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CONNECTING WITH FAMILIES OF POVERTY HANDBOOK

A Project

Presented to

The Graduate Faculty

Central Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment

of Requirements for the Degree

Master of Education

School Administration

by

Rebecca Christine Oren

May 2014

CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Graduate Studies

Final Examination of
Rebecca Christine Oren
Master of Education School Administration

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1:00 p.m.

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Courses presented for the Master's degree

Course No.	Course Title	Number of Credits	Instructor	Quarter Completed
EDF 505	Ed Measurement for Teachers	3	S. Schmitz	Winter, 2011
EDF 506	Educational Futurism	3	S. Schmitz	Spring, 2011
EDAD 589	School Law	5	H. Williams	Summer, 2011
EDAD 583	School and Community	4	H. Williams	Fall, 2011
EDAD 586	Principalship	4	D. Szal	Winter, 2012
EDAD 582	School Curriculum	4	D. Szal	Spring, 2012
EDAD 579	School Personnel	4	J. Pappas	Summer, 2012
EDAD 577	Diversity Leadership	3	J. David	Fall, 2012
EDAD 580	Education Administration	4	H. Williams	Winter, 2013
EDF 510	Ed Foundations & Research Courses	4	S. Schmitz	Winter, 2013
EDAD 581	Public School Finance	4	J. Pappas	Spring, 2013
EDAD 692	Pre-Autumn Internship	3	R. Close	Fall, 2013
EDAD 693	Intern School Administration	3	R. Close	Fall, 2013
EDAD 584	School Supervision	4	D. Wattam	Winter, 2014
EDAD 693	Intern School Administration	3	R. Close	Winter, 2014
EDAD 700	Thesis or Opinion	3	D. Wattam	Spring, 2014
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Please Note:

This student's biographical information has been redacted due to privacy concerns.

ABSTRACT

CONNECTING WITH FAMILIES OF POVERTY HANDBOOK

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Rebecca Christine Oren

May, 2014

The purpose of this project is to create a handbook describing services available in the Sumner School District and researched based practices for elementary administrators and teachers to use when working with students and families of poverty. The McKinney-Vento Act in the United States protects families to ensure that all students have immediate access to school-linked services, including free breakfast and lunch, as well as transportation needs for getting to and from school. This handbook includes descriptions and contact information for local support organizations that administrators and teachers can additionally partner with to create supportive learning environments within their school and community to enhance student achievement in the Sumner and Bonney Lake communities of Washington.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Project

Poverty is an issue and word discussed frequently in today's media. Found in the news in conjuncture with the struggling economy, increase in social need, lack of resources to fill demand, and linked to the failures of schools. Poverty affects students and their families in many ways. In a recent study by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, 80% of the nation's low-income fourth grade students are not proficient in reading (Annie E Casey Foundation, 2014). Students who come from low-income backgrounds are failing at higher rates than their less disadvantaged counterparts, and there is a growing concern for administrators and teachers to find better ways to connect with students and families who are at risk or in poverty (Goldhaber, 2008).

Based on Maslow's hierarchy of need all humans may struggle to reach self-actualization when a basic need or needs from the physiological and safety levels are not met (Maslow, 2013 p. 65). Payne (2013) echoed this idea in her definition of poverty, "the extent to which an individual does without resources" (p. 7). For the purpose of this project Payne's definition for poverty will be used along with the nine basic resources: financial, emotional, mental/cognitive, spiritual, physical, support systems, relationship/role models, knowledge of hidden rules, and language/formal register.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to create a handbook describing services available in the Sumner School District and researched based best practices for elementary administrators and teachers to use when working with students and families who are

considered to be at risk or in poverty. This will be a useful tool to utilize now as it is unclear if the growing need of Washington's families has yet to even peak. Students who come from poverty or are at risk are still the schools' responsibility to care for and educate which may require adjustments to current practice.

Fullan referenced change (2001):

Thus, on the one hand, we need to keep in mind the values and goals and the consequences associated with specific educational changes; and on the other hand, we need to comprehend the dynamics of educational change as a sociopolitical process involving all kinds of individual, classroom, school, local, regional, and national factors at work in interactive ways. The problem of meaning is one of how those involved in change can come to understand what it is that should change, and how it can be best accomplished, while realizing that the what and how constantly interact and reshape each other. (p. 8)

To ensure that this type of change is able to take place administrators and teachers need to be aware of the resources available to them. The goal of the handbook is to provide such information and resources with the intent for it to be utilized in supporting positive and successful interactions between low-income students and schools; resulting in an increase in student achievement.

Significance of the Project

The knowledge of needed resources helps identify and understand people who are either in poverty or at risk. This is such an important issue as the United States economy has been struggling; resulting in changes to the overall population. The effects of these changes according to Sanders and Downer (2013) are, "Population estimates project that

by 2050 the United States will have completed the shift from a European-American, English-speaking majority to a society in which linguistic, ethnic, and cultural diversity is predominant” (para. 1).

As such, schools across the nation are finding an increase of families in poverty or at risk to their population. In Washington State the number of students receiving free or reduced-price meals has gone from 31.1% in 2001-2002 to 46.1% in 2012-2013. That is a 15% increase, and it is not only on a State level. The Sumner School District, total population of 8,459 students as of May 2013, is comprised of eight elementary schools, three middle, and two high schools. As suburb of the city of Tacoma it is located in the south sound portion of Washington State; nested between Puget Sound and Mount Rainer. This district’s two largest races/ethnicities are white and Hispanic which consist of 76.2% and 12% of the total population. Students who received special education services account for 14% of the population and 3% have a 504 plan. During the same time span Sumner’s percentage of students receiving free or reduced-price meals increased a total of 12.7% (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2012).

With these growing numbers of families in need, it has become critical for educators to find ways to build relationships with those in at risk or in poverty. Understanding, relating, and collaborating with low-income families are crucial steps so that all students’ needs are effectively met and they are able to be successful at school.

Limitations of the Project

There are also limitations that need to be addressed for this project. As stated earlier poverty is an issue that has received lots of national attention, and as such there is a lot of information regarding this topic. Background information will be provided when

necessary to illustrate the importance or effectiveness of a strategy or technique. However, a complete sociological review of people at risk or in poverty will not be provided, as it is too grand of a scope. Furthermore, not all of the resources mentioned in this handbook will be available to every elementary administrator and teacher in Washington; as this project is targeted to the Sumner School District area and the surrounding community of Bonney Lake in Washington State.

Definition of Terms

Nine Essential Resources: For the purpose of this study, the words nine essential resources are defined as the necessary resources, that people in poverty are lacking (Payne, 2013, p. 8):

Financial: For the purpose of this study, the word financial is defined as having enough money to purchase needed goods and services, (Payne, 2013, p.8).

Emotional: For the purpose of this study, the word emotional is defined as the ability to choose and control emotional response, particularly to negative situations, without engaging in self-destructive behavior. This is an internal resource and shows itself through stamina, perseverance, and choices (Payne, 2013, p.8).

Mental/Cognitive: For the purpose of this study the words mental/cognitive are defined as having the mental abilities and acquired skills (reading, writing, computing) to deal effectively with daily life (Payne, 2013, p.8).

Spiritual: For the purpose of this study the word spiritual is defined as the belief in divine purpose and guidance (Payne, 2013, p.8).

Physical: For the purpose of this study the word physical is defined as possessing physical health and mobility (Payne, 2013, p.8).

Support System: For the purpose of this study the words support system are defined as having friends, family, and backup resources available to access in times of need. These are external resources (Payne, 2013, p.8).

Relationships/Role Models: For the purpose of this study the words relationships/role models are defined as having frequent access to individual(s) who are appropriate, who are nurturing, and do not engage in self-destructive behavior (Payne, 2013, p. 8).

Knowledge of Hidden Rules: For the purpose of this study the words knowledge of hidden rules are defined as knowing the unspoken cues and habits of different groups (Payne, 2013, p.8).

Language/Formal Register: For the purpose of this study the words language/formal register are defined as the ability to competently, use the vocabulary and sentence structure of work and school (Payne, 2013, p.8).

Summary

The purpose of this project is to create a handbook describing services available in the Sumner School District and researched based best practices for elementary administrators and teachers to use when working with students and families who are in poverty or at risk. The handbook will be a useful tool to serve the current population of the Sumner and Bonney Lake areas within the district, but also in closing the achievement gap. While poverty is an issue that extends beyond the borders of the cities of Sumner and Bonney Lake resources and information in this handbook may not be applicable to all districts in Washington, as the project is targeted specifically to the Sumner School District.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

There are students within the United States that do not have equal access to resources, ultimately placing them at a disadvantage. This highlights the significance of schools changing to ensure that all students are successful.

When schools engage families in ways that are linked to improving learning, students make greater gains. When schools build partnerships with families that respond to their concerns and honor their contributions, they are successful in sustaining connections that are aimed at improving student achievement. And when families and communities organize to hold poorly performing schools accountable, studies suggest that school districts make positive changes in policy, practice, and resources (Henderson & Mapp, 2002, p. 8).

Connecting with families is one tool that can be utilized to help ensure that all children regardless of socio-economic status are able to achieve at high levels and meet grade level standards. The McKinney-Vento Act in the United States protects all families to ensure that students have immediate access to services including free breakfast and lunch, as well as transportation needs for getting to and from school (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2014). Every student in the United States of America needs to be provided the opportunity to find success in school, or their future educational and economic prospects will be hindered, as well as the nation's economy (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2014, p. 1).

The intent of this chapter is to provide background on the increasing amount of research and professional literature supporting the need for educational change today. This type of change is going to require administrators and teachers to respond differently to those students that are considered to be at risk or in poverty. To begin low-income students and their families need schools to possess a greater understanding on why they are in this current economic situation; which consequently has placed these families in a position where they are lacking some or all of the nine essential resources (Payne, 2013). Additionally, at risk students and families need to have administrators and teachers who know more about the broader social and cultural context regarding the constraints surrounding their lives (Books, 2004, p. 2). The review of the selected literature will address the following topics to provide this critical level of understanding: current statistics, federal interventions, the effects of poverty on student achievement, highly qualified teachers, successful high-poverty schools, and interventions for bridging the gap.

Current Statistics

Poverty in the United States of America

The United States Census Bureau uses two surveys, The American Community Survey and Current Population Survey, to collect information regarding income and poverty within the nation. The data collected from these surveys is used to develop estimates on current levels and create projections for the following years (United States Census Bureau, 2012d).

The American Community Survey is conducted annually by the United States Census Bureau in order to collect detailed socioeconomic information about all

communities. It is the largest mandatory household survey in the country (United States Census Bureau, 2014a). Prior to the full implementation in January 2005, the Census Bureau would send out both short and long form questionnaires once every decade to gather information about the nation's population (United States Census Bureau, 2006).

It (The American Community Survey) is sent to a small percentage of the population on a rotating basis throughout the decade. No household will receive the survey more often than once every five years" providing the Bureau with frequent and more current information (United States Census Bureau, 2014a, para. 3).

The Current Population Survey has a smaller sample size of about 100,000 households, compared to the American Community Survey which collects data from about 250,000 households. The Current Population Survey is an optional survey with questions that concentrate on more than fifty sources of income ranging from food stamps to employment related health insurance that transpired during the previous calendar year. The purpose of this survey according to the United States Census Bureau (2012b) is to, "Produce specific socioeconomic and demographic estimates for the United States, and estimates for states for selected characteristics and subpopulations. Provide timely estimates of income and health insurance, as well as official poverty estimates" (para. 2).

The United States Census Bureau uses the information gathered from the Current Population and American Community Surveys to produce two types of reports, the official measure and the supplemental poverty measure, to gauge poverty in the nation. Both measures define poor as lacking an efficient amount of resources either

independently for a single individual, or to share among individuals living within the same household in order to meet their basic needs. Yet, each report measures poverty differently. The official poverty measure does not reflect government policies that have been put in place since the report's development in the 1960s, to help low-income individuals meet their needs. While the supplemental poverty measure takes into account these policies, benefits from the government, and necessary expenses like taxes (United States Census Bureau, 2014b). For the purpose of this project the statistics will be information gained from the United States Census Bureau's official poverty measure report where (2014c):

Poverty status is determined by comparing annual income to a set of dollar values called poverty thresholds that vary by family size, number of children and age of householder. If a family's before tax money income is less than the dollar value of their threshold, then that family and every individual in it are considered to be in poverty. For people not living in families, poverty status is determined by comparing the individual's income to his or her poverty threshold. (para.3)

During 2012 in the United States there was estimated to be around 46.5 million people in poverty, making up 15% of the country's overall population. This was 2.5 percentage points higher than the year prior to 2007, which was the year when the United States endured its most recent economic recession. However, the socio-economic effects on families in poverty were not found to be as statistically different between the years of 2011 and 2012. The percentage of families identified by the federal government's official poverty measure remained at 13.1%, which was a total of 9.5 million families who fell below the poverty line. The poverty rate for children also continued at a

consistent level across the nation during the same time frame, 21.8% for children under the age of eighteen, of which 25.3% were children under the age of six (DeNavas-Walt, Proctor, & Smith, 2013, p. 14).

Poverty in Washington State

In 2012 Washington State's overall poverty population was 2.1 percentage points lower than the nation. During this time there were 852,223 Washington residents considered to be in poverty; which made up 12.9% of the overall population in the state (United States Census Bureau, 2014e). Of those determined to be below the poverty line based on the official poverty measure, 17.1% were children under the age of eighteen. Based on these 268,470 children in poverty 33.2% or 89,132 were under the age of six; and 33% or 88,545 were children between the ages of six to eleven (United States Census Bureau, 2012c). This affected schools across Washington State for the 2011-2012 school year as they reported a total of 27,390 homeless students enrolled (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2014).

In Washington's Pierce County there was a total population of 812,055 during 2012. Of this subgroup 96,634 residents or 11.9% of the county was identified as being below the poverty line; 16% of which were children under the age of eighteen (United States Census Bureau, 2014e). Based on the 31,585 children experiencing poverty in Pierce County, 33.5% or 10,581 were children under the age of six; and 32.9% or 10,391 were those between the ages of six to eleven (United States Census Bureau, 2012a).

Within Pierce County's borders resides the Sumner School District whose population encompasses the cities of Sumner and Bonney Lake. Sumner's total population in 2012 was 9,541 people, 12.2% of which were below the poverty level

(United States Census Bureau, 2014f). While the city of Bonney Lake's total population was 17,964 with 9.6% of its population identified as in poverty (United States Census Bureau, 2014d). These poverty levels have affected the Sumner School District's numbers for students receiving free or reduced-priced lunches and those who are identified as homeless. According to the district's Homeless Education Coordinator (C. Hurd, personal communication, April 17, 2014), the numbers may fluctuate daily in the Sumner School District; yet the most recent information regarding homeless students who are being served under the McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth program can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1

Homeless Population in the Sumner School District

School	Number of Homeless Students
Bonney Lake Elementary	7
Crestwood Elementary	9
Daffodil Valley Elementary	27
Donald Eismann Elementary	7
Emerald Hills Elementary	8
Liberty Ridge Elementary	31
Maple Lawn Elementary	9
Victor Falls Elementary	9
Lakeridge Middle School	11
Mountain View Middle School	15
Sumner Middle School	16
Bonney Lake High School	11
Sumner High School	24
Total	184

Table 1 shows how significantly impacted some schools within the Sumner School District are with their homeless population, with a total of 201 homeless students enrolled. The schools' with the highest homeless rate are Daffodil Valley Elementary and Liberty Ridge Elementary. These two buildings are not geographically located near one another, nor do they appear to have significant effects on the middle or high school

populations they feed into, according to district data from past 10 years. This is unlike the rates of students who receive free or reduced-priced meals (C. Hurd, personal communication, April 17, 2014).

According to the district's Director of Child Nutrition Services the numbers of students who receive free or reduced-priced meals has increased over the past few years, but vary only slightly throughout a given school year; which is shown in Table 2 (K. Brown, personal communication, April 21, 2014).

Table 2

Free or Reduced-Priced Meals Served in the Sumner School District

School	Free	Reduced	Total
Bonney Lake Elementary	137	39	176
Crestwood Elementary	83	15	98
Daffodil Valley Elementary	292	49	341
Donald Eismann Elementary	122	21	143
Emerald Hills Elementary	116	27	143
Liberty Ridge Elementary	208	36	244
Maple Lawn Elementary	153	19	172
Victor Falls Elementary	120	30	150
Lakeridge Middle School	136	46	182
Mountain View Middle School	174	44	218
Sumner Middle School	254	59	313
Bonney Lake High School	297	95	392
Sumner High School	353	92	445
Total	2,445	572	3,017

Table 2 exemplifies that while not every school in the Sumner School District has a substantial homeless population; all but Crestwood Elementary have numbers above 100 students who are receiving free or reduced-priced meals for the 2013-2014 school year. This significance is noted to demonstrate that it is not just students and families that are homeless who are in need. There are a total of 3,017 students within the Sumner School District that are experiencing various levels of poverty or are considered to be at risk (K. Brown, personal communication, April 21, 2014). With this large identified

population it is important for Sumner to be aware of the effects poverty has on student achievement so that the district can limit or eliminate the negative consequences that may result.

Federal Interventions

Early Federal Support

In 1980 the response to homelessness was primarily observable on local levels. The federal government at this time under the Reagan Administration did not believe that the rising numbers of citizens experiencing poverty or identified as at risk, was a national problem nor did it warrant federal support. Efforts from the federal government did not occur until three years later. According to the National Coalition for the Homeless (2006), “In 1983, the first federal task force on homelessness was created to provide information to localities on how to obtain surplus federal property; this task force did not address homelessness through programmatic or policy actions” (p. 1). While this federal task force made an effort to address the problems brought on by homelessness on local levels, it did not meet the needs of the all citizens in poverty or considered to be at risk in the United States. Advocates for this subpopulation began pressuring the federal government to intervene by presenting the Homeless Persons’ Survival Act to both houses of Congress in 1986 (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2006).

The Homeless Persons’ Survival Act was intended to force the United States government to acknowledge the nation’s problem of homelessness and provide national aid in the form of emergency relief, prevention, and the development of long-term solutions. However, the Homeless Persons’ Survival Act was not enacted into law in its entirety. In 1986 the Homeless Eligibility Clarification Act was put into place in order to

remove barriers like permanent address requirements for citizens to receive support from programs such as Food Stamps and Medicaid. Then further adjustments were addressed in the Homeless Housing Act which was also adopted in 1986. This created programs through the Department of Housing and Urban Development that were geared towards providing emergency shelter and transitional housing to those identified as in poverty or at risk (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2006). This was an important development as residential instability is often a precursor to a family or individual becoming homeless (Cunningham, Harwood, & Hall, 2010).

The McKinney-Vento Act

The early federal support systems showed that the United States government had started to recognize the subpopulation of the nation's homeless citizens and provide aid. Further legislation containing Title I from the Homeless Persons' Survival Act were integrated as a subset known as the Urgent Relief for the Homeless Act. This legislation provided aid in the form of: emergency relief provisions for shelter, food, mobile health care, and transitional housing. Both houses of Congress passed the Urgent Relief for the Homeless Act in 1987. Following the death of the lead Republican advocate Representative Stewart B. McKinney, the act was renamed the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act. Then it was finally enacted into law in 1987 with President Reagan's signature (Jozefowicz-Simbeni & Israel, 2006). In 2000 the law was renamed yet again to its current identity as the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. This was done by President Clinton to honor Bruce Vento another initial leading supporter (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2006).

The McKinney-Vento Act provides funding to states across the nation.

Washington receives \$950,000 in federal grant money which is provided by the United States Department of Education. Bound by the terms of the act Washington's educational agency, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction must legally ensure that all school aged children have immediate enrollment and educational stability. This is the only funding Washington has that is designated to support school district programs that target the education of homeless students (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2013).

Some advocates for the impoverished that feel the protection of the McKinney-Vento Act is still not enough. The aid provided is fragmented and there is a lack of communication between policy makers in legislation, school districts, and families in need. According to Mawhinney-Rhoads and Stahler (2006), "Research is one of the tools that will help to bridge the communication gap, assess effectiveness, and provide future guidance to ensure homeless children's effective education through the application of locally based educational reform" (p.304).

Currently, for the purpose of funding programs the McKinney-Vento Act identifies homeless children as those individuals who are lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (Cunningham, Harwood, & Hall, 2010). This definition was reauthorized in 2001 as a part of the No Child Left Behind Act (Jozefowicz-Simbeni & Israel, 2006). Schools are required to immediately enroll children who meet these criteria regardless if the child has the normal required documents for enrollment (Canfield, Teasley, Abell, & Randolph, 2012). Furthermore, school districts are federally mandated to provide transportation to and from a student's school of origin if it is in the

best interest of the child; even if that means out of district transportation (Mawhinney-Rhoads & Stahler, 2006). In these situations the school districts involved will coordinate the transportation services necessary or will divide the costs equally (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2013).

Other support for homeless children is provided through school districts' programs which include: nutrition programs for free breakfast and lunch, Head Start or comparable pre-school programming, Title I, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education, and gifted/talented programs. These services are provided to develop necessary stability for homeless children in order to limit the negative effects associated between poverty and student achievement (Cunningham, Harwood, & Hall, 2010).

The Effects of Poverty on Student Achievement

Language and Vocabulary Development

In the 1964 President Lyndon B. Johnson recognized the negative effects impoverished citizens of the United States were experiencing because of their low-economic status. With the support of Congress, President Johnson began to wage a war against poverty. The intent behind this declaration of war was to not only help those currently struggling, but ultimately prevent others from falling below the poverty line (Bailey & Duquette, 2014). The government began to attack by breaking down the barriers separating socioeconomic statuses in addition to targeting job training and early childhood education (Risley & Hart, 1995).

Early childhood interventions focused on placing low-income children in preschool programs that were similar to those of their less disadvantaged peers.

According to Risley and Hart (1995), “The programs offered the enriched materials and activities available in such preschools, but replaced the traditional emphasis on social development with an emphasis on compensatory education, especially language and cognitive development” (p. 3). These interventions and curriculums had a marked positive impact on students’ language and cognitive abilities. Parents also noted this new learning as they could see the effects carrying over into home. An academic head start was created; yet eventually found to be only temporary. By the time students had entered kindergarten those who had not attended preschool were academically catching up to those that did. This boost in academic performance brought on by the early childhood education continued to dwindle each year, finally leveling off by the third grade (Risley & Hart, 1995).

Despite the lack of a lasting positive effect, there was an initial enhancement to the children’s academic performance. Risley and Hart (1995) began investigating this phenomenon by targeting their research on language and vocabulary development; which they defined as, “A vocabulary is the stock of words (or signs) available to a person or a language community” (p. 6). In an essence, an individual’s vocabulary consists of both words that they know, are able to understand, and use appropriately in context.

In their research Riley and Hart placed tape recorders in 42 homes across the United States representing various size, ethnic background, and socioeconomic status. For one hour every month they recorded the unstructured communications that took place in each home between the children and their parents; measuring the amount of interactions and words spoken (Riley & Hart, 1995, p. 234). While the amount of interactions varied from month to month with each family, trends were also evident. The

amount of verbal exchanges within a given family did not vary systematically based on gender, ethnic background, new births, or whether it was a dual income household (Riley & Hart, 1995, p. 236).

The significant difference that was identified to have caused the most noticeable variation was a families' socioeconomic status. Households where the parents were professionals routinely dedicated more than half the time compared to those parents on welfare, and spoke three times more to their children (Riley & Hart, 1995). Families in poverty or at risk have challenges to overcome because of their socioeconomic status that can hinder the parenting and communication that takes place within the home. According to Jozefowicz-Simbeni and Israel (2006), "The reality of homelessness can also mean parental distress, an undermining of views of parents and the parental role, less responsiveness to child needs, and a splintering of the family unit" (p. 39).

In addition to the disparity in communication, a three year old child in a professional home was found to have a greater vocabulary than that of an adult in a welfare household. Extending beyond the age of three, this early language development and rich vocabulary was further indicative of a child's accomplishments once they were of school age, particularly between the ages of nine and 10 (Riley & Hart, 1995).

The foundational language and literacy skills that are developed at an early age from a child's home experience with their family, have a visible effect once the child enters school. Children who are reared in homes where both parents have a higher educational degrees have are found to have been read to more frequently, have more books in the home, learned to utilize the computer before entering school, and possess differing patters of reading and conversation when compared to children of a similar age

who have parents with less education. These early learning experiences are transferable to a school setting, thus providing an academic readiness for school (Burney & Beilke, 2008).

Academic Effects Observable in School

The effects of poverty in school became very evident in the United States with the standards-based reform movement from the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. This was the first time in the nation's history that a legal emphasis on the academic achievement consisting of all groups of students was mandated; even including subpopulations of students who traditionally were low-achieving. All students were required to achieve at high levels, and if not it must be the school's priority to ensure that "Adequate Yearly Progress" (AYP) was made using performance standards on state assessments to measure success (Chatterji, 2005).

The implementation of the No Child Left Act impacted students in the subpopulation group for poverty, as they were not cognitively prepared. According to Payne (2013):

In order to learn, an individual must have certain cognitive skills to take in and process information - and must have a structure (a *schema*) inside his/her head to organize and store the information; picture a file cabinet or a piece of software. In U. S. schools furthermore, we have traditionally assumed that the cognitive skills and structures - the *schema* - are in place when a child enters school. (p. 120-121)

However, these cognitive skills are not always present in at risk or impoverished students; in fact they may be lacking many (Jozefowicz-Simbeni & Israel, 2006). By the time many low-income children reach the age of eight they have not met the

developmental milestones that provide the necessary foundation for future academic success; ultimately increasing the achievement gap (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2014).

Furthermore, this may provide insight as to why children who are at risk or in poverty are tested and labeled for special education, a Section 504 Plan, Learning Assistance Program, Title I, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, along with other identifiers at higher rates compared to their less financially disadvantaged peers. These labels are indicative of their academic struggles, but do not always address their lagging skills or needs (Jozefowicz-Simbeni & Israel, 2006). In many cases impoverished students are cognitively not ready for the learning that is being required and presented to them through instruction (Payne, 2013, p. 121). Income level is thought to be one of the most powerful predictors of a student's academic achievement (Blazer & Romanik, 2009). Once in school, low-income children have continued to exhibit delays and gaps in learning, even when provided interventions through programs like special education (Rosine, 2013). Additionally, impoverished students are also more likely to not attend school regularly when equated to their less disadvantaged counterparts (Miller, 2011).

The United States Department of Education conducted an early childhood longitudinal study that focused on over 16,000 children, in the age range of five to six years old nationwide to measure their achievement levels once in kindergarten. The research showed that those children who came from the lowest income levels entered kindergarten with fewer cognitive skills (West, Denton, & Germino-Hawken, 2000). Utilizing some of the data from this study Rowan, Cohen, and Raudenbush (2004) observed that in reading those students from the lowest income bracket scored in the 30th

percentile, those classified in the middle class scored in the 45th percentile, and students in the top socioeconomic class scored at the seventieth percentile.

According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation (2014), “Although improvements have been made in the past decade, reading proficiency remains unacceptably low in an economic environment that requires increasing levels of education and skills for family-sustaining jobs” (para. 2). Many impoverished children are not reading proficiently by the time they enter or complete the third grade (Cunningham, Harwood, & Hall, 2010). A child’s reading ability by this particular grade is a fundamental point of indication for future academic achievement. This is because third grade is where students are expected to make the cognitive shift from learning the basics of how to read, to reading to learn and acquire new information from a text (Hernandez & Napierala, 2014).

Through their analysis of Hispanic children and/or children in poverty, Hernandez and Napierala concluded, “Thus, children in poor families are in double jeopardy: They are more likely to have low reading test scores, and at any reading level, they are less likely to graduate from high school” (p. 32). A student’s third grade reading proficiency may further be correlated as to the reason why students from low-income households tend to drop out of school more frequently than their less economically disadvantaged classmates (Boggs, 2011). Consequently, it is important to provide targeted instruction through highly qualified teachers in elementary school. Highly qualified teachers can help bridge the academic gap created from socioeconomic status, and ensure all students have meaningful instruction to achieve at high levels passed the third grade.

Highly Qualified Teachers

Importance of High Quality Instruction

Teachers are believed to be the most important determinant of a school's quality, and as such they are the largest single expenditure item within a school's budget (Hanushek, Rivkin, Rothstein, & Podgursky, 2004, p. 7). According to Clotfelter, Ladd, Vigdor, and Wheeler (2006):

Although many factors combine to make a successful school, most people agree that quality teachers and school principals are among the most important requirements for success, especially when success is defined by the ability of the school to raise achievement of its students. (p. 1345)

Yet, there is a concern that students who are considered to be at risk or in poverty, have less access to these high quality teachers which could help close the achievement gap for this low-income group (Sass, Hannaway, Xu, Figlio, & Feng, 2010).

Less than a decade ago there was little information regarding the overall distribution of highly effective teachers across a school, district, or state (Jozefowicz-Simbeni & Israel, 2006). Then in 2006 it became a requirement that every state develop a plan to ensure that their low-income students have equal access to quality education and teachers. This meant that schools could no longer have students taught by inexperienced teachers, educators working outside of their credentials, or anyone not holding a valid and current certificate (Haycock, 2013). Peske and Haycock (2006) reflected on this development and required report to the Secretary of Education by stating:

For many this process will be the first step in helping the citizens of their states understand the fundamental, but painful truth: Poor and minority children don't

underachieve in school just because they often enter behind; but, also because the schools that are supposed to serve them actually *shortchange* them in the one resource they most need to reach their potential - high quality teachers. (p. 1)

There are logical reasons to explain teachers distributions across a given district based on credentials. Teachers with more seniority have a greater preference of choice with their teaching assignment within their district. This inclination is advantageous when teachers are competing for open positions; and they typically seek out those open positions in less challenging schools (Goldhaber, 2008). Some reasons teachers seek out openings in schools with less poverty is because these schools are less likely to have high mobility rates. According to Cunningham, Harwood, & Hall (2010), "Schools with high numbers of highly mobile and homeless children experience strain on resources because teachers must adjust to new students constantly entering the classroom, repeat lessons, and manage any behavioral problems caused by disruption" (p.5) This type of changing classroom dynamic can additionally affect parent involvement with schools, ultimately lessening the support for teachers and the learning of students (Cunningham, Harwood, & Hall, 2010). With every year teachers continue to acquire seniority that places them in a more optimal position for preferential movement away from those students who need them the most (Goldhaber, 2008).

While there are teachers who go above and beyond to connect with low-income or at risk students by purchasing food, reaching out to their local neighborhood to increase community or parental involvement, and referring those families to health services that can fulfill their needs (Chang & Lawyer, 2012). These teachers are dedicated, high quality and effective at what they do. They have dedicated their lives to supporting and

educating the lower socioeconomic class; however they are the exception and not the rule (Peske & Haycock, 2006, p.2). As a result schools with enrollment that contains a higher population of disadvantaged students tend to employ educators who are less qualified in terms of their experience, test scores that demonstrate student growth, a master's degree or post-baccalaureate studies, and certifications (Jackson, 2009).

Access to High Quality Instruction

After 2006 knowing the importance of highly effective teachers and the discrepancy in availability based on socioeconomic status; studies began to develop that measured the magnitude of the difference in access to high quality instruction (Isenberg et al., 2013). The significance of the following studies from Goldhaber (2008) and Isenber et. al. (2013) is to illustrate the marked discrepancy in access to effective teaching when comparing those students who are at risk or in poverty with their less financially disadvantaged peers across the district or state.

Goldhaber (2008) conducted a study to analyzing the distribution of highly qualified teachers. His study's population consisted of 11,115 teachers in 723 schools across ten districts. The districts chosen all consisted of at least forty elementary schools and economically diverse populations ranging from less than 40% to 100% of the population eligible for free or reduced-priced meals. Based on this study Goldhaber (2008) discovered that the highest performing teachers where significantly underrepresented within middle schools that had the most students with free or reduced-priced meals. This was true when examining middle schools as a whole and separately by district. However, this lack of access to high quality teachers was not as evident in elementary schools when analyzing collectively. The discrepancy was only statistically

evident for four of the eight school districts on an elementary level when considering them individually (Goldhaber, 2008).

In a more recent report from 2013 published by the Institute of Education Sciences, a similar question with a larger test population was investigated. This study included 29 school districts that were evaluated to measure the access to effective teaching for disadvantaged students in grades four through eight. In the research a value-added analysis was utilized to measure this effect over a three year time period. In Isenberg et al. (2013) conclusion they discovered that:

On average, disadvantaged students had less access to effective teaching in 29 study districts in grades 4 through 8. The magnitude of differences in effective teaching for disadvantaged and nondisadvantaged students in a given year was equivalent to a shift of two percentile points in the student achievement gap. (p. ES-1)

This unequitable access affected those students who received free or reduced-priced meals in all major academic content areas. A statistically significant difference of 0.034 standard deviation from their peers in English and language arts, and a standard deviation of 0.024 in mathematics (Isenberg et al., 2013).

Successful High-Poverty Schools

Miracle Schools

Despite the research and evidence that demonstrate the achievement gap and unequal access to highly qualified teachers providing excellent education; there are schools with significant populations of at risk students or students in poverty that are

found to be remarkably successful despite probabilities (Carter, 2000). According to Paige (2013):

A variety of think tanks, policy centers, and popular media have reported on “miracle schools.” All reflect a similar narrative: that with dedicated teachers and administrators, schools alone can solve educational inequities. Poverty and social conditions are obstacles that can be overcome by a *tour de force* of energetic, bright and relentless faculty. This conclusion implies that apathetic teachers and administrators perpetuate inequity. (p. 1)

Reeves (1995) coined the term 90/90/90 schools, which is still used today when describing these miracle buildings that seem to defy statistical and educational odds. This term was based on Reeves’s observations from schools in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He defined the characteristics witnessed as student populations in schools with: 90% or more eligible for free or reduced-priced meals, 90% or more members of an ethnic minority group or groups, and 90% or more meeting the district or state academic standards in reading or another core content area (Reeves, 2003).

Yet, one notion of debate in Reeves description of high performing, high poverty schools is the final characteristic in his definition. Questions have circulated and discussions have risen regarding the qualifier 90% of a student population meeting the district or state academic standard in one area being a true measure of success. Those who argue against this qualification believe that success should extend beyond more than one core content area, and be proven to last over time (Kahlenberg, 2013). However, the findings of Reeves’s report do reveal several characteristics that can contribute to improving teaching and learning for all schools and students. While they may not

eliminate the social, economic, and cultural obstacles that result in the inequities across schools, these identified best practices do provide a fundamental place to begin (Chatterji, 2005).

Characteristics of 90/90/90 Schools

The characteristics of 90/90/90 schools were identified through site based visits which targeted instructional best practice and an analysis of accountability data to distinguish academic success rates across 228 schools. As a result Reeves (2003) determined the following characteristics were common across these 90/90/90 schools: a focus on academic achievement, frequent assessments of student progress with multiple opportunities to show improvement, clear curriculum choices focused on core subject areas, emphasis on written responses through nonfiction writing, and teacher collaboration in the scoring of student work (p. 3).

Within the 130,000 students observed it became clear that these children's primary focus was continual improvement. Each building had chosen five areas on which they targeted and measured students' advancement. Reeves (2013) reflected on the significance of this as, "The focus on improvement is especially important in an environment where many students come to school with academic skills that are substantially below grade level" (p. 3). With this type of measurement the focus did not become the distance students were from standard, but rather on academic growth between each assessment point. Targeting improvement highlighted how much they have gained with each lesson and assessment, showing frequent progress towards the ultimate goal of reaching standard (Paige, 2013).

This was a shift in belief, as assessments were no longer viewed as a final demonstration of students' knowledge or ability. Assessments were now opportunities for students to frequently show their understanding and for teachers to utilize this information to develop next steps for instruction. Changing the use of assessments created an environment where teacher feedback was better utilized and actually affected an increase in understanding. A single test or grade was no longer a measure of finality but rather an identifier for areas to improve upon with additional instruction (Reeves, 2013). With opportunity for growth, students are afforded additional chances to perform, and feel more included because the school has established a culture that includes success for all children (Burney & Beilke, 2008).

The third characteristic of 90/90/90 schools is clear curriculum choices focused on core subjects. When buildings collaborated together as a staff on what needed to be taught they identified curriculum not by subject but rather critical skills within each main curricular area. Schools that hold high expectations with academic support had a clear vision of what they wanted students to know and how they were going to measure it (Burney & Beilke, 2008). Many of these skills came from reading, writing, and math (Kahlenberg, 2013). While other content areas like science are important, assessments in any secondary subject is rooted in skills from literacy and mathematics (Reeves, 2013, p. 4). Furthermore, this is why these schools additionally required written responses in performance assessments regardless of content area.

Nonfiction or informative writing was used as an interdisciplinary instructional tool. In the 135 elementary schools, many teachers reported feeling that they had to take away instruction time from science to focus on the core academic areas of reading,

writing, and math. However, because they incorporated their writing instruction with science by requiring written responses, 80% of students showed improvement on their science scores over a one-year period. This was calculated to be a .74 positive correlation to their targeted core content instruction (Reeves, 2013).

Finally, when teachers in these 228 buildings graded student assessments they did so collaboratively. Scores were not based on individual judgment but rather a uniform basis of evaluating student work. Teachers developed common assessments with rubrics together and exchanged student work to ensure reliable scoring. When disagreements arose teachers would be forced to justify their grading, which typically lead to altering the rubric to be more specific in defining the expected outcome clearly for both teachers and students (Reeves, 2013). This type of collaborative environment is fostered by the school's administration. Successful administrators are able to assume various roles in times of change that facilitate the process through the establishment of a shared vision. The type of change that 90/90/90 schools have been able to produce is additionally the result of effective building leadership and collaboration (Horst & Martin, 2007).

Interventions for Bridging the Gap

Building Relationships and Assessing Resources

In 2000 the Heritage Foundation published a report that highlighted 21 high performing schools in the United States. However, it is important to note that while these 21 schools had managed an increase to their overall student achievement, there were 7,000 high poverty schools that continued to struggle in terms of closing the achievement gap (Kahlenberg, 2013). The social, economic, and cultural hurdles that face at risk students and those of poverty are challenging, complicated, and have a measurable effect

on schools (Culhane & Metraux, 2008). Yet, according to Payne (2013), “The key to achievement for students from poverty is in creating relationships with them. Because relationships are essential for survival in poverty the most significant motivator for these students is relationships” (p. 101).

A successful way adults in schools can foster this connection is by demonstrating that they care. Caring about students should extend beyond an individual’s academic ability to apply on a personal level, getting to know students holistically (Payne, 2013). An educator’s verbal and non-verbal actions help students to either feel respected and appreciated or disregarded and devalued (Payne, 2008). This is an important distinction to make as the quality of relationships within a school is a significant aspect in defining a building’s overall value (Sergiovanni, 2006). Administrators and teachers can construct relationships with children by: using a student’s name when addressing them, answering questions, using respectful language, recognizing/greeting students outside of the classroom or school setting, and assisting students when they need help (Payne, 2008). With successful relationships and role models, students will have a more significant motivation for working towards and achieving success in school despite their economic obstacles (Payne, 2013).

According to Kroeger and Bauer (2004), “Teachers and families may have different goals for the education of individual children and may not know much about each others’ way of life” (p. 76). In order to fully understand a child’s perspective, engaging and listening to their family is crucial. Effective engagement of families is grounded in the premise of support rather than change and judgment. Schools can connect with families by: creating a welcoming atmosphere, identifying what the family

values, emphasizing what they do well in support of their child at school, connecting with their support network to help monopolize resources, and empower the family to understand their child's academic accomplishments and needs (Kroeger & Bauer, 2004). This perspective on family will help administrators and teachers connect with low-come families that may be overwhelmed and/or unsure of how to support their child's education (Noel, Stark, Redford, & Zukerberg, 2013).

Administrators and teachers work with a large number of students and families every year; leaving little time for a formal analysis of every child by taking anecdotal notes from observations regarding the nine essential resources. However, achieving in school requires a level of means that the public educational system may not necessarily provide (Gassama, 2012). When administrators and teachers are connecting with at risk students in poverty or those considered to be at risk it is imperative to analyze the available resources the student possesses (Payne, 2008). Collaborative practice between administrators, teachers, and the districts homeless liaisons will additionally help to make this analysis more efficient and effective. Homeless liaisons within a school district frequently have multiple contacts in the community who can provide additional support for families and students (Miller, 2011)

Inquiries into that child's existing resources can be discovered through conversation. During the process of building a relationship administrators and teachers will already be conversing with students, asking questions to get to know them as a person. According to Payne (2013) the following questions may be beneficial for school personnel to ask when trying to uncover which resource(s) a student is lacking:

What do you like about school?

What do you hate?

What kinds of things does a teacher do that help you learn?

Are there things in your life that make getting homework done a problem? a job?
younger siblings to care for? someone with a disability whom you care for? (p.
29)

These questions provide insight as to what a child's life is like at home, and current level of means. Once a specific resource is identified then interventions can be put into place to help meet or compensate this need (Payne, 2013).

Targeted Instruction to Increase Understanding

Language and vocabulary development is an area that many children who are at risk or are in poverty struggle with (Burney & Beilke, 2008). Educators can help low-income children develop their language skills by understanding the five registers of language and how to use them within the school setting. Many students speak in their casual register (Payne, 2008). This is the type of language that is used between friends. It does not need to be complete sentences and typically consists of 400 to 800 words in a given vocabulary (Payne, 2013, p. 31).

Teachers can help students move past a casual register to speak more eloquently by the words they use in the classroom to develop language and vocabulary (Burney & Beilke, 2008). During instruction, educators should use their formal register to convey academic content, while providing additional explanations as needed for students. A formal register utilizes complete sentences and a 1,200 to 1,600 word spoken vocabulary, and is typically found in business and educational settings. While conversing with students to build relationships educators should use their consultative register. This is a

mix of formal and casual. Moving between registers helps to model the type of language being academically expected of them. It also exposes students to new vocabulary that will increase their understanding and ability to articulate their own needs when asking for help (Payne, 2008).

Principal Monaghan at Lanier Middle School in Houston challenged his staff to reach out to the school's lower socioeconomic population by targeting language and literacy. It was found that those students who lived in a particular attendance zone where relatively poor and scored lower on exams by 28% when compared to their less financially disadvantaged peers. Monaghan targeted this subpopulation in terms of increasing the instruction and rigor that impoverished students were receiving in regards to language and literacy. New instructional strategies were implemented that focused on increasing a student's ability to articulate the meaning of what they have read within a text. In addition, to classroom instruction this strategy was also implemented in new after-school reading and writing groups. The interventions that were put into place developed a student's vocabulary and were additionally found to increase their overall reading stamina. The following year when percentages for students meeting standard were analyzed again, it was noted that this subpopulation had showed significant growth in terms of closing the achievement gap, as they had a 16% increase (Rothman, 2002).

In addition to language and literacy development teachers should focus on the standards for what is expected of students to be able to do and understand, especially in the core academic subjects of reading, writing, and mathematics. Haycock (2013) found through research under Education Trust that teachers in high-poverty schools were not

only assigning fewer assignments but work that was far less rigorous when compared to schools with a higher socioeconomic population. According to Haycock (2013):

Clear and public standards for what students should learn at benchmark grade levels are a crucial part of solving the problem. They are a guide – for teachers, administrators, parents, and students themselves – to what knowledge and skills students must master. (p. 93)

The creation of Common Core State Standards now clearly identifies standards for all students at every grade level from kindergarten through the twelfth grade. Common Core provides administrators and teachers with consistent guidelines for what students should know and do at each grade regardless of financial status (Common Core Standards Initiative, 2014b, para. 1). However, it is important to note that only forty-four states, the District of Columbia, four territories, and the Department of Defense Education Activity have adopted Common Core. Alaska, Texas, Nebraska, Indiana, Wisconsin, and Virginia have all yet to adopt these new academic standards (Common Core Standards Initiative, 2014a).

Educators can also support students' understanding by making learning relational. According to Payne (2008), "When an individual is learning something new, learning should happen in a supportive context. Teachers should help all students feel part of a collaborative culture" (p. 48). New learning should take place in beneficial pairings or cooperative groups to support student learning and increase involvement (Gent, 2007).

Within this collaborative environment students also deepen their understanding with difficult skills like abstract concepts. In school children frequently move from concrete to abstract ideas or models. The more fluently and accurately students can

transfer between the two states, the more they are able to comprehend (Gent, 2007).

Educators can support students through this process by utilizing abstract representations to construct mental models through stories, analogies, or visual representations (Payne, 2013).

The effect educators have on students is insurmountable, and changes made in school can have a positive and lasting impact. According to Payne (2008):

Educators can be a huge gift to students living in poverty. In many instances, education is *the* tool that gives a child life choices. A teacher or administrator who establishes mutual respect, cares enough to make sure a student knows how to survive school, and gives that student the necessary skills is providing a gift that will keep affecting lives from one generation to the next. Never has it been more important to give students living in poverty this gift (p. 52).

Summary

Current statistics reflect that the number of people, including children, experience levels of poverty across the nation is increasing. Federal structures like the McKinney-Vento Act have been enacted into law in order to ensure that all students have immediate access to school-linked services. However, with a homeless population of 184 students the elementary administrators and teachers within the Sumner School District need to deepen their understanding regarding the broader social and cultural constraints surrounding the lives of students in poverty or identified as at risk.

Low-income children are placed at a disadvantage. Delays in language development, lagging vocabulary registers, and few cognitive skills have negative observable academic effects on student success rates in school. Additionally,

impoverished children have less access to highly qualified teachers. Unequal representation of highly qualified teachers in high poverty schools is denying students the quality instruction and interventions needed in order to meet the rigorous demands of Common Core State Standards.

However, there are some schools that are referred to as 90/90/90 schools which seem to break the mold and lessen the gap created from economic disadvantages. These miracle schools focus on: academic achievement through growth, multiple frequent assessments of student progress, targeted clear curriculum on core subject areas, emphasis on non-fiction written responses, and collaboration in scoring student work. The characteristics of 90/90/90 schools can be applied to all districts when analyzing interventions for bridging the gap.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to create a handbook describing services available in the Sumner School District. The project was developed by reviewing, researched based best practices for schools to utilize when working with students and families who are considered to be at risk or in poverty. This descriptive research project highlights the disadvantages low-income students have in school. Reflecting current statistics it is noted that there are an increasing number of children who are in poverty or at risk. Low-income students achieve at lower rates when compared to their less disadvantaged peers, and have unequal access to highly qualified teachers (Rosine, 2013).

This handbook will be a useful guide for administrators and teachers to use in order to bridge this gap; ensuring that all students are cared for and provided access to an education that will enable them to meet the rigorous standards of Common Core. Some basic essentials such as: immediate access to school-linked services, free breakfast and lunch, and transportation needs for getting to and from school are provided by federal law under the McKinney-Vento Act. However, the focus of this handbook is to identify additional means of support for low-income students outside of the framework of the McKinney-Vento Act. The resources within the handbook will be available in the Sumner and Bonney Lake areas of Washington for administrators and teachers to utilize within their school community.

If administrators and teachers are unaware of the resources available within the community they are not able to help their students and families who are considered to be

at risk or in poverty. As a result of this descriptive research, the project will provide a handbook to be used in the Sumner School District consisting of local support organizations that include descriptions and contact information. Administrators and teachers will be able to use this information to make connections that better meet the needs of their school's at risk and poor populations.

Research Method

Poverty is an issue that has received lots of national attention, and as such there is an ample amount of information regarding this topic (Sanders & Downer, 2013). This project focused on current research in following areas: economic statistics ranging from the national to the local level in Sumner, effects of poverty on student achievement, access to highly qualified teachers, successful high-poverty schools, and interventions for bridging the gap created from economic inequities exhibited within schools. These areas provided the scope for the research within the literature review section of this project.

Research was completed through the Central Washington University's online library. This included online communication support with the University's librarians. Librarians were able to locate or suggest resources and tools, such as databases like ERIC and search engines like Google Scholar. The recommended tools were utilized in identifying current research and scholarly articles within the scope of this project through a descriptive analysis. The targeted areas of: economic statistics ranging from the national to the local level in Sumner, effects of poverty on student achievement, access to highly qualified teachers, successful high-poverty schools, and interventions for bridging the gap created from economic inequities exhibited within schools, were used as search topics within ERIC and Google Scholar to identify possible resources.

In order to evaluate the articles chosen other constraints were considered. The criteria used to identify usable articles were as follows: date of publication, relevance to the search topic, location of study limited which is limited to the United States, publication type, and whether or not the article was peer-reviewed. Furthermore, no secondary sources were used within the literature review. While some secondary resources were discovered through the research process that highlighted other studies of relevance and importance, the primary source was researched and referenced.

In addition to scholarly articles other forms of print were utilized like current research books and textbooks. For example, in the study of Riley and Hart (1995), research identified through Google Scholar, the study was noted to have a published text that contained more information. In this case the text was purchased as it encompassed not only the study in its entirety but also other relevant studies conducted by the same researchers. Other texts like Payne (2013) were chosen as this researcher was cited in conversations with Sumner School District leadership as being highly notable in the field of poverty.

Personal communication with coordinators from the Sumner School District's program titled Sumner Tobacco and Alcohol Risk Reduction (STARR) Project were also conducted. In addition to drug and alcohol reduction, the STARR Project is the identified segment within the district that specifically supports students and families who are at risk or in poverty. The communications with personnel from this program provided specific local insight. The interviews with the STARR director and coordinators targeted current statistics, local effects of poverty on students and families, and support or resources

provided by the district itself or through Sumner's collaborative efforts with local organizations from the Sumner and Bonney Lake communities of Washington State.

Criteria Used in the Development

The intent of this handbook is that it is shared with administrators and teachers throughout the Sumner School District; with the goal of meeting the needs of at risk or children in poverty. As a result of better supporting this subpopulation in Sumner, the achievement gap between the low-income students and their less disadvantaged peers will be lessened and ultimately closed. In order for this handbook to be effectively and efficiently utilized by district personnel, the following criteria were considered in the development.

First, every elementary school within the Sumner School District does outreach and builds relationships with the school's surrounding community partners in order to bring in resources for students. However, this looks very different at each building and the Director of the STARR Project does not currently have a thorough assessment of what happens at each elementary location (M. Hill-Anderson, personal communication, April, 19, 2014). As a result efforts were made to contact every elementary principal or councilor in each elementary school within the district to gain a better understanding of the cumulative resources the Sumner School District offers, in addition to some local organizations that have yet to be collaborated with.

The second criterion was that the handbook must be suitable for the Sumner School District. Resources and organizations that are included must be available to all elementary schools within the district. If this is not the case then it should be clearly indicated for which building(s) the resource is applicable.

Finally, it was important that this handbook provide easy access to information for administrators and teachers. To facilitate an ease of reading, the resources are grouped into categories with a brief description about the specifics of each with current contact information.

CHAPTER IV

THE PROJECT

This handbook was developed for elementary administrators and teachers within the Sumner School District to utilize when working with students and families who are considered to be at risk or in poverty. Resources within this handbook focus on local organizations throughout the Sumner and Bonney Lake communities that schools can connect with to support the needs of their low-income population that are outside the framework of the McKinney-Vento Act. However, to ensure all administrators and teachers within the Sumner School District are aware of the McKinney-Vento Act a synopsis describing the services required by the district under this federal law will be included within the introduction.

The handbook is divided into two main sections. These sections are Making Connections and Basic Necessities. Within each section there are brief descriptions of the interventions with references to in district personnel who may be of assistance or support organizations that include contact information.

CONNECTING WITH FAMILIES OF POVERTY

A Handbook for Administrators and Teachers
within the Sumner School District

By
Rebecca Christine Oren

2014

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to describe best practices and low-income support services available in the Sumner School District. Elementary administrators and teachers will be able to utilize this handbook when working with students and families of poverty or those who are considered to be at risk within the school population.

The McKinney-Vento Act in the United States protects families to ensure that all students have immediate access to school-linked services, including free breakfast and lunch, as well as transportation needs for getting to and from school. Other support services provided by the Sumner School District under these federal regulations include: pre-school programming, Title I, special education, bilingual education, and gifted/talented programs. These services available to offer necessary stability for homeless children in order to limit the negative effects associated between poverty and student achievement. For more information regarding specifics of the McKinney-Vento Act and the district programs available to homeless students within the Sumner School District, please contact Marilee Hill-Anderson who is the homeless coordinator/liason for the Sumner School District and Director of the STARR Project.

The focus of this handbook is identifying ways of supporting low-income students outside of the framework of the McKinney-Vento Act to enhance student achievement in the Sumner and Bonney Lake communities of Washington. This handbook includes information on interventions for making connections and bridging the academic gap; in addition to descriptions and contact information for local support organizations that administrators and teachers can additionally partner with to create supportive learning environments within their school and community.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Identifying Those in Need

The behaviors identified in this list provide insight as to the lagging resources of a student. The following are “red flags” or identifiers from Payne (2013, p. 96) which can be utilized by school personnel in recognizing and collaborating on how to best serve a particular student to ensure basic needs are met:

- Truancy
- Patterns of tardiness
- “Acting out” or withdrawn behaviors
- Knowledge of, or conversation about, sex and drugs in appropriate for the child’s age or stage of development
- Delays in common adaptive-behavior skills
- Lower than expected academic performance
- Inability to build or maintain appropriate peer and/or adult relationships
- Anxiety, fearfulness, flinching
- Inability to cope with transitions during the school day
- Lethargy, sleeping at school
- Hunger
- Poor hygiene
- Encopresis, enuresis, or other unusual toileting habits
- Unusual eating habits or patterns
- Somatic complaints
- Lack of parental interest in child’s basic health or school performance

Building Relationships with Deposits

Research has shown that there is a positive impact on student achievement when students have relationships with administrators and teachers (Kroeger & Bauer, 2004; Noel, Stark, Redford, & Zukerberg, 2013). Schools can create or build positive relationships by showing care, promoting student growth, providing role models, insisting on successful behaviors, and making deposits to bond with students. Deposits are positive interactions that lay a foundation for relationships. The following list from Payne (2013, p. 103-104) identifies behavior deposits to be used by all school personnel:

- Seek first to understand
- Keep promises
- Kindness, courtesies
- Clarifying expectations
- Loyalty to the absent
- Apologies
- Open to feedback
- Appreciation for humor and entertainment provided by the individual
- Acceptance of what the individual cannot say about a person or situation
- Respect for the demands and priorities of relationships
- Using the adult voice
- Assisting with goal setting
- Identifying options related to available
- Understanding the importance of personal freedom, speech, and individual personality

School Wide Support System

The following ideas can be used when focusing on creating a school system that targets the learning and needs of all students, but specifically children who are in poverty or identified as at risk. These systems originated from Payne (2013, p. 91-93), but some also connect to buildings within the Sumner School District that have successfully implemented these interventions.

Homework Support

Three elementary schools within the Sumner School District have worked successfully with local community organizations to support homework completion for students identified as lacking parental interest in their child's academics. Daffodil Valley has partnered with members from the congregation at St. Andrew's Catholic Church, Emerald Hills teamed with a local senior center in Bonney Lake, and Donald Eismann collaborated with the senior housing portion of the Tehaleh community called Trilogy. In each community partnership, volunteers came to the school on a regular basis to work with those identified students. In order to not take away or impact students' regular academic schedule, each school scheduled this tutoring to take place either before or after school, or during recess. Partnering with local organizations brings the community into schools and fosters an environment focused on student success while building relationships (J. Hellwich, personal communication, May 15, 2013).

Assistance implementing homework support contact:

Susie Black
Principal, Donald Eismann Elementary
Phone: 253-891-4500
Email: susie_black@sumnersd.org

Jessie Webber

Homework Club Coordinator at Emerald Hills Elementary
Phone: 253-891-4750

Breaen Czerwinski
Homework Club Coordinator at Daffodil Valley Elementary
Phone: 253-891-4622
Email: breaen_czerwinski@sumnersd.org

Supplemental School Wide Academic Programs

The district has purchased programs like Reading A-Z Kids, Accelerated Reader, and an IXL membership for math practice that all teachers and students to have access. These programs are beneficial as they have built in assessments for students to take regarding books read or math skills practiced. Students are able to practice core academic areas without depending on parental support, which may not be present because of insufficient knowledge or interest (T. Davis, personal communication, January 27, 2014). However, these programs are computer-based, meaning some students may not be able to access them at home. Time, space, and resources should be set-aside for students to be able to engage with these programs regardless of income status.

This could be done at each elementary school differently. Those with computer labs like Daffodil Valley, Emerald Hills, Crestwood, and Liberty Ridge could schedule regular times during before or after school, recesses, and lunch for students to access in the computer lab. The other elementary schools are all equipped with laptop carts that could be set up in a designated area to fulfill the same need (T. Davis, personal communication, January 27, 2014).

Assistance implementing a supplemental academic program utilizing Reading A-Z Kids, Accelerated Reader, or IXL contact:

Tracy Davis
District Technology Integration Specialist

Phone: 253-891-6085
Email: tracy_davis@sumnersd.org

Looping

When a child is able to have the same teacher for more than one year they are more likely to develop a strong and lasting relationship. Positive school relationships are a key to helping students find success in schools (Kroeger & Bauer, 2004). Additionally, there is less time spent at the beginning of every year establishing relationships with students and families, so more focus can be placed on learning earlier on in the school year (L. Dent, personal communication, May, 15, 2013).

Assistance implementing a looping system contact:

Laurie Dent
District K-12 Academic Officer
Phone: 253-891-6076
Email: laurie_dent@sumnersd.org

Schedules with Intervention Blocks

Across all eight elementary schools in the Sumner School District a Response to Intervention (RtI) system has been built into schedules. The intent of this intervention block is to target students' abilities in homogeneous groupings based on classroom based assessments or district data from Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing. These homogeneous groups are tiered for intervention and enrichment reading instruction. While there are diverse abilities in other areas, the next step for buildings would be to build a schedule that allows for more intervention blocks to target other areas.

Assistance implementing an RtI system for mathematics contact:

John Hellwich
District Director of Teaching and Learning
Phone: 253-891-6058
Email: john_hellwich@sumnersd.org

Communication Through Technology

A school with 95% poverty in Illinois found that utilizing videotaping to communicate with families was highly effective. Fifteen-minute videos were made that included an introduction, overview of instruction for the year, class expectations, and an invitation for parents to call or visit the school. Five copies of each video were made and then distributed to students to take home and watch with a parent or guardian. The video was a successful means of communication for the following reason: most families had a DVD player, parents who were illiterate could understand the information, it provided a kinesthetic view and feel for the type of teacher and principal, the parent or guardian did not have to find a means of transportation to have contact with the school, and it prevented unnecessary miscommunication early in the year (Payne, 2013, p. 93).

While all elementary schools in the Sumner School District have the capabilities to communicate with families using video, none of the schools currently do. The recent technology levy will further building's means to communicate with families utilizing technology, and it is the District's duty to utilize this funding (S. Maynard, personal communication, March 19, 2014).

Assistance implementing a technology based communication system contact:

Sandy Maynard
District Chief Technology Officer
Phone: 253-891-6111
Email: sandy_maynard@sumnersd.org

Tracy Davis
District Technology Integration Specialist
Phone: 253-891-6085
Email: tracy_davis@sumnersd.org

BASIC NECESSITIES

In order for students to be able to focus on academic success in school their most basic needs from financial and physical resources must be met (Payne, 2013, p. 8). This notion is rooted in Maslow's hierarchy of need that emphasizes all humans struggle to reach self-actualization when a basic need or needs from the physiological and safety levels are not met (Maslow, 2013 p. 65).

The following organizations and programs are available to all elementary schools within the Sumner School District. These organizations and programs are focused on meeting the needs of students and families who are at risk or in poverty. Descriptions and current contact information can be found for the following categories: general assistance and resources, food, clothing/personal hygiene/household commodities, transportation, support groups/care ministries, health care/dental/vision, housing/homeless/home repair, utility assistance, employment/job training/tutoring, and holiday support. When administrators and teachers recommend these resources they should consider the specific needs of the families and students they are supporting, as not every organization may be right for every family or student.

General Assistance and Resources

Sumner/Bonney Lake Family Center for Support

This is a referral based program that is available to all families in the Sumner School District. The multi-agency staff consists of members from Multicare, Tacoma Pierce County Health Department, Pierce County Community Services, Good Samaritan Behavioral Health, the city of Sumner, and the Sumner School District. The goal of the Sumner/Bonney Lake Family Center for Support is to educate, strengthen, and support

the community' families and their children. A variety of services are provided including: parent support groups, immunization programs, parenting classes, child development screening, home visits, brief counseling services, Hispanic services, family events, summer programs, pee wee play time, and sewing classes. All of the services provided are intended to empower families to enable them to become self-sufficient and active members within the community. The Family Support Center also supports students and families by providing donated items such as: school supplies, snacks for classes, diapers, stocking, stuffers, money, etc.

Sumner/Bonney Lake Family Center For Support
Daffodil Valley Elementary School- Portable 1
Coordinator: Joannie Hill

Email: joannie_hill@sumnersd.org

Address: 1503 Valley Avenue Sumner, WA 98390

Webpage: <http://www.sumner.wednet.edu/forparents/pages/SFC.html>

Phone: 253-891-6535

Hours: Monday – Thursday from 9:00am - 4:30pm, and Friday from 9:00am - 4:00pm
(closed for lunch daily from 12:00 - 1:00pm)

Sumner/Bonney Lake Communities for Families Coalition

This is a group is a part of the Sumner Tobacco and Alcohol Risk Reduction Project within the Sumner School District. The group meets once a month in the Sumner School District office. The goal of this meeting is touch base with families to identify common assets and needs within the community. While the coalition is targeting families who live within the school district, it is open to anyone who would like to attend. Families are also able to connect with family related resources, services, and activities that best meet their individual needs.

Sumner/Bonney Lake Communities for Families Coalition

Address: 1202 Wood Avenue Sumner, WA 98390

Phone: 253-891-6066

Hours: First Thursday of every month starting at 3:00pm

Readiness to Learn

A home based case management service for families referred through schools. These referred families need support with outside issues that are impacting their child's ability to learn in school. Support for these families is provided in a number of ways including but not limited to: housing, financial assistance, food, shelter, clothing, transportation, and other basic needs. Readiness to learn also helps parents with parenting skills.

Readiness to Learn
 In Sponsorship with Puget Sound Educational Service District
 District Contact: S.T.A.R.R Project
 Director: Marilee Hill-Anderson
 Email: marilee_hill-anderson@sumnersd.org
 Address: 1202 Wood Avenue Sumner, WA 98390
 Phone: 253-891-6066
 Fax: 253-891-6092

White River Community Outreach

This program works to bridge the economic gap within the communities of East Pierce County. Those families residing in the Sumner, Buckley, and greater Bonney Lake communities are connected with local and county services to meet their needs. The resources provided to these families at the Community Outreach include: personal hygiene items, money, laundry soap, and gift cards to purchase items like gas or shoes.

White River Community Outreach
 Buckley Youth Activity Center
 Resource Director: Julie Bevaart
 Email: Julie@wrco.org
 Address: 251 River Avenue South Buckley, WA 98321
 Mailing Address: P O Box 2401 Buckley, WA 98321
 Webpage: www.wrco.org
 Phone: 360-829-1921 Ext. 261
 Hours: Tuesday and Thursday from 11:00am - 2:00pm

Food

Sumner Community Food Bank

The Food Bank serves over 250 families every month who come from the Sumner, Lake Tapps, and Buckley communities. Residents with the zip code 98390 from Sumner/Bonney Lake and 98391 from Buckley are eligible to receive support. Five days a week families or individuals may pick up food and other items such as toiletries, pet food, and child care necessities. The Sumner Community Food Bank also encourages its visitors and volunteers to learn more about other local resources available to them within the community, the Food Bank's intent behind this is to connect people to the support that they need.

Sumner Community Food Bank

Address: 15625 Main Street East Sumner, WA 98390

Phone: 253-863-3793

Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday from 1:00pm - 3:00pm, and Thursday from 5:00 - 7:00pm

Bonney Lake Community Resources/Food Bank

The Bonney Lake Community Resources center is a food bank that is structured to provide families with basic necessities. To support families of need they offer food, baby items, personal care products, and pet food. While the Bonney Lake Community Resources services many families they have never had to turn anyone away because of a lack of food.

This organization has also created a "Back-Pack" program, which is available to all elementary and middle schools within the Sumner School District. The "Back-Pack" program supports those children who are in poverty or at risk and need of food for over weekend as there may not be any available at home. These students are identified by the

school and supplied with a bag to take home every Friday during the school year. The bags are filled on Wednesday and Thursday with kid-friendly foods that require no preparation. This ensures that the students can eat over the weekend without requiring help with preparation from an adult.

Bonney Lake Community Resources/Food Bank
 Email: info@teamlcr.us
 Address: 18409 Veterans Memorial Drive Bonney Lake, WA 98391
 Webpage: <http://www.teamlcr.us/index.html>
 Phone: 253-863-4043
 Hours: Tuesday and Friday 10:00am-1:00pm and 5:00 - 7:00pm,
 Wednesday and Thursday 10:00am-1:00pm

Emmanuel Food Pantry

The St. Andrews Catholic Church in the middle of downtown Sumner runs the Emmanuel Food Pantry. Members of this organization are volunteers from the church who support local families, regardless of religious affiliation, age, gender, ethnicity, or national origin to ensure those in need have food. Food is distributed to visitors in a back building on church grounds; the Emmanuel Food Pantry is not connected to the physical structure of the church. In addition to providing food this organization coordinates with the local "Back-Pack" program run by the Bonney Lake Food Bank in support of children in elementary and middle school grades. This collaboration ensures those students are nourished over the weekends during the school year.

Emmanuel Food Pantry
 Coordinator: Arlene Evavold
 Email: arleneevavold@comcast.net
 Address: 1402 Valley Avenue Sumner, WA 98390
 Webpage: <http://www.standrewsumner.org/index.cfm?load=page&page=164>
 Phone: 253-350-4899
 Hours: Monday and Friday 10:00am - 12:00pm, and Wednesday 4:00 - 7:00pm

Plateau Outreach Ministries Food Bank

The Plateau Outreach Ministries Food Bank was created with the intent of supporting residents of Enumclaw, Buckley, Black Diamond, Wilkeson, Carbonado, and South Prairie who are in crisis. This is a collaboration of churches that have come together in order to provide resources in the forms of food, shelter, emergency financial assistance, and clothing. Support is available for any family within the service area of the Plateau Outreach Ministries Food Bank regardless of faith, age, gender, ethnicity, or national origin. Non-perishable items in addition to fresh and frozen foods are distributed only on Wednesdays. However, there is an emergency need for food contacts may be made through the Plateau Outreach office to provide resources from the “emergency pantry”.

Plateau Outreach Ministries Food Bank
Address: 2807 Cole Street Enumclaw, WA
Webpage: <http://plateauoutreach.com/index.cfm>
Phone: 360-802-2220

Hours: Wednesday 9:30am - 12:00pm (Food and Clothing Bank)
Monday - Saturday 10:00am - 4:00pm (Emergency Pantry)

*The Plateau Outreach Ministries Food Bank serves residents of South Prairie Ridge; therefore this service is not advised for Bonney Lake, Emerald Hills, Crestwood, Daffodil Valley, or Maple Lawn Elementary as the attendance area is outside of this community.

Summer Feeding Program for Children

During the school year many low-income families are supported through the free and reduced-priced lunch and breakfast program. However, during the summer months when school is not in session, many impoverished families struggle even more without the daily breakfast and lunch aide from schools. Daffodil Valley and Liberty Ridge Elementary have a “Summer Lunch Program for Children” which is supported by the Bonney Lake Food Bank. The Summer Lunch Program for Children was designed to

support families during summer months. The program is based out of these two locations as the school populations in both areas is highly impacted by students who are at risk or in poverty. Children ranging from 1 to 18 are able to stop by either location and enjoy a free meal five days a week. While this program is supported through the Sumner School District, it is available to anyone within the community so children do not need to be current students.

Sumner Freed Program for Children

Address: Daffodil Valley Elementary 1509 Valley Avenue Sumner, WA 98390
Liberty Ridge Elementary 12202 209th Avenue Court East Bonney Lake, WA 98390

Director of Child Nutrition Services: Karen Brown

Email: karen_brown@sumnersd.org

Phone: 253-891-6000 or 253-891-6450

Hours: Summer months (please call for specifics as times vary year to year)

Prairie Ridge Community Coalition

This resource emphasizes support for those families living within the community of Prairie Ridge. Twice a month the Prairie Ridge Community Coalition supports local families by hosting a free dinner with family game time and bingo. These events take place on the first and third Wednesday of every month. While this resource does not provide regular donations of food for families in need, it does offer all families an opportunity to connect with the community by enjoying a free meal and interacting through games.

Prairie Ridge Community Coalition

Address: Recreation Hall 14205 215th Avenue East Bonney Lake, WA 98391

Phone: 253-897-8378

Hours: First and Third Wednesday of every month dinner is from 6:00 - 6:45pm followed by family game time or bingo beginning at 6:45pm

*The Prairie Ridge Community Coalition emphasizes residents of Prairie Ridge; therefore this service is not advised for Bonney Lake, Emerald Hills, Crestwood, Daffodil Valley, or Maple Lawn Elementary as the attendance area is outside of this community.

Clothing/Personal Hygiene/Household Commodities

Lions 4 Kids Home

The Lions organization consists of millions of members located in hundreds of countries. The Bonney Lake the Lions have created a special house that is designed to support children who come from low-income families. The Lions 4 Kids Home provides children of all ages with the following items: personal care items, school supplies, good condition clothing, and other commodities that can be used to help clean and well groomed. The focus of this organization is on clothing and personal hygiene because the Lions want to ensure that all children are outfitted for learning in school, and do not have to worry about ridicule from their peers. This organization will help meet students' basic hygienic needs.

Lions 4 Kids House

Address: 18429 89th Street East Bonney Lake, WA 98391

Webpage: www.bonneylakelions.com/activities/lions-4-kids-house

Phone: 253-447-3844

Normal Hours: Wednesday 4:00 - 6:15pm and Saturday 9:00am - 12:00pm

Summer Hours: Wednesday 2:00 - 5:15pm

Plateau Outreach Ministries Clothing Bank

The Plateau Outreach Ministries Clothing Bank was created with the intent of supporting residents of Enumclaw, Buckley, Black Diamond, Wilkeson, Carbonado, and South Prairie who are in crisis. This is a collaboration of churches that have come together in order to provide resources in the forms of food, shelter, emergency financial assistance, and clothing. Support is available for any family within the service area of the Plateau Outreach Ministries Clothing Bank regardless of faith, age, gender, ethnicity, or national origin.

Plateau Outreach Ministries Clothing Bank
 Address: 2807 Cole Street Enumclaw, WA
 Webpage: <http://plateauoutreach.com/index.cfm>
 Phone: 360-802-2220

Hours: Wednesday 9:30am - 12:00pm (Food and Clothing Bank)

*The Plateau Outreach Ministries Clothing Bank serves residents of South Prairie Ridge; therefore this service is not advised for Bonney Lake, Emerald Hills, Crestwood, Daffodil Valley, or Maple Lawn Elementary as the attendance area is outside of this community.

Bonney Lake Seventh Day Adventist Church Clothing Bank

The Seventh Day Adventist Church collects donations from its congregation and surrounding community to support children and their families. Some of the types of items they collect for distribution are clothing, household products, bedding, toiletries, and diapers. While items are collected and distributed by the Seventh Day Adventist Church they serve anyone in the community who is in need regardless of religious affiliation, race, gender, national origin, or age.

Bonney Lake Seventh Day Adventist Church Clothing Bank
 Address: 11503 214th Avenue South Bonney Lake, WA 98391
 Phone: 253-862-8620
 Hours: First and Third Monday from 9:00-11:00am
 (open for donations 8:00am-12:00pm)

St. Francis House

Doris and Stan Michalek founded the St. Francis House in 1974. It has been serving families living below the poverty line in East Pierce County. They provide a number of free services and have helped thousands of people. Some of their programs include: a clothing bank, furniture bank, meal program, emergency food bank, emergency assistance, English as a Second Language Program, and a back-to-school program. In 2013 they supported families in need by distributing 180,734 clothing items, helping 324 families with furniture needs, and provided meals for 12,537 people.

St. Francis House
Address: 322 7th Street South East Puyallup, WA 98372
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 156 Puyallup, WA 98371
Phone: 253848-3618
Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 11:30am – 2:30pm and Friday 6:30 – 9:00pm

Transportation

Care Van

This free service is available through the Enumclaw Regional Healthcare Foundation to anyone living in the areas of Enumclaw, Black Diamond, Buckley, Bonney Lake, Wilkeson, and Carbonado who displays a hardship for transportation. While this service is geared towards supporting adult mobility, children under the age of 16 may also be transported but must be accompanied by an adult. For those children who are young enough to legally require a car seat, the parent must provide it. The Care Van will provide wheelchair accessible transportation for those in need. However, because of limited resources patrons are encouraged to schedule their appointment at least two days in advanced; requests can be placed up to 14 days prior to the appointment. While the Care Van service recognizes emergency situations arise, these are filled on an as available basis.

Care Van

Sponsored by the Regional Healthcare Foundation
Webpage: www.enumclawregionalhealthcarefoundation.org/what-we-do/care-van/
Phone: 360-284-2444 (during regular business hours)
253-284-2444 (for urgent transportation needs)
Hours: Monday – Friday 9:00am – 2:00pm

*The Care van serves residents of Enumclaw, Black Diamond, Buckley, Bonney Lake, Wilkeson, and Carbonado; therefore this service is not available Daffodil Valley or Maple Lawn Elementary as the attendance area is outside of these communities.

Support Groups/Care Ministries

Good Samaritan Behavioral Health

The Good Samaritan Behavioral Health is a branch of the Multicare Corporation. It works to serve those families who live in the surrounding community of Good Samaritan Hospital through counseling and other support services. Programs under the Good Samaritan Behavioral Health can be found in the list below.

Child and Adolescent Services: Serves families with children or adolescents who exhibit problems of mood or behavior adjustments that are adversely affecting their sense of self. They may be having trouble functioning at home or in school.

Family Therapy: A mental health therapist will support a family as they work together to help their child or adolescent who is having emotional or behavioral problems that are effecting the family dynamics.

Domestic Violence Counseling: Specialized counseling for those who have experienced trauma in their life. This trauma could physical abuse or verbal/emotional violence in relationships.

Good Samaritan Behavioral Health
Address: 325 East Pioneer Avenue Puyallup, WA 98372
Phone: 253-697-8400 or 1-888-445-8120

A Common Voice

The mission of A Common Voice is to provide support for parents who need guidance and support. Parents may feel hopeless, overwhelmed, and unsure of what to do. A Common Voice will provide a support and education for these parents through one on one trainings or support groups. Coping strategies along with information on how to help struggling children are provided through these trainings or sessions. A Common

Voice is knowledgeable and can provide additional resources to help parents who have children that are struggling in school and may be in the process or have an IEP or 504 plan. Advocacy for parents' rights will be provided through educating families on how to navigate systems like school, juvenile court, and mental health issues. Staff can even attend meetings between families and school in order to further advocate and support parents.

A Common Voice

Address: 10402 Kline Street Southwest Lakewood, WA 98499

Webpage: acommonvoice.org/A_Common_voice/HOME.html

Email: acommonvoice@icloud.com or acvsherry@msn.com

Olive Crest Ministry at Calvary Community Church

This is an organization of families from the Calvary Community Church who open their doors to families in need. Children from families who are experiencing a crisis and/or rehab are welcomed into church families' homes, while the biological parents maintain full custody. The intent of this is to prevent child abuse, treating and educating at risk children, and preserving the family in its time of need. A case worker is also provided to work with parents directly. Resource groups may support the host church family to provide additional support for the children in the form of supplies, food, clothing, and finances.

Olive Crest Ministry at Calvary Community Church

Webpage: www.cccsumner.org/#/adults/compassion-ministries

Email: scarlet.taft@calvarycommunitychurch.org

Phone: 253-863-3352 ext. 216

Health Care/Dental/Vision

Community Health Care Clinic

The Community Health Care Clinic is a non-profit organization that was created in 1987. The organization consists of eight clinics, but Parkland is closest both the cities of Sumner and Bonney Lake. Anyone requiring medical support may come, and no one will be denied care if they are unable to pay. For those families who have means to pay for services the clinics accept medical coupons, insurance plans, and provide payment options.

Community Health Care Clinic
 Address: 11225 Pacific Avenue Tacoma, WA 98444
 Webpage: www.commhealth.org
 Phone: 253-536-2020
 Hours: Monday – Friday from 8:00am – 5:00pm
 (closed from lunch from 12:00pm – 1:00pm)

Northwest Lions Foundation for Sight and Hearing/Bonney Lake Lions Club

The Lions Club further supports the children within the Sumner School District Community as they collect new and gently used glasses and hearing aids for those in need. If you have a student who is in need of either glasses or hearing aids please contact the Vision Care Committee Chairperson.

Northwest Lions Foundation for Sight and Hearing/Bonney Lake Lions Club
 Vision Care Committee Chairperson: Tom Watson
 Phone: 253-951-6385

Immunization Site (Free/Low Cost)

In partnership with Multicare and the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department this Immunization Site provides shots for tuberculosis, immunizations, and flu shots. Families will need to bring immunization records, but they do not need to make an

appointment. Walk-ins are welcome any time during operating hours at the South Hill Mall location in Puyallup.

Immunization Site (Free/Low Cost)

In Collaboration with Multicare and the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department

Address: 3500 South Meridian Puyallup, WA 98373

Phone: 253-697-4010

Hours: Monday – Saturday 12:30 - 5:00pm

Housing/Homeless/Home Repair

Helping Hand House

This organization helps families who are either homeless or near homelessness to find regular shelter. The Helping Hand House offers a number of programs that are designed to meet specific the needs of impoverished families. To be eligible for aid from any program the family must live in Pierce County and have at least one child under the age of 17. For details about each program refer to the list below.

Emergency Housing: Housing is provided for a single family for up to 90 days. Participation in an intensive case management and life skills classes are required.

Transitional Housing: Housing is provided for a single family for up to 24 months. Participation in an intensive case management, life skills, workforce training, and financial literacy classes in required.

Permanent Supportive Housing: Housing is provided for a single family. The family will participate in intensive case management and life skills classes that will gradually decrease and the family's ability to manage their own financial resources improve and they gain independence from the Helping Hand House.

Rapid Rehousing: Tailored to individual need; provides financial/housing stabilization services that enable families to relocate and become self-sufficient in their own housing.

Helping Hand House
 Address: 4321 2nd Street Southwest Puyallup, WA 98373
 Mailing Address: P.O. Box 710 Puyallup, WA 98371
 Email: info@helpinghand.org
 Phone: 253-848-6096 or 1-855-444-3264

Access Point 4 Housing

In partnership with Pierce County the Access Point 4 Housing is an organization that is working to develop a model to prevent and ultimately stop homelessness from occurring in the community. It is a centralized intake and referral system that connects families with a housing specialist who will work one-on-one to enable independence. The organization also can provide low-income families with rental assistance. To qualify for services one must be homeless or going to be homeless within 72 hours of contacting Access Point 4 Housing

Access Point 4 Housing
 Webpage: www.associatedministries.org
 Phone: 253-682-3401
 Hours: Monday – Friday 9:00am - 5:00 pm (closed for lunch from 12:00 - 1:00pm)
 Some evening appointments available upon request

Emergency Shelters in Pierce County

The following is a list of contact information for emergency shelters that are available in Pierce County.

Tacoma Avenue Men's and Women's Shelter
 Address: 1142 Court East Tacoma, WA 98402
 Phone: 253-572-0131
 Hours: 5:30pm – 7:00am daily (line forms at 5:00pm)

The Rescue Mission
Address: 2909 South Adams Tacoma, WA 98402
Phone: 253-383-4493 ext. 1500 (call daily to stay on the list; call after 7:00pm for a cot)

Utilities

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program is a block grant from the United States Department of Health and Human Services. This funding is used to support impoverished families requiring immediate support to cover the cost of their home energy needs. Since families with low-income pay a larger portion of their income on heating, the intent of the grant is to support these families by keeping their heat on. To apply for funding, contact the Pierce County Community Connections and make an appointment.

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program
Pierce County Community Connections
Address: 1305 Tacoma Avenue South Suite 104 Tacoma, WA 98402
Phone: 253-798-7228 or 253-798-4500

Safelink Wireless

This is a service provides families across the country with free cell phones and minutes. Eligibility is determined by each area where the service is provided. Contact Safelink Wireless to find out eligibility.

Safelink Wireless
Mailing Address: 9700 Northwest 12th Avenue Miami, Florida 33178
Phone: 1-800-723-35465 (enrollment and plan change)
1-800-378-1684 (technical support)
Hours: Monday – Saturday 8:00am – 10:00pm EST, and Sunday 8:00am – 7:00pm EST

Tutoring

Sylvan Learning Center

Sylvan Learning Center is an organization that targets the learning of all students at high levels. One on one tutoring is provided in a way that best meets the individual child's needs. Support in reading, writing, math, and test preparation is offered. This is not a free service unless the child is an elementary school student at Liberty Ridge Elementary and qualifies for free or reduced-priced meals. Limited enrollment is available.

Sylvan Learning Center
 Address: 8708 188th Avenue East Bonney Lake, WA 98391
 Phone: 253-862-4100

Pierce County Library

The Pierce County Library is reaching out to the community to support the learning of all children in the area. Students can either go to the library or access support from their home computer. Expert tutors are available to help with language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and other academic content areas.

Pierce County Library
 Address: 116 Frayer Avenue Sumner, WA 98390
 Webpage: www.piercecountylibrary.org
 Phone: 253-548-3306
 Hours: Daily from 1:00 – 10:00pm (tutoring hours, not library hours)

Holiday Support

Sumner/Bonney Lake Family Center for Support - Santa's Wish List

During the regular year this is a referral based program that is available to all families in the Sumner School District. The multi-agency staff consists of members from Multicare, Tacoma Pierce County Health Department, Pierce County Community

Services, Good Samaritan Behavioral Health, the city of Sumner, and the Sumner School District. The goal of the Sumner/Bonney Lake Family Center for Support is to educate, strengthen, and support the community. A variety of services are provided including: parent support groups, immunization programs, parenting classes, child development screening, home visits, brief counseling services, Hispanic services, family events, summer programs, pee wee play time, and sewing classes.

Then during the holiday months this organization also partners with elementary schools in the Sumner School District to provide support for low-income students to ensure that they have presents and food for the Christmas holiday. The Center works with schools to identify students in need. Together communication is made with families to provide presents that are specific for every child in the household.

Sumner/Bonney Lake Family Center For Support – Santa’s Wish List
Daffodil Valley Elementary School- Portable 1
Coordinator: Joannie Hill
Email: joannie_hill@sumnersd.org
Address: 1503 Valley Avenue Sumner, WA 98390
Webpage: <http://www.sumner.wednet.edu/forparents/pages/SFC.html>
Phone: 253-891-6535

Hours: Monday – Thursday from 9:00am - 4:30pm, and Friday from 9:00am - 4:00pm
(closed for lunch daily from 12:00 - 1:00pm)

Pierce County Santa Cops

During the month of December the Pierce County Sheriff Deputies partner with other public safety and criminal agencies to provide holiday cheer for local communities. Together they provide food, children’s gifts, and basic necessities to families in need. In order to refer a family into the school will need to contact your local Pierce County police station.

Pierce County Santa Cops
Address: 271 John Bananola Way East Puyallup, WA 98374
Email: centura12@cs.com
Phone: 253-798-7804
Fax: 253-798-3974

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CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this project was to create a handbook for elementary administrators and teachers to utilize in the Sumner School District in order to better connect and meet the needs of students and families who are in poverty or are considered to be at risk within a school's population. While the McKinney-Vento Act protects families to ensure that all students have immediate access to school-linked services, including free breakfast and lunch, as well as transportation needs for getting to and from the school, this has not fulfilled all families' needs nor has it prevented families from falling below the poverty line. This is illustrated through the research presented within the literature review portion of the project which discusses current statistics related to the district's poor or at risk population as a whole and by individual school. Sumner School District has many families in need. These numbers have not dwindled in recent years, but rather have increased.

Schools across the state of Washington are going through or gearing up for large educational initiatives like Common Core State Standards, that directly affect the learning and expectations of schools. As a result of this increase in rigor it has never been more important for schools to reach out to their community to ensure that all students are able to learn and find academic success; which can only be possible when basic needs are met. Sumner School District elementary schools need to reach out to the available resources surrounding their community. While individual schools implement best practice interventions or connect with organizations in various ways; there is currently not a district level system to support these families outside of the STARR Project, nor is

there any collaboration among elementary schools located within the same community to provide support. Only families who connect directly with this branch of the district are receiving universal aid.

Recommendations for next steps would be to distribute this handbook to all elementary schools within the Sumner School District. This would provide schools with a comprehensive list of current resources that are available and being utilized throughout the district. Furthermore, regular meetings should be scheduled between the S.T.A.R.R. Project and buildings to increase communication on current families in need and new available resources that may develop. This would work to create a network of support for all students and families within the Sumner School District who are in poverty or at risk. With district level collaboration that is focused on providing aid and support, it is the hope of the researcher that Sumner will begin to see the academic gap created from economic disadvantages close.

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