The Nova Project for Twice Exceptional Children

Principal Investigator: Dr. Fawzy Ebrahim
Co-Investigators: Carmel Joseph & Kathylynn Pierre
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Purpose

The Nova Project for Twice Exceptional Children is a collaboration with Broward County Public Schools in effort to address gifted and talented students who have learning difficulties, and to implement a comprehensive evaluation to discover highly able students with learning difficulties or social impairments.
The project will concentrate on the recruitment of gifted students at Nova Blanche Forman Elementary School with “general intellectual ability” or “specific ability aptitude” who also have learning difficulties in two broad areas—Autism or specific learning disabilities. The goal of this study is to work with a group of 20 students from Nova Blanche Forman Elementary School.
Objectives

- Describe and document unique characteristics of twice-exceptional students through data analysis.
- Develop data-driven recommendations to enhance the student-learning environment.
- Contribute towards professional development of educators and increase collaboration among regular, special, and gifted educators to meet the learning needs of all children, including students with disabilities who are gifted and talented.
- Disseminate findings so that the program is replicated statewide and, ultimately, throughout the nation.
Subjects’ commitment to the study is 6 weeks.

Students will be observed in their learning environment after school by the PI and the Co-PIs for 3 hours each week; one and a half hours each session (3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.), twice a week.

Students will be tested using the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking – Form A for 20-30 minutes.

Students will participate in mathematics, reading, science, and art activities.

The combined total of activity time is 18 hours.
Proposed Outcomes for Educators

As a result of this project, educators will:

1) increase awareness and understanding of the characteristics and number of twice-exceptional students

2) have knowledge of effective systems to evaluate twice-exceptional students comprehensively

3) improve attitudes about providing appropriate interventions for twice-exceptional students

4) have improved skills to understand unique learning needs of twice-exceptional students, and

5) change their behavior by applying new knowledge, attitudes, awareness, and skills to implement more appropriate procedures and interventions for twice-exceptional students
IRB Timeline

- NSU IRB approval granted August 20, 2009.
- First submission for Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) IRB approval made on October 9, 2009. Approval denied; recommendations provided to research team per Maria Ligas, Ph.D., BCPS IRB Chair.
- Recommendations per Dr. Ligas addressed by research team. Second submission for BCPS IRB approval made on December 22, 2009. Approval pending.
Data collection will begin on March 1, 2010.

Anticipated research completion date is June 30, 2010.

Research findings provided to the Quality of Life Council (NSU) and Research Services (BCPS) on December 1, 2010.
Questions