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Educational applications of achievement goal theory

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EDUCATIONAL APPLICATIONS OF
ACHIEVEMENT GOAL THEORY

An Abstract of a Thesis
Submitted
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Educational Specialist

Michelle Hinzman
University of Northern Iowa
July 2011

ABSTRACT

In the past two decades, achievement goal theory has been found particularly useful in explaining student motivation (Kaplan & Maehr, 2007; Kaplan, Middleton, Urdan, & Midgley, 2002). The purpose of this study was to analyze differences between the achievement goals espoused by middle school and elementary teachers. A mixed-method approach was utilized that required teachers in an urban, eastern Iowa school district to complete a survey regarding their motivational beliefs. Select teachers were then identified based on survey results to be observed and interviewed in an attempt to further analyze instructional practices as they related to student motivation. Results of this study provide significant findings regarding how elementary and middle school classroom environments and instructional practices differ and are especially relevant considering recent middle school reformation.

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DEDICATION

To my parents, for your continuous support these past years. You are, and continue to be, my motivation for striving towards excellence. To Lily and Dylan, may you never doubt all that you are capable of. I am incredibly fortunate to have the support of such extraordinary people in my life.

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I also would like to extend my appreciation towards the teachers who participated in this study and, in particular, to the teachers who opened the doors of their classrooms in order to allow me to observe their instructional practices and beliefs. I cannot begin to express my gratitude to you for allowing me to view your passion for education, research, and, most of all, your students.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Twenty-five years after the publication, “A Nation At-Risk,” demanded reformation of the American educational system (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), research (e.g. Juvonen, Le, Kaganoff, Augustine, & Constant, 2004; Thompson, 2004) has continued to indicate the prevalence of difficulties associated with adolescent motivation. Middle school reforms have introduced advisory teams, block scheduling, schools-within-schools, and additional structural alterations. Following the initiation of such reform, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) was passed by federal legislation. NCLB, which was enacted with the goal of increasing educational accountability and improving standards for schools, has been considered to have the greatest impact of current reforms (Meece, Anderman, & Anderman., 2006).

A major concern of motivational theorists regarding the NCLB legislation has been whether the reform measure will serve to negatively impact students’ motivation and, of particular concern, whether such reform methods will further adversely impact adolescent motivation (Meece et al., 2006). Although public scrutiny of assessment scores may encourage students to work harder, a greater focus on testing may modify achievement goals, serving to decrease motivation of both students and teachers (Roderick & Engel, 2001). While few studies have been made available that consider the impact of contemporary reform measures such as NCLB, an even greater paucity of

research exists that investigates the influence of such reforms on school and classroom environments in which children learn (Meece et al., 2006).

An additional concern is that research suggests the decline of students' academic motivation during the transitional period of elementary to middle school appears to be related to systematic changes in classroom environments that occur in middle schools (Kumar, 2005). Study findings (i.e., Anderman & Midgley, 1997; Wolters & Daugherty, 2007) have consistently supported that elementary classrooms are perceived by students as more mastery-oriented than middle and high school classes. That is, elementary students have reported perceiving elementary classrooms as emphasizing that high ability and the development of self-competence are achieved through increasing personal knowledge, understanding, and/or the mastery of a skill (Ames & Archer, 1988; Nicholls, 1984). Whereas, adolescents have reported perceiving middle school classrooms as stressing performance goals (Anderman & Midgley, 1997) and, thus, judging personal abilities in accordance to other individuals' ability levels and basing success on the ability to successfully surpass normative standards (Ames, 1990).

This is of particular interest as Gehlbach (2006) discovered substantial changes and shifts of adolescents' goal orientations with younger students more likely to report mastery goal orientations than their older counterparts. Other studies (Anderman & Midgley, 1997; Wolters & Daugherty, 2007) have confirmed that achievement goals are susceptible to change, but the type of change experienced often differs. Whereas mastery goals have been shown to decrease as individuals transition to middle school, performance-avoidance goals have increased.

This trend is particularly concerning as classrooms that are perceived by students as emphasizing performance goals have been found to predict a decline in students' academic mathematics achievement, decreased student involvement during group work tasks, and a lack of persistence with tasks considered by students as boring or difficult. Students who report being performance-avoidance goal-oriented appear especially at risk for failure in classrooms that emphasize performance goal orientations (Lau & Nie, 2008).

Furthermore, students in classrooms perceived as performance-oriented have reported a focus on ability, negative perceptions of their personal ability, and consider failure due to a lack of ability (Ames & Archer, 1988). Students in classrooms and schools that endorse competition among students report experiencing increased anxiety levels, decreased perceptions of self-worth (Roeser, Midgley, & Urdan, 1996), and feeling high levels of dissonance (Kumar, 2005). Such findings point out that, although middle schools were intended to address social and emotional developmental needs of adolescents, students continue to report that middle schools provide "suboptimal conditions for learning" (Juvonen et al., 2004, p. 114).

Importance of the Study

Achievement goal theory plays an invaluable role in educational settings as it can be utilized to analyze and improve classroom environments and teaching practices in general and to positively impact student motivation in particular (Ames, 1992). School and classroom cultures, characterized by how schools and teachers present learning to their students (Maehr & Midgley, 1996), can serve to either enhance or discourage

students' development of mastery goal orientations (Ames, 1992; Kaplan et al., 2002; Leeper, Corpus, & Iyengar, 2005; Meece et al., 2006).

Only within the past decade have researchers (Eccles & Midgley, 1989) begun to consider that the problem of adolescents' motivation and the resulting decline in academic achievement during middle school, may be explained through the construct of achievement goal theory (Anderman & Maehr, 1994). The primary objective of achievement goal theory, which is based on socio-cognitive processes, is to understand students' views of learning and the goals they choose to pursue in an achievement setting (Urda, Midgley, & Wood, 1995). More specifically, achievement goal theory considers how psychological factors shape students' acquisitions and applications of skills and the underlying purposes for why students engage in learning (Kaplan et al., 2002). The theory provides a framework for students' adaptive and maladaptive behaviors that influence their overall engagement in the learning process (Dweck, 1986). Further, the theory is based on the premise of two conceptions of abilities, mastery goals and performance goals (Elliott & Dweck, 1988).

Further research is necessary to provide additional support to findings (Midgley, Anderman, & Hicks, 1995) which indicate that middle school teachers: perceive school cultures as being less mastery-oriented, engage in fewer mastery-oriented instructional practices, and are more likely to believe in fixed ability than elementary teachers. Such findings are important as classrooms emphasizing performance goals have been associated with a decline in students' academic mathematics achievement, decreased student involvement during group work tasks, and a lack of persistence with completing

tasks that are considered by students as boring or difficult. Additionally, students who report being performance-avoidance goal-oriented appear especially at risk for failure in classrooms that emphasize performance goal orientations (Lau & Nie, 2008).

Furthermore, students in performance-oriented classrooms have reported a focus on ability, negative perceptions of their personal ability, and consider failure due to a lack of ability (Ames & Archer, 1988). Students in classrooms and schools that endorse competition among students report experiencing increased anxiety levels, decreased perceptions of self-worth (Roeser et al., 1996), and feeling high levels of dissonance (Kumar, 2005).

As the decline of students' academic motivation during the transition from elementary to middle school appears to be related to systematic changes in classroom environments that occur in middle schools (Kumar, 2005), further research is needed in order to understand the specific instructional practices and teacher beliefs in mastery versus performance classrooms. Analyzing classroom practices as they relate to achievement goals is especially significant as research (Roeser et al., 1996) has indicated that students' personal achievement goals are related to the ways in which they interpret the overall school and classroom climate regarding achievement. Additionally, students' perceptions of classroom and school environments can impact student behaviors, affects, and cognitions (Kumar, 2005) and serve to influence the adaptive or maladaptive academic behaviors they demonstrate (Ames & Archer, 1988).

Research Questions

1. Compared to elementary teachers, do middle school teachers differ in the achievement goals they espouse?
2. Compared to elementary teachers, do middle school teachers differ in their beliefs regarding their students' achievement goals?
3. How do the instructional practices, behaviors, and beliefs of teachers who espouse performance goals differ from teachers who espouse mastery goals?
4. How do mastery and performance-oriented classrooms differ at the elementary level versus the middle school level?
5. How have recent educational reforms (NCLB, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Response to Intervention (RTI)) impacted teachers' achievement goals and the achievement goals espoused in schools and classrooms?

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

“There are three things to remember about education. The first one is motivation. The second one is motivation. The third one is motivation,” Terrell H. Bell, former Secretary of Education, once declared (as cited in Ames, 1990, p. 409). Twenty-five years after the publication, “A Nation At-Risk,” demanded reformation of the American educational system (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), research (e.g. Juvonen et al., 2004; Thompson, 2004) has continued to indicate the prevalence of difficulties associated with adolescent motivation. Perhaps of greatest concern, current research (Maehr & Anderman, 1993; Meece et al., 2006; Urda, Midgley, & Wood, 1995; Wigfield & Wagner, 2005) has suggested that this need not be the case. Although some reform has occurred in middle schools, individuals have continued to share concern regarding the lack of focus on learning and understanding, especially in the area of presenting challenging material in middle schools (Midgley, Middleton, Gheen, & Kumar, 2002).

Middle school reform has introduced advisory teams, block scheduling, schools-within-schools, and additional structural alterations. Professional organizations (e.g. National Council of Teachers of Mathematics and the National Middle School Association) have led the push to shift the paradigm of teachers’ thoughts regarding teaching and learning from a focus on memorization and rote learning to a greater emphasis on collaborative learning, mastery of concepts, problem solving, and individual inquiry. Following the initiation of such reform, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

(NCLB) was passed by federal legislators. A major concern of motivational theorists regarding the NCLB legislation has been whether the reform measure negatively impacted students' motivation (Meece et al., 2006). Although public scrutiny of assessment scores may encourage students to work harder, a greater focus on testing may modify achievement goals, serving to decrease motivation of both students and teachers (Roderick & Engel, 2001).

Although few studies considered the impact of contemporary reform measures such as NCLB, there is a greater paucity of research investigating the influence of such reforms on school and classroom environments (Meece et al., 2006). Thus, researchers (Maehr & Midgley, 1996; Midgley & Maehr, 1999) have instead spent a considerable amount of time studying the influence of motivational theories, such as the achievement goal theory, on students' learning in an effort to gain understanding of the effects of school and classroom environments on students.

In the past two decades since its conception, achievement goal theory has been found particularly useful in explaining student motivation in classroom learning environments (Kaplan & Maehr, 2007; Kaplan et al., 2002). Researchers (Dweck, 1986; Nicholls, 1984) began using achievement goal theory to not only consider the difference in strengths of students' learning, but also the quality of students' engagement in the learning process. Although students may appear similarly engaged in a learning task, the quality of their actual engagement may differ.

For instance, one student may be using learning strategies to deeply process information and feeling challenged by the difficulty of a task, while another student may

be attempting to only memorize information and feeling frustrated by the difficulty of the task. Researchers (Kaplan et al., 2002) have come to attribute these differences in students' quality of engagement in learning to different motivational orientations and espoused goals. Only within the past decade have researchers (Eccles & Midgley, 1989) begun to consider that the problem of adolescents' motivation and the resulting decline in academic achievement during middle school, may be explained through the construct of achievement goal theory (Anderman & Maehr, 1994).

The primary objective of achievement goal theory is to gain understanding regarding students' views of learning and the goals they choose to pursue in an achievement setting (Urduan et al., 1995). Achievement goal theory considers how psychological factors shape students' acquisitions and applications of skills and the underlying purposes for why students engage in learning (Kaplan et al., 2002). The theory, based on social-cognitive processes, provides a framework for adaptive and maladaptive behaviors demonstrated by students that influence their overall engagement in the learning process (Dweck, 1986).

Description of Achievement Goals

Achievement Goal Theory

Achievement goal theory is based on the premise of two conceptions of abilities, mastery goals and performance goals. Dweck and Leggett (1988) cautioned researchers from erroneously inferring that the two conceptions of ability in any way influence individuals' overall intelligence. Rather, the construct of achievement goal theory was

devised to explain how individuals of similar intelligence gain differing levels of success and failure in the face of challenge.

The conceptions of abilities differ in the way in which individuals view personal ability levels, the underlying reasons individuals select to behave in particular ways, and the different goals pursued in similar achievement situations (Elliott & Dweck, 1988). The two conceptions of achievement goals include the following variations to identify mastery goals (Ames & Archer, 1988): task goals (Nicholls, Patashnick, & Nolen, 1985) and learning goals; whereas helpless response patterns (Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Elliott & Dweck, 1988) and ego-involvement goals (Nicholls, 1984) are terms previously utilized by researchers to identify performance goals (Ames & Archer, 1988). For the purpose of this study, the two conceptions of abilities will be referred to as mastery and performance goals.

Achievement goals were found to include both personal and situational components (Kaplan et al., 2002). Although the personal component of achievement goals was found to be relatively enduring over time (Meece, Blumenfeld, & Hoyle, 1988; Wolters, Yu, & Pintrich, 1996), numerous laboratory experiments (Elliott & Dweck, 1988; Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1996) showed that the situational component of achievement goals is prone to change in response to the goals emphasized in a particular situation. This finding is deemed as particularly significant for its implications concerning school and classroom environments.

Mastery goals. Individuals who are mastery-oriented believe high ability and self-competence are achieved through increasing personal knowledge, understanding, and/or

the mastery of a skill (Ames & Archer, 1988; Nicholls, 1984). Mastery-oriented individuals realize the necessity of expending extra effort to successfully complete challenging tasks, and believe that academic success is a culmination of interest, hard work, and collaborative effort (Nicholls et al., 1985).

For instance, a mastery-oriented student in a particular achievement situation such as writing a research paper, may select to complete the task because he or she is interested in the topic, wants to improve his or her skill of writing a research paper, and wants to gain further understanding regarding how to successfully research a topic and write a research paper (Urduan et al, 1995). When a mastery-oriented student perceives the task of writing a research paper as more difficult than originally anticipated, he or she will persist in efforts to successfully complete writing the assigned paper and continue to work hard in the face of difficulty (Elliott & Dweck, 1988; Nicholls, 1984). Once this mastery-oriented student completes writing the assigned paper, he or she is likely to attribute his or her success to the effort he or she put forth (Maehr & Anderman, 1993).

The mastery goal orientation has been found to predict student outcomes including: independent learning, continuous academic involvement (Ames, 1990); persistent attempts to increase competence, positive emotions (Elliott & Dweck, 1988); employment of adaptive learning strategies (Kaplan & Midgley, 1997; Wolters et al., 1996); greater levels of active cognitive engagement (Meece et al., 1988); academic self-efficacy (Roeser, Midgley, & Urduan, 1996; Wolters et al., 1996); elevated perceptions of competence (Elliot & Church, 1997); deep processing (Elliot, McGregor, & Gable, 1999); decreased instances of self-handicapping (Migley & Urduan, 2001); increased

utilization of problem-solving strategies such as coping skills (Brdar, Rijavec, & Loncaric, 2006); greater self-regulation, higher levels of academic performance, and adaptive levels of test anxiety (Wolters et al., 1996). Moreover, mastery goals have been found to be a positive predictor of both ability perceptions and achievement behaviors in all grade levels and across all subject areas (Meece et al., 2006).

Performance goals. Individuals who are performance-oriented evaluate their abilities in comparison to other individuals' ability levels (Ames, 1990) and thus base success on their ability to surpass normative standards (Ames, 1992). Performance-oriented individuals equate high ability as above average in comparison to their peers and low ability as below average ability in comparison to peers (Nicholls, 1984). Moreover, performance-oriented individuals are extremely conscious of others' perceptions of their ability level and are most often either concerned with demonstrating ability to others or avoiding the appearance to others that their ability is lacking (Kaplan et al., 2002). Consequently, such individuals avoid tasks considered difficult in an effort to create an impression of competence (Dweck, 1986; Nicholls, 1984).

For example, an individual who is performance-oriented in a particular achievement situation such as completing an algebra assignment, may focus on completing the assignment successfully in order to appear competent to peers and attempt to outperform his or her peers while expending a meager amount of effort (Kaplan et al., 2002). Likewise, a performance-oriented student would be less likely to utilize critical thinking and problem solving skills to complete the assignment (Maehr & Anderman, 1993). If the student were to realize that the algebra assignment is more difficult or

challenging than he or she had originally anticipated, he or she would give up and avoid the challenging aspects of the assignment (Urduan et al., 1995).

Often, performance-oriented students utilize learning strategies that produce only short-term effects (Ames, 1990) and place less importance on deeper learning of educational content (Ames, 1992). Individual focus is a significant difference between mastery and performance orientations in that mastery-oriented individuals are more likely to focus on the task at hand while performance-oriented individuals focus primarily on their perceptions of self (Kaplan et al., 2002).

Although studies (Elliot, 1999; Elliot, 2005; Midgley, Kaplan, & Middleton, 2001) have consistently reported positive outcomes in learning for mastery-oriented individuals, results have found conflicting outcomes associated with performance goal orientations. Some researchers (Ames, 1992; Dweck & Leggett, 1988) have found that performance-oriented individuals consistently display the maladaptive behaviors associated with performance goal orientations. However, other researchers (Elliot, 1999; Midgley et al., 2001) have found that positive student outcomes are also related to performance goals. Performance goals were divided into two subgroups: performance-approach and performance-avoidance orientations to explain the inconsistent results found by researchers which linked performance goals to both positive and negative outcomes (Elliot, 1999).

Performance-approach and performance-avoidance goals. Distinctions between approach and avoidance motivation have been recognized since the advent of scientific psychology (Elliot, 1999) as either the intensification of a specific behavior towards a

positive outcome (approach motivation) or the intensification of a specific behavior away from a negative outcome (avoidance motivation; Lewin, 1935). Elliot noted the absence of an approach-avoidance distinction in achievement goal theory as it was presented during the 1990s. While the approach-avoidance distinction was considered in early research in relation to achievement goals (Nicholls, 1984), it was abandoned by later research (Elliot, 2005). Previous researchers have either adhered to Dweck's (Dweck & Elliot, 1983) lead and have not included the approach-avoidance distinction (Butler, 1992) or have followed Nicholls' by characterizing all achievement goals as an approach form (Meece & Holt, 1993).

Elliot (1999) proposed a departure from the dichotomous conceptualization of only mastery and performance goals in an attempt to explain the inconsistent results associated with performance goals. The resulting trichotomous theory called for a partitioning of performance goals into two subgroups: approach and avoidance goals. Approach goals include individuals who focus on demonstrating ability to others by approaching normative standards (e.g. a student being concerned with completing a task well when compared to the performance of others). Avoidance goals which would be comprised of individuals concerned with avoiding the appearance to others that their ability is lacking (e.g. a student not enrolling in an advanced trigonometry course for fear that he or she will not understand the course material and peers will witness their struggles; Elliot, 2005; Elliot & Moller, 2003).

Through multiple manipulations of performance goals in both laboratory and field studies, researchers (Elliot & Moller, 2003; Rawsthorne & Elliot, 1999) concluded that

performance-approach goals tend to produce positive outcomes and performance-avoidance goals tend to produce negative outcomes. These findings support Elliot's (1999) earlier hypothesis suggesting that the inconsistent findings regarding performance goals was likely due to researchers combining performance-approach and performance-avoidance goals into a single performance goal category. Performance-approach goals have been found to positively predict effort, self-efficacy, persistence, academic performance, performance attainment, and aspirations of performance (Ames & Archer, 1988; Elliot, McGregor, & Gable, 1999; Elliot & Moller, 2003). Performance-approach oriented individuals have also been found to demonstrate the ability to immerse themselves in a task without consciously considering the reasons to complete a specific task; whereas, performance-avoidance oriented individuals often fail to exhibit this ability (Elliot & Moller, 2003).

In another study, Elliot and Church (1997) concluded that whereas mastery goals strengthen intrinsic motivation and performance-approach goals strengthen graded performance, performance-avoidance goals decrease both intrinsic motivation and graded performance. Studies (Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1996; Elliot et al., 1999) additionally found that performance-avoidance goals are characterized by: reduced involvement in tasks, diminished academic performance, disorganization, and surface-level processing. Both performance-avoidance and approach goals have been found to lead to low perceived competence, as well as an overwhelming fear of failure (Elliot & Church, 1997).

Of the categories of performance goals, performance-avoidance goals were found to be the strongest predictor of students' self-handicapping. Self-handicapping is defined

as strategies that students use to avoid appearing intellectually incompetent to peers. Such behaviors have been demonstrated to negatively impact students' academic achievements (Migley & Urdan, 2001). Thus, performance-avoidance goals appear to be especially detrimental to students' success (Lau & Nie, 2008).

As stated before, Elliot and Church (1996) cautioned that performance-approach goals may be more complex to characterize than either mastery or performance-avoidance goals because researchers have only recently begun gathering information on the construct and results have thus far often been ambiguous and provided a mixed representation (Elliot & Moller, 2003). Although Elliot and Moller described the construct as a valuable motivational goal, they have acknowledged that students with performance-approach goals are vulnerable to disruptions of motivation in the following areas: self-presentation, self-protection, and self-validation. The disruption of individuals' self-concepts often is a result of a distortion of performance-approach goals due to socialization.

For instance, performance-approach oriented individuals often focus too greatly on demonstrating positive characteristics in social situations (self-presentation), seeking ways to protect others' perceptions of oneself (self-protection), and attempting to validate their own worth (self-validation) rather than focusing on acquiring competence of academic knowledge (Hobden & Pliner, 1995). This means that while performance-approach goals may seem to be valuable in terms of students' demonstrating a need for competence, they may make students vulnerable to not considering mastery goals. Since individuals with performance-approach goals examine their personal ability at

completing a task in relation to a normative group, performance-approach goals may cause students to experience relational difficulties such as envy, jealousy, or feelings of hostility towards peers (Elliot & Moller, 2003).

2 x 2 Achievement Goal Framework

Following the success of the three goal (trichotomous) achievement framework, Elliot (1999) proposed further dividing the theory of achievement goals into four groups including partitioning mastery goals into mastery-approach and mastery-avoidance goals. Elliot labeled the proposed four goal theory as the 2 x 2 achievement goal framework. In this framework individuals who are mastery-avoidance oriented are characterized as attempting to avoid failure, as defined as the perceived loss of competence or skill, according to mastery terms. That is, individuals who are mastery-avoidance oriented may be greatly concerned about losing what they have learned previously or becoming stagnant in their ability to perform a certain task. Additionally, students with a mastery-avoidance orientation may worry that they will be unable to master class content in a specific amount of time.

Since preliminary research regarding the 2 x 2 achievement goal framework has begun only recently, there is little support as to whether positive or negative outcomes are associated with mastery-avoidance goals. Elliot (1999) has suggested that both positive and negative outcomes may ultimately be associated with the goal orientation. Since Elliot initially proposed that mastery-avoidance goals could be applied to elderly populations, researchers (Kaplan et al., 2002) have expressed uncertainty regarding whether this particular achievement goal orientation can be applied to motivation in

educational settings. Additional concern has been expressed by researchers, including Elliot himself, regarding the validity of tools developed to measure mastery-avoidance goals as presented in the 2 x 2 achievement goal framework. The Achievement Goal Questionnaire (AGQ), the tool designed originally to measure the 2 x 2 achievement goal framework (Elliot & McGregor, 2001), was not found to be effective in assessing goals conceptualized by the 2 x 2 framework (Elliot & Murayama, 2008). Consequently, Elliot and Murayama began to revise AGQ to rectify issues presented by critics and designed a revised assessment measure. However, Elliot and Murayama admitted to purposely designing AGQ-Revised to be slightly ambiguous on certain issues in an effort to allow for future revisions of AGQ-Revised to measure mastery goals as presented in a 3 x 2 achievement goal framework. The 3 x 2 framework further divides mastery goals into task-based mastery goals and intrapersonal-focused mastery goals (Elliot, 1999; Van Yperen, 2006). Thus, while researchers may be planning further divisions of mastery goals for the future, such divisions currently have little available research support.

Classroom and School Cultures in the Context of Achievement Goal Theory

The terms school culture, school ethos, and school climate have all been used at different times (Van Houtte, 2005) to describe the way in which a school goes about its daily business (Maehr & Anderman, 1993). While there may be some debate as to whether the terms may be used interchangeably (Schoen & Teddlie, 2008), for the purpose of this study, the term school culture will be used to refer to differences in learning environments provided by schools.

School culture is a multifaceted construct used to describe a school's overall character and is based on individuals' shared perceptions and beliefs regarding the quality of a school environment (Hoy, Tartar, & Bliss, 1990), the physical environment provided for learning (e.g., buildings, classrooms, corridors, etc.), and the influence of expectations on students' and teachers' behaviors (Creemers & Reezigt, 1999). This can include the various ways in which schools differ in administrators' and teachers' perceptions, thoughts, and beliefs about learning. Such differences can serve to guide different schools toward emphasizing certain practices. School cultures are of considerable significance, in that they can enhance or discourage students' motivation (Maehr & Midgley, 1996).

School cultures also differ in the way in which schools affect students (Maehr & Midgley, 1996). Research (Good & Weinstein, 1986) showed that some schools make a greater difference to students' education than other schools. Some school cultures impact students differently through the expectations that they emphasize, their approach to fostering positive teacher-student relationships, and the degree to which they seek to involve parents in their children's education (Heck, 2000).

Research (Pritchard, Morrow, & Marshall, 2005) found that schools not only differ in how they educate youth, they also differ in the academic goals they stress, the purpose of differing policies and practices, and values they emphasize to staff and students. Although such goals, assumptions, norms, and values may not be explicit or visible to those within the school, they are recognizable to others who enter the school. For example, the answer to the question "Why is a particular learning task important?" often differs greatly in various schools.

Maehr and Midgley (1996) pointed out that, in addition to school cultures, each classroom has its own classroom culture which is characterized by the distinctive way in which individual teachers present learning to their students. School and classroom objectives, purposes, and goals perceived by students serve to define students' schooling experiences. For example, while some teachers may emphasize the importance of mastering material and often encourage students to further research topics they find interesting, others may emphasize the importance of earning high grades to demonstrate learning. Such differences in the school and classroom cultures can impact students' goal orientations (Leeper et al., 2005; Meece et al., 2006).

Classroom Goal Orientations in Elementary and Middle Schools

One of the most meaningful and significant contributions of achievement goal theory is its practical value of analyzing and improving classroom environments and practices (Kaplan et al., 2002). Mastery and performance goals are elicited by specific instructional and environment demands (Ames, 1992) and can be relayed to students via either implicit or explicit goal-related messages (Kaplan et al., 2002). Recently, special emphasis has been placed on the impact of classrooms on students' shifting motivation (Leeper et al., 2005; Meece et al., 2006).

Students' personal achievement goal orientations are related to the ways in which they interpret the overall school and classroom climate regarding achievement (Roeser et al., 1996) which impact their behaviors, affects, and cognitions (Kumar, 2005) and influence the adaptive or maladaptive academic behaviors they demonstrate (Ames & Archer, 1988). For instance, classrooms that are perceived by students as emphasizing

mastery goals have predicted students' math achievement, increased student effort at difficult tasks, and less withdrawal of effort by students on tasks (Lau & Nie, 2008).

In classrooms perceived as mastery-oriented, middle school students self-report utilizing superior learning strategies, preferring challenging material, possessing positive attitudes regarding school, and believing success to be the product of effort. In addition, such classrooms also override students' negative beliefs regarding their personal abilities (Ames & Archer, 1988). By comparison, students in classrooms emphasizing performance goals reported greater occurrences of disruptive behaviors (talking out of turn, teasing, etc.) and school truancy (Anderman & Midgley, 2002).

Mastery goals have been found to be positively related to achievement-related behavior and emotional classroom engagement whereas performance goals are negative predictors of both. Emotional engagement includes: classroom curiosity, enjoyment, anger, anxiety, and boredom. Behavioral engagement is characterized as: effort, persistence, and attention displayed by students in the classroom (Gonida, Kiosseoglou, & Voulala, 2007). Students who perceive classroom environments as encouraging mastery orientations experience a greater sense of belonging and decreased dissonance (Kumar, 2005). Classrooms and schools considered by adolescents to be caring and supportive, provide a more positively adaptive environment for middle school students (Roeser et al., 1996).

Classrooms that are perceived by students as emphasizing performance goals have predicted a decline in students' academic mathematics achievement, decreased student involvement during group work tasks, and a lack of persistence with completing tasks

that are considered by students as boring or difficult. Students who report being performance-avoidance goal-oriented appear especially at risk for failure in classrooms that emphasize performance goal orientations (Lau & Nie, 2008). Furthermore, students in classrooms perceived as performance-oriented have reported a focus on ability, negative perceptions of their personal ability, and attribute failure to a lack of ability (Ames & Archer, 1988). Students in classrooms and schools that endorse competition among students report experiencing increased anxiety levels, decreased perceptions of self-worth (Roeser et al., 1996), and feeling high levels of dissonance (Kumar, 2005).

Since adolescence is marked by many psychological and physiological changes, adolescents are exceedingly vulnerable at the particular time that they are expected to undertake a significant transition from elementary to middle school (Midgley, Feldlaufer, & Eccles, 1989; Wigfield & Wagner, 2005). During the transition, adolescents' perceptions of school belonging decline as the amount of time spent in middle school increases (Anderman, 2003). However, higher levels of school belonging were reported by students who perceive classrooms as mastery goal oriented, suggesting that classrooms' emphases of mastery level learning, encouragement of academic risks, improvement, and effort serves to increase students' perceptions of school belonging.

Cheating, especially in the middle school setting, has become an omnipresent issue (Anderman, Griesinger, & Westerfield, 1998). An increase in cheating is reported to occur in classrooms that are perceived by adolescents as performance-oriented. Anderman et al. also speculated that performance-oriented classrooms may necessitate cheating as a survival tool for certain students who feel as though they lack the required

ability to successfully complete academic tasks. Students have also reported feeling that cheating is justified in situations that emphasize ability and grades (Anderman & Midgley, 2004).

The Impact of Teaching Strategies on Classroom Goal Orientations

Teaching strategies that exist for various academic levels may also encourage adolescents to become increasingly performance goal oriented as they transition to middle school. Whereas elementary classrooms may support mastery goals through stressing students' abilities to overcome academic challenges and meet individualized academic goals, middle and high school classrooms are increasingly more likely to stress inter-student competition and demonstration of ability (Wolters & Daugherty, 2007). Anderman and Midgley (1997) proposed that these negative occurrences may be due, in part, to classroom practices such as grouping techniques, assessments, and types of assignments. Teaching strategies that emphasize performance goals in middle schools include teacher encouragement for competition among students, displays of examples of exemplary student work for comparison basis, and comparison of students' academic efforts (Midgley & Urda, 2001). Classroom practices that make performance goals salient include teachers posting students' grades or reading levels in prominent view in the classroom, rank-ordering students' grades and awarding privileges to students who academically excel (Kaplan et al., 2002). Teachers perceived by students as demonstrating high performance orientations often focus on grades and assessments (Patrick, Anderman, Ryan, Edelin, & Midgley, 2001).

Classroom practices that make mastery goals salient include teachers acknowledging student effort, focus on individual student improvement (Midgley et al., 1995) encouraging students to further investigate topics for deeper knowledge and conveying to students that the main goal of class is to gain understanding of class content (Kaplan et al., 2002). Teachers perceived by students as displaying high mastery goal orientations usually employ the following explicit and implicit practices: describing the learning process to students as an active task, encouraging all students to be involved, providing opportunities for student interactions, and emphasizing students' effort at learning tasks. High mastery-oriented teachers were found to demonstrate caring not only for students' social and emotional well-being, but also their progress as learners and success at endeavors.

TARGET, the taxonomy created by Ames (1990) and built on by Kaplan et al. (2002) has been successfully implemented in several educational settings to encourage classroom focus on mastery goals and will be discussed in greater detail later. Kaplan et al. additionally proposed strategies specifically to move middle school educators away from traditional performance-oriented classroom practices. However, it is important to note that students' perceptions of classroom goal orientations are not solely determined by classroom environments and actual classroom practices, but also by the meaning students place on specific classroom events (Ames & Archer, 1988; Kaplan et al., 2002). Urdan, Midgley and Anderman (1998) found that teachers rarely overtly discuss goal orientations with students and when they do, they are often inconsistent with their messages. Students' interpretations of such discussions also vary immensely. The

meaning students place on classroom events and practices may be positively impacted if teachers overtly discuss motivation and goals with adolescents in a consistent manner.

Midgley et al. (1995) examined the differences in achievement goals teachers held for their students and found that middle school teachers were more likely to utilize instructional practices that emphasized performance goals and they differed from elementary teachers in the achievement goals they held for their students. Findings indicated that middle school teachers, in contrast to elementary teachers, were less likely to hold mastery achievement goals for their students.

Motivation during the Middle School Transition

Nearly 25 years ago, researchers (Blyth, Simmons, & Carlton-Ford, 1983; Eccles & Midgley, 1989) began to consider the impact of the elementary to middle school transition on students. Although some researchers contended that such a transition was problematic for adolescents due to the timing of the transition (Blyth et al., 1983), others (Eccles & Midgley, 1989) suggested that the nature of the transition also served to impact adolescents negatively. The term *stage-environment fit* was coined for the situation in which a mismatch exists between the learning environment middle schools provide and the adolescent students they serve to educate (Eccles & Midgley, 1989).

The theory of stage-environment fit suggests that positive outcomes will result if, at a certain phase in individuals' development, changes in needs are supported by changes in opportunities (Midgley et al., 2002). Eccles and Midgley (1989) challenged the previously held belief that the mismatch documented in numerous studies was an inevitable result of the developmental changes that mark adolescence. Rather, Eccles and

Midgley proposed that, although developmental changes may make adolescents increasingly vulnerable, adolescents can be impacted either positively or negatively based on their environment. During an explicit test of stage-environment fit, Midgley and Feldlaufer (1987) found that, although sixth grade students expressed desire for greater decision-making opportunities after they transitioned to middle school, as middle schoolers the same students reported receiving fewer opportunities after the middle school transition. Likewise, the students' middle school teachers reported, in contrast to the students' sixth grade teachers, that middle schoolers were less likely to be granted decision-making opportunities. Findings also indicated that the students' intrinsic interest in academics declined after the middle school transition.

In the last decade, studies (Fryer & Elliot, 2007; Gehlbach, 2006) indicated that goal orientations are not based solely on personality characteristics, but rather, are influenced by changes in individuals' environments. Gehlbach discovered substantial changes and shifts of adolescents' goal orientations with younger students more likely to report mastery goal orientations than their older counterparts. Other studies (Anderman & Midgley, 1997; Wolters & Daugherty, 2007) confirmed that achievement goal orientations are susceptible to change, but the type of change experienced often differs. Whereas mastery goals have been shown to decrease as individuals transition to middle school, performance-avoidance goals have increased.

Likewise, studies (i.e., Leeper et al., 2005) indicated that although extrinsic motivation remains relatively consistent throughout students' education, students'

intrinsic motivation drastically declines as students progress in America's formal education system. Students' intrinsic motivation has been found to positively correlate to academic achievement, whereas extrinsic motivation negatively correlates to academic achievement (e.g., Gottfried, 1985, 1990; Lloyd, 1984). It is troubling to note that the more time students spend in America's formal education setting, the less they are intrinsically motivated to strive for academic achievement.

Several variables and conditions have been found to alter individuals' goal configurations. Goal orientations may shift due to peer comparison, as it is likely that adolescents may perceive themselves as lacking competence if they compare themselves to their peers (Wigfield & Wagner, 2005). Additionally, goal orientations may shift due to emotional and cognitive development, desire for greater autonomy, and a greater focus on relationships.

Achievement Goal Theory and School Reform

Nearly two decades ago, Ames (1990) collaborated with a group of elementary teachers to design and implement an intervention that included teaching strategies devised to encourage mastery-oriented learning environments. During the year-long intervention, teachers were provided with a notebook comprised of various teaching strategies that would emphasize mastery goals in the classroom. Strategies included emphasizing individual improvement, opportunities such as "Teacher of the Day" or "Adopt-A-Class" to increase students' sense of responsibility, cooperative learning strategies, and student contracts to ensure students monitored their learning progress. The taxonomy created was consistent with the premise that a single strategy cannot create a

mastery-oriented environment, but rather a combination of strategies is required (Maehr & Anderman, 1993).

Within a year of implementing the intervention, Ames (1990) noted that at-risk students showed a greater preference for challenging learning tasks, held more positive beliefs regarding their ability, demonstrated more positive attitudes concerning mathematics and school, reported utilizing learning strategies considered more effective, and reported greater feelings of intrinsic motivation. Kaplan et al. (2002) later expanded the taxonomy originally presented by Ames in an intervention known by the acronym, TARGET. TARGET consists of the following six components: tasks, authority/autonomy, recognition, grouping, evaluation, and time.

While attempting to replicate Ames' (1990) findings, Maehr and Midgley (1991) found teachers' efforts to create classrooms that promote mastery goals can be undermined in situations in which school-wide practices are contradictory to classroom goals. This finding becomes especially significant when applied to middle school settings in which students often have several teachers each day. In such a situation, if a middle school student were to have one teacher whose classroom emphasized mastery goals and another emphasized performance goals, the student would be less likely to develop mastery goals (Urdu et al., 1995).

Originally, school administrators' influence on goals stressed in schools was not considered, thus Maehr and Midgley (1991) designed a school-wide intervention called the Coalition Project with the intention of creating a mastery goal focus not only at the classroom level, but also to develop a school-wide approach emphasizing mastery goals.

As Ames (1990) had declared in earlier research, Maehr and Midgley (1991) believed that mastery goals must pervade the entire learning environment. While Ames identified classroom practices that served to increase the saliency of mastery goals, Maehr and Midgley focused on school-wide policies, procedures and practices that influenced the goal orientation emphasized school-wide.

Maehr and Midgley (1991) noted that school-wide reformation and adherence to mastery goals was necessary since teachers alone do not make decisions regarding the educational practices they implement in their classroom. Decisions are often made at school levels by school boards, curriculum teams, and administrators in subtle and direct ways. School-wide policies and practices can greatly influence students' motivation orientations in that such policies dictate the textbooks and materials used in classrooms, student grouping policies, the way in which students gain recognition for excellence, assessment and evaluation procedures, whether student autonomy is considered and encouraged and the overall classroom culture (Urduan et al., 1995).

Urduan et al. (1995) proposed that Ames' (1990) TARGET classroom intervention could be built upon to also encourage mastery goals school-wide if the application of the intervention were to include school policies and practices. The six dimensions were categorized identically to the six original categories applied to individual classroom environments. Strategies were then suggested in each of the six dimensions to influence students' goal orientations school-wide rather than just in the classroom.

Description of TARGET

The first category, *tasks*, discusses the nature of tasks given to students. Students' perceptions of learning tasks impact their goal orientations, with tasks deemed as more meaningful endorsing students' mastery goal orientations. Students' mastery goals are enhanced by learning tasks that students consider instrumental to achieving future personal goals. This would suggest that learning tasks that were not considered instrumental for students' future success would be unsuccessful towards causing students to adopt mastery goal orientations (Greene, Miller, Crowson, Duke, & Akey, 2004). For instance, while some schools adhere to strict guidelines regarding the use of textbooks to foster learning, Maehr and Midgley (1991) encouraged schools to provide additional authentic resources for students to have hands-on learning experiences such as field trips. Rather than mandating teachers to utilize teacher-proof materials such as preplanned activities and worksheets, schools were encouraged to allow teachers to feel free to design action oriented tasks that were challenging and creative (Maehr & Midgley, 1991).

The second dimension, *authority/autonomy*, basically takes into account the same aspect of teaching by providing students with choices and a sense of responsibility that encourages students to feel a sense of ownership for their learning. This could be accomplished by allowing students to select the books they wish to read or providing them with leadership opportunities (Maehr & Anderman, 1993; Kaplan et al., 2002). On a school-wide basis, this category was designed to require that policies place greater focus on providing students with opportunities to demonstrate greater responsibility rather than disciple policies that seek to control student behavior. Students could also demonstrate

greater responsibility at a school-level by being allowed to participate in student governance groups. Finally, school procedures could place greater focus on students utilizing critical thinking and problem solving skills rather than punishment.

Recognition is the third dimension of a school-wide effort toward increasing the saliency of mastery goals, and was the factor that initially led Maehr and Midgley (1991) to consider the importance of a school emphasizing the same goals as classrooms. While completing research in numerous classrooms, teachers often shared with Maehr and Midgley that while they had created classrooms emphasizing mastery goals, the schools where their classrooms were located were emphasizing performance goals through various recognition programs. The dimension of recognition requires schools to consider the ways in which they recognize students' excellence. Rather than recognizing students' achievement while ignoring whether the task students completed were difficult or challenging, the dimension of recognition requires that schools recognize students for individual progress to ensure that all students are recognized.

Grouping, the fourth dimension Maehr and Midgley (1991) included, fosters an emphasis on the organization of grouping practices. This category is considered especially significant to middle school improvement plans since ability grouping and tracking practices often begin while students are in middle school and continue until students graduate from school. Grouping decisions, such as ability grouping and tracking, are often made at a school level with far-reaching implications for students. For instance, often students enrolled in more advanced courses are provided with more challenging material and creative instructional practices that are opportunities that other students do

not experience. Rather, Maehr and Midgley (1991) proposed that schools provide resources for all students to take part in cooperative learning experiences.

Another dimension of the taxonomy requires that schools consider *evaluation* practices, with a particular focus on assessment and evaluation practices in the classroom. Allowing students to be actively involved in the assessment process and minimizing public acknowledgement of standardized tests results and grades can serve to enhance mastery goals in classroom settings. School policies often dictate the method by which teachers are required to assess their students. Considering the way in which assessment practices impact students' motivation to learn has been a long-standing question of researchers. However, there seems to be a "broad awareness that school-wide evaluation practices may affect the nature and quality of student motivation and learning" (Maehr & Midgley, 1991, p. 414). This topic is especially crucial when one considers the focus on standardized testing and statewide testing programs. There are, perhaps, few topics in education that could potentially serve to more greatly impact students' educational experiences (Maehr & Midgley, 1991).

The final category of TARGET, *time*, refers to the effectiveness of the school schedule. Time considers the flexibility of class times and the benefits of block scheduling in allowing students to progress in the learning process at their own rates (Kaplan et al., 2002). When considered from a school-wide approach, this dimension of the taxonomy requires that schools consider the inflexible nature of scheduling. For instance, a 40 or 50 minute period of time is often insignificant for middle school and secondary teachers to engage students in a challenging learning task since a majority of

the time may be spent preparing materials and cleaning up materials. Such time constraints mandated at the school level make it increasingly difficult for teachers to provide students with thoughtful learning experiences (Maehr & Midgley, 1991).

Impediments to Middle School Reform

Why is it so difficult to reform middle schools so that they emphasize mastery goals at both the classroom and school-wide levels? Urda et al. (1995) proposed several reasons as to why middle school reform was so much more difficult to enact than expected. While implementing the year-long Coalition Project, which was a collaborative effort between researchers and middle schools to implement the TARGET strategies at both classroom and school-wide levels with the intention of creating a mastery goal focus, Urda et al. noted several factors that seem to impede reformation practices. The factors were: (a) pre-existing beliefs educators held regarding middle school students, (b) educators' beliefs about instructional practices, (c) the organization of middle schools, (d) a decline of parental involvement, and (e) school leadership.

The first impediment to middle school reform noted by Urda et al. (1995) was educators' beliefs about middle school students. Several teachers involved in the coalition project shared with researchers that they believed adolescents were undergoing physical, emotional, and psychological changes due to puberty, and may be unable to learn and behave as other students. Other middle school educators argued that middle school students were too old to modify their patterns of learning to achieve greater academic success. Such erroneous beliefs are impediments to middle school reform, in that

educators are less likely to implement reform practices to more effectively educate students if they believe that such changes will be ineffective (Weiner, 1990).

The second impediment was middle school teachers' beliefs regarding instructional practices (Urduan et al., 1995). Middle school teachers differ from elementary teachers in their views of educating students. The difference of pedagogical philosophies may be attributed in part to the departmentalization of middle school by subject matter and ability level grouping practices. Whereas elementary school teachers are required to teach multiple subjects, middle school teachers may be more resistant to use interdisciplinary practices while instructing students.

Another way in which middle schools differ from elementary schools is the overall organization of middle schools. Middle schools often have complex schedules that make school reform attempts more difficult. As Urduan et al. (1995) noted, "Of the many roadblocks during our project, none was more frustrating or difficult to overcome than the dominant role the schedule played in all decisions" (p. 26). Middle schools also differ from the organization of elementary schools in their sheer size. Most middle schools include more teachers, more students, and more administrators than elementary schools.

Finally, Urduan et al. (1995) noted that the leadership of middle schools was considerably different than that of elementary schools and served often to impede the reformation process toward enhancing the saliency of mastery goals at classroom and school-wide levels. For instance, while most elementary schools are run by a single principal, middle schools generally have multiple people in leadership roles including

principals, assistant principals, and department chairs. Since reformation policies require the approval of all leadership parties involved in a particular school, Urdan et al. proposed that middle school reformation is more difficult because it requires the consent and support of multiple leaders.

Also, elementary and middle school administrators often spend time at different tasks. For instance, while elementary principals may have time to promote more effective teaching practices, locating available resources for teachers and distributing information to their staff, Urdan et al. (1995) noted that the middle school principals who participated in the Coalition Project seemed to divide their day dealing with discipline problems, speaking to upset parents, and resolving scheduling problems.

Conclusion

Achievement goal theory plays a central role in educational settings as it can be utilized to analyze and improve classroom environments and teaching practices to positively impact student motivation (Ames, 1992). School and classroom cultures, which are characterized by the way in which schools and individual teachers present learning to their students (Maehr & Midgley, 1996), can serve to either enhance or discourage students' development of mastery goal orientations (Ames, 1992; Kaplan et al, 2002; Leeper et al., 2005; Meece et al., 2006).

Mastery goal orientations are considered the more preferable goal type of motivation for students as they have been found to predict outcomes including continuous academic involvement, persistent attempts to increase competence, employment of adaptive learning strategies, greater levels of active cognitive engagement, academic self-

efficacy, higher levels of academic performance and adaptive levels of test anxiety; whereas certain types of performance goals have been found to predict negative student outcomes including reduced involvement in tasks, diminished academic performance, disorganization, surface-level processing, low perceived competence, and an overwhelming fear of failure.

As positive outcomes in learning for mastery-oriented individuals have been reported, researchers have continued to express concern regarding adolescents' motivation. Research indicates that adolescents' academic motivation becomes more performance-oriented during the transitional period of elementary to middle school and that middle school classrooms are perceived by students as being less mastery-oriented in comparison to elementary classrooms. Middle school teachers also have been found to be more likely than elementary teachers to stress teaching strategies and classroom practices associated with performance goals.

As adolescence is marked by a variety of psychological and physiological changes, adolescents may be vulnerable during the transition to middle school. In addition, differences in learning environments provided by elementary schools in comparison to middle schools have been noted in several studies. Not only are middle school teachers more likely than elementary teachers to utilize instructional practices that emphasize performance goals, but they also differ from elementary teachers in the achievement goals they hold for their students. Such findings lend credence to the belief that, although middle schools were intended to address the social and emotional

developmental needs of adolescents, middle school students continue to report that middle schools provide “suboptimal conditions for learning.”

What beliefs regarding students cause middle school teachers to not only be more likely to create performance-oriented classroom environments in comparison to elementary teachers, but also to be more likely to hold performance achievement goals for their students than mastery goals? This question, as well as several others necessitated this study that considers teachers’ beliefs regarding student motivation and the impact of such beliefs on the school and classroom environments created to encourage learning. Additionally, this study further examines particular differences in the way middle school teachers differ in their beliefs of their students in comparison to elementary teachers’ beliefs of their students. Finally, further this research studies the impact of certain characteristics of educators on their beliefs regarding their students and the learning environments they create.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Survey

Participants

Study participants were 134 elementary and middle school teachers in 11 elementary schools and 4 middle schools in the same school district. The school district was located in an eastern Iowan city with a population of approximately 63,000 residents. The district granted approval to the researcher to conduct the study with the understanding that the purpose of the study was to gather information regarding teachers' beliefs about student motivation within the construct of Achievement Goal Theory. Upon the conclusion of the study, the district was provided data in an aggregated form that did not include any identifying information.

Each of the elementary schools in the study serve students from preschool through grade five while the middle schools serve students from grade six through grade eight and are located in a district that serves more than 10,500 students. The student population the district serves includes a minority population of 39% (27% African American, 8% Hispanic, 4% multi-race). Greater than 55% of students in the district qualify for free and reduced meals based on their socioeconomic status while 7% of students receive services as English Language Learners (ELL). Of the 366 elementary teachers and 161 middle school teachers to whom surveys were distributed, 101 elementary teachers (27.6%) completed the survey and 33 middle school teachers (20.4%) completed the survey.

Materials

Quantitative data were obtained through a 43-item survey (see Appendix A). The survey was comprised of two scales of the Patterns of Adaptive Learning Survey (PALS) that was developed over the course of 8 years by researchers at the University of Michigan (Midgley et al., 2000). Previous research (Midgley et al., 2000) established the reliability and validity of this survey as a measure of motivational beliefs.

The PALS was updated in 2000 to reflect several changes. Such changes included: differentiating for performance-approach versus performance-avoidance dimensions, removing items that required respondents to specify certain behaviors, removing other items that assessed individuals' intrinsic motivation and including information that allowed for individuals' perceptions of the goal structure of classrooms to be assessed. The PALS has been widely used by researchers to measure achievement goal orientations in academic settings and seems to act similarly with students of all age groups, ethnicities, and genders and is based on a 5-point Likert-type scale and is anchored by the following designations at 1 = "Strongly disagree," 3 = "Somewhat true," and 5 = "Very true." While the PALS originally was developed based on mastery and performance goals, the survey (specifically, the personal goal orientations subscale which was additionally modified for the purposes of this study) was updated to differentiate between performance-approach goals and performance-avoidance goals (Midgley et al., 2000).

Two scales of the PALS that were utilized included the teacher scale and a modified version of the student scale. The following subscales that comprise the teacher

scale were utilized: perceptions of the school goal structures, approaches to instruction, and personal teaching efficacy. Overall, the teacher scale was comprised of 29 questions. Thirteen of the 29 questions of the teacher scale comprised the perceptions of the school goal structures subscale, 9 questions comprised the approaches to instruction subscale, and 7 questions comprised the personal teaching efficacy subscale.

The second scale of the PALS that was utilized was the subscale 'personal achievement goal orientations' of the student scale, however, for the purposes of this study this subscale of the student scale was modified to provide information regarding teachers' perceptions of their students' personal achievement goals. This scale was re-titled 'beliefs about students' achievement goals.' Specifically, questions were modified so that they could be answered by teachers. For instance, rather than asking students the following question: "It's important to me that I learn a lot of new concepts this year," the question was modified to ask teachers the following question: "It's important to my students that they learn a lot of new concepts this year." This scale was comprised of 14 questions.

Participants also were asked several demographic questions pertaining to their gender, years of experience teaching, currently held teacher position, and teacher training. Additional space was included in the survey for participants to provide contact information (e.g. name, phone number, email address) if they were interested in allowing the researcher to observe their classroom at a later time.

Procedures

The researcher contacted the district to acquire permission to conduct the study. In February of the school year, the researcher hand-delivered cover letters informing participants of the purpose of the study and their rights as potential research participants as well as copies of the survey and pre-paid envelopes to each elementary and middle school in the district with enough copies for each teacher on staff. A card was also included in each envelope to allow teachers to include their name in a sweepstakes drawing. The sweepstakes prize was one \$50 gift certificate to a local retail store. Cover letters, surveys, prepaid envelopes and sweepstakes cards were placed in each teacher's school mailbox by school personnel. Each pre-paid envelope was coded prior to being delivered to the schools in order to allow the researcher to identify whether the participant was an elementary or middle school teacher.

Teachers were informed in the cover letter that they could mail back an uncompleted survey if they did not wish to participate in the study but still wanted to be included in the sweepstakes drawing. Completed and uncompleted surveys were then returned to the researcher in the prepaid envelope. In order to ensure teachers' anonymity, upon receipt of the surveys, the researcher immediately removed sweepstakes cards from the envelopes in which they had been mailed.

Two weeks after surveys were originally distributed, the researcher hand-delivered reminders to each elementary and middle school office. The reminders were placed in the mailboxes of every teacher in each building to remind them that they still had an opportunity to return surveys. At that time, additional cover letters and surveys

were left with each school's secretary for individuals who had misplaced the surveys that were originally distributed.

Observations

Participants

Additionally, of the 101 elementary teachers who completed the survey, 10 (10%) provided consent to allow the researcher to observe their classrooms and interview them. Of the 33 middle school teachers who completed the survey, 9 (27%) provided consent to allow the researcher to observe their classrooms. Based on the results of the surveys they had completed, four teachers (two elementary teachers and two middle school teachers) were selected to be observed. The two elementary teachers who the researcher selected to observe were chosen as they represented the elementary teacher with the highest mastery-orientation score and the highest performance-orientation score who provided consent to allow the researcher to observe their classrooms. Likewise, the two middle school teachers who the researcher selected to observe were chosen as they represented the middle school teacher with the highest mastery-orientation score and the highest performance-orientation score who provided consent to allow the researcher to observe their classrooms.

All teachers' names are pseudonyms in order to maintain confidentiality. The following are profiles of the four teachers/classrooms that were observed and interviewed during the observation phase of the study:

The elementary teacher selected to be observed and interviewed who perceived her instructional practices and classroom as mastery-focused was named Ms. Matthews

(the M in Matthews is used to denote a high mastery-focus). Ms. Matthews had 32 years teaching experience, the last four years of which were at Sunnyside Elementary where she taught kindergarten. Sunnyside Elementary served approximately 540 students, 38% of whom were minority students (e.g. African American, Hispanic, Native American, and Asian). Approximately 53% of students at Sunnyside Elementary were eligible for free and reduced lunch. Ms. Matthews' qualifications included a bachelors and masters degree in elementary education as well as an early childhood endorsement.

The elementary teacher selected to be observed and interviewed who perceived her instructional practices and classroom as performance-focused was named Ms. Parker (the P in Parker is used to denote a high performance-focus). Ms Parker had three years of teaching experience, all of which were at Eisenhower Elementary where she taught fourth grade. Eisenhower Elementary served approximately 480 students, 91% of whom were minority students. Approximately 85% of students at Eisenhower Elementary were eligible for free and reduced lunch. Ms. Parker's qualifications included a bachelors and masters degree in elementary education as well as a math minor.

The middle school teacher selected to be observed and interviewed who perceived her instructional practices and classroom as mastery-focused was named Ms. Madison (the M in Madison is used to denote a high mastery-focus). Ms. Madison had taught sixth, seventh, and eighth grade exploratory classes at Columbus Middle School for the past six years. Columbus Middle School served approximately 550 students, 46% of whom were minority students. Approximately 70% of students at Columbus Middle

School were eligible for free and reduced lunch. Ms. Madison's qualifications included a bachelor's degree in art and a middle school endorsement.

The middle school teacher selected to be observed and interviewed who perceived her instructional practices and classroom as performance-focused was named Ms. Price (the P in Price is used to denote a high performance-focus). Ms. Price had 16 years of teaching experience at Columbus Middle School she taught sixth grade reading. Columbus Middle School served approximately 550 students, 46% of whom were minority students. Approximately 70% of students at Columbus Middle School were eligible for free and reduced lunch. Ms. Price's qualifications included a bachelor's degree and a reading endorsement.

Materials

As described earlier, classroom observations were completed based on the procedures outlined in Manual for Observing Patterns of Adaptive Learning (OPAL). OPAL was developed based on the goal orientation motivation view, social cognitive learning strategies, and research based on classroom instruction. OPAL provides a protocol for researchers to use as a guide of observations and the analysis of qualitative data collected around achievement goal theory. Since OPAL is not specific to a particular student population, age-range, or academic subject, OPAL may be used to observe the motivation practices of classrooms of all learning environments, grade levels and academic subjects (Patrick et al., 1997).

OPAL includes nine categories, six of which categories are included in the acronym TARGET (Task, Authority, Recognition, Grouping, Evaluation, and Time) that

was originally developed by Epstein (1988) and often cited by goal orientation theorists (e.g., Ames, 1992, Anderman & Maehr, 1994) and three additional categories (Social, Help-seeking, Messages). Specifically, OPAL was designed to allow researchers to determine the implicit and explicit ways educators convey to students an emphasis on mastery and/or performance-oriented goals. This was accomplished through the collection of detailed observation field notes that described the behaviors of teachers and students alike in the classroom setting and were coded using the above mentioned categories of OPAL (Patrick et al., 1997).

Procedures

Based on the survey data, four classrooms (two elementary classrooms and two middle school classrooms) were selected to be further analyzed through the collection of observational field notes and interviews. Of the teachers who volunteered to let the researcher observe their classrooms (teachers were considered to have volunteered based on providing their contact information on the survey for the researcher to contact them at a later time to arrange for the researcher to observe their classrooms), one elementary teacher was selected who represented the highest performance-focused classroom of those teachers who provided consent for the researcher to observe their classrooms. Additionally, one elementary teacher was selected who represented the highest mastery-focused classroom of those teachers who provided consent for the researcher to observe their classrooms. Likewise, two middle school teachers were then selected, one representing the highest performance-focused classroom of those teachers who had

provided consent for the researcher to observe their classrooms and one representing the highest mastery-focused classroom.

Classroom observations occurred in April and May and were conducted for three entire school days at each selected site. Days were selected at the researcher's convenience. The researcher followed observation procedures detailed in the Manual for Observing Patterns of Adaptive Learning (OPAL) as developed at the University of Michigan. Since a single researcher completed all of the 12 days of observations, prior to observing the classrooms and interviewing teachers, the researcher became familiar with the observational protocol as described in OPAL (Patrick et al., 1997).

As detailed in OPAL, the researcher's primary focus during observations was on the classroom teacher and his/her behavior and comments. Students' responses were also recorded when they were considered to be reflective of classroom motivational climate. In addition to the running records recorded by the researcher during observations, field notes also included descriptions of tangible evidence of the classroom motivational climate (e.g., class rules displayed, the physical arrangement of the classroom). Thus, the researcher drew a map of each classroom as well as recorded slogans written on posters displayed around the classroom and kept record of everything written on the chalkboard by either the teacher and/or students.

The time was recorded on the left margin of the field notes in five-minute increments. The researcher also recorded in the field notes each time the teacher transitioned the students into a different classroom activity. While collecting field notes, the researcher included any comments or interpretations made during the observations in

italics in order to be able to discern the researcher's comments and interpretations when the field notes were later analyzed.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted at times convenient (e.g., preparatory times, lunch) for participating teachers. Teachers were asked a variety of questions regarding their teaching background, classroom practices, and beliefs regarding students' motivation through interview questions designed based on the nine categories of OPAL (Task, Authority, Recognition, Grouping, Evaluation, Time, Social, Help Seeking and Messages). For instance, in order to address the category of Task, teachers were asked questions such as the following: How would you describe your teaching? Could you describe some of your lessons or units that you think are the most effective for teaching concepts to students? What can you tell me about your expectations of your students? Interviews typically occurred over several sessions due to time constraints in the teachers' schedules. Observations and interviews were audio recorded to assist in analysis of qualitative data. Interviews were transcribed by the researcher to also allow for qualitative analysis.

Analysis of qualitative data required that interview transcripts and field notes collected during observations to be coded based on the categories of OPAL in order to determine whether differences and commonalities existed in instruction and practices. The main purpose of the qualitative analysis was to provide rich details regarding the practices observed in classrooms in which teachers had been identified as espousing mastery or performance goals. The researcher who had completed the interviews and observations familiarized herself with categories of OPAL and then coded interview

transcripts and field notes according to the OPAL categories. This process required the researcher to select occurrences, behaviors, and statements that aligned with one or more of the categories of OPAL. Transcripts and field notes were color coded to ensure that specific quotes and activities were contributed to the correct teacher. Learning tasks described in the field notes and quotes were at times coded into more than one category.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Survey

A t-test for independent samples was conducted to examine differences between the responses of the elementary teachers and the middle school teachers who completed the Patterns of Adaptive Learning (PALS) survey. Table 1 shows the results of the analysis. Results are reported for each subscale of the PALS teacher scale (perceptions of the school goal structure, approaches to instruction, personal teaching efficacy) as well as: personal achievement goal orientations, which was modified for the purposes of this study to determine whether elementary and middle school teachers differ in their perceptions of their students' goals. This modified scale has been renamed for the purposes of this study and will be referred to as 'beliefs about students' achievement goals.'

Analysis of teachers' responses on the first subscale of the PALS teacher scale, perceptions of the school goal structure (which refers to teachers' perceptions regarding the message that their school conveys to students regarding the purpose of engaging in learning), supports the hypothesis that middle school teachers perceive that middle schools place greater emphasis on performance goals in comparison to elementary teachers; whereas elementary teachers perceive that elementary schools place greater emphasis on mastery goals in comparison to middle school teachers. Reliability for the mastery-oriented items on this scale was .70 while reliability for the performance-oriented items on this scale was .71.

Analysis of teachers' responses on the second subscale of the PALS teacher scale, approaches to instruction (which refers to strategies utilized in the classroom by teachers that convey the purpose of engaging in learning to students), supports the hypothesis that middle school teachers utilize strategies and espouse achievement goals that are consistent with performance goals more than elementary teachers; whereas elementary teachers report greater use of strategies and achievement goals consistent with a mastery orientation than middle school teachers. On the approaches to instruction subscale, reliability for the mastery-oriented items on this scale was .58 while reliability for the performance-oriented items on this scale was .71.

Analysis of teachers' responses on the third subscale of the PALS teacher scale, personal teaching efficacy (which refers to teachers' beliefs that they significantly contribute to the learning of students and that they can teach all students effectively), supports the hypothesis that middle school teachers feel less efficacious than elementary teachers. On the efficacy subscale, a reliability score of .71 was obtained.

Analysis of the final PALS subscale, beliefs about students' achievement goals, (which refers to teachers' perceptions of their students' motivational orientations), supports the hypothesis that middle school teachers believe their students have greater performance approach and performance avoidance goals than do elementary teachers. Elementary teachers believe their students espouse higher mastery goals in comparison to middle school teachers' perceptions of the goals espoused by their students. Finally, on the beliefs about students' achievement goals subscale, reliability for the mastery-oriented items on this scale was .85. Reliability for the performance approach-oriented

items on this scale was .83 while reliability for the performance avoidance-oriented items on this scale was .73.

Observations

Results of the running records compiled during the classroom observations and transcripts created from the interviews conducted with the four selected teachers (two elementary teachers and two middle school teachers) were coded by the researcher according to the categories described in OPAL. Results are reported according to the categories of OPAL.

Task

The category of *task* as described by OPAL considers the two distinct subcategories of *structural dimensions* and *psychological dimensions*. The subcategory of *structural dimensions* considers the content of learning tasks, the product students are expected to produce, procedures and routines adhered to in the classroom, the materials available to students, and the ways in which students are allowed and required to participate. The subcategory of *psychological dimensions* considers students' and teachers' affect or emotions regarding learning tasks, instances during which students are required to demonstrate higher-order thinking skills, cases in which students are encouraged to elaborate on ideas and responses, additional supports provided by the teacher (i.e. modeling), specific strategies taught to students, and messages made by the teacher regarding goal orientation, effort, and the reasons for completing learning tasks (Patrick et al., 1997).

Mastery goals are espoused according to the category of *task* when students are provided challenging, meaningful, important, and interesting learning tasks. This would include encouraging hands-on and project-based learning tasks (Maehr & Midgley, 1991). In order to design tasks that adhere to mastery goals, teachers must be allowed freedom to create tasks that are challenging, creative, based on student interest, and action-oriented (Meece & Holt, 1993). Whereas, performance goals are emphasized in environments where educators are provided ‘teacher-proof’ materials including preplanned tasks with specific texts and worksheets (Maehr & Midgley, 1991).

Ms. Matthews. Ms. Matthews was observed presenting a variety of lessons to her kindergarten students. Morning literacy lessons typically included students journaling with the aid of a writing prompt displayed on the Promethean Board, Ms. Matthews reading a story that involved the letter or sound of the day, a worksheet assignment to be completed independently, small group guided reading instruction, and the students selecting a literacy center activity to complete with peers.

Afternoon instruction in Ms. Matthews’ classroom included community circle time, whole group math instruction that ranged from lessons involving symmetry to addition, an independent math learning task that typically allowed students to create a model of a math concept with art materials (i.e., construction paper, glue, crayons), and math activity time in which students were allowed to work in small groups to complete a variety of math games and activities.

Ms. Matthews often selected students to participate in activities, such as counting money during circle time, with the aid of Equity Sticks. Equity Sticks were popsicle

sticks on which each student's name had been printed. Drawing a popsicle stick allowed Ms. Matthews to randomly select students to respond to questions or select materials.

Ms. Matthews often modeled learning tasks to the students before they attempted tasks independently or as groups. For instance, prior to assigning students to create a flower garden to illustrate an addition sentence, Ms. Matthews took out each of the materials that the students would utilize, cut several 'flowers' from construction paper, and modeled for students how they would arrange their paper. When assigning students a literacy worksheet to work on independently, Ms. Matthews was always observed introducing the worksheet to the students, discussing what skill it was intended to teach, and working out the first couple of worksheet questions with the class.

When describing learning tasks to the students, Ms. Matthews seemed excited at the prospect of the class learning something new. For instance, when modeling for the students how they would create an Earth Day book, Ms. Matthews exclaimed, "We have a very important book to make today and it's going to have five pages. And I'm going to show you how to make this book. It's going to be a cool book when we're done." During a lesson that required the students to sort animals in a Venn diagram according to their habitat, Ms. Matthews introduced the lesson to the class by saying, "Now we are going to do something neat. This is a knock, knock." Ms. Matthews' enthusiasm for learning seemed to encourage her class to also be excited to learn. For example, when Ms. Matthews explained to the class during a mathematics lesson that they would create a garden like the one they had read about, the students cheered.

Ms. Matthews often seemed to encourage students to attempt difficult tasks. During a mathematics lesson in which Ms. Matthews used dominos to illustrate the concept of addition, Ms. Matthews modeled for students how they might draw dots on the ‘dominos’ that they were to create with black construction paper. She then told the students, “When you draw a five, oh this is tricky. It looks like a four with one in the middle.” A student then repeated, “This is tricky.” When reading a story to students that involved a cross-eyed alien, Ms. Matthews said, “Oh, this is a hard one.” She then asked the students if they knew what ‘cross-eyed’ meant. When a student responded incorrectly, Ms. Matthews said, “That’s a good try.”

Ms. Matthews often reiterated to her class, as well as to students individually, the importance of trying their hardest. For instance, one day Ms. Matthews wrote the following morning message with the class, “Dear class, Everyone is here today. We go to Media and Art. Will you try to do your best? Do you think it will rain today or tomorrow?” When completing a learning task, a student said to Ms. Matthews, “I don’t know how to.” Ms. Matthews responded, “Do your best. Just do your best.” Another time, when a boy showed Ms. Matthews what he had written and said, “I wrote the ‘love’ part in the front,” Ms. Matthews responded, “I kind of figured that it was your handwriting.” The boy then quietly admitted to Ms. Matthews, “Yeah, I couldn’t write the ‘Kris’ part as good as my mom.” Ms. Matthews encouraged with a smile, “I bet you could if you tried.”

Ms. Parker. Depending on the day of the week, Ms. Parker began the school day by creating a list on the dry erase board at the front of the classroom of students’ names

who had not completed spelling and mathematics homework on time. Students then were required to phone their parents in order to inform their parents that they had not completed the homework. From there, Ms. Parker gathered the class for a 'Pow Wow' discussion which usually involved the students responding to a question such as "If you could be anyone, who would you be?"

While Ms. Parker met with guided reading groups to discuss the novels they were reading, the other students in the class were directed to remain at their seats and silently read. A significant portion of time in Ms. Parker's classroom seemed to be dedicated to completing a variety of tests. For instance, on the days that Ms. Parker's classroom was observed, the students completed a spelling test, multiplication test, subtraction math pre-test, and a social studies test in addition to practice Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) tests as well as the actual ITBS.

In addition to ITBS testing, a variety of other activities diminished the amount of instructional time Ms. Parker was able to provide students in the classroom. Activities included a presentation by the guidance counselor to provide students with tips on how to successfully complete the ITBS, a Star Assembly during which students were recognized by the school for having high grades, a Positive Behavior and Interventions Support (PBIS) assembly during which classes were recognized for displaying positive behavior, a fourth grade assembly regarding ITBS which allowed school administrators to explain the importance of achieving success on the test, a birthday pizza party thrown in honor of the special education teacher, and attending a local theater production.

Ms. Parker was observed providing whole-group math instruction to her students. One day for math instruction, Ms. Parker directed the students to sit on the floor in the back of the classroom. She then read a variety of word problems from a bulletin board in order to teach students the concept of rounding. Another math lesson involved Ms. Parker reading a book to the class titled *Fraction Action*. The students, who each had a piece of notebook paper on a clipboard, completed fraction problems that occurred throughout the book.

Ms. Madison. The students in Ms. Madison's classroom participated in a variety of performance-based, independent learning including: sewing bags, creating puppets with fabric, and reviewing newspaper advertisements to establish a financial budget. While Ms. Madison rarely provided whole-group instruction, she was observed responding to a variety of individual students' questions. While monitoring a study hall class, Ms. Madison instructed students to complete several mathematics story problems in addition to reading silently for approximately fifteen minutes. Ms. Madison's students were allowed to select from a variety of materials in order to create specific projects such as bags and puppets with fabric.

Ms. Price. While nearly every class period in Ms. Price's classroom included the students either listening to an audio recording of a short story from a basal textbook or the students reading short stories in small groups, Ms. Price also employed a variety of activities to supplement the reading instruction. Additional activities included the following: the students watching a short video (i.e. background information for the story, short videos about the author), completing a vocabulary activity on the Promethean

Board, writing poems, journaling about a self-selected topic, completing a lesson about the parts of a simple sentence, and creating a Venn Diagram comparing nonfiction to fictional text.

Ms. Price stated, “This is the new curriculum that we’ve had for two weeks so forgive me if it’s kind of broken up.” When asked what materials had been previously used to guide instruction, Ms. Price said that this was the first year that she had been provided basal textbooks for the students as previously, “The most they (the district) have given me before are those orange packets over there. I’m not in love with this yet,” she said while pointing to the basal textbooks. “I’m a better teacher when I’m in love with what I’m teaching.”

When instructing on the topic of simple sentences, Ms. Price began the lesson by asking, “Do you guys remember a simple sentence? What does a simple sentence need to have?” When a student responded that a simple sentence included a subject and verb, Ms. Price continued, “We have to make sure that you guys review this before you go to seventh grade because right when you start seventh grade you’re going to take a pretest over this.” During another lesson, Ms. Price stated, “There are several things that I can call people up to the board for. I really don’t think you should pass because there are people who can help you so don’t feel bad if you don’t know the answer.”

The students in Ms. Price’s class often participated in whole group activities by volunteering. During one lesson that used the Promethean Board, students raised their hands to indicate that they wanted to go to the front of the classroom to answer questions

that were displayed on the Promethean Board. Ms. Price stated, “I’m proud that everyone wants a turn. I wish that we could do this more.”

Task summary. (See Table 2 for a listing of *task* differences according to classroom.) While Ms. Matthews and Ms. Madison, the teachers identified as mastery-oriented, both provided a variety of performance-based learning tasks (i.e. sewing puppets, creating dominos, designing addition flower gardens) and allowed students to select from an arrangement of materials, Ms. Matthews’ instruction adhered to several mastery goal principles. For instance, Ms. Matthews allowed students to collaborate during literacy and mathematics center time, modeled learning tasks before expecting students to complete the assigned tasks, encouraged students to attempt challenging tasks, emphasized that students should try their hardest, and introduced new learning tasks with enthusiasm.

Whereas, Ms. Parker and Ms. Price, the teachers identified as performance-oriented, based classroom instruction from ‘teacher-proof’ materials such as basal reading texts, worksheets, and Promethean Board activities. Likewise, in both classrooms there appeared to strong emphasis placed on assessment. For instance, the students in Ms. Parker’s classroom completed a variety of tests (i.e. spelling tests, multiplication tests) while Ms. Price specified to her students that the purpose of one learning activity was so that students could successfully complete a pre-test in the fall of the next academic year.

Authority

The category of *authority* as described by OPAL considers classroom rules, classroom expectations, and the behavior management techniques practiced by the

teacher (this includes explicit and implicit behavioral strategies utilized). This includes classroom expectations as well as how non-compliance is managed in the classroom. The category of authority includes the subcategory of *autonomy*. The subcategory of *autonomy* considers the degree of control allowed to students. For instance, whether students are allowed choices regarding the following aspects of classroom learning tasks: the content of learning tasks, the product required to demonstrate mastery, the order by which tasks can be completed, when tasks can be completed in the classroom, how a task is evaluated, and whether students are allowed to self-select peers that they group with (Patrick et al., 1997).

Mastery goals are indicated in the category of *authority* when rules and guidelines are established to emphasize responsibility and focus on the development of students' self-regulation. Thus, discipline must be designed to encourage students' critical thinking about how their behavior relates to a democratic society. Whereas, performance goals would be indicated in this category when limitations are placed on students in an effort to control behavior (Maehr & Midgley, 1991).

Ms. Matthews. Ms. Matthews had affixed a poster to the classroom wall that read: "I-Care Rules for little kids! We listen to each other, hands are for helping not for hurting, we use I-care language, we care about each other's feelings, and we are responsible for what we say and do." When asked about the classroom rules, Ms. Matthews responded, "We pretty much go by the Character Counts. So we just talk about being respectful, responsible, and caring. And then we always say, "Give me five." So

when we're on the carpet, seat on the floor, legs crossed, hands in your lap, eyes on the speaker, and mouth quiet. We use signals when we want to speak.”

The Character Counts rules referenced by Ms. Matthews were posted in back of the classroom. For instance, the poster that highlighted ‘citizenship,’ stated, “Are you a good citizen? Do you cooperate with others? Do you obey rules and laws? Do you do your share to make your school and neighborhood better? Do you help protect the Earth.”

When asked how non-compliance was addressed in the classroom, Ms. Matthews pointed to a picture of a dog house, fence, tree, fire hydrant, and individual dogs each with a student's name on it and stated,

I don't know if you noticed our dog house. All of the dogs are happy. They are in the dog park when they are following the rules and everyone is doing a good job. When I move them to the other side of the dog park that means that that they have gotten a warning, a verbal warning and I also move it so that it's a visual for them and if they continue then they go into the pen. And if they are in the dogpen, they know that they have to be careful because they know that one more, when they get to the dog house, they don't get to go out for recess. And then, also if they improve their behavior they can get back to the dog park. So if they get to the dog house that means that they have gotten a verbal warning, another warning, another one, and then the fourth one we do a character check which is a little form that we fill out that then goes home to parents and they have to sign and return and then those also go to the office.

Ms. Matthews utilized the dog house behavior program in several ways. In some instances, she would whisper to students who had failed to comply with the classroom rules, “That's dog house.” Other times, she would look at the student, ensure that the student was returning eye contact with her, and then she would proceed to move the student's dog closer to the dog house without verbally addressing the student.

When asked her expectations of students, Ms. Matthews stated,

I hope that they honestly love coming to school and look forward to what will happen today. What are we going to do tomorrow? What are we going to learn about tomorrow? So that's my goal...I expect them to get the basics of kindergarten. I expect them to begin to do some reading. I expect them to do some writing, sentence writing, at least three or four sentences in journals. I expect them to be respectful and listen to speakers and participate in all activities. I expect them to follow the rules of the school and treat each other with respect.

Ms. Matthews also stated the following regarding the amount of choice students in her classroom were allowed,

They have quite a bit of choice. They get to choose what they want to write in their journals. They get to choose their Daily Five activity. We have choice time at centers. They can choose, after they complete their math, they can choose a math activity which is kind of like math centers but we just call it math activities not to confuse it with centers time. They can choose who they read or share their work with. So there are a lot of choices.

As Ms. Matthews indicated, the students were allowed not only to select the Daily Five activity that they completed daily, the students also were allowed to choose a book to read during guided reading. On one occasion when Ms. Matthews directed the students to pick a book during guided reading instruction, after all of the students except one had selected a book and began reading aloud, Ms. Matthews looked at the student who selected last and said, "Next time, you'll pick first."

Ms. Parker. The classroom rules were not posted anywhere in Ms. Parker's classroom. However, when asked how she would describe the classroom rules, Ms. Parker stated,

I like to think that our classroom rules are pretty clear. We talk about them quite a bit. In our morning Pow Wow if there is something that didn't go well we'll say, 'Well, yesterday there were some things that didn't go well so think about some things that we can improve on because, just like the students make mistakes, I

make mistakes, and we want to make sure we improve. We want to make our classroom a better place for everyone. So I like to think they're clear. And to think they're flexible. Rules that worked last year might not work this group this year. Your class last year may have been a really talkative group and this year may not. So trying to be flexible with them but once you set them in stone or once you agree on something making sure that you keep those expectations. Trying, I think one of the things that is difficult is making sure that your expectations and your rules go for everyone. And it's like the students need to see you have one of those kids who never does anything wrong you, like if you point out or have them pull a card because they did something that really makes every look around. So trying to have fair expectations or fair rules not always equal because I don't think equal is always fair.

When asked what happened if a student didn't comply with the classroom rules, Ms. Parker pointed to a bulletin board at the front of classroom titled "Good character is TRRFCC!" Under the title, a pocket chart was affixed to the bulletin board. Each pouch of the pocket chart had been labeled with each student's name in the class and contained a green, yellow, orange, and red card. Ms. Matthews described one of the behavior management systems that had been implemented in the classroom as,

Well we have our card system up there (indicating the bulletin board). If they (the students) don't follow a rule a lot of times the special education teacher or I will give them a verbal redirection. If they continue to not follow the rules, then they will have to pull a card. After they pull a card, they go from green to yellow and that's just kind of like a warning, like 'I made a mistake.' If they continue to do things, they'll go from yellow to orange. And orange means that they have to call home and after they make a call home and they have to pull another one, they are on red.

Several times each day, Ms. Parker warned students that they would have to 'pull their card' (indicating that the students would have to move their card on the bulletin board located at the front of the classroom from green to yellow, yellow to orange, or orange to red). Ms. Parker threatened or demanded that students 'pull their cards' for a

variety of infractions. Sometimes Ms. Parker threatened that she had students ‘pull their cards’ because students were talking during instruction, “Gentlemen that is your warning. I’m going to ask you to remind the students what they should be doing when other students are talking. We have other things to do and we need to get through this. I think we’re going to start pulling cards next.” Another time, Ms. Parker required two students to ‘pull their cards’ because they did not sit on the carpet the first time she directed the class to sit on the carpet. As often seemed to occur after Ms. Parker told students to ‘pull their cards,’ the student in this situation seemed upset as, after pulling his card, he sat on the carpet with his hands covering his head. Ms. Parker also cautioned the class, “Ms. Scott (addressing the special education teacher who was standing nearby), I think you’re going to have to be the patient one now because I’m not going to anymore.”

Ms. Parker also required students to ‘pull their cards’ for failing to complete an assignment on time and being unable to correctly respond to questions when called on during instruction. For instance, one time Ms. Parker called on a student to respond to a question by using Equity Sticks (Equity Sticks are popsicle sticks with students’ names written on them that are used to select students randomly to participate) during Daily Oral Language (DOL). When the student said, “I don’t know,” Ms. Parker responded, “Should we pull a card? You must have been talking to your friends.” The boy then walked to the board titled “Good character is TRRFCC!” and put the green card in the pocket with his name on it behind the other cards so that the yellow card was displayed. He then began crying as he walked back to his desk. After a short time passed, Ms. Parker kneeled beside the student’s desk and explained to him that she knew he could do better and that

he should take a deep breath. The student continued crying at his desk with his hands covering his face while Ms. Parker went back to instructing the class.

As indicated earlier, that was not the only time when students in Ms. Parker became visibly upset when required to ‘pull their cards.’ Another time, while students were coming back to the classroom from a restroom break, Ms. Parker noticed two girls standing near the water faucet. She said from across the classroom, “Emily and Susan, you can both pull cards. No one else is talking and I don’t want you talking.” Ms. Parker did not look at the students when one girl responded, “I wasn’t talking. I was washing my hands.” The girl then went to her desk and hid her face behind a book. The girl repeated that she “wasn’t doing anything,” and began to cry. Ms. Parker ignored the girl and went to the bulletin board where she moved the girl’s card so that the yellow card was displayed.

Ms. Parker utilized another strategy in the classroom to manage students’ behavior. On the side of the classroom dry erase board was written the following: ‘Team 1,’ ‘Team 2,’ ‘Team 3,’ ‘Team 4,’ and ‘Team 5.’ Ms. Parker had divided the classroom into five teams. Throughout each day, she then awarded points to groups based on a variety of behaviors. When asked about this behavior system, Ms. Parker responded,

The team thing I came up with by myself because I found we would waste so much time during transitions. Rather than trying to say, ‘Okay, come on and so and so, you’re not ready’ and ‘I need you to hurry up,’ I try to do something positive during that time so it’s where the teams really have to work together. The first couple of months, it’s hard for them because they learn the routine and they have to learn that they win as a team or lose as a team. and if there is one person on your team who isn’t ready yelling at them is not going to help them get ready. So they have to get that camaraderie of how to help someone get ready or how to help in the transition. So I make it more a group thing so that people can help me

get the whole class ready and, like I said, the team that wins, they get to eat lunch with me and I don't know why it works and they love it so I just continue doing it.

Ms. Parker most often awarded points to students' team based on which group of students complied with the directions the quickest. For instance, Ms. Parker told the class, "I'm looking for my first team that has everything off their desks and their voices off. Their voices off. When I hit zero, I need all desks clear and voices turned off. Team 2 you were my first team right." Ms. Parker then made a tally under 'Team 2' on the dry erase board at the front of the classroom.

One day, when the students were about to line up in the hallway on their way to attend an assembly, Ms. Parker told the students, "Let's look for a team who is doing their job. When we get into the line, I need you to check that your shirts are tucked in, you are only wearing one bracelet, and you look like a star." Additionally, Ms. Parker also awarded teams points based on whether students provided a correct answer when called on during classroom instruction. The special education teacher told the class, "I'm going to pull some sticks (Equity Sticks) and hopefully earn some points." When the student whose equity stick was pulled correctly responded to the worksheet question, Ms. Parker wrote two tallies under the student's team on the dry erase board.

Another way in which Ms. Parker initiated competition with behavior management was with comments such as the following. "What is the principal going to think tomorrow if I have to pull Sarah from the play tomorrow? Why do you think that I chose Sarah for my example?" After a student responded, Ms. Parker confirmed, "That's

right because Sarah is always doing her job. I wouldn't have to pull her from the play tomorrow.”

When asked to describe the expectations she had for her students, Ms. Parker stated,

We have our behavior cards that we deal with. Expectations in the classroom: just getting them to be quiet when I need them to be quiet, getting them on-task or switching from one activity to the next activity. I try to have them, we have the countdown a lot or team points. I just expect them to do their job...They're going to do this work because that's what they're here for and we can't do our job unless they're doing it. So just expectations of them being here to learn.

When asked whether students were allowed choices in the classroom, Ms. Parker stated, “Choices? Hmm, I guess when (the special education teacher) and I talk like a, when they (the students) come in here (in the classroom), they have lots of choices. Their choices might result in a positive or negative consequence. I can't make them do anything.” Ms. Parker also indicated that she either selected groups for students when completing a learning task or that students were randomly assigned to groups by drawing numbers. She stated, “With homework, of course, I try to give them different choices so they can choose because some students might like to write and other students might like to draw. So I give them different choices within that realm.”

Ms Parker told a student during whole group math instruction, “Here are your choices. You can choose to sit and listen or you can choose not to listen and I will send you back to your seat and give you a math worksheet.” Another time, after directing students to complete an assignment at their desks, Ms. Parker prompted the class, “What is the first thing you should do? What is the second thing? The first team who gets that

done gets seven points.” When a student returned to the classroom after going to her locker, Ms. Parker asked, “Did you have permission to go to your locker? Next time ask for permission.”

Ms. Madison. The classroom rules in Ms. Madison’s classroom are posted on a small piece of paper at the front of the classroom. The classroom rules include the following rule under the heading ‘Trustworthiness: Come with a good attitude and do your best.’ When asked about the classroom rules, Ms. Madison stated,

They (the rules) follow the pillars: responsibility, respect, caring, fairness, and citizenship. And then at the beginning of every rotation, I go through my rules, I don’t call them rules. I call them expectations. This is what I expect you to do. This is how I expect you to act. You work as a group soemthings. You work respectfully. You want my help, you be respectful, the ‘please’ and ‘thank you’ thing and, I’m just old fashioned I guess. I think they should be taught that and they’re not being taught it at home a lot.

Ms. Madison continued, “First of all, I’m a disciplinarian. That’s how I was taught, I think, as a child. And if you don’t have their attention, you can’t teach them. So I guess you’d say I’m a disciplinarian first and foremost and then after that it’s just getting them to learn what you have to teach them and doing it in a fun way or trying to make it as interesting as possible.”

When asked about enforcing specific classroom rules, Ms. Madison continued,

The planner is another issue. If they (the students) come to class and they don’t have their planner, then they aren’t going anywhere. If they have to go to the bathroom, they’re not going because this is what I’ve been told. This is the rule and this is what I’m going to follow. So when they tell me where they want to go somewhere, I say, ‘I’m sorry. You don’t have a planner, then you don’t go.’ So I say, ‘You made that choice. That’s the first thing I told you the first day you were in here. You don’t have a planner? You have to go to the bathroom? You’re going

to have to hold it. If you think you're going to need to use the restroom or get a drink, then you need to carry your planner. That's the school rule.

When asked what happened when students failed to comply with classroom rules, Ms. Madison stated, "Today I gave a girl an essay for saying an (inappropriate) word. And I'll do that once. I don't do that very often because, if I don't write it down, I forget and they think that they've gotten by with that." On several occasions, Ms. Madison disciplined students by assigning them to write an essay about their behavior. When a student used inappropriate language in the classroom, Ms. Madison responded, "I need an essay now. How you should be speaking in the classroom. Front side. And if it isn't done tomorrow, it's double. And I want complete sentences."

When a student handed Ms. Madison the essay that she had written, Ms. Madison responded, "Thank you. You're off the hook. Now I am going to read your essay out loud to the class. This isn't an essay. This is sentences." The girl then whispered to Ms. Madison, "I thought that's what you wanted me to write." Ms. Madison responded, "I'll accept it this time. I'm going to keep it for blackmail with your parents."

When asked to describe her expectations of students, Ms. Madison stated,

Well, first of all after they've had me they know my expectations as far as behavior and discipline and all that. I don't take much. They've got to listen. And I don't do anything if they're talking and I want to start class. I'll just stand there... They know that I expect them to try here. Sewing isn't for everybody. I know that. Cooking isn't for everybody but I said, 'You gotta eat and so you've got to learn how to do some basic fundamentals in the kitchen.' So I expect them to listen very well because a lot of this is listening. Have a good attitude. Just try. That's the big word, try.

While students were not allowed to select where they sat in the classroom, Ms. Madison seemed to often reiterate that she would look for additional materials if the students wanted to create products with different colored fabric. For example, Ms. Madison stated, “If you would like different ones (handles), I can cut more. Do not make a mess. I have straightened this out and I am done. Handles are down here. I have various colors cut. If a color you want isn’t down here, I can cut more.”

Ms. Price. The rules in Ms. Price’s classroom were stated, similarly to Ms. Madison’s classroom rules, as expectations. There was a small poster affixed to the wall near the classroom door that read:

Room #223 Classroom Expectations: Respect for self: I will always do my best. I will be prepared for class when the bell rings. I will positively participate in all classroom activities. Respect for others: I will not use ‘put downs’ or harass others. I will respect other people’s differences and opinions. I will stay on-task without disturbing or distracting others. Respect for school: I will raise my hand to speak. I will enter and exit the room quietly. I will complete all assignments on time. I will actively listen when the teacher is speaking.

On the days that her classroom was observed, Ms. Price was never observed sanctioning students for inappropriate behavior. Instead, she seemed to often discuss students’ behavior one-on-one. For instance, when Ms. Price overheard a student saying something inappropriate, Ms. Price stated, “Excuse me. Let’s not say things like that. Let’s respect each other and be responsible in the classroom. When I say your name three times, I think that you should know that I’m trying to help.” Another time, when a student asked to leave the room, Ms. Price stated, “No, you work hard but we’re not leaving the room.” When it became obvious to Ms. Price that the student was upset, Ms.

Price said calmly to the students standing near the girl's desk, "Everyone give Alex some space. She needs some space right now."

Ms. Price's behavior management system seemed to consist mostly of rewarding appropriate behavior with 'Mega Money.' The school provided a list of items and privileges that students could earn with certain amounts of Mega Money. The following rewards were included in the list of items students could earn: pencil, positive phone call home from an administrator, eating lunch with a friend, soda, locker shelf, single movie pass, dozen homemade cookies, picture taken with a friend and put up on display, free admission to a school athletic event, an assignment pass, and a candy bouquet.

When asked to describe her expectations of students, Ms. Price stated,

Sometimes they get way too low and I don't expect enough and I have to control that because I'll get hopeless when I'm tired or I've worked too hard or I feel like they haven't worked hard enough and I've worked harder than they have. Or I definitely have to re-evaluate my expectations daily and this new curriculum that we have has actual expectations down at the edge of the paper so I try to revisit those often. Especially on the days I'm very hopeless and thinking that they aren't working. They're not even trying. So, and then I want to have higher expectations. I think No Child Left Behind has really made people look at the expectations. I have. I was about halfway through my career when that went into effect and it really has made us look at those and say, 'Is it good enough?' And we're really not dumbing kids down anymore. We have a teacher who likes to use third and fourth grade materials. That would be really easy to do everyday and you're not really pulling your hair out to teach that. So you really have to search for things that try to get the rigor of your lessons.

The students in Ms. Price's classroom were allowed a variety of choices regarding the content of assignments, products completed, peers grouped with, materials utilized, order in which learning tasks were completed, and their seat in the classroom. For instance, Ms. Price instructed her students to close their eyes and vote whether they

would rather read a story with a partner or listen to audio of the story. When the majority of students voted that they wanted to read the story as groups, Ms. Price allowed the students to select the peers that they grouped with. When another student asked Ms. Price if he could work on his math when he had finished an assessment, Ms. Price responded with a smile, “You sure can. You sure can.”

Authority summary. (See Table 3 for a listing of *authority* differences according to classroom.) The elementary and middle school teachers identified as mastery-oriented emphasized the importance of student responsibility when creating classroom rules. In both classrooms, the rules were clearly displayed at the front of the room. While Ms. Madison, the mastery-oriented middle school teacher, encouraged students to select classroom materials, Ms. Matthews, the elementary teacher, provided students with a bevy of choices throughout the school day including: what topic to journal about, which literacy center to complete, which students to partner with to share their learning, and the math activity that they would complete. Additionally, while Ms. Matthews’ behavior management system allowed her to provide verbal and nonverbal reminders to students, Ms. Madison’s behavior system consisted of requiring students to write essays regarding their behavior that then could be read to their peers. Thus, the inflexibility and rigidity Ms. Madison displayed regarding school and classroom rules would be considered consistent with performance goals rather than mastery goals.

The elementary teacher identified as performance-oriented displayed a variety of behaviors that espoused performance goals to students. Such behaviors included: often pointing out instances during which students who typically did not misbehave failed to

follow a rule, verbally threatening students in front of their peers that they would be required to ‘pull their card’ for a variety of infractions, dividing students into teams that competed for points, and directing students in which order they were required to complete tasks. When asked to describe expectations, rather than mentioning academic expectations, Ms. Parker referred to each student’s choice to behave appropriately.

While Ms. Parker did not even allow students to select the peers that they grouped with, Ms. Price’s *authority* practices were, at times, consistent with mastery goals. For instance, the rules in Ms. Price’s classroom were posted at the front of the class and included the caveat, ‘I will always do my best.’ Also, Ms. Price was never observed sanctioning students for misbehavior as she instead often conferenced one-on-one with students to discuss their behavior. Ms. Price allowed students a bevy of choices including: the products they created, the group they worked with on assignments, the materials utilized, the order of tasks completed, and whether they preferred to listen to audio of a story or read it in small groups. One behavior that Ms. Price demonstrated that was consistent with performance goals was the way in which she rewarded student behavior with ‘Mega Money.’ The usage of Mega Money is consistent with performance goals as it was implemented in order to control students’ behavior.

Recognition

The category of *recognition* as described by OPAL includes the methods and criteria by which students are recognized by the classroom teacher. This includes whether such recognition is public or private and/or positive or negative in nature. This category also takes into consideration whether tangible forms of reinforcement are utilized. A sub-

section of this category is *social comparison*. The sub-category of *social comparison* considers whether teachers reference students' academic or behavioral performance in comparison to peers and whether students' work and assessment scores are publicly displayed (Patrick et al., 1997).

Mastery goals are indicated in the category of *recognition* when students are recognized based on individual progress and effort. This requires that social competition be minimized. Strategies that are mastery-focused in that area of recognition include opportunities provided for all students to be recognized based on goal attainment and students' efforts being recognized for a variety of learning activities. In contrast, performance goals are espoused in the category of *recognition* when recognition is based on students' skills in comparison to relative ability (e.g. school-wide honor roll systems; Maehr & Midgley, 1991).

Ms. Matthews. When asked how she recognized students who have excelled at certain tasks, Ms. Matthews stated,

I used to right before we changed this board I had a 'Tada Board!' And so when someone who did an awesome job on some activity, like a coloring or writing activity, I would hang that up on the 'Tada Board' and make a big deal of that. We hang things up in the hall. I sometimes, with journal writing especially, when someone has really done something fantastic, I let them go down and read their journal to the principal.

As part of the Positive Behavioral and Intervention Support (PBIS) model that was implemented school-wide, Ms. Matthews created a small bulletin board beside the classroom door. The bulletin board had cards titled 'Little Hawk Leaders' that included a checklist of behaviors such as 'being respectful' and 'responsible.' Ms. Matthews

explained that after each monthly school-wide, she posted a blue card on the bulletin board with each student's name in order to remember "which students still have things that they need to work on." As students exhibited the positive behaviors listed on the 'Little Hawk Leaders' card, Ms. Matthews would remove the student's card from the bulletin board.

Ms. Parker. Ms. Parker provided a variety of tangible rewards for students who excelled either academically or behaviorally. Such rewards included animal crackers for completing a spelling assignment, skittles for taking a practice ITBS test, and certificates that were posted in the school hallway for successfully completing a math computation test. Ms. Parker asked a student, "What should be your goal? To earn a reward. That is a good goal."

Each day Ms. Parker, with the assistance of the special education teacher, created a list on the dry erase board of students' names who had not handed in spelling and mathematics assignments. The first day her classroom was observed, Ms. Parker spent approximately the first thirty minutes of the day asking students who had not turned in assignments to phone their parents. Ms. Parker remarked, "It's their (students) responsibility. It's their behavior or that they didn't hand in their homework. That's on them. It's not my fault. I don't want them throwing blame around. I want them to take responsibility for their actions so I have them call home."

Social comparisons often occurred in the classroom through remarks made by Ms. Parker as well as during the all-school Star Assembly. Ms. Parker stated to a student who was independently completing practice math problems, "Today when we do math you're

going to be ahead of the rest of the class because you're already practicing story problems right now." The students also seemed to make comparisons amongst themselves. For instance, when asked during community circle who they would like to be, one student responded that she would like to be like Mary, another student in class. Ms. Parker stated that she agreed it would be fun to be the other student because she had a nice desk and excelled at writing.

Ms. Parker stated to students, "This morning we have a Star Assembly. This is one of my favorite assemblies. This is a chance for all of the people and classes to be recognized for the good work they've been doing...I think that every time we've had a Star Assembly this class has won an award or more than one and I can't say that about every class." Ms. Parker called students' names who could line up for the Star Assembly. After approximately half of the students in the class were lined up and the other half of the class remained seated at their desks, Ms. Parker stated, "There are some of you in line who got a certificate on your desk. This means that your grades did improve. They didn't improve enough for the Star Bug Award." One student who was standing in line pointed to a student who was still seated at his desk (this indicates that the student did not earn an award), "His grades have improved a little but not enough." As the students walked to the gymnasium for the assembly, Ms. Parker said, "Make sure that you aren't leaning on the wall and are acting like a star. We only need ten more points and they might be looking at classrooms today so we could earn out ten more points if we're acting like a star."

Each classroom in the school was present for the Star Assembly. There were several rows of seats at the back of the gymnasium that were occupied by parents. One

parent asked another mother, "Is your son getting an award?" The other parent responded, "One of them is." The principal began the assembly by announcing to the audience,

I hope that we have a lot of students getting awards today. We have students getting awards today for making good choices either behaviorally or academically. We also have Star Awards for students who have 85% of grades threes or As."

The principal continued by explaining that the Star Bug Award was for students who have "gotten their grades up from second semester. When it was a class's turn for students to accept an award, the teacher led the class to the stage located at the front of the gymnasium. The students who have earned awards then lined up beside the stage. As their names were called by the teacher as well as the award that they would receive, the students individually walked across the stage, shook hands with the teacher, accepted their award, and remained on stage until every student in the class who was receiving an award had accepted their award. Everyone in the gymnasium then clapped for the students in the class that earned awards. While some parents clapped loudly while their children accepted an award, other parents whistled. One parent shouted, "I love you baby!" when their child accepted a Star Award.

When each class of a grade level had accepted their awards, the principal interjected to tell the audience what skills the students had been learning. She stated, "Fourth graders have been working on subtraction. Students started at the beginning with 14% where they needed to be and ended with 100%. We started with 0% at 80% proficiency and ended with 98%." It seems as though fewer students received awards in

the upper elementary grades in comparison to kindergarten and first grade in which almost every student collected an award. Both fourth grade classrooms seem to have only approximately 50% of students accepting individual rewards.

Ms. Madison. When asked how she recognized students who excelled at a learning task, Ms. Madison stated, “Verbally... We have a program here at school, PBIS. Positive behavioral thing. We do that. There’s not a whole lot. Their grade. They earn an ‘A’ or whatever but there’s not a whole lot I can do because I have them for such a short time..I may single them out to help someone or have them be a helper.”

As part of the PBIS system, the school had implemented a token system called ‘Mega Money.’ School staff awarded students Mega Money for behaving appropriately. Students then could ‘purchase’ a variety of items or privileges with the Mega Money. When asked her thoughts regarding the use of Mega Money to recognize students who behave appropriately, Ms. Madison stated, “This is kind of a two-edged sword. The way I am with my discipline, I guess I feel why do we have to reward the kids for something they should be doing.”

Ms. Price. As Ms. Price and Ms. Madison taught at the same middle school, Ms. Price also awarded Mega Money to students. While Ms. Madison was never observed awarding any Mega Money to students, on many occasions Ms. Price was observed awarding Mega Money for a variety of reasons to students such as: being respectful to a substitute teacher, volunteering to hand out basal readers to the class, and reading an assigned story. Ms. Price stated,

So I started giving Mega Money during Tier Three (as part of the school’s Instructional Decision Making model, students who require intensive instruction

are provided the instruction for several weeks after school). So I think there needs to be some reward for them staying after school. It's not their fault that maybe nobody read to them when they were a kid. I think there should be rewards. I don't think there is anything wrong with that. My reward for being here is my paycheck.

Recognition summary. (See Table 4 for a listing of *recognition* differences according to classroom.) The behavioral program implemented in each of the schools observed, Positive Behavior and Intervention Supports (PBIS), had a far-reaching impact on the behaviors related to the category of *recognition*. For instance, while Ms. Madison was never observed providing students with 'Mega Money' for appropriate behaviors, Ms. Matthews displayed the 'Little Hawk Leaders' cards that were a part of the PBIS model implemented in the school where she taught. Rather than displaying the cards that students had earned by exhibiting appropriate behavior, Ms. Matthews chose to display names of students who had not earned 'Little Hawk Leader' cards. Either way, the practice of public display of cards seemed to emphasize social competition (a performance goal) rather than recognizing students' progress and effort (a mastery goal).

Ms. Parker's classroom practices certainly underscored the performance goal implications of PBIS. Examples of her practices include providing students with tangible rewards (i.e. animal crackers, skittles) for completing assigned tasks, listing students' names on the board who failed to complete assignments on-time, and directing students who earned awards at the Star Assembly to line up while students who did not earn awards remained seated, all strongly espoused performance goals. Finally, while students who improved their grades were recognized at the Star Assembly, other students were

recognized based solely on adherence to relative ability. Ms. Price's practice of awarding students 'Mega Money' for a variety of behaviors also adhered to performance goals.

Grouping

The category of *grouping* as described by OPAL considers opportunities provided in the classroom for students to learn either independently or in groups. This includes the basis by which groups are formed, whether they are heterogeneous or homogeneous, group size, and whether groups are flexible or stable across time (Patrick et al., 1997).

Specifically, grouping practices that adhere to mastery goals include establishing opportunities for peer interaction, providing opportunities for students to problem solve as groups, and utilization of the tenants of cooperative learning. Grouping practices are especially important in the framework of TARGET as grouping practices are often related not only to the quality of the task (i.e. whether the learning task is challenging or project-based) but also determine which resources are made available to particular groups of students (e.g. computers). Grouping practices that adhere to performance goals include ability grouping and tracking (Maehr & Midgley, 1991).

Ms. Matthews. Students in Ms. Matthews' classroom were seated at tables with approximately four students per a table. While such a seating arrangement may seem to provide optimal grouping opportunities, most group work in Ms. Matthews' classroom occurred in places around the classroom instead of at the students' tables with exception to a matching activity. For this particular activity, Ms. Matthews assigned the class to complete a matching activity at their tables with their seatmates. The purpose of this

assignment was for students to listen to the beginning sounds of words and identify words that started with the same initial sounds.

It is important to note the way students were assigned to sit at one particular table in the classroom. As the special education teacher often came into Ms. Matthews' classroom to provide assistance to a group of students who received special education services as part of an Individual Education Plan (IEP), Ms. Matthews shared that she had decided to group several of these students at one table.

The students in Ms. Matthews classroom were allowed to work as small groups for several daily activities. For instance, students were grouped by Ms. Matthews for guided reading instruction. When asked the process by which students had been grouped for guided reading, Ms. Matthews stated that the groups were formed at the beginning of the year according to students' identified strengths and needs on a variety of classroom assessments. However, Ms. Matthews also shared, "Shortly after I start reading groups then I'll switch them around. So they're very flexible grouping."

Students in Ms. Matthews classroom also had the opportunity to work with their peers for the Daily Five. The Daily Five included a variety of literacy tasks that students engaged in while Ms. Matthews met with guided reading groups daily. The Daily Five was comprised of the following tasks: reading with a peer, writing, listening to a book on tape, reading independently, and word work. Rather than assigning students to particular literary tasks or centers, Ms. Matthews allowed students to select the reading task that they completed. Each day, when guided reading time concluded, Ms. Matthews would

call on each student to report the activity that they had selected to complete for the day.

Ms. Matthews then would record the tasks that students completed.

Students in Ms. Matthews' classroom were provided additional time to work in groups for mathematics centers. Each day, after whole group math instruction and completing an independent math activity to practice the math skill taught, students were allowed to select a math center that they wanted to complete. Since the math centers often included math games, students were encouraged to work with their peers to practice specific math skills.

Ms. Parker. Students in Ms. Parker's classroom were seated at individual desks that had been arranged in several rows. When asked her beliefs regarding group work, Ms. Parker stated, "I think that group work is important, but in the same sense, I think it has its time and its place because the students have done so much work I don't want them to rely on other students. I want them to be able to think, 'Okay, I can do this.'" This belief was clearly apparent in Ms. Parker's classroom as students often completed work independently at their seats including: reading silently, taking a variety of tests (i.e. the weekly spelling test, multiplication test, and a math pre-test), and completing worksheets.

As in Ms. Matthews' classroom, the students in Ms. Parker's classroom were allowed to learn in groups during guided reading instruction. When asked about the rationale for how guided reading groups were formed, Ms. Parker stated,

It starts out as ability-based. These kids come from third grade which has an all-boy classroom and an all-girl classroom and so a lot of the students have not been with boys and girls together so fourth grade is quite a transition for them. And so with my two groups I have an all-boy group and an all-girl group... There are some books that are just directed towards girls and some that are directed towards

boys. Like, for example, my boys read *Al Capone Does My Shirts* and we really got into the whole criminal thing and figuring out who Al Capone was and Machine Gun Kelly where my girls weren't into that. So we had other girls, like we read *Drita My Homegirl* is our next book and we read *Number the Stars*. So just kind of high interest books for them.

As observations occurred the week before district-wide Iowa Test of Basic Skills(ITBS) testing, rather than providing the typical guided reading instruction during guided reading time, the focus of guided reading groups was for students to complete a practice ITBS test titled, "Test Achiever" that assisted students with practicing the reading portion of the ITBS. Ms. Parker directed the students to independently read passages and then instructed them as to how they might determine which answer was correct.

Ms. Parker also shared that students had been grouped into 'bubble groups' according to their previous performance on the ITBS. Thus, students who scored near proficient (the state of Iowa has determined that students who score at or above the 41st percentile on the ITBS are proficient), were grouped in order to be provided with additional instruction during lunch time and after school with hopes of improving the students' ITBS scores for the upcoming test.

Ms. Madison. Students in Ms. Madison's classroom sat at tables with approximately two to four students per table. Interestingly, only on one occasion Ms. Madison encouraged students to collaborate with one another as the majority of learning tasks were assigned to be completed independently. Learning tasks which students completed independently included: sewing bags, completing math problems assigned during study hall, reading silently, and sewing puppets. When students were allowed to

work together, Ms. Madison instructed, “If you all want to get together at one table, that’s fine.” As there was a limited amount of resources (i.e. newspapers) with which to complete the task, Ms. Madison allowed the students to share newspapers in order to create a budget. The assignment of creating a budget required the students to select an automobile from the classified newspaper ads.

Ms. Price. Students in Ms. Price’s middle school classroom were seated in individual desks that were arranged in rows facing one another. When asked how students were placed in a reading class, Ms. Price stated that all students were required to schedule a reading course, however, the students simply selected which class best fit their schedules. Ms. Price stated, “Yeah, it’s just kind of random scheduling but next year we’re going to try to evaluate the kids a little bit better and do some ability placing.” Ms. Price continued by expressing some concerns regarding ability grouping, “So you can’t always do ability grouping. It just doesn’t, it’s just not fair to some of the kids. They miss out on some of the experiences that they could have...At the same time, you can mix those groups (ability-based classrooms) up so you can have all of the different ideas and all of the different experiences in the same group.”

On several occasions, Ms. Price also instructed classes to form groups in order to re-read a short story from the basal reader for fluency and then discuss the comprehension questions also provided in the basal readers. While several classes listened to stories from the basal reader via the Promethean Board application, during one class period, Ms. Price provided students the choice of whether they would rather listen to audio of the story or read the story in small groups. When the majority of students

voted to read the story in small groups, Ms. Price allowed the students to select the peers that they wanted to form a group with.

Grouping summary. (See Table 5 for a listing of *grouping* differences according to classroom.) It is interesting to note, that both the mastery-oriented elementary and middle school teachers seated students in groups at tables while students in the performance-oriented classrooms were seated at individual desks. However, this seating arrangement did not clearly translate to increased opportunities to collaborate with peers. For instance, while Ms. Matthews allowed the kindergarten students to self-select groups during a variety of learning tasks each day (i.e. literacy centers, math centers), Ms. Madison, the mastery-oriented middle school teacher, only allowed the students in her class to collaborate with one another for one learning task. Ms. Matthews employed a variety of grouping practices that align with mastery goals such as forming guided reading groups based on students' needs and allowing for flexible grouping throughout the academic year. However, the strategy of grouping students who receive special education services at one table reflects a performance goals orientation.

Likewise, the elementary classroom identified as performance-oriented, had implemented a variety of grouping strategies that are consistent with performance goals. Such practices include: grouping students according to ability for guided reading instruction, grouping students according to gender, and the belief that allowing students to collaborate with another encourages students to negatively rely on each other. Even Ms. Price, the middle school teacher identified as performance goal oriented, expressed concern about grouping students for reading classes according to ability.

Evaluation

The *evaluation* category in OPAL considers the nature of assessment practices in the classroom including testing and grading policies. For instance, this category considers the content of assessments, criteria for evaluation, whether students evaluate their own work or that of their peers, and comments made by teachers regarding failure and mistakes (Patrick et al., 1997).

Specifically, evaluation practices consistent with mastery goals include policies that encourage students to improve their performance (i.e. test retakes, study skill classes), instances during which students are allowed to self-monitor their progress toward goal attainment, and mistakes viewed as a part of the learning process. In contrast, an evaluation practice that adheres to performance goals would be programs that emphasize social comparison of learning achieved (i.e. school-wide honor roll; Maehr & Midgley, 1991).

It is important to note that the academic year during which both the quantitative and qualitative data for this study were collected coincided with the district's first year of implementing the Instructional Decision Making (IDM) model district-wide within all of the elementary and middle schools. IDM is a multi-tiered approach to providing support at three instructional levels: core instruction, supplemental instruction, and intensive instruction.

Ms. Matthews. Interestingly, during the days Ms. Matthew's kindergarten classroom was observed, at no time did she mention to students (either individually or as a whole class) grades or assessments nor did Ms. Matthews administer any formal

assessments. In fact, Ms. Matthews only spoke of grades and assessments when asked direct questions regarding both topics by the researcher during interviews. When asked questions regarding her beliefs of grading and assessment practices, Ms. Matthews shared that kindergarten teachers at the school had recently modified the kindergarten report card so that the newly altered report card was, “more of a continuum of what we’re working on and it shows the whole year at a glance and then we check them (the students) and mark off the things that they have achieved.”

Ms. Matthews also stated that, prior to the current academic year, the kindergarten teachers in the school had been required to administer several assessments during kindergarten round-up with the results of such assessments being used to heterogeneously group students in the classroom that they would be assigned to for the year. It appeared as though Ms. Matthews had preferred this practice as it allowed kindergarten classes to be heterogeneous in nature rather than allowing for the possibility that one kindergarten classroom may, by chance, be comprised of a greater percentage of students with high needs in comparison to the other kindergarten classrooms.

When students made mistakes on independent work products or provided a response to a question that was incorrect, rather than telling the student that his/her response was wrong, Ms. Matthews almost always encouraged or prompted the student towards the correct answer or the correct way to complete a work product. For example, while assisting a student to write a word on a worksheet and seeing that the student had incorrectly spelled the word, Ms. Matthews told the student, “Oops. That’s (the word) shark. Let’s stretch it.” For another learning activity, during which the class was

categorizing animals with a Venn diagram on the Promethean Board, a student moved the picture of the duck on the Venn diagram side indicating that ducks live on water. Ms. Matthews encouraged the student to reconsider his answer by saying, “One time when I was driving, guess what I saw on the land?” When the boy then moved the picture of the duck to the other side of the Venn diagram to indicate that ducks live on land, Ms. Matthews continued, “But then another time guess what I saw on a pond?”

During one of the observations, Ms. Matthews’ students seemed to especially struggle to successfully complete one of the assigned learning tasks. After several math lessons during which Ms. Matthews’ modeled using manipulatives (i.e., colored chips) to understand the concept of addition, Ms. Matthews assigned the students to write a number sentence with a sum of eight. Ms. Matthews then modeled for the class how to create a visual representation of the addition sentence with two differently colored groups of flowers. When she noticed that several student’s first attempt to write a number sentence with a sum of eight and draw a visual representation of the number sentence was unsuccessful, Ms. Matthews cut several additional pieces of black construction paper for each of the students and said, “Try again.” After several students had placed their assignment in a ‘done’ basket, Ms. Matthews began looking at the assignments that the students had handed in and began handing some of the assignments back to students saying, “Austin, you’re not done. You need a number sentence.”

Ms. Matthews often had several adults in the classroom assisting her to support the kindergarten students. There was sometimes a paraprofessional in the classroom that seemed to be primarily assigned to assist one student as well as a special education

teacher who often worked with students in the classroom. Although Ms. Matthews and the special education teacher, Ms. Smith, rarely spoke individually to one another, Ms. Smith often provided comments to the entire class while Ms. Matthews was instructing the class. Ms. Smith also was observed walking around the classroom during independent work time and assisting individual or small groups of students. During the math task described above, Ms. Smith told a girl that seemed to be struggling to write a number sentence, “Watch how you write a number Jan. Make sure you get it right.”

Ms. Parker. The week during which the researcher observed Ms. Parker’s fourth grade classroom happened to be a week before the school was scheduled to complete the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). Since the ITBS are used to determine proficiency according to the standards of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), there were several events during the week scheduled by school administration to prepare students for the ITBS. It is important to note that the school had been placed on the School in Need of Improvement (SINA) list due to the previous year’s ITBS scores. Ms. Parker most aptly described the school atmosphere the week before ITBS was administered when she stated during the interview,

You don’t want the kids to think it’s all or nothing on these tests but, as you can see, when the (guidance counselor) came in for guidance, it really is all or nothing for the test! We rely on these test scores for our funding and for our sanity. So we know how important they are as teachers but we have students who try so hard but they just, they self-destruct mentally because it’s so difficult for them.

In order to prepare students for the ITBS, the first day the researcher observed Ms. Parker’s classroom the guidance counselor presented a PowerPoint to each class in the school that was intended to provide students with tips to prepare for the ITBS. Tips

shared during the presentation including what to eat for breakfast before the test, how to calm anxiety during the test by breathing steadily, and how much sleep each student should acquire the night before the test. Ms. Parker introduced the guidance counselor's presentation to the class by asking students, "Why do we practice ITBS testing? It's for you. It's not for me."

While the guidance counselor declared, "It's okay not to know everything. You will not know everything. I'll tell you a secret. I went to high school and graduated, went to college and graduated, and got my Masters and graduated and I don't know everything. You don't have to know everything, you just have to try your best," it also was equally as obvious that the students must score as high as possible on the test. At one point during the presentation, the guidance counselor stated to the students, "And stay positive. Those people who told me they were excited about the test will do better. If you come in and say that you are going to work hard, work hard for your school, you're going to do well. If you say that you don't want to do well and that you don't care about your school, you won't do well no matter how smart you are." The guidance counselor also indicated to the students that breaking the test rules was alright when she asked Ms. Parker in front of the students, "Have you told them that they can mark lightly on the test?" After Ms. Parker shook her head, the guidance counselor loudly whispered to the class with a smile, "You can mark lightly on the test, but I didn't tell you that."

Preparation for the ITBS continued throughout the three days the researcher observed Ms. Parker's classroom. On multiple occasions the classroom schedule and groupings were altered to accommodate preparations for ITBS. For instance, rather than

meeting with groups of students for guided reading instruction, Ms. Parker instructed a 'bubble group' of students using ITBS practice test workbooks. When asked who the bubble group included, Ms. Parker stated that school administrators had created a list of students who were considered bubble kids. Bubble kids included students who did not score proficient on ITBS when it was previously administered "but who could be proficient." Thus, Ms. Parker shared that many teachers in the school were providing further instruction in reading and mathematics to groups of bubble kids before, during, and after the regular school day in an effort to ensure that they scored proficient on the ITBS.

Ms. Parker's discussion on ITBS seemed to infiltrate most aspects of classroom instruction in the days leading up to administration of the test. For instance, when providing reading instruction to a small group of students Ms. Parker asked the students, "What should you do if you don't know what 'meek' means?" When a student responded, "Use a dictionary," Ms. Parker stated, "But you're not going to have a dictionary for the ITBS. Look at the second word. Use the process of elimination to figure out the right answer." At another time while completing a practice test for the ITBS, a student asked, "Do we have to get timed?" Ms. Parker responded, "Yes, why? Because we're preparing for the ITBS."

School administration also gathered each grade level of students for an assembly the week before ITBS testing in order to further prepare the students. The principal began the assembly by asking students, "It is a very important week with the test coming up. Somebody share with me why this test is important." When a student responded, "So you

can get an education,” the principal asked, “But why is this particular test so important?” When the next student the principal called on to respond declares, “So we can keep our teachers and principals!” the principal laughed and said, “I like that answer! But why else?” After calling on several more students to respond, the principal finally stated, “This test is important for a lot of different reasons. It is a chance to show what you have learned. The test is important for different reasons. I’m competitive. I want (our school) to be at the top. We’re not at the top right now and we could be.”

The assembly continued with another administrator explaining to the students that there were a variety of items on the test, some of which were harder than others. The speaker then asked students what they should do if they have twelve questions left and time on the test was running out. When none of the students raised their hands to respond, the administrator stated, “Should you fill in? If you do, pick a letter and stick with it.” The speaker turned to a large poster that had been fastened to the gymnasium wall and began to draw comparisons as the poster includes previous scores obtained by the district, the school, and each grade level. The assembly concluded with the administrator sharing with students the goals that had been set regarding the test scores. She asked the students, “What happens if you make your reading goal?” The students in the gymnasium responded, “No uniform day!” She continued, “What happens if you make your math goal?” The students again responded in unison, “No uniform day!” “What if you make progress?” The students responded, “Jean day!” The principal then asked Ms. Parker for her classes pencils. Ms. Parker handed the principal a bundle of pencils. The principal

held the pencils in her hand and asked students for a moment of silence for the ‘magic pencils’ that the students will use for the ITBS next week.

As earlier mentioned, the year that the researcher conducted this study happened to coincide with the first year the district had implemented IDM. When asked to describe the IDM process that the district had implemented, Ms. Parker shared,

We do CFA 1 (Common Formative Assessment), which is the pretest and CFA 2 is the posttest. If we are not at 80% for the class, 80% of us are not proficient, then I do reteaching. Then I test again, which is CFA 2-A and the students that aren’t proficient after that go into what is called supplemental and a teacher will come in and pull them out of the classroom during a time that’s not reading or math time and they’ll do small group instruction with them. And after two weeks of small group instruction, then they’ll take another test which is CFA-3. If they are still not proficient then they do this intensive program and that’s after school for an hour twice a week. And they do that for two weeks and then they take CFA-4. We just started that this year and the reason is that we’re going by the belief that failure is not an option. All of our students deserve the opportunity to succeed and it shouldn’t matter if it takes them two weeks or four weeks or six weeks. We need to make sure that we’re meeting all students’ needs. And those CFAs are a lot of times similar.

When asked whether she believed that her students want to excel academically, Ms. Parker replied,

The last couple of years I don’t know that I could say that they do. Since we started doing out IDM process the kids are more aware of their pretest scores. Like we have a class graph up there (she points to a nearby poster on the wall), we do our pretest scores and then we like to show them (the students) the growth. And they (the students) get really pumped up about the day that we do our CFA. Two of the kids are like, “Okay, we need to do good on this”...I can’t think of any student in this classroom who gets a paper back, like a CFA back, and didn’t pass who wouldn’t be upset or wouldn’t feel bad about it which leads me to believe that they want to do well.

When asked her beliefs regarding students making mistakes in the classroom such as incorrectly answering a question or failing to hand in an assignment on time, Ms.

Parker said,

We (the class) were working on organization and writing things down in our planner and being responsible for our own actions, taking credit when they need credit and understanding that if they make a mistake that there are consequences and it's okay to make mistakes. We just need to make sure that we're learning from our mistakes... And I try to emphasize, 'It's okay to make mistakes. It's okay if you don't know how to do things perfectly. That's how we learn.' But a lot of times we get the, just like the shutting down, the frustration because it's more cool to look like a bad kid than a dumb kid.

Ms. Madison. Ms. Madison was not observed administering any formal assessments to her exploratory class while the researcher was observing, Ms. Madison was overheard several times making off-hand comments regarding grades and assessments to individual students in her classroom. At one point, when a student told Ms. Madison, "I don't know how to thread the bobbin," Ms. Madison responded, "This is the last time that I'm helping you and then your grade is going to go down because if you don't know how to thread the bobbin then you don't know how to sew. Right?" Ms. Madison told another student who asked for further assistance, "Bring that top thread to the top. See if I were grading you on this you would fail because you don't know how to do it yet." At another time, when the students were viewing a video about babysitting practices, Ms. Madison warned a group of students, "Hey! This video is for information. We can have a test on it if you want."

When asked about classroom testing practices, Ms. Madison described the IDM model that had been implemented. She stated,

And we do have a standard here in our school now. It's got to be 80% school and district-wide so I got at that too but I give them (the students) more than one chance to get it. I let them study again. And then I remind them if they get a 100% the second time, I remind them that they could have done it the first time. It's 23 words and I give them a word bank. I make it easy for them to pass, I mean succeed. I don't want them to fail and I tell them that but I tell them they also have to put in a part of it too. They have to put in some effort too.

The students in Ms. Madison's classroom seem nervous and hesitant to make mistakes when sewing a variety of projects such as puppets and bags. Even Ms. Madison noted, "You can tell they (the students) need so much affirmation. I can show them how to do something but yet they'll still come to me, "Is this right? Is this right? Is this right?" which is part of the learning thing I guess. They're just a little bit afraid to do it that they'll do it wrong and then there are some who do it right away." While Ms. Madison often suggested to students that they would be required to redo or start over a project so that they completed it successfully, Ms. Madison's told the researcher her policy regarding mistakes, "If they (the students) did something wrong, I'll take it out and say, "Let's do it right. You have to do it the right way." Because I don't want things leaving here and getting out in the public and people saying, "You did this in school? This is terrible!" You know and I want them to learn the right way anyway."

Ms. Price. When asked to share her thoughts regarding test scores, Ms. Price commented, "We put a whole bunch of stress on one test that it's like the Olympics. These athletes, they compete all year round but nobody cares unless it's an Olympic gold medal. You know, nobody cares unless it's ITBS 99th percentile or whatever." Ms. Price often made comments to her students regarding grades and test scores especially in reference to the report cards that students would receive before the beginning of summer

break. Ms. Price at one point told a class, “Here’s my idea. How about you do your homework? You need to learn how to read and practicing is a part of that and you know you guys are going to be sad with your grades. How do you think the summer is going to kick off when your moms see your grades?” Ms. Price again reiterated to a student the importance of reading and grades when she stated, “You need to start doing reading logs because learning to read is really important and is a really important part of your grade...If you keep working on your reading log guess what’s going to happen?” When the student indicated that his grade would increase, Ms. Price confirmed, “Yup. And you know what else goes up? Your ability to read. You want to be anything that you dream? Read.”

Ms. Price also described how IDM was operationalized in the middle school, “For the IDM thing I now stay after school Tuesdays and Thursdays and I bring the kids in again who didn’t understand the concept or didn’t get mastery or whatever. So if Brad doesn’t do well today on his test, but he would prefer to go to his study skills class instead of getting his grades up in here because they (students) can raise their grades through the tiers too.” During her preparatory period each day several students would come to Ms. Price’s classroom for ‘tier two’ (this is what they called supplementary instruction). One day, Ms. Price was observed administering a test to three male students. Before the students began the test, Ms. Price offered,

Todd, let’s make a deal. How about for every five questions you answer, you get a Mega Money (Mega Money was fake money that the students were provided by teachers and school staff for good behavior that could be used to ‘purchase’ a variety of items at school). ..That means by the end of today you could buy your own pop or a powerade...Well, for every five questions that would be four Mega

Money and I'll add one more if you get done on time and that's five Mega Money.

Both Ms. Price and the students seemed determined to pass the test so that the students could move out of tier two. When a student asked Ms. Price how many questions he needed to get correct to pass the test, Ms. Price responded, "Try to redo all of them that way at least you'll get a passing grade on the test." The post-tests for IDM tier two instruction were also included in students' grades. Ms. Price reminded a student of this while he completed a post-test, "Okay, I want you to redo the last page. You've got twelve (questions) right. That's passing but you still want to get a few more to get your grade up." When Ms. Price indicated to a student, "You got those first three (questions) right. Nobody got those first three right. You can do this," the student voiced the frustration that many of the students seemed to be feeling as they were required to take a test a second or possibly a third time, "This is hard! I don't know! Why do you give us a hard test to make our grade worse?!" Ms. Price responded to the student, "Well, you've got to try." When another student voiced his frustration at having to complete another test, Ms. Price attempted to encourage the student's effort by reminding him that he could improve his grade by passing the test. Ms. Price stated, "I'll even print you another grade sheet. You can take it home and show it off. And I can write on there, 'Brad's grade has changed and the report card is wrong.'"

Ms. Price's classroom policies regarding making mistakes, such as failing to turn in an assignment on time or answering a question incorrectly, seemed to focus on students completing the task assigned. For instance, she often provided extensions for

students' homework assignments such as reading logs. When a student failed to put their name on an assignment that they had handed in, Ms. Price asked, "Where is your name? You guys need to take credit for the wonderful work you do." While reading a story in class, Ms. Price led the students in a discussion of what might happen at home if they made a mistake such as messing up the wax on their parents' car. One student responded, "Stuff that I can't say...My mom would slap me."

Evaluation summary. (See Table 6 for a listing of *evaluation* differences according to classroom.) The elementary teacher who was identified as espousing mastery goals, Ms. Matthews, displayed a variety of evaluation practices that adhered to a mastery-orientation such as: designing report cards that indicated students' skills according to a continuum, encouraging students to attempt learning tasks a second time when mistakes were made, and allowing students to reconsider responses that were initially incorrect. However, while the middle school teacher who had been identified as mastery-oriented demonstrated several behaviors consistent with mastery goals such as: emphasizing student effort when completing pre/post-tests as part of the IDM process and allowing students to redo projects if mistakes had been made, Ms. Madison also exhibited several performance-oriented characteristics. Namely, Ms. Madison's practice of threatening to lower students' grades when they asked for assistance, indicating that pre/post tests should be 'easy' in order to allow students to successfully pass the tests, and creating an environment that caused students to feel nervous or hesitant to request help on projects, are all indicative of performance goals.

The elementary and middle school teachers identified as performance goal oriented also exhibited evaluation practices consistent with performance goals such as: comparing student test performance to school and district scores, referencing grades and report cards as a primary reason students should engage in learning, awarding tangible rewards to students for successfully passing assessments, grouping students according to test scores, and encouraging the notion that students would lose their teachers and principal based on their performance on a single assessment.

As Ms. Parker declared the week before ITBS was administered,

You don't want the kids to think it's all or nothing on these tests but, as you can see, when the (guidance counselor) came in for guidance, it really is all or nothing for the test! We rely on these test scores for our funding and for our sanity. So we know how important they are as teachers but we have students who try so hard but they just, they self-destruct mentally because it's so difficult for them.

Even Ms. Price, the middle school teacher who was identified as espousing performance goals expressed concern regarding the emphasis placed on test scores as she stated, "We put a whole bunch of stress on one test that it's like the Olympics. These athletes, they compete all year round but nobody cares unless it's an Olympic gold medal. You know, nobody cares unless it's ITBS 99th percentile or whatever."

Time

The category of *time* as described by OPAL includes references made by teachers regarding the amount of time students are allotted to complete certain tasks, instances when time is used to manage students' behavior in the classroom, and comments made by teachers regarding time restrictions such as how quickly students should be working in

order to complete certain activities. Finally, the category of *time* includes classroom schedules and to what degree such schedules are adhered to (Patrick et al., 1997).

Specifically, time practices that adhere to mastery goals include flexible scheduling to suit students' needs. Time is an especially important element of schools as time constraints often impact the quality of learning tasks presented to students. For instance, providing a specific amount of time for a particular subject (i.e. 50 minutes for reading instruction) may not allow students to fully engage in a learning task.

Performance goals are reflected in time practices when time constraints are placed on learning and schedules are adhered to regardless of student need (Maehr & Midgley, 1991).

Ms. Matthews. There was no schedule posted in Ms. Matthew's kindergarten classroom. However, Ms. Matthew's shared that there had been a picture schedule posted above the chalkboard until recently when a Promethean Board was installed to replace the chalkboard. Until the schedule was removed, the schedule included photographs of each of the daily subjects. Each day, one student was responsible for moving the clothespin from one picture to another as the school day progressed to indicate the time of the day. When asked how often the class schedule was followed, Ms. Matthews stated, "I truly believe in teaching to the moment. I start out with a schedule but I'm not one of those that has to adhere to a specific schedule because I know that that's the way this age works. You know if something comes up and we have to go to that topic I believe that's the moment to do it."

Ms. Matthews made several comments to students about time, often indicating that time was at a minimum and must be used effectively. For instance, she made comments such as “Five seconds, pick one,” indicating that the student was to quickly select colored paper. Another time when a student was at the front of the classroom assisting to categorize animals in a Venn diagram, Ms. Matthews stated, “Move fast. We have a lot to get through. You have 5 seconds.” Additionally, when independent time concluded and it was time for the students to gather on the carpet for whole group instruction, Ms. Matthews told several students, “You have about 2 minutes to finish that” and “Where are the rest of your pictures? I see one. Get them out. You have 1 minute to finish it.” The only time during the school day when Ms. Matthews used a timer to indicate to students that only a certain amount of time would be allotted for a specific activity was during snack time. One time, Ms. Matthews told a student who was working on writing a sentence that accompanied an addition problem, “You can’t be in a hurry Jon.”

Ms. Parker. Ms. Parker wrote the daily schedule on the chalkboard each day and began each day by going over the schedule with the class. When asked how often the schedule was adhered to, Ms. Parker commented,

Usually, as far as the schedule goes, I guess that we’re always flexible like if the guidance counselor decides that she is going to come in or if there is an assembly... Generally, those changes I know before the school day has started so that schedule is correct on the board. And the reason why I do that is because if I didn’t have it up then they’re (the students) always asking what are we doing next? So usually we follow it pretty closely... However, I had to learn how to be flexible and that was something that I wasn’t good at because I like to do things on my own and I like to have them done perfectly so I like schedules and I think that the kids like them.

Often throughout each school day Ms. Parker would post a countdown on the Promethean Board to indicate to students the amount of time they were allotted for specific tasks. The countdown clock was displayed on the Promethean Board when the students took restroom breaks, completed timed math assessments, silent read and completed practice Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) tests in preparation for the district-wide assessment. At one point, Ms. Parker explained to the class that she set the countdown timer on the Promethean Board to indicate the time students were allotted for a restroom break because, “I’m going to set the timer for two minutes. The reason that I’m setting the timer is because last time it took some of us five minutes and five minutes is too long. We need to use our time wisely.” However, during academic tasks, such as completing assigned worksheets or assessments, Ms. Parker commented, more than once, that students should indicate if they need extra time because “I want to make sure that you have enough time to finish.”

Ms. Madison. Ms. Madison did not have a copy of the class schedule posted in the classroom. Instead, Ms. Madison had written the overall learning objective of each period for each day of the week on the chalkboard. For example, for Monday Ms. Madison had written that the sixth grade “students will learn about babysitting and first aid” and that seventh grade “students will learn the importance of having a budget.” Ms. Madison often referred to the amount of time each class period had until the bell rang to indicate the end of the period such as, “I need everyone stopping. Six minutes. We’ll finish up some of yours Monday” and “We have about five more minutes!” Ms. Madison also often told students how much time would be allotted for specific activities. For instance, during

study hall students were instructed to read silently for fifteen minutes. One time while students were working on several math problems that were posted on the Promethean Board in the classroom that had been assigned during study hall as part of a school-wide intervention, Ms. Madison told the class, “Let’s go folks. I’ll let this up until quarter after and then it’s homework.”

Since the observations occurred towards the end of the school year, Ms. Madison also often made comments regarding the amount of days left in the school year. Such comments including Ms. Madison telling students, “There are only three more weeks of school left” and “We have three more weeks. I’ll make you do some more sewing if I know that you don’t like it.”

Ms. Price. Each day Ms. Price wrote on the chalkboard the overall focus of each class period. For example, one day Ms. Price wrote on the board *Drive in Movies* under the heading ‘1st hour’ to indicate that the first period class would be reading the story *Drive in Movies* that day. Ms. Price often made comments to the class indicating that students needed to put materials away, transition from one activity to another, and complete assignments in a more timely manner. For instance, Ms. Price was overheard telling a student who was completing an activity at the Promethean Board in front of the class, “Quickly, quickly, quickly so that we can move on” and telling another group of students at another time “Okay guys. We are running out of time. I didn’t think that would take us so long. Come on guys. To your seats. Quick, quick.”

When assigning independent learning tasks, Ms. Price also often stated how much time students would be allotted to complete activity. Directions provided by Ms. Price

included, “On the front of your paper you’re going to do a quick journal for seven minutes. Let’s see if you can move your pencil for all seven minutes.” Ms. Price also warned students when the allotted time for an activity was concluding by stating, “You have three minutes... You’ve got two minutes. Guys finish this up” and “Come on. We have less than fourteen minutes. Hustle.” At one point, Ms. Price told a pair of students who were reading a story aloud to one another, “No more goofing around. In twelve minutes you are going to need to be where the other students are.”

Ms. Price also often commented to students that they were “wasting time” because they did not transition from one activity to another quietly. On several occasions, Ms. Price made the following comments, “You’re wasting time. Maybe we should call Chris and tell him that for 27 days of school left that you don’t know what the expectation is,” “It would appear to me that we are really wasting time. Let’s not do that. Let’s transition smoother” and “Gentlemen, come on. Let’s find us a spot. You’re wasting time. You only have ten minutes and you’ve wasted a minute.” Since it was near the end of academic year when the researcher observed Ms. Price’s classroom, Ms. Price often referred to the limited amount of school days left before summer break in an apparent effort to encourage students to remain focused and on-task.

Time summary. (See Table 7 for a listing of *time* differences according to classroom.) Many similar practices regarding time were observed both in classrooms that had been identified as mastery-oriented as well as in performance-oriented classrooms. For instance, all the teachers who were observed, often reminded students to transition from one learning task to another quicker, placed time restrictions on specific learning

tasks (i.e. 15 minutes to silent read, 7 minutes to journal), and encouraged students to select materials faster. Ms. Matthews, the kindergarten teacher identified as espousing mastery goals, was the only teacher observed who told a student, “You can’t be in a hurry.” Although Ms. Matthews had previously had a schedule posted in the classroom, she stated that the schedule was flexible as, “I truly believe in teaching to the moment. I start out with a schedule but I’m not one of those that has to adhere to a specific schedule because I know that that’s the way this age works. You know if something comes up and we have to go to that topic I believe that’s the moment to do it.”

All of the teachers observed had a schedule of some sort posted in their classrooms. However, Ms. Parker seemed most concerned with adhering to the classroom schedule. This included Ms. Parker placing a countdown on the Promethean Board to restrict the amount of time allotted for a variety of activities (i.e. restroom breaks, completing assessments). While Ms. Parker stated that she encouraged students to let her know if they required additional time to complete assessments, when a student failed to complete an assessment in the allotted time, Ms. Parker was observed removing the test from the student’s desk while the student cried.

Social

The category of *social* as described by OPAL considers the two subcategories of *student-student interactions* and *teacher-student interactions*. The subcategory of *student-student interactions* includes comments made by the teacher regarding whether students are allowed to interact with one another. This includes the extent to which students interact with one another, the circumstances that allow students to interact, the

nature of students' discussions with one another, and whether learning tasks are structured to allow students to interact.

The subcategory of *teacher-student interactions* considers interactions that occur involving the teacher and students. This category includes comments made by the teacher towards students that are caring and supportive in nature, possible instances of conflict between the teacher and specific students, and occurrences during which the teacher shares personal information to students (Patrick et al., 1997).

Mastery goal practices included in the *social* include providing students the opportunity to collaborate with one another and teachers encouraging student learning with caring and supportive comments. An additional mastery practice includes structuring learning tasks to allow for cooperative learning to occur (Patrick et al., 1997).

Ms. Matthews. Ms. Matthews often allowed students to talk quietly to one another during transitions and while students worked independently on learning tasks (i.e. journaling, seatwork). Ms. Matthews also encouraged students to share their materials, learning, and personal experiences. For instance, the kindergarten students in Ms. Matthews' classroom began each day responding to a writing prompt in their journals. Ms. Matthews then would allow several students to share what they had written by saying, "Okay. Let's hear some stories! Ann, can you share? Quiet everyone so we can hear her story." Ms. Matthews also allowed the students to share personal experiences during class times such as 'Pass the Puppy' and 'Show and Tell.' During 'Pass the Puppy,' the students took turns passing a stuffed dog around the class and responding to a question proposed by Ms. Matthews such as, "Today when we pass the puppy, I want you

to tell me what Earth Day means to you. Are you going to do something special?"

"Today when we pass the dog, I'd like to hear what your plans are for Saturday, tomorrow."

While students were observed assisting one another in the classroom (for instance, one student helped another hang his coat on the coat hook in the classroom because the student could not reach the hook), there were times when the kindergarten students argued with one another. Ms. Matthews handled such instances in a variety of ways. For instance, while at times she would respond nonverbally by shaking her head or placing a hand on a student's shoulder who was arguing with another student, she also responded by telling students, "No. No."

In the classroom, Ms. Matthews used a very calm, reassuring, and quiet tone. She often smiled gently to students when responding to questions or providing directions about particular learning tasks. While Ms. Matthews was not observed sharing personal information with students, the class was clearly aware that Ms. Matthews had a grandson. At one point, a student asked Ms. Matthews if her grandson would have liked the cookies that they baked for snack-time.

Ms. Parker. The students in Ms. Parker's classroom were often reminded that they were not allowed to talk to their peers during both learning tasks and breaks. Ms. Parker often made comments such as the following: "Please, we don't need conversation," "Before I get started can someone please tell me what our voices should sound like?" "No, I didn't tell you to start talking yet." When students continued talking to one another, Ms. Parker often threatened, "If I have to tell you guys to be quiet, I'm going to

pull your card. This time needs to be quiet.” As part of the classroom behavior management system, each student had cards in a pocket chart at the front of the classroom. Ms. Parker also counted down during each transition to indicate to students that there should be no talking in the classroom. For instance, she reminded the class, “What should it sound like in here when I hit zero? Quiet.” Only on one occasion were the students in Ms. Parker’s classroom allowed to talk to one another. One day during a pizza party, the students were allowed to talk and sing with one another while completing math puzzles that included a variety of computation facts.

On several occasions while the students were completing independent learning tasks such as completing a worksheet or taking a test, students seemed concerned that their peers might copy their answers. In fact, during a test one student loudly told his classmate who was seated nearby, “Don’t look at my paper!” Ms. Parker seemed to encourage the idea that students should be cognizant that their peers may attempt to copy answers as she told a student, “Max that is your last warning. Do you want to move to the back table by Ms. Hopper? She might look at your test but she won’t copy.”

Each day during the classroom ‘Pow Wow,’ a time when students responded to a question provided by Ms. Parker, Ms. Parker often shared personal stories with the class. For instance, on one occasion she asked, “Do you guys remember what happened on my honeymoon?” She then told the students that she was afraid of mountain lions when she went west on her honeymoon. Ms. Parker also encouraged the special education teacher who was often in the class to share stories about the daughter that she had adopted from overseas.

At the end of the school day and during breaks in learning activities, Ms. Parker often laughed with students while conversing with them individually or in small groups. She occasionally teased the students by saying, “It’s just like you guys. You love us when we feed you.” When a student responded with a smile, “I don’t love you,” Ms. Parker smiled and stated, “You have some making up to us to do. How should I get even with you? Remember that fun game that we’re doing during math?”

Ms. Madison. Although the students in Ms. Madison’s class spent a majority of class time working on projects independently, Ms. Madison rarely seemed to encourage or allow students to converse with one another, regardless of whether students’ were attempting to assist one another with classroom projects. In fact, Ms. Madison told a group of students, “When you talk you aren’t really working.” When a student replied, “I’m working,” Ms. Madison continued, “No you aren’t. You’re talking with your hand on the top of your machine, like this. Like a little chicken. I can hardly talk and work and I’m good.”

Ms. Madison seemed to relax her no talking classroom rule during certain classes. For instance, she told one class of students, “I don’t mind if you sit here. You guys can whisper, you’re across from each other.” Later during the class period, Ms. Madison addressed a group of four students who were talking and laughing softly while working on their classroom project, “You need to go in the bathroom and compose yourself.” When the girl replied, “It’s not always me. You always say it’s me and it’s not,” Ms. Madison responded, “You are the one I always hear laughing.”

One day, while watching a video during class, two boys began to argue quietly about whether one of them had kicked the other student. Ms. Madison threatened the students in front of the class, “This video is for information. We can have a test on it if you want.”

Ms. Madison often approached students while they worked on classroom projects independently and asked a variety of rhetorical questions in a demanding and harsh voice. For instance, Ms. Madison approached a boy one day and demanded, “Why is your light not on? Why are you sitting like that? This looks all muddled to me. Can you explain what you did?” When the student did not respond, Ms. Madison continued,

Now you have it around this presser foot. You want to thread it and take it to the right side. You just took it to the left side. Stop. What do you do with the top thread? With your left hand, hold it. You know what to do, see. Bring that top thread to the top. See if I were grading you on this you would fail because you don't know how to do it yet. Now you're going to sew. That's not how I showed you how to pin. You need one here, one here.

Ms. Madison approached another student and asked, “What are you doing?” When the boy seemed confused, she demanded, “Do you understand what you are doing? Have you been gone for awhile?” When the boy didn't respond, another student nearby answered kindly that the boy had been absent for a few days. Ms. Madison said harshly when the boy began coughing, “Don't cough on me. I said, don't cough on me. I can't get sick. I have a track meet tomorrow morning.”

When approaching students to note the progress they were making on their projects or responding to students' questions, Ms. Madison gave directions quickly in short sentences. She directed a student, “You are going to use a zig zag stitch. Go to an

ironing board and iron this open. This needs to be cut because it's in the way. You have to sew your sides together before you do the handles. So get it even at the top. Forward back, forward back, zig zag, four times. Forward back, forward back, zig zag." When another student, who seemed nervous to ask for help from Ms. Madison, asked, "Ms. Madison, can you come here please." Ms. Madison demanded, "Number one, where is your thread? It's down here. Number two, it isn't threaded. What did I say to do with the machine when you were done? That's why you're wasting class time rethreading. Why do you have handles? You don't even need handles yet. See it works fine when you get it threaded. It works just fine."

Ms. Madison often made sarcastic comments when interacting with students. For instance, when a boy explained, "I'm making sure it has a crease," Ms. Madison responded, "I'll crease you!" Another time, when a student explained that he was late for class because he had tripped on his shoelace in the hallway and had decided to stop to tie them, Ms. Madison responded sarcastically, "Good conclusion." During another class, when a student mentioned a video that he had watched on YouTube, Ms. Madison asked sarcastically, "Oh, so that is where you get your annoying tendencies? There are good things about watching t.v. and bad things."

Ms. Madison made a few comments in the classroom regarding her previous experiences and personal life. When assisting students to design a financial budget, she told them a story about the time when she tried to sell a vehicle that she owned. She also made comments to students regarding her father and her son. Finally, one day while the students were watching a video about sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), Ms. Madison

stated, “Just a little note here. When I was an art teacher, Vincent Van Gogh, has anyone heard of him? He fell in love with a prostitute and ended up with syphilis. He cut his ear off. His most famous painting was painted when he was in the insane asylum.”

Ms. Price. During nearly every class period, Ms. Price encouraged the middle school students to share personal stories and experiences with one another. Ms. Price often used students’ personal experiences to introduce a story and build students’ background knowledge. For instance, before reading a story about a dog at the marketplace, Ms. Price asked a student who had previously lived in Europe to share his experience with the class. Ms. Price encouraged, “You have been to a market in Europe, haven’t you? Tell me about a market in Europe. Tell me what they do there. Do they go to HyVee? Then tell me what they do?” Another time, when reading a story about an abused dog, Ms. Price asked the class, “Who has a dog at home?” When many of the students raised their hands, Ms. Price continued, “You lucky kids! How about we do a quick turn and talk to your neighbor about an animal that you have had and then we can move on.” When Ms. Price noticed that a student had his head down on his desk and was not talking to any other students, she walked to his desk and said with a kind smile, “Ian, can you wake up sweetheart? Ian have you ever had any pets? You need to wake up. Don’t put your head down.”

However, during instructional time Ms. Price seemed to discourage the students from talking to one another. She made comments such as, “The sidebar conversation needs to be with all of us,” “You guys are getting awfully chatty. We have only five minutes left. Focus,” and “Can I get your voice to turn off?”

When interacting with students, Ms. Price used endearments liberally such as: ‘sweetie,’ ‘darling,’ ‘buddy,’ ‘sister,’ ‘honey bunny,’ and ‘love.’ Ms. Price also often asked students how they were doing as she seemed to genuinely care about students’ emotional states. When Ms. Price noticed that a student seemed upset, she said, “Andre, whatever is getting you down, forget about it. You’re a great kid.” She also attempted to encourage a new student to interact more with the class by saying, “Ian, how are you doing buddy? Do you want to sit up here so that you can see better?” When Ms. Price asked a student why she was not in class the day before and the student said that she was suspended for fighting with another student, Ms. Price said kindly, “Well then why don’t you talk to me when you have a problem with him next time. I’ll listen.”

Ms. Price often shared personal experiences related to topics discussed in stories the classes were reading. Topics ranged from Ms. Price’s previous experience teaching at a local alternative high school, rescuing a rabbit from her lawnmower, and her pet snake. Ms. Price spoke in a kind and reassuring voice with a smile even when reprimanding students. After noticing that a group of students had been in the hallway turning the lights off and on, Ms. Price said, “Gentlemen. Gentlemen, what were you thinking? I’m supposed to be in the hallway. I am not your momma.” Ms. Price smiled kindly when a student responded, “You are my momma.”

Several letters from former students were posted on Ms. Price’s classroom wall. The letters read: “Dear Ms. Price, You are the best teacher ever. You are really nice and smart. You always make me laugh and I really want to be in your other classes! From Chase.” “Ms. Price, you are the best teacher ever! You are also the nicest teacher I have

ever met. You make study skills really fun and I enjoy being in your class. You are like the #1 teacher in the world.”

Social summary. (See Table 8 for a listing of *social* differences according to classroom.) While the elementary teacher was identified as mastery-oriented, Ms. Matthews, and the students in her classroom exhibited a variety of behaviors consistent with mastery goals in the category of *social* such as: encouraging students to share personal experiences and students assisting one another, the middle school teacher, Ms. Madison, identified as espousing mastery goals, in fact demonstrated a variety of behaviors consistent with performance goals. For instance, Ms. Madison discouraged students from conversing, assisting, or collaborating with one another, responded to students’ attempts to seek assistance with short, fast sentences that did not encourage questions, and made a variety of sarcastic comments at the expense of students. In fact, Ms. Madison told a group of students, “When you talk you aren’t really working.” When a student replied, “I’m working,” Ms. Madison continued, “No you aren’t. You’re talking with your hand on the top of your machine, like this. Like a little chicken. I can hardly talk and work and I’m good.”

Likewise, the elementary teacher identified with performance goals, Ms. Parker, displayed a variety of behaviors consistent with performance goals such as: often reminding students that they were not allowed to speak to their peers during instruction and breaks as well as requiring students who talked to their peers to pull their behavior cards. However, many of the behaviors the middle school teacher identified as espousing performance goals was observed displaying in the category of *social* were consistent with

mastery goals. For instance, Ms. Price encouraged students to share personal experiences especially as they related to the stories being read, used a kind, reassuring voice even when reprimanding students, and often shared personal stories with students regarding her family, pets, and previous job experiences.

Help-Seeking

The category of *help-seeking* as described by OPAL includes the ways in which help is sought by students and statements made by teachers regarding students seeking help. The category also includes whether students seek help publicly and from whom they seek help such as teachers and peers (Patrick et al., 1997).

Help-seeking behaviors that are consistent with mastery goals include students being encouraged, either verbally or nonverbally, to ask a variety of questions to deepen their understanding of the presented content. This requires that a classroom environment be established that encourages students to ask questions to both teachers and their peers (Patrick et al., 1997).

Ms. Matthews. The students in Ms. Matthews kindergarten classroom utilized a variety of methods to obtain Ms. Matthews attention when they had a question or required assistance with an assignment. Students were often observed approaching Ms. Matthews during independent and small group work. Ms. Matthews responded quietly to students' questions or provided further instruction in order for the student to successfully complete a learning task. The following was observed while the students were writing independently in their journals and is indicative of Ms. Matthews' general approach to students' questions: Ms. Matthews was seated at the kidney-shaped table. A student

walked to the table and asked Ms. Matthews a question. Ms. Matthews responded quietly, “Probably not.” Another student walked to the table and began talking to Ms. Matthews. Ms. Matthews responded, “Very nice,” and began writing in a nearby binder. A student came to the table and asked a question. Ms. Matthews responded, “Oops. That’s okay. That’s funny. As long as they’re facing the right way.” Two more students surrounded the table and asked questions about the assignment. Ms. Matthews looked at the students’ journals and helped them to identify the words. She sounded out a word with a student. When he correctly read, “Children,” Ms. Matthews replied with a smile, “Yes!”

Although Ms. Matthews most often responded to students’ questions whenever they approached her for assistance, in some cases she instructed students who had questions, “Use your signal.” By ‘use your signal,’ Ms. Matthews reminded students to remain seated and raise their hands in order to receive assistance. When asked what students typically did when they were unsure of what they were supposed to be doing, Ms. Matthews responded with a smile, “Oh, they ask!”

Interestingly, a special education teacher often spent time in Ms. Matthews’ classroom in order to provide services in the general education setting to students who had been identified as being eligible for special education services. The special education teacher’s policies regarding students seeking help clearly differed from Ms. Matthews’. For instance, on one occasion when a student approached the researcher for assistance with an assignment, the special education teacher instructed the student, “Take it to your desk. You have to do it by yourself. She’s not here to help you.” Another time when a student approached the special education teacher and tapped her on the shoulder in an

effort to gain assistance with an assignment, the special education teacher responded, “I can’t help you if you’re tapping me on the shoulder. Sit down.” When another student was observed seeking assistance from a paraprofessional in the classroom, the special education teacher stated to the student, “No, no, no. Don’t ask her. You do it.”

Ms. Parker. When asked what students do when they were unsure about what was being required of them for a particular assignment or task, Ms. Parker stated, “Give up. Have behavior problems. Cry, yell. A lot of times they seek attention but in a negative way because they don’t want people to know that they don’t get it or that they don’t understand.” Ms. Parker continued, “(the special education teacher) and I like to joke with them and say things like ‘Absolutely no questions! You can’t ask any questions!’ and things where they are like, ‘What? We can’t?’ You know, we like to joke with them.” Although Ms. Parker told students, “If you need help, you need to raise your hand,” on several occasions when students raised their hands to ask a question while they were assigned to silently read, Ms. Parker told students, “Sam, put your hand down.” Another time when a student approached Ms. Parker who was seated alone at her desk while the students silently read, Ms. Parker seemed to purposely ignore the student who was standing near her until the student returned to his seat.

Ms. Madison. The students in Ms. Madison’s middle school classroom seemed very hesitant to seek Ms. Madison’s assistance with learning tasks and ask questions. This may have been due to Ms. Madison’s approach to respond to questions. As she told the researcher while instructing the class, “You should count how many times I repeat things. It’s amazing that teachers have voices at the end of the day.”

When one student asked Ms. Madison for assistance with a math problem during study hall and quietly admitted to Ms. Madison, “I don’t know how to divide,” Ms. Madison responded, “Jacob, I’m not playing this game with you.” The student again murmured, “I don’t know how,” as Ms. Madison walked away. Another time a student asked Ms. Madison, “How do you backstitch? Do you go back?” Ms. Madison stared at her for several moments when another student attempted to respond to the girl’s question. Ms. Madison then stated, “No. Are you kidding me? You go forward, back, forward, back. Do you go back? Do you go back?” Ms. Madison then turned to a student standing nearby and again stated sarcastically, “Do you go back? I’m going crazy.” Another boy who had been standing nearby Ms. Madison waiting to ask for her assistance, walked away without asking for help after he witnessed the way Ms. Madison responded to the other student’s question. While walking away, the boy quietly stated, “It’s like I don’t know how to do nothing. I don’t want to be up here.” Without being asked, a boy nearly approached the other student and began assisting him with his project. He explained to the boy, “It’s stupid. All you had to do is turn it.”

Several times Ms. Madison seemed to refuse to assist student’s when they asked for assistance with projects. When a student asked Ms. Madison why she would not help him, she responded, “Because you are going to learn how to do this.” When another student sought help from her, Ms. Madison declared, “I showed you yesterday. Today you need to try it yourself.” At one point a student appeared to ask Ms. Madison for assistance for another student who was apparently hesitant to seek assistance from Ms.

Madison. When the girl told Ms. Madison that the student needed help, Ms. Madison responded, “I know. I’m busy. She needs to learn patience. Patience, patience, patience.”

Ms. Madison also seemed to discourage the students from seeking assistance from one another. When Ms. Madison noticed a student assisting another student, she demanded, “Are you doing that for her? What did she learn when you did that for her? What I’m asking is what did she learn when you did her job for her. I don’t care if you help her verbally but not physically.” Another time, when Ms. Madison noticed another student helping a peer, Ms. Madison stated, “No. Let her do it.”

Ms. Price. Ms. Price seemed to consciously create an environment where students were unafraid to ask questions. For instance, when one student prefaced a question about an assignment by stating, “This is a stupid question but,” Ms. Price quickly interjected with a smile, “There are no stupid questions.” Additional comments that seemed to encourage help-seeking behavior included Ms. Price telling a class, “Erin asks a great question when we put up the first question for the story. Why do kids do chores?” and Ms. Price asking another class while they worked independently on a writing assignment, “Who else needs help?”

In fact, Ms. Price even responded to questions asked during class time which were unrelated to instruction. For instance, when several students asked questions related to a thunderstorm that was occurring outside, Ms. Price responded to their questions by stating, “Are you afraid of storms? So am I. I’ll protect you. There are safe places in the building where we can go.” While the class waited for the Promethean Board to upload audio of a story, a student asked Ms. Price if she had ever dissected an animal. Ms. Price

stated that she had dissected animals and began to list several of the kinds of animals that she had dissected.

Finally, when Ms. Price was unable to immediately respond to a student's questions regarding an assignment or learning task, Ms. Price often would indicate that she would respond to questions in the near future. For instance, when a student began asking questions while the Channel One news played, Ms. Price stated, "Let's talk about it more when it's over. Hold your thoughts until we're done sweetheart. Write them down so you don't forget."

Help-seeking summary. (See Table 9 for a listing of *help-seeking* differences according to classroom.) Ms. Matthews, the elementary teacher identified as espousing mastery goals, and her kindergarten students displayed a variety of help-seeking behaviors that are consistent with mastery goals. For instance, Ms. Matthews' students asked a variety of questions during all instructional activities that Ms. Matthews responded to either verbally or nonverbally. When asked what students typically did when they were unsure of what they were supposed to be doing, Ms. Matthews responded with a smile, "Oh, they ask!" However, most of Ms. Madison's, the middle school teacher identified as espousing mastery goals, help-seeking behaviors were not consistent with mastery goals but rather indicative of performance goals. For instance, the students in Ms. Madison's middle school classroom seemed very hesitant to seek Ms. Madison's assistance as she responded to questions similarly to this example: "How do you backstitch? Do you go back?" Ms. Madison stared at her for several moments when another student attempted to respond to the girl's question. Ms. Madison then stated,

“No. Are you kidding me? You go forward, back, forward, back. Do you go back? Do you go back?” Ms. Madison then turned to a student standing nearby and again stated sarcastically, “Do you go back? I’m going crazy.”

While the elementary teacher identified with performance goals, Ms. Parker’s, help-seeking behavior adhered to performance goals, the middle school teacher identified as espousing performance goals, and in fact displayed a majority of help-seeking behavior consistent with mastery goals. For instance, Ms. Price created an environment where students were unafraid to ask questions as she responded to one student who prefaced a question about an assignment by stating, “This is a stupid question but,” Ms. Price quickly interjected with a smile, “There are no stupid questions.” Whereas, when asked what students do when they were unsure about what was being required of them for a particular assignment or task, Ms. Parker stated, “Give up. Have behavior problems. Cry, yell. A lot of times they seek attention but in a negative way because they don’t want people to know that they don’t get it or that they don’t understand.”

Messages

The category of *messages* as described by OPAL considers general comments made by the teacher regarding their beliefs about expectations, relationships with students, student behavior and the classroom goal structure. This category does not include teacher comments regarding specific academic tasks (Patrick et al., 1997).

Ms. Matthews. Around the elementary school where Ms. Matthews taught the following quotes were stenciled on the walls: “Whatever you are, be a good one” Abraham Lincoln, “Children are our most valuable resource” Herbert Hoover, and

“Intelligence plus character, that is the true goal of education.” When discussing summer school with a student, Ms. Matthews exclaimed, “Summer school means that you can have fun in the summer.”

When asked what motivates her students, Ms. Matthews stated, “It’s a variety of things. You know, some really need the praise and I think that honestly motivates a lot of them, most of them. Some of them really need some extrinsic type of thing and a lot of them really like to have something that parents will get to see because I know that we have several really involved parents that really praise their kids when they bring something home. Yeah, but for most of them it’s the praise, acknowledgement.”

Ms. Parker. When asked what motivates her students, Ms. Parker stated,

I think that when we make learning fun it motivates them. They like knowing, they like the technology, they like knowing different learning, like when (the special education teacher) shows them the way to do a problem, I’ll show them a different way, and I think that they like competition. Like with our teams. They really enjoy trying to get their team to win and it’s so silly because on Monday the team that wins gets to eat lunch with me and it’s a huge deal for them. They really try hard for that and it’s funny that something that doesn’t cost money and is as little as eating lunch with their teacher can mean that much to them.

After attending a school-wide assembly during which students received awards for grades and good behavior, Ms. Parker told the students, “What should be your goal? To earn an award. That is a good goal.” Ms. Parker then directed the students, “Raise your hand if you can tell me something good that happened.” When one student responded, “A lot of people getting an award,” Ms. Parker affirmed, “That is good because that means that a lot of people were doing their job.”

Several times, teachers made comments to the students in Ms. Parker's classroom regarding appearance. For instance, as the students were walking towards the gymnasium for an assembly, Ms. Parker told the students that she was proud of them because they looked great since their feet were quiet and their uniforms looked good. When attending a theater production in the community, another teacher from the school told several of the students in Ms. Parker's class who were misbehaving during the play, "I just want you to know that people are judging you right now. They're judging what you look like because you are wearing uniforms."

When providing directions to the class regarding a worksheet about cause and effect, Ms. Parker used the researcher observing the classroom as an example of a cause and effect. She asked, "There could be a negative or positive effect when (the researcher) goes back to her boss. What could be a negative effect if (the researcher) goes back and tells her boss that the kids are horrible?" The special education teacher then asked, "Could (the school) be closed?" After the students nodded affirming that the school could be closed, Ms. Parker continued, "What could happen if (the researcher) goes back to her boss and tells her that the students are wonderful? Could (the school) be on the news as the best school ever?"

Ms. Madison. A large sign is posted on the wall of Ms. Madison's classroom that reads, 'Skills for Life.' Another small poster is attached to a wall in the classroom that states, 'If it's not working, stop doing it.' When asked what motivates the students,

I think the challenge motivates them and then I guess I'm the other factor motivating them cause there are some students who don't want to do

something and I've got to motivate them. I've got to tell them, 'This is your grade and you don't have a choice. This is the curriculum.' It's a combination of things. Maybe sometimes parents get involved. They motivate them too.

Ms. Price. When asked what motivates students, Ms. Price stated,

Mega Money. The yellow dollars I give out occasionally. That's been really awesome motivation. You know most places don't want to do token economies where kids get paid for things that they should be doing anyway, but you know I think sixth graders are still babies. They're still elementary really even though we're in this middle school model. They need things to motivate them. They don't have the intrinsic things that you and I have.

When asked whether she believed that her student wanted to excel academically, Ms. Price responded, "No. I don't really. I have maybe handful of kids who really value their grades and look at their grades."

Messages summary. (See Table 10 for a listing of *messages* differences according to classroom.) The elementary and middle school teachers identified as mastery goal oriented made statements regarding students' motivation and the purpose of learning that are consistent with mastery goals. For instance, Ms. Matthews was overheard telling a student, "Summer school means that you can have fun in the summer." Likewise, Ms. Madison stated that she believed students were motivated by challenging learning tasks and that the purpose of learning was to building "skills for life."

Whereas, the elementary and middle school teachers identified as espousing performance goals made statements regarding students' motivation and the purpose of learning that are consistent with performance goals. Ms. Price stated that she believed students were motivated by Mega Money while Ms. Parker declared that students

were motivated by “trying to get their team to win.” Ms. Parker also asked students, “What should be your goal? To earn an award. That’s a good goal.”

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This study achieved multiple goals. First, this study provides support for the hypothesis that middle school teachers differ from elementary counterparts in the instructional strategies they utilize, goals espoused at the school-level, and beliefs regarding their students' achievement goals. This study also provides future researchers with a survey scale, titled 'beliefs about students' achievement goals,' to measure teachers' perceptions of their students' achievement goals. Additionally, this study contributes to research (Patrick et al., 1997) that considers the specific ways in which the instructional practices, behaviors, and beliefs of teachers who espouse performance goals differ from teachers who espouse mastery goals. Also, this study considers how mastery and performance-oriented classrooms differ at the elementary versus middle school level. Finally, this study considers the implications of recent educational reforms (i.e. NCLB, PBIS, RTI) on students' achievement goals.

Differences in Teachers' Beliefs

First and foremost, this study supports the hypothesis that middle school teachers differ, in comparison to elementary teachers, regarding the instructional strategies they implement in the classroom and their perceptions of achievement goals emphasized school-wide. Specifically, results indicate that middle school teachers perceive that middle schools place greater emphasis on performance goals in comparison to elementary teachers' perceptions of elementary schools; whereas, elementary teachers perceive that

elementary schools place greater emphasis on mastery goals in comparison to middle school teachers.

Also, middle school teachers indicated that they use strategies and espouse achievement goals that are consistent with performance goals more than elementary teachers; whereas, elementary teachers report greater usage of strategies and achievement goals consistent with a mastery orientation than middle school teachers. Finally, middle school teachers reported feeling less efficacious than elementary teachers. These findings support previous research (Midgley et al., 1995) which indicated that middle school teachers perceive school cultures as being less mastery-oriented, engage in fewer mastery-oriented instructional practices, and are more likely to believe in fixed ability than elementary teachers.

Such findings are of concern when considering that classrooms perceived by students as emphasizing performance goals have been shown to predict a decline in students' academic mathematics achievement, decreased student involvement during group work tasks, and a lack of persistence when completing tasks considered by students as boring or difficult. Furthermore, students in classrooms perceived as performance-oriented have reported a focus on ability, negative perceptions of their personal ability, and consider failure due to a lack of ability (Ames & Archer, 1988). Students in classrooms and schools that endorse competition among students, which is a characteristic of classrooms perceived as espousing performance goals, report experiencing increased anxiety levels, decreased perceptions of self-worth (Roeser et al., 1996), and feeling high levels of dissonance (Kumar, 2005).

Adapted Survey Scale

In addition, this study provides an additional survey scale to be utilized by future researchers in order to measure teachers' perceptions regarding their students' achievement goals. This survey scale, adapted from the student scale of the Patterns of Adaptive Learning Survey (PALS), was successfully modified to measure teachers' perceptions regarding their students' achievement goals. Reliability for the mastery-oriented items on this scale was .85. Reliability for the performance approach-oriented items on this scale was .83 while reliability for the performance avoidance-oriented items on this scale was .73.

The middle school teachers who participated in this study believed their students had greater performance-approach and performance-avoidance goals in comparison to elementary teachers' beliefs regarding their students' achievement goals. Elementary teachers instead believed their students espoused higher mastery goals in comparison to middle school teachers' perceptions of the goals espoused by their students.

These findings are troubling for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, teachers' perceptions of their students' achievement goals may impact the goals they themselves espouse at the classroom level with the instructional strategies they utilize and the reasons they provide to students as to the importance of learning. For instance, while individuals who are mastery-oriented believe high ability and the development of self-competence are achieved through increasing personal knowledge, understanding, and/or mastery of skill (Ames & Archer, 1988; Nicholls, 1984), individuals who are performance-oriented judge personal abilities in accordance to other individuals' ability

levels (Ames, 1990) and thus base success on the ability to successfully surpass normative standards (Ames, 1992). Thus, while mastery-oriented individuals realize the necessity of expending extra effort to successfully complete endeavors deemed as challenging, and believe that academic success is a culmination of interest, hard work, and collaborative effort (Nicholls et al., 1985), performance-oriented individuals often avoid tasks considered difficult in an effort to create an impression of competence (Dweck, 1986; Nicholls, 1984) in order to either demonstrate ability to others or avoid appearing to others as lacking ability (Kaplan et al., 2002).

Thus, while mastery goals have been found to predict positive student outcomes such as: independent learning, continuous academic involvement (Ames, 1990); persistent attempts to increase competence, positive emotions (Elliott & Dweck, 1988); employment of adaptive learning strategies (Kaplan & Midgley, 1997; Wolters et al., 1996); greater levels of active cognitive engagement (Meece et al., 1988); academic self-efficacy (Roeser, Midgley, & Urda, 1996; Wolters et al., 1996); elevated perceptions of competence (Elliot & Church, 1997); deep processing (Elliot, McGregor, & Gable, 1999); decreased instances of self-handicapping (Migley & Urda, 2001); increased utilization of problem-solving strategies such as coping skills (Brdar, Rijavec, & Loncaric, 2006); greater self-regulation, higher levels of academic performance, and adaptive levels of test anxiety (Wolters et al., 1996), individuals who espouse performance goals have been found to utilize strategies that produce only short-term effects (Ames, 1990) and place less importance on deeper learning of educational content (Ames, 1992).

Additionally, research (i.e., Kumar, 2005) has indicated that students' perceptions of classroom and school environments can impact their behaviors, affects, and cognitions and serve to influence the adaptive or maladaptive academic behaviors they demonstrate (Ames & Archer, 1988). For instance, while classrooms that are perceived by students as emphasizing mastery goals have predicted students' math achievement, increased student effort at difficult tasks, and less withdrawal of effort by students on tasks (Lau & Nie, 2008), classrooms that are perceived by students as emphasizing performance goals have predicted a decline in students' academic mathematics achievement, decreased student involvement during group work tasks, and a lack of persistence with completing tasks that are considered by students as boring or difficult. Students who report being performance-avoidance goal-oriented appear especially at risk for failure in classrooms that emphasize performance goals (Lau & Nie, 2008).

Differences in Classroom Practices

This study utilized the categories of TARGET (task, authority, recognition, grouping, evaluation, time) as outlined in OPAL to investigate the specific ways in which the instructional practices, behaviors, and beliefs of teachers who espouse performance goals differ from teachers who espouse mastery goals (Patrick et al., 1997). Additionally, an aim of this study was to consider how mastery and performance-oriented classrooms differed at the elementary versus middle school level. Such findings are important as research (Kumar, 2005) has indicated that the decline of students' academic motivation during the transitional period of elementary to middle school appears to be related to systematic changes in classroom environments that occur in middle schools.

Findings were generally consistent with previous research (Patrick et al., 2001) in that teachers who were identified on the basis of the PALS survey as mastery or performance-oriented most often adhered to the practices consistent with their apparent beliefs. For instance, the elementary teacher identified as espousing mastery goals was observed displaying the following practices in the classroom: providing a variety of performance-based tasks (i.e. creating dominos, designing flower gardens to represent a mathematic sentence), encouraging students to attempt challenging tasks, allowing students a bevy of choices (i.e. what topic to write about, which literacy center to complete), arranging guided reading groups flexibly according to students' needs, designing a report card based on a continuum of skills students' were learning, creating an environment in which students felt comfortable asking questions about a range of topics, and declaring, "Summer school means that you can have fun in the summer."

Interestingly, one behavior that the mastery-oriented elementary teacher was observed displaying that was consistent with performance goals related to a school-wide policy regarding PBIS. The teacher had posted positive behavior cards that the students were suppose to earn each month. Of more concern, the teacher had decided to post students' behavior cards who had not yet earned their card on a bulletin board near the classroom door as a reminder to the students.

Likewise, the elementary teacher identified as espousing performance goals was observed displaying the following practices in the classroom: placing a strong emphasis on test scores, dividing students into teams to compete for points, pointing out instances when students who did not typically misbehave behaved inappropriately, providing

tangible rewards for completing assignments and tests, listing students' names on the chalkboard who failed to complete assignments on time, dividing students in line according to who had earned an academic award, grouping students in reading groups according to gender and ability, discouraging grouping as it required students to 'rely on' one another, ignoring students who had raised their hands to ask questions, and believing that students were motivated by "trying to get their team to win."

Comparing the practices of elementary and middle school teachers led to an interesting finding. While the elementary teachers who were identified by the results of the PALS survey as being mastery or performance oriented, generally adhered to the practices associated with each goal orientation, the middle school teachers' practices generally seemed less consistent with a single goal orientation. For instance, while the middle school teacher who was identified as espousing mastery goals displayed some behaviors consistent with a mastery goal orientation, she also displayed more performance-oriented behaviors than were observed in the elementary teacher's classroom who had been identified as espousing mastery goals. Likewise, while the middle school teacher who was identified as espousing performance goals displayed some behaviors consistent with a performance goal orientation, she too displayed more mastery-oriented behaviors than were observed in the elementary teacher's classroom who had been identified as espousing performance goals.

For instance, while the middle school teacher who was identified as espousing mastery goals displayed the following classroom practices: providing performance-based learning tasks (i.e. sewing puppets), emphasizing student responsibility as it related to the

class rules, selecting not to utilize the school-wide token economy system, emphasizing student effort, allowing students to redo assignments, and believing that the purpose of learning was to build “skills for life,” the mastery middle school teacher also displayed a variety of behaviors consistent with performance goals. Such behaviors that espoused performance goals included: emphasizing grades, discouraging students from collaborating or assisting one another, threatening to lower students’ grades if they asked for assistance, and creating an environment in which students seemed especially hesitant to ask questions.

Likewise, while the middle school teacher who was identified as espousing performance goals displaying the following behaviors that are consistent with a performance orientation: placing a strong emphasis on test scores and grades, utilizing the school-wide token economy system to reward students, and referencing grades as being a reason students should engage in learning, the performance middle school teacher also displayed numerous practices consistent with mastery goals. For instance, included in the classroom rules was the caveat ‘I will always do my best,’ the teacher also: allowed students many choices (i.e. what product they created, materials utilized, order of tasks completed), created an environment in which students were unafraid to ask questions, and encouraged students to share personal stories.

Implications of Current Educational Reform

Finally, quantitative and qualitative research exploring achievement goal theory is currently of particular importance given recent educational reform measures.

Motivational theorists have expressed concern regarding the impact of certain reform

practices, namely No Child Left Behind (NCLB), on students' motivation. While few studies to date have been conducted that consider the impact of contemporary reform measures such as NCLB on students' motivation, an even greater paucity of research exists that considers the impact of such reforms on school and classroom environments in which students learn (Meece et al., 2006).

A major concern of motivational theorists regarding NCLB legislation has been whether the reform measure will serve to further negatively impact students' motivation (Meece et al., 2006). Although public scrutiny of assessment scores may encourage students to work harder, a greater focus on testing may modify achievement goals, serving to decrease motivation of both students and teachers (Roderick & Engel, 2001).

One of the most concerning aspects of observing classroom practices as they related to achievement goal theory was viewing the way in which students were prepared to complete the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (the measure that is used in Iowa to show progress in accordance to NCLB mandates). One of the elementary teachers who participated in this study most aptly described the school atmosphere the week before ITBS was to be administered by saying, "You don't want the kids to think it's all or nothing on these tests but, as you can see, when the (guidance counselor) came in for guidance, it really is all or nothing for the test! We rely on these test scores for our funding and for our sanity. So we know how important they are as teachers but we have students who try so hard but they just, they self-destruct mentally because it's so difficult for them."

Many of the behaviors displayed by teachers the week prior to ITBS testing could be only described as espousing performance goals. An example includes the guidance counselor indicating to students that breaking the test rules was alright when she asked the teacher in front of the students, “Have you told them that they can mark lightly on the test?” After the teacher shook her head, the guidance counselor loudly whispered to the class with a smile, “You can mark lightly on the test, but I didn’t tell you that.” Even grouping practices were altered the week prior to ITBS testing to espouse performance goals with school administrators identifying ‘bubble kids.’ Bubble kids included students who did not score proficient on ITBS when it was previously administered “but who could be proficient,” according to school administration, if provided additional instruction and test-taking practice prior to the most recent ITBS testing.

The principal of the school also espoused performance goals during a grade-level assembly to prepare students for ITBS testing when she asked students, “It is a very important week with the test coming up. Somebody share with me why this test is important.” When a student responded, “So you can get an education,” the principal asked, “But why is this particular test so important?” When the next student the principal called on to respond declared, “So we can keep our teachers and principals!” the principal laughed and said, “I like that answer! But why else?” Even a middle school teacher who had been identified as espousing performance goals expressed concern regarding the way in which high-stakes testing practices were impacting students. She declared, “We put a whole bunch of stress on one test that it’s like the Olympics. These athletes, they compete

all year round but nobody cares unless it's an Olympic gold medal. You know, nobody cares unless it's ITBS 99th percentile."

It also seems likely that NCLB will not be alone in transforming students' motivation. Other educational initiatives, such as Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Instructional Decision Making (IDM) (which is a form of Response to Intervention (RTI)) also are impacting students' motivation in ways never considered. Specifically, if not thoughtfully implemented, award ceremonies that are intended as part of PBIS to provide students with recognition for excelling academically and behaviorally may instead provide a platform by which social comparisons become rampant. For instance, one school's PBIS assembly included calling students to a stage individually to accept an academic award for either having 85% of their grades at an 'A' level or improving their grades. In such an atmosphere, social comparisons occur without consideration to consequences. For instance, when lining students up in order to walk to the school's PBIS assembly, the teacher identified as espousing performance goals individually called students' names. After approximately half of the students in the class were lined up and the other half of the class remained seated at their desks, the teacher stated, "There are some of you in line who got a certificate on your desk. This means that your grades did improve. They didn't improve enough for the Star Bug Award."

Another recent educational reform, IDM or RTI could have far-reaching implications on students' achievement goals if not thoughtfully implemented. For instance, in a reform model that often includes some type of pre and post-testing, teachers and students are at risk of losing sight of the actual purpose of assessment. In the course

of this study, several teachers were observed implementing IDM in ways consistent with espousing performance goals. For instance, one middle school teacher resorted to providing tangible rewards to students each time they worked towards successfully passing a post-test. For example, when a student asked the teacher how many questions he needed to get correct to pass the test, the teacher responded, “Try to redo all of them that way at least you’ll get a passing grade on the test...Okay, I want you to redo the last page. You’ve got twelve (questions) right. That’s passing but you still want to get a few more to get your grade up.”

Study Limitations

One limitation of this study is the fact that a single researcher was primarily responsible for observing each classroom selected for the qualitative portion of this study, interviewing the teachers who allowed the researcher to observe their classrooms, and coding the qualitative data from interview transcripts and field notes. While this allowed for a certain consistency among the practices utilized for interviewing teachers, observing classrooms, and coding qualitative data, this may have caused some inadvertent errors in the data coding process (such as excluding information that may have been relevant to the categories of OPAL).

Conclusion

More so than ever before, the importance of understanding the implications of *achievement goals in students’ pursuits of educational excellence cannot be* underemphasized. While middle school and elementary teachers’ beliefs and practices relating to achievement goal theory differ, it is important that future research consider:

why middle school teachers: perceive that middle schools place greater emphasis on performance goals in comparison to elementary schools, utilize strategies and espouse achievement goals that are consistent with performance goals more than elementary teachers, and believe their students espouse greater performance approach and performance avoidance goals in comparison to elementary teachers' beliefs regarding their students' achievement goals. Additionally, future research may be conducted to consider why middle school teachers' practices seem to less consistently adhere to the achievement goals they espouse in comparison to the practices of elementary teachers. Finally, future research must consider the implications of current educational reform on students' and teachers' achievement goals. For while student achievement has always been the primary goal of education, student achievement must not come at the expense of students' motivation to learn.

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TABLE 1
Differences in Responses between Elementary and Middle School Teachers

Scale	<u>Elementary</u>		<u>Middle School</u>		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>
School goal structure					
Mastery	28.57	3.39	26.80	3.03	2.713**
Performance	14.91	3.78	17.94	2.54	-4.373***
Approaches to instruction					
Mastery	12.17	1.90	11.00	1.93	3.094**
Performance	11.60	3.41	14.38	3.12	-4.168***
Beliefs about students' achievement goals					
Mastery	18.98	3.54	16.38	4.24	3.49***
Performance approach	11.91	4.22	13.68	3.36	-2.209*
Performance avoidance	8.58	3.35	12.14	2.93	-5.544***
Efficacy	28.32	3.17	24.72	3.99	4.634***

Note: For elementary teachers, n=98; for middle school teachers, n=35; *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001.

<p style="text-align: center;">TARGET Classroom Practices-TASK <i>(Italics used to denote practices not consistent with the teacher's goal orientation)</i> <i>(e.g., a mastery-oriented teacher utilizing performance practices or a performance-oriented teacher utilizing mastery practices)</i></p>		
	Mastery-Oriented Classroom	Performance-Oriented Classroom
Elementary Level	<p>TASK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided variety of performance-based tasks (i.e. creating dominos, designing flower garden) • Allowed students to select materials • Allowed students to collaborate • Modeled tasks • Challenging tasks encouraged • Emphasized effort • Introduced lessons with enthusiasm 	<p>TASK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong emphasis on assessment • Utilized considerable amount of instructional time to prepare for state test
Middle School Level	<p>TASK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasized effort • Allowed students to select materials • Provided performance-based tasks (i.e. sewing puppets, sewing bags) • <i>Emphasized grades</i> 	<p>TASK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilized 'teacher-proof materials' (i.e. basal readers, Promethean Board activities) • Strong emphasis on assessment scores and grades

Observed Practices According to TARGET: TASK

TABLE 2

<p style="text-align: center;">TARGET Classroom Practices-AUTHORITY <i>(Italics used to denote practices not consistent with the teacher's goal orientation)</i> <i>(e.g., a mastery-oriented teacher utilizing performance practices or a performance-oriented teacher utilizing mastery practices)</i></p>		
	Mastery-Oriented Classroom	Performance-Oriented Classroom
Elementary Level	<p>AUTHORITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasized student responsibility • Rules clearly displayed • Encouraged students to select materials • Bevy of choices (topic to write about, literacy center to complete, self-select peer partners) • Behavior system included nonverbal & verbal reminders 	<p>AUTHORITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pointed out instances when students who did not typically misbehave behaved inappropriately • Verbally threatened students to 'pull (behavior card) in front of class • Divided students into teams to compete for points • Directed students order in which to complete tasks • Did not allow students to self-select groups
Middle School Level	<p>AUTHORITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasized student responsibility • Rules clearly displayed • Encouraged students to select materials • <i>Required students to write essays as consequence for inappropriate behavior</i> 	<p>AUTHORITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Rules posted in classroom included caveat 'I will always do my best.'</i> • <i>Rather than sanctioning students for misbehaving, talked one-on-one with students to discuss behavior</i> • <i>Allowed many choices (product created, self-select peer partners, materials utilized, order of task completed)</i> • Utilized token economy system with 'Mega Money' for appropriate behavior

Observed Practices According to TARGET: AUTHORITY

TABLE 3

<p style="text-align: center;">TARGET Classroom Practices-RECOGNITION <i>(Italics used to denote practices not consistent with the teacher's goal orientation)</i> <i>(e.g., a mastery-oriented teacher utilizing performance practices or a performance-oriented teacher utilizing mastery practices)</i></p>		
	Mastery-Oriented Classroom	Performance-Oriented Classroom
Elementary Level	<p>RECOGNITION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Posted behavior cards of students who had not displayed positive behavior necessary</i> 	<p>RECOGNITION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided tangible rewards (i.e. animal crackers, skittles) • Listed students' names on chalkboard who failed to complete assignments on time • Divided students in line according to who had earned a 'Star Award' • Recognized students based on amount of 'A's earned at school assembly
Middle School Level	<p>RECOGNITION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not utilize school-wide token economy system for good behavior 	<p>RECOGNITION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awarded students 'Mega Money' as part of school-wide token economy system for good behavior

Observed Practices According to TARGET: RECOGNITION

TABLE 4

Observed Practices According to TARGET: GROUPING

TABLE 5

<p>TARGET Classroom Practices-GROUPING <i>(Italics used to denote practices not consistent with the teacher's goal orientation)</i> <i>(e.g., a mastery-oriented teacher utilizing performance practices or a performance-oriented teacher utilizing mastery practices)</i></p>		
	Mastery-Oriented Classroom	Performance-Oriented Classroom
Elementary Level	<p>GROUPING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students seated at tables • Allowed students to self-select groups for literacy and math centers daily • Arranged guided reading groups according to students' needs and adjusted often • <i>Seated students identified eligible for special education at one table</i> 	<p>GROUPING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students seated at desks • Grouped guided reading groups according to gender and ability • Did not allow students to self-select groups Discouraged grouping as it required students to 'rely on' one another
Middle School Level	<p>GROUPING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students seated at tables • <i>Only allowed students to collaborate together for one task</i> 	<p>GROUPING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students seated at desks • <i>Allowed students to self-select groups</i> • School plans to implement grade-level ability grouping for classes next year

<p style="text-align: center;">TARGET Classroom Practices-EVALUATION <i>(Italics used to denote practices not consistent with the teacher's goal orientation)</i> <i>(e.g., a mastery-oriented teacher utilizing performance practices or a performance-oriented teacher utilizing mastery practices)</i></p>		
	Mastery-Oriented Classroom	Performance-Oriented Classroom
Elementary Level	<p>EVALUATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report cards designed based on continuum of skills achieved and learning • Allowed students to reconsider incorrect responses 	<p>EVALUATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compared student test scores to class, school, and district scores during student assembly • Encouraged notion that students would lose teachers based on test scores • Emphasized test scores during all-school assembly, class assembly, and guidance counselor presentation
Middle School Level	<p>EVALUATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasized student effort • Allowed students to redo assignments • <i>Threatened to lower students' grades if they asked for assistance</i> • <i>Created environment in which students were nervous to ask questions</i> • <i>Emphasized tasks as 'easy'</i> 	<p>EVALUATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referenced test scores and grades as reasons students should engage in learning

Observed Practices According to TARGET: EVALUATION

TABLE 6

<p style="text-align: center;">TARGET Classroom Practices-TIME <i>(Italics used to denote practices not consistent with the teacher's goal orientation)</i> <i>(e.g., a mastery-oriented teacher utilizing performance practices or a performance-oriented teacher utilizing mastery practices)</i></p>		
	Mastery-Oriented Classroom	Performance-Oriented Classroom
Elementary Level	<p>TIME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Encouraged students to transition more quickly</i> • Told student, "You can't be in a hurry." • Classroom schedule posted • Classroom schedule considered flexible in order to "teach to the moment" 	<p>TIME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraged students to transition more quickly • Placed restrictions on tasks (silent reading, restroom breaks) • Classroom schedule posted • Struggled to be flexible with schedule • Placed countdown on Promethean Board to indicate amount of time for tasks (tests, restroom breaks)
Middle School Level	<p>TIME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Encouraged students to transition more quickly</i> • Classroom schedule posted 	<p>TIME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraged students to transition more quickly • Placed time restrictions on tasks (writing) • Classroom schedule posted

Observed Practices According to TARGET: TIME

TABLE 7

<p style="text-align: center;">TARGET Classroom Practices-SOCIAL <i>(Italics used to denote practices not consistent with the teacher's goal orientation)</i> <i>(e.g., a mastery-oriented teacher utilizing performance practices or a performance-oriented teacher utilizing mastery practices)</i></p>		
	Mastery-Oriented Classroom	Performance-Oriented Classroom
Elementary Level	<p>SOCIAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraged students to share personal stories ('Pass the Puppy' time) • Allowed students to assist one another • Shared personal stories 	<p>SOCIAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminded students they were not to speak to one another • Warned students to be aware that other students may cheat • <i>Shared personal stories</i>
Middle School Level	<p>SOCIAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Discouraged students from conversing, "When you talk you aren't really working."</i> • <i>Discouraged students from collaborating</i> • <i>Discouraged students from assisting one another</i> • Shared personal stories 	<p>SOCIAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Encouraged students to share personal stories</i> • <i>Shared personal stories related to her family, pets, and previous work experience</i> • <i>Used a kind and reassuring voice even when reprimanding students</i>

Observed Practices According to TARGET: SOCIAL

TABLE 8

<p style="text-align: center;">TARGET Classroom Practices-HELP-SEEKING <i>(Italics used to denote practices not consistent with the teacher's goal orientation)</i> <i>(e.g., a mastery-oriented teacher utilizing performance practices or a performance-oriented teacher utilizing mastery practices)</i></p>		
	Mastery-Oriented Classroom	Performance-Oriented Classroom
Elementary Level	<p>HELP-SEEKING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created environment in which students felt comfortable asking questions about a range of topics • Responded to nearly every student question either verbally or nonverbally 	<p>HELP-SEEKING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ignored students' who had raised their hands to indicate they had questions • Directed students to 'put their hands down' when they had questions • Believed that students "Give up. Have behavior problems. Cry, yell. A lot of times they seek attention but in a negative way because they don't want people to know they don't get it or that they don't understand."
Middle School Level	<p>HELP-SEEKING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Created an environment in which students seemed hesitant to seek assistance</i> • <i>Responded to students' questions with sarcasm</i> 	<p>HELP-SEEKING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Students seemed unafraid to ask questions</i>

Observed Practices According to TARGET: HELP-SEEKING

TABLE 9

<p style="text-align: center;">TARGET Classroom Practices-MESSAGES <i>(Italics used to denote practices not consistent with the teacher's goal orientation)</i> <i>(e.g., a mastery-oriented teacher utilizing performance practices or a performance-oriented teacher utilizing mastery practices)</i></p>		
	Mastery-Oriented Classroom	Performance-Oriented Classroom
Elementary Level	<p>MESSAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stated, "Summer school means that you can have fun in the summer." 	<p>MESSAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Told students, "What should be your goal? To earn a reward. That's a good goal." • Believed students motivated by "trying to get their team to win."
Middle School Level	<p>MESSAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believed the purpose of learning to build "skills for life" 	<p>MESSAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awarded 'Mega Bucks' as part of token system for completing tests

Observed Practices According to TARGET: MESSAGES

TABLE 10

APPENDIX A
INVITATION LETTER TO TEACHERS

Dear Respondent:

Michelle Hinzman, a candidate for an Education Specialist Degree in School Psychology at the University of Northern Iowa, would appreciate your participation in a research study designed to study educators' motivational beliefs and practices. You are being asked to complete a questionnaire. This questionnaire should not take more than 10-15 minutes and is confidential. Your responses are important in helping to develop new training programs, school improvement plans, and in-services.

The purpose of this study is to promote increased understanding and application of research-based motivational strategies in schools and classrooms by determining educators' motivational beliefs and practices. Districts will receive district-level data based on your responses. No identifying information will be included in this data. The summarized findings, with no identifying information, may be published in an academic journal or presented at a scholarly conference.

To ensure confidentiality, participants are not required to provide personal information on the survey. An additional card has been placed in the envelope with the survey to allow participants who return their survey the opportunity to win a prize in a sweepstakes drawing. In order to include your name in the sweepstakes drawing, participants only need to include their contact information on the sweepstakes card and return the card in the prepaid postage envelope included with either their completed or uncompleted survey **no later than March 1, 2010**. Sweepstakes cards will be separated from surveys as soon as they are received at the University of Northern Iowa. Participants who would like to further participate in this study by allowing the researcher to observe their classroom at a later date in the year can include contact information on the survey in the area provided. Participation is completely voluntary.

Participants are free to withdraw from participation at anytime or choose not to participate at all and by doing so, will not be penalized or lose benefits to which they are otherwise entitled. Individuals who choose not to participate will not be penalized in any way. We do not anticipate that participation in this study will cause any foreseeable risks.

If you have questions about the study regarding your participation or the study generally, you can contact Michelle Hinzman at 319-277-8878 (or by email at hinzmanm@uni.edu) or the project investigator's committee chairperson Dr. Charlotte Haselhuhn, Department of Educational Psychology, University of Northern Iowa, at 319-273-3834 (or by email at charlotte.haselhuhn@uni.edu), you can also contact the office of the IRB Administrator, University of Northern Iowa, at 319-273-6148, for answers to questions about rights of research participants and the participant review process.

Sincerely,

Michelle Hinzman

APPENDIX B
TEACHER CONSENT LETTER

**UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA
HUMAN PARTICIPANTS REVIEW
INFORMED CONSENT**

Project Title: Educational Applications of Achievement Goal Theory

Name of Investigator(s): Michelle Hinzman

Invitation to Participate: You are invited to participate in a research project conducted through the University of Northern Iowa. The University requires that you give your signed agreement to participate in this project. The following information is provided to help you make an informed decision about whether or not to participate.

Nature and Purpose: Michelle Hinzman, a candidate for an Educational Specialist Degree in School Psychology at the University of Northern Iowa, would appreciate your participation in a research study designed to study educators' motivational beliefs and practices. The purpose of this study is to promote increased understanding and application of research-based motivational strategies in schools and classrooms by determining educators' motivational beliefs and practices.

Explanation of Procedures: You are being asked to complete an anonymous questionnaire. This questionnaire should not take more than 10-15 minutes and is confidential. Your responses are important in helping to develop new training programs, school improvement plans, and in-services. Districts will receive district level data based on your responses. No identifying information will be included in this data. Participants who would like to further participate in this study by allowing the researcher to observe their classroom at a later date in the year can include contact information on the survey in the area provided.

Discomfort and Risks: There are no foreseeable risks to participants.

Benefits and Compensation: An additional card has been placed in the envelope with the survey to allow participants who return their survey the opportunity to a prize in a sweepstakes drawing. In order to include your name in the sweepstakes drawing, participants only need to include their contact information on the card and return the card in the prepaid postage envelope included with either their completed or uncompleted survey. Sweepstakes cards will be separated from surveys as soon as they are received at the University of Northern Iowa.

Confidentiality: Information obtained during this study which could identify you will be kept confidential. The summarized findings with no identifying information may be published in an academic journal or presented at a scholarly conference.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw: Your participation is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw from participation at any time or to choose not to participate at all, and by doing so, you will not be penalized or lose benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Individuals who choose not to participate will not be penalized in any way.

Questions: If you have questions about the study you may contact or design information in the future regarding your participation or the study generally, you can contact Michelle Hinzman at 319-277-8878 (or by email at hinzmanm@uni.edu) or the project investigator's committee chairperson Dr. Charlotte Haselhuhn at the Department of Educational Psychology, University of Northern Iowa 319-273-3834 (or by email at charlotte.haselhuhn@uni.edu), you can also contact the office of the IRB Administrator, University of Northern Iowa, at 319-273-6148, for answers to questions about rights of research participants and the participant review process.

Agreement:

I am fully aware of the nature and extent of my participation in this project as stated above and the possible risks arising from it. I hereby agree to participate in this project. I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this consent statement. I am 18 years of age or older.

(Signature of participant)

(Date)

(Printed name of participant)

(Signature of investigator)

(Date)

(Signature of instructor/advisor)

(Date)

APPENDIX C
EDUCATORS' MOTIVATIONAL BELIEFS
AND PRACTICES (PALS SURVEY)

Educators' Motivational Beliefs & Practices

Demographic Information – Please provide the following information in the space provided.

Gender:

What is your **primary** role within your school:

What grade level do you teach:

How long have you been working in the field of education:

Please list all of your degrees and areas of expertise (e.g., K-8 Reading Endorsement, K-8 Special Education):

Survey Directions – For each question please circle the number that *best indicates* your response.

	Not at all true		Sometimes true		Very true
I give special privileges to students who do the best work.	1	2	3	4	5
If I try really hard, I can get through to even the most difficult student.	1	2	3	4	5
In this school: The importance of trying hard is really stressed to students.	1	2	3	4	5
I make a special effort to recognize students' individual progress, even if they are below grade level.	1	2	3	4	5
In this school: Students are told that making mistakes is OK as long as they are learning and improving.	1	2	3	4	5
Factors beyond my control have a greater influence on my students' achievement than I do.	1	2	3	4	5
I am good at helping all the students in my classes make significant improvement.	1	2	3	4	5
I display the work of the highest achieving students as an example.	1	2	3	4	5

	Not at all true		Sometimes true		Very true
	1	2	3	4	5
In this school: Students who get good grades are pointed out as an example to others.	1	2	3	4	5
During class, I often provide several different activities so that students can choose among them.	1	2	3	4	5
In this school: Students hear a lot about the importance of getting high test scores.	1	2	3	4	5
I consider how much students have improved when I give them report card grades.	1	2	3	4	5
In this school: A lot of the work students do is boring and repetitious.	1	2	3	4	5
In this school: Grades and test scores are not talked about a lot.	1	2	3	4	5
In this school: Students are frequently told that learning should be fun.	1	2	3	4	5
I help students understand how their performance compares to others.	1	2	3	4	5
Some students are not going to make a lot of progress this year, no matter what I do.	1	2	3	4	5
I encourage students to compete with each other.	1	2	3	4	5
In this school: The emphasis is on really understanding schoolwork, not just memorizing it.	1	2	3	4	5
I point out those students who do well as a model for the other students.	1	2	3	4	5
In this school: A real effort is made to recognize students for effort and improvement.	1	2	3	4	5
I am certain that I am making a difference in the lives of my students.	1	2	3	4	5
There is little I can do to ensure that all my students make significant progress this year.	1	2	3	4	5
In this school: Students hear a lot about the importance of making the honor roll or being recognized at honor assemblies.	1	2	3	4	5

	Not at all true	Sometimes true			Very true	
		1	2	3	4	5
I give a wide range of assignments, matched to students' needs and skill level.	1	2	3	4	5	
In this school: A real effort is made to show students how the work they do in school is related to their lives outside of school.	1	2	3	4	5	
I can deal with almost any learning problem.	1	2	3	4	5	
In this school: Students are encouraged to compete with each other academically.	1	2	3	4	5	
My students think it is important that they don't look stupid in class.	1	2	3	4	5	
My students think it is important that other students in their class think that they are good at class work.	1	2	3	4	5	
The reason my students do their class work is so that their teachers don't think they know less than others.	1	2	3	4	5	
One of the goals of my students in class is to learn as much as they can.	1	2	3	4	5	
One of the goals of my students is to show others that they're good at their class work.	1	2	3	4	5	
One of the goals of my students is to master a lot of new skills this year.	1	2	3	4	5	
One of the goals of my students is to keep others from thinking that they're not smart in class.	1	2	3	4	5	
My students believe that it is important that they thoroughly understand their class work.	1	2	3	4	5	
It's easy to tell which students get the highest grades and which students get the lowest grades.	1	2	3	4	5	
One the goals of my students is to look smart in comparison to the other students in class.	1	2	3	4	5	
One the goals of my students in class is to avoid looking like they have trouble doing the work.	1	2	3	4	5	
It's important to my students that they learn a lot of new concepts this year.	1	2	3	4	5	

	Not at all true		Sometimes true		Very true
It's important to my students that they look smart compared to others in the class.	1	2	3	4	5
It's important to my students that they improve their skills this year.	1	2	3	4	5
One of the goals of my students is to show others that class work is easy for them.	1	2	3	4	5

Please *only* provide the following contact information if you are interested in having the research observe your classroom in the future. (Contact information is not required of those who do not wish to allow the research to observe their classrooms.)

Name:

School where you teach:

Telephone number:

Email address:

Thank you for participating in this research project!

APPENDIX D
SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Task

- How would you describe your teaching?
- Could you describe some of your lessons or units that you think are the most effective for teaching concepts to students?
- What can you tell me about your expectations for your students?
- How would you describe teaching to someone who was interested in the field?

Authority

- Tell me about your classroom rules.
- How are the rules created?
- What happens when students don't follow the rules?
- Do you have a classroom management system? If so, can you tell me about it?
- How much choice would you say students have in your classroom (e.g. order of completing tasks, form of the product, or who they work with)?

Recognition

- How do you recognize students who have excelled at a task?
- What are your thoughts about using rewards in your classroom?

Evaluation

- What are your thoughts about test scores and grades?
- What are the primary ways that students in your class are evaluated (e.g. tests, portfolios)?
- Do students in your class evaluate their own work or the work of their peers?

Time

- Is there a set time schedule in your class?
- How often is the class schedule adhered to?
- How aware of students of the time schedule?

Social

- How often and in what situations do students interact with one another during lessons, activities, or assignments in the classroom?
- How would you describe your relationship with your students?

Help-seeking

- What do students typically do when they are unsure of what is required of them for a particular assignment?
- What do you typically tell your students about getting help on assignments?

Self Efficacy

- Do you think that there are children who aren't going to be able to make progress in spite of your efforts?

Motivation

- Do you think your students want to excel academically? Why or why not?
- What motivates your students?