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THE EFFECTS OF GENDER SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL
STRATEGIES: EXAMINING THE READING ACHIEVEMENT OF
BOYS IN SINGLE-SEX SCHOOLS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

Virginia Bonomo
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STUDENT HAS RESTRICTED ACCESS TO FULL TEXT OF THE DISSERTATION.

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This study examines the effect of gender specific instructional strategies on boys reading achievement in single-sex schools. Research indicates that there is a growing gender gap, especially in the area of literacy development and reading achievement. Each year, statistics indicate that boys are falling further behind girls in reading achievement. Although researchers agree that there are developmental gender differences, opinions differ as to the impact of those differences on learning. Boys and girls do learn differently, but to what extent should that impact how educators teach reading? Does gender influence how children learn? Do boys learn one way and girls learn another? With the current climate of high-stakes testing, standardized tests continue to indicate achievement gaps by gender.

The interest in single-sex schooling is not new; however, the emphasis on gender differences is the key to the current rationale for implementation of single-sex education. Elementary schools that are transitioning from co-educational to single-sex schools are doing so to improve student achievement, address the needs of students who are at risk of academic failure, meet diverse educational needs, and

acknowledge gender-based learning differences. Understanding and addressing these gender-based differences can help to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to learn. For educators, the goal should be to meet the diverse learning needs of each student in the classroom and that creates an educational system that has the courage and the wisdom to value, encourage, and celebrate the innate gender differences while creating an equal educational opportunity for every child.

It is vital that brain-based gender differences be considered when planning and implementing curriculum within schools. If the daunting statistic concerning boys reading achievement in schools is to be addressed, single-sex classrooms and schools must become an integral part of the debate in the educational system in America. This study provides additional evidence that attending a single-sex school improves the reading achievement of boys.