moved to California with her mom and her sister, even though this was still a hard time. Her dad left the family that summer and never contacted América again. Yet, América reports
maturing during this time in part because of her participation in educational travel. Feeling “advanced” and feeling empowered helped her win an award:

My behavior and my academics got a lot better even though I moved to California. Actually in 8th grade I was sent to the principal for an award for my promotion to high school…I remember him calling me in to the office and telling me like, "You're not in trouble. I just want to let you know that with everything that you have been through lately a lot of research indicate that you would be one of the troubled kids, but you learned to surface above it." And I remember feeling like, "How did I do this?" It made me feel intelligent … After DC my view of [school changed] my grades got better… I think it was because I was able to see what I could be in the future.

América discusses another way that she learned from educational travel now that she has had time to reflect on what it has meant in her life. She believes that she learned the skill of organizing mementos from events in her life in an organized manner allows her to revisit and learn from events in her past.

[A skill I learned] was being able to make the scrapbook, and revisit it, and go back to memories, and go back [and think] to events that have happened in my life. Now, I have this box where I store things that have happened in my life, or things that are meaningful to me. Even really nice birthday cards… Yeah, that's what happens when I go back, and visit them. I actually also have this.

América’s empowerment came from reflecting on all she had learned before, during, and after her travels to Washington, DC. She gained confidence and perseverance from this
experience and reflection. This skill she has applied to other areas of her life as she mentions when she talks about saving memorabilia

**Transformative.** *In under-represented travel groups, educational travel transforms students as they confront and transcend the boundary of “who travels” of traditional educational travel experiences.*

América mentions the transformative nature of the trip when she tells about people’s reactions to her when she moved to California and told them that she had been to DC. For the students in this small, middle-class town, it was difficult for them to believe that América could have traveled to DC with a school from a low-income neighborhood in Denver in Grade 6:

So for them, for some reason, a lot of kids thought that I would lie about it or they'd be like, "No, you haven't. You haven't been to the DC area." I'd be like, "Come to my house. I'll show you pictures. I have a lot of them." But for them, they had to wait until they were in 8th grade…I just felt like I was one advanced student when I moved here.

This conversation was also repeated with teachers who were surprised that América has already done so much. For América, it transformed how she saw herself ("advanced") and it made her realize that she was not the “typical” traveler in this community’s eyes.
**Adult advocate.** An adult advocate guides every student’s educational travel experience every step of the way.

**Change in perspective.** Educational travel provides the opportunity for students to experience a change in perspective to the world around them and to themselves.

América mentioned Mrs. Carrington’s influence during the trip and believes Mrs. Carrington helped her have a good trip. She also credits Mrs. Carrington in helping her to see things from a different perspective when she got a job in a high school as an adult.

[On the Washington, DC trip] I remember being more aware of how hard it is to work with a larger group of students because I remember how once at the end of the trip she said something like, "You girls are making a mess of the room." Because we’d bring popcorn in our room. And she [says], "Why did you girls bring popcorn [into your bedroom]?" And it was so funny… And then, she said, "If I had a bigger group I would go crazy," and that's one of the things that I also think of especially now that I'm an aide I have to deal with sometimes seven students at a time. And I think that I'm going crazy, but I'm going to deal with a larger group. I think that I did earn a little bit more respect for my teachers only because now I knew what they had to do…. [My trip was good] because my chaperone was great, and you were such a great teacher, and I'm sure you still are… And I thought to myself, "You know, if these people are able to make such an impact in my life if I apply myself, and I get good grades, and I get to go to college then maybe I can make a difference in someone else's life."
Because América had two adults who were “great,” she began to understand the ways we influenced her life when she reflected on the trip later. She earned more respect for teachers as she began to understand more about what caring for children involves. She believes that the influence of the adult advocates and the shift in perspective inspired her to “make a difference in someone else’s life” which she is doing in her current job. She hopes to do more after she gets her degree in psychology and by serving in the Air Force.

**Parting thoughts and summary of América’s post-travel experience to DC.** At the end of every interview, I offer the participant to give advice to future travelers or share any thoughts. Not all participants share something extra but América tells me of the advice she would give future travelers:

I would tell them to stop thinking about it and actually do it… But I’d tell them to fundraise a lot, and even if it's hard to put their mind in to it, and that they'd be able to go and learn so many things. Not only about history, but about life and about their self. And it really shapes you to grow, and be more aware of things that are going on around you. And also, to be educated, and look in to what's going on in history because a lot has happened before, and a lot of people say history repeats itself.

América’s final quote reflects her belief that the trip was a chance to work diligently for something that will be worthwhile in the long run because of the learning that takes place and the personal development through travel. As we have seen with América’s reflections on the travel experience, she credits a variety of characteristics as
helping her to gain meaning from educational travel. The feeling of pride she had when she told her mom about the trip was something that made her happy. She did better in school and gained self-confidence, even though at times she was disheartened due to her immigration status. Her perspective changed and she acknowledges the adult advocate’s role in her life.

**DC-Only: Lucas**

Lucas suggested we meet at a locally owned coffee shop that is very popular with the younger crowd. I arrived 15 minutes early to set up and was glad I did: I managed to snag a table, as far from the coffee bean-grinding as possible so it would not interfere with the recording.

I had not kept in touch with Lucas over the years. Several colleagues kept me apprised of his and his family’s activities but he and I had not been in direct contact. As I had scanned my list of DC students who did not go to Europe, I contacted several to see if they were interested in being interviewed and Lucas was selected from the group. Lucas participated in the DC 2008 trip and was unable to participate in Europe 2010 as some of his peers did because of his undocumented status. At the time of the trip, Lucas was still learning English as he began school in the USA in January 2006.

Born in Mexico in 1995, Lucas is 19 at the time of the interview. Having not seen him in several years I did not recognize the handsome young Hispanic male who walked through the door in aviator sunglasses. Lucas was neatly dressed and insisted on paying for his own beverage. He shared with me that he had just graduated from our state university in the spring. He landed a job at an upscale retail store as a sales associate.
Some day he hopes to design his own line of clothes. By coincidence, he works with another former traveler, a woman who participated in DC 2006 and Europe 2008 who was also a junior chaperone on the DC 2008 trip so they remembered each other. At work, they often exchange fond memories of travel at Harold.

Lucas freely discusses his path to coming out as gay in high school, not an easy road even though he had a supportive family. He twice tried to commit suicide and received professional help after each attempt. Lucas now feels comfortable in his adult life as a gay man and has been able to help others. As he recognized that Harvey High School was not going to be as accepting of him, he began to take more classes at a local university through concurrent enrollment. He believes that this ended up being a good choice for him as he was able to graduate early from college.

**Pre-educational travel to DC: Lucas.** As Lucas recalls how he decided to travel with Harold Middle School, he mentions the same five themes as América and adds two additional themes present in his pre-educational travel experience. Lucas’ status as an undocumented student also troubled his family until Ms. Córdova and I spoke with them regarding his immigration status. With Angelina, Lucas shared *Exposure to New Ideas* and *Pride.*

As with América’s recollections, *Family Involvement* is a theme Lucas mentions when he recalls his mom’s involvement before he went to DC. She attended the parent meetings and offered support, “She told me ‘you’ve got to work. If it’s going to take you to sweep classrooms and hallways, you’re going to do it for this trip.’ She was very supportive [of me] and a firm believer in hard work.” Lucas remembers the
Transformative characteristic of the trip when he shares how nervous he was to get on a plane, “I was so nervous…it was scary being new here…not knowing the language well…my legal status. It was my first time traveling in the US. It was a big deal for me…for my family.” Lucas recognized that this was something different that others in his family had not been able to do. Lucas mentions the Developmentally Responsive nature of the trip when he recalls:

I was nervous that I was leaving my house because I’d never gone on a trip by myself…How was I going to call my mom?...It just gave me the confidence [that] I can do things on my own. I mean I was still being supervised, but own my own, without my parents holding my hand.

He feels that this was the perfect way for him, at that age, to learn how to manage being away from home but still have someone to watch over him.

Lucas agrees with América regarding the Organizational Structures of the Washington, DC trip. “I remember you walking us through everything,” Lucas explains, “You explained what we would do and how we would do it in DC.” He recalls using the DC Student Handbook at home before we left to make sure he knew what to do and how to pack. He also recalls all of the preparation we did in class to view the US Holocaust Memorial Museum.

As with Angelina, Lucas adds the two themes to his pre-travel experience: Exposure to New Ideas and Pride. Lucas’ motivation for joining the Washington, DC trip was to explore the USA and “to explore and see what else there is because…it opened a whole, new world for me.” The idea of travel to Washington, DC represented an
Exposure to New Ideas regarding what could be possible for him, as he never thought about traveling in the US. He was the first in his family to do so.

Even before the trip started Lucas recalls his sense of Pride in making the trip happen. His family supported him but he recognized that he was learning the power of making something happen for himself in his life. Of this, he was proud.

One thing I did learn that I’m always going to keep in my head is that we had to work to get that trip. It wasn’t just like your parents would write that check, and it’s paid for. No, you have to work and there is no other way around it. [My HEEP job] was sweeping…everyone got to sweep. Which I think was great because it taught us that in order to get something you have to work for it...I think this helped me a lot in that sense that if I want something bad enough, you have to work for it.

Lucas’ pre-trip experience was similar to América’s with the addition of two other themes that made the pre-trip experience meaningful for him. Next, Lucas shares his thoughts about his travel experience on the Washington, DC trip.

**Educational travel experience in DC: Lucas.** When Lucas recalls what the travel experience was like in DC, he shares three themes with América and adds two themes not mentioned in América’s recollections. He and Angelina share *Active Purposeful Learning.*

The three themes Lucas shares with América are adult advocate, validating, and comprehensive. Lucas clearly remembers Mr. Dalton calling him “Dos” because there were two boys with the name Lucas on the trip. He states that the connection Mr. Dalton
built with him as an Adult Advocate improved his trip. “He made the trip really fun...we bonded,” Lucas recalls. Ms. Córdova also made the trip better for him because she “translated for us and helped us overcome the language barrier…I only remember you, Ms. Córdova, and Mr. Dalton.” On this Washington, DC trip, there were five adult chaperones and Lucas remembers the three who made a difference for him.

Lucas experienced the Validating theme of the trip when he met then Senator Obama. He recalls one of our students yelling to Senator Obama, “Hey Mr. President” and Mr. Obama turned around, asked who was calling him President, came to talk with the boys, and shook their hands. Lucas recalls how excited he was when he met President Obama again in high school, “That’s one of the things I’m not going to forget. Obama came to Harvey High School and I was [telling people], ‘We’ve met him before.’” Lucas had seen Obama in Washington, DC and then in his neighborhood, which brought a connection between his neighborhood and the world outside his immediate circle. He felt validated in being one of a handful of Harvey students who could say they met Obama twice.

Lucas and América mention the Comprehensive nature of travel. For Lucas it was the strong connections he made with his fellow female travelers L. and M. They were two other Spanish dominant students on the trip that became very close to Lucas, “We bonded from the beginning. It was nice having [friends I] could connect with on the trip.” Later, we will see how Lucas felt alienated from the boys in his group because he was struggling with his sexual identity so the bonds he formed with L. and M. were even more important.
Three themes Lucas mentions that América does not are *Active Purposeful Learning* (which he shares with Angelina), *Developmentally Responsive*, and *Increased Academics*.

Angelina and Lucas participated in *Active Purposeful Learning* by learning about the Holocaust in the classroom, reading *Jacob’s Rescue: A Holocaust Story*, and talking with his mom about it but it did not make sense until he visited the museum. Lucas states, “I really didn’t know what it was all about until I actually saw [the museum]. Like in the classroom I was just like spacing out…I focused on trying to read in English.” He recalls that when he was at the USHMM he thought, “Oh my God, this really happened! It’s no joke. It was a massive thing.” For Lucas, learning about the Holocaust before he left, while he was not sure what to make of it, helped him understand was he did see.

Learning about the Holocaust also led to another theme not shared with América. When Lucas talks about this learning, he demonstrates the theme of *Developmentally Responsive* nature of the trip. Lucas reports that learning about the evil in the world through the Holocaust made him grow-up a bit more. He states, “So, [learning about the Holocaust] was one of those experiences when I kind of like transitioned from being a little kid into a teenager…good for me in the sense that I can recognize the transition…not everyone in this world is a nice person.” This type of transition from childhood to adolescence is typical for students of Lucas’ age and he recalls this as part of his DC experience.
When recalling what the Washington, DC trip was like, Lucas reports *Increased Academics*. Lucas states that his learning “just sort of [started] falling together” as he viewed all he had learned before he left on the trip. He states,

When we went into the National Archives and looked at the [Constitution], it was really interesting…[on the trip] we went all through the US History. It gave me a lot of brain food; I call it, because I was able to…just process all [that I knew].

This all helped me prepare for high school. It helped me so much.

Lucas recognizes that this increased interest in history came from connecting his classroom learning what he was seeing.

**Post-educational travel to DC: Lucas.** When reflecting on the meaning of educational travel to DC, Lucas shares these five themes with América: *Increased Academics, Family Involvement, Empowering, Transformative, and Comprehensive.*

Lucas also adds the themes of *Exposure to New Ideas, Active Purposeful Learning, and Engagement* (shared with Angelina).

Lucas also reports *Increased Academics* as a result of the learning he did before and on the Washington, DC trip,

I was a good student [before DC]. But it was just that we learned a lot more…I mean like knowledge that I actually applied in high school…I learned about this in middle school [before I left] then I saw it in Washington, DC. So I know this…I started reading more, I started diving into books. Books are awesome!

In high school Lucas believes his teachers treated him differently because “they were thrilled someone in the class cared and knew what they were talking about,
especially when it came to the Holocaust.” He shared that when the projects he did for his classes were related to his Washington, DC trip, he got As on them. He also noticed he was more interested in history as a result of the trip, “I feel like if I hadn’t gone on that Washington, DC trip, I could have cared less about my history classes…the moment you experience something, then someone talks about it, that just excites you to talk more about it.” This excitement increased his desire to do well in history classes.

For Lucas Family Involvement means that his parents, especially his mom, supported him in getting to DC and was very proud of him when he returned. Lucas recalls that she told her friends to send their children. He believes his mom said this to others because, “For Latino communities it’s a big deal for the kids to be learning and just so knowledgeable.”

The educational travel experience was Empowering because Lucas felt like a “hot thing” because he knew all the answers in class after having traveled to DC. When he was in class and knew about the topic he thought, “I know about this, so that’s how it felt... Let me tell you. Let me speak to you…go accept this…and it’s just very empowering for me to know all about it.” He also mentions the power of seeing things with his own eyes and then studying about it as being very empowering, “I saw the real thing…that connection kind of motivates you to keep going.” Lucas’ self-confidence increased as he knew more of the answers in class due to his travels.

Lucas describes the trip as being Transformative when he discusses his childhood in Mexico for 10 years, coming to the US as an undocumented child, and then having the opportunity to travel to DC where he felt he got “educated to be a good citizen” in this
new country. It was a drastic change to come to the US and to do so without legal status. However, when he traveled to DC he believes the trip helped him to find his place in this new country. The trip was *Comprehensive* because Lucas felt like he, M. and L. looked out for each other on the trip. Also, years later, one of the boys (A.) from his group with whom he did not get along, contacted Lucas when he wanted to come out as a gay man. He knew Lucas had come out in high school and since they had traveled together he felt Lucas would be a help to him. Lucas met him and got him to seek help for A.’s suicidal thoughts. The connection of having traveled together, even though they were not friends, led to a feeling of connectedness that endured through the years. This gave A. the courage to ask for help from Lucas later in life.

The three themes that Lucas brings to the post-educational travel experience to DC are *Exposure to New Ideas*, *Active Purposeful Learning*, and *Engagement*.

As Lucas reflects on what the trip means to him, he realizes that trying new food meant *Exposure to New Ideas*. He tried seafood and buffalo burgers, which he had never sampled before and now likes to eat. He shares how the whole trip opened him up to new ideas through this type of exposure, “[The trip] is an eye-opener…it shows you how to deal with different people…it opens up a new world…you try new things.” This exposure to new ideas brought new ways of thinking and living that he had not considered previously.

Lucas mentions his continued interest in the Holocaust as an example of *Active Purposeful Learning*. He has read books, watched movies, and discussed the Holocaust as he keeps learning new things since the Washington, DC trip. When discussing his
continued learning, he shares, “I like being educated… I love discovering new things… this isn’t the end of [studying about the Holocaust]… let’s get educated so it doesn’t happen again.” Lucas learned about the Holocaust before, during, and after his trip and this continues to be a part of his life.

After the DC, Lucas remembers experiencing more Engagement and this helped him re-engage after he hit a rough spot. Lucas shares with me; “I was definitely more focused in school… [but then] I went through a rough patch… until 10th grade when I had a really good history teacher.” Having a good teacher in a subject Lucas excelled in helped him re-engage in school. Lucas struggled when he came out as gay and missed a lot of school. He got back on track and connected with a teacher who taught a subject about which he had learned a lot on his Washington, DC trip. This helped him graduate on time despite missing a lot of school, being suspended, and failing some classes. He re-engaged in his high school to graduate on time.

DC-Only: Angelina

Angelina is an 18-year-old Hispanic woman who graduated from Harvey High School in 2015. She is the youngest member of the study, having traveled to DC in 2009 in Grade 6. She has a fraternal twin brother who did not want to leave home to participate in DC 2009 with her. When I ask about him, she says that he has a girlfriend and is not interested in college but he did graduate from Harvey.

Angelina has enrolled at a state university for the fall term but would like to transfer to a private university in our city after she gets some credits under her belt. She remembers a field trip we took in Grade 6 to this private university and wants to be a
student there because she loved the campus. Also, her older sister just graduated from the same school with a degree in criminal justice and had a very good experience. Angelina credits her older sister with helping her stay motivated and focused on her goals despite her older brother’s troubles with the law leading him to be incarcerated during two years of Angelina’s high school years. Her family is always very supportive and close to each other. It was hard on all of them to have this setback in their lives. He is out now and working but Angelina’s bright eyes still cloud over when talking about this time. It is apparent it has left a mark on her.

I had not seen Angelina since 2011 when she left Harold Middle School for Harvey High School. I remembered her as a shy, inquisitive girl with a ready smile and a friendly personality. She was a little unsure of herself in the DC class as she did not have a lot of friends at first and her brother was not in class. With a kind personality and a ready smile, she quickly made friends and opened up to them. It was apparent to me as she walked into the café to meet me that she had gained a lot of confidence through the years. She wore a summer floral print dress with heels and her hair pulled back in a neat bun. Her bright brown eyes were quick to recognize me. She quickly came over to give me a big hug. She was very excited to share what the Washington, DC trip had meant to her.

**Pre-educational travel to DC: Angelina.** Angelina shares three themes with América and Lucas: *Increased Academics, Organizational Structures,* and *Family Involvement.* With Lucas, Angelina shares the theme of *Exposure to New Ideas* and
Pride. Angelina adds the themes of Active Purposeful Learning, Adult Advocate, and Empowering not found in the interviews with América and Lucas.

Increased Academics is one of the first themes Angelina mentions when I ask her how she came to travel. After telling me a bit about how she always “loved to meet new people” and that she recalls “having plans for my life,” she shared that she noticed how she started reading a lot more, “I read a lot… I even went to the B. Public Library and checked out books. I got books from you about DC.” Angelina recalls how the Organizational Structures of the evening meetings helped convince her family to let her travel, “I remember we were in your classroom… you showed us all the pictures from other trips… and I said to my parents, “I want to go!” The meeting’s agenda and visuals were organized to help families unfamiliar with travel understand what educational travel entailed. Angelina credits this with making her family feel comfortable with her traveling to DC. Family Involvement began that evening as Angelina recalls how the families of future travelers received all the information they needed to become involved in assisting their children go on the trip. Angelina recalls not just her family helping but her mom’s boss assisted her financially as well.

As with Lucas, Angelina shares with me how Exposure to New Ideas is clearly a part of her pre-travel experience. “I told my parents that I want to explore. I want to learn new things… I want to go out and see how the world is.” She continues by listing all the new places in DC she remembers wanting to explore after hearing about them in class and concludes by saying she had never flown before. This was something she had not “expected” to do in her life. Angelina also remembers a sense of Pride as she became
more and more responsible in her HEEP job working the café before school. She recalls that raising all the money was not easy and she felt proud, “it made me think that in this life if you want something you have to…reach for it…you have to go for it.”

*Active Purposeful Learning* played a large role in Angelina’s pre-trip experience as she recalls learning about the Holocaust through *Jacob’s Rescue* and the class we had about what to expect at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. She made connections between the book and the museum even though sometimes it was “a struggle because we read about it and [it’s hard to see the point] but then we’re going there so there’s a reason why.” Angelina recalls being encouraged by Ms. Córdova and I along with another teacher at our school, Mr. E. The *Adult Advocates* helped her see the trip was possible and encouraged her to learn about where she was going, “You [and Ms. Córdova] definitely persuaded us to travel to DC…you guys are amazing teachers…and Mr. E. was always telling me to ‘take a look at this’ about something in DC.” Angelina describes the fundraising events HEEP held to raise money. She recalls meeting funders from the community who would ask her about the upcoming trip and it was *Empowering* for her to say, “I am actually traveling to DC in a couple of months, I’m really doing it, yeah [me]. I will never forget those Meet and Greets with HEEP.” Telling these people from the community that she was traveling gave her self-confidence.

**Educational travel experience in DC: Angelina.** Angelina shares the theme of *Comprehensive* with América and Lucas. With América she shares *Exposure to New Ideas* and *Empowering*. With Lucas, Angelina shares the theme of *Active Purposeful*
Learning. Angelina adds the themes of *Organizational Structures* and *Pride* not found in the interviews with América and Lucas.

América and Lucas mention the *Comprehensive* nature of the educational travel experience in DC. Angelina is no different and recalls getting really close to the girls in her group and the junior chaperones, M. and C. She recalls how they helped her when she was sick with a cold and confused in the airport. She tells me, “I get emotional [when I think about this]…I wish I could go back to that week and be with all of you again. It was a family. It was just like a family.”

América and Angelina share the themes of *Exposure to New Ideas* and *Empowering*. Angelina lists many new things she tried and saw while on the trip. She did not care for seafood before the trip but now crab legs are one of her favorite foods because she had to try new foods at the seafood buffet. She remembers trying many other new foods she had not even heard of before and recalls, “just trying a lot of stuff.” She also credits the trip to DC as inspiring her to want to study in Germany, something she never would have considered before traveling to DC. The trip was also *Empowering* because she was sick with a cold for most of the trip yet she recalls, “It wasn’t nice. I wasn’t too excited [that I was sick] but I never gave up…even though I was sick, I had to keep a positive attitude.” She gained self-confidence because she overcame this obstacle. She also felt empowered by seeing things with her own eyes. She recalls being impressed by all the monuments, the Library of Congress, the Supreme Court, and Ford’s Theater. Angelina states, “I remember being at Ford’s Theater and you would always be talking about it [to us], then I was there! I saw it with my own eyes!”

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Lucas and Angelina both believe they experienced *Active Purposeful Learning* during educational travel. Angelina recalls learning about the metro before we left and then understanding what we had learned when she was riding the metro. She also recalls the Vietnam Veteran’s Wall and how the learned she had done in class connected to what she was seeing. Before we left, she recalls, “you told us that every name on that wall was a person. And when we were there, the connection became [real for me].” She reports that this was an example, of “all those little things than can just…connect to me.”

Learning about what to do on the metro, learning how to keep her memorabilia organized, knowing how to navigate the breakfast buffet, and organizing daily life while traveling were part of *Organizational Structures* Angelina remembers from her trip experience. Angelina recalls sense of *Pride* on the Washington, DC trip because of all the hours she worked for the trip, “I wanted to show people that I worked so hard to go first, and nothing came easy to me but it was all about working hard, and actually wanting it…it was worth it.” She recalls thinking about this on the Washington, DC trip and was proud she made the trip happen for herself.

**Post-educational travel to DC: Angelina.** Angelina shares the themes of *Increased Academics, Transformative, Comprehensive,* and *Pride* with América and Lucas. With América she shares *Enhanced Experiential Learning, Academic Achievement,* and *Adult Advocate.* With Lucas, Angelina shares the theme of *Engagement.* Angelina adds the themes of *Organizational Structures* and *Validating* not found in the interviews with América and Lucas.
When I ask her what meaning educational travel to DC has in her life, Angelina reports *Increased Academics* as a result of traveling to DC, just as América and Lucas do. Angelina believes the Washington, DC trip helped her immensely with her Advanced Placement US History and in her Civics classes. She recalls thinking, “This is my topic! I traveled to DC…I remember a day in class when we had a Document Based Question Project…right away I was on it…I knew all about it [because of the DC trip].” She recalls doing well on her papers regarding US History, Civics, and the Holocaust because she “knew all about it” from our learning for the trip. Teachers even asked to speak to after class so she could share how she knew so much about these topics. She also recalls understanding how maps worked after the trip. In geography in Grade 9 she realized, “I had trouble looking at a map until you actually helped us and now [I realized] I know how to read a map. It helped in geography.”

Angelina also reports that the educational travel experience was *Transformative* because she now expected more from herself after seeing what she could do. She believes, “It actually pushed me to do more. Now, I didn’t just want to graduate. I wanted a brighter future …after the trip I wanted to travel more. I wanted to go for more both in traveling and going to college.” Angelina realized after the trip that the *Comprehensive* nature of working together changed her. She believes the Washington, DC trip helped her to be, “more open. I’m more talkative. I communicate better with people.” She recalls being very shy before the trip but after sharing all the memories with a close group of girls she had a lot to talk about and was less shy. She still talks with these friends and they recall their trip fondly. She also believes the *Adult Advocates*
helped build this comprehensive nature. “For the first time,” she recalls, “I had amazing teachers who helped me…. we wouldn’t have made it by ourselves without you…there were a lot of students going so we [worked] altogether.” Angelina recalls the Pride she felt when she returned to school and saw her friends’ and family’s facial expressions when she told them about the trip. They said, “Wow, you’re back! What did you do? What did you see? And it felt really good, like really proud of myself because I did it…all due to my hard work.”

The post-travel experience changed the way Lucas engaged in school and this is also true for Angelina. She experienced increased Engagement in high school. She believes the Washington, DC trip, “pushed me to actually join sports…it’s because of the responsibility of doing sports and keeping up your grades, which is like the [DC trip].” She credits this with keeping her grades high during high school. She also believes she engaged more with teachers after the trip, “It was easier to actually have a conversation with them...to discuss with them. It gave me a push to actually talk and to speak up.” This increased her engagement because she could talk about classwork with them.

Angelina is very proud of the way she created her scrapbook where she had stored all of her memorabilia and has written about her trip. She also still has her DC Student Journal along with all her receipts from fundraising. She credits the Organizational Structures of the post-travel experience with helping her to be able to recall her trip and the meaning it has for her through the years. The post-trip experience is Validating because she got to see with her own eyes “the important places that people talk so much about on TV. I’m able to say, ‘I was there.’ And I stood right there…I even cry a little
because I can’t believe I was there.” Angelina also internalized the trip, “You know, it’s part of my life now. I’m able to talk about it and tell people about my experience traveling to Washington, DC.” Because of her confidence with travel and interpreting what the trip has meant to her, she wants to travel to Germany, Brazil, and Colombia.

**Europe-Only: Eliot**

_I am here because my parents randomly decided one day to move to another place in the world, where they had nothing to start from. They have worked almost every day of their life since...a "keep pushing" mentality. The same mentality that I believe all of my travel peers and their families have. Regardless of the situation, we are battle tested and ready. Whether it is from [travel to] Europe or whatever experiences living in "the hood" has brought us, we think differently._

As I arrive at Eliot’s home for the interview, his mother greets me warmly in Spanish. As I chat with her in the neat living room decorated with family photos and mementos, I think of how long I have known this family, almost 20 years! His mother and I talk about how quickly time flies by and how we wish our children could stay young forever...sometimes! The delicious smells of roast chicken, tortillas, and chilies fill the air and I am reminded what a good cook Mrs. G. is. Eliot’s family still lives in the same house where he and his siblings grew up, about a mile away from Harold Middle School and one block over from a busy boulevard filled with Asian and Hispanic shops. Their home is a well-maintained, modest one-story brick home with beautiful flowers rimming the house and large trees in the front yard. Several family members sit outside in lawn chairs enjoying the cool breeze of a summer evening, as are other families in
their working class neighborhood. His parents came to the US from Mexico in 1993.
While everyone in his family can understand and speak varying levels of English, Spanish is still the dominant language in the home.

I know Eliot’s family from my days as an elementary teacher at Herbert School where his older sister and older brother traveled to Washington, DC with us in the 1990s. His younger sister traveled to Washington, DC and to Europe so that family is well versed in travel opportunities. I was excited when Eliot responded to the request for interviews and a bit surprised, as he always was rather quiet.

Eliot enters the room in a 24601 t-shirt his sister bought him on her Europe trip when she saw Les Misérables. (24601 refers to Jean Valjean’s prisoner number). Born in 1994, Eliot is a 21 year-old Latino male at the time of this interview. He is a rising third year marketing student at a state university outside of our city. He works for a local mobile phone company and worked at the cultural center near his university over the last few years. Self-assured and soft-spoken, he was one of the first to respond to my query to be interviewed, eager to share his thoughts about the meaning of travel in his life. He participated in the Europe 2008 trip when he was fourteen years old and in 8th grade at Harold Middle School. He attended Harvey High School where he graduated in 2012. He tried another area high school in his freshman year but the school lacked a football team so he would have had to play at another high school. This made him decide to transfer to Harvey.
Pre-educational travel to Europe: Eliot. As we begin our interview, Eliot’s mom pops in to remind us that she “encouraged” him to travel, meaning she told him he had to try to go on the Europe trip. Eliot’s remembrances indicate this as well. He cites Family Involvement, Engagement, Active Purposeful Learning, and Exposure to New Ideas as his beginning point to educational travel.

Family involvement. Educational travel actively involves families in preparing their children to travel.

Engagement. When students take part in meaningful educational travel, they experience a deeper level of engagement with school and with travel that assists with one or more of the following: personal development, attendance, behavior, goal-setting, and academic achievement.

Eliot begins by telling me how his mom strongly “encouraged” him to travel to Europe since his brother and sister had traveled to Washington, DC but he did not. He felt “forced” into it and had to leave his peer group to do so because none of them were traveling. He was surprised at his mother’s insistence at first because he “wasn’t ever in many organized things growing up, my mom wasn’t the type to take us to Disneyland or anything like that” just sports. His mom helped him fundraise and then he kept working.

To fundraise, I worked throughout the house, recycled metal, recycled cans. I'd always see that my mom would put forth money and you were the one that would tell me, "Hey, you met the deadline," and I'm like, "My mom just really [worked so hard for me]-- why is she doing this?" So –[I kept working, I had a lot of
family support]. I worked at my HEEP job; I played sports [and got the scholarship].

Because his mom pushed him, he became more engaged in the trip. His mom had seen the benefits of sending her older two children on the Washington, DC trip so she pushed Eliot to try, even though he was reluctant at first.

When Eliot began to work and attend the Europe class, he became more engaged with the group and excited about this opportunity to travel. He recalls coming into the Europe class and being one of six boys so they reached out to him right away. He says, “I was the quiet one. I changed a little bit for the better…everyone started bonding and I started making new friends.” He cites this as engaging him in the Europe trip and he began to understand why his mom wanted him to travel. As he got to know other students and saw how excited they were, he became more engaged in the trip and then the academics as we will see in the next section.

**Active purposeful learning.** Students and adults are engaged in active, purposeful learning before, during, and after the trip.

**Exposure to new ideas.** Educational travel offers the opportunity for exposure to new ideas. This “opens doors” to new possibilities thereby expanding travelers knowledge of the world.

Eliot recalls learning about the Holocaust when he read *Anne Frank: The diary of a young girl* in the Europe class in preparation to see the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam. He did not know who she was when he started reading the book. Eliot shares how he had a hard time understanding her story and the Holocaust but he thought,
“Wait? Is this a book [or a true story]? So I had to pick it up [and read it].” He remembers that he and his classmates were surprised at the depth of Anne’s writing.

Eliot also remembers learning about *Les Misérables*. As with learning about Anne Frank, he recalls that it was a “little blurry but it was the exposure to it that was good for me.” He had never seen a musical and shares that he thought, “Why does this matter? Why [is Ms. Olson] teaching me this? And then it was like, ‘wait, you mean there’s a play [that we’ll see in London] with this?’ Maybe I should actually look into the play.”

Eliot mentions learning how to treat two other new experiences: coping with homesickness having never been away from home for that long and preparing for his first time flying. His family had never allowed him to spend the night somewhere that was not with family nor had he ever been on a plane. The student handbook, the meetings, and the packing list were all things Eliot remembers using to prepare for travel.

**Summary of pre-Europe travel experience.** Eliot recalls his mother’s encouragement as the factor that brought him to the Europe trip. It was her involvement in fundraising that also inspired him to work to earn money for his trip. For Eliot, the pre-trip experience meant exposure to new ideas he had not previously considered such as learning about the Holocaust, *Les Misérables*, and the details of an international travel. Eliot also became more engaged as he made new friends began to see the purpose to what he was learning in the Europe class.
Educational travel experience in Europe: Eliot. Next, I ask Eliot to share his recollections of what it was like on the Europe trip. He cites his adult chaperone as helping ensure the trip was good. He also began to change his perspective on how he viewed himself and his fellow travelers as he journeyed through Europe. Eliot also began to understand the purpose of learning about places before we left as he saw things with his own eyes. The characteristics he mentions are Adult Advocate, Change in perspective, Active purposeful learning, and Exposure to new ideas.

Adult advocate. An adult advocate guides every student’s educational travel experience every step of the way.

Eliot believes Mr. Douglas made the trip better for him. Eliot recalls that Mr. Douglas would ask them about places they wanted to see. If they could not decide, they “just went with the flow” and followed Mr. Douglas’ lead. Eliot remembers Mr. Douglas told them, "Hey, whatever we choose we're going to enjoy it, so why not explore?"

Eliot recalls that Mr. Douglas watched over all the boys in the group and made sure they were having a good trip. If he noticed that one of the boys appeared to have a problem, Mr. Douglas talked with them and helped them figure out what to do. This helped Eliot have a good trip:

[Mr. Douglas was] always in a good mood. He was never upset…if there was something wrong, he’d figure it out…[also he cared about us], It wasn’t that he’s on the trip because he had to be…he chose to be there for a reason, because he wanted to give us all this positive influence that he can…that made me have a good trip.
Change in perspective. Educational travel provides the opportunity for students to experience a change in perspective to the world around them and to themselves.

Active purposeful learning. Students and adults are engaged in active, purposeful learning before, during, and after the trip.

Despite seeing the places he studied with his own eyes, it did not “sink in” at first. Eliot recalls being at the top of the Eiffel Tower, something he never thought he would do and thinking about it in his hotel room that night, “Yeah, I was just at the top of the Eiffel Tower. That’s just crazy!” He felt the same way about visiting the Anne Frank House. He remembers visiting it but not really comprehending where he had just been until later that day, “I remember putting myself in [her] position, you know. It was just crazy. It’s a cliché that it’s crazy but sometimes words [fail me when talking] about the Holocaust, for sure, you just can’t put it in to words.”

Having seen these things with his own eyes and learning about them also helped him see the purpose behind some of the things he did not understand before we left. As he recalls seeing Les Misérables in London, he reminds me of what he said previously of how he did not see the purpose behind learning all about the musical. However, when he was viewing the play, he had a change in his perspective (and he felt his peers did as well),

You know, as a young kid you’re always thinking, ‘Why does this matter? Why are they teaching us this?’ That’s the mentality that I feel a lot of us took into the Europe class at first… [But] when the play was in front of us it was more like,
"Oh that's why she really emphasized this part, or that's why she really wanted us to know this about that person in the play.’ Oh, now [we] get it.

**Exposure to new ideas.** Educational travel offers the opportunity for exposure to new ideas. This “opens doors” to new possibilities thereby expanding travelers knowledge of the world.

Being exposed to new food changed Eliot. He shares that he was always a “picky eater, I wouldn’t even put like onions on my food.” The Europe trip changed his perspective as he moved through the different countries on his trip.

I didn’t try the mussels in Brussels…but I did try the [Alsatian] pizza in Paris and I tried the snails too…I’m still kind of [picky] but the trip changed me in that sense too…especially when I’m out with people, its more like openly trying the food on the table as opposed to just not trying anything [like I used to do]…Everything around you is really nice [in Europe], the food was really good, like you’re eating the food and it’s really good. And after you’re like, “Whoa, that was really good. I’ll probably never eat that again unless I come back here!”

When recalling an incident that happened with a friend, Eliot believes he experienced a shift in how he viewed new ideas. He tells me the story with a good friend of his, B. and how B. was a “hater” when B. was reprimanded in Paris. Eliot mentions that he used to be like B. and would not give new ideas a chance and would easily dismiss teachers if he were reprimanded. Eliot had to write a speech in one of his communications class about something that changed his perspective and he tells me what he remembers:

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I used B. as an example while I was on that trip, because I realized that he wasn't giving things a chance. So as being a hater I like put that towards myself as like give things a chance, like stop being a hater. If wouldn't even know [whether or not like something] if I didn't try it at first. So I like always worry about myself, [and I realize that] I can’t change someone else's opinions and mine is mine. So analyzing B. really helped me out towards, "I really wonder why he doesn't want to look into this stuff." I vividly remember on our way to the top of the [Eiffel] Tower you took his Gameboy [because he was playing with it] He was upset the whole way up. I'm like, "B., look up, bro. [You’re on the Eiffel Tower!]" And he still didn't and I keep thinking back to that…Maybe that helped me, like everything in life, just stop being a hater, just try it. Try it. It was just like more, "Just be out there, be open about it." You have your likings, of course, but you never know if you might stop liking something at some point or go a completely different way. I could wake up tomorrow and think, "Oh, this isn't what I want to do." But just try it!

Another new idea occurred to Eliot when he thought about what it would be like when he returned to Denver. He recalls that some people did not want to travel because they might not want to come back or that they would feel that there was nothing left at home for them. He shares,

So that was one thing that I was afraid of [on the trip that I hadn’t really thought about before], but I knew in a sense it was like for the good, something new,
something that would open me up to other things. If it wasn’t something in Europe, it was just traveling in general or looking into new things in general.

New foods, observing a friend, and thinking about returning home all gave Eliot and opportunity to experience new ideas about which he had not thought before he traveled to Europe.

**Summary of educational travel experience in Europe: Eliot.** Having a strong relationship with Mr. Douglas on the trip was important to Eliot. Mr. Douglas could sense how each member of the group was feeling and intervened to help solve any problems. Mr. Douglas’ positive attitude also enhanced Eliot’s trip. Eliot experienced changes in perspective, active purposeful learning, and exposure to new ideas as he began to learn more about himself on the Europe trip.

**Post-educational travel experience in Europe: Eliot.** Through the years, Eliot has thought a great deal about what educational travel has meant in his life. From those first days when he returned home to his current desire to study abroad, Eliot believes educational travel continues to influence his life.

**Validating.** Educational travel connects academic abstractions with students’ lived sociocultural realities. This connection builds bridges of meaning between home, school, and travel, thus validating students’ understandings and experiences. When students see things with their own eyes, they bring their own meaning to educational travel and their own understanding to academics.
One of the characteristics that strongly describe educational travel for Eliot is the feeling of validation he experienced as he recognized a shift in how he viewed himself and his world when he returned from Europe.

Eliot remembers riding the bus from the airport back to Harold after our long flight home. He reflects on how all of his other bus trips were to somewhere “exciting” but this time the excitement was to return to his family and share what he saw and how he appreciated them more.

[When I returned, I remember] I appreciated things a lot more…The bus ride home was, you know, every bus ride before that was to somewhere, to a place, to a place that was like more excitement wise. Whereas to this it was more, "Finally, my family.

Eliot’s excitement in returning to his family was not just because he missed them but also because he wanted to talk with them about all he had seen and done while he was away. His fear of not wanting to return or not having anything left at home for him was unrealized on this bus ride him. On the contrary, he was eager to share what he had experienced with his family.

Educational travel was validating for Eliot when he recalls how he was prepared to learn on the trip. He mentions this when he tells me about his friends in college who view travel as fun and not necessarily educational. He tells me how proud he was that he traveled to learn and was surprised by having fun:

I have some friends in college that love to travel…I see it as they go for the fun and they're texting me about things they're learning about, whereas we went to go
learn and we told our families about how much fun we're having... I need to go back.

Eliot wants to be able to travel again to experience educational travel that is also fun. To do so, he is planning on adding extra time to his college years to study abroad with a popular professor at his university. He understands the importance of learning about a place before one travels and plans on do the same with his study abroad. He feels this way of travel has validated his experiences.

Returning back to Harold, Eliot found validation with his friends from the Europe trip. At first it was difficult for him to explain how he was connected what he had experienced with who he was. With the help of his friends and creating his scrapbook, he began to understand what the trip meant for him.

When Eliot returned to his classes, he remembers not being able to be able to express what he had experienced. Eliot tells me that teachers and friends would ask him how the trip went and all he could say was “I liked it, but inside there was more.” He simply could not share all his emotions and thoughts at first. He recognized that something significant had changed inside of him, something that made him change. Instead of explaining all this to people when they asked, he told they needed to travel, "You need to do that. If you ever get the chance, travel."

Perhaps because of this, when Eliot returned, he recalls depending on the people in the Europe class, as they had become his friends. He felt pride in creating his scrapbook with his friends in class and being “more artistic” than he thought he was in creating his memories. He feels they had shared the experience of traveling together so
they could talk about it together. This is a friendship that continues until today. He remembers missing this close-knit class when he went to high school,

If anything it made me miss middle school a little more, as opposed to being with that certain group of people for a certain period of time, because -- so middle school you did have the same class of people, didn't you? And in high school it was everybody's schedule mixed up… I feel like that was more -- especially with the Europe group, you know, we did everything together [at Harold]. It was more like, "Oh, hey, oh, hey." And I still talk to a lot of those people… I keep in touch with J., S., B., G., and Mr. Douglas. We inbox each other every once in a while…we mention [the Europe trip] a little bit, like, you know, jokes or whatever, you know, side jokes, whatever…Just always like, "Remember?" And then it's like we're in a whole different world from the other people that are present for a couple seconds. And then it's like, oh, back to, "Oh, man, yeah, that was really fun."

**Transformative.** In under-represented travel groups, educational travel transforms students as they confront and transcend the boundary of “who travels” of traditional educational travel experiences.

**Exposure to new ideas.** Educational travel offers the opportunity for exposure to new ideas. This “opens doors” to new possibilities thereby expanding travelers knowledge of the world.
The experience of traveling transformed Eliot into “a little traveler.” When I ask him what people’s reactions are to him when he tells the story of traveling to Europe at a young age, he shares this with me:

[When I tell people] Same thing: "Really?" Like, just they kind of shrug it off really quick. And then when I start [telling them about] the places where we really did go… And I'm like, "Yeah, I'm a little traveler." [In class] when somebody would talk about Europe and I was just nodding my head along, "Yes, I know about that. Yes, I know about that." And at some point I wanted to say, "Yes, I have been there," but really… I'll show it by, you know, after class going up to the professor and saying, "Oh, yeah, I actually have [traveled to Europe]" It's all that matters that I know. It doesn't really affect anybody else to know.

For Eliot, he believes that his change, his transformation of becoming a little traveler is very personal, something he does not need to brag about to others. The personal transformation and the increase in confidence that travel brought about is the most important piece.

Eliot feels an increase in self-confidence because he has traveled. He compares himself to the “smartest kid” from his high school who won a prestigious scholarship yet does not believe he can travel whereas Eliot knows he can. He tells me:

[It makes me feel great] Because I can leave my country and I can do things…even the smartest kid I know from Harvey, he just graduated from [a private university]. He had a kid at a really young age…so he says that can't travel, you know, for a long period of time. And I'm just like, for whatever reason
that may be, certain people say they can't travel. But they can. We can. You said
we could. [We did].

In sharing this story, he recounts how other people he knows simply do not believe they
can travel. Part of Eliot’s self-confidence comes from knowing he can travel because he
did as an eighth grader at Harold.

Enhanced experiential learning. Students are engaged in a cycle of learning,
experiencing, reflecting, and applying new ideas or concepts to their lives.

Validating. Educational travel connects academic abstractions with students’
lived sociocultural realities. This connection builds bridges of meaning between home,
school, and travel, thus validating students’ understandings and experiences. When
students see things with their own eyes, they bring their own meaning to educational
tavel and their own understanding to academics.

Empowering. Educational travel empowers students by increasing and
developing self-confidence, courage, and the belief they can succeed.

When reflecting on the meaning educational travel for his life Eliot comes back to
the book, Anne Frank: A Diary of a Young Girl. He said that he was going through his
books recently and decided to read it again. He remembers that in Grade 8, learning
about the Holocaust and Anne Frank was very new. Then, he visited her museum. Now,
he is rereading the book.

I had to pick it up. And [back] then… I remember like people making comments
of, "But she's so young, why does she think things like this?" But now -- because I
would look at it -- of course you look at it as comparing [her to yourself], so when
you're that age it's not that far away. Now that I'm older it's like, "Man, she was this young and had these thoughts. That is insane." And I'm always like making little side notes to myself as to like ways that she thought or the way she lived…Especially rereading that book is like -- you know. [I pick up something different each time I read it or a nuance].

Eliot believes that rereading Anne Frank’s book helps him in his life now. The cycle of learning about this before he left, visiting her house in Amsterdam, and then coming back to the book years later to see how it applies to his life has changed how he views himself. This is particularly true when he reads how Anne did not like to erase things preferring to cross them out:

I now don't believe in norms. I remember reading that Anne Frank didn't like erasing anything she wrote. That simple mention changed me as well. If I truly believe that I am a decent human being then even thoughts unsaid shouldn't be wished un-thought. No one should be told how to think. The proper way of spelling something is proper according to who? Why is it surprising that I am attending college? How is "being successful" defined? It all follows this "template" or "cookie cutter" mentality that I was trying to explain, I escaped this mentality. I believe that my some of my peers that traveled with me have done the same. That may be part of the explanation of why Europe students were more likely to be suspended in high school (referring to the quantitative data).
Eliot draws inspiration from his reflections on Anne Frank. Now that he has had time to reflect on what Anne Frank has meant to him, he realizes that he has internalized part of her message to his life. This message validates him to think differently and empowers him not to be a “template” and to question society by asking “Why is it surprising that I am attending college?” Eliot believes the world has opened up to him after traveling as he broke away from what might have been expected from a Latino male in a low-income neighborhood. This has been validating and empowering for him.

**Increased academics.** Educational travel provides multiple opportunities to connect classroom learning and academic subjects to lived experiences thereby increasing interest and achievement in academics.

**Exposure to new ideas.** Educational travel offers the opportunity for exposure to new ideas. This “opens doors” to new possibilities thereby expanding travelers knowledge of the world.

Eliot also remembers how his knowledge of the Holocaust, and European history in general helped him in his high school AP class. He recalls that having learned about these topics and having traveled to Europe helped him do well in the class. It also made him wonder why more of his classmates did not share the same curiosity of world events.

I took…AP European History, I went to every single class, did every single assignment and everything, and I did good in each class. Now, they wouldn't give you the college credit unless you aced the final exam. And they pretty much told everybody that the final exam is really, really, really, really, really, really, really hard… so I took it as, whole semester I'm going to learn everything I can.
Each class I got good grades. Finished with a B. Because we had to take an actual final before the Europe class, before the actual AP exam. And I did good on the final, I think I might have aced it or had a high B. I went into the final for the AP and I was like, "I'm going to skim over these questions, because it doesn't matter what they say about this, I learned and I know what I learned.” [I was confident in what I had learned because] I was exposed to so much as an 8th grader. But now, I go into class and you hear -- well throughout high school, whatever the case may have been, you hear Holocaust and [about European history] and see you people that don't know what it is. I'm like, "How do you not know this?” I've always hated preaching so I don't spill it upon like and say, "Well, this is what this is, this is what this is. I travelled to Europe and I know this." I always just like analyze and wonder why, or ask well why haven't [they] looked into this or other countries?” What is that? Why don't they like looking into other countries?

As Eliot has matured, he realizes that the exposure to “so much” as an 8th grader through learning, seeing, and reflecting has deepened his understanding of the world around him and has given him a perspective that not all of his other classmates had. Eliot recognizes that he had an increased understanding of his AP European History class because he learned about the same topics and places when he traveled to Europe. He felt confident in his ability to do well in the class.
**Academic achievement.** As a result of having multiple pathways to and increased engagement with academics, educational travel may offer higher standardized test scores, increased probability of high school graduation, and an increase in grade point averages.

Before traveling to Europe, Eliot reports that he never missed a day of school, never was suspended, and behaved well. He received good grades and knew he was going to graduate from high school because he wanted to play four years of football in high school. However, he was not sure about college. After the Europe trip he began to consider going to college when he saw how younger family members looked up to him and because of his increased academics:

[But college, I didn’t think about going] It was out there, I mean if anything I was thinking community college. I think, at least from my mom's side -- so she has nine sisters, four brothers -- I'm pretty sure I'll be the first to graduate from university out of everybody. I'll have to check on her with that, but -- It was -- I just know it's out there. It's one of those things you don't think about much because you're not surrounded with people, like people in your family that think in that way. But now I hear my younger siblings and my younger cousins when they like talk to their parents about what are they going to do next -- like a lot of them are like, "Oh, I want to be like El. Like El" Oh man, I'm like somebody they're comparing. It's crazy.
**Exposure to new ideas.** Educational travel offers the opportunity for exposure to new ideas. This “opens doors” to new possibilities thereby expanding travelers knowledge of the world.

**Empowering.** Educational travel empowers students by increasing and developing self-confidence, courage, and the belief they can succeed.

Eliot believes the Europe trip was empowering through exposure to new ideas, or “open doors.” Because of the educational travel experience he had, Eliot now feels one major cannot define him:

Again…I don't want to be just a template…I don't want somebody to think of me right now, "He's a businessman, and he’s a business major." No, I want to get my business degree and market-- marketing's such a broad term-- if you go towards accounting I feel like you can be an accountant. You go towards finance you're going to be a financial advisor. So I look at it as okay, marketing, what am I going to be a marketer? Okay, I'll be this marketer… but…I just don't like being closed in in that sense, I don’t want to be just one term. I feel like that's what this trip did for me is open things up; you know… open doors, definitely.

Eliot credits the trip with helping him develop a belief that he can escape what he views as a “template” mentality of being just a business major. He is empowered to define himself in more nuanced terms through the “open doors” of travel.

**Europe-Only: Kim**

When selecting a pseudonym, Kim jokingly said, “How about Kim Kardashian?”

With long black hair, black eyes, and smooth skin, Kim could be the reality TV star’s
double. Happy and bubbly, she arrived at our interview place before I did and got us a quiet table. She works as a dental assistant and came in her work scrubs looking like she just left home instead of after a long week of work. With a ready smile and a cheerful personality, Kim has always been outgoing and friendly. At 25 years old, Kim is the oldest of all my participants. She moved away from our neighborhood to another state in 2005 and I had not seen her since then. She graduated in 2008 despite being 8 months pregnant at the time. She attended a charter school in her new state and said she was determined to graduate.

A couple of years ago her former middle school boyfriend got in touch with her and they started dating. She moved back to Denver and they are now engaged. Her fiancée is great with her son while his biological father has all but disappeared from their lives. She mentions how she loves to travel and is planning a honeymoon to London after her fall 2016 wedding.

Kim is working to become a certified dental hygienist and hopes to continue on to college one day. She has one older sister and three younger brothers. She is interested in planning a reunion of all the students who have traveled to DC or Europe with Harold.

**Pre-educational travel to Europe: Kim.** Kim shares four themes with Eliot and Camila: *Exposure to New Ideas, Active Purposeful Learning, and Family Involvement.* With Camila she shares the four themes of *Organizational Structures, Empowering, Validating, and Pride.* Kim and Eliot share *Engagement* between the two of them. Kim adds the themes of *Transformative, and Comprehensive* to her pre-travel experience.
By deciding to travel, Kim realized that she wanted the *Exposure to New Ideas* that she believed travel would give her. She recalls thinking about the new countries, new languages, and new sights she would see as things that motivated her to travel. She had not thought about the currency as something new, “so when you showed us the money, it seems fake to me…and then we had it in our hands…Oh my God, this is real!” She also recalls being exposed to a musical for the first time when we learned about *Les Misérables* in class. *Active Purposeful Learning* played a large role in why Kim studied about things before we left. For example, she learned more about *Les Misérables* before we left, even though she had never considered learning about a musical because she knew she would see it in London. She also recalls studying the French and German phrase books diligently to learn how to say basic expressions in those languages.

The parent meetings were important for *Family Involvement* because we helped Kim’s mom feel more comfortable about allowing her to travel,

I remember my mom was really hesitant to attend the meetings because she didn’t speak [English]. But once she wound out that you, Ms. Córdova, and Mr. Gutiérrez would be there and [spoke Spanish], it made her ease more into it and she agreed more to let me go…she never thought one of her kids was actually going to travel across the [world] to go to Europe…I was the first one to leave the country without my parents…that was a big eye-opener for everybody.

Kim recalls that before her mom attended the meeting; she was hesitant to let her go. However, since Kim seemed so determined and her parents, “saw something in me that they [said], ‘Okay, let’s give her a chance.’” When Kim related this incident, she
also mentions the *Transformative* nature of her pre-travel experience. This is a theme only Kim mentions and it connects to the *Family Involvement* piece. She recalls being shocked that her family agreed to let her go because they were very strict. In fact, some of her relatives did not think she would make it. Normally, her family said, “’No, you can’t leave my sight!’ Especially with the whole we’re Mexican and we’re girls and you can’t leave the house and what if this happens?” She knew that for her Mexican-American family, it was not the norm to allow young girls to travel without a family member. However, the meetings and the way in which the adults worked with her family changed their minds and they allowed Kim to travel with us.

As with Eliot, Kim recalls the *Engagement* that came about by participating in the pre-trip activities. She believes it helped her attend school more and thereby helped her engage more with her classes and teachers, “It had a positive effect on me…it made me go to school more, I remember being at school a lot, after school and before school.” She cites the fact that she was physically at school more and this helped her to feel more comfortable at Harold.

Kim shares several themes with Camila. Kim recalls the *Organizational Structures* before we traveled. She mentions the monthly meetings, studying all the words related to Europe and taking notes, and learning about how to travel. She felt that the pre-trip experience was organized so that even when she broke her foot before the trip, she knew how to create a plan so that she could still go on the trip. This was *Empowering* because she had to mentally prepare herself not only to go out of the country but also to do so on crutches at the last minute. She recalls meeting with Ms.
Córdova, her mom, and myself to create a plan, “I remember sitting with you guys and talking about how I am going to do this…I don’t have insurance over there…what about my luggage?” We reassured her family that we had insurance for her on the trip and we created a plan to take care of her luggage and getting around. Kim mentions Validating as part of her pre-trip experience when she recalls not only learning about the places we will see and the things we will do but also being asked, “what do you think you’ll like about this [place]?” It was validating for her to share her thoughts about what she was learning. She mentions the Pride she felt in working at her HEEP job. She credits this with helping her become a hard worker for things she wants in life, “I think I found the value of money…that’s why I’m such a hard worker, because I started young. I worked for it.”

The new themes Kim brings to pre-educational travel are Comprehensive, and Transformative. One of Kim’s memories of eating lunch with me every day before we traveled stands out in her mind. She credits this with strengthening her pre-travel experience and creating a family-like atmosphere because “it was like a double class, because we always would be talking about Europe so it was like double. We never had lunch in the lunchroom.” I also remember the Comprehensive nature Kim refers to in this section. The students decided to eat with me every day to get to know each other and to learn more about Europe. When Kim discussed her family’s views on travel, she shared the Transformative nature in the previous paragraph.

**Educational travel experience in Europe: Kim.** When I ask Kim what the educational travel experience in Europe was like for her, she mentions two themes that
Eliot and Camila also discuss: *Active Purposeful Learning* and *Adult Advocate*. Kim and Camila share the themes of *Empowering* and *Validating* when thinking about their travels in Europe. With Eliot, Kim shares *Exposure to New Ideas*. Kim alone brings the themes of *Developmentally Responsive* and *Comprehensive* to her account of what the trip was like.

For Kim, Eliot, and Camila educational travel represented *Active Purposeful Learning*. This was most apparent for Kim when touring the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam; “I made connections to what I had learned…the Anne Frank House was like a slap in the face to reality, like this happened…here, and that was the most intense part of my whole trip.” She shares how she knew a lot about the Holocaust before but something about learning about it and then seeing it was very powerful and made learning come alive. Kim also credits the *Adult Advocates* with helping her have a meaningful trip. “We saw everything we wanted to see, I don’t remember not seeing anything or not doing anything we really wanted to see,” Kim recalls. Kim describes the best chaperones as the ones who are kind and responsible. She adds that having a good attitude and a willingness to work for the students made the trip a lot of fun and informative for Kim. She remarked how the two male chaperones even carried her places she could not access on her crutches!

Kim and Camila mention *Empowering*, and *Validating*. On the Europe trip, Kim began to think about how she wanted to keep going, “It’s something that you’re like, if I did this, what else can I do?” Traveling was *Empowering* which helped her think of other
possibilities in her life. The trip was also *Validating* for Kim as it was for Camila. Kim tells me about watching movies in class and then seeing things for herself:

I remember we would watch movies [about places in Europe] before we left and they told us, ‘this is how it is’ but it really wasn’t like that though, because you think you’re going to go and see this and you see it…you think, ‘Wait. I saw that in a movie,’ but with different eyes now because we’re seeing it now [with our own] eyes.

Seeing the sights for herself and thinking about how she interpreted them differently from others was important to her because she could bring her own meaning to what she was seeing.

Eliot and Kim believe the Europe trip provided them with *Exposure to New Ideas*. Kim lists all the new things she tried on the trip that were new to her: German food, sparkling water, trying lasagna in Cologne, the canal boat ride in Amsterdam, bike riding in Amsterdam, seeing *Les Misérables*, talking to Europeans, and seeing all the different types of churches and cathedrals. Kim had never done any of these things before nor had she considered them as part of her life.

Kim alone mentions the *Developmentally Responsive* and *Comprehensive* nature of the trip. She believes the trip was *Developmentally Responsive* because it was the first time she ever considered the actuality of the Holocaust really happening in history. She had studied it before but shares that being in the Anne Frank House, “helped me grow up and realize that when you grow up, it’s not going to be perfect, it’s not going to be perfect.” Kim tells me that it’s sad to learn about but necessary to understand the world.
better. The close connections she made with the other girls on the trip helped her feel a part of a community and indicate the *Comprehensive* nature of the trip. She remembers “feeling really close to everybody” and taking care of each other when one person got homesick. She also remembers how much fun they all had taking pictures of each other in different places and not leaving anyone out.

**Post-educational travel to Europe: Kim.** Kim concurs with Eliot and Camila that educational travel to Europe has the themes of *Increased Academics* and *Transformative*. Kim and Eliot share the theme of *Validating* when reflecting on their experience. Kim mentions *Family Involvement* and *Pride*, as does Camila, when discussing what the trip has meant to them in their lives. Kim also adds *Adult Advocates and Comprehensive* when sharing what educational travel has meant to her.

All three Europe-Only travelers believe the Europe trip has meant *Increased Academics*. Kim believes it helped with all of her history classes more than others.

The Europe trip helped with history…because we were learning about the Holocaust and world history…and I knew about it. When Colin Powell came to our school, I already knew who that was because we learned about him [in the Europe class]…In Arizona, we had this culture class and we had to write about different types of cultures and I picked Germany. It was super easy and I aced it…I did really well in school…I missed a whole semester of school because of the whole pregnancy…and I still graduated with honors.
As with the other two Europe-Only Travelers, Kim believes the trip’s meaning is *Transformative*. Kim shares how the trip is a “milestone” in her life and continues to be something that changed the boundaries of what she thought was possible. “Me, growing up Hispanic in a low-income family, having only one pair of shoes a year, then going and being able to go to Europe and working your butt off and actually doing something with [my] life, it’s remarkable.” As we will see later, because Kim changed the idea of who travels in her family, another person was able to travel. Breaking this boundary still holds significance for Kim.

*Validating* is how both Kim and Eliot describe their post-educational travel experience. For Kim, coming from a low-income family and being able to travel to Europe to see places of which she had only dreamed helped her bridge the gap of school, home, and the world. She was able to apply what she learned to her classes and help her family see what travel could hold for them, as we will see in the next section.

Kim shares how *Family Involvement* shapes her post-educational travel experience, as with Camila. Kim’s family is very proud that Kim went somewhere no one else in the family had ever been. Because of this, they cherish the souvenirs she brought back for them. Her father traveled for work and carried the St. Christopher statue Kim bought for him in Cologne with him wherever he goes. Now, her brother works for the same company and her father passed it on to her brother for good luck. She also shares how a younger family member wanted to travel to the Dominican Republic but that family said no. Kim met with them and said, “You need to let her go because this is a big experience.” Her family let her go because of Kim’s influence. *Pride* is also how
Kim describes her post travel experience. Whenever she shares the story of how she earned her trip to Europe, she is proud to say she and her family worked hard for it.

“When I tell people,” Kim shares, “it’s so shocking to them, they’re like, ‘I wish I could have done that.’ And that makes me feel proud because I tell them how I got there!” She loves to bring her pictures to work to share with colleagues and tells me how she still is proud of all she did. Because of this, she wants her son to travel and has already started taking small trips with him.

When Kim thinks back on what the trip has meant to her, she adds the themes of Adult Advocates and Comprehensive the trip that Eliot and Camila do not mention. Kim credits educational travel with helping her communicate better with other teachers. She mentions the Adult Advocates on the trip teaching her how to talk to other teachers,

Having interacted with you guys so much…. helped out a lot…I wasn’t really that close to my teachers before…But you made us change. You changed my attitude with my parents…and how I talked to teachers…now I knew how to go up to them and talk to them.

This helped Kim navigate high school in a new state when she had trouble. She credits the trip with teaching her how to discuss her grades and academic work with teachers. This helped her when she had to miss school to have her son.

Kim also recalls the Comprehensive nature of the of the post-educational travel experience. Upon returning to Harold, Kim felt that other students who did not travel did not understand this closeness, “people just didn’t understand the bonds that we all had, because we had bigger bonds [in Europe].” She recalls becoming even closer to the
adults and students she traveled with to Europe, which has stayed with her through the years. Kim tells me that she feels a special connection to people she traveled with, “Even now, there is a lot of significance, especially when I talk with somebody [from the trip].

**Europe-Only: Camila**

Camila is a 19-year-old Mexican-American woman who works at a landscaping company near Harold Middle School. She has worked there since she was in high school as an administrative assistant. She graduated in 2014 from Harvey High School just as her older sister, Nancy, did in 2013. Camila is an outgoing, happy young lady who is just as interested in asking me questions and I am in asking her. We spend more time than I did with the rest just catching up while she ate a delicious-looking smothered burrito.

Camila is a pretty girl with light brown eyes and wavy light brown hair that she wears in a ponytail. Beautiful gold necklaces and rings complete her clean appearance. Her nails are still beautifully manicured and still painted from her sister Karina’s quinceañera. Camila comes from a close-knit family of 7 children. Her parents came to the USA from Zacatecas, Mexico in 1993 when Nancy was 3 months in hopes of a better life and to find jobs. Devoutly catholic, they are very active in the neighborhood church and their faith plays a big part in their lives. Nancy is married with two children and Camila has been married for 10 months. She shared with me that she has three dreams: to get married, become an elementary school teacher, and to travel with her husband. She is well on her way to achieving all three as she is attending a local community college to work on her degree in education. This fall she will work as a paraprofessional in our
school district and attend classes at night to work on reaching those dreams. Her husband works in construction.

When I contacted her, we decided to meet at the same restaurant as Beto (a Both participant from the next section) and I did. This time I arrived early to secure a booth further away from the speakers playing non-stop ranchera music as to not interfere with our interview. While munching on the homemade tortilla chips and salsa, we catch up for about 15 minutes before we begin the interview.

**Pre-educational travel to Europe: Camila.** Camila shares *Exposure to New Ideas, Active Purposeful Learning,* and *Family Involvement* with Eliot and Kim. Camila and Eliot share *Engagement.* Camila and Kim share *Organizational Structures,* *Empowering,* and *Pride.* Camila alone brings *Increased Academics.*

Educational travel represents an *Exposure to New Ideas* for Camila as it does for Eliot and Kim. Camila recalls how she first heard about educational travel, “I remember you went to our classroom [and told us about the trip]…and said we could sign up in your classroom…I wasn’t really into school and I was very rebellious.” She thought about it throughout the day and decided this was something new she wanted to try, even though none of her friends wanted to try it, either because they were not citizens or because this new idea was not interesting. When she told her family, they said, “Are you out of your mind? That’s a lot of money!” However, when they saw how hard Camila was working in school and how she was trying to raise money, they decided to support her by attending the parent meetings. *Family Involvement* developed over time for Camila but was very important. Camila recalls an increased desire to learn about the Holocaust and
European history through *Active Purposeful Learning*. She had studied these topics before however, “I never paid attention until I fully gave my attention in the Europe class because now I was [going to Europe].” After thinking about it for a bit, Camila also shares, “The only [class] I remember is the Europe class…I barely remember the others.” She believes she remembers the Europe class because she learned about things she was going to see.

Camila recalls an increase in *Engagement* as part of her pre-travel experience through increased attendance and behavior. She recalls that she now wanted to attend school every day due to her HEEP job and the Europe class:

So my mom was never a fan of leaving us home, even if we were sick. Unless we were like sick sick, but she would always tell us to go to school. And I never ditched until high school…but in 8th grade [my attendance] got even better…before I would make any excuse to miss.

In Grade 8, she increased her desire to attend every day. It also increased her positive behavior in school. In Grade 7, Camila was “very rude” and would “talk back to my teachers all the time.” She was suspended once for a fight. Deciding to travel to Europe in the middle of Grade 7 changed that; “I started changing…I was more respectful. And I tried to be more calm…I had to be more responsible now because if I want to go to Europe I have to change my actions.” Camila became more engaged in school by behaving better and wanting to attend more regularly. However, Camila did not consider graduating from high school. For her, this seemed very far away, “I think my main focus in 8th grade was the Europe trip.”
As with Kim, Camila recalls how the *Organizational Structures* of the parent meetings were important to her pre-educational travel experience. She mentions how she looked forward to the cookies and how it was fun to see her friends and their families. However, most importantly, the meetings were in Spanish and English, “So this helped our parents…[the meetings] were very informative, they were very helpful.” She also recalls how the Europe elective class was structured to learn as much as possible. She remembers reading books, looking at pictures, how the class was organized for group discussions, and the personal writing we did to reflect on our learning, “I remember…we would always write in our notebooks, so it was like our little diary.”

Especially for a girl who had been in trouble at school, working her HEEP job was *Empowering* as she was quickly promoted to floor manager after sweeping for several months. She recalls gaining self-confidence as she tried, “to keep everyone on track” and make sure they did their job. The HEEP job also gave Camila a sense of *Pride* knowing that she was earning money for her trip. As a manager, she remembers, “The idea of staying after school wasn’t very exciting but the fact that I was doing it [to go] to Europe was fun…I remember clocking in and clocking out…keeping an eye on everyone…and getting paid.”

Only Camila mentions the themes of *Increased Academics* as a part of her pre-educational travel experience. During the years Camila traveled with us, we had a scholarship program whereby the students could earn money towards the price of their trip by improving their grades. Camila recalls, “I was more conscious of my grades because of the scholarship money…being a part of the Europe trip helped me a lot with
my grades.” She recalls not being a “straight A” student but tried to do a good job in all her classes. If she was doing poorly in one, she now talked to the teachers, “I would go to the teacher[s] and talk to them and tell them about the Europe trip and ask, can you please work with me?” Before deciding to travel to Europe Camila simply accepted poor grades and did not try to improve.

**Educational travel experience in Europe: Camila.** Camila shares *Active Purposeful Learning* and *Adult Advocate* with Eliot and Kim. Camila and Eliot alone share *Exposure to New Ideas*. Camila and Kim share *Empowering* and *Validating*. Camila alone *Organizational Structures and Family Involvement*.

When I ask Camila to explain what it was like on the Europe trip, she mentions one of the same themes as Eliot and Kim: *Active Purposeful Learning*. For Camila, this meant viewing places related to the Holocaust that she studied before her trip. Camila remembers seeing things from reading about Anne Frank before entering her house. She compared what she had read to what she saw as it became more real for her to think about what Anne lived through in the Annex, “It’s just so small…and the stairs were small and steep…it was hard to imagine being in her shoes.” Viewing the *Memorial de la Shoah* in Paris also gave Camila a chance to connect learning before the trip with what she saw. She remembers finding the mother’s name of a survivor who speaks at our school on the wall of names. She remembers thinking about the magnitude of people who died in the Holocaust when she saw the names. Seeing places connected to the Holocaust helped Camila connect what she learned in school with what she was seeing on her trip.
Kim, Eliot, and Camila all state the influence of an Adult Advocate in helping to make the trip meaningful for them. Camila remembers Mrs. Samuels sitting next to her on the plane to Europe. Camila had never flown before and Mrs. Samuels helped her feel less afraid by holding her hand. By the time Camila flew back home, she was confident and not afraid to fly because Mrs. Samuels helped her. Another adult who helped Camila on the trip was Mrs. Carrington. On the trip Camila believes she had a good experience because Mrs. Carrington “always made sure we were having fun, first of all, and that we were always safe.”

Camila and Eliot believe that being on the trip provided Exposure to New Ideas. Camila tried new experiences on the trip that she had not considered doing before such as bike riding in Amsterdam, horseback riding in London, seeing different lifestyles, and viewing a musical, Les Misérables, for the first time in London. She also tried new foods such as mussels, snails, and fish and chips. Even if she did not like the food, she was exposed to it. Camila also shared that the storyline of Les Misérables is still confusing but it prepared her for seeing another live performance in college. She knew what to expect from a live performance.

Camila and Kim share Empowering and Validating. Camila now is confident about flying. This increase in self-confidence is Empowering because she overcame this big fear in her life. The trip was also Validating. On top of the Eiffel Tower, Camila realized that she had made it to the other side of the world. “That’s where it hit me, when we were on the top. And I was like, the view was so beautiful, and I was just like “Wow, I’m really here. I made it. I’m really here.” She shares that after this realization, it was
just “emotion after emotion” in letting it sink in that she made it to Europe from the Harold neighborhood.

Organizational Structures and Family Involvement are two themes Camila brings to the educational travel experience. Camila credits the Organizational Structures of the trip for helping her remember her travels. On the trip, the adults helped the students save memorabilia, take pictures, and write about their days. Camila created a scrapbook when we returned where she has her tickets, her photos, and her journaling. Another way the organizational structures helped Camila was how she knew that she was safe on the trip while still having fun, “First of all, they kept everyone safe. And then make sure everybody has fun…you all were very strict but it was fun.” Camila also shares how she was very homesick at one point because she missed her close-knit family. Then she remembered how they were so supportive of her before she left and how happy they were that she was able to have this experience. Thinking about this support made her “get over it” and enjoy the rest of the trip to be able to go back and tell them about it. Camila recalls, “They told me to enjoy the trip and that they were going to be there waiting for me when I came back home.” Family Involvement (even when the family was not physically present) was important to Camila because it helped her move past her homesickness.

Post-educational travel to Europe: Camila. When describing the meaning the trip has had for her life, Camila shares the Validating theme with Eliot and Kim. Camila also mentions Exposure to New Ideas, Academic Achievement and Empowering, which are themes she shares with Eliot. Camila, like Kim, mentions Family Involvement and
Pride. Camila references the themes of Change in Perspective, Engagement that Eliot and Kim do not mention.

All three Europe-Only travelers believe educational travel has been Validating. For Camila, it was not just seeing all these places with her own eyes but also sharing this with people she met after leaving Harold, “When I meet people, I always talk about my trip…like when you have to say a bit about yourself…I’ve been to Paris, London, Amsterdam and Brussels. And that’s been the best experience of my life. I always tell them about them about the trip.” She believes this connection of learning about Europe, traveling there with her family’s support, and coming back to share her experience has strengthened her identity as traveler. She states, “I have…this experience of a lifetime…in my heart that I already went somewhere around the world.”

Camila, like Eliot, believes that the trip has meant Exposure to New Ideas that have shaped her life. She mentions the “little things” from the trip like eating mussels or eating French Fries with mayonnaise that she did not think about doing before and now is a part of her life, “Wow, if I wouldn’t have gone to Europe, I would have never thought about eating French Fries with mayo.” She reports that these “little things, they just stick with me.” She reports how the trip was Empowering when she realized she could be a better student and improved her Academic Achievement and her behavior:

Even though the trip was over, [it] helped me to be a better student, a better person, more respectful…[the trip] changed me because I wanted [my parents] to see that I actually deserved that trip. So I changed my behavior, and I changed the way I was towards them….I even wrote an essay about how the trip helped
me…Now that I am in college, I think the trip will really help me…especially when I take history.

Through educational travel she gained the self-confidence needed to make changes in her life to improve her academics and her family relationships.

Camila and Kim credit *Family Involvement* as a part of their post-travel experience. For Camila, she immediately started crying when she saw her family as she got off the bus from Europe and realized “like I matured a little [on my trip] because it was the experience of a lifetime.” As we saw in the previous quote, she changed how she treated her parents. When her younger sister, C., wanted to go on the Washington, DC trip and then the Europe trip, Camila remembers how she sat down and had a conversation with her parents about the benefits of travel. She told her parents, “if I had started with the motivation of going to Washington and to Europe in 6th grade, I think I would have been a better student, I wouldn’t talk back to anybody.” Her parents did let C. go on both trips and Camila helped out. Camila shares that C. is “brilliant” and Camila credits the two trips with helping her do so well. Camila mentions *Pride* when she tells me about the meaning educational travel has had in her life. “It has been a very big impact in my life…it made me realize that whenever you want something, if you work hard for it, you can get it…we started working at a very young age for what we wanted.” She is proud of how hard she and her family worked to make the Europe trip happen. This has stayed with her through her life, especially when she meets new people and tells them about what she did in middle school:
Because you know how you have to introduce yourself in classes...I say, I’m Camila. I’ve been to Europe. Yeah, I always like to say that. I feel proud...Because not a lot of people can say they’ve been to Europe, can say that they’ve been to the top of the Eiffel Tower, that have been on the London Eye or that have been to the Anne Frank House. Not a lot of people can say that. Yeah. So I feel proud of myself...Like many [say] ‘Wow that’s really cool.’ On their face I see the surprise [of me going there].

Camila feels very proud to discuss the different experiences she had while traveling when she meets new people. It gives her a renewed sense of pride to be able to talk about this important event in her life.

Camila believes that educational travel has meant a Change in Perspective and has the theme of Engagement. Before Camila traveled to Europe, she was used to being adversarial with teachers. After Europe and getting to know the adults on the trip, she had a Change in Perspective about teachers. Her relationship with them changed, “After Europe I talk to my [teachers] and professors differently...I made the decision of becoming a teacher after the trip...and I was actually thinking that later in the future I could work myself up to becoming a professor.” Camila even models her teaching style as an assistant after Mrs. Carrington and Ms. Córdova’s interactions with her. Camila says she learned how to be strict but still be fun. She also changed how she saw her parents, “I was very rude...[the trip] helped me become a better person because with all that experience, I didn’t want to be like, ‘Oh you had these wonderful things and you’re not grateful.” So Camila saw how hard they worked and how ungrateful she must have
seemed before so now she looked at herself from their perspective and changed her attitude.

Both DC and Europe: Laura

“…When you make things happen like [DC and] Europe...It changes your whole life perspective. Like me, I live such a happy life. I'm not rich. I'm not educated. I haven't finished college -- but I feel really content in the way I live my life, because I travel, and I have traveled.”

Laura is a 23 year-old Latina woman who lives with her 4-year-old son, Leonidas. When Laura meets me she is dressed professionally in a beige suit that offsets her beautiful dark eyes and long wavy hair. As always, I am surprised to see how grown-up my students are and Laura is no exception. She left high school before graduating to have her son and returned to a teen-parent high school to complete her education. Today, Laura works at a teen-parent service center (connected to her high school) in our state as the youth advocate. She studies marketing at a local community college. Juggling school, work, and her son she is motivated to make the most of her life.

Laura was born in Del Rio, Texas across the border from Mexico. Her family moved back to Mexico after Laura was born. Her father has never been a part of her life. Her mother came to our city when Laura was in elementary school in search of a better life. Laura spoke mainly Spanish at home until she started school.

Laura is an unlikely traveler in that her behavior might have precluded her from traveling in typical situations where only the well-behaved and academically advanced students get to travel. As a sixth grader, Laura was unafraid to speak her mind and had
strong opinions. Her memory of being in the advisor’s office for her behavior and having one of the trip chaperones advocate for her is something I remember as well. Her passionate nature sometimes got her in trouble but I also remember her maturing throughout her three years in middle school. I see the confidence that has blossomed in her through the years as she has learned to take her strong personality and ability to speak up to advocate for the needs for others. Her recollections are strong and vivid from what the trips have meant through the years. She has the same deep feelings as she had when she was younger and hers is the first interview where I cry with her within the first 15 minutes when she recalls what it was like to be asked what she thought of a book.

**Pre-educational travel to DC: Laura.** I begin our interview by asking Laura to recall her decision to travel to Washington, DC as a sixth grade student at Harold Middle School. I also ask her to tell me what it was like before she traveled. As Laura begins, her recollections demonstrate the importance of family involvement and school engagement as she shares what it was like in the fall of her sixth grade year before Washington, DC trip in the spring. The characteristics Laura mentions are *Engagement, Family Involvement, Increased Academics, Active Purposeful Learning, Safe Environment, Validating,* and *Privilege.*

**Engagement.** When students take part in meaningful educational travel, they experience a deeper level of engagement with school and with travel that assists with one or more of the following: personal development, attendance, behavior, goal-setting, and academic achievement.
**Family Involvement.** Educational travel actively involves families in preparing their children to travel.

**Increased academics.** Educational travel provides multiple opportunities to connect classroom learning and academic subjects to lived experiences thereby increasing interest and achievement in academics.

Laura tells me that she chose to go on the trip because it was offered to her and no one had ever offered an opportunity like this to her previously. She adds that neither she nor her family had ever been engaged in school before. “We were never engaged like that because I’m a first generation American…and my mom didn’t know English back then…you went to school, you went home, and it was separate.” Laura recalls “dragging” her mom to the family meetings for the Washington, DC trip because her mom had to work long hours at a restaurant to support Laura and her sister. Her mom changed her view about school and told Laura, “Oh yeah, that sounds interesting…you can totally start selling [chocolates] at the restaurant” Laura now “felt supported, and [my mom] was kind of getting engaged in my school which was really exciting!” She remembers how good it was for her to be involved with the school and how it helped her relationship with her mother. She recalls:

I was really defiant to my mom…I had to come home, make dinner, and stuff like that [because] she worked so much…with her helping me raise money and coming to school events I think my home life really simmered down…it was a combination of her not having too many calls from school and having DC be a leverage helped [our relationship].
Laura recalls improving in her academics after the first semester of school which she attributes to being more engaged in school because of the DC class, “I think I made more connections, more interactions with academic[s].” For Laura the combination of her mom becoming more involved in her school because of the Washington, DC trip helped Laura become more engaged in school. Because of becoming more engaged in school through the DC class in preparation to travel, Laura engaged more with academics through “connections” and “interactions.”

**Active purposeful learning.** Students and adults are engaged in active, purposeful learning before, during, and after the trip.

**Increased academics.** Educational travel provides multiple opportunities to connect classroom learning and academic subjects to lived experiences thereby increasing interest and achievement in academics.

**Safe environment.** The environment of educational travel is inviting, safe, inclusive, and supportive for all.

**Validating.** Educational travel connects academic abstractions with students’ lived sociocultural realities. This connection builds bridges of meaning between home, school, and travel, thus validating students’ understandings and experiences. When students see things with their own eyes, they bring their own meaning to educational travel and their own understanding to academics.

**Privilege.** Educational travel represents that opportunity to do something special that makes one feel proud.
Laura describes feeling like one of the “cool” students by being a part of the Washington, DC trip and in the DC class. She describes a feeling of privilege because she learned about “advanced topics” like the US Government and history, things about which her family had no knowledge. This gave her a feeling of having the opportunity to do something special that others did not get to do. Laura also clearly recalls reading the book, *Jacob’s Rescue*, in preparation for a visit to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. To ensure the students all understand the complex topic of the Holocaust, they all participated in large group and small group discussions about their thinking and emotions while reading the book as a class. The clearest recollection Laura shares with me is when she was asked to share what *she* thought of the reading. Laura says, “I guess we were just so used to being taught at and not really engaging. But, we read the book, we talked about it, we’d sit in a circle, and we would stop after a chapter to [talk about it] and…in a low-income school, we never got that.” The experience of being in a classroom where her thoughts mattered validated Laura as a learner. As Laura learned about the places she would visit and the topics related to travel, she learned that her experiences mattered to her education and others were interested in learning about her views.

Laura recalls feeling “safe” in the DC class with her peers who would travel with her. As Laura begins to cry (and I join her), she describes the shift she experienced in learning about the government, her view of reading, and her place in school:

We were just so used to being treated like gang members. I remember walking into the school and like being patted down, our backpacks being opened…like
after something [had happened in the school]. And we would go to [the DC class] and we would really learn about societal issues and the branches of government and how things made an impact and how our government worked and how [our country] was…Like I didn't really think of it as impactful then, but it really has changed my life, even learning about the Holocaust. It was like our feelings and our thoughts and everything [mattered], when we were just used to being treated like inner city, low-income kids, you know? You looked at us different. And it really meant a lot to us…it meant a lot to me. Like your classroom was a safe place. It was so different…and we were just so used to the white person telling us what to do and looking at us so different. But we were like, ‘Why is Ms. Olson telling us this? Why is she telling us to do this?’…Looking back on it, it was just how everyone was being taught. That's how everyone in other nice schools was being taught, and we didn't have that. [So that helped so much] in my reading... I had never read a book before. I had never read a book front-to-back before.

Ever… that's when I started reading. And if it's not for school, all my interesting books, like my personal books, are all about the Holocaust… I still read about the Holocaust.

When Laura started crying during this section of the interview, I also had tears in my eyes. Listening to her recall the meaning of being a part of educational travel at an urban, low-income school where sometimes she did not feel safe until she arrived in our classroom moved me in a way I had not expected in this process. Laura’s recollections of reading a book cover to cover and being asked what she thought about it were things that
have stayed with her since 2005 when she was in Grade 6. Laura’s ability to speak frankly about the impact of my ethnicity indicates her level of maturity in thinking about what the meaning of educational travel has been in her life.

**Summary of pre-DC travel experience.** From Laura’s pre-travel comments, it appears that the journey started from the first meeting. Her recollections are packed with many themes indicating the powerful nature of this experience in her life. It is a challenge to separate one theme from another when analyzing her thoughts regarding the meaning of the pre-travel experience. However, what stands out clearly for Laura is that this was the beginning of a new way of viewing academics and her role in the American educational system.

**Educational travel experience in Washington, DC: Laura.** Next, I ask Laura to think back to what it was like for her on the Washington, DC trip. Laura mentions four characteristics that impressed her on the trip: *Organizational Structures, Developmentally Responsive, Empowering, Adult Advocate, and Enhanced Experiential Learning.*

**Organizational structures.** *Organizational structures foster purposeful learning; create a safe environment; and meaningful relationships.*

The educational travel experience to DC is designed ensure the students were prepared before they left and knew what to expect on the trip. A great deal of planning went into creating the itinerary for the Washington, DC trip based on student feedback before the trip began. The students had a very clear packing list along with a student handbook delineating behavior expectations and procedures to ensure everyone
understood the nature of the trip. While in DC, students wrote in their DC Student Journal that Laura also remembers. Laura touches on this organization in this quote:

Our itinerary was so full, but so -- like we didn't have -- you know, when you go on trips, and you're kind of like, “Well, what should we do now? Should we go to this museum or this one?” And you take so much time deciding? It was like, okay, today we're going to do this, and we crammed so much stuff into those days that we were there… I remember our backpacks. We were always so prepared. I think that has shaped me for how I travel in life…. I remember our pouches underneath [our clothes]. I still do that… [I remember how we ate] breakfast every day, and all the meals were really good. And we were just really well fed and really well taken care of. We never were hungry. We never felt hungry. I remember the snack bags. I remember journaling.

Laura feels that the organizational structures of the trip had a positive impact on her experience. All of the planning and preparing that she participated in before and during the trip helped her benefit from this experience. As an adult, Laura applies some of the skills she learned, such as carrying valuables under her clothes, and applied them to subsequent travels.

**Developmentally responsive.** Adult advocates are committed to and knowledgeable about this age group. In addition, leaders anticipate and plan for the challenges and strengths of this age before, during, and after travel.
Laura mentions the developmentally responsive nature of the Washington, DC trip. She mentions several instances where she recalls the way she was allowed to do age appropriate things with her friends that she had not be able to do before. She also feels that the trip was a safe environment:

I think, probably developmentally [the DC trip had an impact because], I remember going to the pool with all of my friends, because I don't think I had ever been with like a party with my friends. You know? It was really cool to sleep over. I guess our houses are always too small, or we're always living with somebody that we're never allowed to go sleep over. And my friends…were all just hanging out… [There was] this girl, Ann, I don't remember her last name…She was not Hispanic. I think she was Anglo, but she had dark hair. She didn't come from our neighborhood. And to be room buddies with her was really different. We learned so much. She was like one of the few people that didn't speak Spanish of my friends. And so we were conscious of that, and we shared stories. And her family had dinner, and our families did not. We were just sharing stories. [Also, we] went to a Mongolian restaurant …and it was like a feast and it was really good. They had chopsticks, and we put them like as walrus teeth. We had an opportunity with our friends in a safe environment [to play and be kids]. And it was just a really cool experience.
Laura’s comments reflect the budding interest young adolescents have in other children their age. She enjoyed doing some of the things she had not been able to do before like swimming and sleeping together with other peers her age. Also, being silly in a restaurant where she was served a “feast” left an impression on her.

**Empowering.** Educational travel empowers students by increasing and developing self-confidence, courage, and the belief they can succeed.

**Adult advocate.** An adult advocate guides every student’s educational travel experience every step of the way.

Laura recalls the adult chaperones on the trip as being “ethical, caring, and in tune” with the travelers. She recalls being more stabilized in her behavior and in her education while being on the trip due to the adult expectations of her and her fellow travelers. Laura knew that the adult chaperones that she had gotten to know before she traveled had high expectations for behavior and for learning before the trip and while one the trip. She states, “I remember thinking, ‘Oh, this isn’t school. This is Ms. Olson’s class. And this is what we do.’ And it was more like people expected higher of us, so we didn’t mess up.” Because the adults expected more from her, Laura believes she gained self-confidence and skills to improve her behavior.

**Enhanced experiential learning.** Students are engaged in a cycle of learning, experiencing, reflecting, and applying new ideas or concepts to their lives.

Laura recalls visiting many sites on her trip, especially the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Lincoln Memorial. These two sites left impressions on her and she feels they still play a role in her life. At the USHMM, she
remembers meeting a Holocaust survivor and having a talk with him which was “such a big privilege.” She credits this incident and the learning before the trip with her continued interest in the Holocaust. Learning about the Holocaust was learning that connected her not only with reading but pride in seeing things and meeting people from this period.

While Laura was on the trip, she recalls being captivated by her visit to the USHMM and seeing things she had learned about before she left.

The Lincoln Memorial is another place has become a touchstone for Laura because it changed in her perspective about what she would do with her life. Laura states recalls: “The first time I went [in sixth grade] it was surreal, you know? It was like the beginning of so many opportunities that would come… every time I go back there now, I sit on the top of the stairs and I pray…for all the opportunities that I have.” At the time of the Grade 6 trip to DC, Laura thought of the Lincoln Memorial as representative of the culmination of all the months of raising money and learning about DC. She viewed it almost as the high point in the end of a journey. Little did she know that it would become the beginning of “so many opportunities that would come her way.” Laura’s recounting of this demonstrates how she credits Enhanced Experiential Learning as bringing meaning to her trip. She learned about something before she left; visited it while she was traveling; reflected on it through the years; and continues to engage with what she learned.

**Summary of DC travel experience.** Because the trip had organizational structures and was developmentally responsive, Laura enjoyed the travel experience. The adults’ belief that her behavior would be good on the trip was empowering for her. Since Laura
had a close relationship with the adults and respected them, she behaved well and gained confidence in the process. Laura’s impressions of learning about places before she left and then seeing them with her own eyes carries into her life today as she returns to learn more about the Holocaust and to visit the Lincoln Memorial.

Post-educational travel to DC: Laura. When I ask Laura about what it was like to return home after traveling to DC she recalls feeling empowered, transformed, and having pride in what she accomplished. She also believes the Washington, DC trip helped her in academics in high school. Understanding the meaning educational travel had for her developed after she came home, especially when talking with other people about her trip. The characteristics Laura mentions are Empowering, Engagement, Pride, Privilege, and Increased Academics.

Empowering. Educational travel empowers students by increasing and developing self-confidence, courage, and the belief they can succeed.

Engagement. When students take part in meaningful educational travel, they experience a deeper level of engagement with school and with travel that assists with one or more of the following: personal development, attendance, behavior, goal-setting, and academic achievement.

Pride. Educational travel cultivates a sense of pride in accomplishing a task.

Privilege. Educational travel represents that opportunity to do something special that makes one feel proud.

Laura shares the excitement to tell her family about the Washington, DC trip. Not only was she proud, but her family was as well. She remembers feeling “smart” because
she had so much to tell them about the world she had just seen. When Laura saw her mom and sister she remembers:

   And honestly I just felt so empowered… My whole family was really, really proud of me that I did that. [At Harold], we were like the cool kids. I remember we were so cool…we wore our [DC] T-shirts…some of the teachers had us talk about our experiences, so that was really cool. And again, I just felt engaged, engaged in the community.

Laura also credits the Washington, DC trip with helping her to think about other opportunities and empowered her to think differently about her life. By traveling and engaging in school, Laura believes the Washington, DC trip was a protective factor for her:

   It got me engaged. It got me thinking about other opportunities I [could have] in my life… I think it can be easily taken for granted, but it's highly, highly, highly effective in engagement, in academics. I mean like behavioral, social, emotional - - it has so many benefits. It had so many benefits for me…it's a protective factor.

Laura mentions pride and privilege when reflecting on the meaning of travel in her life. She especially notices this when she talks with people such as her co-workers about the Washington, DC trip:

   People are really surprised that the opportunity was given to inner-city youth… And I tell them about raising the money, and the classes that we did, and really what we learned. And it wasn't just like, oh, have a vacation… [I tell them about my HEEP job]…I tell them I used to run the school's store for school. And I used
to sell a bunch of stuff. And people were like, ‘Wow,’ especially people at my job. [They say], ‘Oh, my God, that's so cool. I can't believe you got to do that.’ And they're really impressed… I feel so proud telling them that. I feel really proud telling them that.”

Laura feels proud to be able to say that she worked hard for her trip by running the HEEP school store and learning about what she saw before she left. By participating in this educational travel experience Laura feels she was privileged in the sense of “special opportunity to do something that makes one proud” (Merriam Webster, n.d.). This is evident when she talks about the reaction of her coworker’s reactions.

**Increased academics.** *Educational travel provides multiple opportunities to connect classroom learning and academic subjects to lived experiences thereby increasing interest and achievement in academics.*

Laura also credits the Washington, DC trip with an increase in academic achievement, especially in learning how to study and in high school history. In preparation for the Washington, DC trip, the students studied the 100 civics questions for the US citizenship test. The students also read books about the US government. Laura believes this education helped her. She remembers:

[The DC trip is] supporting in your academic standards, like the reading, like the tests…I remember the little flashcards that have everything that you need to pass to be a citizen. Remember those cards? …That shows you how to study…and it was like skills that you needed for the rest of your academic life. And we were high-risk kids. And that was a protective factor to all of that…one [high school]
teacher really made a connection with me. He was the civics class teacher. And he taught about the branches of the government…and then he had us do a mock trial. And that whole semester I didn't go to anyone's class but his. And it's because I felt so smart. I felt so smart that I knew everything…I never said anything in that school. But in his class, I was like, "That's the judicial branch. And this is that." And I just felt so connected with his class, because I had prior knowledge to it [from the DC trip].

Laura believes that the learning she gained while preparing for the Washington, DC trip carried over into high school. The study skills and the connection with her civics teacher through her knowledge of civics from the Washington, DC trip provided a protective factor. Feeling “connected” to him and his class kept Laura attending one class while she was dis-engaged from the rest of her high school classes.

**Summary of post-DC travel experience.** When Laura thinks back to what meaning the Washington, DC trip had in her life, she believes she experienced empowerment, engagement, pride, privilege, and increased academics. She recalls that this engagement in academics helped her think of new opportunities and kept her connected to school in a small way when she was disengaging in high school. Laura recalls travel as being a special opportunity, a privilege that changed her view and made her feel pride in what she had accomplished.

**Pre-educational travel to Europe: Laura.** In this section, I ask Laura to think back to what it was like before she went to Europe. Laura remembers the family involvement and the way her friends and the adult advocates helped her. She credits the
comprehensive way everyone worked together in making sure she traveled to Europe.

The characteristics Laura mentions are *Family Involvement, Adult Advocate, Comprehensive, Empowering, Active Purposeful Learning, Change in Perspective,* and *Organizational Structures.*

**Family involvement.** *Educational travel actively involves families in preparing their children to travel.*

**Adult advocate.** *An adult advocate guides every student’s educational travel experience every step of the way.*

**Comprehensive.** *Educational travel cultivates a sense of community, camaraderie, and a shared responsibility to the group. It helps students of color maintain identity and connections to their ethnic group while exploring the world.*

**Empowering.** *Educational travel empowers students by increasing and developing self-confidence, courage, and the belief they can succeed.*

At first, it was not certain Laura would travel, even though she really wanted to go with her friends and she did not want to be left behind. Laura mentions the difficulty of committing to the Europe trip because:

...Back then $2,000 for a young person was like $2,000 is like so much money. And I didn't know that I could do it...and then I didn't meet a deadline or something. And you talked to me and my mom about it's okay to not make deadlines, but we've got to just talk. And you really talked to my mom and made her really understand this is something that she wants to do, and we should all support her.
Laura remembers that her mother supported her after this conversation and began to get others involved. She also recalls how her extended family helped her this time and how proud they were of her going to Europe. Laura also recalls that this family involvement helped her relationship with her mom at home and helped her at school.

Laura states that her extended family,

Would help me sell chocolates at church and then in the different restaurants that they worked at. We didn't have a lot of money to spare. But … they gave me spending money. And they would tell people about me that I was going to Europe. They would tell people, and they were just so proud to say that… I remember really, really being good with my mom that year…my behavior was good at home… and at school… my attendance was great…so I remember really, really being a model student. [My grades improved].”

Laura’s friends at Harold and their families were also a factor in her traveling to Europe. She mentions the comprehensive nature of how her friends and their families helped her get to Europe. Laura recalls,

“All my friends that went to the DC trip, almost everyone was going [to Europe]…So I was like I don't want to be left out, like what am I going to do in April, when everyone goes to Europe, and I'm going to be here all sad… And their parents were really involved – K. and M.'s parents and B.'s…they came from two-parent households…and their parents were so engaged. And obviously they had two incomes, so they had a little bit more [cash] flow in their household. But I remember I wanted to be like them, and I didn't want to feel left out. And they
were so supportive of me also, which it was just like a really cool group of friends that I had [who helped me get to Europe]…so then they were like, ‘Just come on. We'll help you, and come on.’ They were really encouraging to me, so I did it.”

Laura saw how her family, her friends, and their families were supportive of her so she began to believe that she could make it to Europe. She felt encouraged by this and it helped her commit to the Europe trip.

Laura also credits the adult chaperones from both trips in helping her make it to Europe. Having someone intervene for her when she got into trouble and being trusted with the school store items helped her to realize that she could rise to these higher expectations teachers had for her, just like she did on the Washington, DC trip. She recalls her behavior changing from seventh to eighth grade because of this:

…I remember being one of the students that the teachers trusted. And I remember my behavior changed from 7th grade to 8th grade. My behavior changed a lot. I remember being engaged…I think it was just like the expectations and the trust the staff gave me. You know, like now I knew Mr. Jameson better, because we had traveled with him. I knew you, I knew Ms. Córdova, I knew Mr. C…. The gym teacher. Even though he never traveled with us, he helped us all the time…Ms. T. was my counselor. And she really grew to trust me a lot…when in 6th grade…I was such a thorn in her backside…so we really talked. And because [the trip chaperones] would tell her… "She was a good student in D.C., like this and she’s going to Europe." And she really had a different approach to me. And all the teachers actually did. And it made me feel kind of like, I don't know, like, wow,
people think highly of me, and so I should be like that. And I should be a model student...I think working at the after-school store, like even the students, like they think highly of you, because you can do math and like...Ms. Córdova doesn't have to stand with us anymore, because --we were advanced, so we were the cool kids. So I think that's really what changed me, is like the teachers' perspective [of me] and [then] my respect towards the teachers.

Laura recalls that Ms. Córdova believed so firmly in Laura’s ability to make it to Europe that it changed how Laura saw herself. She also remembers how I talked to her mom and explaining how we all needed to help Laura reach this goal. This act also helped her believe she could make it. Laura demonstrates the empowering and comprehensive nature of having an adult advocate in educational travel when she talks about this adult who believed in her:

I remember Ms. Córdova had me write in an index card, "I will go to Europe."

And she had me put it under my pillow. And she had me read it. And she told me that if I said I will, I would do it. And I was like this lady's crazy. That doesn't happen. I didn't say that to her. And I was like, ‘Okay, whatever. Okay. This card is going to make me go to Europe.’ And it did. And it did. And I probably didn't read it enough times. But I guess it was just that she believed it. You know, that someone believed that I was going to go. And her determination and her so matter of factly, like, ‘You will go to Europe.’ And you [Ms. Olson] talking to my mom, making it seem like I’m going to go to Europe. ‘You've got to help her.’ It just made me feel like, whoa, holy crap, I'm going to go to Europe. And people
believe that I'm going to go to Europe, so I should start acting like I'm going to go. And that's how I decided [I could make it to Europe].

Laura considers these four characteristics of educational travel (family involvement, adult advocate, comprehensive, empowering) as the reason she committed to traveling to Europe. Without this support she does not believe she would have traveled to Europe.

**Active purposeful learning.** Students and adults are engaged in active, purposeful learning before, during, and after the trip.

**Change in perspective.** Educational travel provides the opportunity for students to experience a change in perspective to the world around them and to themselves.

To prepare for the trip, Laura recalls reading Rick Steves’ travel books, learning phrases in Dutch, German, and French, and continuing to learn about the Holocaust by reading the *Anne Frank: The diary of a young girl*. She recalls that she was motivated to learn about these places. This motivation shifted how she viewed classroom learning. This happened when she recalls being unable to fathom that she could be on top of the “Eiffel Tower, of course, [and to see] the Mona Lisa. Just the fact to be in London. And just being there, I couldn't fathom [seeing it myself], I couldn't fathom [being there myself].” Yet, she knew that she was going to travel to Europe that increased her motivation to learn about topics related to the trip. She also recalls changing how she viewed learning about the performing arts when she studied the musical *Les Misérables* in preparation for attending the performance in London. She states,
I remember listening to *Les Mis*. And really our families were…not into the arts…and I don't think anyone had ever been to a play or even heard of a play or even been interested in learning about a play… And I was like this is weird, like people sing to tell a story. That's so weird. But I got really into it.

The connection Laura began to feel to topics that were previously “unfathomable” created an active purposeful learning environment that changed her perspective on what she believed she could accomplish.

**Organizational structures.** Organizational structures foster purposeful learning; create a safe environment; and meaningful relationships.

As with the Washington, DC trip, Laura mentions the organizational structures that helped her prepare for educational travel. She recalls this time it felt more focused because we were traveling out of the country. Laura remembers the Europe Student Handbook and talking about the trip before we left:

We talked a lot about preparing. We had after-school meetings, too, about our parents, like what it's going to look like, like jet lag and drinking a lot of water and what clothes to bring…We talked a lot in class, too, about staying together and really following the rules and being on our best behavior, because we were going to be in a totally different country, and like hotel etiquette…we learned you can go to hotels and get breakfast…[we learned about] itineraries and how to see museums. And everything I learned about traveling was from you -- the pouch, the packing. Remember the packing list? And also I just told this to my friend when we lost our luggage going to Vegas, that's why I always pack an extra pair
of clothes in my backpack. And she's like, "Who told you that?" I'm like, "Let me tell you!"

As with the Washington, DC trip, Laura believes that the organizational structures helped her have a better travel experience because she knew what to expect. She also knew how to read an itinerary to ensure she was ready for each day’s activities. Being prepared and organized before a trip is learning that Laura clearly remembers and uses still today.

**Summary of pre-Europe travel experience.** For Laura, the pre-travel experience demonstrated to her how her family and friends worked together to make the trip happen for her. Because of this, preparing to travel also helped improve her relationship with her mother. Laura also credits the adult advocates in the trip chaperones as helping other teachers see her in a different way. She recognizes the impact of learning about places before she traveled and how her perspective of her place in the world changed. In addition, the organizational structures helped her have a meaningful educational travel experience.

**Educational travel experience in Europe: Laura.** When I ask Laura to describe what meaning the Europe trip had for her, Laura recalls typical things about traveling overseas for the first time such as new foods, a long plane ride, hearing different languages, seeing museums, visiting churches and cathedrals. As she mentioned in the pre-travel section, she had a change in perspective by seeing sites with her own eyes. She mentions the Eiffel Tower, the Mona Lisa, and the Anne Frank House as places she remembers vividly. She also was impressed by the variety of foods she tried from
Nutella and lamb in Germany to waffles and mussels in Brussels. The characteristics she mentions are **Adult Advocate, Developmentally Responsive, and Organizational Structures.**

**Adult advocate.** An adult advocate guides every student’s educational travel experience every step of the way.

However, for Laura one of the most significant recollections she has is the strong connection with Ms. Córdova. She stated that for an adult to care about her and always check in on her; improved the trip for her. Laura remembers that when she had a difficult time in Cologne, Germany and Ms. Córdova talked with her:

I had a [little] breakdown, because I just felt really weird. And I had to talk to Ms. Córdova about how I felt there… I just felt like there was a presence in Germany. And when we were walking from the cathedral, I just felt really weird… it was like, wow, one time this was in a war zone. And this was somewhere that people weren't allowed to be different…Ms. Córdova was the best…She was so amazing… I think I had a connection with her, because I was going through a lot of hard times. And emotionally she really helped me, like be a really good support for me. So during that trip, she was always checking in on me. And that thing in Germany, where I just really needed to talk to her, she was, I guess, like not spiritual, but maybe just like a support system that I could look into that more than just academics or more than just a chaperone. I really came to trust Ms. Córdova in a lot of [things]…[she made the trip better] I think that's where I really
gained respect for teachers and what they do, because it's not just teaching. It's like Ms. Córdova really cared about us. You know?

For Laura, Ms. Córdova showed her that there were adults who cared about her, “not just teaching,” but as people. It helped Laura feel safe and comfortable to know that there was someone with whom she could talk while away from home. This newfound respect stayed with her through her school years.

**Developmentally responsive.** Adult advocates are committed to and knowledgeable about this age group. In addition, leaders anticipate and plan for the challenges and strengths of this age before, during, and after travel.

**Organizational structures.** Organizational structures foster purposeful learning; create a safe environment; and meaningful relationships.

As with her DC recollections, Laura mentions how the trip was developmentally responsive to middle level learners by giving the students age appropriate freedom at times. She also mentions the organizational structures that helped her have a safe trip. Laura tells me:

You were really [organized and] kept us on track for everything. You were always just so prepared…you never let us get lost; because it could be really easy…you gave us time to be kids. Like I remember when we took a tour of Notre Dame, and we were there in Paris -- like in a little square. And you're like, "Okay. We're going to be here." And you let us kids go to the little square and pick where we wanted a snack…and I was like, "Is she really letting us? Okay, we're going to go. We're leaving, Ms. Olson."…And it was like, wow, like they really trust us. Like
we're here in Europe with our friends eating crepes… And you let us be kids. And you gave us -- you let us be kids in a structured and safe environment.”

As an adult recalling her travel experience, Laura recognizes the role adults play in creating a positive travel experiences. She also acknowledges that travel requires organization that incorporates safe activities that are fun for the young adolescent. Allowing safe choices that are challenging made this a positive experience for Laura.

**Summary of Europe travel experience.** For Laura, the trip to Europe meant the opportunity to develop a strong relationship with an adult advocate in Ms. Córdova, which is something she believes, stayed with her all her life. She also believes the organizational structures and developmentally responsive way in which the trip was created helped her benefit from educational travel.

**Post-educational travel to Europe: Laura.** I ask Laura to think back to what it was like when she returned home from Europe. Many different themes are apparent when Laura speaks about the time right after she came home and the years after the trip. Laura speaks passionately the meaning of the trip through the years. She mentions feeling empowered, validated, and transformed by the trip. She also feels a sense of pride and privilege in having this opportunity. Her perspective changed and her self-confidence increased. The characteristics she lists are *Transformative, Adult Advocate, Change in Perspective, Pride, Privilege, and Empowering.*
Transformative. In under-represented travel groups, educational travel transforms students as they confront and transcend the boundary of “who travels” of traditional educational travel experiences.

One of the ways Laura felt transformed originates from the respect she earned from her peers that could not travel to Europe. She talks about how happy she was in Europe and she shared this with her friends. She recalls:

“[When I came home from Europe]… Everyone was just really impressed. Everyone wanted to hear my stories…. everyone was so interested in learning about our trips, and everyone was really, really, really impressed. And I gave everyone souvenirs and stuff. And I was like, "I went to the Eiffel Tower. And I went to the Louvre." And I remember [telling people] that even after all walking a lot, a lot, a lot, I was really, really, really happy. I remember that about Europe, was being really happy…[my friends who didn’t go to Europe]…I think they were kind of jealous. Maybe that's why we stuck to our Europe group… But I still had friends that couldn't go [because they] were undocumented. And they were like, "That's so cool, que suave. You got to go. Good job.” Like my close friends that couldn't go or that didn't go, they were really proud. And they weren't envious. You know? They were really proud. And I just felt like really wanted and really respected by them.”
After the Europe trip, Laura begins to realize how far she had come from being the rebellious sixth grader. She feels transformed by now being one of the students people look up to and feels “happy” that she now has this role.

*Adult advocate.* An adult advocate guides every student’s educational travel experience every step of the way.

*Change in perspective.* Educational travel provides the opportunity for students to experience a change in perspective to the world around them and to themselves.

Laura also credits Ms. Córdova and the other teachers who chaperoned the trip as changing her perspective about how she interacted with adults. Ms. Córdova was such a strong adult advocate for her that Laura did not disrespect a teacher again after her travels. Before the Europe trip, Laura states:

[Before I traveled to Europe], I didn't respect my teachers as I should have. But after really getting to know them at not a school setting, as real people, and they sleep and they eat and they function like us, and they have feelings. And Ms. Córdova really connected with everyone. I never disrespected a teacher after that…Even if I didn't go to class, even if I didn't do my homework, I would never disrespect a teacher after that…And I still have that different, newfound respect for elders.

Having a strong adult as an advocate that cared for her changed the way Laura worked with teachers long after the trip. This was a turning point for her in how she viewed educators.
**Pride.** Educational travel cultivates a sense of pride in accomplishing a task.

**Privilege.** Educational travel represents that opportunity to do something special that makes one feel proud.

**Empowering.** Educational travel empowers students by increasing and developing self-confidence, courage, and the belief they can succeed.

Laura mentions the pride she felt in having traveled to Europe. She now realizes that this was a remarkable thing to do when she was only 14. She believes it was a privilege to travel internationally, something she did not understand until she began to interact with people outside her neighborhood and told them about the trip. It changed her perspective and empowered her to do things that she had not thought of before. Laura relates this to me:

I feel just so honored to even have that opportunity…like that is such an amazing opportunity to travel at such a young age. I think it was just so much. And developmentally I don't know if I could have understood the great privilege that I had…because at that age, I still haven't seen the economical or social difference in me versus other people not in [our neighborhood]…So maybe that's why I wasn't like, "Oh, I'm so privileged." It was just like a trip that we did. And it was a great opportunity…[I realized it] probably after I had my son, and I started getting into advocacy. And I really started learning about socioeconomic status and really the diversity in people and diversity in our community. That's when I was really like, "Wow. That is not something that someone from a low-income, poverty or below poverty gets to do." That was amazing… I still don't know, how did we do
Laura experienced some challenging times when she did not graduate with her class and had a son at a young age. When she returned to school and began to work with youth advocacy, she began to realize how educational travel provided her with privileges that she had not thought about before. It was empowering for her to realize that she could “do a lot of things that I didn’t think I could do.”

**Change in perspective.** *Educational travel provides the opportunity for students to experience a change in perspective to the world around them and to themselves.*

**Empowering.** *Educational travel empowers students by increasing and developing self-confidence, courage, and the belief they can succeed.*

Laura believes the trip to Europe changed her perspective on using her own voice that was empowering. She credits travel with increasing her ability to talk to people outside her immediate world; which empowered her to make herself heard by others later in life. She tells me about this:

… And also, too, believe it or not, like I don't think I had ever really talked to anyone outside of school and my family, besides people in Harold -- you and Ms. Córdova. [On the trip] we were in the real world. We had to navigate things, and [you and Ms. Córdova] asked me, "Do you want to go to this museum? Do you not want to go? Are you hungry? Are you not?" [And then we learned to talk to people at museums and restaurants]. And that really gave me a voice that could be
heard. I didn't think of going to an interview and getting a job as a challenge because of that, because I have already talked to people, because I already knew you can just ask and make myself heard. Like I had a voice that like going to work and being interviewed wasn't a barrier to me. You know?"

Laura believes that this ability to use her voice to be heard was cultivated by traveling because previously she had only interacted with people at Harold. On the trip, she learned how to talk with people outside of her immediate circle and that was empowering.

**Parting thoughts and of post-Europe travel experience: Laura.** At the end of this portion of the interview, I ask Laura to share any parting thoughts she has about the DC and Europe educational travel experience. She shares how the opportunity to travel transformed her and the way she parents her son, Leonidas. She mentions the impact of the trips as changing how she has chosen to raise her son and live her life. Laura shares, Europe was one of the trips that I still talk about, probably honestly like five times a week, either to co-workers, to my mom, to my friends. Every time that I go on a trip with my son, I always think of where I came from and where I started. And it was traveling with you guys. It has shaped my values in my life. I don't live to go to work. I don't live to pay the bills. I don't just live to raise my son for him to go to school. Like we go on vacations… He loves to. And it's like if my mom could make that happen for me -- I can make it happen for me and my son. I can start young with him. Like I'm a single mom, but we have done so many amazing trips, because I've learned so much, you know…. But to really think back on how [DC
and Europe have shaped me and the trips I've made have shaped my life, the older I get, it's really resonated with me and how I want to raise my son. Like that was a value that wasn't in our family, because my mom couldn't travel… We didn't leave. We didn't leave the state, because we were so scared. And now it was such a privilege to know that's where you go get your passport. Let's go get him his passport so we can go travel to the beach. And now I'm going to be on an airplane with my kid, [and] I know how to do these things.

For Laura, the opportunity to participate in educational travel shapes the decisions she makes as a single parent. She wants her son to travel and experience what she has learned from her journeys.

As we wrap up this portion of the interview, Laura shares how she changed her whole life perspective after traveling. She acknowledges that while she may not be rich, she is “content” with her life. Laura starts by mentioning the travel program at Harold Middle School,

This program really teaches, and it gives people new values in life. Like really a low-income person or just a middle-class person doesn't think of taking vacations with their kids. They're too busy thinking about their bills. But when you make things happen like [DC and] Europe happen, that's when you really value that, and you make that a value of your life, it changes your whole life perspective. Like me, like I live such a happy life. I'm not rich. I'm not educated. I haven't finished college -- but I feel really content in the way I live my life, because I travel, and I have traveled.
Having an adult advocate and becoming engaged in school through educational travel are two of the most prominent themes in Laura’s interpretation the meaning of this for her life. She also mentions empowerment and changes in perspective. Laura mentions how the Europe educational travel experience was transformative for her because of the respect she earned from others. She also felt pride and empowerment at having made this privilege happen for her at such a young age. The lasting effects have empowered her to speak up and changed her perspective on the value of her voice in interviews and meeting new people.

**Both DC and Europe: Beto**

Beto asked to meet me at a popular Mexican restaurant near Harold Middle School. The ubiquitous ranchera music is playing in the background as I arrive and am greeted in Spanish. Beto is already at the restaurant and I am surprised at how tall he is. Many times, I find myself thinking of my former students as their Grade 6 or Grade 8 selves and am surprised to find young men and women when I meet them.

A 22-year-old Hispanic male, Beto currently works for an agency that hangs billboards around the state. After he graduated from Harvey High School, he worked with his dad in construction but found his current job through a man at his church. Beto is active in his Christian congregation and plays the bass guitar for services. He speaks fondly of the members and how they supported his trips to DC and Europe. In addition, they sponsored him to work on a mission in Mexico City for four months after he graduated which he enjoyed immensely. His family immigrated to the USA from Chihuahua, Mexico in 1987 in search of work. He and his four brothers were all born in
Denver, CO. His mother has worked for over 20 years at Harvey HS in the school cafeteria and Beto is very proud of how hard his whole family works. His two older brothers also have steady jobs.

Beto is tall with light brown hair and dark brown eyes that sparkle when he talks. He is very excited to be interviewed and to see me to reminisce. After I notified him that he had been selected to participate, he called me to say he couldn’t wait. He told me of the other teachers he had been in touch with over the years and was glad we had reconnected to do the same. When we meet, he is casually dressed with a blue t-shirt and jeans explaining that he had just been playing with his younger brother and was worried he would lose track of time. He begins immediately to tell me about his life since I last saw him over seven years ago. He is a father of a two and a half year old girl, Liza. He and her mother tried living together but it did not work so now he sends child support payments to them and sees Liza several times a month. He lives with his parents directly across the street from Harold Middle School.

**Pre-educational travel to DC: Beto.** All three travelers share *Family Involvement*. Beto shares with Laura *Active Purposeful Learning*. Beto and Lilac do not share any themes. Beto alone *Transformative, Comprehensive, Pride*.

As with the others, I ask Beto to describe how he came to travel on the Washington, DC trip in Grade 6. Beto remembers being “curious” about what travel would be like but he did not have any friends who wanted to travel. He decided to join the trip as a “loner” as he describes himself. He mentions *Family Involvement* like Laura and Lilac do. Beto shares how his mom came from a family of 15 siblings and his father
from a family of five. Both grew up in poor, rural communities in Mexico and came to
the USA looking for a better life. When Beto told them he wanted to travel to
Washington, DC they knew it would be hard to raise the money but “it was a dream for
her too” for her son to travel to the nation’s capital. His family supported him selling
chocolates and raising money in the church.

*Active Purposeful Learning* is what Beto recalls from the pre-travel experience,
just as Laura does. Beto remembers learning about the history of our nation and “just
learning more about life” before he traveled. He lists some of what he remembers
learning, “We learned a lot about history, the Holocaust…the Lincoln Memorial…the
Bill of Rights…National Archives…George Washington…like where we come from.”

Beto brings several themes to the pre-travel experience that Laura and Lilac do
not. Beto recalls a *Transformative* moment early in the DC pre-travel experience.
Former DC and Europe travelers often came to talk to the current students who were
interested in traveling to share with them tips and strategies for making their travel
dreams come true. Beto reports that this “motivated” him because, “they grew up like”
him in the same community and had hard circumstances. Hearing them speak helped him
realize he could travel too.

The pre-trip experience was *Comprehensive* for Beto because he saw how his
church helped him raise the money; “I used to sell [chocolates] in the church in the
afternoons. The service was finished…some people would buy five at a time or a whole
box [just to help me].” He knew his family would help him but was surprised at how
much his church helped him too. He believes this additional support kept him on track,
“I was in church. So I didn’t have time to slack off, I was never on the streets, I was never in gangs.” Beto credits his good behavior to his regular church attendance and the community support he received to him raise money for his trip. In addition, he began to feel a sense of family with the other travelers working at HEEP jobs, “and we could sell candy right there outside the class…all the people just used to hang out.” Even though he believes he was “mostly all the time by myself” and a bit of a loner, he began to feel a part of a group. The experience of working to raise money also brought a sense of Pride to Beto and it made his parents happy, “It you put an effort to it and buen desempeño, hard work, it pays off…your parents enjoy that.” He knew he wanted to graduate from high school for the same reason: to show his parents that he can work hard and make them happy.

**Educational travel experience in DC: Beto.** All three travelers share *Adult Advocate, Empowering*. Beto and Laura do not share any characteristics of the travel experience only between each other. Beto shares *Active Purposeful Learning* with Lilac. Beto alone reports *Exposure to New Ideas, Safe Environment, Validating, and Comprehensive* as being part of his travel experience in DC.

All three Both travelers believe educational travel had the themes of *Adult Advocate* and *Empowering*. For Beto, the *Adult Advocate* in his chaperone, Mr. Gutiérrez was important to him having a meaningful trip because, “he translated for us, he was outgoing, he was very patient with his people.” Beto tells me how he learned more on his trip because of Mr. Gutiérrez. Even though he had studied about the places before he left, he felt Mr. Gutiérrez added to that knowledge, “He knew a lot about the places. Like
everything he could explain to us very well.” Beto believes the trip was Empowering. He mentions the confidence he had gained from being away from his family and learning how to take care of himself without them. However, Beto gained the most confidence when he flew for the first time. Beto tells me, “Nervous? Yes. The first time I flew on a plane… but inside of me, like I felt strong enough you know?” This inner strength gave him self-confidence.

Beto and Lilac believe the trip engaged them in Active Purposeful Learning. Beto recalls seeing things and thinking, “We learned about that with Ms. Olson.” He feels this is especially true at the USHMM. It was meaningful for him to see “what history picks up and to show off to the world… to encounter every spoon, every fork, every shoe, every number, every Jewish star…” He believes seeing the artifacts with his own eyes after learning about it before he left deepened his understanding of the Holocaust.

Beto mentions several themes that the others in the Both group do not. Beto mentions Exposure to New Ideas when he talks about visiting an art museum for the first time in his life. He had never considered visiting one before. He mentions the Safe Environment on the trip, “You took good care of us, you fed us very well, breakfast lunch and dinner… I know I had a map… I felt very confident.” The trip was Validating because he got to see places with his own eyes such as, “riding the Metro… the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights and the Constitution… and [in New York City] where the Twin Towers used to be, the Statue of Liberty” all were places he had only read about before. Finally, the trip was Comprehensive because he grew close to the group of boys in his room and Mr. Gutiérrez. He sheepishly shares how his group did not
complete their DC Student Journals because, “It was just so much fun” in the room, “we were like a team!” He shares how much he enjoyed this time that he did not have any bad “encounters” on the trip.

**Post-educational travel to DC: Beto.** All three travelers share *Empowering.* Beto shares with Laura none. Beto shares with Lilac *Adult Advocate.* Beto alone *Family Involvement, Transformative, Comprehensive*

All three travelers share *Empowering.* For Beto, he proudly shares his scrapbook with people who do not believe he traveled to DC, “They have to see my scrapbook to believe it.” He believes some people “start being opened up” to him more because they realize he had traveled and this makes him feel good about what he has done in his life. He also credits the Washington, DC trip with “leaving a root in my heart. It left a root in my mind that you’re going to struggle…you could just change that…it would just turn around and get better.” This “root” has given him the confidence to travel to Mexico City alone when he was 18 to work for a church. He now wants to travel to Spain and Israel because of the confidence he got from educational travel that began in Grade 6.

Beto and Lilac believe that their post-educational travel represents *Active Purposeful Learning.* Beto recalls the adults on the trip asking him, “‘What did we learn about this? What do you know? And if somebody doesn’t know about it, just ask me questions.’ But there was nothing that we did not even [know].” He also mentions the travel skills we learned before we left and practiced on the trip as being learning that was important to his life, “you would show us different values of life like…waking up, brushing your teeth, keeping track of your money, how to live with people, wear
deodorant!” The Adult Advocates on the trip gave his post-trip experience meaning. What Beto liked when he thinks back to the Washington, DC trip was “spending time with you guys… It’s fun because you guys know DC so well…it was just so cool, you know? Like you’re speaking to me about it and I’m right there [in DC] in my head.” He mentions again that the adults were fun and knowledgeable all while keeping him safe. After the trip he also realized how the adult advocates were still willing to help him.

Beto mentions several themes that the other Both participants do not. Beto’s Family Involvement is one of the first topics he discusses in recalling his post-trip experience. Getting off the bus, the first thing Beto wanted to do was to tell his mom all about the trip because of how she had supported him, “My mom was there, like right where she left me…that brings a little bit of joyful to my heart…I had so many thing I wanted to tell her.” Being able to show his mom and his family all of his memorabilia and photos from his trip was one of Beto’s clearest recollections of what the trip had meant for him. Beto describes the Transformative meaning of the trip when he think about what it was like as a student from the Harold neighborhood to see Ford’s Theater, the Peterson House (where Lincoln died), and the Lincoln Memorial. Because he was able to see these places, he believes it is a “catapult because that makes me…have a goal, I dream about it…I want to accomplish it. I can have a lot of support on my back if I look in my mind to see that I could do it.” Beto feels he was less of a loner after the Washington, DC trip due to the Comprehensive nature of educational travel. He remembers talking with his fellow travelers after this trip and being more “opened up with school and my classmates” after the trip. He shares, “The DC trip helped me
become friends with other people…I felt friendly…I felt at home…We’d talk about the National Archives…. the places we’ve been.” As he felt more connected to others in the class, he began to form more friendships,

**Pre-educational travel to Europe: Beto.** All three travelers share *Active Purposeful Learning, Family Involvement.* Beto shares with Laura *Comprehensive.* Beto and Lilac share *Engagement.*

All three travelers mention the themes of *Active Purposeful Learning* and *Family Involvement* when describing their pre-educational travel experience. For Beto, the theme of *Active Purposeful Learning* is reflected in his eagerness study bits of French and Dutch. He used his knowledge of Spanish and English to apply it to these new languages. Beto also was excited to learn about the geography of Europe, the different foods, Anne Frank, and *Les Misérables,* “Les Misérables!...It was so artistic, the way they made the musical. I remember studying this!” Beto shares that he learned more because he knew he would be seeing these things for himself on the trip. It took a bit more convincing to get his family to support his trip to Europe. It was more money and Beto brought it up a couple of times before his mom started to come to the meetings. *Family Involvement* was similar to DC, his family worked together to raise the money and his mom told him, “You’re going. We’re going to get your passport…just keep behaving…bring me good grades.” Beto said that this inspired him to work even harder in Grades 7 and 8 to do well. He recalls his mom coming to the meetings and understanding more about the trip to Europe because we talked with her in Spanish about
the trip. This made her feel more comfortable working to send him to Europe, “You spoke Spanish to my family…that really helped my mom.”

Beto shares the Comprehensive and Adult Advocate themes of the trip with Laura. He remembers the former Europe students coming to the current Europe students’ class, as before and talking to them about what the trip is like. “That got me excited,” Beto remembers when he heard them talk about their trip. Then he also recalls that he received help from Adult Advocates Mrs. Samuels, Ms. Córdova, and myself. This created a family-like atmosphere where everyone worked together to make sure Beto traveled, “You guys were with me, financially, emotionally…you helped me get ready to go.”

Beto and Lilac believe the trip helped with school Engagement. Beto recalls, “I was always just so busy…my Europe trip, the HEEP job, church activities…I was never on the streets…that made me stay on the right path.” Beto remembers seeing some of his classmates spend time doing “bad things in the streets” and he believes that staying busy helped him engage in school and make good choices.

**Educational travel experience in Europe: Beto.** All three travelers share Organizational Structures, Adult Advocate, and Developmentally Responsive. Beto and Laura do not share any characteristics of travel exclusively between the two of them. Beto shares Exposure to New Ideas, Active Purposeful Learning with Lilac. Beto alone does not bring anything to the Europe travel experience.

All three travelers mention Organizational Structures when discussing the meaning of educational travel in Europe. For Beto, he recalls how he liked knowing
where we were going and what we were doing, “Every place we could go like you gave us reasons why we would go there…like at the Eiffel Tower, you would show us who built it, what year he built it.” Beto believes this helped enjoy his trip more and feel more confident, “There wasn’t anything I didn’t like on the Europe trip because everything was so prepared…nothing was a surprise…I was very confident.” The Adult Advocates on the trip were important to Beto, especially Mr. Jameson. Beto still keeps in touch with him through social media. He recalls, “He was fantastic…he was silly… he was understandable…he would laugh with you…We learned a lot from him and I feel like I could talk to him…I still talk to him like if it was yesterday [on the trip].” Beto believes that the trip was Developmentally Responsive as we adjusted to do something the travelers were anxious to try. Beto remembers wanting to play soccer in London even though that was not on the list of museums and sites to visit. Soccer was important to this group of Latino youth who followed world soccer games and played on teams. He told Mr. Jameson about this and he took Beto and some friends to buy a soccer ball. Then they went to Hyde Park and played soccer which was very meaningful for Beto, “He helped me out…I played soccer in London! [I still remember] the grass was like todo verde, todo mojado [all green, all wet].”

Like Lilac, Beto references Exposure to New Ideas when discussing his Europe trip. He recalls trying new foods. In particular he remembers when we were in London and he really wanted to go to McDonalds but tried fish and chips at my urging, “We ate fish and chips…I am not very familiar with seafood…you said, ‘you have to try this.’” He did not like it but was glad he tried something new. Beto also mentions going to the
Louvre and the Van Gogh Museum as the second time he was exposed to art, the first being in DC. It left an impression on him to see “mucha arte valiosa [a lot of expensive art].” This was still a rather new idea for Beto to see art and one that he was proud to say he had experienced in Europe and DC.

**Post-educational travel to Europe: Beto.** All three travelers share *Empowering, Pride.* Beto shares with Laura *Transformative.* Beto shares with Lilac *Increased Academics, Comprehensive.* Beto alone *Exposure to New Ideas, Organizational Structures, Engagement.*

When I ask Beto what the meaning educational travel has had in his life, he shares two themes that Laura and Lilac mention: *Empowering* and *Pride.* Beto believes the post-travel experience has been *Empowering* for him when he talks about the Europe trip with his boss and co-workers. On his job, “none of them have been to Europe, I tell them, ‘Go travel. Go out there, Meet the world, bro!’” He has a good relationship with his boss and is a “top guy” at work because he is a hard worker. He credits the trips with this drive to do his best, “So if I encounter something in life, I look at it in high standards, better standards….if you don’t have it and you want it, you’re going to…have to put some effort into it.” This empowering feeling of having done something others have not and knowing how to work hard for his goals give Beto a sense of *Pride.* He feels pride when he discusses how much he learned for his trip. Beto recalls not just learning history but also learning about some of the souvenirs he bought. He did not realize how important this was until after the trip when he met someone who also had bought wooden
clogs in Amsterdam. Beto was surprised that this friend did not know the history of why clogs were important nor how they were made. He share this about his friend,

He didn’t know anything about them! I went to the room…[I know] what type of tree they’re made from, I look at the shoes, it’s like I know who created them because I’ve seen this history, I met the guy who made them in person. I got a good feeling about the effort was like to make them.

As Beto shares this story, it is apparent that he is proud he knows the history of his purchase and felt a connection with the man who made them. Beto also was able to teach his friend this history, which made him feel proud to know these details.

Beto and Laura both agree the post-educational travel has been Transformative. Beto tells me the story I hear far too often from my former travelers, “When I tell people I went to Europe, they don’t believe me. I would always…have to bring my scrapbook even with some of my friends.” This act of “proving” to people that students from Harold do travel outside their neighborhood begins to shift the idea of travel being only for other students.

Beto and Lilac believe they experienced Increased Academics after the trip and they comment on the Comprehensive nature of their post trip experience. For Beto, he credits the Europe trip with helping him get a “thumbs up” and an “accomplishment” in his high school history classes. Beto lives next door to two sisters who traveled on both trips, one sister on Beto’s trip and another sister traveled a couple years behind him. When he talks with them, he feels the Comprehensive theme of the trip. He feels a
special connection to them because of the trips, “To this day, we can talk about Europe, we talk about our childhood, we can talk about DC too, we can talk with no hesitation.”

Beto alone adds the themes of *Exposure to New Ideas, Organizational Structures, Engagement* to the meaning of his post-trip experience. *Exposure to New Ideas* sums up the travel experience for Beto as it is the first thing he mentions, “You’ve got to have the love for traveling…that passion…[you don’t want to] go out there and be like ‘I don’t want to try this.’” Beto believes that core of travel is trying new things. To illustrate this point, he shares the story of eating mussels in Brussels. Some of his friends loved the mussels and Beto did not. He tried mussels with different sauces and with lemon and salt, “I didn’t like them but I couldn’t resist trying…at least I tried it.” Beto also gives me “another star” for the *Organizational Structures* of the trip, “Ms. Olson, so you had our things very organized, I have all my pictures…and you made me do my scrapbook, do you remember? At the end of year? You forced me and I am so glad!” I recall this moment very clearly as it was close to the end of school and Beto had not finished his scrapbook. Harried and frazzled with end of the school year tasks, I recall losing my patience with him. In response, he worked from early afternoon until 9:00 p.m. in my room with me and completed it all in one day. As we saw previously, this scrapbook is his “proof” that he went to Europe.

Beto recalls feeling *Engagement* he experienced in his European history class in high school. He knew details about the Eiffel Tower and the London Eye that other students did not because Beto had seem them. He gave a detailed presentation in class on the Eiffel Tower and also discussed the London Eye. He recalls feeling excited and
engaged in class when he knew so much. He felt the other students were a bit bored by history because they had never traveled, “those kids like just en la casa no más, a la escuela, a casa [only at home, to school, to home], they never travel.” Beto believes the educational travel kept him engaged through high school. “I never wanted to give up on school because… I went to DC…and I went to Europe…I didn’t slack in high school…it was just the same as [middle school]...only now I did ROTC…I didn’t feel lonely…I was busy.” Beto continues by explaining to me that he missed the group activities of being a part of the trips so he joined Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) to be a part of a group and stay busy.

**Both DC and Europe: Lilac**

*(My advice for people going to travel) take someone that you really are close to, because that made it easier with my cousin…it means more when you share with a family member…My family has been a big part of my travels and our culture of travel…*

Lilac is a 24-year-old Hispanic woman who has a 10-month-old daughter, Biz. She and Biz’s father, Bill, have been together since 2007 when they were both in high school. Working at the local Boys and Girls Club have made them a popular couple in the neighborhood because they were always so kind and helpful to all the children who showed up afterschool to hang out at “the Club.” Many of my students talk about Lilac and Bill in class and are always surprised to know that I know them. They just bought a house in the neighborhood by Harold Middle School where their families still live.

Lilac participated in the DC 2003 and Europe 2005 trips. Her two older siblings both had participated in previous DC and Europe trips and her three younger siblings also
did both trips. In addition, four of her cousins also traveled on the DC and Europe trips creating a family culture of travel. I wanted to be sure I included at least one family with whom I had kept in close contact through the years and had traveled with several family members to create a full picture of travel with Harold. From several participants who met these criteria, Lilac was selected from a random draw of names.

Lilac graduated in 2009 from Harvey High School and began her work towards a degree in social work at a local community college before transferring to a state university. She would have graduated in November 2014 but went into labor with Biz and one instructor would not let her make up the final exam. This meant that she could not graduate until she repeated the class and took the final, which she did in the fall of 2015. While waiting to finish her degree, she works at a local craft store.

I have known Lilac since she was a small child who attended trip meetings and parent teacher conferences with her family for her older siblings. Shy and hidden behind glasses, I remember Lilac not saying much but always watching what was going on around her. I also remember that Lilac worked diligently in all her schoolwork to complete everything to the best of her ability. She was dedicated in school, always well behaved, and helped others whenever they needed it. Coming from a large family, her parents were very strict with their children and made sure each child knew what they expectations were at school and home. Her mother, Mrs. R., is very good at organizing and taught this to her children. I know that I was always happy when one of Mrs. R.’s children was on a trip, as they all would help organize the other students. In addition, her children always came prepared to travel. This was apparent when I asked her what she
remembered from the DC and Europe classes and she draws a map of how I had organized the class. She even remembers the seating chart!

Family is very important to Lilac and she depends on her family for childcare and they depend on her help as well. The day we met, her younger sister had stayed at her house and cooked for them. It is not unusual to have members staying at each other’s houses. Much of Lilac’s social life involves attending events for family members.

Lilac is still a hard worker and has blossomed into a beautiful young lady with long dark brown hair and brown eyes. Lilac was athletic in school and continues to stay in shape by working out which is important to her and Bill. When we meet she is neatly dressed with her hair in a neat ponytail and dangling blue earrings. Stating that she has saved “everything” from the trips, she comes with several pages of notes to share with me along with her student travel journals from DC and Europe that I created for the students to record their thoughts on the trips. She apologized for not bringing some mementos and her scrapbooks due to them being in storage. She carefully describes other mementos that now decorate both her and her parents’ homes that she did not want to remove for fear of damaging them.

**Pre-educational travel to DC: Lilac.** Lilac is like Beto and Laura in that she believes the pre-travel experience meant *Family Involvement*. Lilac and Laura do not share any themes. Lilac and Beto agree on the *Empowering* nature of pre-travel. Lilac alone mentions *Adult Advocate*.

When I ask Lilac what it was like before she traveled to DC, she recalls *Family Involvement.* Lilac’s siblings told her about their Washington, DC trips, “They described
it as being fun and they showed me all their pictures.” Still, she was not sure she wanted to travel. “We were all stubborn about our first trip…I think a part of it was because we didn’t want to work for it,” she recalls because everyone knew their mother was strict about the children earning part of their trip. However, since two of her siblings had traveled to DC and Europe her mother, “didn’t give me a choice.” Once she started attending the meetings and the class, she said, “OK, it’s not as bad as it might be. My mom might be right. We should see the world since she didn’t have a chance to.” Lilac and her mom attended the evening parent meetings where her mom would teach her about the different fundraisers they would do together. Lilac felt uncomfortable selling things at first, but then, she watched how her mom did it and “I just started taking up what she was saying, her body language, and started using this to my advantage.” Her mom played a large role in her pre-travel experience.

Lilac and Beto believe the pre-travel experience was **Empowering.** Lilac started her HEEP job and remembers that she “loved it!” She recalls feeling very confident as she learned how to sell concessions in the school store, “I sold right in front of Ms. Córdova’s room, I got the carts, counting the items, making change, I remember it perfectly!” She also began to realize the trip would give her a chance to confront her deepest fear: heights! She recalls the scary feeling of knowing she had to get over this to fly but also feeling confident that she could do it.

Lilac mentions that she was very grateful for the **Adult Advocate** she found in teachers who were not traveling to DC with us but who wanted to help her. In particular, she recalls Mrs. Salazar and Mr. C, whenever “was a fundraiser and someone else would
ask them, they would say, ‘no, someone’s already asked me,’ even though I hadn’t…then they’d ask me…Mrs. Salazar, even though she was buying from someone else, she would always wait and buy from me.” Lilac recalls all the items they bought from her and credits these experiences with helping her get to DC.

**Educational travel experience in DC: Lilac.** Adult Advocate and Empowering are two themes Laura, Beto, and Lilac share. Lilac and Laura agree that the Washington, DC trip had the themes of Enhanced Experiential Learning and Organizational Structures. Lilac shares Active Purposeful Learning with Beto. Lilac alone does not add any additional themes.

All three travelers share Adult Advocate and Empowering. Lilac remembers Ms. Córdova let the girls vote on what they wanted to see at each place, asked them questions about the places they were visiting, and helped them understand their trip. Lilac recalls that Ms. Córdova seemed very strict at school and was surprised to find she was ‘more lenient, more relaxed on the trip…once we were at a place, she would give us a little space.” When I ask what Ms. Córdova did that helped her have a meaningful trip, Lilac tells me, “being lenient at times, and acting like a kid…that’s what makes a good chaperone and easy to talk to. Even though I was away from home, I felt like I had an adult I could talk to.” It was Empowering for Lilac to go up to the top of the Washington Monument and the Empire State Building even though they were tall and she was afraid of heights, she went up to the top of both. She recalls she, “got past my fear” and this is why she remembers them so vividly. She also remembers how moving it was to visit the Lincoln Memorial and see it for herself, “I remember it the most…the pool and the
Lincoln Memorial…and me, walking through it.” Overcoming her fears and viewing famous sites also gave her courage to travel again. She recalls thinking, “Really? I could do this again!” when she thought about traveling again on her trip. She realized she could travel without her family and this gave her confidence.

For Lilac and Laura, the learning that began on the Washington, DC trip continues until today, which is evidence of Enhanced Experiential Learning. As with Laura, this is true of Lilac’s study of the Holocaust. Lilac tells me, “I’m still learning about the Holocaust. It’s just fascinating to me.” In college, she had the opportunity to study it again and she was very surprised to find that some people believe it never happened, “even though we’re in college.” She tells them about her experience of seeing the artifacts in the museum and learning people’s stories, but “they just don’t believe it.” Lilac believes that her viewing the evidence in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum was also Empowering because she saw these things with her own eyes so can give a firsthand account of it. Organizational Structures contributed to Lilac’s on trip experience. She remembers the routine in the hotel room at night, Ms. Córdova “would make us sit at the table for at least ten minutes before we went swimming and answer all the questions.” This structure inspired Lilac to write more during her trip so it would be “vivid” and she would not forget what she was learning. This helped her remember what she learned and felt on her trip. Lilac also saved “everything, the maps, the brochures, my phone card, boarding passes, the DC Metro Card, my DC Student Handbook and Journal.” She remembers listening to the adults who told her to save everything and she did. She is glad now because she can reminisce about her trip. She regrets not saving
more and using more descriptive words in her journal. When she went to Europe, she remembered this and changed how she organized her writing and memorabilia.

Lilac and Beto believe travel provided them with Active Purposeful Learning. Lilac eagerly tells me what she recalls seeing on her trip, “I remember the Empire State Building, the Holocaust Museum, the Washington Monument, and the Hard Rock Café….after reading my book, [then seeing them], I know because I still have pictures of them, it just became more clear.” She says her memories of these places are “the most vivid” because she learned about them before she left and deepened her understanding of what she was seeing.

**Post-educational travel to DC: Lilac.** All three travelers believe the post-DC travel experience was Empowering. Lilac and Laura describe the Pride and Privilege they felt after their trip. Lilac and Beto mention Adult Advocates. Lilac brings Exposure to New Ideas to the description of her Washington, DC trip.

For Lilac the post-educational travel experience was Empowering because it taught her “to travel, not just to believe what we see on the movies. Because it’s different. I see with my own eyes.” She recalls that the White House and the surrounding area looked completely different from what she had seen on movies. She mentions that the experience of traveling allowed her to check her expectations of what she thought something would be like to what she actually experienced. This gave her a deeper understanding of things and she brought her own meaning to what she saw.

*Pride* and *Privilege* are how Lilac and Laura describe the meaning the Washington, DC trip has had for them. Lilac experienced *Pride* when she realized that
she learned how to work for her trip. She was proud of herself, “because [I] earned it, ‘Well, I got myself over there’… I think that’s one of the things I did learn, and that my mom was probably trying to teach us, maybe still teaching us, we have to work for stuff.” She recalls this feeling when she tells her co-workers about her travels and they are incredulous and say, “Really? You’ve been to DC? New York? Europe?” Lilac shares that most have not left Colorado, or if they have, they only have been to visit family in Mexico. She is also proud to tell them she went with Harold Middle School. She feels it was a Privilege that other people at similar schools did not have. She tells me that one of the “advantage of being at Harold is that people didn’t even think about it because of the neighborhood. They didn’t realize that we had the opportunity with a program like HEEP.” Lilac thinks the opportunity to travel was a privilege most students like her did not have.

Lilac and Beto mention the Adult Advocate. Because of the close ties Lilac created with Ms. Córdova before and on the trip, she still felt a connection to her Adult Advocate when she returned to Harold. In fact, Lilac volunteered to help Ms. Córdova with some of her friends. “We know we don’t have to work the store anymore,” she tells me, “But deciding to do it was still fun. We also knew it meant a lot to Ms. Córdova.” Lilac enjoyed being able to help an adult who helped her and mentions how Ms. Córdova was important to her for the rest of the year.

Lilac alone speaks about the Exposure to New Ideas as part of her post-trip experience. Lilac’s advice to future travelers is to “go with an open mind” to see and try new things. Because she was exposed to new things and saw things with her own eyes
she saw her learning at Harold in a different way. She remembers coming back to classes and thinking, “it was different, the whole school experience was different just because we did go [on the trip].”

**Pre-educational travel to Europe: Lilac.** All three travelers share *Active Purposeful Learning, Family Involvement.* Lilac and Laura mention *Organizational Structures and Empowering.* Lilac and Beto do not share any themes. Lilac does not bring any new themes to the pre-travel experience.

As with the other two Both travelers, Lilac mentions *Family Involvement* when recalling what the pre-travel experience was like for her. She mentions the role her mom played in getting her to Europe, just as her mom did for the Washington, DC trip. This time Lilac was not reluctant, she wanted to go because she wanted to try “something new” and told her mom she was ready to fundraise. Her mom helped her create a plan again and they got started right away. Her sister and brother also helped her, “they prepared me…you’re going to need to learn this, and this, and this.” She listened to them because she knew their advice had helped for DC so it must be true for Europe. One of her cousins, M., talked to Lilac about Europe and they concocted an idea to get M. to change schools and go with her to Europe. Lilac’s brother and sister went together so she wanted a family member to go with her because family was so important. “I don’t know how I did it, I know I convinced my cousin to come.” *Active Purposeful Learning* is another theme of Lilac’s pre-travel experience. She recalls the Europe bookshelf in the room, “We used the little books…our group tried to learn at least one phrase, at least ‘thank you’ or ‘please excuse me.’” She remembers wanting to learn to be able to say
things on the trip. She also remembers navigating the confusion of understanding *Les Misérables* in preparation for seeing the musical. She mentions the excitement of leaving the country as a motivation to learn, “I just remember the excitement of leaving the country.”

For Lilac and Laura, *Organizational Structures* were an important part of their pre-trip experience. Lilac recalls that our classroom was organized so that everyone was in a group to be able to talk about what they were learning. She believes it was easier to prepare for Europe because she understood the structure of how to travel. She tells me, “We already knew what to expect…so it was easier to pack and easier to learn” about where they were going. She mentions taking notes during the meetings for fundraising and preparing to travel as structures that helped her get ready to travel. Lilac and Laura comment on the *Empowering* theme of preparing to travel. Lilac gained self-confidence in her HEEP job. She understood how to run concessions so she was given the morning café job. She recalls, “My HEEP job was in the morning. …I always got there early…I knew what [the teachers] wanted and I already knew how much they owed.” She felt confident knowing that she did her job well and that Ms. Córdova could count on her.

**Educational travel experience in Europe: Lilac.** All three Both travelers share *Organizational Structures, Adult Advocate, and Developmentally Responsive*. Lilac does not share any themes with Laura. With Beto, Lilac shares *Exposure to New Ideas* and *Active Purposeful Learning*. Lilac alone mentions *Empowering*.

Of the three themes the travelers share, Lilac mentions *Organizational Structures* first. On the trip, the adults work with the travelers to organize and save artifacts from
their travels. Lilac remembers that she did not save all she wanted to from DC. This time she says, “I saved all [my memorabilia] because I didn’t save everything from DC, I wrote more…here I wrote about Les Mis and I have my Les Mis ticket. I saw the summary and everything.” She continues by showing me her scrapbook while mentioning all the journaling she did about her trip to create a beautiful scrapbook. She still has her Europe Student Journal as well as shares that with me. She liked writing each day about how she was feeling and why. She felt this added to her trip experience.

The Adult Advocates on the trip also played an important role for Lilac as with the other two Both travelers. On the Europe trip she said that all the chaperones helped her. Mr. Jameson was “playful and made it easier” to travel far away. Ms. Timson was Lilac’s soccer coach so she knew Lilac well, “She already knew my reactions, and when I was slowing down, or when I was happy. I know there was one time that I was crying and…she said, ‘I’m here for you.’” Lilac does not remember why she was crying but was comforted knowing that Ms. Timson was watching over her. She also recalls our tour director from the travel company, S., and the bus driver who was with us for six days. They added to her trip because S. took pictures with them and the bus driver gave them wooden clogs. The trip was Developmentally Responsive for Lilac because she remembers the group wanting to play soccer in Paris instead of seeing visiting places. Ms. Timson and Mr. Jameson got a soccer ball and organized a game. Lilac credits this as a highlight of her trip.

As Beto mentions in his interview, Lilac mentions Exposure to New Ideas as part of the theme for her trip. Other than viewing a monument to homosexuals in Amsterdam,
the new ideas she shares from her trip reflect the new foods she tried. Lilac recalls eating crepes at a fancy restaurant in Paris, as well as trying Alsatian pizza and a Croque Madame. She recalls mussels and chocolate in Brussels, fish and chips in London, and “all the other amazing food.” She sums up her experience of eating in Europe by relating, “I could tell you what we ate pretty much every day…And I never really thought of it, egg on a sandwich. So I was like iffy and I’m tasting it, but then it was so good.” She pushed herself to try new foods and found some new favorites. *Active Purposeful Learning* is a theme Lilac mentions when she discusses the Anne Frank House. She remembers, “It was so vivid…I remember the Anne Frank House because I remember learning about what her house was like at school and then I saw it.” She compared what she learned before she left with what she saw and learned while she was there. “It was really tiny, though. That’s the one thing that surprised me…I took really good notes about being in the Anne Frank House.” She bought a copy of the diary in the gift shop and would like to go back to reread it. Lilac also mentions learning about *Les Mis* before we left and viewing it in London. This musical left an impression on her, “I really do want to go back and watch it because I love it.”

Lilac alone mentions *Empowering* as themes of her on trip experience. Still afraid of heights to some degree, Lilac gained confidence by going up to the top of the Eiffel Tower. For students who are deeply afraid of heights, we offer them the opportunity to not go to the top. Lilac remembers, “I’m still afraid of heights. It was easier, but I felt like I was going to fall, it was windy so you could feel it…swaying.” Several times in the interview Lilac mentions the importance of the Eiffel Tower, “I just have to see [it] in the
movies and then it all comes back to me.” Similar to her DC experience, Lilac feels empowered when she can say she has seen this with her own eyes and that she has done something that “not many people get to do.”

**Post-educational travel to Europe: Lilac.** All three travelers describe the post-educational travel experience as *Empowering* and gave them a sense of *Pride*. Lilac and Laura do not share any themes. Lilac and Beto agree post-educational travel meant *Increased Academics* and they believe it was *Comprehensive*. Lilac alone ascribes the themes of *Family Involvement* and *Validating* to her post-educational travel experience.

In Lilac’s life, as with Beto and Laura, the meaning of the trip has been *Empowering*. She mentions her HEEP job as something that has given her strength to keep going, “My HEEP job taught me that even if you want to quit sometimes, just keep on going with it.” She shares how sometimes it was difficult to juggle school, soccer, and her HEEP job. She had to make choices about how to spend her time. Lilac also mentions feeling confident in her history classes because she had traveled to Europe. Her teachers and professors would ask her, “Well, what’s your experience?” when they discussed places she had been. She “felt good” to be recognized for this knowledge.

Looking back on her HEEP job experience, Lilac believes it gave her a sense of *Pride* that she worked for her trip and learned how to manage her time. She also feels proud when she tells people that she went to Europe and they say, “‘Really?’ that’s the first word, ‘Really?’ They don’t believe [me], and…it’s really fun to just brag about it.” At her job, all her co-workers are older than Lilac and none of them have traveled so she
feels even more proud of the fact that she has traveled to Europe and DC and they have not.

Lilac and Beto agree post-educational travel means Increased Academics. For Lilac, it helped her in her history classes; “The Europe trip helped me in history…because of Anne Frank. Because of the Holocaust.” She mentions that other history subjects just came “easier because once we’re learning about it, [I would think] ‘Well, I already learned this.’” This increased her ability to participate in class discussion, “It felt good to know the answers.” Lilac mentions the Comprehensive theme in her post-travel discussion, which blends into the theme of Family Involvement, which Lilac alone mentions. All Lilac’s six siblings and four cousins have traveled with us. Lilac shares with me that at family gatherings, “I talk with my sisters and my cousins who went. We went different years. Just the stuff that we didn’t get to see…or I saw this and they didn’t.” She also mentions the close connection she still feels to the cousin, M., who traveled with her to Europe. They talk about moments from the trip when they felt a close connection, “It’s a really good experience, something that I could bring up in conversation every time, and it never gets old.” In fact, when I ask Lilac about advice she has for future travelers, she tells me, “Take someone that you really are close to…so if you can, take someone from your family.” She continues by telling me, “My family has been a big part of this, the culture of travel.”

Educational travel is Validating for Lilac. As with DC, Lilac mentions the ability to interpret the world through her own eyes as something that has been meaningful for her as she reflects on the Europe trip. She shares, “The Europe trip opened up my eyes
and not just to believe what what’s on the movies. It’s better to see it yourself and experience it.” Lilac learned so much on her trip that she “wants to go back again” and share the experience with her fiancé and her daughter. When she brought it up with him, he was concerned about time and money. Lilac told him, “Well we could make time and stay in budget.” She convinced him to travel to Mexico with her and now wants him to go to DC and Europe because, “It was a really good experience” to travel and see things “with your own eyes.”

Comments on Quantitative Data Results at the End of the Interview

At the end of each interview, I showed each participant a binder of the results in quantitative data (see Appendix M for a copy of the binder I showed the participants). This next section reports the comments from each participant on each variable. The first set of variables measured academic achievement via American College Test (ACT) results, Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) results, and cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) results. The second set of variables measured school engagement via attendance, graduation, and suspension rates.

Academic Achievement: ACT Results

The ACT results were as follows:

- Students who were in the DC and Both travel groups had a higher mean ACT composite score than those who were in the Europe or No Travel Groups.
• Students who were in the DC and Both travel groups had a higher mean ACT English subscore than those who were in the Europe or No Travel Groups.

• Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had a higher mean ACT reading subscore than those who were in the No Travel Groups.

• The Math and Science subscores indicated no statistical difference.

These were the first set quantitative results I shared with the participants at the end of each interview. I asked them questions about how they viewed the ACT test and whether or not they felt their educational travel experience changed the results of this test. I gave them the opportunity to share any other thoughts about the test that I may not have asked them.

The nine participants mention the themes of Active Purposeful Learning, Increased Academics, Adult Advocate, Validating, Comprehensive, and Engagement.

All nine participants mention Active Purposeful Learning as a reason why they think the composite, reading, and English subscores are higher. Kim sums up their thoughts when she states, “[Reading is higher] because once you know you’re going somewhere, you research it, you look into it, you want to know everything and anything about it.” This increase in reading led to Increased Academics due to Engagement. Camila shares with me, “We read a lot…we write a lot…I think this stayed with me. I remember reading all those books, Anne Frank, the guidebooks…this helped a lot.” She, like the other participants, believes that the engagement with reading and writing through
the trips led to an increase in academic achievement reflected in the ACT scores.

América and Eliot add the *Validating* theme of travel on the ACT variables:

[Those of us who traveled] realized that you can learn a lot when you’re reading, and you’re interested in what you’re reading. And it’s going to help you in the future. And I remember actually doing a lot of personal reading even after the trip whereas before I didn’t like to read…what changed for me was seeing something some to life…seeing things with my own eyes…

Reading became a way to connect their lives with learning because they are reading for a purpose, something they will experience and can add to their understanding of the world. Eliot adds that after traveling, “You’re more open minded. You look at a book and you [think] wait…it might say something important in it.” He shares that before the trip he dismissed books that did not immediately appeal to him because he did not see the point in reading them. Now he knows that he can find a connection to his life through reading a variety of books. Laura adds that now, “I read more after DC, like reading a book cover to cover…and that stayed with me.”

Lilac and Beto believe the scores were higher due to the *Adult Advocate*. They both remember how the adults involved with the trip discussed their grades with them. Lilac recalls, “You were always honest with our grades. I know we had to have good grades in order to go so I think that encouraged us.” The adults involved with the trips worked with students to ensure they were succeeding in their classes and Lilac remembers this. Beto recalls a similar moment, “So the trip kids scored higher…because there were people pushing them.” Lilac and Beto believe that this extra mentoring stayed
with them through high school. Lilac tells me, “So the push you gave us in middle school for reading [and our grades], by the time I got to 11th grade that push was still there.” Beto believes that Comprehensive nature of the trips gave him the extra push to do better on his ACT, “We’re like a family on that trip…[and] we were all interested in history from the trips…and it really did help in high school.”

When I asked the participants about the low scores for math and science, they all mention how they were not very engaged with math or science in middle school and even less in high school. They all say they are not surprised by the results. Beto sums up what many felt, “There’s just some [subjects] where I just like would wander off.” These subjects, even for Lucas who excelled in math in middle school, just became difficult and disconnected from their lives.

**Academic Achievement: CSAP Results**

The CSAP test results did not show a statistically significant difference in their scores over time. As a group, the students who were in the travel groups scored higher in Grade 5 and ended higher in Grade 10:

- As a group, students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had higher CSAP scale scores in all tested subjects and grades than those in the No Travel Group.

These were the second set of results I shared with the participants at the end of each interview. I asked them questions similar to the ACT test to elicit what effect, if any, travel had on theses scores. I gave them the opportunity to share any other thoughts about the test that I may not have asked them.
The participants expressed a variety of thoughts regarding these scores. The themes they mention are *Transformative, Increased Academics*, (lack of) *Engagement*, and *Family Involvement*.

América expresses surprise when she sees how high the DC students score. She believes DC changed her life, “It makes me think, ‘what would have it been like if I had not gone to DC?...the trajectory of my life changed in 6th grade and I didn’t even know it.” This comment indicates that América credits the trip with being *Transformative*, as she believes it changed the course of her life.

Lucas credits the *Increased Academics* of the Washington, DC trip with helping the DC students score higher on CSAP, “DC was the most educating trip…it educated you about a lot of things. You used all of your skills…I agree with all of these [CSAP scores].” Camila agrees with Lucas, “Traveling definitely has an impact. For reading, it might be higher because I was more motivated to read and write.” She believes that this motivation increased her academic achievement so she did better on ACT and other travelers might have done the same. Kim agrees, “I feel we read a lot more [than the non-travelers].” Beto remembers doing more homework to prepare for the trips, which increase his academic achievement equaling higher test scores. Eliot and Lilac are puzzled by why the scores drop so drastically for science. They both tell me they would like to know more about CSAP scores.

Several participants are not surprised by science. They cite a lack of *Engagement* as the reason why the science scores appear to decrease instead of increase over time as the other scores do. Angelina says she did not “learn much about science. The teachers
were just talking...we didn’t know why we were learning...we weren’t learning.” Kim echoes this recollection, “I hated science...we dissected a pig and an eye...that’s what I remember...and that was seventh grade...I don’t even remember other science classes.” At this point Kim asks if she even had science classes in Grades 6 and 8, answering her own question she says she must have had them. However, Laura sums up what most participants appear to say about science CSAP scores:

I never really thought about CSAP having an impact on anything really. I didn't really think it tested to your knowledge. I just thought it tested to your ability to test, to be honest...I hated science...I think the dimension with science, there's really a disconnect between real life and science... There was this lady -- Ms. L-H -- she was a white lady, she was only there for one year, so she cried all the time. She was one of the worst teachers ever. But even through high school, I carried that trend. Because honestly when I'm worried about my family and really what we're going to eat and where we're going to stay, the last thing on my mind is really how atoms work.

Beto is the only one who mentions the Family Involvement theme when he comments on the CSAP scores. He credits “a better relationship with our families” to the overall higher scores. He tells me that his family and his friends who traveled families always “stuck with them” and supported them. This carried over to higher test scores.
Academic Achievement: GPA Results

The next set of results was the grade point averages (GPA) of the students at the time the data were collected by the school district. The results for the GPA analysis indicated:

- Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had higher grade point averages (GPA) at the time they graduated (or did not graduate) from high school than those who were in the No Travel Group.

These results were the third set I shared with the participants. I asked them questions to see what effect, if any, travel had on their GPA. I gave them the opportunity to share any other thoughts about the test that I may not have asked them.

All of the participants were not surprised by how low the GPAs are on the graph and several were saddened to see how low they are now that they are older and understand what a GPA means for future educational and employment opportunities. They mention the same themes to those mentioned for ACT and CSAP scores: **Increased Academics, Adult Advocate, Empowerment, and Engagement.** Eliot adds the theme of **Exposure to New Ideas.**

**Increased Academics** is a why América believes the GPA is higher for travel students. She mentions that you learn how to prepare and this carries over to academics, which leads to a higher GPA,

I think because traveling, no matter if it's short-term or long-term how long you get to prepare for it you're preparing for something in the future. And I think that's
what academics are, too. You're preparing for something in the future. So it might be that…. We went at a young age to prepare for something that's coming.

Lucas shares that his GPA reflects the low ones on the chart. He tells me that he became very disengaged in high school and was frequently truant from his classes. He tells me, “My GPA was bad…It was probably less than a three because of all the ditching (truancy)…. If I were to go back, I would have not ditched one single day.” For Lucas, the lack of Engagement led him to miss school and receive poor grades. This led to a low GPA. Camila recalls that the students who traveled had a high GPA and recalls they were engaged in school. She believes her GPA was also about the same as what is reflected in the graph. While Laura dropped out of high school, she did not have a high GPA. However, she recalls that the other travelers who had a high GPA. She believes they had a higher GPA because of “the engagement and the expectation and respect you got from your peers and teachers because you traveled.”

Lilac mentions the Adult Advocates who pushed her to do better in middle school. She laughs and says, “I think we were being pushed so much that once we got to high school, it was just like, ‘Well, we could push ourselves instead of Ms. Olson saying, 'Do it! Do it! Do it!’” She believes that the adults who worked with her in middle school as part of travel gave her the motivation to keep pushing herself in high school.

Eliot agrees that the GPA is higher for travel students for the same reasons mentioned for ACT and CSAP. He also believes Exposure to New Ideas might influence the travelers’ GPA. He reports that if someone has traveled, he is “more open-minded so you do better academically.”
School Engagement: Attendance

I examined the available attendance data from Grades 6 through Grade 9. No attendance data were available for our school district for Grades 5 and 10. Statistical significance was found in Grade 8 and Grade 9:

- Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had a higher mean attendance rate in Grade 8 than those who were in the No Travel Groups.

- Students who were in the Both Travel Groups had a higher mean attendance rate in Grade 9 than those who were in the DC, Europe, or No Travel Groups.

I showed the participants the graphs from all the years. Then I asked them questions about what they thought about the results. All of the travelers mention Engagement as a reason why travel students had a higher attendance rate. Several mention the Comprehensive characteristic of working together as a team. Beto and Angelina mention the Adult Advocate.

América believes travel created more Engagement with school and thereby influenced attendance because “after the trip, they’re really excited about school, and you’re really excited about succeeding, and meeting your goals.” Lucas agrees, “When you’re a student going to Europe or DC, you wanted to be in school. You didn’t want to miss those classes…[you] were motivated.” Eliot believes the trip students engaged more because they thought, “Hey, there might be something to learn today!” He recalls seeing students as young as Grade 5 who were truant from school. He believes that
educational travel encouraged students to attend more because they realized that school had something for them to learn. Camila credits her HEEP job and her interest in the Europe class with improving her attendance. Laura and Angelina mention the engagement as well and the desire “to be a little more responsible” as Angelina puts it by attending school more.

Kim mentions the Comprehensive feeling she had in working for her trip, “you’re so used to being there. You had to live there.” She recalls “always being at school” with the teachers and her friends. She mentions eating lunch with me again. Beto echoes Kim’s thoughts and adds Adult Advocate, “You were on us Miss!...We learned a young age, in 6th grade that we better attend school...because if I didn’t [I’d miss out], I didn’t see my friends, I didn’t [learn] from the class...I never saw any of us ditch.” Angelina also mentions Adult Advocates when she tells me, “You guys prepared us to be a little more responsible, and to be at school. Show up on time.” For Beto and Angelina the persistence from the adults helped their attendance.

When I probe the participants for reasons why attendance did not stay consistently higher for all travel groups, they all gave reasons that point to lack of Engagement after the travel ended. América tells me that maybe when students go to other grades, they “forget about the trip then you're not as excited to meet your goals.” Eliot believes that students disengaged from academics to become more engaged in more social type activities in high school. He tells me, “they get hit with this who's Mr. Popularity and who's this and who's that?...you’re more likely to ditch... You get thrown off a little.” Camila agrees saying that she first was truant in high school, “And I never ditched till
high school.” She says she just got caught up in the high school scene and almost did not graduate. Lilac cites the fact that high school was “lenient” about whether or not students attended class so she just did not attend sometimes. This was especially true for classes where she was not being challenged or where she already knew the information. Laura tells the story of her decline in school. She used to have regular attendance and started a downhill trend until she dropped out of high school:

[In] my junior year, my mom lost her job…at the restaurant that she would work at for like so long. And so she's undocumented, so she couldn't find a job...Because I went to Europe, I always had a job, a part-time job after school and on the weekends…so my mom was like, "Okay. You should ask for more hours at your job." And I was working at [clothing store]. And so slowly but surely I quit going to school, and I started going to work full-time when I was 17… I remember one time, my mom was like, "We need to go to the bank to take out your college savings," which was like $700, because we couldn't pay rent. And my mom was undocumented. And we were really, really, really -- it was a really challenging, hard time for us. I just set school aside. After that, I didn't really feel supported in school to go back….my son's dad, you know, he was going to school. But he worked, too, and so then I got pregnant when I was 18…His parents are really big Catholics, so they forced us to get married. So we moved in together and got married. And then had a kid. But then things went wrong, and we had to get a divorce when I was -- two years ago, three years ago, when I was 20. So that's what happened to school [for me].
Laura did not find the support and engagement to continue going to school when things became overwhelmingly difficult for her in high school. This led to her attending less frequently and eventually dropping out of school.

**School Engagement: Graduation**

I examined the graduation rates for students who would have graduated at the time the school district gathered this data. The analysis of these data indicated:

- Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups were more likely to graduate from high school than those who were in the No Travel Group.

As with the other variables, I ask the participants why they think the travel students appear to graduate at a higher rate than the non-travelers. I also ask them what this means for them personally.

América, Lucas, Angelina, Eliot, Camila, and Beto all mention *Engagement* and *Increased Academics* as leading to *Academic Achievement* as a factor for the increased graduation rates of travelers. Lilac mentions the *Empowering* nature of the trip on the desire to graduate. Eliot and Beto discuss the significance of *Exposure to New Ideas* in creating a thirst to see what education might hold for them. Beto believes travelers also have a sense of *Pride* in knowing how to work hard to make dreams a reality.

América recalls that she did not think much about college graduation in Grade 6 but did think about high school graduation because not many people in her family graduated. She wanted to be a role model for her younger cousins. After the Washington, DC trip she started thinking about college. She believes that the ones who
did not graduate were not as engaged in school and did not have “a sense of goal setting, maybe, and of achieving their goals.” She credits the trip in helping her set goals to reach the dream of graduating. Lucas was the first in his immediate family to graduate from high school and is the second in his extended family. He believes that the Washington, DC trip helped with Engagement and Increased Academics because “it all falls into education, motivation…if you’re more educated, you’re more likely to be motivated every time…you just know what you’re doing and what they’re talking about [in classes].” He shares that he knows peers who dropped out because they were not motivated or engaged with school so they fell “into the wrong things…started hanging out with the wrong people” and quit. Angelina agrees, “I think probably all the knowledge they got from these trips. But the non-travelers, they didn't have any motivation. They didn't have anything to look back [on].” She also expresses concern about how few people graduated from Harvey when she did in 2015, “We don’t have a lot of kids graduating.” Laura believes that the effect of the trip can wear off so that is why more Europe students graduated than DC students. She believes educational travel creates more high school graduates for the reasons mentioned in our interview and that, “Maybe Europe is higher because it was closer to your high school years.”

Eliot shares how he expects low graduation rates from the non-travelers. However, seeing the graphs, he expresses a bit of surprise, “That’s crazy! You have a 50-50 chance… That makes sense as well…thinking of it in my place, there's my eight friends.” He points to the graph and tells that he thinks about this a great deal, “Of my 10 best friends, throughout middle school and high school…I walked across the
graduation stage with two of them. And the rest of them either didn't graduate or they weren't here or they were in jail.” When I ask him why he thinks that the travelers graduated at a higher rate than the non-travelers, he believes that the non-travelers might not have been as engaged because they did not see how education related to their lives, “Kind of like what you say when you look at a book, you don't, ‘Nah, that's not for me,’ but where if you've travelled, you kind of take that book and say, ‘Yeah, maybe there's something there for me.’” Eliot mentions the Exposure to New Ideas from travel helped him, and maybe other travelers, see that something different from what they are used to holds meaning for them. He believes non-travelers might not have been as engaged in school because they dismissed education as not having meaning for them. Therefore they did not do well in their classes and their academic achievement suffered so they dropped out of school because it “did not have anything for them.” The travelers, on the other hand, were engaged in school and thought:

In my opinion, they probably -- well, I was thinking of it as, "You're going to graduate high school. You're going to do that. There's no question." "We'll see about college, though." Like that was my mentality…And then now I'm thinking, "I'm going to graduate college. We'll see about grad school." It brings that mentality of, "I'm going to get there regardless," like I said, in my opinion with me. So the road there isn't necessarily much what I'm concerned about. Just as – [the end goal] Just like the trip. You know, I was concerned with meeting deadlines or whatever the case may be…So I feel like it brings that mentality with you of once you set yourself to it, "I'm going to graduate high school." "The road
there is -- I'm going to try these classes, I'm going to try this and that. If that doesn't work out it's okay. There might be some things that I get into but I'm going to graduate." So that…they graduate more, that's what's important. That is the most important thing. To graduate.

Eliot believes that educational travel leads to a deeper level of engagement with school and an open-mindedness that can lead to greater academic achievement. He adds that he would like to research this more, “Why is it that this [the trip] made me decide to open up a lot more?” Because of his comments and questions, I can tell Eliot is troubled by how few students graduate from high school at Harvey.

Kim recalls that everyone she traveled with graduated. She cannot think of one person who did not graduate and goes through the names with me and I cannot think of one who dropped out either. She believes that Europe is higher because when students return from educational travel they are motivated to learn more to travel again. She also is surprised by DC’s lower graduation rate,

You're like a leech, and you want more, you want to keep going back there, and you know the only way to do it is if you travel abroad, get a good scholarship, or get a good job, make sure you graduate, get a good job, and then you can go there again…It opened their minds to a wider world…I'm pretty sure the people that travel to DC, it's like DC's around the corner, I can go whenever I want… but I'm kind of surprised why this is so low, as low as where we are, because if you're traveling and you have the urge to travel so much, why would you not want to keep going and graduate?
Kim credits the Europe trip with increasing her academics because she returned with a thirst for learning more about our world in general. She believes this is the same for other travelers.

Camila also recalls that everyone she traveled with graduated, “All of the people that I traveled with, all of them graduated.” Camila believes that this is because of increased academics and an increase in motivation due to the *Empowering* nature of educational travel. Camila believes that travelers returned wanting to know more about her subjects in school in general and “wanting to be somebody in life, especially because I wanted to go back to Europe.” She now understood that if she wanted to do something, she needed an education so she engaged more in school, even when she hit rough spots, she was motivated to do better. Camila shares with me,

So if I want to do something, I have to have an education. Europe reminded me that if I ever wanted to accomplish something I knew that I could do it no matter how much I struggled and gave me that extra push at the end when it looked like I wasn’t going to graduate.

At one point, Camila thought she would not graduate. She took some wrong turns and made some poor decisions. However, she was able to turn her academics around and graduate on time. Lilac mentions the *Empowering* nature of travel because students who traveled had worked harder and had the confidence to make their dreams come true, “maybe [all the travel kids] worked harder at everything…they worked harder to graduate; whereas [the ones who didn’t graduate] didn't work as hard.” She also
mentions that Europe and Both travelers graduate at a higher rate because they want to “see things with their own eyes…it’s harder to go to Europe.” She also believes they engage more in school because “I feel like they know what's out there, and they want to experience those. And they obviously need a good job to go places, so they graduate more.” Lilac believes educational travel provides increased academic achievement because students engage more and are motivated to graduate.

Beto agrees with Lilac. He feels travelers are more motivated to graduate because they have seen something more and because they have Pride in knowing how to work hard:

Whew! That's…some really pretty numbers right there considering myself where I'm both, so it's like 88 percent. I agree with that. Half of my friends from even middle school, they didn't graduate…They didn't have like no sense in life because they were just, you know, work, home, work, like school, home, work, school, home, work. That's what they always had in mind, you know, very -- Like for me personally, I was more motivated because it's like…If you want something, you need to like -- how do you say? It's mucho esfuerzo. ¿Cómo vas a poder terminar la escuela si no te esfuerzas? (How are you going to finish school is you don’t push yourself?). After that is college. You've got to like learn into the future, you know. But there's people that just go out there and just walk [in life] without just like any education.
Overall, the participants agree that students who engage in educational travel are more motivated to do well in school thereby engaging more in their school experience. Because of this, they graduate at a higher rate. As Beto tells us, they “learn into the future” which creates higher academic achievement.

**School Engagement: Suspensions**

School suspensions was the final variable I examined to ascertain school engagement. Suspension data were available for Grade 5 through Grade 10. Statistical significance was found in the following areas:

- Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups were less likely to have been suspended in Grade 5 than those who were in the No Travel Groups.
- Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups were less likely to have been suspended in Grade 6 than those who were in the No Travel Groups.
- Students who were in the No Travel group were less likely to be suspended in Grade 9 than those in the DC, Europe, or Both travel groups.

All the participants initially express shocked that the travelers were suspended at a higher rate in Grade 9 than no travelers. However, once they had a chance to think about it, they gave some reasons for why they believe this is representative of what they recall.

Lucas, Eliot, and Lilac mention an increase in *Academic Achievement* as a reason why students might be suspended more. Eliot and Laura indicate the lack of an *Adult Advocate* also affects students leading to an increase in suspensions. América, Eliot, and
Kim believe students experienced the *Empowering* nature of post-educational travel giving them the confidence to speak up. Lucas and Laura speak of the lack of *Engagement* when they attended high school, which led to increased suspensions. Laura believes the *Comprehensive* nature of educational travel that helped her to thrive in middle school was lacking in high school.

Angelina, Camila, Kim, and Beto share that they are not sure why students would get suspended more if they had traveled. Camila tells me that the data represent her life, “Wow. That's interesting. I even got suspended in high school…. This data that's here is…my experience.” Angelina thinks students might return more *Empowered* and are “more present, more there” in their classes so they might be more “free” to question things that happen and might get suspended more. However she is not sure, “It's really not that understandable just because how can students that have traveled are more likely to get suspended than students that haven't really traveled?” While Kim offers an idea of why she thinks students are suspended more, she also agrees with Camila in not really understanding why.

After participating in educational travel, Lucas, Eliot, and Lilac believe students experience an increase in their overall *Academic Achievement*, which can lead to students experiencing boredom with their classes or unpleasant encounters with teachers who might not be prepared to work with students who understand the material. For example, Lilac tells me her experience, “Because I knew some of the stuff for the Holocaust, I just skimmed through it, I got bored.” Lilac decided to not attend class when she was bored and thought, “I already know what they’re teaching today, I don't need to go to class. I
don't need to learn more about it.” She saw other students who had traveled do the same thing. Then, she recalls it just became easier to not attend class which led to suspensions, “Obviously, once you start ditching, you start doing it more often…because we think we know it all, and then one ditch becomes another one, and it just becomes a habit...and then we’d get suspended for not going to school!” Lucas echoes the same idea Lilac shared with me. He remembers his own experience of feeling like he already “knew it all” in his classes, so he was truant, “Some teachers’ classes, you wouldn’t even bother to show up because you knew what they were talking about, so it’s like, why show off?” He recalls thinking that it would not matter if he missed a class here and there, “I know what we're talking about, I'll catch up, I'll just start ditching.” However, he started missing more and more classes and when he was caught, it “was suspension for sure…I think that's a very serious relation there [between knowing the material and ditching]. That's just from my personal experience. I felt like I knew what we were talking about. I've got this…and then you're suspended.” As demonstrated by Lilac and Lucas, one truancy can lead to another making it easier not to attend classes.

Eliot recalls, “All I know is I had a lot of friends…that although they were having 4.0 GPAs…when it came to dealing with faculty it was just more like, ‘Uh, stop, get out of here.’” Eliot believes that some of the teachers were not willing to give students more challenging assignments when the students demonstrated they understood the material. This led to some students challenging their teachers and being suspended for perceived challenges to their authority.
Lucas, Eliot and Laura mention the lack of an *Adult Advocate* in high school as a reason why students might have been suspended more. Lucas recalls that some teachers just ignored bad behavior, “I was just playing with my homies. And the teachers... wouldn't even talk to us.” They were not reprimanded and Lucas recalls just leaving the class, “we would just get up in the classroom and walk out.” He believes that the feeling of teachers not caring whether they left or stayed might have led to more suspensions.

While Eliot was able to find teachers who supported him, he saw other students only experience negative encounters as we saw in description in the preceding paragraph. Laura shares her thoughts, “There was no support. There was no engagement. There was no protective layer… And we were freshmen. And freshmen are crazy.” In part, she believes “protective layer” that was missing were the adults like Ms. Córdova who helped her so much in middle school. Laura also believes the *Comprehensive* nature of educational travel was missing in high school. In middle school, no one wanted to get a suspension because they wanted to travel. The adults, the class, the interesting topics to study, and the close-knit community she experienced in the travel groups were factors that helped students not get suspended. However, these factors disappeared in high school. Laura shares, “Like you didn't want to get suspended, because you wouldn't go on the trip. But now, what do you have to lose? There's no trip. There's nothing.” The lack of an *Adult Advocate* and a lack of a *Comprehensive* nature can lead to a dis-Engagement with school.

The *Empowering* nature of educational travel possibly put students at risk for being suspended according to América, Eliot, and Kim because it gave them the...
confidence to speak up. América notices that the graph indicates that there is not a large
difference between the suspension rates and she comments, “it kind of contradicts what
we know about good academics, good behavior. It's like good academics, maybe not so
good behavior.” She believes that maybe the travelers “feel adventurous” and are
empowered to take more risks that might lead to suspensions. Eliot examines the graphs
and shares how he believes that the travelers had more confidence to “speak their mind,”

I never was suspended…but the first thing I think about is [the ones who got
suspended] put up a fight… For whatever reason they're being suspended, I mean
I know at Harvey there was a lot of like uniform [reasons why they] suspended.
Maybe it didn't make sense the reason that they were being suspended. If maybe it
was, you know, "Why are those jeans black?" "Well, you didn't say much about
the jeans," or whatever…they were more –they had more confidence to speak
their mind. Exactly.

Kim agrees with Eliot, “You feel invincible when you come back.” She recalls that she
got suspended once for fighting. After thinking about the other students on the trip, she
mentions how everyone was close after the trip and how confident they felt. Kim
believes that, “maybe that's why, because other people thought we thought we were better
than them, wanted to fight us, you know what I mean?”

Overall, the participants believe the increase in Academic Achievement could lead
to an increase in suspensions due to boredom in classes or due to teachers’ unwillingness
to accommodate their requests for new material to learn. The lack of an Adult Advocate
and the lack of a Comprehensive nature in high school also might lead to more
suspensions. An increase in self-confidence from the *Empowering* nature of the trip might also lead to more students questioning authority translating into more suspensions. Lucas and Laura mention the lack of *Engagement* when they attended high school that led to increased suspensions.

**Ethnicity, Race, Urban School, Low-income, Gender**

At the end of the interview, I ask students to share their thoughts regarding the effects of ethnicity, race, attending a large, low-income, urban school, and gender on their educational travel experience. I include these characteristics as I want the participants to have the opportunity to share their views since they are the descriptors used to define the participants in our school district.

**Ethnicity.** First, I ask the participants to describe which race or ethnicity they use to describe themselves. I do not give them examples of what I mean by this preferring instead to allow each person to interpret this question as he or she understands it. I ask each participant if their ethnicity had any impact on the meaning of their educational travel experience and all of them responded that it did not change the meaning of the trip.

América tells me that she actually changes how she defines herself based on the setting,

I never really thought about it this way, but whenever I'm with people that don't dance I say I'm Hispanic, but whenever I'm around dancers I say I'm Latina… I never thought about it that way… I think because in the dance community when you say Latina they think a lot more like, "Oh, spicy, Salsa. She has a character or
something." And it's definitely not what I want other people to think about me. I don't know, that's so funny. I never thought about it that way.

Lucas, Angelina, Kim, and Lilac identify as Hispanic. Eliot prefers Latino. Camila tells me, “I'm Mexican-American. I was born and raised here, but my parents are Mexican.” Laura identities as “Latina, Hispanic, and Mexican.” Beto prefers Hispanic Latino.

**Effect of a large low-income, urban school.** Next, I ask the participants if attending a large, low income, urban school had any effect on their educational travel experience. I also ask them to explain their thinking on each one of the indicators: large, low-income, and urban. América, Camila, and Beto state that none of these indicators affected their educational travel. However América notes they did after the trip was over. Beto believes it did not have an effect because, “because we had HEEP. My mom and my family and you guys helped.” Angelina and Lilac are the only two who separate the indicators when they answer. They said that Harold’s size did not matter and Harold’s low-income and urban status did. Lucas, Kim, and Laura believe these indicators did affect their travel.

América believes none of these indicators matters before or during her travel experience. However, when she moved to California, she believes it did, “I think it affected afterwards, especially when I moved to California the way that I viewed how I lived life in Denver. I thought to myself, ‘Wow, these kids are really spoiled in California.’” She recalls that her new school had a Washington, DC trip in Grade 8 and many students did not have to work hard for their trip. This made her realize that she had
to work hard because her family came from a low-income neighborhood in Denver and now lived in a more well to do area. She had not thought about how hard she had worked before.

Angelina and Lilac state the size of the school did not matter. In fact, Angelina believes that it helped to be at a large school where everyone was “the same,”

Nope, it actually helped me to be a better person because at Harold we were all mainly the same…Most of the students that were there, we were all Hispanic. And the fact that I was able to go to the D.C. trip with those same people, it just made me a better person.

Raising money in a low-income school did influence their educational travel experience. Angelina believes that her educational travel experience was Comprehensive because of being in a large urban school where everyone worked together,

It actually pushed me to go. Harder. Harder. Just hearing people talk. Having their own little comments behind didn't really get to me because I knew that just because I was in this neighborhood it was not going to affect me. Actually, it was going to make me a better person. It was going to make me go for more. That we all needed that. This could be a better school. This neighborhood could be better. We could all go for it, and make it a better place. Motivated, yeah. Oh, yeah, and I could hear people, "We're all family here. At Harold's we're all a family." Teachers, students. It doesn't matter. It's all about [family]. It doesn't matter if were low income, we’re family…[at my high school] I can hear people talking, "Oh, Harold was a bad school. It was a ghetto school." And I'm like, "Excuse
me?...I went to DC, and it was so much fun." Up to this point, and they're like, "Wow, you guys had a chance to go, and travel?" And I'm like, "Yes." They're like, "Oh, I wish I could go." I'm all, "No, no, no. That school was good…We have the best teachers in that school…Those teachers are amazing."

Lilac believes the low-income neighborhood did affect her trip because it was difficult to fundraise, “because all of us were from that neighborhood -- or most of us were. So we were trying to sell stuff to the same people, so that made it harder for us. So we sort of had to go out of our boundaries.” Lilac also remembers that it affected her Europe trip. During the trip, when she met other students who were traveling, they were surprised to learn that a low-income school was in Europe. Lilac recalls, “It was surprising, to those that we did speak to in Europe, to tell them where we came from.” She believes this affected her trip because the HEEP travelers were not the typical travelers to Europe and she had not thought about that before.

Lucas because these factors affected his educational travel experience because the school was very “diverse.” Lucas' view of Harold is opposite from Angelina’s. He believes this diversity played role, “Although it was mainly a Latino population, or Hispanic population, diversity's a very huge role because we were from different backgrounds.” For Lucas that fact that there were students from Mexico, Central America, and South America helped him learn more about diversity. He credits Harold’s large, diverse population of people helped him see more of life and prepared him for educational travel to DC. Lucas tells me,
We just learned from each other, that kind…of showed you that there is diversity. I guess for me it was a big deal, going to such a big, [diverse] school, because…going into sixth grade, wow, it was a huge eye-opener for me….And just being able to go on that trip was just a cool thing… you explored your country. You just saw history right there. You're going to a school that's so diverse.

For Lucas, the combination of attending a large diverse school and traveling opened his eyes to new possibilities that he had not considered before.

Eliot comments on the gangs that were prevalent at Harold because of its location in an urban, low-income neighborhood. He recalls some of his friends “looking forward” becoming a part of a gang, “Middle school…was mainly gangs…whether it was at the projects or in the alley right…after [F. boulevard], people looked forward to that after school. And I had friends that looked forward to it.” Eliot kept himself busy playing sports so he was not tempted by these “distractions” as he calls the gangs. However, once when he was out of sports for the season, he recalls starting to look at this street life a little more closely but eventually deciding to stick with his goals:

Once I was out of sports it was like, you know, I'd go to the store [near the school] so it seemed like I was following along, when really I was just trying to get home and play video games. It was like, "Well, hey, wait, what are you doing, bro? Okay, well, that's cool, I guess." The word "distractions." It was just weird that you taught yourself not following along but just like surrounded by it I guess you can say [it was tempting]… In those kids' minds it's just like, "I'm not going
to go Europe. . ." So it's just I feel like everybody else saying this and that even worth looking into, and at some point you feel like something you got yourself into so you just have to finish it. That's how you get caught up with putting yourself in other people's shoes I guess. But you got to just… Be yourself. Stick to your goals. Your dreams.

Eliot believes that the effect of a large, urban, low-income school meant that there were always distractions around the corner. He also began to understand how some students got caught up in that and did pursue their dreams. While he was tempted because everyone else is doing it, he pulled himself away.

Laura believes it did have an effect because “being a student at Harold and getting to travel was defiantly not the norm or expected from low-income or urban students.” Because it was not the “norm or expected” Laura believes we broke some barriers to educational travel and demonstrated that students from a large, low-income, urban school can travel.

**Gender.** I ask the participants to comment on gender as the final characteristic. I ask them to share, if they are comfortable doing so, with which gender they identify and if they believe this had an effect on their educational travel experience.

América, Angelina, Kim, Camila, Laura, and Lilac all identify as female. Eliot and Beto identify as male. Lucas identifies as a gay male. Angelina, Camila, Laura, and Beto believe their gender did not affect their travel experience. Lilac thinks it might have had an effect on fundraising but not on the trip itself, “Guys are more willing to
buy…from females.” Lilac believes that it was easier for her to raise money when she sold things because she is female.

América, Kim, Lucas, and Eliot believe their gender did affect their educational travel. América and Kim believe their families were more cautious and nervous about them traveling because they were female. América recalls,

I think it affected my parent's perspectives because they always spoke to me, ‘You can't go anywhere because you were a girl, but if you were a boy we wouldn't worry as much’… I think once they went to the parent meetings, and they realized I was not the only girl going, and that there was also a lot of parents that shared their same… same questions and concerns, and they saw that the adults that were going were trustworthy I feel that changed their viewpoint a little bit.

Kim agrees with América. She tells me that her parents were “more cautious” than they could have been if it were her brothers traveling instead. She recalls telling people about her trip and they were “kind of shocked that I actually went across the world, especially how old was I? 13?” She recalls that “nobody” let their girls go on trips like this so she remembers having to convince her family to let her go.

Lucas believes that his gender and his dawning realization that he was gay affected his trip. He shares what this meant for him on the trip:

It was a little rough. I'm not going to lie…I know there was no one in the trip that was actually like a grown-up that was gay—you know that I can just sincerely talk to. That was a big one. So I just kind of kept to myself. And that was really
one of the reasons I kept to myself, because I didn't want to be bullied. I didn't want to be teased by anybody. I know I could talk to the adults at any time if that happened, if that was going on...I had the feeling that I was [gay], but not a hundred percent...I was still getting the hang of things. And it was just -- I had a lot going in my head. So I was just like, you know...What if my parents find out? Like I can tell someone right now [on the DC trip], but if my parents find out, they're going to kill me. Which was totally not true because when I totally told my parents, they were just like, we knew. Yeah, yeah. Like, we were aware of this.

Lucas recalls feeling guarded and “to himself” because of his sexual orientation. He believes this is why he chose to stay close to M. and L., the two female friends he had on the trip. He was not concerned about them finding out as much as he was about the other males on the trip.

For Eliot, being male meant the he was “outnumbered” due to the number of females traveling compared to the number of boys. In his year, there were eight boys and twenty-five girls. Eliot believes he had to “look more into what it was to be a gentleman, I guess you can say. You know you're presenting yourself with a group you're going to travel with across the world. So in a sense I couldn't just be immature.” He wanted to present himself as “being a gentleman and doing what you believe” is correct for the situation as a man. He believes he learned this from watching and “analyzing Mr. Douglas,”

[Watching him]...it made me think...in college I did look more -- I joined a group called M. E. N. throughout college at the Cultural Center. And we went to it
because there was free food... And then that's the funny part of it. So it was like a bunch of guys. And I was like, "You know what's weird about this? It doesn't say only open to guys, but it's only guys here." So we'd just talk about like what it is to be a man, we'd watch videos, we'd analyze rap culture, we'd analyze sports culture, this and that...and being a gentleman.

For Eliot, as a fourteen-year-old boy, his gender affected his trip as he learned how to become a gentleman, especially in front of the girls and in a different country. Through observing how Mr. Douglas handled himself on the trip, Eliot gained this knowledge and inspired him to look into it more in college.

Summary

Three DC-Only, three Europe-Only, and three Both participants shared their thoughts about how they came to educational travel, what it was like on the trip, and what it has meant for them in the years after attending Harold Middle School. For each group I highlight one participant and provide a shorter summary of the other two from each category. They also provided their thoughts on academic achievement and school engagement variables. Next, we turn to the adult chaperone focus group to learn the meaning they feel educational travel had for the student travelers.

Results from the Adult Chaperone Focus Group

On Monday, September 14, 2015 I met with eight chaperones for one hour and 41 minutes. We met at my house in an addition to my garage. It was a hot September evening so we had fans and lots of water. I provided snacks. Several chaperones contacted me ahead of time and asked if we could have dinner together after we finished.
After checking individually with each participant to ensure this was acceptable, I invited everyone to a dinner with their families. They all requested that Ruth Córdova attend as well. Before I started to record the focus group, we spent 15 minutes catching up with each other. Some chaperones were old friends and others had never met each other.

**Descriptions of adult chaperones.** The two DC-Only chaperones I selected were Ray Allegro and Analyn Salamanca. Ray is a White male from Colorado in his 30s who currently works at another middle school in our district as a music teacher. Ray is an accomplished musician who often serenaded the Harold students during passing period with his trumpet. Analyn is a female Latina from Colombia in her 40s. She currently works at Harold as a family and community liaison. Analyn is vivacious and outgoing making her a favorite amongst students and families.

The three Europe-Only participants were David Douglas, Armando Salazar, and Patty Samuels. David is an attorney from Colorado in his late 30s. He served on the HEEP board where he was always eager to learn more about the students and their families. In 2008 when we had trouble securing another Europe chaperone he confessed that he had been longing to travel with the students and asked for permission to accompany us. He was a natural with the students due to his friendly attitude and intuitive understanding of how to work with young adolescents. Armando is a Latino male in his 30s from Colorado who is a math and technology teacher in our school district. Armando married one of the popular teachers (Mrs. Salazar) at our school who mentored several trip students and the students loved to learn of this romance between two teachers. Armando played a wide variety of music and taught students creative ways
of using technology in his classes and this made him a favorite at Harold. Patty is a White female from California in her 50s who worked for our school district for 15 years and now is a nanny. At Harold she provided technical support in the main office welcoming anyone with a friendly smile and an offer of assistance. Noting the pleasure she had in working with travelers, she wrote on her survey, “I miss being a chaperone!”

The three participants were Grace Carrington, Kyle Jameson, and Erin Timson. Grace is a White female from Colorado in her late 30s. She began chaperoning on the Washington, DC trip when she was substitute teaching at Harold and instinctively knew how to guide nervous Grade 6 students on this big trip out of state. Grace is a positive and encouraging teacher who is very active with students outside of school coaching soccer, organizing school plays, and working with student government. Kyle is a White male in his late 30s who used to teach in our district and now works at an alternate school. Kyle was a favorite teacher at Harold because he stayed current of popular teen culture and taught students how to think critically about what they were learning. Kyle was always willing to assist his students, both in and out of school. They knew this and sought him out for help on many occasions.

**Adult chaperones’ characteristics of educational travel.** The adult chaperones shared their thoughts with me about how they viewed the students’ meaning of the trip. This was different than what the trip meant for them. At times during the group I guided their comments from their personal meaning back to how they saw the students’ make meaning. The adult chaperones mention *Exposure to New Ideas, Active Purposeful Learning, Increased Academics, Academic Achievement, Organizational Structures,*
*Adult Advocate, Developmentally Responsive, Family Involvement, Empowering, Transformative, Empowering, Validating, Comprehensive, and Pride.* They did not mention *Enhanced Experiential Learning, Safe Environment, Privilege, Change in Perspective,* or *Engagement.* For each characteristic I will highlight one or two adult chaperone’s comments that are representative of the group so that the reader can get a feel for how they viewed educational travel for the students.

**Exposure to new ideas.** Educational travel offers the opportunity for exposure to new ideas. This “opens doors” to new possibilities thereby expanding travelers knowledge of the world.

This is one of the first characteristics Ray mentions. He recalls the students’ “introduction to breakfast” at Embassy Suites on the Washington, DC trip. This popular chain of suites has an all-you-can-eat breakfast with delicious options such as made-to-order omelets, waffles, pancakes, bacon, sausage, etc. He shares that it was one of the best things of the trip, “because you just see their eyes get brighter and brighter, ‘Look at all this food!’” He mentions that many had never seen that much food before and some had not eaten until they were full. It was a learning experience to have this much food from which to choose for breakfast and some took too much and ended up not eating it all. Ray comments that this was such a new experience for them and they learned how to make better choices as the week progressed. For Kyle, he believes the students were exposed to the new idea of leaving the neighborhood where most students were comfortable. He shares:
I think their world is very insular in their neighborhoods. I mean, there's a certain comfort zone there because the neighborhood sounds the way that their house sounds, and it looks the way that their family looks, and whether they've come from another place. . .I think the impact of the trips was to get them out of that comfortable place, both in the home with their family and the neighborhood itself. And that's, I guess, defined by their ethnicity to a large extent. For them to get outside of that, though, and interact in a world that doesn't include their own comfort zone I think was what made it tough, but also what gave it its impact.… So I think just coming out of that comfort zone and saying, "Hey I'm a world citizen, not just [the Harold] ‘Hood," or that kind of thing.

For both Ray and Kyle, they believe part of the meaning of the trip was the change students experienced when they were exposed to new ideas either through breakfast or seeing people different from themselves.

*Active purposeful learning.* Sometimes, *Active Purposeful Learning* was not something the students enjoyed immediately. Armando recalls that sometimes the students seemed a “frustrated at the beginning when they found out they had to take a class in order to travel.” However, once they started learning about things and realizing they were going to see what they were studying, they really enjoyed the class. Patty believes the same thing happened in studying for *Les Misérables.* The students studied this popular musical before we left and at times it seemed rather boring to some of them. Then, about two weeks before the trip, the students would stay after school and listen to
the entire musical from beginning to end. Patty attended these after school events and recalls:

I always could see the real change the day that we would do Les Misérables, because they heard the story; they had this idea and thought they knew. And you'd see them start processing as the music was going, and this dawning realization of, "I thought I knew how this was going to go," and then be in the grip of it and see some of those same kids at the performance…So they thought they knew. They got a taste of it. And then they got to see the performance, and they got to see that transition from cerebral, brain knowledge to full experience. And it was mind-blowing.

The cycle of learning about something to be prepared to see it was what made this experience so powerful from Patty’s point of view. David mentions how important it was for the students to know what they were going to see and do on the trip. He believes this learning was very abstract until they saw it:

I remember them talking with each other, like certain things were so… it was like so in a vacuum though…. [after they saw it], It was like, "That's not really what it’s like. . . I get what you're saying about Notre Dame. I get that. It was this building, and you have to know these facts. But, wait, when you get there, you'll know. You can only experience it." And that was interesting because it was lacking before they went.
The students learned about places to know what they were however their understanding was enhanced when they experienced it for themselves. Ray recalls hearing students comment on the trip about things they had learned before they left: “They'll be like, ‘Hey, did you remember that from class?’ They're helping each other out, and they're trying to do the [DC Student Journals] during the day.”

While not all students enjoyed the experience of learning before we left and not all students learned all they could, the adult chaperones believe that this learning enhanced the power of educational travel. They also believe the students understood this better when they were on the trip.

**Increased academics, academic achievement.** All the adult chaperones believe that educational travel increased interest in academics that lead to greater academic achievement. Grace mentions that the travelers had higher standards for themselves because they could earn scholarship money for travel based on their grades. Armando agrees and adds that it was not only the academically proficient students who worked to get good grades. He recalls, “There were a lot of “high flyers” who traveled…but they held themselves to those high expectations too.” Armando believes that the opportunity to travel changed these students and they thought, “I'm done with whatever I'm doing” to get in trouble and brought themselves up to a higher standard academically. Kyle believes this is apparent in the ACT and CSAP scores. Kyle recalls that the travel elective class was based on literacy where students built their academic vocabulary as they learned about the places they would see. He recalls the students’ interest in learning about Les Misérables and reading Anne Frank’s diary. He believes this led to an increase in
academic achievement because it was relevant. He shares this comment with the group, “There was just a lot of impacting literature that was meaningful, and the relevance of it, too. I think the trip made the class relevant. And by being relevant, it was just meaningful.” All the chaperones agree that educational travel increased the students’ academic achievement in some way.

Organizational structures. Grace and Ray comment on everything about educational travel at Harold was well organized. The travel experience was meaningful because of this organization from the first meeting to returning to school to complete the scrapbooks.

Ray recalls his first impressions of the travel meeting with parents and echoes the thoughts of several other chaperones:

I remember there was always food, and that the students who were traveling were frequently the ones who were doing the physical setup and tear-down. And by the time I got on board at Harold, everything seemed to be just almost running itself. I know that’s not really what happened, but from an outsider’s perspective, it seemed like the system was almost self-sustaining. And when I finally got involved with the trips, I got to see what happened on the backside of that. But [that organization] was really, really impressive to watch.

The students and their families knew what to expect when the monthly evening meetings were held. This assisted them in understanding the details of traveling and what was required. It also helped to build relationships and create a solid structure. Grace believes that educational travel at Harold was meaningful because from the first meeting
to the end of the school year everything was planned. She credits “the meticulous planning, every minute and detail. Because it's not just a, ‘Let's go and have a free-for-all’ that it really is educational.”

**Adult advocate.** All the adult chaperones mention their awareness of the special role they played in creating a child-centered environment on the trip. In discussing their comments here, it is not just the *Adult Advocate* characteristic that comes through but also *Developmentally Responsive* one as the adults share the challenges of working with young adolescents.

Grace shares what is means to be a good chaperone to ensure the travelers have a quality trip, “Obviously, being a good chaperone is being knowledgeable about where you're going…Like giving them information, asking them questions, making sure that they're actually thinking while you're there, having a plan, being prepared beforehand.” Grace also mentions that it is important to know your travelers so that one can “control the drama…so that they don't come back remembering some petty argument, that they come back actually remembering the trip.” Grace recalls the times she worked with her groups to ensure this happened.

Kyle recalls that the trip was a bit of a “roller coaster” mentoring young adolescents and something about that inspired the adults to “come back for more” and travel again with students. Kyle attributes his “roller coaster” to “the demand to keep kids socially and emotionally on track, while you're also trying to have an educational experience, and you're also trying to navigate travel in a large group, I think there's an overwhelming element to it.” Even though it was challenging, it was very meaningful.
work to guide the young charges through a travel experience and no one made a
difference. He saw that the students had bad days on the trip sometimes but because the
adults helped them, the impact was lessened, “If you ask any of the kids who say they
had a good trip, there's a good chance they had at least one or two really bad days.”

David agrees with Grace and Kyle when he recalls a time on the trip when Eliot
was not behaving appropriately. David knew he had to talk to him and help him figure
out what to do:

Eliot had this moment…on the trip where he was misbehaving. . . Of course, for
me, it's all coming down to this moment on this trip, but maybe that was what was
going on with his life at that point in time…He had a choice where we basically
had to pull him aside and just say, "Look, dude. You handled this the wrong way.
How's this trip going to be for you?" And from that moment on, he was just a
leader amongst the four kids that were in his little group. He was the leader,
leading by example, good examples. And I felt like we had a little role in just
helping him choose that path instead of something else.

On the trip, Armando remembers another way the adults played a role in creating
a child-centered trip. The students were allowed to choose between several activities on
the Europe trip when it was free time from the tour company. Armando and Patty once
took one child to the Tower of London because he was the only one who wanted to see it.
Armando recalls, “That was all he wanted, was the Tower of London. He so enjoyed
himself, and we were talking about the armor. And the horses were armored as well, and
the crown jewels.” For this boy, knowing that his choice was honored, even when he was the only one, made his trip a good one.

Kyle and Analyn recall that sometimes our homecoming from the trips was not as joyful for some students. After many trips, there would be one or two children whose families forgot to pick them up or did not have transportation to come and get them. While we waited for the other reunions to end, we would assist the students who had no one waiting for them. Analyn shares that one girl looked at her and said, “I am so glad you are here even if my family isn’t.” Kyle shares how those moments reminded him of why he traveled with students:

Every year when you come home and there's that intensity of the reunions of families, and the balloons, and the 12 people that are there, or the other side of it, where there's no one there and you're waiting for someone…And that's, sometimes, what brings it home more than anything...I'm glad I did this now.”

For the adult chaperones, being an advocate was an important undertaking and they understood the importance this played on the students’ educational travel experience.

**Developmentally responsive.** Several chaperones mention the special characteristics of working with middle school students. At this time in their lives, they are experiencing many physical, emotional, intellectual, and developmental changes. As the reader saw in the previous section, the Adult Advocates play an important role in helping the travelers navigate their travel experience. This section I will examine other examples of the Developmentally Responsive nature of the educational travel.
Ray recalls moments when the students the Washington Monument for the first time and finally realizing how tall it is. He also remarks that their “heads are on a swivel” as they look at all the things they have learned when they view sights on the National Mall. He believes they begin to understand larger concepts when they see things with their own eyes. Ray recalls “it's real finally. It's tangible at that point. And we all know adolescents...abstract thought is almost impossible. So when it's finally a concrete thing, you could almost feel the goose bumps on their arms.” He believes he could almost see them changing the way they saw things and shifting from concrete to formal operations as they processed the trip.

Kyle mentions that every year there are students who do not end up traveling who thought they would. As anyone who has worked with 11 to 14 year olds knows, there are times when these students make poor choices that have lasting consequences. Despite the mentoring the adults provided to students before the trips, there were times when we could not help them out of poor choices. Kyle believes this was a “formative experience” because not everyone makes it. This affects the students who are traveling as well when they see a friend so something that makes participating in the trip no longer an option. Kyle recalls that there were “things where we as adults can't run interference -- we have to stand back and say, ‘Hey, this is on you, and none of your teachers can do anything about that.’ I think it's a lesson for everyone.” While none of the nine participants mention this in the interviews, several of the other adults agreed with Kyle.

**Family involvement.** All of the adult chaperones recall the importance of family in educational travel.
Grace recalls that students often came to the meetings for the trips because a family member has traveled. At the meetings, Armando and Analyn recall that it was a “family affair” because the whole family would often attend the meetings and it was something that families looked forward to for their children:

You always saw the families come through. You saw the siblings come. When they were in elementary school, they got excited about the trips, "When I get to Harold, I'm going to travel." It was always brought up with them that way.

Patty and Erin recall that there was a high turnout for the parent meetings and the excitement that was created in the days up to the meetings. Patty recalls encouraging students to attend even if they were not sure they wanted to travel. Ray recalls that the packing list and paper-signing meetings had the highest turnout.

Erin and Analyn both cite former travelers who helped a younger sibling go on a trip because of how it had changed the travelers. Erin ran into a former traveler at the grocery story, “He was…doing everything he could so his little sister could get on that sixth grade trip, and just getting across the finish line. And I think that just speaks volumes about how much it impacted him that he wanted to help his sister also have that opportunity.” Analyn agrees,

About a month ago, one of the students, who caused a lot of trouble on one of our trips…we were ready to send him back home, he joined…the army or the marines…But he is another person. You should see him talking to his sister. He's like, "You need to go. You need to do what I couldn't do because I was nuts. You
are going to do it." And I was like, "Oh, my god. You are not the same person."

He is another person. And he was telling me how the trip changed him.

**Empowering.** All chaperones comment about the *Empowering* nature of educational travel. Whether this empowerment is demonstrated in self-confidence, a “swagger,” or in academic achievement, the adult chaperones credit educational travel as having a part in creating this with the travelers.

Ray restates what some of the participants said in the individual interviews regarding the *Empowering* nature of the trips. He mentions how students felt they could tackle other things in their lives. It gave them self-confidence to push themselves:

More than once I heard the kids say, ‘Well, if I can raise this much money and go to Europe [or DC], why can't I go to college, or why can't I do this?’ Whatever door they perceived as being closed to them in the past, it was now possible to open…They feel like they've accomplished something when perhaps before they didn't have that feeling.

Erin believes this empowerment was reflected in the “swagger” the students had when they returned form the trip: “I think, for me, it was this moxie or swagger…and there was just something. . . . I remember making eye contact with one of the students, and there was just this unspoken, non-verbal, "Mm-hmm, I just traveled to another continent."

Erin continues to share how this confidence led to them making “right decisions” and also to become more adaptable, even on the trip. Erin saw how even when things did not go as planned on the trip, the students had a spirit of accomplishment to make things happen in their lives. Erin shares her memory: “It was pouring rain in London, we
couldn't make the Tube; and we were going to now walk 30 kids to try to get to Les Misérables in time in Oxford Circle….those kids [had] the adaptability, the leadership” to make it on time to the performance despite adverse conditions. Erin believes that they saw all they could accomplish because of the confidence they gained on the trip.

Grace and Ray believe that the Empowering nature of the trip is reflected in their Academic Achievement. When they discuss they ACT and CSAP test results, they both agree that students are empowered to do more after traveling and this might be the reason more higher scores for trip students. Grace believes it might have to do with a “growth mindset” that the travelers have. After they make it on the trip, “so now you know you can do the next thing. And so you have that growth mindset that you can do whatever you want to do…instead of just the fixed…mindset.” This translates into higher test scores because travelers believe in themselves and their ability to meet higher goals. Ray believes they can reach these higher goals because they met a tangible goal at a young age. He thinks this is especially true for Europe-Only and Both travelers: “Their goal becomes a lot more tangible …The majority of the kids who went to Europe decided they were going to go to Europe in seventh grade and started working toward it then.” He believes that most middle school students are not used to setting two-year goals and meeting them. When the Europe-Only and Both travelers were able to do this, it was empowering: “So it's a two year goal that [they meet], when else in middle school are you going to have a two year goal?”
Transformative. In under-represented travel groups, educational travel transforms students as they confront and transcend the boundary of “who travels” of traditional educational travel experiences.

The adult chaperones also believe educational travel was transformative for the students. Patty and Armando recall how many of our students had never imagined they could travel outside their own neighborhood. Grace mentions the reactions of people when they learned out students were in middle school and from a public school in the USA.

Many of our students had not traveled far beyond their immediate surroundings unless it was to travel to Mexico to visit family. Therefore, many had little knowledge of traveling in general or traveling by plane. Patty and Armando believe this was transformative because the students learned they could be a part of this travel culture even if was a little scary. Patty shares, “You could see the fear and concern, but not overwhelmingly so. Because they had been prepared…And then they weren't [just] part of the 30 group. They were part of their subgroup. So our group is all going together.” The students learned they were able to leave their neighborhoods to travel with a group.

Grace recalls encountering people in both Europe and Washington, DC who expressed surprise that a group middle school students were traveling. Grace shares, “I remember every time I traveled that people would be so shocked that our kids were in middle school. They would be like…‘Oh, my gosh. We thought you guys were in high school.’” In addition, people were also surprised that we were from a low-income, public school in the USA. The expectations of people for students from this neighborhood
appeared to be different than what people encountered with our group. Grace remembers:

[People would ask me if] were from Spain or a private school from Mexico. . .

And they would just be so shocked to learn we are from the USA…I think it gave them a sense of more pride about who they are and where they come from, because they were shocked in a good way, like really giving a positive message…And so them just hearing that and getting so many compliments and so much praise, it did mature them -- again, the rite of passage. But then I feel like they would come back changed and still act mature for the most part…But that was, I think, really big for them, was hearing that constantly.

Grace and the other chaperones agree that this impression left on people outside of the Harold community helped the travelers to see that not only could they travel to places that other students had traveled to but also that they could leave a better impression than what was expected of traveling teens. This changed the narrative of “who travels” for the Harold students and possibly for the people the Harold students encountered. Ray adds that taking students from the Harold community to other places is transformative because of “the fact that people got to see young children of color being outstanding citizens out in public. That kind of flips the script on what the…perception [of them] is in the world…you see people looking and being pleasantly surprised.”

Introducing the Harold students to the larger world of travel was transformative for them and possibly for the people they encountered on their travels.
Not all recollections are happy ones when discussing people’s reactions to low-income ethnically and linguistically diverse students’ travel experiences. Perhaps is it because we had so many experiences of pleasant surprise reactions of others that the next story was unexpected for David. His eyes were opened regarding what our students of color experience frequently and he did not expect to see it in Paris. He shares a story about when he took his group to visit a Louis Vuitton store on Champs Elysées:

I had been to Europe probably three or four times in my privileged upbringing. And I was like, "Hey, there's Louis V store!" And they're walking down the street, and they're like, "Ah, Louis V!" because that was when Kanye was blowing up, it was cool or whatever…And I was like, "Come on. Let's go check it out." So we go across the street to check it out, and we very quickly were meant to feel unwelcomed. We were just ushered, basically, out of the store. And I've never experienced anything like that. I was just shocked. I was like, "Damn, this is what these kids go through, all these kids of color. . ." I didn't even think twice about it, man. It was a wake-up call for me. They felt bad, having left that store. And I felt bad for taking them in. Jesus. . . you know? It was a lesson for me too.

Educational travel is transformative because it helps students who are non-traditional travelers disrupt the narrative of white, higher-income students only as travelers. It also is transformative because it begins to show other people that travel is for low-income ethnically and linguistically diverse students. It can even change the perceptions of the adult chaperones about the challenges our ethnically and linguistically diverse students face as they travel.
Comprehensive. The Comprehensive nature of the trip was apparent to all the adult chaperones. The travelers formed a camaraderie that carried over into their other academic classes according to Ray. Kyle and Grace remember other students who were not traveling saw this and wanted to be a part of HEEP even if they did not want to travel.

Ray tells us that he recalls a “sense of camaraderie” that developed between the travelers, not just for the trip that they were participating in but also across trips, “They all felt like they were in something together…they always had at least one person that they knew they could go to, one person their age that they could go to and say, ‘Hey, help me work through this.’” In the music classes Ray taught at Harold, he noticed that the trip students tended to work together and support each other.

Kyle and Grace recall students who did not want to travel but wanted to be a part of HEEP because they saw the prestige of managing the school store or café, sweeping after school, or the adults who supported them. Sometimes they would approach Kyle and ask “Hey, how do I get to that job, that sweeper job?” Kyle believes that some students signed up for educational travel, not for travel per se, but to be a part of something bigger. He shares his thoughts, “I think we got kids who traveled with us for the sake of being a part of something bigger, but not necessarily for the sake of going on a trip and getting away from home.” He and Grace agree that students saw the close-knit group of travelers and the adults who supported them and thought, "All these people have my back, and I want to be a part of that."
Pride. Grace and Armando mention the pride they saw in the students when they worked for their travels. Armando recalls, “I think there was a pride in having worked for the trip and having struggled, ‘I did this for myself. And I had help, but this was my work, and this is my reward for all the work...” Grace mentions that in her current position, cleaning the school is seen as a punishment for doing something wrong or bad behavior. However the HEEP workers took pride in keeping their school clean and working for their trip. Grace recalls:

In this case, it was cool to have your job and do your cleaning, because there was such a system. There were students in charge, and you had to check in, and it was cool. I mean, they thought it was cool. They took pride in being a cleaner.

The other adult chaperones recalls similar times when the students expressed the pride they felt in raising their own money and earning their trip either through grades, fundraising, or their HEEP job.
CHAPTER SIX

Discussion

In this chapter, I provide a summary of the quantitative and qualitative findings followed by a discussion of these findings as they relate to the four main research questions of this study. I provide the reader with an interpretation of my findings concerning the meaning of educational travel through analysis of academic achievement and school engagement variables, nine individual interviews, and one focus group. In addition, I discuss the limitations of this study along with suggestions for future research. I mention the implications for educational travel in urban schools and share closing thoughts at the end.

This transformative, explanatory sequential mixed methods study was conducted to understand the meaning of educational travel in the lives of urban, middle school youth in a low-income neighborhood. From the years 2003 to 2011, students traveled to Washington, DC in Grade 6 (DC-Only group), to Europe in Grade 8 (Europe-Only), and some participated in both trips (Both) at Harold Middle School in Denver, Colorado, USA. Little research (quantitative or qualitative) has been done on the effects of educational travel with any students in middle school and high school (Stone & Petrick, 2013). The central goal of this study was to address this gap by deepening the understanding of educational travel through quantitative and qualitative research. By understanding how meaningful educational travel occurred at Harold Middle School, I
hoped to ascertain which design structures helped the travelers understand educational travel and, as a result, what outcomes travel had in their lives. This study gives recommendations to educators, administrators, and travel companies for finding ways to make educational travel more accessible for more low-income urban youth. These recommendations are ones that would bring more equality to an area that is dominated by White, middle- and upper-income students (Farrugia & Bhandari, 2013; Mission Measurement, 2010; SYTA 2008).

**Research Questions**

As stated in previous chapters, this study focused on answering the following four research questions:

1. **Mixed Methods Question:**
   a. What is the meaning of educational travel in the lives of middle school students in a low-income, urban neighborhood as measured by academic achievement, school engagement, interviews, and one focus group?

2. **Quantitative Question:**
   a. What are the differences in student academic achievement, and school engagement between DC-Only travelers, Europe-Only travelers and students who traveled to both DC and Europe as compared to non-travelers from Harold Middle School?
      i. Academic Achievement: What is the difference in ACT scores, CSAP scale scores, and cumulative GPA?
ii. School Engagement: What is the difference in attendance, graduation, and suspension rates?

3. Qualitative Question:
   a. What is the meaning of being a part of the educational travel program at Harold Middle School as interpreted by:
      i. DC-Only travelers (three individual interviews)?
      ii. Europe-Only travelers (three individual interviews)?
      iii. Student who traveled to both DC and Europe (three individual interviews)?
      iv. Adult chaperones’ view of the meaning for the students (one focus group of 8 participants)?

4. Transformative Question
   a. How can educational institutions and leaders enhance and provide increased access to educational travel for urban middle school youth based on the voices of the participants?

To answer these questions, I selected an explanatory, sequential design because it corresponded with my vision for the integration and timing of the quantitative and qualitative data collection. I analyzed the quantitative data first so that I could present it to the participants at the end of interviews and focus group. All seventeen participants were invited to comment on the quantitative data after they had participated in the qualitative interview process. In addition, I used the overarching filter of the transformative paradigm to ensure the results were viewed from a resilience-based
perspective rather than a deficit-based perspective of families in an urban environment (Mertens, 2009). This paradigm made it critical for the participants to comment on the data that are so often used to describe them to ensure they were not marginalized. Both datasets were afforded equal weight. Had I only emphasized the quantitative results, then I would have yielded to the culture of data rampant in our schools today and I would not have ascertained the meaning the participants ascribe to educational travel. Conversely, if I only collected the qualitative data, I would not have discovered the statistical significance of the associations between travel and academic outcomes. Privileging one type of data over the other would have inaccurately represented the educational culture in which we live today.

**Summary of Quantitative Findings**

The quantitative data tested the theory that predicted that educational travel would positively influence academic achievement and school engagement for three different groups of former travelers at Harold Middle School. I used a one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) with ACT scores and GPA. I used a repeated measures ANOVA with CSAP scale scores. A one-way ANOVA was used for attendance scores and a Pearson chi-square was used for graduation and suspension rates.

There were mixed results for the academic achievement variables. I found statistically significant higher scores in some areas of the ACT scores. I found no statistically significant effect of travel found for any CSAP scale scores. DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both travel groups indicated a statistically significant higher GPA.
There were also mixed results for the school engagement variables. I found statistical significance in a portion of all three variables. Attendance rates were higher for some groups of traveling students than for non-traveling students in some, but not all, grades. Students in the DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both travel groups were more likely to graduate from high school. Students in the DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both travel groups were less likely to have been suspended in Grade 5 and in Grade 6. Surprisingly, students in the DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both travel groups were more likely to have been suspended in Grade 9.

**Summary of Qualitative Findings**

Through interviews and focus groups, the qualitative data explored the meaning of educational travel for the nine student participants and adult chaperones from the DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both travel groups. I interviewed three participants from each travel group for this study. América, Lucas, and Angelina were the three participants from the DC-Only group. Eliot, Kim, and Camila were the three participants from the Europe-Only Group. Laura, Lilac, and Beto were the three participants from the Both Group. The nine adults who participated in the focus group were Ray Allegro and Analyn Salamanca from the DC-Only Group; David Douglas, Armando Salazar, and Patty Samuels from the Europe-Only Group; and Grace Carrington, Kyle Jameson, and Erin Timson from the Both Group.

After conducting an *in vivo* coding process (Creswell, 2014), I discovered four essential attributes that encompass four themes and 18 characteristics to describe the meaning of educational travel in the lives of the participants. I sorted these
characteristics into the categories of design structure and outcomes. As we will see, some of these characteristics fell into both categories.

In thinking about the overarching attributes that permeate my findings, I found four essential attributes of educational travel. These attributes are Developmentally Responsive, Culturally Responsive, Academically Engaging, and Purposefully Organized. Some of these attributes can be found in the individual characteristics however they are also crucial to the overall framework. For example, Developmentally Responsive is a characteristic that adults demonstrate when working with students but it is also an attribute that must be considered when designing the Curriculum and Instruction theme of travel. Therefore, these four attributes are listed as the first step to considering the others.

The participants reported that Curriculum and Instruction played a role in ensuring educational travel was meaningful in their lives. The following are the characteristics that made this possible: Exposure to New Ideas, Active Purposeful Learning, Enhanced Experiential Learning, Increased Academics, and Academic Achievement. When educational travel offers ways for students to deeply engage in learning experiences they undergo a change in their outlook on their education. They also reported that Leadership and Organization played an important role in ensuring that their educational travel was meaningful. They mentioned three characteristics: Organizational Structures, Adult Advocate, and Developmentally Responsive. Of these three, the Adult Advocate appeared to be the most important as that person ensured the
trip was organized well and appropriate for the developmental needs of young adolescents before, during, and after the trip.

One of the most important findings of this study is the role of the *Culture and Community* theme in educational travel. The participants reported these six characteristics as having a profound impact on their travel experience: *Family Involvement, Safe Environment, Empowerment (CRT), Transformative (CRT), Validating (CRT)*, and *Comprehensive (CRT)*. *CRT* refers to the characteristics of culturally responsive teaching as discussed by Gay (2010). The participants reported that effective and meaningful educational travel had these six characteristics before, during, and/or after their trip. In addition, the participants reported that the characteristics of the *Personal Development* theme were part of their educational travel experience. These characteristics are *Pride, Privilege, Change in Perspective, and Engagement*.

**Discussion of Results**

This section interprets the findings as I answer each research question. Creswell (2104) lists this as the final step in data analysis: “Step 6. A final step in data analysis involves making interpretation in qualitative research (bold original) of the findings or results” (p. 200). This is the section where I combine what I have learned from the quantitative and qualitative data analysis to discover the meaning of educational travel for urban, middle school youth. The transformative paradigm guides this section, as I provide insights on the meaning of educational travel through the voices of the participants thus meeting the goal of the transformative paradigm. By highlighting the participants meaning of educational travel, I bring a community traditionally marginalized or
excluded from the educational travel research community into academia. Through an examination of culturally responsive teaching, I examine ways to break down the inequality prevalent in educational travel today.

**Research question one.** Research question one is the overarching mixed methods question and seeks to ascertain the meaning of educational travel in the lives of urban middle school students in a living in a low-income neighborhood. The answer to this question combines the results of questions two and three. The six findings to be discussed in answering research questions two and three are as follows along with the literature from Chapter Two that suggested the same results from educational travel or that influenced the results found in this study:

- *Educational travel provides a strong connection to curriculum and instruction* (Dewey, 1938; Kolb, 1984; Carlson et al., 1990; Byrnes, 2001; Sutton & Dwyer, 2004; Rubin, 2004; Johnson, 2008; Saitow, 2009; Asia Society, 2011; SYTA, 2016).
- *Educational travel requires strong leadership and organization* (Dewey, 1938; Kolb, 1984; Byrnes, 2001; Saitow, 2009; Broomhall et al., 2010).
• *Equitable educational travel includes the culture and community of the students* (Gmelch, 1997; Delpit, 2006; Simon, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Gay, 2010; McLellan, 2011; Nieto, 2010).

• *Educational travel provides the opportunity for personal development* (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004; Gmelch, 1997; Minnaert, 2007; Johnson, 2008; Coetzee & Bester, 2009; Mission Measurement, 2010; SYTA, 2016).

These findings synthesize the quantitative results and the qualitative results to ascertain the meaning of educational travel for Harold students. The design structure and the outcomes will provide recommendations for others who wish to promote educational travel for students in low-income, urban neighborhoods.

**Research question two.** The quantitative data tested the theory that predicted that educational travel would positively influence academic achievement and school engagement for three different groups of former travelers at Harold Middle School when compared to the non-traveling students who attended Harold during the same time. The results suggest that educational travel positively influences some areas of both academic achievement and school engagement. This section will discuss the results and will remind the reader of the nine participants’ thoughts and reflections on these data. Chapter Five contains the full discussion of these points (see “Comments on Quantitative Data Results at the End of the Interview”).

*Educational travel means increased academic achievement.* Statistical significance was found in two of the three of the academic achievement variables. CSAP scale scores did not show any statistically significant differences in test results.
Following the results of each variable, I provide comments of the participants that had been previously discussed.

**ACT Results.** I found statistically significantly higher scores for students who were part of the DC-Only and Both travel groups in ACT composite scores and in English subscores. ACT reading subscores were higher for DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both travel groups. No statistical significance was found for ACT mathematics or ACT science subscores. These findings suggest that students who travel outperform their non-traveling peers on ACT sub-tests for English and reading; thus increasing the composite score. For the ACT reading subscores, it is possible that DC-Only and Both scored higher than Europe due to the fact that both of these groups included students who traveled in Grade 6. The students in both of these groups were exposed to *Active Purposeful Learning* at a younger age and might have discovered that reading could be interesting. Therefore they might read more over a longer period of time thus improving their reading. The ACT English subscore is higher for all three travel groups when compared to the non-travel groups suggesting that all three travel groups learned more about the English language. It is possible that students who traveled increased their academic vocabulary because they experienced a greater degree of *Engagement* with school. Middle school is a crucial time in students’ lives to develop the skills to be life-long learners (Balfanz, 2009) and possibly educational travel helped create these skills for the travelers.

As we saw in Chapter Five, the nine participants credit the following characteristics to the increased academic achievement results in ACT scores: *Active*
Purposeful Learning, Increased Academics, Adult Advocate, Validating, Comprehensive, and Engagement. Overall, the participants report an increased desire to read that began while preparing to read about where they were traveling. This increased engagement in reading, and for some in writing, carried over into the high school years, which increased their test scores. Some mentioned the adult advocates who pushed them in middle school to do well in school. They report still feeling that push in high school. Beto mentioned that he felt that not only the adults in middle school pushed him but also the other travelers. This comprehensive nature of educational travel helped students continue to push themselves academically. The validation of seeing things with one’s own eyes as América mentioned also increased ACT scores. She, and others, read more after the trips because they believed they would engage with reading and other subject because it offered something for them.

CSAP Results. There was no statistically significant effect of travel found for any CSAP scale scores. The results indicated that the DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both travel groups scores are higher in Grade 5 and end higher in Grade 10 on CSAP scale scores. Several points are important to keep in mind when examining these scores. First, the travelers started higher and ended higher over time. A senior research analyst in Harold’s school district mentioned to me that “it is hard to maintain high growth when you are already on a higher curve. It is just a basic economic principle that things tend to yield lower rates of return as we go higher” (C. Pham, personal communication, May 1, 2016). Therefore, one can surmise that the traveling students who started higher in Grade 5 might not have maintained that level of growth through the years if they had not
participated in educational travel. Second, despite the lack of statistical significance for an effect of travel, it is interesting to note that by Grade 10 DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both had a Proficient mean on CSAP Reading. This indicates that by Grade 10 the mean of the traveling students included in this sample would have met the criteria to be considered proficient in reading. In Grade 10, the scale scores ranges for Proficient are 578 – 689 (CDE, 2008). The means for the travel groups were as follows: DC-Only is 666.44; Europe-Only is 662.42; and Both is 668.95. This was not statically significant but it is worth noting.

CSAP Science scale scores were an anomaly because the students’ means dropped (See Figure 6). There are several factors the might have influenced the CSAP science scale scores during the years of the study. The science standards were changed in 2007 as noted on the spreadsheet Science CSAP School and District 2008, “Please note: in 2007 the Colorado State Board of Education adopted new model content standards for science. The 2008 science results are not comparable to earlier results because they test new standards” (CDE, 2008). Despite this statement, the school district still used these scores for planning purposed and the science teachers at Harold were held accountable for preparing students for the CSAP test. In addition, Harold had many different science teachers for Grades 6, 7, and 8, as it was a difficult position to staff. I recall students complaining that they had completed Chapter One of the science text three times with three different teachers due to turnover during one of the years during this study. This is typical of urban schools as research shows that one third of teachers leave within the first
three years of teaching and one half leave after five years (Kelley, 2004). Hiring and retaining teachers in an urban, low-income school is a challenge.

The nine participants credit the following characteristics to the increased academic achievement results in CSAP scores: *Transformative, Increased Academics, (lack of) Engagement, and Family Involvement*. In looking at the CSAP scores, América sums up the thoughts of others when she says travel “changed the trajectory” of her life. She believes that because she traveled to DC, she scored higher than what was expected of students at Harold. The participants believe that travel educates students on a wide variety of topics and inspires students to read more, similar to what they reported for ACT results. When the participants examined the science scores, they all reported a lack of engagement with the topic of that started in middle school and continued through high school. Several struggled to find the relevance of science to their lives. Laura spoke of this in her interview, mentioning the disengagement she felt from the topic with everything that was happening in her life. Some do not even recall having a science class in middle school even though they all did. Beto believes that he was closer to his family after the trips and this support helped him do better on the CSAP test. He believes the same is true for his other traveling friends.

It is possible that both ACT scores and CSAP scale scores were higher for reasons having nothing to do with travel. All the students who traveled attended an elective class that I taught before and after their travels. It is possible that my teaching influenced their learning resulting in higher scores. In addition, since the students all had higher CSAP scale scores in Grade 5 than their non-traveling counterparts, it is possible that they had
predisposition to score higher in high school. Further analysis of these scores is beyond the scope of this study.

**GPA.** DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both travel groups indicated a statistically significant higher GPA than the No Travel group. According to the report, “America’s High School Graduates: Results of the 2009 NAEP High School Transcript Study” (NCES, 2011), the average overall GPA for high school students in the USA from 2005 – 2009 fluctuated very little and averaged around 3.00 (NCES, 2011, p.13). The GPAs of the students in this study were as follows: No Travel group was 1.94, DC-Only was 2.31, Europe-Only was 2.29, and Both was 2.37. The National Center for Education Statistics (2011) examined a sample population of 37,700 high school students that represented approximately 3 million high school graduates from 2009 (p. 1). This study found that White and Asian/Pacific Islander high school graduates earn higher GPAs. In 2009, the averages were as follows: White students' GPA was 3.09, Black students' GPA was 2.69, Hispanic students' GPA was 2.84, and Asian/Pacific Islander students' GPA was 3.26. The average GPAs in this study for all groups was 1.97. Therefore, the average GPA for all groups of students included in this research study was lower than the national average. The three groups of students who traveled all had higher GPAs than the average for the students that attended Harold at the same time but not as high as the national average for Hispanics. Most of the students in this study attended Harvey High School. Despite repeated attempts to ascertain the average GPA of students at Harvey for the years of this study, I never received an answer to my queries.
In Chapter Five, we saw that the nine participants credit the following characteristics to the increased academic achievement results in GPA averages: *Increased Academics, Adult Advocate, Empowerment, Engagement, and Exposure to New Ideas*. América believes that the GPAs are higher because throughout school the travel students knew how to plan for something in the future, which led to increased academic success and a better GPA. For Lucas, the lack of engagement led him to not do as well in classes and thereby he had a lower GPA. Lilac suggests that the effect of the adult advocates in middle school that pushed her still has an effect on her, and possibly others’, motivation to do well in high school. Eliot believes the exposure to new ideas pushed him to be more open-minded. He credits being open-minded with doing better academically.

Harold Middle School is similar to so many urban schools in a low-income neighborhood. Abram, Stembridge, Fergus, and Noguera (n.d.) have documented the challenges of teaching in a school where there are large groups of minority students who live in segregated neighborhoods. Education in schools such as these is combined with structural challenges such as: 1) low student achievement, 2) a lack of instructional coherence, 3) inexperienced teaching staff, 4) poor data management systems, and 5) low expectations of students (Abram, Stembridge, Fergus, & Noguera, n.d.; Kincheloe 2004, 2010). The academic achievement results indicate this as well. The ACT scores, CSAP scores, and GPA are below average overall. In addition, the participants reported lack of instructional coherence and inexperienced teaching staff when they discussed science CSAP scores.
Educational travel means increased school engagement. There were mixed results for the school engagement variables however educational travel appeared to increase school engagement for attendance and high school graduation. Surprisingly, students in the DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both travel groups were more likely to have been suspended in Grade 9; however, this may not indicate a lack of engagement with school as we will see in the next section where the participants voice their thoughts. Again, I will highlight some of the participants’ thoughts to illustrate the connection between the data and their ideas. Chapter Five contains the full discussion of these points (see “Comments on Quantitative Data Results at the End of the Interview”).

Attendance. Students in the DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both travel groups were more likely to have better attendance in Grade 8 and students in the Both travel group were more likely to have better attendance in Grade 9. These are the only two areas where I discovered statistical significance for attendance. At the time these students were enrolled in Harold’s school district, it did not track student attendance data in Grade 5 and lower with enough consistency for it to be used in this study. The same thing was true for Grades 10 to 12. In addition, the accuracy of attendance data was not certain during this time as new electronic systems of taking attendance were implemented in the schools and it is possible there was staff error in recording attendance. Perhaps the significance found in the attendance rates can be ascribed to some of the same factors listened in the previous section: when students experience Engagement in Active Purposeful Learning they want to attend school with more regularity. However, if this were true, then one would expect the DC-Only group to have a higher rate in Grades 6
and 7. In addition we would expect DC-Only and Europe to be higher in Grade 9 as well. This is possibly an area for future research.

The nine participants credit the following characteristics to the increased academic achievement results in attendance: Engagement, Comprehensive, and Adult Advocate. América, Lucas, Eliot, Camila, Laura, and Angelina believe that students who travel are more likely to attend school because they feel more engaged in learning. They mentioned how they enjoyed the elective class for the trips but also they just began to think like Eliot did when he said, “Hey, there might be something to learn today!” They mentioned an increased motivation because they were traveling to a new place and wanted to be prepared for what they would see and do. The participants also felt like they were a part of something bigger than just school when they got to know fellow travelers and built a sense of camaraderie. This comprehensive feeling helped the students who were traveling engage in school more. The adult advocates played an important role in this as well as they pushed the students to come to school more and helped the students see why attending every day was important. América, Eliot, Camila, Laura, and Lilac mentioned a lack of engagement in high school as a reason why attendance dropped off for some, even the travelers. When there was not a sense of family, fewer adult advocates, and nothing to look forward to, so many just stopped coming to school or attended less frequently.

Graduation. Students in the DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both travel groups were more likely to graduate from high school. An examination of the graduation rate for the groups revealed that students who were in the No Travel group had a 51% graduation
rate. The students who traveled had a higher graduation rate that was statistically significant. The results are as follows: DC-Only graduated at a 71% rate; Europe-Only graduated at a 91% rate; and Both graduated at an 88% rate. When I combined the totals, the travel students graduated at 84% combined. This finding is significant as graduation is the end goal of secondary schooling. One student, Adelí who was not a part of this study commented to me that this is the most important finding of my study because “that’s what we all want, that diploma, to graduate. That’s what opens doors for our future” (personal communication, July 2015, J. J. Adelí). According to SchoolDigger (2016), Harvey’s student population was between 1,308 to 1,930 students during the years of this study. Therefore, it is likely that between 641 to 946 students dropped out every year. This is a staggering figure and one that, as Adelí informs us, feels important. Without a high school diploma, it is difficult to get a job or pursue post-secondary education. Travel appears to have a positive influence on graduation rates.

It is interesting to note that DC-Only had the lowest rate of graduation and Europe-Only had the highest of the three. One reason why DC-Only students graduated at a lower rate might have to do students who left the country. It was not legal to ask students for their immigration status at school but some shared with me that they were in the US as undocumented students. Some found it too difficult to continue in the US and dropped out to return to their home country. Also some of the students who traveled to Washington, DC with Harold were more likely to be second language learners because of their immigrant status. Therefore, they had to learn English and then learn the content of high school courses. This might have led to them dropping out of high school at a higher
rate. The Europe-Only students might have graduated at a higher rate due to the type attracted to only the Europe trip. As we will see when discussing suspensions, Europe-Only students were less likely to have been suspended indicating that they might have been more willing to follow the rules. This likely would transfer to compliance in turning in assignments, completing classwork, and doing what was necessary to graduate. This is particularly of note when examining ACT scores as DC-Only scored higher than Europe-Only in English subscores and had a higher mean GPA. This might indicate that the DC-Only students did not lack in academic achievement but did lack in school engagement.

The nine participants credit the following characteristics to the increased academic achievement results in graduation rates: Engagement, Increased Academics, Academic Achievement, Empowering, Exposure to New Ideas, and Pride. América, Lucas, Angelina, Eliot, Camila, and Beto all mentioned Engagement and Increased Academics as leading to Academic Achievement as a factor for the increased graduation rates of travelers. Angelina said that it is “all the knowledge they got from the trips” that engaged and motivated students to do well. When they did well in school, they were more likely to do better in classes and get good grades so school was a place where they excelled. This creates more engagement and motivation to do better. Lilac mentioned the empowering nature of the trip on the desire to graduate. She thinks that the travelers “worked harder at everything” because they had the confidence to make their dreams a reality after having done it for the trips. They felt empowered to be able to do more with their futures than students who had not traveled. Eliot and Beto discuss the importance of exposure to new ideas in creating a thirst to see what education might hold for them.
Beto expresses this idea in an interesting way when he says that travelers “learn into the future.” Exposure to new ideas creates a desire to learn more because one’s curiosity is piqued. This leads to increased academic achievement. Beto believes travelers also have a sense of *Pride* in knowing how to work hard to make dreams a reality.

**Suspensions.** Students in the DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both travel groups were less likely to have been suspended in Grade 5 and in Grade 6. Surprisingly, students in the DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both travel groups were more likely to have been suspended in Grade 9. When the suspension rate tables are examined from Grade 5 to Grade 9, one can see that the travel students increase their rate of suspension in Grade 7 and Grade 8 even though statistical significance is not found until Grade 9. In considering these results, it is important to keep in mind that suspensions may suffer from the same problems as attendance. New systems of tracking suspensions and staff error when recording the incidents may result in higher or lower rates than what is reflected. In addition, one school may consider truancy a suspension, for example and other school may not. However, it is a result that is valuable to consider. Perhaps the students who traveled experienced *Empowerment* that gave them the confidence to speak up when they were reprimanded or when they saw something unjust after they had traveled. From the academic achievement data, one can surmise that they were engaged with school to a greater degree that their non-traveling counterparts and demonstrated they were learning as demonstrated in the results of the three variables.

The nine participants credit the following characteristics to the increased suspension rates for Grade 9: *Academic Achievement, Empowering, (lack of) Adult*
Advocate, (lack of) Engagement, and Comprehensive. Some of the participants reported that students who did better academically might become bored leading to truancies which led to a suspension in several cases. Feeling empowered from traveling across the nation or to Europe could lead to an increase in confidence which might be perceived by some teachers as defiance leading to a suspension. Several students reported feeling like they knew all the material being covered in class so the questioned the teachers for more challenging work. This request could be considered as demonstrating defiance. When students are empowered from having traveled, they might be more “free,” as Angelina puts it, to question things in class, which might lead to more suspensions. Not having an adult advocate who helped out when times were tough and not having the comprehensiveness of a close-knit group of friends might also have led to more suspensions. Some travelers reported that these two factors led to a disengagement with school.

Ethnicity, race, urban school, low-income, and gender. At the end of the interview and after examining the quantitative data results, the participants were offered the change to comment the characteristics used to describe Harold and themselves. Chapter Five contains the full discussion of these points (see “Ethnicity, race, urban school, low-income, and gender.”). They first selected the term they preferred to use when referring to their race or ethnicity. Lucas, Angelina, Kim, and Lilac are Hispanic. Eliot is Latino. Camila is Mexican-American. Laura is Latina, Hispanic, and Mexican. Beto is Hispanic Latino.
América, Camila, and Beto believe that coming from a large, urban, low-income school did not affect their travel experience. Angelina and Lilac believe the size of the school did not matter but living in a low-income neighborhood did because it was hard to raise money. However, it positively affected Angelina’s trip because everyone worked together. Lucas comments on the diversity of Hispanics at Harold and that this helped him prepare to work with a lot of different people. Eliot comments on the “distractions” of gangs and fights that he believes were a part of Harold because of its size and location. Laura said it affected her trip because she knew it was not the “norm or expected” that people from a low-income neighborhood would travel.

América, Kim, Lucas, and Eliot believe their gender affected their travel experience. América and Kim mention that their Latino families were very nervous about sending their daughters on trips. Lucas believes it affected him because he was just discovering he was gay and kept to himself because he was worried about how others would react. Eliot says it affected him to be in a minority because it taught him to be a “gentleman.” The rest of the travelers believed gender did not affect their educational travel.

**Research question three.** This research question sought to discover the meaning of educational travel in participants’ lives. Upon listening to the recordings of the interviews and the focus group, I noted themes and characteristics that began to emerge that I coded using their words in line with *in vivo* coding (Creswell, 2014). I also used Tesch’s (1990) process of finding codes that are based on themes one would expect to find, codes that are surprising, and codes that are unusual. Next, I considered the
research on experiential learning, effective middle level education (AMLE, 2010), and culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2010). From there, I began to code their responses as they related to the current research in the field. Some comments regarding the meaning of educational travel were original and did not quite fit into the emerging characteristics based on the literature. Therefore I created the additional characteristics under the theme of *Personal Development*. After analyzing all the data, I created a framework for categorizing the findings based on Association of Middle Level Education’s *This We Believe* (AMLE, 2010). AMLE’s framework (See Appendix K) describes the four essential attributes, three themes, and 16 characteristics for effective middle level education. The framework I created, *Meaningful Educational Travel for Adolescents: Design Structures and Outcomes*, follows this design with four essential attributes, four themes, and 18 characteristics (see Figure 8).
Figure 8. Meaningful educational travel for adolescents: Design structures and outcomes.

Of these characteristics of meaningful educational travel, some refer to design structure, others to the outcomes reported by the participants, and some to both. For example, I learned that several participants cited the theme of Exposure to New Ideas as an outcome of travel. This theme is also a design structure of educational travel. When one leaves a familiar environment, one inherently is exposed to new ideas. Therefore this theme is present both in how travel is designed and in the outcome of travel. Academic Achievement, however, is not a design structure of educational travel, it is an outcome that participants reported after they traveled. Further discussion of these characteristics is found in the next section. Table 58 gives an overview of the classification of design.
structures and outcomes of educational travel. The italicized themes pertain to both
design structures and outcomes.

Chapter Five contains the full discussion of these themes and characteristics as
reported by the nine participants and the eight adult chaperones. To illustrate each
characteristic, I use some of the same quotes found from this chapter so that the reader
can see the connection between the two points. A more complete discussion of these
themes and characteristics can be found under each participant’s name or in the adult
focus group findings.
Table 58

*Design Structures and Outcomes of Educational Travel*

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<th>Theme</th>
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*Educational travel provides a strong connection to curriculum and instruction.*

When educational travel was purposefully organized around characteristics of curriculum and instruction, the participants reported a connecting travel to learning. In the case of travel at Harold Middle School, the students took an elective class during their school day to prepare them for travel as few students had ever traveled before. The class taught students about the culture of travel giving them the skills necessary to prepare to travel such as creating packing lists, flying on planes, hotel and restaurant etiquette, budgeting...
for mementos, journaling about their travels, taking pictures, and getting along with everyone on the trip. The students also learned about the places they would visit through guidebooks, DVDs, Internet searches, guest speakers, maps, and games. When educational travel offers ways for students to deeply engage in learning experiences, they undergo a change in their outlook on education.

The participants reported that *Curriculum and Instruction* played a role in ensuring educational travel was meaningful in their lives. The following are the design structure characteristics that made this possible: *Exposure to New Ideas, Active Purposeful Learning,* and *Enhanced Experiential Learning.* The outcome characteristics are: *Exposure to New Ideas, Active Purposeful Learning, Enhanced Experiential Learning, Increased Academics,* and *Academic Achievement.* The next paragraphs will demonstrate how I chose the placement of these categories based on the participants’ interviews. I also include comments from the adult chaperones.

*Exposure to New Ideas:* Educational travel offers the opportunity for exposure to new ideas. This “opens doors” to new possibilities thereby expanding travelers’ knowledge of the world.

Beto from the Both group demonstrated how *Exposure to New Ideas* is a design structure and an outcomes. He recalled that on the Washington, DC trip, he went to an art museum, something he had never considered before in his life. Travel offers new ideas to students and Beto was surprised to find that he liked it. The same thing happened in Europe when he visited the Louvre and the Van Gogh Museum. These experiences, along with several others, led Beto to remark that the meaning of travel for
him was *Exposure to New Ideas*. To travel is to try new things and Beto illustrates this by sharing how he tried mussels in Brussels several different ways to see if he would like them. He did not, but is glad he tried something new so that he can say he had this experience. Therefore, *Exposure to New Ideas* is not only the way educational travel is designed but also is an outcome.

*Active Purposeful Learning*: *Students and adults are engaged in active, purposeful learning before, during, and after the trip.*

Angelina from the DC-Only group shared how *Active Purposeful Learning* is also a design structure and an outcome. Most travelers engage in *Active Purposeful Learning* without even realizing it as they learn about a place before they go to prepare for what they will see. The class at Harold was designed to provide this skill for students before they traveled. Since many of the students had not traveled before, this was an integral part of the class. Before the Washington, DC trip Angelina recalled learning about the Holocaust, the Vietnam Veterans’ Memorial, and the metro. In class, she pushed herself to understand what she was learning because she knew she would see these places with her own eyes. Even though she felt this learning was complicated at times, such as understanding the Holocaust book *Jacob’s Rescue*, she made herself do it. This demonstrates the design structure of educational travel. When students travel to learn, they learn something about a place before they go. Angelina might not have been as motivated to push herself to understand complicated ideas if she had not been so excited to travel to some place new and if had not been what was expected in her pre-travel experience. This hard work paid off for her when she was in Washington, DC. As she
reported in Chapter 5, “the connection became [real for me]” when she was seeing what she had learned. This was an outcome of travel for Angelina’s educational travel experience.

*Enhanced Experiential Learning*: Students are engaged in a cycle of learning, experiencing, reflecting, and applying new ideas or concepts to their lives.

*Enhanced Experiential Learning* is apparent in the design structure and in the outcome when Lilac discusses her DC and Europe travels. This cycle of learning about something, seeing it, reflecting on it, and then incorporating it into one’s life is most apparent when Lilac discusses the Holocaust. As Lilac’s teacher, I can comment on the Holocaust lessons I provided for the travel students. I participated in the Belfer National Conference for Educators, became a Museum Teacher Fellowship, and was selected to join the Regional Education Corps Member at United Stated Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), I understood the importance of carefully preparing students for what they would learn about the Holocaust. I ensured the Grade 6 students were prepared for what they would see at the USHMM and selected only parts of the museum that they would view due to their young age. In addition, the Grade 8 students were similarly prepared to visit the Anne Frank House. Therefore, *Enhanced Experiential Learning* begins as a design structure of the curriculum as I hope the students will internalize what they learn and apply it to their lives.

Lilac recalls that she first became interested in the Holocaust after reading *Jacob’s Rescue*. She remembers the impact of being in the USHMM and seeing artifacts with her own eyes. Lilac wanted to learn more so she was excited to read *Anne Frank*: 
Diary of a Young Girl in Grade 8. She even bought the book as a souvenir when she visited the house and recalls “I took really good notes” about being there. Lilac shared with me that this learning continued in high school in her history class; between her sisters and cousins and they compared versions of the Diary, and in college when she confronted Holocaust deniers for the first time. Through these interactions, Holocaust learning is an example of Enhanced Experiential Learning as an outcome for Lilac of educational travel. Her Holocaust learning continues and her understanding of this event deepens and becomes part of her life as this interest that started in Grade 6 continues to grow.

Increased Academics: Educational travel provides multiple opportunities to connect classroom learning and academic subjects to lived experiences thereby increasing interest and achievement in academics.

Lucas from the DC-Only group shares an example of how Increased Academics was an outcome of educational travel for him. He believes that because his “learning just sort of [started] falling together” on the trip when he saw all that we learned about before we left, he got a lot of “brain food.” This “brain food” helped him do better in history classes in high school because he was more interested in the topic and he knew more than other classmates. This helped him do better academically so he felt more prepared and got better grades than what he expected.

Academic Achievement: As a result of having multiple pathways to and increased engagement with academics, educational travel may offer higher standardized test
scores, increased probability of high school graduation, and an increase in grade point averages.

Some of the participants report that educational travel in general leads to greater Academic Achievement. They cite other outcomes such as Empowering and Engagement that lead to greater academic achievement. The adult chaperones also believe that educational travel increased interest in academics that lead to greater academic achievement. Grace and Armando agreed that many travelers worked harder in school to improve their overall academic achievement so they could earn a scholarship and travel. Kyle believes this is apparent in the ACT and CSAP scores. Kyle recalls the learning that took place before the trip was relevant to the students because they were going to see what they were learning so they naturally worked harder. This effect carried over into other classes as the travelers learned how to navigate school and achieve at higher levels. Grace and Erin believe that this increase in academic achievement led to a greater self-confidence which led to continued academic success which they believe, as Kyle does, is reflected in test scores.

**Educational travel requires strong leadership and organization.** The participants reported that the Leadership and Organization played an important role in ensuring that their educational travel was meaningful. They mentioned three characteristics that are design structures of educational travel: Organizational Structures, Adult Advocate, and Developmentally Responsive.

*Organizational Structures: Organizational structures foster purposeful learning; create a safe environment; and meaningful relationships.*
Organizational Structures of educational travel at Harold were apparent for the participants before, during, and after their travels. Kim, Camila, and América mention the importance of the monthly meetings before the trips in helping their families understand the travel opportunity. Knowing how to pack, what they would see and do, and how to behave are all pieces of the organizational structures that many participants credit as making their trip meaningful. On the trips, Camila mentions how the adults helped the students save memorabilia, take pictures, and write about their days that helped her create a beautiful scrapbook when she returned. Laura shared how she believes she got the most out of her Washington, DC trip because the itinerary was full and the students were well prepared and well fed. Ray and Grace also agree that the organizational structure made educational travel more meaningful. Grace credits this to “the meticulous planning, every minute and detail. Because it's not just a, ‘Let's go and have a free-for-all’ that it really is educational.”

Adult Advocate: An adult advocate guides every student’s educational travel experience every step of the way.

The Adult Advocates are a design structure and an outcome of meaningful educational travel. The adult chaperones mention their understanding of this role when they took part in educational travel. The participants recall the adults who helped them before, during, and after their travels.

Kyle echoed the thoughts of several adult chaperones when he said that he recalls the trip was a bit of a “roller coaster” due to the nature of mentoring young adolescents. However, challenging it was, there was something about the relationships built between
the adults and the student that inspired the adults to “come back for more” and travel again with students. Erin shared how she and a former traveler made eye contact when they returned a shared a moment of “I just traveled to another continent” with you and she knew this had made a difference in that child’s life. She adds that after one has traveled with students there is a new bond. She recalls thinking that “passing students in the hall is no longer just passing students in the hall” because of the shared experience of travel. She knows there is a new bond that she has with students.

The characteristic of Adult Advocates is also an outcome. The participants all mentioned the importance of having an adult mentor them in some way as an important outcome of their educational travel experience. The result is they knew they had an adult whom they could turn to for help. Lilac recognized this in Erin Timson when she shared with how Ms. Timson was watching over her in Europe when she was sad, “She already knew my reactions.” This helped Lilac because she felt comforted knowing she could count on someone. In addition, Laura felt this connection with Ms. Córdova. She played a large role in Laura’s educational travel experience from believing in Laura’s ability to go to Europe to helping her when she was sad in Germany. Eliot believes he learned how to be a “gentleman” from watching Mr. Douglas. Lucas mentions Mr. Dalton’s lighthearted joking with him as something that made him feel a part of the group.
Developmentally Responsive: Adult advocates are committed to and knowledgeable about this age group. In addition, leaders anticipate and plan for the challenges and strengths of this age before, during, and after travel.

Developmentally Responsive is a design structure of meaningful educational travel. América recalls how she was a “brat” and began rebelling against her parents who had struggles of their own. She credits the adults who were going to travel with her as helping her understand her behavior. Lucas mentions that the Washington, DC trip was developmentally appropriate for him in learning how to be away from his family but he was still supervised. On the trip Laura mentions being able to do age appropriate things with other girls her age in the hotel room at night and Beto mentions playing soccer on the trip. The adults who traveled with the students were trained in working with young adolescents and anticipated the delights and challenges of this age. Ray recalls the delight in watching students teeter between the concrete to formal operations stage as they saw sites in DC. Kyle recalls that some students tested the boundaries only to find they made a choice that prohibited them from traveling. These are examples of the developmental nature of this age.

Equitable educational travel includes the culture and community of the students. In order for educational travel to equitable, it must include the culture and the community of the students. The participants reported these six characteristics as having a profound impact on their travel experience: Family Involvement, Safe Environment, Empowerment (CRT), Transformative (CRT), Validating (CRT), and Comprehensive (CRT). CRT refers to the characteristics of culturally responsive teaching as discussed by
Gay (2010). The participants reported that effective and meaningful educational travel had these six characteristics before, during, and/or after their trip. The participants often discussed these when reflecting on the meaning the trip has had through the years for them. Through the years of traveling with students in the Harold community, the adults involved with the trip developed these design structures when we met to plan each trip. Every year after each Washington, DC trip and after each Europe trip, the adult chaperones met to discuss what worked, what did not work, and how could we improve. As difficult as it was to have these conversations sometimes, it is ultimately what made educational travel at Harold stronger because we incorporated more of the culturally responsive teaching design structures.

*Family Involvement: Educational travel actively involves families in preparing their children to travel.*

*Family Involvement* is a design structure and outcome of educational travel as reported by the participants and the adult chaperones. Evening family meetings was an intentional design structure of educational travel. When we started traveling with the Harold neighborhood, we quickly realized that we needed to explain to the families what educational travel entailed for them and their children. Very few family members had participated in educational travel and it was not the norm to send ones children away with strangers for a week or more. We began the once-a-month evening meetings to explain travel, offer fundraisers, and provide a time where we could all get to know each other. We made sure we had snacks and beverages available. All the meeting notes were in English and Spanish and the meeting was run in both languages. When we had other
languages represented, we hired translators from our school district. Because of this intentional design structure, *Family Involvement* is also an outcome.

The participants reported that the monthly evening meetings helped their families understand educational travel better and was a place where they got their questions answered in person. We used both English and Spanish at these meetings that helped families as reported by Kim, Camila, Laura, and Beto. The adult chaperones also mentioned the evening meetings. Armando and Analyn mentioned that the meetings were a “family affair” where the whole family came to hear what the trip was about. Grace recalls that former travelers came to meetings to support the current traveling family member. Families were also involved in fundraising and in supporting their children in any way that they were able to make educational travel a reality. Some participants, like Camila, remembered this when they were homesick on the trip. Camila recalled the support she has gotten from her family to make her trip a reality so this helped her “get over it” and enjoy the rest of the trip to be able to go back and tell them about it. For others, like Beto and Laura, they reported becoming closer to their parents because they saw how hard they worked to make the trip a reality.

*Safe Environment:* The environment of educational travel is inviting, safe, inclusive, and supportive for all.

A *Safe Environment* is a design structure of educational travel. Several of the participants recall reading the DC and Europe Handbooks in preparation to travel. These books contained information on how to travel and there was also an emphasis on safety. Not only did we include rules about physical safety but also we included rules about
emotional safety. Traveling together in a group for seven to twelve days can be trying and emotions can run high. We included rules about how to help each other when someone is sad, homesick, physically ill, and so on. Educational travel at Harold was open to all students willing to work to raise the money and willing to build a relationship of trust with the adults and the other students. This created a group of students who might not have normally selected to work together. As Armando indicated in the focus group, “There were a lot of ‘high flyers’ that traveled.” “High flyers” refers to the students who often were in trouble at school. We also wanted them to feel welcome in the educational travel experience regardless of academic achievement or behavior. Having solid ground rules about what was safe and appropriate behavior to travel, physically and emotionally, helped all students create a safe environment.

The participants reported that Safe Environment was important in creating meaningful educational travel because they knew they were safe before, during, and after the trips. Laura mentioned that this safe feeling began before she traveled when she was in the DC elective class. She also felt that the trips had meaning because she had a safe place to be silly with her friends. Beto and América mentioned that they did not worry about getting lost because the adults kept them safe. Camila also mentioned that Mrs. Carrington kept all the girls safe in Europe so she did not worry about her safety.

Transformative (CRT): In under-represented travel groups, educational travel transforms students as they confront and transcend the boundary of “who travels” of traditional educational travel experiences.
Educational travel at Harold was *Transformative* in both design structure and as an outcome. It is *Transformative* in its design because, as Laura shared in her interview, “being a student at Harold and getting to travel was defiantly not the norm or expected from low-income or urban students.” Just the fact that travel was offered at Harold during these years changed the boundary of “who travels.” The adult chaperones also recall the reactions of people on our trips when they found out we were from a low-income, public school. The adult advocates involved in the trip were very aware of this and prepared the students for what they would encounter. As Patty and Armando stated, the students learned they could be a part of this travel culture even if it was a little scary.

The participants also reported *Transformative* as an outcome they experienced by participating in educational travel. América recalled the moment she realized she had a “good future ahead” of her when she was standing in front of the Charters of Freedom in the National Archives in a country where she was considered an illegal immigrant. She realized that by being there and witnessing all this country held for her, she was going to do well in life. For Angelina, it transformed her into someone who now expected more from herself after seeing what she could do to make it on the trip. She had higher expectations of herself because she knew she could do more than what was previously expected of her. Kim shared that educational travel was transformative because she came from a low-income family where she only had “one pair of shoes a year” to someone who could travel to Europe and back. This broke a boundary not just for her but also for her whole family, as another person was able to travel.
Validating (CRT). Educational travel connects academic abstractions with students’ lived sociocultural realities. This connection builds bridges of meaning between home, school, and travel, thus validating students’ understandings and experiences. When students see things with their own eyes, they bring their own meaning to educational travel and their own understanding to academics.

Validating is a design structure and an outcome. The elective class the students took before they traveled provided the design structure to connect the academic abstractions with students’ lives. The students learned about all they would see and do during their educational travel experience, América and Angelina recall learning about places before we left and then seeing them with their eyes. They could form their own opinions about what they saw and connect it to their lives. Being able to say, “I was there” and sharing their own thoughts an opinion about what they saw is validating. Eliot was the only student in a college class to raise his hand and say he had traveled to Europe. He believed this was especially validating because all the other students in this college class were White. When some of them traveled later in the year, Eliot once again experienced the validating nature of educational travel because they traveled to have fun and were surprised to be learning. He shared that he felt proud to say that traveled to learn and was surprised by having fun. He also believes he found validation in learning more about Anne Frank after visiting her house and learning about her journey to become a writer. He bridges his understanding of her life to his life and does not believe in norms anymore. He also asked the question, “Why is it surprising that I am attending college?”
as a Latino male from a low-income neighborhood. Educational travel has helped him connect his life with the world around him and question things he took for granted before.

Comprehensive (CRT). Educational travel cultivates a sense of community, camaraderie, and a shared responsibility to the group. It helps students of color maintain identity and connections to their ethnic group while exploring the world.

Educational travel at Harold was created to be Comprehensive in design structure and the participants reported Comprehensive as an outcome. The participants share the ways they believe Comprehensive is an outcome of educational travel. Laura remembers that the Comprehensive nature of the trips started before we left Harold. She recalls that two of her friends’ families offered to help her and her mother raise the money to get to Europe so she would not be left out. Kim remembers “feeling really close to everybody” and taking care of each other when one person got homesick. She also remembers how much fun they all had taking pictures of each other in different places and not leaving anyone out. Beto recalls how much fun the boys had in their rooms at night on the Washington, DC trip and they were like a “team.” Angelina remembers feeling like the students, their families, and the teachers were “all a family” at Harold when she was part of the Washington, DC trip. Kyle and Grace recall that some students who did not want to travel wanted to be a part of the group because they saw how close everyone was. Ray recalls that the trip students worked well together in his class and were good problem solvers.
Empowering (CRT). Educational travel empowers students by increasing and developing self-confidence, courage, and the belief they can succeed.

Empowering is an outcome of educational travel. Lucas shared an example that others also report. He mentioned how he felt when he knew all the answers in class, “Let me tell you. Let me speak to you…go accept this…and it’s just very empowering for me to know all about it.” For Kim it was empowering because she thought, “…if I did this, what else can I do?” Traveling helped her think of other possibilities in her life. Camila reports how the trip was Empowering when she realized she could be a better student so she improved her academic achievement and her behavior so her parents could see they made the right decision of helping her get to Europe.

Educational travel provides the opportunity for personal development. In addition, the participants reported that the characteristics of the Personal Development theme were part of their educational travel experience. Pride, Privilege, Change in Perspective and Engagement are all outcomes.

Pride. Educational travel cultivates a sense of pride in accomplishing a task.

Camila discussed the ways she feels pride when she talks about her Europe trip. First, she is very proud that she worked so hard to make the trip happen and she is proud of her family for having helped her. She also mentioned the pride she feels when she introduces herself to new people and can say she has been to Europe. She realizes that not many people can say that and they look at her differently. Laura is also proud of how hard she worked to make her trips happen and how she managed the HEEP store. She
mentioned how people are surprised she had that much responsibility at a young age and earned money for her trip.

Privilege. Educational travel represents that opportunity to do something special that makes one feel proud.

Laura is the only one who mentioned Privilege when discussing the trip outcomes. She believes it was a privilege to travel internationally, something she did not understand until she began to interact with people outside her neighborhood and told them about the trip. After she grew up and realized that not all schools like Harold has trips to Europe, she realized that this was a privilege of which she was proud to have been a part of in middle school. It made her realize that she could do more than what she had previously thought possible because she had this opportunity to travel.

Change in Perspective. Educational travel provides the opportunity for students to experience a change in perspective to the world around them and to themselves.

Another outcome is Change in Perspective. Laura reports that because she was asked what she wanted to do on the Europe trip and her opinions were heard she changed her perspective on the importance of using her own voice. She also learned how to talk to people outside of Harold when she traveled. Later in life when she was being interviewed for a job, she felt comfortable expressing her ideas. Laura also changed her perspective on the arts after seeing Les Misérables and realizing the even though no one in her family had ever been to a play or a musical, it was interesting and she could learn something from it. América believes that the influence of the adult advocates shifted her perspective of what to do with her life. She was inspired to devote herself to working
with others after observing the adult advocates. Camila decided to become a teacher after getting to know the adults on the trip, something she never would have considered before traveling because she was very “rebellious.”

*Engagement. When students take part in meaningful educational travel, they experience a deeper level of engagement with school and with travel that assists with one or more of the following: personal development, attendance, behavior, goal-setting, and academic achievement.*

*Engagement* is another outcome of Personal Development. Lucas recalls being more engaged in school after the Washington, DC trip. He called on that engagement after hitting hard times in high school. He got back on track because connected with a US History teacher who taught a subject Lucas knew a great deal about so he excelled in the class. This helped him re-engage in high school and graduate on time. Angelina experienced increased *Engagement* in high school because she joined sport, which resembled the camaraderie she has come to expect from the DC group. She also believes she engaged more with teachers after the trip, “It was easier to actually have a conversation with them...to discuss with them. It gave me a push to actually talk and to speak up.” By “speaking up” she got to know her teachers more so she felt more engaged in her learning.

**Research question four.** This research question addresses how can educational institutions and leaders enhance and provide increased access to educational travel for urban, middle school students in a low-income neighborhood. From the voices of the participants, there are several suggestions for the design structure of educational travel.
**Implications for educational travel in urban schools.** First of all, from this study, I learned that educational travel appears to affect academic achievement and school engagement. The quantitative results suggest that travel might increase or maintain students’ standardized test scores and increase their grade point averages, attendance, and graduation rates. The participants confirmed these findings by sharing their thoughts about how educational travel affected these results. The quantitative results from this study provide an indication that travel appears to have an effect on the data used to measure students in schools today. It does not tell the whole story of what students learn through travel. However, these quantitative results provide a starting point that does indicate that travel can impact educational data.

Next, the participants told us the design structures and outcomes that made educational travel meaningful for them (See Table 58). From the theme of Curriculum and Instruction, we learn that the *Exposure to New Ideas*, engaging in *Active Purposeful Learning*, and reflecting on their travels through *Enhanced Experiential Learning* are design structures that brought meaning to their travels. The recommendation from these findings is that organizers should design educational travel with a strong emphasis on curriculum and instruction that involves learning before, during, and after the trip. The cycle of learning about something, experiencing it with one’s own eyes, and then reflecting on its meaning was apparent for the participants who mentioned *Active Purposeful Learning* and *Enhanced Experiential Learning*. Making sure that the travelers are ready to experience new ideas, foods, museums, ways of living, events, etc. also is crucial to making educational travel meaningful. Sometimes this means pushing
students out of their comfort zone to try new things. When Beto talked about trying new foods, we saw that even though he did not like what he tried, he was glad he had pushed himself.

From the theme of Leadership and Organization we learn the importance of having *Organizational Structures*, cultivating an *Adult Advocate* for each student, and having a *Developmentally Responsive* structure. Educational travel that is well organized before, during, and after the trip enhances meaning for the students and their families. Grace tells us that she believes the trips had meaning because it was not a “free for all” and that everything was planned. Creating a solid organizational system for every aspect of the trip is vital. The nature of travel means that anything can go wrong at any time; flight delays, lost luggage, change in itinerary, illness, etc. However, if it is well planned, these interruptions will be less of a problem. In addition, keeping in mind the 16 characteristics of successful middle schools for young adolescents creates a strong organizational structure for educational travel. One of the characteristics from the net section, *Safe Environment*, is worth discussing briefly here because a well-organized trip is a safe one. Knowing what to do in case of an emergency and know the procedures for the ins and outs of traveling ahead of time makes for a safe travel. In addition, when the trip’s organizational structure tells the travelers ahead of time what to expect on their trip, they will feel more confident and safe. Basic knowledge of the itinerary, what to expect at each place that will be visited, and how to behave in hotels, restaurants, and planes keeps the travelers safe and well behaved.
From the participants and the adult chaperones we learn the importance of having an Adult Advocate during every step of the educational travel experience. This means adults who can talk with potential travelers and their families to explain the steps to making travel a reality. It also means instilling in students a belief that they will make it as we saw with Laura and Ms. Córdova. Adults care about students, understand how to teach them, and are willing to build strong relationships are vital to the success of educational travel. During the trip, the adults also play an important role as they guide, interpret, explain, and question the students about what they are seeing and learning. Caring about their emotional well-being on the trip is also an area where they play an important role as we saw with Lilac and Ms. Timson. After the trip, the adults still were important to the travelers in mentoring them or reminiscing about educational travel.

The organizational structure and the adults also were Developmentally Responsive to the students. When planning educational travel for students, it is important to remember their developmental stage and gear the trip towards what is interesting to them. One expects to visit museums, monuments, and tour cities as part of traveling however ensuring there is time to engage in other activities can make the experience more meaningful. Adults who have a sense of humor and can have fun with the students also brought more meaning to the trip. Kyle reminded us that he remembered navigating some “bad days” with students on the trip but that is not what they remembered because the adults intervened to help them. Adolescence is a time of physical, emotional, social, and intellectual changes. Being responsive to this and ready for this is what makes the trip meaningful for students.
Perhaps the most significant implication for this study can be found in the theme of Culture and Community. The design structures that helped make meaning for the participants were: *Family Involvement, Safe Environment, Transformative (CRT), Validating (CRT)*, and *Comprehensive (CRT)*. CRT refers to culturally relevant teaching (Gay, 2010). Connecting CRT with educational travel is a place to begin in disrupting the statistic that the majority of travelers are White and from middle- to upper-income neighborhoods (Mission Measurement for EF Tours, 2010, p. 17 – 18).

The participants reported that educational travel was meaningful when their *Family Involvement* was cultivated at every step of the journey. Contrary to what is often believed of ethnically and culturally diverse families in low-income neighborhoods, these participants reported that their families played an active role in their educational travel experience. Whether it was the insistence to travel, assisting with fund-raising, or the general emotional support, family involvement was an integral design structure for these participants. The adult chaperones also recalled the family involvement. Making the pre-trip meeting inviting and conversational is critical to ensuring families feel comfortable attending these events. It is important to remember that families also may not be versed the in culture of travel, such as how to plan for a trip, how to pack, what to bring, how to go through security, how to fly, etc. This should be addressed in meeting in a way that honors what the families do know about travel and builds from there. Individual meetings, phone calls, and spending time getting to know the families of the travelers is important to build this community.
A Safe Environment does not just refer to personal safety as discussed above. It also refers to emotional safety as well. For example, sometime we had children who traveled with us who we learned did not have enough clothes or two pairs of shoes for a weeklong trip. From this we learned to speak with children privately ahead of time if we suspected this was the case so they were not embarrassed to bring it up to us. We also warned the students that everyone will probably cry at one point on the trip and that we should be prepared for this. When it happened, the students reacted with compassion and care because they knew it might happen. Travel attracted students who were rebels without a cause and the paranoid overachievers so we worked with all students to be accepting of each other even if they came from different social groups.

The last design structures speak to culturally responsive teaching and pedagogy: Transformative (CRT), Validating (CRT), and Comprehensive (CRT). Traveling with a group of students from an urban, non-White diverse, low-income neighborhood is transformative as Gay (2010) describes it because we are transcending the boundary of who travels in traditional educational travel experiences. This is a design structure that inspired the first trip I took with students to Washington, DC in 1993. I saw other groups of White, suburban students traveling and I thought, “My students deserve the same opportunity.” This should be a guiding principal of all people who organize educational travel for students. Instead of thinking of the typical traveler, ask the non-typical traveler. Laura showed us this was what motivated her to travel. She said no one had ever asked her before. How many potential travelers are in our schools that have not
been asked? Inviting all who are interested in travel to pre-travel meetings and making them feel welcome is the first step.

The *Validating* design of educational travel cannot be understated. Connecting what students already know about the world with the places they will see brings a validation of their own cultural background. Educational travel provides the opportunity for students to see things with their own eyes as history comes alive. Not only can they see and experience new things, but also they bring their own understandings to what they see to create a deeper meaning. The connections students make between their background knowledge, the curriculum, and what they see on travels is where the validating nature of educational travel comes into focus. Nieto (2010) stressed that *learner agency* is at the heart of active knowledge construction. This must be a conscious design structure for the organizers of educational travel. It is not just to see the museums, buildings, art galleries, etc. but also what do they students think of all that they are seeing? What meaning does it hold for them? What connections are they making to what they already know? These are ways that educational travel can be validating for students.

Educational travel must be *Comprehensive*. Helping ethnically and linguistically diverse students maintain their own identity while also exploring the world is an important component of travel. The “family feeling” that several participants spoke of during their interviews is also a part of this characteristic. Travel brings people closer together every step of the way. As we saw with Laura when her friends’ parents offered to help her and her mother get her to Europe. Several other students mention how they still felt connected to the group when they returned from their travels. When the students
are able to experience travel with other students from their ethnic group, a strong sense of community is created. Together they create connections to the larger world and their heritage. This comprehensive characteristic must be fostered before, during, and after educational travel. The idea that no one is left behind and everyone works as a team is critical for all students to feel comfortable and safe while traveling. Leaders should work with their students ahead of time so that they know each other’s names, interests, hobbies, etc. While on the trip, structures should be in place to build the family feeling as well as when students return from traveling. A continued connection to the travel group creates more meaning between the members.

However, it is not just these three reported design structures (along with the reported outcomes) that are worthy of our consideration for educational travel. A full consideration of culturally responsive teaching and pedagogy is called for at the end of this study. As our nation’s schools are also becoming more inclusive through CRT strategies and framework, so must educational travel. Gay (2010) calls on us to have the “unequivocal faith” in our students. This also applies to travel. Having the faith that our students and their families can access travel opportunities is just the beginning. It will move ethnically and linguistically diverse students from the “cannot” to the “can” of travel (Gay, 2010). As mentioned in Chapter Two, Singleton (2015) suggests that equity can be thought of this way: “Equity does not mean that every students receives equal level of resources and support toward his or her educational goals. Rather, equity means that the students of greatest need receive the greatest level of support to guarantee academic success” (p. 56). This is what CRT offers educational travel to ethnically and
linguistically diverse urban students in a low-income neighborhood. The organizers and leaders in educational travel are called on to give non-traditional travelers the “greatest level of support” to guarantee access to educational travel.

**Significance of the Research**

This study is significant because it provides an understanding of the meaning of domestic and international short-term educational travel by using quantitative and qualitative data. This is the strongest point of this study. No study identified to date has examined the effects of domestic and international educational travel on academic achievement and school engagement while also offering the participants the opportunity to provide their voices on the meaning of these data and of travel in their lives.

Additionally, the participants were divided into three groups that provided insights on short-term domestic travel in the United States that is lacking in current research (Ritchie, 2003; Stone & Petrick, 2013). The participants were 11 to 14 years old at the time of their educational travel and this is also an under-researched area (Stone & Petrick, 2013). This study provides insights into the meaning of educational travel for this age group as the participants recall what it was like to travel at a young age and the meaning it has help for them.

This study makes recommendations on how middle (and possibly high) schools can provide equity in student travel. This study outlines the benefits of culturally responsive teaching based-educational travel for urban, minority youth from a low-income neighborhood based on the voices of the participants and through data analysis. It is also combines the tenets of culturally responsive, multicultural teaching and learning.
(Delpit, 2006; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2009; and Nieto, 2010) with travel to provide
greater access and more meaningful educational travel experiences. Schools, travel
companies, educational leaders, and teachers may use the findings from this study to
make short-term domestic and international travel more accessible for students who are not
White, middle-to upper-income students.

This study is also significant because it builds on the research that has already
been conducted on effective middle level education. Middle school is a crucial time for
students. This study confirms the work of the Association for Middle Level Education
(AMLE, 2010) where it outlines the keys to education young adolescents. Several of the
indicators for middle level education listed in *This We Believe* (AMLE, 2010) are also
found in meaningful educational travel.

This study gives a voice to people who are often marginalized in conversations
about what works in education. I am not aware of any academic study of this nature that
emphasizes the students of Harold Middle School. This study uses their reflections on
the meaning of educational travel before, during, and after their experience to inform a
wider audience on what worked for them when approaching travel experiences. These
reflections inform the design structure for making educational travel a reality for more
students who normally may not travel.

Education is encased in a culture of data with test scores dominating discussions
and driving instruction in schools (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2010; Mertler, 2014). Therefore,
examining quantitative data as part of this study is critical. Even though there are
limitations to the data as discussed in the next section, it is the first time quantitative data
has been linked to educational short-term travel for students aged 11 to 14 years old. As urban schools struggle to find ways to raise test scores, this study begins an important conversation on the link between travel and academic achievement and school engagement variables.

Suggestions for Future Research

There are several areas for future research that arise from this study. One suggestion is to examine the school records of the students who did not have test scores and find out where they went. When one considers there were 6,444 students who traveled through the doors of Harold during an eight year span and only 20% have data, one wonders, where did other 80% go or why did they come and go? Given the high mobility of urban schools and the impact this has on a child’s education, it is important to consider. Another future study could examine matched pairs from this data set to determine what difference there is, if any, of the students for whom we have data from Grade 5 to Grade 10 in the four groups of travelers and non-travelers.

A deeper examination of the attendance, graduation, and suspension rates might illuminate the reasons for the variation in the scores mentioned in the Research Question Two discussion section. Why is there such variation in the attendance data? Why does DC-Only have a lower graduation rate when their GPAs and test scores are higher than Europe-Only? Why types of suspensions did the travelers receive? A more thorough understanding of these variables would future our understanding of what effect, if any, travel had.

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All of the DC-Only, Europe-Only, and Both students had me for a teacher in middle school. They all took an elective class at Harold Middle School that taught them about the trips. Three areas of future research arise from this fact. First, a future study could examine students who participate in short term educational travel who do not take a class at a middle school that teaches them about travel. Second, a study that involves an analysis of the test scores of the students who had me for a teacher and did not travel could be compared to the scores of the students in this study who did travel to determine if the teacher had an effect on the academic achievement and school engagement variables. Lastly, examining the meaning of short-term travel for high school students would be beneficial to understand if they report similar or different characteristics as holding meaning for their educational travel experience. Because many of the nine participants cited a lack of engagement in high school, it would be interesting to learn of the effects of travel on engagement in high school.

I also wonder if the results would be different for different subgroups in this study. I have data regarding the English Language Acquisition (ELA) levels, special education (SpEd) status, and gender. A future study could examine the meaning of travel on these three subgroups. It is possible that ELA students and SpEd students learned more from traveling than their non-traveling peers due to the holistic nature of travel. Also, more girls traveled than boys so asking both genders for their insights regarding this would be interesting to determine why this appears to be true. Also, a study of the difference in scores for non-traveling boys and girls compared to traveling boys and girls might indicate what meaning educational travel holds based on gender.
Three groups of participants in this study were not interviewed and future research could include these groups: the families of travelers, students who attended Harold and did not travel, and students who started out wanting to travel and then did not. A focus group or interviews with the parents, guardians, grandparents, or other adult caregivers of the travelers would shed light on the meaning of educational travel they saw for their travelers. They are the most important people in children’s’ lives and know them well so understanding their perspective is crucial. The students who knew about educational travel and did not participant might inform us about why some students do not want to travel and what meaning that holds for them in their lives. Understanding the opposite side of an argument can be illuminating. Finally, understanding why some students started on the journey to travel and then did not complete their mission would give voice to reasons that are not discussed in this study.

Closing Thoughts

By and large a good rule for finding out is this: the kind of work God usually calls you to is the kind of work (a) that you need most to do and (b) that the world most needs to have done... The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet. (Buechner, 1993, p. 118-119)

This study describes the ways in which the students of Harold Middle School made meaning of their educational travels and what they thought about the relationship between travel and the academic achievement and school engagement variables. This was supplemented by the adult chaperones thoughts. The end result is a table of design structures and outcomes for those wishing to better understand educational travel and
increase access for minority students in urban, low-income neighborhoods. Another result is found in Figure 8, Meaningful Educational Travel for Young Adolescents: Design Structures and Outcomes. These two end results are informed by the voices of the nine participants. Most importantly, the voices of an underrepresented population in educational travel are at the center of these recommendations.

In Chapter One, I mention the idea of standing in the “tragic gap” of what is and what should be in our world (Palmer, 2004; Boechler, 2004). The gap in educational travel is in equity. Presently, educational travel does not have equity for non-White diverse students in urban, low-income neighborhoods. There is a long journey ahead for those of us interested in lessening the “tragic gap” of how educational travel is and what it should be. As Buechner states in the quote above, lessening the gap is the work “the world most needs to have done” and it is also my calling, the work I “most need to do.” These two points are intertwined in my life and it is my hope that this study begins to bridge this gap.

The nine participants are issuing a call to action for those interested in a more just, equitable world of travel. From the nine former student travelers, we learn what works to include all in the world of travel. Culturally relevant teaching is a place to begin. It is up to us to change the landscape of travel. How can we, the leaders of student travel, create a place where the students like Laura are invited and welcomed to travel? Where the students such as Lucas can have make connections to learning and have the confidence to say “Let me speak to you” about what I know? Where “rebellious” students like Camila can take their adolescent energy and use it to make their travel dreams come true? Where
students like Beto grow “roots in their hearts” that remind them they can change their lives? Where students like Kim who can only have one pair of shoes a year can stand at the top of the Eiffel Tower?

These students have shared the meaning travel has brought to their lives. The framework and design structures from this dissertation are a place to start on our journey. It is time for us to pack our bags with these tools and set off on a journey to make educational travel possible for all students regardless of ethnicity, language, income level, or neighborhood.
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APPENDIX A

Visual Model for a Transformative, Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods

Adapted from Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick, 2006, p. 981
APPENDIX B

Performance level scale ranges for CSAP Assessments

Taken from the Colorado Department of Education:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Area</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
<th>Partially Proficient</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
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<td>Reading</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>150-465</td>
<td>466-525</td>
<td>526-655</td>
<td>656-795</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>180-516</td>
<td>517-571</td>
<td>572-670</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>220-537</td>
<td>538-587</td>
<td>588-690</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>543-599</td>
<td>600-695</td>
<td>696-760</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>330-577</td>
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<td>632-723</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>642-738</td>
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<td>418-497</td>
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<td>300-468</td>
<td>469-506</td>
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</tbody>
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Updated July 18, 2008
APPENDIX C

Informed Consent Letter: Student Interviews

University of Denver
Social, Behavioral, and Educational Research
Informed Consent Form

Project Title: The Meaning of Educational Travel in the Lives of Urban Middle School Students: A Transformative, Sequential Mixed Methods Study

Principal Investigator: Carrie A. Olson
Faculty Sponsor: P. Bruce Uhrmacher, PhD
DU IRB Protocol #: 646831-1

You are being asked to be in a research study. This form provides you with information about the study. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything you don’t understand before deciding whether or not to take part.

Invitation to participate in a research study

You are invited to participate in a research study about the effects of educational travel on students’ lives. You traveled with Kepner Middle School to Washington, DC, Europe or both Washington, DC and Europe during the years 2003-2011 and can give information about your trip(s).

You are being asked to be in this research study because your thoughts, opinions, and stories about your experience with educational travel are invaluable to understanding the significance of travel and students.

Description of subject involvement

If you agree to be part of the research study, you will be asked to a one-on-one interview with Carrie A. Olson at a time and location that is agreeable to you. You will be asked to bring one souvenir, memento, photo, journal, or other item from your trip if you have them. If you do not have these, that’s fine.

You will be asked to think about several questions regarding your participation in travel while attending Kepner Middle School: how did you decide to travel, what was it like when you were on the trip, and what has it been like since you traveled.
This will take about 60 – 120 minutes. Nine people will be interviewed in this manner.

**Possible risks and discomforts**

The researcher has taken steps to minimize the risks of this study. Even so, you may still experience some risks related to your participation, even when the researcher is careful to avoid them. The study may include risks that are unknown at this time.

**Possible benefits of the study**

This study is designed for the researcher to learn more about the significance of educational travel with low-income, minority, youth who attend an urban middle school.

If you agree to take part in this study, there will be no direct benefit to you. However, information gathered in this study may benefit others who are interested in learning more about students who travel before college. You will be part of one of the first studies that involves this population. You may also have your thoughts, ideas, and opinions read by a wide variety of people interested in making travel more accessible for students before they get to college. You may benefit from this by knowing you may help other students travel.

**Study compensation**

You will be given $40 or $60 for participating in this study.

**Study cost**

You will not be expected to pay any costs related to the study. Please let the researcher know if you need reimbursement for parking or for childcare.

**Confidentiality, Storage and future use of data**

To keep your information safe, the researcher will identify your responses by a pseudonym and will be kept separate form information that could identify you. With your consent, the interview will be digitally recorded and transcribed by a professional transcription service. Your transcribed responses will be sent to you via email, or given to you in person if you prefer, for you to review. At that time, you can add any additional comments. Once you agree the transcript reflects your thoughts, the researcher will delete the audio recording. Only the researcher will have access to your identifying data and any reports generated as a result of this study will use your pseudonym.

The researcher will retain the transcribed interview with your pseudonym indefinitely on a password-protected computer using special software that scrambles the information so no one can read it. The transcribed interviews will not be made available to other researchers for other studies following the completion of this research study.
The results from the research will be shared in a dissertation written by the researcher and may be shared at meetings. The results from the research may be in published articles. Your individual identity will be kept private when information is presented or published.

**Who will see my research information?**

Although we will do everything we can to keep your records a secret, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Others may look at both the records that identify you and the consent form signed by you.

- Federal agencies that monitor human subject research
- Human Subject Research Committee

All of these people are required to keep your identity confidential. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records.

Also, if you tell us something that makes us believe that you or others have been or may be physically harmed, we may report that information to the appropriate agencies.

- Some things we cannot keep private. If you give us any information about child abuse or neglect we have to report that to Colorado Social Services. Also, if we get a court order to turn over your study records, we will have to do that.
- If you tell us you are going to physically hurt yourself or someone else, we have to report that to the state police or other agency. Also, if we get a court order to turn over your study records, we will have to do that.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study**

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you decide to participate now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. If you experience something unpleasant in the interview, you may stop. The researcher respects your right to choose not to answer any questions that may make you feel uncomfortable. Refusal to participate or withdraw from participation will involve no penalty or loss the $40 or $60.

- If you change your mind after the interview, the information or data you provided will be destroyed.
- If you experience something unpleasant in the interview, you may stop. The researcher respects your right to choose not to answer any questions that may make you feel uncomfortable. Refusal to participate or withdraw from participation will involve no penalty or loss the $40 or $60.
Contact Information

The researcher carrying out this study is Carrie A. Olson. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may call Carrie A. Olson at 303-910-4963 or email CarrieAOlson@gmail.com.

If the researchers cannot be reached, or if you would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s) about: (1) questions, concerns or complaints regarding this study, (2) research participant rights, (3) research-related injuries, or (4) other human subjects issues, you may contact the Chair of the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, at 303-871-4015 or by emailing IRBChair@du.edu, or you may contact the Office for Research Compliance by emailing IRBAdmin@du.edu, calling 303-871-4050 or in writing (University of Denver, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, 2199 S. University Blvd., Denver, CO 80208-2121).

Agreement to be in this study

I have read this paper about the study or it was read to me. I understand the possible risks and benefits of this study. I know that being in this study is voluntary. I choose to be in this study: I will get a copy of this consent form.

Please initial this box if data from this research may be used for future research.

Please initial here and provide a valid email (or postal) address if you would like a summary of the results of this study to be mailed to you.

Agreement to be audiotaped

Please initial this box if you AGREE to be audiotaped for research purposes.

Please initial this box if you DO NOT AGREE to be audiotaped for research purposes.

Signature: __________________________________________

Date: __________________________________________

Print Name: ______________________________________
You are being asked to be in a research study. This form provides you with information about the study. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything you don’t understand before deciding whether or not to take part.

Invitation to participate in a research study

You are invited to participate in a research study about the effects of educational travel on students’ lives. You are identified as a “chaperone” of a trip to Washington, DC, Europe or both Washington, DC and Europe from Kepner Middle School from 2003 – 2011. The term “chaperone” means you were directly supervised students on the trip(s).

You are being asked to be in this research study because your thoughts, opinions, and stories about experience with educational travel are invaluable to understanding the significance of travel and students.

Description of subject involvement

If you agree to be part of the research study, you will be asked to participate in a focus group of 6 – 8 other people with Carrie A. Olson at a time and location that is agreeable to you.

You will be asked to think about several questions regarding the students’ participation in travel while attending Kepner Middle School: how did they decide to travel, what was it like while they was on the trip, and what has it been like since they traveled.

This will take about 60 – 90 minutes. There will be one focus group of chaperones.
**Possible risks and discomforts**

The researcher has taken steps to minimize the risks of this study. Even so, you may still experience some risks related to your participation, even when the researcher is careful to avoid them. The study may include risks that are unknown at this time.

**Possible benefits of the study**

This study is designed for the researcher to learn more about the significance of educational travel with low-income, minority, youth who attend an urban middle school.

If you agree to take part in this study, there will be no direct benefit to you. However, information gathered in this study may benefit others who are interested in learning more about students who travel before college. You will be part of one of the first studies that involves this population. You may also have your thoughts, ideas, and opinions read by a wide variety of people interested in making travel more accessible for students before they get to college. You may benefit from this by knowing you may help other students travel.

**Study compensation**

You will be given $40 for participating in this study.

**Study cost**

You will not be expected to pay any costs related to the study. Please let the researcher know if you need reimbursement for parking or for childcare.

**Confidentiality, Storage and future use of data**

To keep your information safe, the researcher will identify your responses by a pseudonym and will be kept separate from information that could identify you. With your consent, the interview will be digitally recorded and transcribed by a professional transcription service. The transcribed responses will be sent to you via email, or given to you in person if you prefer, for you to review. At that time, you can add any additional comments. Once you agree the transcript reflects your thoughts, the researcher will delete the audio recording. Only the researcher will have access to your identifying data and any reports generated as a result of this study will use your pseudonym.

The researcher will retain the transcribed interview with your pseudonym indefinitely on a password-protected computer using special software that scrambles the information so no one can read it. The transcribed interviews will not be made available to other researchers for other studies following the completion of this research study.
The results from the research will be shared in a dissertation written by the researcher and may be shared at meetings. The results from the research may be in published articles. Your individual identity will be kept private when information is presented or published.

Please be advised that although the researcher will take every precaution to maintain confidentiality of the data, the nature of focus groups prevents the researchers from guaranteeing confidentiality. The researcher would like to remind participants to respect the privacy of your fellow participants and not repeat what is said in the focus group to others.

**Who will see my research information?**

Although we will do everything we can to keep your records a secret, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

Others may look at both the records that identify you and the consent form signed by you.

- Federal agencies that monitor human subject research
- Human Subject Research Committee

All of these people are required to keep your identity confidential. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records.

Also, if you tell us something that makes us believe that you or others have been or may be physically harmed, we may report that information to the appropriate agencies.

- Some things we cannot keep private. If you give us any information about child abuse or neglect we have to report that to Colorado Social Services. Also, if we get a court order to turn over your study records, we will have to do that.
- If you tell us you are going to physically hurt yourself or someone else, we have to report that to the state police or other agency. Also, if we get a court order to turn over your study records, we will have to do that.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study**

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you decide to participate now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. If you experience something unpleasant in the interview, you may stop. The researcher respects your right to choose not to answer any questions that may make you feel uncomfortable. Refusal to participate or withdraw from participation will involve no penalty or loss the $40.

- If you change your mind after the interview, the information or data you provided will be destroyed.
If you experience something unpleasant in the interview, you may stop. The researcher respects your right to choose not to answer any questions that may make you feel uncomfortable. Refusal to participate or withdraw from participation will involve no penalty or loss the $40.

Contact Information

The researcher carrying out this study is Carrie A. Olson. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may call Carrie A. Olson at 303-910-4963 or email CarrieAOlson@gmail.com.

If the researchers cannot be reached, or if you would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s) about; (1) questions, concerns or complaints regarding this study, (2) research participant rights, (3) research-related injuries, or (4) other human subjects issues, you may contact the Chair of the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, at 303-871-4015 or by emailing IRBChair@du.edu, or you may contact the Office for Research Compliance by emailing IRBAAdmin@du.edu, calling 303-871-4050 or in writing (University of Denver, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, 2199 S. University Blvd., Denver, CO 80208-2121).

Agreement to be in this study

I have read this paper about the study or it was read to me. I understand the possible risks and benefits of this study. I know that being in this study is voluntary. I choose to be in this study: I will get a copy of this consent form.

Please initial this box if data from this research may be used for future research.

Please initial here and provide a valid email (or postal) address if you would like a summary of the results of this study to be mailed to you.___________________________

Signature:_________________________________________ Date:_______

Print Name:_________________________________________
APPENDIX D

Recruitment Letter: Interviews

Project Title: The Meaning of Educational Travel in the Lives of Urban Middle School Students: A Transformative, Sequential Mixed Methods Study

Principal Investigator: Carrie A. Olson
Faculty Sponsor: P. Bruce Uhrmacher, PhD
DU IRB Protocol #: 646831-1

(To be shared through email, social media, and flyers distributed to individuals to spread the word to as many people as possible).

Traveler Recruitment Flyer

Did you travel with Kepner Middle School during 2003 – 2011?

Are you willing to share your thoughts and opinions about this travel with Ms. Olson?

WHO: I am looking for people who traveled in 6th grade to Washington, DC; in 8th grade to Europe; or traveled to Washington, DC and Europe.

WHAT: I would like to interview nine people, three from each group. I would like to know how you decided to travel, what the trip(s) were like for you, and what it has meant to you since you left Kepner Middle School. You can bring any memorabilia from your trips that you’d like to use to talk about your trip.

WHERE: The interviews will occur at a place and time that is convenient for you for about an hour or so for people who traveled on one trip and about two hours for people who traveled on both DC and Europe trips.

WHEN: You will be notified by July 23, 2015 whether you’ve been selected or not. The interviews will take place during the months of July, August, and September.

WHY: Your voice will be part of a study in an area that is not well researched and will help others understand educational travel. You will receive $40 cash for your participation in the single trip.
interviews if you are selected. You will receive $60 cash for your participation in the interviews that discuss both Washington, DC and Europe.

**CONTACT:** If you are interested, please call Carrie A. Olson at 303-910-4963, email her at CarrieAOlson@gmail.com, or respond via this survey: https://udenver.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_6mK2QWBNuoTj6Tj
Recruitment Letter: Chaperone Focus Group

Project Title: The Meaning of Educational Travel in the Lives of Urban Middle School Students: A Transformative, Sequential Mixed Methods Study

Principal Investigator: Carrie A. Olson
Faculty Sponsor: P. Bruce Uhrmacher, PhD
DU IRB Protocol #: 646831-1

(To be shared through email, social media, and flyers distributed to individuals to spread the word to as many people as possible).

Chaperone Recruitment Flyer

Were you a chaperone of a group who traveled with Kepner Middle School during 2003 – 2011?

Are you willing to share your thoughts about this travel with Ms. Olson?

WHO: I am looking for chaperones of students who traveled in 6th grade to Washington, DC; in 8th grade to Europe; or traveled to Washington, DC and Europe.

WHAT: I would like to conduct one focus group of 6 – 8 people to explore your thoughts on the questions: how did the students decided to travel, what the trip(s) were like for the students, and what this trip has meant to the students since they left Kepner Middle School. You can bring any memorabilia from your trips that you’d like to use to talk about the students’ trip.

WHERE: The focus group will occur at a place and time that is convenient for the group for about an hour and a half to two hours.

WHEN: The focus group will take place during the months of August or September depending on the participants’ availability. You will be notified by August 15, 2015 whether you’ve been selected or not.
**WHY:** You can be part of a study in an area that is not well researched and is aimed at helping others understand educational travel. You will receive $40 cash for your participation if you are selected.

**CONTACT:** If you are interested, please call Carrie A. Olson at 303-910-4963, email her at CarrieAOlson@gmail.com, or take this survey:

https://udenver.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_80LHgDW45mDeUcd
APPENDIX E

Survey: Former Student Travelers

Interest in Travel Interview. Interés en la Encuesta de los Viajes.

Which year were you a DC participant? ¿En qué año viajaste a DC?
- DC 2001
- DC 2002
- DC 2003
- DC 2004
- DC 2005
- DC 2006
- DC 2007
- DC 2008
- DC 2009
- DC 2010
- DC 2011
- I did not travel to DC with Harold. No viajé a DC con la Escuela Harold.
- I am not sure. No estoy seguro/a.

Which year were you a Europe participant? ¿En qué año viajaste a Europa?
- Europe 2001
- Europe 2002
- Europe 2003
- Europe 2004
- Europe 2005
- Europe 2006
- Europe 2007
- Europe 2008
- Europe 2009
- Europe 2010
- Europe 2011
- I did not travel to Europe with Harold School. No viajé a Europe con la Escuela Harold.
- I am not sure. No estoy seguro/a.

What is your gender? ¿Cuál es tu género?
- Male/Masculino
- Female/Feminino
What are your first and last name(s)? ¿Cuáles es tu nombre y apellido(s)?

Please tell me the best way to reach you. Provide your email, phone number, cell phone, mailing address, etc. so that I can let you know if you’ve been selected. Thank you. ¿Cómo puedo ponerme en contacto contigo? Por favor, dame tu correo electrónico, tu número de teléfono, tu celular, dirección, etc. para que te puedo avisar si eres seleccionado para participar.

Thank you very much for completing this survey and demonstrating interest in being a participant! Please contact me if you have any questions, CarrieAOlson@gmail.com or 303-910-4963. ¡Muchísimas gracias por completar esta encuesta y por mostrar interés de ser un participante. Por favor, contáctame si tienes cualquier pregunta o duda, , CarrieAOlson@gmail.com o 303-910-4963.
Survey: Adult Chaperones
Interest in Educational Travel Focus Group.
Interés en Grupo de Enfoque del Viajes Educativos

Please select the focus group in which you would like to participate. Por favor, elégir el grupo de enfoque en que quiere participar.
- Trip chaperone. Monitor del viaje.

What is your gender? ¿Cuál es tu género?
- Male/Masculino
- Female/Feminino

What are your first and last name(s)? ¿Cuáles es su nombre y apellido(s)?

Please tell me the best way to reach you. Provide your email, phone number, cell phone, mailing address, etc. so that I can let you know if you’ve been selected. Thank you. ¿Cómo puedo ponermé en contacto contigo? Por favor, déme su correo electrónico, su número de teléfono, su celular, dirección, etc. para que le puedo avisar si es seleccionado para participar.

Thank you very much for completing this survey and demonstrating interest in being a participant! Please contact me if you have any questions, CarrieAOlson@gmail.com or 303-910-4963. ¡Muchísimas gracias por completar esta encuesta y por mostrar interés de ser un participante. Por favor, contácteme si tiene cualquier pregunta o duda, , CarrieAOlson@gmail.com o 303-910-4963.
DATE: September 15, 2015

TO: Carrie Olson, PhD

FROM: University of Denver (DU) IRB


SUBMISSION TYPE: Continuing Review/Progress Report

APPROVAL DATE: 9/16/2015

EXPIRATION DATE: 9/15/2016

RISK LEVEL: Minimal Risk

CHILD RISK ASSESSMENT: 45 CFR 46.404

REVIEW PERIOD: 12 Months

REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

ACTION: APPROVED

Thank you for your submission of Continuing Review/Progress Report materials for this project. The University of Denver (DU) IRB has granted FULL APPROVAL for your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a project design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission. The IRB determined that the criteria for IRB approval of research, per 45 CFR 46.111 has been met.

This submission has received expedited review based on applicable federal regulations.

The following documents were included in the review and approval of this continuing review submission:

- Continuing Review/Progress Report
- Consent form (Spanish Version)
- Consent form (English Version)
- Amendment/Modification Form
- Revised recruitment letter (Spanish version)
- Revised recruitment letter (English version)

The following changes were approved in the amendment request:

- Date changed in each version of the recruitment letter to extend recruitment period

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the project and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal
regulations require that each participant receives a copy of the consent document. 
Forms used beyond the expiration date stamped on the document are not valid.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this committee prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others (UPIRSO's) and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported promptly to this office. Please use the appropriate reporting forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must be reported promptly to this office.

This project has been determined to be a minimal risk project. Based on the risks, this project requires continuing review by this committee on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate forms for this procedure. Your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date of 9/15/2016.

Please note that all research records must be retained in a secure location for a minimum of three years after the completion of the project.

If you have any questions, please contact the DU Office of Research Compliance at irbadmin@du.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within University of Denver (DU)’s records.
### Student Interview Protocol Questions: DC-Only

**Project Title:** The Meaning of Educational Travel in the Lives of Urban Middle School Students: A Transformative, Sequential Mixed Methods Study

**Principal Investigator:** Carrie A. Olson  
**Faculty Sponsor:** P. Bruce Uhrmacher, PhD  
**DU IRB Protocol #:** 646831-1

**Interview Protocol: Washington, DC-Only**

I am interviewing past travel students to learn more about what it was like for you before, during, and after the DC trip. I want to know what your experience of the trips was and what meaning you make of it! Thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me for this interview.

Before we get started, I will need for you to sign a consent form saying that you agree to participate in the study. This is the same one I sent you when you agreed to participate in this interview. I will go over the consent form with you right now. [Read over the consent form and have participant sign it].

Do you have any questions? [Answer questions if participant has any].

Remember this interview will be confidential and I will give you a pseudonym unless you’d like to choose your own pseudonym. Which do you prefer? [Allow participant to choose pseudonym. Record if given].

The main question I am exploring is “What does it mean to have traveled to Washington, DC in 6th grade with Kepner Middle School between the years 2003-2011?” In order to answer this question, I’d like to hear your thoughts with regards to the trips before, during, and after we went to Washington, DC. Talking with you today will help me learn more about the things that you, other families, and teachers can do to be sure students have a great trip. Your interview will be one of several I will write about in my dissertation. Sharing your experience will bring a unique perspective to the data I have collected about the trips through the years. I will ask you some questions, and hopefully we will have a productive conversation reflecting upon your trip to Washington, DC!

*In order to be sure we talk about all the parts of the travel experience as it was for you, you must say at least one negative thing about the trip! It is important for me to hear all of your thoughts. Remember can ask me to explain anything you do not understand.*
answering the questions you can use examples, share stories, or describe experiences. If you do not feel comfortable answering any of the questions, just tell me and we’ll skip it. Do you have any questions before we start? OK. Let’s begin!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preliminaries</th>
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<td>1) Tell me a little bit about yourself. What are you doing now? What are your hopes for your future, your hobbies, your interests, etc.?</td>
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</table>
**Question Set #1: How did you come to travel on the DC Trip?**

1. **(General trip)** Now I’d like to talk about trip. This part will help us think about what it was like for you before you traveled. Think back to the time before you took your first trip at Kepner Middle School. Tell me what it was like and what made you decide to travel with Kepner. Think of as many factors as you can.

   **Probes:**
   a. Describe how you decided to travel to DC.
   b. Describe what it was like to fundraise.
   c. Describe the parent meetings. What were they like for you?
   d. Describe what you learned before you traveled.
   e. What did your family say to you about the trip?
   f. What did your friends say to you about the trip?
   g. Describe the DC class. What was it like?
   h. How did you prepare to travel?
   i. How did you use the DC Student Handbook to prepare yourself to travel?
   j. Was there anything you were worried about or about which you were concerned before you traveled? If so, how did that affect your decision to travel?

2. **(Academic achievement and school engagement)** Describe your view of school before the DC trip. Think about your grades, attendance, behavior, your teachers, etc.

   **Probes:**
   a. Describe the grades you got in 6th grade. How did you feel about your grades?
   b. Describe how you viewed your test scores in 6th grade? How did you feel about your tests?
   c. What classes did you like in 6th grade?
   d. What teachers did you like in 6th grade?
   e. Describe the effect of DC trip on your 6th grade year at Kepner, if at all. Think about your classes, your friends, your KEEP job, your teachers, etc.
   f. Describe your attendance in 6th grade.
   g. Describe your behavior at home & at school in 6th grade. Describe any suspensions or referrals you had.
   h. Describe what you thought about graduating from high school in 6th grade.
   i. Describe the adults who helped you travel or the adult chaperones and how they helped you before the trip.

3. **(Wrap-up of Set #1)** Did you bring something to share with me
4. Do you have anything else you’d like to say about how you came to travel?

Question Set #2: What was it like for you on the DC trip?

1. (General) Now I want to ask you about what it was like to travel to Washington, DC as a 6th grader with Kepner Middle School. Think back to when you were on the trip and tell me about what it was like for you.

Probes:
   a. What experiences do you remember most clearly? Why?
   b. What did you like the best?
   c. What did you like the least?
   d. Describe what it was like being away from home.
   e. Talk about your experience flying.
   f. Please share one experience that you feel represents what it was like to be on the DC trip.
   g. Describe any souvenirs or any mementoes you brought home from your trip. What are they? What meaning did they hold for you? Why did you buy them? How do they represent the trip for you?

2. (Student learning & engagement on the trip) Tell me about what you learned on the trip. Describe what you learned and how you learned it.

Probes:
   a. Tell me about how you used your DC Student Journal. What did you write or draw in it? What else did you put in it?
   b. When we got to a new site or museum, how did you decide what you wanted to see at each place?
   c. What were you learning on the trip? How do you know? Describe a time you remember from the trip when you learned something.
   d. Describe your behavior on the trip. How did this affect what you learned?
   e. Describe something that was personally challenging for you on the trip? It could be anything that was difficult, uncomfortable, or unfamiliar that challenged you. How did this affect you?
   f. What didn’t you like about the trip? Why?
3. (Other travelers). Tell me about the other travelers. Describe the other students on the trip. Describe the adult chaperones.

Probe:
   a. Describe what makes a good adult chaperone on the trip. Thinking about your trip, did they help or not help on the trip? How? How did the adults affect your trip?
   b. Tell me about the other students on the trip. Did you make any new friends? Did anyone help you on the trip? How did other students affect your trip?
   c. Describe other students’ behavior on the trip.

4. (Wrap-up of Set #2) Did you bring something to share with me about what it was like to be on the trip? If so, why did you bring it? What does it say about your trip?

5. Do you have anything else you’d like to say about what it was like to travel to DC?
### Question Set #3: Describe what the trip has meant for you in your life.

1. **(General) Now tell me what it was like when you arrived back home after being on the Washington, DC trip.**

   **Probes:**
   a. What did you tell your family and friends about the trip?
   b. What was it like to come back to school?
   c. When you meet new people and tell them about your 6th grade trip, what do you say and what is their reaction?
   d. Describe what the trip has meant to you in your life.

2. **(Student learning & engagement after the trip) As the years have gone by, what has stuck with you that you learned on the DC trip?**

   **Probes:**
   a. Share one story that shows what the trip has meant to you through the years.
   b. How did what you learned before the trip help you, or not help you, understand what you saw and did on the trip?
   c. How did the DC trip affect your academic life?
   d. Did your view about school change after DC? How? Why or why not?
   e. Do you still have your DC Student Journal? If so, do you every look at it? What do you think about what you wrote?
   f. Did your behavior at home or school change as a result of the DC trip? How can you tell?
   g. Describe your attendance at school before and after the DC trip. Was there a change? How? Why?
   h. Did you participate in different clubs, sports, or activities in school after having traveled to DC?
   i. Describe your attitude towards school after the DC trip. Had it changed because of the trip? Did it affect the answers to these questions: What kinds of grades did you get? What subjects were you good in? Which were hard? Did you work harder? Did it change your view of graduation?

3. **(Other travelers). Tell me about your interactions with other travelers since the trip.**

   **Probes:**
   a. Who do you keep in touch with from the trips? What do you talk about? What do you say when you reflect
on the trip? Describe your conversations.

b. Describe the chaperones. Why do you think that’s what you remember about him, her, and them?

c. When you think about the chaperones, do you think you had a different relationship with one or all of the chaperones after the trip as compared to your other teachers? Describe this.

d. Did you work with teachers differently after the DC trip? How? Why?

4. (Personal Meaning through the years) Over the years, what has it meant to you to be a traveler to Washington, DC?

Probes:

a. What did you learn about yourself?

b. When do you talk about your trip? What do you say?

c. How did the trip change you, if it did? How do you know it was the trip and not something else?

d. What surprised you about the significance of the trip? How? Why?

e. Do you still have your scrapbook? If you do, what does it tell you about your trip?

f. What things did you learn on the trip that helped you later in your life? These can be personal, academic, work-related, college, etc.

g. Have you traveled since your DC trip? Where? With whom? Did the DC trip influence your desire to travel? How do the two experiences compare?

h. Where else would you like to go? Why? Did the DC trip influence this?

i. Share one experience that demonstrates what the DC trip has meant to you through the years.

j. Share the advice you’d give a future DC student, his family, and his chaperones.

k. As you reflect on the trip through the years, what didn’t you like about the trip? Why?

5. (Wrap-up Set #3) Did you bring something to share with me about what the trip has meant to you through the years? If so, why did you bring it? What does it say about your trip?

6. Do you have anything else you’d like to say about what the trip has meant to you?
## Quantitative Questions

Now I’d like to show you some information about students like you who traveled with Kepner during the same time period as you did. I am including data about students who traveled in this interview because we hear a lot about test scores and data when talking about education. I want to know what you think about these data because it tells part of the story of your education.

First I’m going to show you some information about academic achievement that includes ACT scores, CSAP scale scores, and grade point averages at the end of high school.

In this binder, I have some statements and tables about what I have learned. (See Appendix M).

The data that I looked at suggest the following:

1. Students who were in the DC and Both travel groups had a higher mean ACT composite scores.
2. Students who were in the DC and Both travel groups had a higher mean ACT English subscore than those who were in the Europe or No Travel Groups.
3. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had a higher mean ACT reading subscore than those who were in the No Travel Groups.
4. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups has higher mean CSAP scale scores in all tested subjects and grades than those in the No Travel Group.
5. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had higher grade point averages by the time they graduated (or did not graduate) from high school than those who were in the No Travel Groups.

I am interested in hearing what this information means to you. Describe what comes to your mind when you read these statements.

Probes
   a. Describe how you viewed the ACT and the CSAP test.
   b. Do you think that the DC trip changed how you did on either one of these tests? How?
   c. Describe how you felt about your GPA from high school. Do you think the DC trip had an influence on your grades? How?

Next, I’m going to show you data about school engagement that includes attendance rates, graduation rates, and suspension data.

In this binder, I have some statements and tables about what I have learned. (See Appendix M).
The data that I looked at suggest the following:

1. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had a higher mean attendance rate in Grade 8 than those who were in the No Travel Groups.
2. Students who were in the Both Travel Groups had a higher mean attendance rate in Grade 9 than those who were in the DC, Europe, or No Travel Groups.
3. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups were less likely to have been suspended in Grade 5 & Grade 6 than those who were in the No Travel Groups.
4. Students who were in the No Travel group were less likely to be suspended in Grade 9 than those in the DC, Europe, or Both travel groups.
5. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups were more likely to graduate from high school than those who were in the No Travel Groups.

I am interested in hearing what this information means to you. Describe what comes to your mind when you read these statements.

Probes
a) What do you think these attendance and suspension rates?
b) Describe your attendance and suspensions when you were in school.
c) Did you graduate? Do you think the DC trip had an influence on whether or not you graduated? How?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity, Race, Urban, Income Level, and Gender Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some of the factors I am examining in this study are the effects, if any, of ethnicity, race, urban schooling, and income level on travel. If you are not comfortable answering these questions, you do not have to answer them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **With which race or ethnicity do you identify?** (I can give you examples if you want). Describe how your race or ethnicity affected or did not affect your travel experience. Why or why not?

2. **Kepner Middle School is considered an urban school (a school in a big city).** Describe how the fact that you attended a large urban middle school affected or did not affect your travel experience. Why or why not?

3. **Kepner Middle School is a school in a low-income neighborhood.** Describe how attending a low-income middle school affected or did not affect your travel experience. Why or why not?

4. **With which gender do you identify?** Describe how your gender affected or did not affect your travel experience. Why or why not?

5. **Do you have anything you’d like to add about these four topics before we leave this section?**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wrap Up Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Would you like to add anything else before we close?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. At the beginning of the interview I asked about how you came to travel with Kepner. Some of the things I heard include…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. And then I asked you what it was like on the trip. Some of the things I heard include…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. And then I asked you about what the trips have meant to you. Some of the things I heard include…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Did I get that right? Is there anything else you’d like to add? Is there anything that you feel I didn’t understand properly?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thanks. I really appreciate your help with my research. Here is your $40. I will follow up with you by email in a couple of days to see if there is anything else you would like to add about your interview. I will also send you a transcript of your interview for you to read and make sure you said all you wanted to say. Remember, you can always contact me with questions or comments about this interview.
APPENDIX H

Student Interview Protocol:  Europe-Only

Project Title:  The Meaning of Educational Travel in the Lives of Urban Middle School Students:  A Transformative, Sequential Mixed Methods Study

Principal Investigator:  Carrie A. Olson
Faculty Sponsor:  P. Bruce Uhrmacher, PhD
DU IRB Protocol #: 646831-1

Interview Protocol:  Europe-Only

I am interviewing past travel students to learn more about what it was like for you before, during, and after the Europe trip.  I want to know what your experience of the trip was and what meaning you make of it!  Thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me for this interview.

Before we get started, I will need for you to sign a consent form saying that you agree to participate in the study.  This is the same one I sent you when you agreed to participate in this interview.  I will go over the consent form with you right now. [Read over the consent form and have participant sign the form].

Do you have any questions?  [Answer questions if participant has any].

Remember this interview will be confidential and I will give you a pseudonym unless you’d like to choose your own pseudonym.  Which do you prefer?  [Allow participant to choose pseudonym.  Record if given].

The main question I am exploring is “What does it mean to be have traveled to Europe in 8th grade with Kepner Middle School between the years 2003-2011?”  In order to answer this question, I’d like to hear your thoughts with regards to the trips before, during, and after we went to Europe.  Talking with you today will help me learn more about the things that you, other families, and teachers can do to be sure students have a great trip.  Your interview will be one of several I will write about in my dissertation.  Sharing your experience will bring a unique perspective to the data I have collected about the trips through the years.  I will ask you some questions, and hopefully we will have a productive conversation reflecting upon your trip to Europe!
In order to be sure we talk about all the parts of the travel experience as it was for you, you **must** say at least one negative thing about the trip! It is important for me to hear all of your thoughts.

Remember can ask me to explain anything you do not understand. In answering the questions you can use examples, share stories, or describe experiences. If you do not feel comfortable answering any of the questions, just tell me and we’ll skip it.

Do you have any questions before we start? OK. Let’s begin!

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### Question Set #1: How did you come to travel on the Europe Trip?

1. **(General trip)** Now I’d like to talk about trip. This part will help us think about what it was like for you before you traveled. Think back to the time before you took your first trip at Kepner Middle School. Tell me what it was like and what made you decide to travel with Kepner. Think of as many factors as you can.

   **Probes:**
   - a. Describe how you decided to travel to Europe.
   - b. Describe what it was like to fundraise.
   - c. Describe the parent meetings. What were they like for you?
   - d. Describe what you learned before you traveled.
   - e. What did your family say to you about the trip?
   - f. What did your friends say to you about the trip?
   - g. Describe the Europe class. What was it like?
   - h. How did you prepare to travel?
   - i. How did you use the Europe Student Handbook to prepare yourself to travel?
   - j. Was there anything you were worried about or about which you were concerned before you traveled? If so, how did that affect your decision to travel?

2. **(Academic achievement and school engagement)** Describe your view of school before the Europe trip. Think about your grades, attendance, behavior, your teachers, etc.

   **Probes:**
   - a. Describe the grades you got in 8th grade. How did you feel about your grades?
   - b. Describe how you viewed your test scores in 8th grade? How did you feel about your tests?
   - c. What classes did you like in 8th grade?
   - d. What teachers did you like in 8th grade?
   - e. Describe the effect of Europe trip on your 8th grade year at Kepner, if at all. Think about your classes, your friends, your KEEP job, your teachers, etc.
   - f. Describe your attendance in 8th grade.
   - g. Describe your behavior at home & at school in 8th grade. Describe any suspensions or referrals you had.
   - h. Describe what you thought about graduating from high school in 8th grade.
   - i. Describe the adults who helped you travel or the adult chaperones and how they helped you before the trip.

3. **(Wrap-up of Set #1)** Did you bring something to share with me
about preparing to travel? If so, what is it and why did you
decide to bring it? What does it say about your trip?
4. Do you have anything else you’d like to say about how you
came to travel?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Set #2: What was it like for you on the Europe trip?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. (General) Now I want to ask you about what it was like to</td>
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<tr>
<td>travel to Europe as an 8th grader with Kepner Middle School.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Think back to when you were on the trip and tell me about what</td>
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<td>it was like.</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>a. What experiences do you remember most clearly?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Why?</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. What did you like the best?</td>
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<td>c. What did you like the least?</td>
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<td>d. Describe what it was like being away from home.</td>
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<td>hold for you? Why did you buy them? How do they represent</td>
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<td>the trip for you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. (Student learning &amp; engagement on the trip) Tell me about</td>
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<td>what you learned on the trip. Describe what you learned and</td>
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<tr>
<td>how you learned it.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>a. Tell me about how you used your Europe Student Journal.</td>
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<td>f. What didn’t you like about the trip? Why?</td>
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<td>3. (Other travelers). Tell me about the other travelers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Describe the other students on the trip. Describe the adult</td>
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<tr>
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on the trip? How? How did the adults affect your trip?
b. Tell me about the other students on the trip. Did you make any new friends? Did anyone help you on the trip? How did other students affect your trip?
c. Describe other students’ behavior on the trip.

4. (Wrap-up of Set #2) Did you bring something to share with me about what it was like to be on the trip? If so, why did you bring it? What does it say about your trip?

5. Do you have anything else you’d like to say about what it was like to travel to Europe?
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<td>b. How did what you learned before the trip help you, or not help you, understand what you saw and did on the trip?</td>
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Probes:

a. Who do you keep in touch with from the trips? What do you talk about? What do you say when you reflect on the trip? Describe your conversations.

b. Describe your relationship with the chaperones since the trip. What is this relationship like for you?

c. When you think about the chaperones, do you think you had a different relationship with one or all of the chaperones after the trip as compared to your other teachers? Describe this.

d. Did you work with teachers differently after the Europe trip? How? Why?

4. (Personal Meaning through the years) Over the years, what has it meant to you to be a traveler to Washington, Europe?

Probes:

a. What did you learn about yourself?

b. When do you talk about your trip? What do you say?

c. How did the trip change you, if it did? How do you know it was the trip and not something else?

d. What surprised you about the significance of the trip? How? Why?

e. Do you still have your scrapbook? If you do, what does it tell you about your trip?

f. What things did you learn on the trip that helped you later in your life? These can be personal, academic, work-related, college, etc.

g. Have you traveled since your Europe trip? Where? With whom? Did the Europe trip influence your desire to travel? How do the two experiences compare?

h. Where else would you like to go? Why? Did the Europe trip influence this?

i. Share one experience that demonstrates what the Europe trip has meant to you through the years.

j. Share the advice you’d give a future Europe student, his family, and his chaperones.

k. As you reflect on the trip through the years, what didn’t you like about the trip? Why?

5. (Wrap-up Set #3) Did you bring something to share with me about what the trip has meant to you through the years? If so, why did you bring it? What does it say about your trip?

6. Do you have anything else you’d like to say about what the trip has meant to you?
Quantitative Questions

Now I’d like to show you some information about students like you who traveled with Kepner during the same time period as you did. I am including data about students who traveled in this interview because we hear a lot about test scores and data when talking about education. I want to know what you think about these data because it tells part of the story of your education.

First I’m going to show you some information about academic achievement that includes ACT scores, CSAP scale scores, and grade point averages at the end of high school.

In this binder, I have some statements and tables about what I have learned. (See Appendix M).

The data that I looked at suggest the following:

6. Students who were in the DC and Both travel groups had a higher mean ACT composite scores.
7. Students who were in the DC and Both travel groups had a higher mean ACT English subscore than those who were in the Europe or No Travel Groups.
8. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had a higher mean ACT reading subscore than those who were in the No Travel Groups.
9. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups has higher mean CSAP scale scores in all tested subjects and grades than those in the No Travel Group.
10. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had higher grade point averages by the time they graduated (or did not graduate) from high school than those who were in the No Travel Groups.

I am interested in hearing what this information means to you. Describe what comes to your mind when you read these statements.

Probes

d. Describe how you viewed the ACT and the CSAP test.
e. Do you think that the Europe trip changed how you did on either one of these tests? How?
f. Describe how you felt about your GPA from high school. Do you think the Europe trip had an influence on your grades? How?
Next, I’m going to show you data about **school engagement** that includes attendance rates, graduation rates, and suspension data.

In this binder, I have some statements and tables about what I have learned. (See Appendix M).

The data that I looked at suggest the following:

6. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had a higher mean attendance rate in Grade 8 than those who were in the No Travel Groups.

7. Students who were in the Both Travel Groups had a higher mean attendance rate in Grade 9 than those who were in the DC, Europe, or No Travel Groups.

8. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups were less likely to have been suspended in Grade 5 & Grade 6 than those who were in the No Travel Groups.

9. Students who were in the No Travel group were less likely to be suspended in Grade 9 than those in the DC, Europe, or Both travel groups.

10. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups were more likely to graduate from high school than those who were in the No Travel Groups.

I am interested in hearing what this information means to you. Describe what comes to your mind when you read these statements.

**Probes**

d) What do you think these attendance and suspension rates?

e) Describe your attendance and suspensions when you were in school.

f) Did you graduate? Do you think the Europe trip had an influence on whether or not you graduated? How?
Some of the factors I am examining in this study are the effects, if any, of ethnicity, race, urban schooling, and income level on travel. If you are not comfortable answering these questions, you do not have to answer them.

1. With which race or ethnicity do you identify? (I can give you examples if you want). Describe how your race or ethnicity affected or did not affect your travel experience. Why or why not?

2. Kepner Middle School is considered an urban school (a school in a big city). Describe how the fact that you attended a large urban middle school affected or did not affect your travel experience. Why or why not?

3. Kepner Middle School is a school in a low-income neighborhood. Describe how attending a low-income middle school affected or did not affect your travel experience. Why or why not?

4. With which gender do you identify? Describe how your gender affected or did not affect your travel experience. Why or why not?

5. Do you have anything you’d like to add about these four topics before we leave this section?
### Wrap Up

1. Would you like to add anything else before we close?

2. At the beginning of the interview I asked about how you came to travel with Kepner. Some of the things I heard include…

3. And then I asked you what it was like on the trip. Some of the things I heard include…

4. And then I asked you about what the trips have meant to you. Some of the things I heard include…

5. Did I get that right? Is there anything else you’d like to add? Is there anything that you feel I didn’t understand properly?

Thanks. I really appreciate your help with my research. Here is your $40. I will follow up with you by email in a couple of days to see if there is anything else you would like to add about your interview. I will also send you a transcript of your interview for you to read and make sure you said all you wanted to say. Remember, you can always contact me with questions or comments about this interview.
APPENDIX I

Student Interview Protocol: Washington, DC & Europe

Project Title: The Meaning of Educational Travel in the Lives of Urban Middle School Students: A Transformative, Sequential Mixed Methods Study

Principal Investigator: Carrie A. Olson
Faculty Sponsor: P. Bruce Uhrmacher, PhD
DU IRB Protocol #: 646831-1

Interview Protocol: Washington, DC & Europe

I am interviewing past travel students to learn more about what it was like for you before, during, and after the DC & Europe trips. I want to know what your experience of the trips was and what meaning you make of it! Thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me for this interview.

Before we get started, I will need for you to sign a consent form saying that you agree to participate in the study. This is the same one I sent you when you agreed to participate in this interview. I will go over the consent form with you right now. [Read over the consent form and have participant sign the form].

Do you have any questions? [Answer questions if participant has any].

Remember this interview will be confidential and I will give you a pseudonym unless you’d like to choose your own pseudonym. Which do you prefer? [Allow participant to choose pseudonym. Record if given].

The main question I am exploring is “What does it mean to be have traveled to Washington, DC in 6th grade and to Europe in 8th grade with Kepner Middle School between the years 2003-2011?” In order to answer this question, I’d like to hear your thoughts with regards to the trips before, during, and after we went to Washington, DC and to Europe. Talking with you today will help me learn more about the things that you, other families, and teachers can do to be sure students have a great trip. Your interview will be one of several I will write about in my dissertation. Sharing your experience will bring a unique perspective to the data I have collected about the trips through the years. I will ask you some questions, and hopefully we will have a productive conversation reflecting upon your trip to Washington, DC and Europe!
In order to be sure we talk about all the parts of the travel experiences as the trips were for you, you **must** say at least one negative thing about each of the trips! It is important for me to hear all of your thoughts.

Remember **can** ask me to explain anything you do not understand. **In answering the questions you can use examples, share stories, or describe experiences. If you do not feel comfortable answering any of the questions, just tell me and we’ll skip it.**

Do you have any questions before we start? **OK. Let’s begin!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preliminaries</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2) Tell me a little bit about yourself. What are you doing now? What are your hopes for your future, your hobbies, your interests, etc.?</td>
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</table>
### Washington, DC Interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Set #1: How did you come to travel on the DC Trip?</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>5. (General trip) Now I’d like to talk about trip. This part will help us think about what it was like for you before you traveled. Think back to the time before you took your first trip at Kepner Middle School. Tell me what it was like and what made you decide to travel with Kepner. Think of as many factors as you can.</td>
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<td>b. Describe what it was like to fundraise.</td>
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<td>c. Describe the parent meetings. What were they like for you?</td>
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<td>d. Describe what you learned before you traveled.</td>
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<td>e. What did your family say to you about the trip?</td>
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<td>f. What did your friends say to you about the trip?</td>
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<td>g. Describe the DC class. What was it like?</td>
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<td>h. How did you prepare to travel?</td>
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<td>i. How did you use the DC Student Handbook to prepare yourself to travel?</td>
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<td>c. What classes did you like in 6th grade?</td>
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<td>d. What teachers did you like in 6th grade?</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. Describe the effect of DC trip on your 6th grade year at Kepner, if at all. Think about your classes, your friends, your KEEP job, your teachers, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. Describe your attendance in 6th grade.</td>
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<td>g. Describe your behavior at home &amp; at school in 6th grade. Describe any suspensions or referrals you had.</td>
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<td>h. Describe what you thought about graduating from high school in 6th grade.</td>
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<td>i. Describe the adults who helped you travel or the adult chaperones and how they helped you before</td>
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7. (Wrap-up of Set #1) Did you bring something to share with me about preparing to travel? If so, what is it and why did you decide to bring it? What does it say about your trip?

8. Do you have anything else you’d like to say about how you came to travel?
Question Set #2: What was it like for you on the DC trip?

6. (General) Now I want to ask you about what it was like to travel to Washington, DC as a 6th grader with Kepner Middle School. Think back to when you were on the trip and tell me about what it was like for you.

Probes:
   a. What experiences do you remember most clearly? Why?
   b. What did you like the best?
   c. What did you like the least?
   d. Describe what it was like being away from home.
   e. Talk about your experience flying.
   f. Please share one experience that you feel represents what it was like to be on the DC trip.
   g. Describe any souvenirs or any mementoes you brought home from your trip. What are they? What meaning did they hold for you? Why did you buy them? How do they represent the trip for you?

7. (Student learning & engagement on the trip) Tell me about what you learned on the trip. Describe what you learned and how you learned it.

Probes:
   a. Tell me about how you used your DC Student Journal. What did you write or draw in it? What else did you put in it?
   b. When we got to a new site or museum, how did you decide what you wanted to see at each place?
   c. What were you learning on the trip? How do you know? Describe a time you remember from the trip when you learned something.
   d. Describe your behavior on the trip. How did this affect what you learned?
   e. Describe something that was personally challenging for you on the trip? It could be anything that was difficult, uncomfortable, or unfamiliar that challenged you. How did this affect you?
   f. What didn’t you like about the trip? Why?

8. (Other travelers). Tell me about the other travelers. Describe the other students on the trip. Describe the adult chaperones.

Probe:
   a. Describe what makes a good adult chaperone on the
trip. Thinking about your trip, did they help or not help on the trip? How? How did the adults affect your trip?

b. Tell me about the other students on the trip. Did you make any new friends? Did anyone help you on the trip? How did other students affect your trip?

c. Describe other students’ behavior on the trip.

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<td>d. Did your view about school change after DC? How? Why or why not?</td>
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<td>i. Describe your attitude towards school after the DC trip. Had it changed because of the trip? Did it affect the answers to these questions: What kinds of grades did you get? What subjects were you good in? Which were hard? Did you work harder? Did it change your view of graduation?</td>
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b. Describe the chaperones. Why do you think that’s what you remember about him, her, and them?

c. When you think about the chaperones, do you think you had a different relationship with one or all of the chaperones after the trip as compared to your other teachers? Describe this.

d. Did you work with teachers differently after the DC trip? How? Why?

10. (Personal Meaning through the years) Over the years, what has it meant to you to be a traveler to Washington, DC?

   Probes:
   a. What did you learn about yourself?
   b. When do you talk about your trip? What do you say?
   c. How did the trip change you, if it did? How do you know it was the trip and not something else?
   d. What surprised you about the significance of the trip? How? Why?
   e. Do you still have your scrapbook? If you do, what does it tell you about your trip?
   f. What things did you learn on the trip that helped you later in your life? These can be personal, academic, work-related, college, etc.
   g. Have you traveled since your DC trip? Where? With whom? Did the DC trip influence your desire to travel? How do the two experiences compare?
   h. Where else would you like to go? Why? Did the DC trip influence this?
   i. Share one experience that demonstrates what the DC trip has meant to you through the years.
   j. Share the advice you’d give a future DC student, his family, and his chaperones.
   k. As you reflect on the trip through the years, what didn’t you like about the trip? Why?

11. (Wrap-up Set #3) Did you bring something to share with me about what the trip has meant to you through the years? If so, why did you bring it? What does it say about your trip?

12. Do you have anything else you’d like to say about what the trip has meant to you?
Europe Interview Questions

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| 2. (Academic achievement and school engagement) Describe your view of school before the Europe trip. Think about your grades, attendance, behavior, your teachers, etc. |
| Probes: |
| a. Describe the grades you got in 8th grade. How did you feel about your grades? |
| b. Describe how you viewed your test scores in 8th grade? How did you feel about your tests? |
| c. What classes did you like in 8th grade? |
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3. (Wrap-up of Set #1) Did you bring something to share with me about preparing to travel? If so, what is it and why did you decide to bring it? What does it say about your trip?

4. Do you have anything else you’d like to say about how you came to travel?
### Question Set #2: What was it like for you on the Europe trip?

1. **(General)** Now I want to ask you about what it was like to travel to Europe as an 8th grader with Kepner Middle School. Think back to when you were on the trip and tell me about what it was like.

   **Probes:**
   - a. What experiences do you remember most clearly? Why?
   - b. What did you like the best?
   - c. What did you like the least?
   - d. Describe what it was like being away from home.
   - e. Talk about your experience flying.
   - f. Please share one experience that you feel represents what it was like to be on the Europe trip.
   - g. Describe any souvenirs or any mementos you brought home from your trip. What are they? What meaning did they hold for you? Why did you buy them? How do they represent the trip for you?

2. **(Student learning & engagement on the trip)** Tell me about what you learned on the trip. Describe what you learned and how you learned it.

   **Probes:**
   - a. Tell me about how you used your Europe Student Journal. What did you write or draw in it? What else did you put in it?
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3. **(Other travelers).** Tell me about the other travelers. Describe the other students on the trip. Describe the adult chaperones.

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Question Set #3: Describe what the trip has meant for you in your life.

1. (General) Now tell me what it was like when you arrived back home after being on the Europe trip.

   Probes:
   a. What did you tell your family and friends about the trip?
   b. What was it like to come back to school?
   c. When you meet new people and tell them about your 8th grade trip, what do you say and what is their reaction?
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2. (Student learning & engagement after the trip) As the years have gone by, what has stuck with you that you learned on the Europe trip?

   Probes:
   a. Share one story that shows what the trip has meant to you through the years.
   b. How did what you learned before the trip help you, or not help you, understand what you saw and did on the trip?
   c. How did the Europe trip affect your academic life?
   d. Did your view about school change after Europe? How? Why or why not?
   e. Do you still have your Europe Student Journal? If so, do you every look at it? What do you think about what you wrote?
   f. Did your behavior at home or school change as a result of the Europe trip? How can you tell?
   g. Describe your attendance at school before and after the Europe trip. Was there a change? How? Why?
   h. Did you participate in different clubs, sports, or activities in school after having traveled to Europe?
   i. Describe your attitude towards school after the Europe trip. Had it changed because of the trip? Did it affect the answers to these questions: What kinds of grades did you get? What subjects were you good in? Which were hard? Did you work harder? Did it change your view of graduation?

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b. Describe your relationship with the chaperones since the trip. What is this relationship like for you?
c. When you think about the chaperones, do you think you had a different relationship with one or all of the chaperones after the trip as compared to your other teachers? Describe this.
d. Did you work with teachers differently after the Europe trip? How? Why?

4. (Personal Meaning through the years) Over the years, what has it meant to you to be a traveler to Europe?

Probes:
   a. What did you learn about yourself?
   b. When do you talk about your trip? What do you say?
   c. How did the trip change you, if it did? How do you know it was the trip and not something else?
   d. What surprised you about the significance of the trip? How? Why?
   e. Do you still have your scrapbook? If you do, what does it tell you about your trip?
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   h. Where else would you like to go? Why? Did the Europe trip influence this?
   i. Share one experience that demonstrates what the Europe trip has meant to you through the years.
   j. Share the advice you’d give a future Europe student, his family, and his chaperones.
   k. As you reflect on the trip through the years, what didn’t you like about the trip? Why?

5. (Wrap-up Set #3) Did you bring something to share with me about what the trip has meant to you through the years? If so, why did you bring it? What does it say about your trip?

6. Do you have anything else you’d like to say about what the trip has meant to you?
Now I’d like to show you some information about students like you who traveled with Kepner during the same time period as you did. I am including data about students who traveled in this interview because we hear a lot about test scores and data when talking about education. I want to know what you think about these data because it tells part of the story of your education.

First I’m going to show you some information about academic achievement that includes ACT scores, CSAP scale scores, and grade point averages at the end of high school.

In this binder, I have some statements and tables about what I have learned. (See Appendix M).

The data that I looked at suggest the following:
1. Students who were in the DC and Both travel groups had a higher mean ACT composite scores.
2. Students who were in the DC and Both travel groups had a higher mean ACT English subscore than those who were in the Europe or No Travel Groups.
3. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had a higher mean ACT reading subscore than those who were in the No Travel Groups.
4. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups has higher mean CSAP scale scores in all tested subjects and grades than those in the No Travel Group.
5. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had higher grade point averages by the time they graduated (or did not graduate) from high school than those who were in the No Travel Groups.

I am interested in hearing what this information means to you. Describe what comes to your mind when you read these statements.

Probes
a. Describe how you viewed the ACT and the CSAP test.
b. Do you think that the DC trip changed how you did on either one of these tests? How?
c. Describe how you felt about your GPA from high school. Do you think the DC trip and/or the Europe trip had an influence on your grades? How?
Next, I’m going to show you data about school engagement that includes attendance rates, graduation rates, and suspension data.

In this binder, I have some statements and tables about what I have learned. (See Appendix M).

The data that I looked at suggest the following:

1. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had a higher mean attendance rate in Grade 8 than those who were in the No Travel Groups.
2. Students who were in the Both Travel Groups had a higher mean attendance rate in Grade 9 than those who were in the DC, Europe, or No Travel Groups.
3. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups were less likely to have been suspended in Grade 5 & Grade 6 than those who were in the No Travel Groups.
4. Students who were in the No Travel group were less likely to be suspended in Grade 9 than those in the DC, Europe, or Both travel groups.
5. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups were more likely to graduate from high school than those who were in the No Travel Groups.

I am interested in hearing what this information means to you. Describe what comes to your mind when you read these statements.

Probes

  g) What do you think these attendance and suspension rates?
  h) Describe your attendance and suspensions when you were in school.
  i) Did you graduate? Do you think the DC and/or the Europe trip had an influence on whether or not you graduated? How?
Some of the factors I am examining in this study are the effects, if any, of ethnicity, race, urban schooling, and income level on travel. If you are not comfortable answering these questions, you do not have to answer them.

1. With which race or ethnicity do you identify? (I can give you examples if you want). Describe how your race or ethnicity affected or did not affect your travel experience for DC and/or Europe. Why or why not?

2. Kepner Middle School is considered an urban school (a school in a big city). Describe how the fact that you attended a large urban middle school affected or did not affect your travel experience for DC and/or Europe. Why or why not?

3. Kepner Middle School is a school in a low-income neighborhood. Describe how attending a low-income middle school affected or did not affect your travel experience for DC and/or Europe. Why or why not?

4. With which gender do you identify? Describe how your gender affected or did not affect your travel experience for DC and/or Europe. Why or why not?

5. Do you have anything you’d like to add about these four topics before we leave this section?
Wrap Up

1. Would you like to add anything else before we close?

2. At the beginning of the interview I asked about how you came to travel with Kepner. Some of the things I heard include…

3. And then I asked you what it was like on the trip. Some of the things I heard include…

4. And then I asked you about what the trips have meant to you. Some of the things I heard include…

5. Did I get that right? Is there anything else you’d like to add? Is there anything that you feel I didn’t understand properly?

Thanks. I really appreciate your help with my research. Here is your $60. I will follow up with you by email in a couple of days to see if there is anything else you would like to add about your interview. I will also send you a transcript of your interview for you to read and make sure you said all you wanted to say. Remember, you can always contact me with questions or comments about this interview.
APPENDIX J

Focus Group Protocol: Former Chaperones for Focus Groups

Thank you for coming! I appreciate your willingness to share your thoughts and ideas with me.

Before we get started, I will need for each of you to sign a consent form saying that you agree to participate in the study. This is the same one I sent you when you agreed to participate in this interview. I will go over the consent form with you right now. [Read over the consent form and have participants sign the form.]

Do you have any questions? [Answer questions if participant has any.]

Please remember that I will try to be sure that this is confidential, the nature of focus groups prevents the researchers from guaranteeing confidentiality. I would like to remind participants to respect the privacy of your fellow participants and not repeat what is said in the focus group to others.

You will be given a pseudonym. Would you like to choose your own pseudonym? [Allow participants to chose pseudonym. Record if given.]

The main question I am exploring is “What does it mean to have traveled to Washington, DC in 6th grade, Europe in 8th grade, or traveled on both trips with Kepner Middle School?” In order to answer this question, I’d like to hear your thoughts with regards to the trips before, during, and after the children traveled with us. Talking with you today will help me learn more about the things that other travelers, their families and teachers can do to be sure students have a great trip. I will write about your focus group, the adult caregiver focus group, and interviews with the students in my dissertation. Sharing your experience will bring a unique perspective to the data I have collected about the trips through the years. I will ask you some questions, and hopefully we will have a productive conversation reflecting upon our trips!

In order to be sure we talk about the good, and the not-so-good, things you remember about the trip, you must say one not-so-good thing about the trip! It is important for me to hear all of your thoughts.
Remember can ask me to explain anything you do not understand. In answering the questions you can use examples, share stories, or describe experiences. If you do not feel comfortable answering any of the questions, just tell me and you can skip that one.

Do you have any questions before we start? OK. Let's begin!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preliminaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Please turn off your cell phones or put them on silent mode. If you need to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leave, the room, please do so. Help yourself to move refreshments when you’d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>like.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Please introduce yourself to the group. State what name you’d like to be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>called (and please write it on your nametag), what trip(s) you chaperoned, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what you are doing now.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ground Rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Give everyone a chance to talk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. I might call on you if you’re not saying much. It’s just a way to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>make sure everyone participated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. It’s OK to disagree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. As much as possible, I will not participate in the discussion. I might</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ask you to clarify something I don’t understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Please try not to hold side conversations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. It will be helpful to remember that I am interested in knowing how you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viewed the meaning of the trips for the students. This means that I am asking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you to remember what you thought it was like for the students, not necessarily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for you. You can share what the trips have meant to you if it’s helpful in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explaining a point about how you saw it helping students. Please ask for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clarification if this isn’t clear.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Question Set #1: How did the students come to travel on the trips?

1) (General trip) This part will help us think about what it was like for students before they traveled. Think back to the time before you chaperoned the trip(s) at Harold Middle School. Describe what it was like for the students and what you remember about how the students decided to travel with Harold. Think of as many factors as you can.

**Probes:**
- a. Describe fundraising and the parent meetings. What were they like?
- b. What did the students learn before they traveled? How do you know?
- c. Describe the class related to the trip. What did students say about the class?
- d. What did their families say to you about the trip? Their friends?
- e. How did the students prepare to travel?
- f. How did they use the Student Handbook to prepare for travel?
- g. Was there anything the students told you that worried about or about which they were concerned before they traveled? If so, how did that affect your decision to travel?

2) (Academic achievement and school engagement) Describe how you remember their view of school before the trip(s). Think about their grades, attendance, behavior, teachers, etc.

**Probes:**
- a. What classes did the students like? What teachers did the students like?
- b. Describe how you remember students thinking about their grades.
- c. Describe how you remember students thought about CSAP.
- d. How do you think the trip(s) affected students’ school experience before they traveled? Think about classes, friends, HEEP job, teachers, etc.
- e. Describe how you remember travelers’ attendance and/or behavior at home and school before they traveled.
- f. Describe interactions with students before they traveled.

3) (Wrap-up of Set #1) Did you bring something to share with me about preparing to travel? If so, what is it and why did you decide to bring it? What does it say about the students’ trip(s)?

4) Do you have anything else you’d like to say about how students came to travel with Harold?

### Question Set #2: What was it like for students on the trips?

1) (General) Now I want to ask you about what it was like for students to travel with Harold Middle School. Think back to when you were on the trip and tell me about what it was like for the students.

   a. **Probes:**
   b. What experiences do you remember most clearly? Why?
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>What did the students liked the best? Liked least?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>What was it like for them to be away from home?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td>Talk about their experience flying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>Please share one experience that you feel represents what it was like to be on the DC trip as a student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g.</td>
<td>Describe any souvenirs or any mementoes you brought home from your trip. What are they? What meaning did they hold for you? Why did you buy them? How do they represent what the trip was like for students?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>(Student learning &amp; engagement on the trip) Tell me about what you think the students learned on the trip. Describe what and how they learned it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Probes:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>Tell me about how they used their Student Journal. What did they write or draw in it? What else did they put in it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>When we got to a new site or museum, how did work with the students to decide what they wanted to see at each place?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>Did you feel like they were learning on the trip? How do you know? Describe a time you remember from the trip when you feel they learned something.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td>Describe their behavior on the trip. How did this affect what they learned?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>Describe something that was personally challenging for a student on the trip. It could be anything that was difficult, uncomfortable, or unfamiliar that challenged a student. How did this affect that student?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g.</td>
<td>What didn’t the students like about the trip? Why? How do you know?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2)</td>
<td>(Other travelers). Tell me about the other travelers. Describe how the adult chaperones affected students’ trip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Probe:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1)</td>
<td>Describe what makes a good adult chaperone on the trip. Thinking about your trip, did you help or not help students? How? How did you affect students’ trips?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2)</td>
<td>Describe other chaperones and how they affected the students’ trips.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3)</td>
<td>Tell me about the students on the trip. Did you connect with new students? How did students affect your trip?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5)</td>
<td>(Wrap-up of Set #2) Did you bring something to share with me about what it was like to be on the trip as a student? If so, why did you bring it? What does it say about the students’ trip(s)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6)</td>
<td>Do you have anything else you’d like to say about what it was like for students to travel with Harold?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Question Set #3: Describe what the trip has meant for students and their lives**

1) (General) Now tell me what it was like for the students when they arrived home and through the years.

   **Probes:**
   a. What did the students tell their families and friends about the trip?
   b. What was it like to come back to school for the students?
   c. When you heard the students talk about their trip, what did they say and what was their reaction of other students or adults?

2) (Student learning & engagement after the trip) As the years have gone by, what has stuck with the students that they learned on the trips?

   **Probes:**
   a. Share one story that shows what the trip has meant to them through the years.
   b. How did what they learned before the trip help them, or not help them, understand what they saw and did on the trip?
   c. How did the trip affect their academic life?
   d. Did their view about school change after the trips? How? Why or why not?
   e. Describe what students have told you about their Student Journal and the meaning it has had since the trip.
   f. Describe any changes in their behavior at home or school change as a result of the trips. How can you tell it was due to the trips?
   g. Describe any changes in their attendance at home or school change as a result of the trips. How can you tell it was due to the trips?
   h. Did they participate in different clubs, sports, or activities in school after having traveled? Which ones? How do you know?
   i. Describe their attitude towards school after the trips. Had it changed because of the trip? Did it affect the answers to these questions: What kinds of grades did they get? What subjects did they do well in? Which were hard? Did they work harder? How do you know?

3) (Other travelers). Tell me about your interactions with student travelers since the trip. You can also think of other interactions with adult travelers as it relates to the meaning of travel for students

   **Probes:**
   a. Which student travelers do you keep in touch with from the trips? What do you talk about? What do you say when you reflect on the trip? Describe your conversations.
   b. Describe the other chaperones? How did they affect the students’ trips?
   c. When you think about the student travelers, do you think you had a different relationship with the students who traveled when compared to your non-traveling students since the trips? Describe this.
   d. Did you work with your students differently after the trip? How? Why?

4) (Personal Meaning through the years) Over the years, what has it meant to the students to have traveled?
Probes:

| a. | What did they learn about themselves? |
| b. | When do you talk about the trips and the impact on students with others?  
   | What do you say? |
| c. | How did the trip change the students, if it did? How do you know it was the trip and not something else? |
| d. | What surprised you about the significance of the trip for the students? How? Why? |
| e. | Do you ever talk with the students about their scrapbooks? If you do, what does it tell you about their trip? |
| f. | What things did they learn on the trip that helped them later in life? These can be personal, academic, work-related, college, etc. |
| g. | Have they traveled since their trip? Where? With whom? Did the trip influence their desire to travel? How do the two experiences compare? |
| h. | Where else have they shared that they’d like to go? Why? Did the trip influence this? |
| i. | Share one experience that demonstrates what the DC trip has meant to students through the years. |
| j. | Share the advice you’d give a future DC student, his family, and his chaperones. |
| k. | As you reflect on the trip through the years, what didn’t they like about the trip? Why? |

5) (Wrap-up Set #3) Did you bring something to share with me about what the trip has meant to students through the years? If so, why did you bring it? What does it say about their trip?

6) Do you have anything else you’d like to say about what the trip has meant to students?
Now I’d like to show you some information about students who traveled with Kepner during the same time period as you did. I am including data about students who traveled in the study because we hear a lot about test scores and data when talking about education. I want to know what you think about these data because it tells part of the story of their education.

First I’m going to show you some information about academic achievement that includes ACT scores, CSAP scale scores, and grade point averages at the end of high school.

Please open your binder to the first page. We will look at the 5 statements together and then talk about each one. (See Appendix M).

The data that I looked at suggest the following:
1. Students who were in the DC and Both travel groups had higher means for the ACT composite scores.
2. Students who were in the DC and Both travel groups had higher means for the ACT English subscores than those who were in the Europe or No Travel Groups.
3. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had higher means for ACT reading subscores than those who were in the No Travel Groups.
4. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups has higher CSAP scale scores in all tested subjects and grades than those in the No Travel Group.
5. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had higher grade point averages by the time they graduated (or did not graduate) from high school than those who were in the No Travel Groups.

I am interested in hearing what this information means to you.

Probes
a. What you remember how the students viewed standardized test scores on the ACT? CSAP?
b. Do you think that the trip changed how they did on either one of these tests? How?
c. Do you remember students talking about their GPA from high school? Do you think the trip had an influence on their grades? How?

Next, I’m going to show you data about school engagement that includes attendance rates, graduation rates, and suspension data.

Please open your binder to the section on school engagement. We will look at the 5 statements together and then talk about each one. (See Appendix M).

The information that I looked at suggest the following:
1. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had higher mean attendance rates in Grade 8 than those who were in the No Travel Groups.
2. Students who were in the Both Travel Groups had higher mean attendance rates in Grade 9 than those who were in the DC, Europe, or No Travel Groups.
3. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups were less likely to be suspended in Grade 5 & Grade 6 than those who were in the No Travel Groups.
4. Students who were in the No Travel group were less likely to be suspended in Grade 9 than those in the DC, Europe, or Both travel groups.
5. Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups were more likely to graduate from high school than those who were in the No Travel Groups.

I am interested in hearing what this information means to you.

Probes
a) What do you think these attendance and suspension rates?
b) Describe what you remember about students’ attendance and suspensions during the time of the trip
c) Describe the trip’s influence on whether or not a traveler graduated? How?
**Ethnicity, Race, Urban, Income Level and Gender Questions**

Some of the factors I am examining in this study are the effects, if any, of ethnicity, race, urban schooling, and income level on travel. If you are not comfortable answering these questions, you do not have to answer them.

a. Do you think travelers’ race or ethnicity affected their travel experience? How? Why or why not?

b. Harold Middle School is considered an urban school (a school in a big city). Describe the influence attending a large urban middle school may or may not have had on the students’ travel experience. How? Why or why not?

c. Harold Middle School is a school in a low-income neighborhood. Describe the influence attending a school in a low-income neighborhood may or may not have had on the students’ travel experience? How? Why or why not?

d. Describe the influence gender may or may not have had on the students’ travel experience. How? Why or Why not?

e. Do you have anything you’d like to add about these three topics before we leave this section?
## Wrap Up

1) Would you like to add anything else before we close?

2) At the beginning of the interview I asked about how students came to travel with Harold. Some of the things I heard include…

3) And then I asked you what it was like on the trip for the students. Some of the things I heard include…

4) And then I asked you about what the trips have meant to the students. Some of the things I heard include…

5) Did I get that right? Is there anything else you’d like to add? Is there anything that you feel I didn’t understand properly?

Thanks. I really appreciate your help with my research. Here is your $40. I will follow up with you by email in a couple of days to see if there is anything else you would like to add about your interview. I will also send you a summary of this focus group for you to read and make sure you said all you wanted to say. Remember, you can always contact me with questions or comments about this focus group.
APPENDIX K

This We Believe, AMLE, 2010

From Association for Middle Level Education, http://www.amle.org/portals/0/pdf.twb/TWB_colorchart
Grade 6 Attendance

Mean attendance rates by travel group for Grade 6.
Grade 7 Attendance

Mean attendance rates by travel group for Grade 7.
Mean attendance rates by travel group for Grade 8.
Grade 9 Attendance

Mean attendance rates by travel group for Grade 9.
APPENDIX M

Binder Information shared with Participants

Interview Binder

The Meaning of Educational Travel in the Lives of Urban Middle School Students:
A Transformative, Sequential Mixed Methods Study

Academic Achievement
ACT Scores
CSAP Scale Scores
GPA (Grade Point Averages)

School Engagement
Attendance Rates
Graduation Rates
Suspensions

Carrie A. Olson
303-910-4963

Academic Achievement

ACT Scores

Students who were in the DC and Both travel groups had a higher mean ACT composite score than those who were in the Europe or No Travel Groups.

Students who were in the DC and Both travel groups had a higher mean ACT English subscore than those who were in the Europe or No Travel Groups.

Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had a higher mean ACT reading subscore than those who were in the No Travel Groups.

CSAP Scale Scores

As a group, students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had higher CSAP scale scores in all tested subjects and grades than those in the No Travel Group.
GPA (Grade Point Averages)

Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had higher grade point averages (GPA) at the time they graduated (or did not graduate) from high school than those who were in the No Travel Group.
**Academic Achievement:**

**ACT Scores**

Students who were in the **DC and Both** travel groups had a higher mean **ACT composite score** than those who were in the Europe or No Travel Groups.

Students who were in the **DC and Both** travel groups had a higher mean **ACT English subscore** than those who were in the Europe or No Travel Groups.

Students who were in the **DC, Europe, or Both** Travel Groups had a higher mean **ACT reading subscore** than those who were in the No Travel Groups.
## ACT NUMBERS

### Table 1

*Average Number of Students Who Took the ACT 2003-2011*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US National</td>
<td>1,348,242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>49,163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School district</td>
<td>3,457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvey HS</td>
<td>319</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2

*Number of Students in the Study Who Took the ACT 2003-2011*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Total in Study</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Travel</td>
<td>1010</td>
<td>6100</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1178</td>
<td>6444</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3

*Average ACT Scores 2003 – 2011*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Composite</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Science</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US National</td>
<td>21.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>20.43</td>
<td>19.71</td>
<td>20.14</td>
<td>20.78</td>
<td>20.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>20.50</td>
<td>19.71</td>
<td>20.14</td>
<td>20.78</td>
<td>20.50</td>
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<td>district</td>
<td>16.74</td>
<td>15.05</td>
<td>16.98</td>
<td>17.40</td>
<td>17.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvey HS</td>
<td>14.08</td>
<td>11.86</td>
<td>15.16</td>
<td>13.96</td>
<td>15.08</td>
</tr>
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<td>17.18</td>
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<td>14.34</td>
<td>16.95</td>
<td>16.36</td>
<td>16.31</td>
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<td>15.26</td>
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Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for ACT Composite Scores

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<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
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<td>1.25</td>
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<td>4.10</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>-0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>16.06</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.37</td>
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<td>0.52</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
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*Figure 1. Mean of ACT composite score by Travel Group.*
ACT English Subscores

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for ACT English Subscores

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<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
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<td>0.17</td>
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<tr>
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<td>44</td>
<td>5.07</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>14.34</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>-0.56</td>
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<tr>
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<td>43</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>-0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>4.36</td>
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Figure 2. Mean of ACT English subscore by Travel Group.
### ACT Mathematics Subscores

Table 6

**Descriptive Statistics for ACT Mathematics Subscores**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Travel</th>
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<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewnes</th>
<th>Kurtosi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>No travel</td>
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<td>3.00</td>
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<td>3.62</td>
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<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>80</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>17.02</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>3.40</td>
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<tr>
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*Figure 3. Mean of ACT mathematics subscore by Travel Group.*
ACT Reading Subscores

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics for ACT Reading Subscores

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<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>-0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>16.36</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>17.02</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
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Figure 4. ACT reading mean subscore by Travel Group.
ACT Science Subscores

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for ACT Science Subscores

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>3.78</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.23</td>
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<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>17.18</td>
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<td>4.40</td>
<td>-0.22</td>
<td>-0.56</td>
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<td>16.31</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
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<td>Both</td>
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<td>3.81</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
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<td>1177</td>
<td>3.82</td>
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<td></td>
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</table>

Figure 5. ACT science mean subscore by Travel Group.
Academic Achievement: 
CSAP Scale Scores

As a group, students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had higher CSAP scale scores in all tested subjects and grades than those in the No Travel Group.
Table 9

*Number of Students in the Study Who Took the CSAP Mathematics 2003-2011*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Total in Study</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Travel</td>
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<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1341</td>
<td>6444</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10

*Number of Students in the Study Who Took the CSAP Reading 2003-2011*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Total in Study</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Travel</td>
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<td>6100</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1316</td>
<td>6444</td>
<td>20%</td>
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</table>

Table 11

*Number of Students in the Study Who Took the CSAP Science 2003-2011*

<table>
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<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>6444</td>
<td>7%</td>
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Table 12

*Number of Students in the Study Who Took the CSAP Writing 2003-2011*

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<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>58</td>
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<td>Europe</td>
<td>73</td>
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<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1171</td>
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Table 13

Performance Level Scale Ranges for CSAP Assessments (adapted)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Content Area</th>
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<th>Partially Proficient</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>220 – 421</td>
<td>422 – 493</td>
<td>494 – 561</td>
<td>562 – 800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>280 – 486</td>
<td>519 – 558</td>
<td>559 – 613</td>
<td>614 – 860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>220 – 357</td>
<td>338 – 587</td>
<td>588 – 690</td>
<td>691 – 955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>280 – 486</td>
<td>487 – 558</td>
<td>559 – 613</td>
<td>614 – 860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>300 – 428</td>
<td>429 – 507</td>
<td>508 – 568</td>
<td>569 – 900</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>300 – 408</td>
<td>469 – 506</td>
<td>507 – 580</td>
<td>581 – 900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>220 – 217</td>
<td>418 – 497</td>
<td>498 – 575</td>
<td>576 – 780</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>240 – 429</td>
<td>430 – 538</td>
<td>539 – 628</td>
<td>629 – 890</td>
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<td>556 – 651</td>
<td>651 – 910</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>459 – 577</td>
<td>578 – 690</td>
<td>690 – 950</td>
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<td>Std. Deviation</td>
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<td>----------------</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>479.51</td>
<td>63.59</td>
<td>86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
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<td>75.99</td>
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<td>62.06</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>61.95</td>
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<td>1341</td>
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<td>86</td>
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<td>DC</td>
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</table>
**Figure 5.** CSAP Mathematics scale scores means by grade and by travel group.
Table 15

*Descriptive Statistics for CSAP Reading Scale Scores*

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Grade</th>
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<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>572.26</td>
<td>53.27</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
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<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>73.95</td>
<td>1316</td>
</tr>
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<td>563.12</td>
<td>73.77</td>
<td>1116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>577.32</td>
<td>75.79</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>586.94</td>
<td>60.40</td>
<td>86</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>602.04</td>
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<td>55</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>582.26</td>
<td>66.57</td>
<td>1116</td>
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<td></td>
<td>DC</td>
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<td>78.98</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Europe</td>
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<td>53.50</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>622.95</td>
<td>53.82</td>
<td>55</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>586.28</td>
<td>66.64</td>
<td>1316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>602.07</td>
<td>58.16</td>
<td>1116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>624.51</td>
<td>63.87</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>623.47</td>
<td>46.20</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>629.85</td>
<td>64.72</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>605.63</td>
<td>58.57</td>
<td>1316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>623.55</td>
<td>48.91</td>
<td>1116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>638.53</td>
<td>55.82</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>637.47</td>
<td>38.69</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>644.51</td>
<td>49.26</td>
<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>626.00</td>
<td>48.97</td>
<td>1316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>645.42</td>
<td>53.34</td>
<td>1116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>666.44</td>
<td>52.00</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>662.42</td>
<td>35.02</td>
<td>86</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>668.95</td>
<td>59.35</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>648.46</td>
<td>53.00</td>
<td>1316</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 6. CSAP reading scale score means by grade and by travel group.
Table 16

Descriptive Statistics for CSAP Science Scale Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5 Science Scale Score</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>489.14</td>
<td>56.08</td>
<td>421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>534.84</td>
<td>46.17</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>490.19</td>
<td>51.19</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>522.70</td>
<td>31.25</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>492.60</td>
<td>55.65</td>
<td>479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8 Science Scale Score</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>453.29</td>
<td>60.70</td>
<td>421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>493.26</td>
<td>34.58</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>446.60</td>
<td>56.61</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>483.09</td>
<td>39.52</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>456.08</td>
<td>59.62</td>
<td>479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10 Science Scale Score</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>449.77</td>
<td>58.77</td>
<td>421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>489.42</td>
<td>38.78</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>442.88</td>
<td>71.82</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>471.09</td>
<td>45.13</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>452.13</td>
<td>58.55</td>
<td>479</td>
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</table>
Figure 7. CSAP science scale score means by grade and by travel group.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5 Writing Scale Score</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>454.03</td>
<td>50.98</td>
<td>988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>464.91</td>
<td>58.18</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>475.70</td>
<td>48.85</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>481.90</td>
<td>48.05</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>457.16</td>
<td>51.62</td>
<td>1171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6 Writing Scale Score</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>475.17</td>
<td>53.40</td>
<td>988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>488.29</td>
<td>56.71</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>501.11</td>
<td>49.66</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>509.33</td>
<td>48.29</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>478.95</td>
<td>53.89</td>
<td>1171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7 Writing Scale Score</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>496.64</td>
<td>58.87</td>
<td>988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>519.26</td>
<td>69.40</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>516.81</td>
<td>57.69</td>
<td>73</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>532.19</td>
<td>52.86</td>
<td>52</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>59.80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 8 Writing Scale Score</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>510.89</td>
<td>56.91</td>
<td>988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>529.50</td>
<td>62.74</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>525.55</td>
<td>50.92</td>
<td>73</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>546.77</td>
<td>51.40</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>514.32</td>
<td>57.23</td>
<td>1171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 9 Writing Scale Score</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>514.74</td>
<td>56.06</td>
<td>988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>537.67</td>
<td>63.09</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>533.30</td>
<td>48.17</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>548.02</td>
<td>54.28</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>518.51</td>
<td>56.56</td>
<td>1171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10 Writing Scale Score</td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>523.15</td>
<td>63.36</td>
<td>988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>547.67</td>
<td>69.16</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>542.32</td>
<td>53.11</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>552.02</td>
<td>60.76</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>526.84</td>
<td>63.49</td>
<td>1171</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 8. CSAP writing scale score means by grade and by travel group.
Academic Achievement: GPA
(Grade Point Averages)

Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had higher grade point averages (GPA) at the time they graduated (or did not graduate) from high school than those who were in the No Travel Group.
Table 18

Descriptive Statistics for Cumulative GPA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>3952</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>-0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>-0.40</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>-0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>4282</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 9.* Mean unweighted grade point averages by travel group. Unweighted refers to a 4.0 grading scale.
School Engagement

Attendance Rates

Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had a higher mean attendance rate in Grade 8 than those who were in the No Travel Groups.

Students who were in the Both Travel Groups had a higher mean attendance rate in Grade 9 than those who were in the DC, Europe, or No Travel Groups.

Graduation Rates

Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups were more likely to graduate from high school than those who were in the No Travel Group.

Suspensions

Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups were less likely to have been suspended in Grade 5 than those who were in the No Travel Groups.

Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups were less likely to have been suspended in Grade 6 than those who were in the No Travel Groups.

Students who were in the No Travel group were less likely to be suspended in Grade 9 than those in the DC, Europe, or Both travel groups.
School Engagement: Attendance Rates

Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups had a higher mean attendance rate in Grade 8 than those who were in the No Travel Groups.

Students who were in the Both Travel Groups had a higher mean attendance rate in Grade 9 than those who were in the DC, Europe, or No Travel Groups.
Grade 6 Attendance

Table 19

Descriptive Statistics for Grade 6 Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>2362</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>2399</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 10. Mean attendance rates by travel group for Grade 6.
Grade 7 Attendance

Table 20

Descriptive Statistics for Grade 7 Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>2213</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>2283</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 11. Mean attendance rates by travel group for Grade 7.
Grade 8 Attendance

Table 21

Descriptive Statistics for Grade 8 Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>2046</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>2155</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 12. Mean attendance rates by travel group for Grade 8.
Grade 9 Attendance

Table 22

Descriptive Statistics for Grade 9 Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>1827</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 13. Mean attendance rates by travel group for Grade 9.
School Engagement: Graduation Rates

Students who were in the DC, Europe, or Both Travel Groups were more likely to graduate from high school than those who were in the No Travel Group.
Table 23  

*Number of Students Who Graduated from HS from 2003-2011*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Number Graduated</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Travel</td>
<td>1499</td>
<td>769</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1663</td>
<td>906</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 24  

*Number of Students Who Did Not Graduate from HS from 2003-2011*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Number Not Graduated</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Travel</td>
<td>1499</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1663</td>
<td>757</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 25

Graduation and Non-Graduation Comparisons for Travel Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduation</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>No travel</th>
<th>DC</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Both</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>769</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>816.7</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>906.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Travel</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not graduate</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>682</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>757.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Travel</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>-1.9</td>
<td>-4.7</td>
<td>-2.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>1499</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>1499.0</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>76.0</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>1663.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>90.1%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Graduation Rate
(by four travel groups)

Figure 14. Percentage of high school graduates and drop outs by travel group.
Table 26

Graduation and Non-Graduation Comparisons for Travel and No Travel Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduation</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>No travel</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>769</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>906</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>816.7</td>
<td>89.3</td>
<td>906.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Travel</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not graduate</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>757</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>682.3</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>757.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Travel</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>-5.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>1499</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>1663</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>1499.0</td>
<td>164.0</td>
<td>1663.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 15. Percent of high school graduates and drop outs by travel group. DC, Europe, and Both are combined into one group, Travel.
School Engagement: Suspensions

Students who were in the **DC, Europe, or Both** Travel Groups were **less likely to have been suspended in Grade 5** than those who were in the No Travel Groups.

Students who were in the **DC, Europe, or Both** Travel Groups were **less likely to have been suspended in Grade 6** than those who were in the No Travel Groups.

Students who were in the **No Travel** group were **less likely to be suspended in Grade 9** than those in the DC, Europe, or Both travel groups.
Table 27

*Suspension Rate Comparisons for Travel Groups in Grade 5*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suspensions</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>Euro</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>5804</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>6146</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>5817.9</td>
<td>128.8</td>
<td>128.8</td>
<td>70.6</td>
<td>6146.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Travel</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>94.4%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One or more</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>suspensions Count</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>298</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>282.1</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>298.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Travel</td>
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<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
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<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>-2.1</td>
<td>-2.5</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>6100</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>6444</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>6100.0</td>
<td>135.0</td>
<td>135.0</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>6444.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grade 5 Suspensions
(by four travel groups)

Figure 16. Percent of students with one or more suspensions. This graph shows percent of students with one or more suspensions and those with no suspensions by Travel Group for Grade 5.
Table 28

Suspension Rate Comparisons for Travel Groups in Grade 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suspensions</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>Euro</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>5401</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>5739</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>5432.6</td>
<td>120.2</td>
<td>120.2</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>5739</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NoSuspensions</td>
<td>% within Travel</td>
<td>88.7%</td>
<td>94.8%</td>
<td>97.0</td>
<td>94.6%</td>
<td>89.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total Std. Residual</td>
<td>84.0%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>89.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>705</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>667.4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>705.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspensions</td>
<td>% within Travel</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total Std. Residual</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>6100</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>6444</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>6100.0</td>
<td>135.0</td>
<td>135.0</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>6444.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grade 6 Suspensions
(by four travel groups)

Figure 17. Percent of students with one or more suspensions. This graph shows percent of students with one or more suspensions and those with no suspensions by Travel Group for Grade 6.
Table 29

Suspension Rate Comparisons for Travel Groups in Grade 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suspensions</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No travel</td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No suspensions</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>5252</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>5554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected</td>
<td>5257.5</td>
<td>116.4</td>
<td>116.4</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>5554.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within</td>
<td>86.1%</td>
<td>85.9%</td>
<td>90.4%</td>
<td>86.5%</td>
<td>86.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>81.5%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>86.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>19</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>890</td>
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<td>suspensions</td>
<td>Expected</td>
<td>842.5</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>890.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>6100</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>6444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected</td>
<td>6100.0</td>
<td>135.0</td>
<td>135.0</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>6444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

%
Grade 7 Suspensions  
(by four travel groups)

Figure 18. Percent of students with one or more suspensions. This graph shows percent of students with one or more suspensions and those with no suspensions by Travel Group for Grade 7.
Table 30

Suspension Rate Comparisons for Travel Groups in Grade 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suspensions</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>No travel</th>
<th>DC</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Both</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>5281</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
<td>5507</td>
</tr>
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<td>5213.0</td>
<td>115.4</td>
<td>115.4</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>5507.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Travel</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
<td>79.3%</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>89.2%</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One or more</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suspensions Count</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>937</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>887.0</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>937.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Travel</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Count</td>
<td>6100</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>6444</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>6100.0</td>
<td>135.0</td>
<td>135.0</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>6444</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 19. Percent of students with one or more suspensions. This graph shows percent of students with one or more suspensions and those with no suspensions by Travel Group for Grade 8.
Table 31

*Suspension Rate Comparisons for Travel Groups in Grade 9*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suspensions</th>
<th>Count</th>
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<th>DC</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Both</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>No suspensions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Count</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5498</td>
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<td>118</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>5794</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>121.4</td>
<td>66.5</td>
<td>5794.0</td>
</tr>
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<td>83.0%</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>89.2%</td>
<td>89.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>85.3%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>89.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
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<td>-0.9</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>One or more</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Count</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>8</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>615.3</td>
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<td>13.6</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>650.0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>9.9%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
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<td>9.3%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
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<td>-0.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Count</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>135</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>6444</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Expected</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6100.0</td>
<td>135.0</td>
<td>135.0</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>6444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>94.7%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grade 9 Suspensions
(by four travel groups)

Figure 20. Percent of students with one or more suspensions. This graph shows percent of students with one or more suspensions and those with no suspensions by Travel Group for Grade 9.
Table 33

Suspension Rate Comparisons for Travel vs. No Travel Groups in Grade 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suspensions</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>No travel</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No suspensions</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>5804</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>6146</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>5817.09</td>
<td>328.1</td>
<td>6146.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>90.1%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>95.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 or more suspensions</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>298</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>282.1</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>298.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>-3.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>6100</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>6444</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>6100.0</td>
<td>344.0</td>
<td>6444.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grade 5 Suspensions
(by two travel groups)

Figure 21. Percent of students with one or more suspensions. This graph shows percent of students with one or more suspensions and those with no suspensions comparing No Travel and Travel for Grade 5. DC, Europe, and Both are combined into one group, Travel.
Table 34

Suspension Rate Comparisons for Travel vs. No Travel Groups in Grade 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suspensions</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>No travel</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No suspensions</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>5410</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>5739</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>5432.6</td>
<td>306.4</td>
<td>5739.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Travel</td>
<td>88.7%</td>
<td>95.6%</td>
<td>89.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>84.0%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>89.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 or more suspensions</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>705</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>667.4</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>705.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Travel</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>-3.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>6100</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>6444</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>6100.0</td>
<td>344.0</td>
<td>6444.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 22. Percent of students with one or more suspensions. This graph shows percent of students with one or more suspensions and those with no suspensions No Travel and Travel for Grade 6. DC, Europe, and Both are combined into one group, Travel.
Table 35

*Suspension Rate Comparisons for Travel vs. No Travel Groups in Grade 7*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suspensions</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>No travel</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No suspensions</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>5252</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>5554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>5257.5</td>
<td>296.5</td>
<td>5554.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>81.5%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>86.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 or more suspensions</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>848</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>842.5</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>890.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>6100</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>6444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>6100.0</td>
<td>344.0</td>
<td>6444.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grade 7 Suspensions (by two travel groups)

Figure 23. Percent of students with one or more suspensions. This graph shows percent of students with one or more suspensions and those with no suspensions comparing No Travel and Travel for Grade 7. DC, Europe, and Both are combined into one group, Travel.
Table 36

Suspension Rate Comparisons for Travel vs. No Travel Groups in Grade 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suspensions</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>No travel</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No suspensions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>5218</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>5507</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>5213.0</td>
<td>294.0</td>
<td>5507.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Travel</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
<td>84.0%</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 or more suspensions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>882</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>937</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>887.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>937.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Travel</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6100</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>6444</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>6100.0</td>
<td>344.0</td>
<td>6444.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 24. Percent of students with one or more suspensions. This graph shows percent of students with one or more suspensions and those with no suspensions comparing No Travel and Travel for Grade 8. DC, Europe, and Both are combined into one group, Travel.
### Table 37

**Suspension Rate Comparisons for Travel vs. No Travel Groups in Grade 9**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suspensions</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>No travel</th>
<th>Travel</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>No suspensions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>5498</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>5794</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>5484.7</td>
<td>309.3</td>
<td>5794</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Travel</td>
<td>90.1%</td>
<td>86.0%</td>
<td>89.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>85.3%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>89.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Residual</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>602</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>650</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>615.3</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>650.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One or more suspensions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>6100</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>6444</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>6100.0</td>
<td>344.0</td>
<td>6444.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grade 9 Suspensions
(by two travel groups)

Figure 25. Percent of students with one or more suspensions. This graph shows percent of students with one or more suspensions and those with no suspensions comparing No Travel and Travel for Grade 9. DC, Europe, and Both are combined into one group, Travel.
### Years of the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>DC</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Both</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2008 &amp; 2010</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2009 &amp; 2011</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2010 &amp; 2012</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2011 &amp; 2013</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of the 6444 at the time of graduation in 2012

43% weren’t old enough to have graduated
17% went to another school in CO
10% went out of state or the country
2% to non-public schools
11% dropped out
13% graduated with a regular diploma
4% illness, detention centers, GED, etc.

Table 7

| Total Trip Students (1993–2014) from Harold Middle School and Sample Population Characteristics |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Total                                           | M %                                           | Fe %                                           | A %                                           | B %                                           | Hi %                                           | W %                                           |
| Sample                                         | Total                                         | Total                                         | Total                                         | Total                                         | Total                                         | Total                                         |
| Males                                          | %                                             | %                                             | %                                             | %                                             | %                                             | %                                             |
| females                                        | %                                             | %                                             | %                                             | %                                             | %                                             | %                                             |
| American                                        | 3                                             | 3                                             | 48                                            | 6                                             | 1                                             | 1                                             | 1                                             | 2                                             | 58                                             | 7                                             | 7                                             | 9                                             |
| Asian                                          | 2                                             | 0                                             | 9                                             | 0                                             | 1                                             | 1                                             | 1                                             | 4                                             | 4                                              | 5                                             | 1                                             |
| Black                                          | 2                                             | 1                                             | 3                                             | 2                                             | 7                                             | 8                                             | 8                                             | 1                                             | 2                                              | 7                                             |
| Hawaiian                                        | 9                                             | 2                                             | 0                                             | 4                                             | 4                                             | 4                                             | 9                                             | 9                                             | 7                                              |
| Both                                           | 97                                            | 2                                             | 3                                             | 68                                            | 7                                             | 0                                             | 0                                             | 1                                             | 1                                             | 88                                            | 9                                             | 8                                             | 9                                             |
| DC                                             | 175                                           | 6                                             | 3                                             | 11                                            | 6                                             | 4                                             | 2                                             | 1                                             | 1                                             | 16                                            | 9                                             | 1                                             | 6                                             |
| European                                       | 146                                           | 4                                             | 3                                             | 98                                            | 6                                             | 4                                             | 3                                             | 7                                             | 5                                             | 12                                            | 8                                             | 1                                             | 7                                             |
| Other                                          | 8                                             | 3                                             | 7                                             |                                               |                                               |                                               |                                               |                                               |                                               |                                               |                                               |                                               |                                               |

Note. The sample number (418) is different from the actual scores I examined (344) due to missing data. I left it at 418 because it describes the sample from which I invited people to be interviewed or participate in focus groups. Because the data is coded, I do not know whose data has been removed due to no score