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THE EFFECTS OF INDIVIDUALIZED TEACHER MEETINGS ON STRUGGLING HIGH
SCHOOL STUDENTS

by

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A capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Education

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

My research question is as follows: how will regularly scheduled teacher meetings affect academically struggling high school students? My question is geared to inform my actions in understanding how I can better help students who are struggling with school academically. The goal is to find effective strategies in working with these students, so I, as one of their teachers, can have a set plan in helping to improve the academics for this student group.

The following chapter is organized first by describing the personal motives for this research project. The personal motives section is then followed by a description of the school the research will take place at, the plan for intervention, goals of the research, how the data will be collected, personal past experiences, and the importance of the research. The chapter will end with a summary of its components and a preview of Chapter two.

Variables that will impact this research question include the numerous motivational factors that students deal with, the various constraints of teachers, and the student's family involvement. It is hard to know or understand where a student is coming from or what is going on in their lives that impact their learning. Many students who are struggling academically have situations that negatively affect their ability to learn in school.

A subgoal is to elicit more family involvement from those parents or guardians not taking an active role in their student's education. With an organized plan for meeting

with and helping these students, I can help them feel more connected to the school, or at the very least, know that we are willing to help them in many ways. I will work to foster parents' involvement and understanding of knowing what and who their resources are as they, in turn, seek to help their children achieve success in the classroom.

Personal Motives

At my present high school, plenty of struggling students and their parents feel disconnected. As a staff we have been devising ways to accommodate these students. However, nothing concrete has been implemented. I would limit my focus to students who are earning two or more F's one month into the semester or to students who have earned two or more F's the previous semester. Teachers and administrators have voiced support for any actions that we believe can help students who are in this situation. It would be important for me and our school to see if this is an effective strategy since the school I work at lacks intervention strategies for struggling students, beyond peer tutors and help from a teacher. Students who are not on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or a Section 504 Plan have limited options for help, as a school we need to develop options for these students.

School Description

My school is an inner-ring suburb of a large metro area and is a public school that serves under 700 students, grades 9-12. Because of our school's size, I believe I can manage doing individual meetings, in an advisory role, for all students in this category that are in my classroom. The school's graduation rate is typically in the 90% range, which is impressive. However, due to open enrollment the overall population of the

school has increased in the past ten years roughly 10%, and because of that we have a growing number of students not meeting academic requirements for graduation. The theory behind the larger number of students not meeting the requirements is that a number of the open enrollment students have not had the consistency of our school district for very long and need to catch up academically. Having worked with many of these students, I have felt as though there were many intelligent and personable students who needed just a little something more to help them earn their diploma. I would like to find an appropriate intervention plan to help these students.

Intervention Plan

The intervention I am proposing is to have regular, at least weekly, meetings with students who meet the criteria set by me to be considered a struggling student. I would hold these meetings with students in class work time, before school, after school, or call them in during my prep hour if their schedule allows. These meetings will serve in any capacity as the student needs; they could be social, academic, or organizational. In these meetings I will review the student's current grades, where they are at in terms of graduation, and any current or missed assignments. We will discuss the student's opinions of why they are struggling, checking to see if it is content related, social issues, or a combination of the two. We will review ideas that could help the student, such as tutors, organizational meetings, or meetings with the school psychologist or school based therapist.

These meetings can also be a time to connect with the student on issues not necessarily related to school: their interests, their family, their favorite music, etc. These

connections will serve a valuable purpose in making the meetings a positive experience for the student. The meeting's information will then be recorded on a 'graduation planning sheet, and also on an excel spreadsheet, the graduation planning sheet will be kept in the student's cumulative folder with a copy going to the student and their family. The spreadsheet will be used for easy access to information.

Research Goals

The goal of my research is to have a plan, proven through research, to guide myself and my school in helping struggling students. I would also hope that these results help guide the guidance team (school psychologist, school counselor, deans) and our school staff (teachers, attendance officer) be included in these plans so this can be a school wide effort when necessary. Efforts necessary to secure the proper permission would be through the school principal, the superintendent, the selected students, and their families. This will be done through informed consent and parental consent forms.

Data Collection

I will need access to student records, both past and current, to determine if they meet the criteria of being a struggling student; two or more Fs from the previous or current semester. Access is granted to a teacher for students currently enrolled in each teacher's class, access is not available if a student is not enrolled in said teacher's course. In addition, academic records will be reviewed to help me see if students are improving as the research goes on. I will collect data on the following: past and current student grades, student and family opinions on our school policies, student and family opinions on why students are struggling academically, and what are students and family opinions

on what strategies could help? I will collect data through interviews, surveys, and data collection of grades from the student records.

I will be starting in the fall of 2015, at the beginning of the school year. I will use the first month of the school year to research which students meet the criteria to be considered 'struggling.' I am looking to start the permission stage of my research in the spring or summer of 2015 with school administrators, and to start my permissions with students and families in fall of 2015. In October, I will to start the meetings with students, and start to meet with all students on the initial list on a weekly basis by the end of the first semester in January. The final goal will be to collect data on whether or not this is helping based on first semester grades and qualitative data, including surveys and interviews, gathered.

Past Experiences

My journey to my research question stems from my time at the high school I currently work at. The 2015-16 school year will mark my tenth year at this school where I have held two different positions: social studies teacher and academic dean. Holding these two positions has helped me see the larger picture of how our school operates, including the school's strengths and weaknesses. One of the weaknesses I have seen has been the resources available for those students who are not having much, if any, success in school and do not qualify for academic plans that give legal rights for additional help and or academic modifications such as special education or a Section 504 plan. The limitations of resources for struggling students include lack of study halls or advisory hours, or lack of available peer tutors. Teachers regularly put in extra time to be able to

work with students before and after school, but a common assumption would be that extra work outside of school hours does not have an impact on students who lack motivation since it would take a great deal of motivation to put in that work on a regular basis.

Throughout my time as an academic dean, this has become a growing concern for me. I see and work with a number of these students every year, and some do figure out how to have academic success, while many others seemingly do not. Those who do not “figure it out” by not getting on graduation pace transfer schools or end up not graduating, some move on to an Alternative Learning Center (ALC) to finish their credits or to a General Educational Development (GED) center to study for the GED/High School Equivalency test. In my opinion, these students need more guidance and a teacher serving in an advisor role for them is something I think will benefit their education.

Research Importance

I hope the significance of my research question to stakeholders will be positive. My goal is for students to understand that staff members are looking out for their best interests, to help students know and understand available school resources, and to improve student’s organizational and academic skills. Student’s families are a huge stakeholder in this process as well, and I want this process to help include the family in the school’s work. This would include coming in for meetings with a staff member. They would make sure the family understands the school’s resources, such as online grades. Staff members at the school will be large stakeholders in this process, since they

will be included in a number of student's plans with interviews and surveys about the selected students in their classes.

Fellow teachers, deans, school counselors, and others will all be part of the process to help students. In many cases other staff members will need to connect with struggling students to make sure they are getting the correct information about classes, and that they are getting the necessary social help they need. The last major stakeholder in the process would be the administrators in our school, namely the deans, principal, superintendent, and the school board. These administrators are the policy makers in the high school, and if results from my action research are highly positive, it can certainly influence future policies for helping struggling students.

Summary

How will regularly scheduled teacher meetings affect academically struggling high school students? This question is geared towards helping those students who are not getting necessary help or attention currently in our school. My goal is to serve as a type of advisor for the students who meet the criteria of "struggling" and to help them with organization, connecting with other staff members as needed, get their families more involved in school happenings, and to have an overall positive effect on their academics.

Using information gathered through our Student Information System students will be chosen for this study if they have two or more Fs in either their previous semester or the current school semester. These students who meet the criteria of 'struggling' will have the option to have one on one meetings with a teacher in order to see the effects of a teacher taking on a more of an advisor role for selected students. The goal of the research

is to find a positive connection to help struggling with their academics.

Looking Forward

Chapter Two reviews the literature pertaining to the research question of how will regularly scheduled teacher meetings affect academically struggling high school students. There will be five main areas of research related to the topic area: 1) reasons for student struggle; 2) the role a positive connection in school can make; 3) the main topics my meetings will cover; 4) how teacher collaboration can impact student performance and, 5) how to deal with potential issues. Looking in depth at previous research will help guide the approaches to this research, as it will help with understanding what could work and what might not work.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter reviews literature pertaining to the research question: how will regularly scheduled teacher meetings affect academically struggling high school students? In reviewing this literature I will be focusing on five main areas based on research related to my topic area: 1) reasons for student struggle; 2) the role a positive connection in school can make; 3) the main topics my meetings will cover; 4) how teacher collaboration can impact student performance and, 5) how to deal with potential issues. Delving into specifics of completed research involving struggling students will allow me to understand the approaches that have worked and have not worked and apply that to my own action research.

Reasons For Struggling

There is a multitude of reasons why a student might be struggling academically with school. In this study the research will uncover major factors that influence student success. Specifically students' academic skills, confidence level, parental involvement, family income, and educational background have been identified as determining influences. Of course there can be many other reasons for academic issues, but I will focus mainly on the issues stated above.

Academic skills. In their study of different ways to support struggling students Robyn Jackson and Claire Lambert (2010) discuss the most common reason for student struggle – lack of skills. These skills can break down into two different areas: the

background knowledge needed to take in new information and the “soft skills” that assist learning, such as organizational and note taking skills (Lambert, 2010). Addressing these two issues can be huge factors in helping students who are not having success with their academics.

Students who lack prior knowledge cannot make the necessary associations needed to connect them to new material. If a student is missing key vocabulary terms or familiarity with a subject they have nothing to go on with their continuation of learning. Instead of taking the time to help the students adequately acquire the necessary background information, educators all too often work to just get the student through the present assignment or topic (Jackson & Lambert, 2010). This practice continually prevents these students from getting the necessary base of learning and only reinforces their struggles.

When “soft skills” of organization, note taking, and study skills are a student’s issue, the student can learn new material well, but their progress is slowed because of their inability to understand the process of learning. Not understanding how to take notes well, not understanding how to ask proper questions, or how to even organize their school folders are all issues that can impede students from reaching their academic potential, but are all also skills that can be easily taught.

Confidence level. Student’s level of confidence can be a direct reason for their issues with grades. Tamara Glupczynski Spencer’s (2009) study on what it actually means to struggle found that labels on students, like struggling reader, could be a social construct that could say less about the actual reader and more about our policies. This

type of label could directly lead to a student losing confidence in their ability, further contributing to their already lacking reading skills.

Using specific words, such as struggling, to label students can be another contributing factor to lower a student's confidence level (Triplett, 2007). When a student's confidence level is down, they typically will not perform well academically. When a student's confidence level is high they typically perform better in school (Triplett, 2007). Being careful to not label or group students into classes or groups that are 'struggling' or 'basic' and focusing on nurturing their strengths can help their confidence level (Triplett, 2007). This notion is important in looking at how we label students in our school and the effect it can have on their success level. Building student confidence level when it comes to their academics is something educators can work on (Triplett, 2007).

Parental influence. A student's family life can be an indicator of his or her school success. Factors such as involvement, income level, stress level, and educational expectations all can be major influences on a student's academic success. As parents and family are typically the biggest influence in a young person's life, it makes sense that this too, relates to school (Waddle, 2011).

Ann Waddle's (2011) research on student achievement reports that there are significant links between student's "academic achievement and family income, parents' level of education, and community based parental involvement activities." This puts students who are in households with high levels of income, education, and involvement at quite an advantage for school success (Waddle, 2011). To look at it from the other

viewpoint, students who do not have that characteristic in their household can be put at quite the disadvantage. Waddle (2011) goes on to show how planning parental involvement programs in your community can lead to academic improvement in learning and skills for students. This important aspect of a student's background should be considered, and be part of the process, with every student meeting.

A large amount of research has been done that shows parental involvement is instrumental to their children's success in school and on their achievement. Higher levels of parental involvement can be associated with higher levels of academic success (Stewart, 2008). For example, parental involvement with school and their activities has shown to have a positive effect on their student's math achievement (Dufur & Parcel, 2001). Contact with school staff through means such as teacher-parent conferences, parent meetings with administration, open houses, or social activities, all further support this academic achievement (Jeynes, 2003).

According to past studies, parental influence clearly has a significant impact on a student's academic achievement. Although I obviously will not be able to change factors such as household income and parental educational level for students, I can certainly work hard to increase parent involvement with school activities. This can come from simple requests for parent-teacher conferences or communication through phone calls and email. It can even come from large changes such as more programs in our school and community to include parents in more school activities, such as open houses or social gatherings. This huge impact is something I will certainly have to consider when meeting and working with each student in the individualized meetings.

Positive Connections

Previous studies have laid out basic tenants of what teachers can do to have a positive impact on struggling students when they take on individualized meetings in a type of advisor role. A common theme among the research discusses the main purpose of holding individual meetings with struggling students is to forge a positive connection with them. This connection is something that seemingly many struggling students are missing (Pianta, Stuhlman, & Hamre, 2002).

Relationships. “Educators who facilitate the building of positive relationships with students can help provide the motivation, initiative, and engagement, all which are essential for academic success” (Pianta et al., 2002). For students who are at-risk of academic failure, many times they feel as though there is not an adult in the school who looks out for, cares for, or generally likes them (Pianta et al., 2002). Mentors or advisors can be the answer for struggling students to achieve more and even lead more successful lives. (Herrick, 2010). This is quite an opportunity for a teacher to take on this role of advisor or mentor and make a meaningful difference in the pursuit to help students improve their academic situation.

Classroom teachers are involved with almost every function of a student’s day: they have them in their classroom, they see them in the hallway, in many cases they are even their coach or supervisor for after school activities. Herrick’s research has shown that because of this, they are most likely best positioned to forge these relationships in a positive fashion (2010). In order to create a strong, positive relationship with a struggling student the teacher, who is in a powerful position, must first have the correct disposition;

they must be caring and empathetic in order to cultivate the relationship needed with these students (Lumpkin, 2007). A teacher serves in a unique situation to create a strong bond with struggling students, and in many cases these bonds can help the students with their academic struggles and make them more invested in academics (Lumpkin, 2007).

Students who receive insufficient positive attention will act out in one of two ways: they will act as though they are invisible or they will act out to receive attention in a different way. In either event, if those students are not tended to, sooner or later they will probably drop out of high school. Being proactive in those situations is critical to catch these students before they drop out and in time to help them get the positive attention needed. Adults in a school who show concern on an individual level for at-risk students can have a significant impact on student attendance (Testerman, 1996).

Most educators have a strong passion for helping their students and a concern for their well-being. It is surprising to find out then that in a longitudinal study done with over 30,000 sophomore students by Wehlage and Rutter (1986) well over 50% of respondents gave teachers a fair-to-poor rating on their personal interest level. Those are not overwhelmingly good marks at all. Clearly, working to improve student perceptions is important if we want students' attitudes of school to be largely positive. One way to do this is to work to give these struggling students an individual teacher-advisor (Wehlage & Rutter, 1986).

In Whelage and Rutter's (1986) study they compared a group of at-risk students with an assigned advisor to those with no advisor. The study was 21 weeks long, and advisors and advisees had to meet for at least 15 minutes each week to converse

(Wehlage & Rutter, 1986). The study had very telling results. The group with advisors showed significant differences in higher attendance, less drop outs, and higher mean grade point average (Wehlage & Rutter, 1986). Teacher advisors even reported a large difference in the form of attitude, stating that their advisees were much more open, much more fun, even starting to be concerned with being successful in school (Wehlage & Rutter, 1986)

Caring without lowering standards. It is easy for educators to believe they are helping a student by watering down content to help them receive higher marks. This does not help, but in fact contributes to their continued struggles. Connecting with students positively and showing them you care can mean giving them more time, giving specific scaffolding, or other strategies, but the high expectations still are there. A caring teacher helps students reach those high expectations. Talking with students about their thinking, learning, and behavior is a common behavior of effective teachers, instead of guessing and theorizing all day, asking them can get you right to the point (Fry & DeWit, 2011).

Watered-down curriculum is one common mistake educators can make in working with struggling students, so is assigning a student to a remedial class. In her study on struggling African-American students in regards to exit exams, Diedre Houchen (2013) reports that students who were assigned remedial classes felt resentment, even anger towards the class due to the loss of another elective because of the remedial class, teasing from classmates, and even comments from other teachers. Another example educators can learn from students, even struggling ones, is they need high expectations from teachers who show their concern and care. I am hoping individualized meetings can

help accomplish this, so students in need can avoid being placed into remedial classes in our school.

Meeting Topics

When reviewing literature there were five main areas that stood out to focus on in individualized meetings: work on academic skills, encouragement of participation in a school activity, connecting the curriculum to student lives, developing student self-advocacy skills, and connecting personally with students. In an already time-stressed environment, fitting in additional time for individual meetings can be quite a challenge, a challenge though that seems well worth it (Kratz-Kent, 2008).

Academic skills. Past studies show meeting time with students will be involved with helping them on academic skill work (Jackson & Lambert, 2010). This work can be content based or on “soft skills” dealing with studying, note taking, or organization. These academic skills are the most general reason for struggle with many students. Fortunately, this is an issue that is in the student’s control. If they are motivated to fix the issue, it can be fixed (Jackson & Lambert, 2010).

In many cases goal setting, along with instructional strategies, can be an effective strategy to help these students who show deficits in their skills. Pipkin, Winters, and Diller (2007) showed that a multiple-component intervention, an intervention that approaches the issue in a number of ways, might be necessary to support the improvement in skills of a struggling student. While working with these students then, the instructional strategy of helping them acquire necessary background information or

work on “soft skills” coupled with a strategy of setting small goals for their progress could be an effective plan (Diller et al., 2007).

Real connections. Connecting with a student can have a huge, lasting impact. If a student feels recognized and excited about learning, they will meet higher expectations. In these meetings school might not even be discussed, instead the conversations could revolve around their interests, hobbies, or future goals. Teachers who can prove sincerity and respect to students can help fuel their connection to school. According to Gerzon-Kessler (2006, p-253), “Connecting with a child’s heart is the best pathway to reaching his mind.”

There are many ways to connect with students outside of these personal meetings. Many times subtle moments with students can have lasting effects. A joke, a pat on the back, or a smile and greeting in the hallway can foster a positive relationship (Gerzon-Kessler, 2006). The research noted how another effective method is getting involved in extra-curricular activities; this can get the educator involved in different aspects of a student’s life (Gerzon-Kessler, 2006). Extra-curricular activities like basketball, weightlifting, or Key Club can also reach students by connecting their activity to valuable life lessons such as giving back to the community or helping others (Gerzon-Kessler, 2006).

School activity involvement. Numerous studies have shown a positive relationship between students who are involved in school activities and good grade point averages (Stephens & Schaben, 2002). Schools nowadays offer a large number of activities and clubs for students to take part in – anything from competitive cheerleading

to the robotics team. This wide-range of activities meets the needs of a variety of students. If a student is struggling academically and not involved in any activity, I will encourage them and connect them to the appropriate staff member to get them involved.

Stephens and Schaben's (2002) extensive study on sports and academic achievement shows some of the positive results being involved in an activity can have on a student's grades. The two authors cited six different studies that showed a positive relationship between academic achievement and athletic participation (Stephens & Schaben, 2002). The U.S. Department of Education even released a study stating that students who participate in a co-curricular activity is three times as likely to earn a grade point average of 3.0 or better than a student who does not participate in an activity (Stephens & Schaben, 2002). In a similar study, Filsigner (2012) showed that out of 150 high school students, split 75 non-athletes and 75 athletes, the grade point average was significantly higher for the athletes.

Not only does school participation show a positive academic effect, it also shows long lasting effects in life beyond school. From Gholson's (1985) study he states that there is a positive correlation between student involvement in co-curricular activities and success in nonacademic pursuits following high school and college. In fact, achievement in co-curricular activities is a factor that can predict success in life beyond school (Gholson, 1985). These positive effects of being involved in activities is the main reason why getting those struggling students not involved already to find an activity they would enjoy is an important factor of my meetings.

Self advocacy skills. Past studies on self advocacy have largely involved students with disabilities, or more specifically students on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 (504) plan. IEPs and 504s are plans to accommodate student work to help with certain disabilities, such as specific seating or longer times on testing. IEPs also have the ability to modify student work, such as modifying an assignment for a student to do half of the assigned problems. However, many students fall in the category of struggling who are not on an IEP or 504, self-advocacy skills are important for them as well (Prater, Redman, Anderson, & Gibbs, 2014).

Students with disabilities need to work on their self advocacy, but all students who do not fall under special education have a need to work on advocacy as well. Testerman (1996) states that many academically unsuccessful students will start to act as though they are invisible. This means that they are not asking questions, they are not asking for seating that could help them learn better, they are not advocating for themselves when needed. They simply prefer to stay hidden. Building self advocacy skills with these students is an important process in helping them succeed academically.

In their work with building self advocacy skills with students, Linda Kozacek and Chris Specht (2014) believe that the process must start with a student's self-efficacy. Self efficacy refers to a person's belief in his or her ability to succeed at any given task. When these students have a history of failure with academics, their self efficacy is more than likely low. When a person has a weak sense of self efficacy they focus more on disappointments and failures than any successes.

Building self-efficacy through small goals and by helping students take ownership of their education can get them to the point where self-advocacy is not a problem (Kozacek & Specht, 2014). Having that ability can help immensely in ensuring that students are achieving their potential in the classroom so they can communicate their needs to teachers and staff members. Building self-advocacy through building self-efficacy is another step in helping struggling students overcome their academic problems.

Teacher Collaboration

Professional educators working together in order to help students is something that many schools are now working on implementing. A popular method for organized collaboration in schools has been termed Professional Learning Communities or PLCs (Watson, 2014). These PLCs are structured meetings between teachers who typically would have common students, and is one of many ways teachers can work together in order to enhance student learning (Watson, 2014). There are certainly more ways for teachers to work together, such as informal conversations, online collaboration, or even co-teaching.

Professional learning communities. The popularity of PLCs in schools has risen over the past 5-10 years in large part because of the success the meetings have had in raising student learning experiences. PLCs have shown a strong connection with student achievement over the years, making these meetings a widely used strategy for school's looking for improvement (Jackson, 2014). These PLC meetings can be organized a number of ways according to the needs of the school, but typical meetings will be based

around professional reflection, content collaboration, and most importantly student learning (Watson, 2014).

PLC groups are set up by academic department, an example being social studies teachers would meet together for a PLC. The PLCs at our school are expected to meet one time each week. In these meetings the focus is typically on how best to present required and elective social studies content to our students, how best to reach all learners, and what we can do to improve (Jackson, 2014).

Online communication. Teachers can communicate with each other in regards to improving instruction and helping students on many levels. PLC meetings are one way to do this, but I also plan on having many informal conversations with other teachers during common prep time, lunch, and especially through email. Many times teachers are too busy to have too much time to reflect with each other, but through email we can connect when it best serves us. Not only does this encourage more conversation, it also encourages more in-depth conversation. Instead of the brief meetings in the hallway or before school, a colleague can write a detailed email on their own time (Phillips & Olson, 2013).

Emails will also give an opportunity to attach lesson plans, worksheets, or even streaming videos that can help. Technology is a powerful tool to help teachers explore and share best practices. Emails and technology are useful for teachers when working with struggling students in their classes (Phillips & Olson, 2013).

Potential Issues

Based on the research, there are issues that can arise are time and student motivation level (Krantz-Kent, 2008). How can a teacher find time and what should a teacher do with a student whose issue is motivation?

Time concern. Finding additional time in an already busy workday to meet with students individually is a challenge. Teachers have a heavy work schedule in and out of school. Teachers on average have shorter workdays than most professionals, but are also more likely to work from home, work on Sundays, and work early mornings (Krantz-Kent, 2008). The reason for the additional work at home is typically because there is not enough time in the day to get all of a teacher's work done. The additional challenge with these individualized meetings is finding times of the day that work for not only the teacher, but also the student (Krantz-Kent, 2008).

Student motivation. A common issue with students who are not doing well can also be motivation. If a student does not have the motivation to succeed, they surely will not find any success. Pianta (2002), Testerman (1996), and Gerzon-Kessler (2006) lay out the positive effects of motivating through positive relationships or Stephens and Schaben's (2002) study about the power of student activities. Those approaches of gaining positive relationships, working on self-advocacy skills, and encouraging involvement in school activities will guide this study.

Based on the literature I have reviewed, positive relationships and student involvement are effective methods of motivating students, but they will not work for every student. Wery and Thomson (2013) have laid out other practical approaches to

helping these students in their study on motivational strategies. Connecting learning to the real world, modeling enthusiasm, praising students, involving students in the learning process, building intrinsic motivation, and allowing for independence are all ways stated to help these students (Wery & Thomson, 2013). Finding the appropriate method for each student will be important steps in helping these students find academic success.

Conclusion

This literature review has been aimed towards answering the question: how will regularly scheduled teacher meetings affect academically struggling high school students? By reviewing various experts in this subject area I have been able to explore the many different aspects I need to be aware of for my individual student meetings. This review of literature has given me a clear direction on why my students might be struggling, how positive connections can help any student, what topics I should cover in my meetings, and how to handle potential issues that may arise.

From the literature review, there are numerous reasons for student struggle consisting mainly of academic skills, both content related and “soft skills,” a student’s confidence level, and the influence of parents (Jackson & Lambert, 2010). It is helpful to have this research when planning for these meetings to understand where many students might be coming from.

According to research, academic skill work may be the most common problem. In addition to that, many students will need help with their “soft skills,” which is their organization, study skills, and essentially how to use the content given to them (Jackson & Lambert, 2010). In regards to a student’s confidence level, literature shows how

remedial classes and labels such as “struggling” harm a student’s confidence and performance level (Triplett, 2007). It was clear from the research that students with a strong confidence level typically performed better in school (Triplett, 2007).

According to research, parental influence such as income level, education level, and engagement in academics are all major factors to a student’s success. This can be done through individual means such as emails, phone calls, teacher-parent conferences, and also through larger scale means such as open houses and social events. Influence at home is a driving factor for most students; I am hoping to engage families, along with the student, to help the process towards academic success along (Waddle, 2011).

The literature reviewed emphasized the importance of connecting positive relationships in school to academic success. A consistent theme with researchers that studied how to help students who are struggling; it was forging positive connections in the school (Pianta et al., 2002). There are many ways to do this, including connecting through after-school activities, a well-timed pat on the back, or discussing a student’s interests are a few (Pianta et al., 2002). Connecting with students is an integral part of being an educator. Research shows that students who do not feel as though school staff members, especially teachers, care for them, will not put the necessary effort into having success (Herrick, 2010). The common theme from the literature reviewed was positive connections in the school can be a huge motivator for any student.

The reviewed literature shows the positive effect involvement in school activities can have (Stephens & Schaben, 2002). Research shows a strong connection to high grade point average and even more success in life after school (Gholson, 1985). This research

is showing the importance of connecting the students I will be meeting with to sports or activities they have might have interest in. Most schools have a large variety of options for students, and the school I work at is no different. Getting involved in an activity can give a struggling student a connection to the school to help motivate them to more success.

Self-advocacy, the ability to communicate and convey your own interests, is a skill many struggling students lack. Building this skill is essential to a student having success. Part of this skill building will include working on a student's self-efficacy, helping the student get enough confidence to ask questions or stand up for their rights in effective manner. Many students might lack this skill which can only hurt their success in school, building it with them can help immensely (Testerman, 1996).

From the research reviewed, two of the most common problems will be student motivation and lack of time. Many students are in this situation because of their motivation level. If common ideas to help motivation level do not work, the literature I reviewed helped me find more ideas. Those ideas include modeling enthusiasm, connecting the learning to the student's life, and giving more independence. In regards to time, it is always a concern for teachers, prioritizing and making time for something as important as these meetings will be necessary for me to help these students.

Looking Forward

In Chapter Three we will continue the discussion by exploring the different methods by which we can evaluate and assess the effects of individualized meetings for struggling students. The goal remains to find strategies and practices to help students

who do not qualify for an IEP or Section 504 Plan, but are still having academic difficulties. The activities in Chapter Three will focus on finding opinions and viewpoints of students, teachers, and parents. The main goal being to create an environment for struggling students where they can feel comfortable and confident in regards to academics.

The need to reach and help struggling students is critical. After reviewing existing literature on best practices to help these students my question stands: How will regularly scheduled teacher meetings affect high school students in my social studies classes who are struggling with academics? Chapter Three details the methodologies that I plan to use to answer this question. The chapter begins by discussing the research paradigm as well as the rationale, setting, and participants. It will then describe the research methods and tools used. In addition the chapter describes what from the literature review I plan to integrate into my individualized meetings.

CHAPTER THREE

Methods

Introduction

In this chapter I will be detailing the methodologies I used to explain the research question: how will regularly scheduled teacher meetings affect academically struggling high school students? This project stemmed from the desire to find additional supports for students in our schools who struggle, who do not get the accommodations or modifications that an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or a Section 504 Plan can offer. To answer this question I used a mixed-methods approach of research, involving the use of interviews, surveys, observations, and data interpretation. This research method was used on students, parents, and staff members from the school I currently work at.

Research Paradigm

This study involved a mixed methods research approach, using both quantitative and qualitative data from my participants (Creswell, 2014). My quantitative data came from standardized testing and grades of the students from their past and current classes. My qualitative data came from surveys, interviews, and observations from students, parents, and fellow teachers in the school.

Quantitative data. Quantitative research uses numbers to explain cause-effect relationships (Mills, 2011). In my study I looked specifically at numbers describing student grades before and after the individualized meetings took place. The grades I looked at specifically include semester grades from previous courses, previous standardized test scores, and classroom participation grades such as daily work. Those

grades and scores were then compared with how the student did during and after our meeting sessions. The numbers gave a good indication of what the effect of the meetings had on the student's academic success.

Qualitative data. According to Creswell, qualitative data is an approach “for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (2014, p-185). I did this in a few different ways. Surveys were given to students and their parents before and after the individualized meetings happened. Interviews with teachers were also be a part of the study. Teachers of the selected students before the process were questioned on student performance, effort, and behavior. Additionally, students were interviewed after the process to get in depth thoughts about the process.

The mixed methods approach gave this study a broader sense of how effective the action research was in the selected classroom (Mills, 2011). Instead of getting strictly the numbers of how it is worked, or only the perspective and opinions of those involved, the mixed method design did both. It strengthened the results by merging the data to show if they were convergent or divergent. The meaning of convergent is if the data is closely related, and the meaning of divergent if the data is moving apart (Creswell, 2014).

Setting and Participants

The research took place in a community of approximately 8,000 people in the upper Midwest. The community is an inner-ring suburb and is represented by a socio-economic cross-section of people. A predominance of the people in this community are

middle to upper-middle class income citizens (Minnesota Department of Education, 2013).

The school where the study was conducted is a public school that hosts 687 students, grades 9-12, with 42 total licensed staff, 36 of which are full or part-time teachers in the building. Demographics of the school include a student body that is 74% white, 9% Hispanic, 8% Black, 8% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1% American Indian (MDE, 2013). A total of 20.83% of all students are part of the free and reduced lunch program (MDE, 2013). The free and reduced lunch program is typically an indicator of the number of students whose families earn lower incomes as it is based on comparison of the household's income to current U.S. Department of Agriculture household income guidelines (MDE, 2013).

From this stated demographics and population, I used students from my 9th grade Global Studies and Economics course. This is a required 9th grade course, and the students came any of my three sections, out of a group of roughly 90 total students. Specific data was not available for the students until class rosters were scheduled in August of 2015. In the upcoming section the methods and tools were used for this study will be discussed.

Methods and Tools

The procedures of this study, the details of how data and information were gathered, started with getting the necessary approval from all parties involved. Once proper permission was granted, information gathered about which students were eligible for the study. Permission was requested from eligible students and their parents, giving

them detailed information on my study. Once permission was granted, the actual research steps of the study started with a focus on the information from students, parents, and teachers and how helped answer the research question.

Permission. Permission for the study came from three different sources: the administration at the school, the eligible students, and the parents of the students. This permission was requested in the form of a letter to all three parties (Appendix A). The first step in this process was to secure the permission from the school principal and district superintendant. The letter addressed to each person described the proposed study and who was involved. Letters to the students and parents were similar in that they described the study, what school I am associated with, and what will happen with the results (Appendix B). Teachers were also asked for their permission, they had the same permission letter as the parents.

Eligible Students. This study focused on helping students who meet the criteria of ‘struggling.’ For this study ‘struggling’ was defined as “earning two or more F’s in the previous semester or having two or more F’s one month into the fall semester of 2015-16 school year.” Students could also be eligible based on their previous state testing. If a student had scored in the ‘does not meet expectations’ or ‘partially meets expectations’ two or more times in their past they were also able to qualify. Students could have qualified with either the grade requirement or the test requirement; they did not need to meet both standards. An ‘eligibility checklist’ was drafted to help organize eligible students (Appendix C).

Students who were in my 9th grade Global Studies course and met the criteria were asked permission verbally and through the permission letter. Parents were followed up with an email that had the permission letter attached and more information on the study. The eligibility checklist was drafted based on high school graduation requirements. Any student who failed more than one course in a semester is automatically behind pace for graduation (MDE, 2013). These students then needed an intervention to help them maintain passing grades in their current classes and also make-up any needed courses to get back on pace for graduation.

Data, specifically student letter grades and GPA, was collected through the school's Student Information System (SIS) and Data Warehouse (DW), both of which store and organize student grades and assessment information. The SIS and DW both clearly list out grade and assessment information records for any students currently in a teacher's class. This information was available to me in August of 2015.

Surveys. To find the general opinions of the eligible students, surveys were given out. Surveys were chosen because of their effectiveness in collecting data on trends, opinions, and attitudes of a selected population (Creswell, 2014). Surveys were designed for parents and students to get data on topics such as teacher interest in students, athletic and activity participation, confidence level with school, and positive relationships with school staff members (Appendices D & E). This gave good insight to any trends these students and parents might be having in regards to the topics found during the literature review.

Lack of academic skills has shown to be consistently the most common and general reason for student struggle (Jackson & Lambert, 2010). Getting a sense of the eligible students and their parents' feelings about academic skills being a hindrance to student success was important for guiding the individualized meetings. This information helped me process what students needed to work on and what specific skills might be best for us to focus on.

The student and parent surveys also asked about a student's confidence level. Confidence level has shown to be a direct reason for issues with grades (Spencer, 2009). If students are not confident they tend to shy away from participating in class, asking questions, or advocating for their needs in class (Triplett, 2007). When the confidence level is high they typically perform better in school (Triplett, 2007). This information was also a useful guide for me to see if there is a trend towards struggling students with low confidence. If this trend was present, the individual meetings focused more on building the confidence level of the students.

Many students believe that teachers do not have a great deal of personal interest in their students (Wehlage & Rutter, 1986). This detail also can contribute to student struggle, or more appropriately teacher interest and positive relationships with students can help improve students' academic success (Pianta et al., 2002). Finding out if the eligible students, and their parents, felt as though there are positive connections in the school showed if the trend is present with this population (Pianta et al., 2002). If a positive connection was not present, we worked towards making one or connecting them somewhere in the school.

One of the last questions the surveys checked on student involvement in athletics and/or activities in the school. Participation in school related activities and athletics can have a noticeable positive impact on students' academic success (Stephens & Schaben, 2002). In fact some studies, noticeably Gholson's, have noted that success in a school related sport or activity can be a factor in predicting success in life beyond school (1985). Finding out this information from the surveys helped view another potential trend and also helped guide the meetings.

Interviews. Interviews were conducted with students and teachers at the beginning and end of the study. Specifically, students were interviewed after the fall semester of the 2015-16 school year to get their in depth thoughts about the process (Appendix F). Teachers of the selected students were interviewed before and after the fall semester and questioned on student performance, effort, and behavior (Appendix G). Interviews were chosen because of the opportunity to ask all participants the same series of questions, and the ability to get in depth information (Mills, 2011). Questions were framed in a way to help illicit the desired information from students and teachers (Appendices F & G).

The questions on each interview were related to information gathered from the literature review including confidence, effort, positive connections, and academic skills and knowledge. This gave an in-depth understanding of the student's thoughts on the effects of the individualized meetings. This also gave teachers' thoughts on if there were any noticeable differences before and after this process started.

Observations. Another qualitative data collection method I used was classroom observations. As a teacher, I constantly observed my class and had countless opportunities to take field notes on the students in the study (Mills, 2011). I again directed my observations towards my findings from the literature review. Looking at a student's confidence level, effort, self-advocacy skills, and content knowledge were all reviewed from field notes taken throughout the semester.

Data Collection. The collection of data took place on a number of different fronts. Data was gathered before and after from the school's Student Information System and Data Warehouse to see if there were any changes in assessment scores, participation grades, and overall semester grades. Reviewing the surveys of the students and parent's information happened to see if any trends such as improved confidence, improved relationships with teachers, or participation in activities happened from the study. Answers from the teacher and student interviews helped with qualitative data, and the field notes from the semester-long observations were useful to review. The interviews and field notes provided data based on the emotional states of the students.

Human Subjects Research

Prior to collecting any data involving human subjects a research project must be reviewed by the School of Education Human Subjects Committee (HSC). An application was submitted to and approved by the HSC. This process is in compliance with federal law, and its purpose is to protect Hamline faculty, graduate students, and those who participate in the research study. This study was approved by the Human Subjects Committee on June 29th, 2015 (Appendix I).

Conclusion

To measure the effects of individualized meetings with struggling students, I used a mixed methods approach of research. Utilizing qualitative methods such as surveys, interviews, and observation along with a quantitative approach of gathering academic data of the students involved, the methodology helped determine the impact of the study. The goal was to answer the research question: how will regularly scheduled teacher meetings affect academically struggling high school students?

Looking Forward

Chapter Four presents and discusses the results of implementing individualized meetings for struggling students in my social studies class. I will present the data along with themes or generalizations that I found with the mixed methods research data collection types. The upcoming chapter reports the outcomes of the research and includes an interpretation of the results.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

Introduction

In this chapter I will be detailing the results of my research question: how will regularly scheduled teacher meetings affect academically struggling high school students? To get these results I used a mixed-methods approach of research, involving the use of interviews, surveys, observations, and data interpretation. This research method was used on students, parents, and staff members from the school I currently work at, an inner-ring suburban, public school of under 700 predominantly white students.

Mixed Methods Approach

The study I have conducted involved a mixed methods research approach using both quantitative and qualitative data from my participants. The Quantitative data focuses on using numbers to explain cause-effect relationships (Mills, 2011). Qualitative data is an approach used for recognizing the individualized aspect of each student in depth, especially in regards to their thoughts or feelings (Creswell, 2014).

I utilized quantitative data from standardized tests and grades from the student's past and current classes before and after the study. The qualitative data I used came from surveys from students and parents, interviews with teachers and students, as well as classroom observations of the student subjects. This mixed methods approach gave my study a broad sense of how effective this action research was with my students (Mills,

2011). Using numbers from relevant data sources along with opinions and perspectives of those involved helped strengthen my results by showing they are convergent in nature.

Methods and Tools

The first step for my study was gain proper permission from school administration. In my school the permission needed to come from my district superintendent and school principal. Permission was granted with signatures from both administration positions on letters that I presented them that described my study, who would be involved, and my intentions for the findings (Appendix A). Once the permission from administration was granted my actual research steps of the study started, with the focus being on retrieving information from students, parents, and teachers.

Student Eligibility. Once I had the permission from school administration, I was free to use our school's Student Information System (SIS) and Data Warehouse (DW) to research the students I had in my class. To find out which students were eligible for the study I used a Student Eligibility Checklist (Appendix C). Students who then met the criteria of have earning two or more F's in 2014-15 spring semester or in the first month of the 2015-16 fall semester would be put on my list as eligible candidates. Students could also be eligible with a test requirement of scoring a 'does not meet expectations' or 'partially meets expectations' two or more times in the past. Students only needed to meet one of the standards listed.

Classroom grades were collected by using the SIS and test scores were gathered in the DW. I collected my data after the first month of the school year in order to get

current grades from these students in their first month of high school. The SIS also helped to inform me which students were on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), which would eliminate them from my study. After the initial data research there were eight students who met the criteria. The next step was to ask for permission from the students and parent/guardians.

Permission. For gaining permission to use student information in the study, I first checked with each student to see if they were interested meeting with me on a regular basis. This step actually eliminated three of the eight students as they were either not interested or felt as though they would not have time to meet. The remaining five students were interested in meeting, so they were given hard copies of the permission letters (Appendix B) as well as emailed copies to their parent/guardians. I followed up each email with a phone call to each student's parent/guardian giving them a chance to discuss what the letter was about and ask any questions they might have. All five families were comfortable with their student meeting with me regularly and with using the information in my study, at this point they were labeled students A through E.

Teachers were also asked to sign permission slips since I am using their interview answers about the student subjects. Once it was finalized what students were going to be a part of my study, then I checked in with other teachers Students A-E had to give them information and get their acknowledged permission from the same letter the parents received (Appendix B). No teacher denied giving me permission using the information in my study, the only issue was that eventually some teachers were busy and we did not get an interview with them. Despite this issue we had enough information from the

interviews that did occur to use for the study. After the permission step was completed with all parties, I started my study off with a survey for students and parents as well as interviews with teachers.

Surveys. In the first meeting with each student they received a survey to find their general opinions on school, their teachers, their academic abilities, and if they have any involvement in activities (Appendix D). At the same time surveys were also sent off to the parent/guardians of each of the five students involved in the study (Appendix E). The parent survey was designed to gauge parental feelings on the school and their student's academic abilities, and to see if those feelings matched up their student's.

The findings of the student surveys were interesting in a few ways (Appendix D). First, despite some students doing very poorly (Appendix C) not one of the students answered 'poorly' when asked how they felt they had done academically in their classes. Four out of the five students instead chose the 'not well' answer, showing that they are not realistic on their performances to this point. Student E, for example, had six F's and one B for his grades when asked this question, yet he still choose 'not well' instead of poorly.

Another important trend from the student survey was the lack of school activities these students took part in. Only one student took part in any school activities, which for him were two sports. No other student in the study took part in any school activities. Activities have been shown to have positive effects of school activities on academic GPA

(Stephens and Schaben, 2002), as we discussed in Chapter two. This information helped guide the discussions of the first few meetings with the students.

In the parent surveys there were also two trends that stood out (Appendix E). The first trend based on responses from a question similar to what the students answered: How do you feel your son or daughter is performing in their classes at school? No parent answered very well or well, and 60% of them answered not well or poorly. The parents clearly had a more realistic viewpoint on how their children were doing academically in their classes than the students themselves.

The second trend that stood out from the parent surveys was dealing with student motivation, question two, and the level of help the school is giving their child, question six. 75% of respondents answered that lack of motivation was their student's current issue in school, and 60% of respondents said the school's level of effort to help their student was not good or poor. This is showing dissatisfaction on two fronts; with their student and with the school. The trends from the parental surveys certainly helped how my focus at the meetings with the students, but also helped with understanding parental feelings on the effort level from both the student and the school.

Interviews. Time conflicts made interviews with all six of each student's other teachers impossible, but enough took place to get some significant trends (Appendix G). The first and most notable trend was the perceived lack of effort reported for all five students. There were only a few instances where a teacher recognized some effort from any of the students, and those were usually 'flashes' of effort instead of constant hard

work from the student. This trend helped me to focus discussions to find opportunities or ideas that might serve as motivators for these students to work harder academically.

Another trend that came out from these interviews was that most of the teachers believed these students were ‘smart’ or ‘bright.’ Those words came up a number of times describing the students. Those terms are obvious compliments and showed some belief by the teachers that the students certainly could be doing better if they so wished. These comments for teachers were helpful when talking to students, in some cases the students themselves were surprised the teachers said that and it seemingly gave them a confidence boost.

Distractions were another common trend. Cell phones, friends, or just plain not paying attention all were factors for their low grades, according to their teachers. The individual meetings were used to also discuss some strategies about how to focus more in the classroom. Ideas for increased attention included turning in the phone to the teacher at the beginning of class, moving seats, and notes checked off by the teacher daily. The teacher interviews were great not only for background information, but also to reference with students when I talked with them in our meetings.

Individual Meetings. Individual meetings with each student were roughly ten to 15 minutes one time every one to two weeks. Originally these meetings were intended to be every week, but as the school year moved on it was increasingly difficult for the meetings to regularly take place. What eventually happened was meetings happened when they could, sometimes every other week, and sometimes meetings did not happen.

For this study I had to start relying more on observations and short discussions in class or in the hallway.

The meetings that did take place were very valuable. For some of the students the meetings were intentionally kept social so I could learn more about them and so they had a staff member they felt they could talk to. In some cases all we talked about were academic strategies to help them get on track with their grades. For two of the students, Student A and Student E, discussions of getting more or different help occurred. Student A was interested in learning more about ADD and how he could get tested for it, I referred him to our school counselor. Student E discussed with me in great detail his desire to transfer to an online high school.

Student A did get tested for ADD and ended up getting a prescribed medication to help treat it. Student E eventually did transfer out of our school and into an online high school before we could finish the study. This is representative of outside influences on a student's academics.

It was clear that these meetings were difficult for several reasons. Namely, a teacher is already busy. On top of helping other students, prepping for their classes, and anything else that comes up, having a 15 minute meeting scheduled with a student can sometimes be difficult. Additionally, students are busy. Many times we had to reschedule or cancel our meetings because a student had to catch the bus, get home to babysit, or any number of other reasons. The meetings were valuable, but would have to be scheduled into your day during an advisor period or something of the sort.

Observations. Throughout the study I made observations of each of the students in my classroom. These observations helped to reinforce ideas discussed in the individual meetings, for example I was able to use situations from my own class to get a point across to a student. It was useful to be able to observe the student's actions in class and see if that matched up with issues we discussed.

The discussions with Student A, for example, certainly confirmed what our discussions were about. Student had concerns about having ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder), and our talks led him to get tested for the learning disorder, but his classrooms actions supported what he was telling me. Many times I would catch Student A zoning out, or just looking at his paper. When I would catch him doing this in class he genuinely felt as though he was trying, but could not make progress. On my recommendation, Student A went in to get tested and was found to indeed have ADD, the family chose to put him on the recommended medication from their doctor.

Student B sleeping on a regular basis in my class. Student B was typically out with friends until very late each night, or more appropriately very early in the morning. The discussion point then was working on strategies to change that behavior. It turns out Student B was staying out until the early hours each morning and then still getting to school. Although it was impressive for him to make it to school every day on time, we discussed how changing some of those behaviors could keep him more awake and focused, meaning his grades would more than likely improve.

Student C, the only female in the group, had a very careless attitude until the end of the semester, when the reality of poor grades was sinking in for her. Throughout our discussions and from classroom observations, Student C believed she was smart enough to not pay attention, not do daily work, and not take any notes but yet still do well in class. Although she was very smart, this attitude was catching up with her. Cell phones and friends are what she was concerned with during most class periods. In the last weeks of the semester Student C worked hard to bring her grade up to a 'C,' well below her capability, but much better than where it was before this last spurt of effort.

Student D was another bright student concerned with social activities all too much. Observations in class found him to be talking to his girlfriend across the room, playing on his cell phone, or just plain goofing off. Student D would show glimpses of his intelligence in my class during discussions on occasion when he would impress me with a question or an answer that many others were not able to get. Similar to Student C, Student D was hoping to slide by on that natural intelligence.

Student E was interested in switching to an online school, and although he had the worst grades of any student in the study, he put forth the least amount of effort fixing those grade. From our discussions, Student E was pretty certain he was going to transfer schools, which he eventually did, so he believed that the classes he was in until he transferred were pointless. Unfortunately, it seemed as though he was intentionally doing as poorly as he could, and it showed. Student E did transfer before the semester was over, but I did get some good meetings and observation time with him.

The observations I was able to note during my time teaching the students in my study helped me to see the academic side of the students. In some cases it helped me confirm what the students were telling me in our meetings, in other cases it helped me bring up examples I observed to refute something they might have told me. From my observations I would agree with the teachers interviewed, that effort was the overall problem. There were some barriers for them to put forth real effort though, such as ADD or sleeping patterns, and that is what the individual meetings attempted to address. To finish the research and methods aspect of my study I gave exit interviews to Students A-E.

Student Interviews. The trends noticed from the student exit interviews were two-fold (Appendix F). First, most of the students thought the meetings were helpful. Second, most of the students did not believe this helped to strengthen their connection to the school.

Four out of the five students had positive statements and thought this process was helpful to them throughout Fall Semester. Student C was the lone student in the study who did not believe it was helpful, as she believed she did not need additional help. It is a positive that most appreciated this process, regardless if one of the students even liked it to get out of class, since these students needed more positive events in school. Students A-E clearly did not enjoy school, so if this was something that increased their enjoyment, or at the least gave them another person who believed in them, then that met part of the plans for this as stated in Chapter two.

It is almost contradicting that the students did not feel more connected to the school after this process, since that was also one of the goals discussed in Chapter two. My take on this situation is that many of these students did already have a teacher or strong social group in the school they felt connected to. Student D was even in two sports and felt connected to his teams and coaches. All of this information helps tie into how the students eventually did, academically, by the end of the semester.

Final Grades. Final grades for all five students did improve during the study (Appendix H). On average student grades went up 1/3 of a letter grade in two classes, for example a 'B' to a 'B+' is 1/3 of a letter grade. Although this is not significant, it was a short study, lasting roughly 10 school weeks. Additionally, Student E transferred before the semester was over, so his grades at the time of transfer were used, they were very low and certainly dropped the average increase for the study. These factors were limiting to the results as the study, in my opinion based off of this research, would have better results with more time and a larger research group of students.

Conclusion

To measure the effects of individualized meetings with struggling students, I used a mixed methods approach that utilized surveys, interviews, observations, and data research. In looking at the results of this mixed methods approach I believe the study shows an increase in grades for struggling students when their teacher has individualized meetings with them. The direct result was an increase in grades, but as the rest of my

research shows, it also shows an increase awareness of expectations, limiting factors such as ADD, and strategies to improve your situation.

Looking Forward

Chapter five discusses the conclusions I have made from implementing these individualized meetings for struggling students in my social studies class. I will discuss what I have learned from my research, if the data agrees with my findings from the literature review, and will include my reflections on the most important points of my paper. The upcoming chapter will also discuss my recommendations for schools and any other similar or related research projects I would like to take part in based off of this research.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions

Introduction

My research question is as follows: how will regularly scheduled teacher meetings affect academically struggling high school students? My question is geared to inform my actions in understanding how I can better help students who are struggling with school academically. In this chapter I will take a look at what I would do differently with my research, the positives that came out of it, and the recommendations I would pass on to schools based off the study.

There were a few portions of my study that I would change if I were to do it over again. Increasing the length of time of the study and working with the master scheduler to ensure integrated times in the schedule to work with students are the main parts I would change. The two changes listed address some of the limitations on the study, and changing them would help make the study more valid and reliable by giving the study a larger research group and longer time to see the trends.

I did feel as though there were many positive aspects of this study though. It gave students another staff member to connect with, discuss issues they might have been too shy to bring up on their own, helped the students focus on their classroom behaviors, and best of all, it improved their grades. It seems that if this was a procedure implemented in schools, assigning struggling students to periodically meet with teachers individually, that it would have a positive impact.

Based off of this study I would have a few recommendations for secondary schools in regards with how to deal with struggling students. Giving students who are not doing well academically a teacher to meet with occasionally and actually assigning the meetings in the teacher schedule, as part of their contract, would help on many levels. Additionally, schools should start or continue to encourage all students to be in some school activity. Many studies have shown a strong correlation between school activities and high GPAs (Filsigner, 2012). My study showed that same result as only one of the students, Student D, was in any school activity.

Changes

Concerns of my study that were listed in Chapter two ended up being limitations on the research. In the upcoming sections I will discuss changes I believe could help this research if completed again. It would take administrative cooperation on these changes if they were to be implemented.

Finding the appropriate time for these individual meetings was a struggle throughout the study. I had planned to meet the students before school, after school, or during my off hour. In tough situations I figured we could meet during work time in class. All of these proved hard to accomplish as schedules and priorities got in the way. We did not get in all the meetings I had hoped, as most were rescheduled or even cancelled due to time constraints from myself or the student.

A teacher's extra time for additional assignments beyond their regular classroom is well-documented to be limited (Krantz-Kent, 2008). This was no different with my

study. It was difficult for me to carve out additional time for students beyond the preparation time for three different courses, coaching, having a family, and attempting to be an on task teacher during class time. As I will discuss in my recommendations section, the best way for this to work well would be for a school to assign a teacher students as part of their contract, in place of a class, instead of in addition to a class.

Students also had difficulty meeting on occasions. Attempting to catch the bus, not getting to school with enough time to meet in the morning, or any other number of issues came up to put a damper on our regular meetings. We did find times, but they were not as regular as I had hoped, and many times were spur of the moment meetings. If this is not something scheduled in by the administration, then it would always be difficult to accomplish.

Another time factor that made a difference was the length of the study, roughly ten weeks. If I were to do this study again, I would change this to be a year long study in order get results over a longer period of time. Initially I believed the ten weeks would be sufficient, but after reviewing the data, I think that time was limiting in regards to seeing the true results of the meetings. I believe if gone on longer the study would result in student grades doing even better.

I would also look to include more students and teachers. To get a real feel for the impact of this type of implementation, it would need to be done on a larger scale than five students and one teacher. That would help give the study more reliable and valid data, than the small scale research done in this study.

Outside influences such as home life or alcohol abuse are also factors that could be added in this research. Those are issues that can get complex and I believe that again, it would be something that could be worked out with school counselors to be a part of this study. If done again, this study could have school administration, including counselors, take an active part to address the limitations of time and major influences that can come outside of the school.

Favorable Results

Having individual meetings with struggling students had a number of favorable results. These meetings gave the students at least one staff member they could connect with or know on a somewhat personal level. The meetings also helped the students focus on the behaviors in the classroom and how that affected their overall grades. Additionally, the most notable result that was favorable for the students was an increase in their grades.

Teacher Connection. Most students in my study listed in the student survey that they did have a teacher they felt a strong connection with already. Going into the study I postulated that the struggling students would not have strong connections and these meetings would be their gateway to finding one. Since they mostly listed a positive connection with another teacher, this study at the least gave them another connection they could count on to ask questions, get help from, or in some cases just talk to. This connection can only help improve their attitude towards school, which should in turn help them have success.

From the parent surveys (Appendix E), there was a feeling that the school was not putting forth a good effort in helping their struggling students. This type of program would help with parents feeling supported with their son or daughter. It can be hard when a school counselor has half, or more, of the school to work with and keep track of. If a teacher is assigned a small number of students they can keep track of them more easily and also parents have a definitive go to for any questions or concerns.

Focus on Behavior. When discussion on how their classes were going, it was clear that many of these students did not take time to really think about how their behavior really affects their success in class. These discussions helped increase awareness on how their actions directly made an impact on their content knowledge and their grades. From changing strategies at home to meeting with a counselor about ADD, these students did increase their awareness of their classroom behavior.

When Student B could not stay awake in class and we discussed why he was so tired, it was clear that his late nights caused him to be tired. It was in fact admirable that he was able to get to school on time almost every day considering the lack of sleep he had. From our discussions he came up with ideas to get some more sleep at night, which in turn helped him considerably in class, because he could actually stay awake while in it.

Student A, who requested ADD testing during this study, did not think much about why he was having these problems before our conversations. It seemed as though it was helpful to talk about his actions in class and how to change them, as the topic of ADD then came up. Student A then discussed it with his counselor, then his doctor, then

was found to suffer from the learning disorder ADD. His family then decided to take the doctor recommendation of taking a prescription drug to help with his issue. Student A started taking this drug towards the end of the study, so unfortunately we did not see the results of those.

The two situations listed for Student A and Student B are examples of how these discussions helped students focus on what their classroom behavior was really doing to them. The result of all of these meetings was that students had to at least talk about why they felt the class was going poorly for them academically. Many times those talks turned to the student coming up with their own strategies to help themselves, a clear improvement of self-advocacy skills.

Increased Grades. Grades for these five struggling students increased on average 1/3 of a letter grade from the time the study started to the end of the semester (Appendix E). An example of 1/3 of a letter grade would be going from a 'B' to a 'B+'. This increase was encouraging since I felt like the time of the study was not long enough and because Student E was seemingly intentionally doing poorly before he transferred schools. To me, if increased grades can happen in ten weeks with this study, I would imagine that if done over a full year it would get even better results.

Recommendations

From my study I would give secondary schools two main recommendations in assigning struggling students to individual teachers for meetings: Give ample amount of time to meet and give them the necessary resources to succeed. As stated earlier, if the

school's master scheduler assigned time during the day for teacher's to meet with these struggling students in place of a class instead of on top of all of their classes, then it would be extremely effective. The main issue with this study was the problem in meeting regularly, the assigned times always seemed to cause problems and meetings needed to be rescheduled or cancelled. Make them a part of the schedule and they will succeed. If resources such as specific academic strategies or access to a tutor lab are available they would be helpful as well.

Resources include for schools to succeed with this model would include academic resources to rely on or academic labs for students who need help. Examples of academic resources would be planners to give students, standard note-taking skills to work on, or even binders and other organizational materials to give students. Academic labs would be useful as well as that could be a resource for students in subjects in which their assigned teacher might not be strong in, when Students A-E had math issues I usually worked with the math teacher to find times for the student to meet with them as I was not able to help in that subject.

Conclusion

My research question looking into how regularly scheduled teacher meetings would affect academically struggling high school students was answered with one word: positively. It increased their grades, gave the students another positive connection in the school, and helped them come up with their own strategies to help themselves. This type

of intervention could positively affect schools and struggling students on a large scale basis if implemented in a secondary school.

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APPENDIX A

Permission Letter to School Administrators

5/2/2015

Mr. [REDACTED]

Principal of [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

RE: Permission to Conduct Research Study

Dear Principal [REDACTED]:

I am writing to request permission to conduct an action research study at your institution. I am currently enrolled in the Masters of Education program at Hamline University in St. Paul, MN, and am in the process of writing my Capstone. The study is entitled 'The Effects of Individualized Teacher Meetings on Struggling High School Students.'

I hope that the school administration will allow me to recruit up to 10 students from my 9th grade Global Studies and Economics class to anonymously complete two surveys, an interview, and to take part in individual meetings with myself to help them academically (copy enclosed). Due to the nature of the study, I hope to parents or guardians of these students to anonymously complete their survey (copy enclosed). I would also be asking other teachers of these students to answer short interview questions (copy enclosed). Interested students, who volunteer to participate, will be given a consent form to be signed by their parent or guardian (copy enclosed) and returned to the primary researcher at the beginning of the survey process. Parents who volunteer to participate will also be given consent forms to be signed and returned to the primary researcher (copy enclosed).

If approved, this study will take place during the 2015-16 school year. If approval is granted, student participants will complete the survey in a classroom or other quiet setting on the school site. The survey process should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete. Parent participants would complete the survey at home. Interviews will happen in person or over email. The survey results will be pooled for the capstone project and individual results of this study will remain absolutely confidential and anonymous. Should this study be published, only pooled results will be documented. No costs will be incurred by either your school/center or the individual participants.

Your approval to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated. I will follow up with a telephone call next week and would be happy to answer any questions or concerns that you may have at that time.

If you agree, kindly sign below and return the signed form in the enclosed self-addressed envelope. Alternatively, kindly submit a signed letter of permission on your institution's letterhead acknowledging your consent and permission for me to conduct this survey/study at your institution.

Sincerely,

Travis MacLeod
[REDACTED]

Approved by:

Print your name and title here

Signature

Date

5/2/2015

Mr. [REDACTED]

Superintendent of [REDACTED]

RE: Permission to Conduct Research Study

Dear Superintendent [REDACTED]:

I am writing to request permission to conduct an action research study at your institution. I am currently enrolled in the Masters of Education program at Hamline University in St. Paul, MN, and am in the process of writing my Capstone. The study is entitled 'The Effects of Individualized Teacher Meetings on Struggling High School Students.'

I hope that the school administration will allow me to recruit up to 10 students from my 9th grade Global Studies and Economics class to anonymously complete two surveys, an interview, and to take part in individual meetings with myself to help them academically (copy enclosed). Due to the nature of the study, I hope to parents or guardians of these students to anonymously complete their survey (copy enclosed). I would also be asking other teachers of these students to answer short interview questions (copy enclosed). Interested students, who volunteer to participate, will be given a consent form to be signed by their parent or guardian (copy enclosed) and returned to the primary researcher at the beginning of the survey process. Parents who volunteer to participate will also be given consent forms to be signed and returned to the primary researcher (copy enclosed).

If approved, this study will take place during the 2015-16 school year. If approval is granted, student participants will complete the survey in a classroom or other quiet setting on the school site. The survey process should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete. Parent participants would complete the survey at home. Interviews will happen in person or over email. The survey results will be pooled for the capstone project and individual results of this study will remain absolutely confidential and anonymous. Should this study be published, only pooled results will be documented. No costs will be incurred by either your school/center or the individual participants.

Your approval to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated. I will follow up with a telephone call next week and would be happy to answer any questions or concerns that you may have at that time.

If you agree, kindly sign below and return the signed form in the enclosed self-addressed envelope. Alternatively, kindly submit a signed letter of permission on your institution's letterhead acknowledging your consent and permission for me to conduct this survey/study at your institution.

Sincerely,

Travis MacLeod

Approved by:

Print your name and title here

Signature

Date

APPENDIX B

Student and Adult Permission Letters

Letter of Informed Consent Requesting Permission of Adults to Take Part in Research

05/02/15

Dear _____,

I am a graduate student working on an advanced degree in education at Hamline University, St. Paul, Minnesota. As part of my graduate work, I plan to conduct research in my classroom from September 8, 2015 – January 16, 2016. The purpose of this letter is to request your participation. This research is public scholarship the abstract and final product will be cataloged in Hamline's Bush Library Digital Commons, a searchable electronic repository and that it may be published or used in other ways.

The topic of my master's capstone (thesis) is how individual teacher meetings with struggling students will affect their grades. I plan on administering surveys over email to parents of eligible students of the study. Additionally, I plan on interviewing teachers of these students in person or over email at the beginning of the project in September and at the end of the project in January. After completing the capstone, I will summarize the findings in a report to be distributed to interview participants and to our school administrators.

There is little to no risk if you choose to be interviewed. All results will be confidential and anonymous. Pseudonyms for the district, schools, and participants will be used. The interviews will be conducted at a place and time that are convenient for you. The interview recordings will be destroyed after completion of my study.

Participation in the interview is voluntary, and, at any time, you may decline to be interviewed or to have your interview content deleted from the capstone without negative consequences.

I have received approval from the School of Education at Hamline University, from the school superintendent, and from the school principal to conduct this study. The capstone will be cataloged in Hamline's Bush Library Digital Commons, a searchable electronic repository. My results might be included in an article in a professional journal or a session at a professional conference. In all cases, your identity and participation in this study will be confidential.

If you agree to participate, keep this page. Fill out the duplicate agreement to participate on page two and return it to me by mail or copy the form in an email to me no later than _____. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Travis MacLeod

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

I have received your letter about the study you plan to conduct in which you having individual meetings, administering surveys, and administering interviews. I understand there is little to no risk involved for me, that my confidentiality will be protected, and that I may withdraw or my child may withdraw from the project at any time.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

To Parents/Guardians Requesting Permission for Minors to Take Part in Research

11/23/2015

Dear Parent or Guardian,

I am or will be your child's social studies teacher and a graduate student working on an advanced degree in education at Hamline University, St. Paul, Minnesota. As part of my graduate work, I plan to conduct research in my classroom from September 8, 2015 – January 16, 2016. The purpose of this letter is to ask your permission for your child to take part in my research. This research is public scholarship the abstract and final product will be cataloged in Hamline's Bush Library Digital Commons, a searchable electronic repository and that it may be published or used in other ways.

I want to study how having individualized meetings with struggling students will affect their grades. I will be meeting with your son or daughter for at least 15 minutes each week to work on academic skills, to form a positive relationship, or to just check in on their work. The steps in the research process would be for each student to fill out a survey before the start of the meetings in November and then at the conclusion of the meetings at the end of the semester in January. I will also ask each student to answer short interview questions about their feelings on the meetings.

There is little to no risk for your child to participate. All results will be confidential and anonymous. I will not record information about individual students, such as their names, nor report identifying information or characteristics in the capstone. Participation is voluntary and you may decide at any time and without negative consequences that information about your child will not be included in the capstone.

I have received approval for my study from the School of Education at Hamline University, from the district superintendent, and the school principal. The capstone will be cataloged in Hamline's Bush Library Digital Commons, a searchable electronic repository. My results might also be included in an article for publication in a professional journal or in a report at a professional conference. In all cases, your child's identity and participation in this study will be confidential.

If you agree that your child may participate, keep this page. Fill out the duplicate agreement to participate on page two and return to me by mail or copy the form in an email no later than December 4th. If you have any questions, please email or call me at school.

Sincerely,
Travis MacLeod



I have received your letter about the study you plan to conduct in which you having individual meetings, administering surveys, and administering interviews. I understand there is little to no risk involved for my child, that his/her confidentiality will be protected, and that I may withdraw or my child may withdraw from the project at any time.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Participant copy

Informed Consent to Participate in Qualitative Interview & Survey
Return this portion to Travis MacLeod

I have received your letter about the study you plan to conduct in which you having individual meetings, administering surveys, and administering interviews. I understand there is little to no risk involved for my child, that his/her confidentiality will be protected, and that I may withdraw or my child may withdraw from the project at any time.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Researcher copy

APPENDIX C

Student Eligibility Checklist

Student Eligibility Checklist

2014-2015 Spring Semester Grades

English _____

Social Studies _____

Math _____

Science _____

Elective _____

Elective _____

Elective _____

2015-16 Fall Semester Grades – Current

English _____

Social Studies _____

Math _____

Science _____

Elective _____

Elective _____

Elective _____

MCA Test Results (circle one)

7th Grade Reading: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

7th Grade Math: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

8th Grade Reading: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

8th Grade Math: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

_____ Eligible for study

_____ Not eligible for study

Student A

Student Eligibility Checklist

2014-2015 Spring Semester Grades

English D

Social Studies F

Math F

Science D+

Elective C+

Elective D-

Elective B-

2015-16 Fall Semester Grades – Current

English F

Social Studies D-

Math F

Science D-

Elective F

Elective D

Elective B-

MCA Test Results (circle one)

7th Grade Reading: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

7th Grade Math: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

8th Grade Reading: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

8th Grade Math: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

Eligible for study

Not eligible for study

Student B

Student Eligibility Checklist

2014-2015 Spring Semester Grades

English F

Social Studies C-

Math D-

Science F

Elective F

Elective B-

Elective B

2015-16 Fall Semester Grades – Current

English F

Social Studies D+

Math D

Science D-

Elective F

Elective B-

Elective C+

MCA Test Results (circle one)

7th Grade Reading: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

7th Grade Math: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

8th Grade Reading: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

8th Grade Math: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

Eligible for study

Not eligible for study

Student Eligibility Checklist

Student C

2014-2015 Spring Semester Grades

English A

Social Studies B+

Math B+

Science F

Elective F

Elective A

Elective A

2015-16 Fall Semester Grades – Current

English B-

Social Studies D

Math C

Science F

Elective F

Elective B+

Elective A

MCA Test Results (circle one)

7th Grade Reading: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

7th Grade Math: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

8th Grade Reading: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

8th Grade Math: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

Eligible for study

Not eligible for study

Student Eligibility Checklist

Student D

2014-2015 Spring Semester Grades

English C

Social Studies C+

Math F

Science D

Elective F

Elective B+

Elective B-

2015-16 Fall Semester Grades – Current

English C-

Social Studies C

Math D

Science D+

Elective B

Elective F

Elective F

MCA Test Results (circle one)

7th Grade Reading: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

7th Grade Math: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

8th Grade Reading: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

8th Grade Math: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

X Eligible for study

_____ Not eligible for study

Student E

Student Eligibility Checklist

2014-2015 Spring Semester Grades

English F

Social Studies F

Math F

Science D-

Elective F

Elective B

Elective C+

2015-16 Fall Semester Grades – Current

English F

Social Studies F

Math F

Science F

Elective F

Elective B

Elective F

MCA Test Results (circle one)

7th Grade Reading: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

7th Grade Math: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

8th Grade Reading: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

8th Grade Math: Does Not Meet Standards Partially Meets Standards Meets Standards Exceeds Standards

X Eligible for study

_____ Not eligible for study

APPENDIX D

Student Surveys: Questions and Results

Student Surveys

1) How do you feel you are performing in your classes at school?

a) very well b) well c) adequate d) not well e) poorly

2) If you answered D or E for question 1, why do you feel as though you are not performing well?

a) content is too difficult b) academic skills (note-taking, studying) are lacking

c) lack of motivation and/or effort d) Other

3) How is your confidence level in regards to your ability to perform well in the classroom?

a) high b) adequate c) low

4) How would you describe the relationships with your teachers overall?

a) great b) good c) ok – not good or bad d) not good e) poor

5) Do you have a specific teacher or teachers that you feel a strong positive connection?

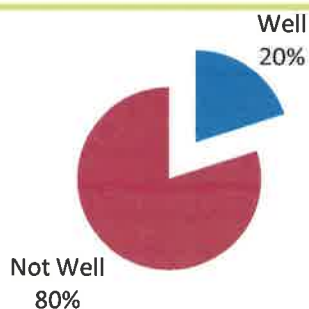
a) yes b) no

6) Are you involved in any school sport or activity? Examples include basketball, Key Club, school musical, GSA club.

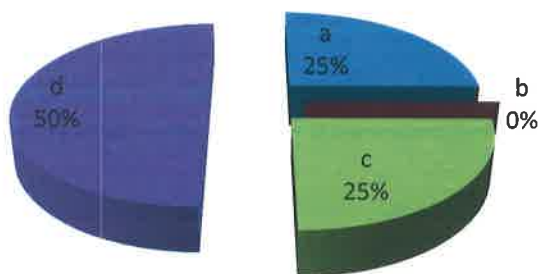
a) yes b) no

7) If you answered yes to question 6, please list all sports and/or activities below.

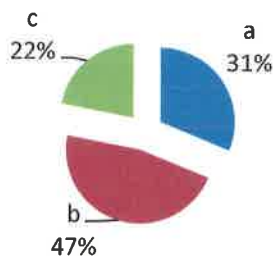
How do you feel you are performing at school?



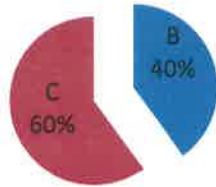
Why do you feel as though you are not performing well?



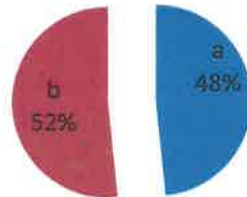
How is your confidence level in regards to your ability to perform well in the classroom?



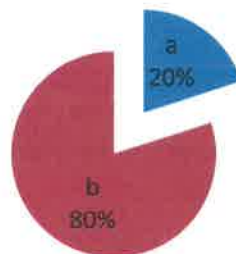
How would you describe the relationships with your teachers overall?



Do you have a specific teacher or teachers that you feel a strong positive connection?



Are you involved in any school sport or activity?



Student Surveys

1) How do you feel you are performing in your classes at school?

- a) very well b) well c) adequate d) not well e) poorly

2) If you answered D or E for question 1, why do you feel as though you are not performing well?

- a) content is too difficult b) academic skills (note-taking, studying) are lacking
c) lack of motivation and/or effort d) Other

3) How is your confidence level in regards to your ability to perform well in the classroom?

- a) high b) adequate c) low

4) How would you describe the relationships with your teachers overall?

- a) great b) good c) ok – not good or bad d) not good e) poor

5) Do you have a specific teacher or teachers that you feel a strong positive connection?

- a) yes b) no

6) Are you involved in any school sport or activity? Examples include basketball, Key Club, school musical, GSA club.

- a) yes b) no

7) If you answered yes to question 6, please list all sports and/or activities below.

Student Surveys

1) How do you feel you are performing in your classes at school?

- a) very well b) well c) adequate d) not well e) poorly

2) If you answered D or E for question 1, why do you feel as though you are not performing well?

- a) content is too difficult b) academic skills (note-taking, studying) are lacking
c) lack of motivation and/or effort d) Other

3) How is your confidence level in regards to your ability to perform well in the classroom?

- a) high b) adequate c) low

4) How would you describe the relationships with your teachers overall?

- a) great b) good c) ok – not good or bad d) not good e) poor

5) Do you have a specific teacher or teachers that you feel a strong positive connection?

- a) yes b) no

6) Are you involved in any school sport or activity? Examples include basketball, Key Club, school musical, GSA club.

- a) yes b) no

Yes

7) If you answered yes to question 6, please list all sports and/or activities below.

I was in basketball

Student Surveys

Student C

1) How do you feel you are performing in your classes at school?

- a) very well b) well c) adequate d) not well e) poorly

2) If you answered D or E for question 1, why do you feel as though you are not performing well?

- a) content is too difficult b) academic skills (note-taking, studying) are lacking

- c) lack of motivation and/or effort d) Other

3) How is your confidence level in regards to your ability to perform well in the classroom?

- a) high b) adequate c) low

4) How would you describe the relationships with your teachers overall?

- a) great b) good c) ok – not good or bad d) not good e) poor

5) Do you have a specific teacher or teachers that you feel a strong positive connection?

- a) yes b) no

6) Are you involved in any school sport or activity? Examples include basketball, Key Club, school musical, GSA club.

- a) yes b) no

7) If you answered yes to question 6, please list all sports and/or activities below.

Student Surveys

Student D

1) How do you feel you are performing in your classes at school?

- a) very well b) well c) adequate d) not well e) poorly

2) If you answered D or E for question 1, why do you feel as though you are not performing well?

- a) content is too difficult b) academic skills (note-taking, studying) are lacking
c) lack of motivation and/or effort d) Other

Cannot keep my mind on one thing at a time

3) How is your confidence level in regards to your ability to perform well in the classroom?

- a) high b) adequate c) low

~~not sure~~

4) How would you describe the relationships with your teachers overall?

- a) great b) good c) ok – not good or bad d) not good e) poor

5) Do you have a specific teacher or teachers that you feel a strong positive connection?

- a) yes b) no

6) Are you involved in any school sport or activity? Examples include basketball, Key Club, school musical, GSA club.

- a) yes b) no

Football, Baseball

7) If you answered yes to question 6, please list all sports and/or activities below.

Football, Baseball

Student Surveys

1) How do you feel you are performing in your classes at school?

- a) very well b) well c) adequate d) not well e) poorly

2) If you answered D or E for question 1, why do you feel as though you are not performing well?

- a) content is too difficult b) academic skills (note-taking, studying) are lacking
c) lack of motivation and/or effort d) Other

3) How is your confidence level in regards to your ability to perform well in the classroom?

- a) high b) adequate c) low

4) How would you describe the relationships with your teachers overall?

- a) great b) good c) ok – not good or bad d) not good e) poor

5) Do you have a specific teacher or teachers that you feel a strong positive connection?

- a) yes b) no

6) Are you involved in any school sport or activity? Examples include basketball, Key Club, school musical, GSA club.

- a) yes b) no

7) If you answered yes to question 6, please list all sports and/or activities below.

APPENDIX E

Parent Surveys: Questions and Results

Parent Surveys

1) How do you feel your son or daughter is performing in their classes at school?

- a) very well b) well c) adequate d) not well e) poorly

2) If you answered D or E for question 1, why do you feel as though they are not performing well?

- a) content is too difficult b) academic skills (note-taking, studying) are lacking
c) lack of motivation and/or effort d) Other

3) How would you rate your son or daughter's confidence level in regards to their ability to perform well in the classroom?

- a) high b) adequate c) low

4) How would you describe the relationships your son or daughter has with their teachers overall?

- a) great b) good c) ok – not good or bad d) not good e) poor

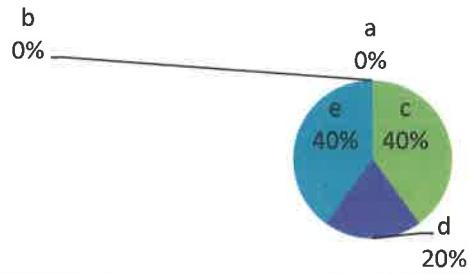
5) Do you believe they have a specific teacher or teachers that they have a strong positive connection?

- a) yes b) no

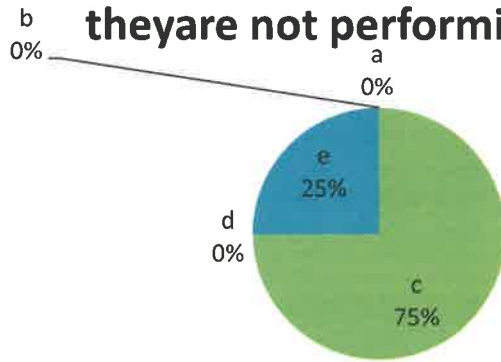
6) What is your opinion of the school's effort level to help your son or daughter with their academics?

- a) great b) good c) ok – not good or bad d) not good e) poor

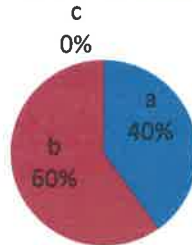
How do you feel your son or daughter is performing in their classes at school



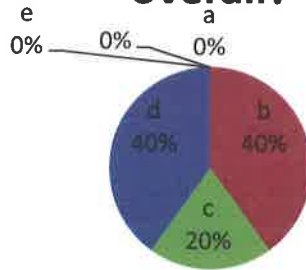
Why do you feel as though they are not performing well?



How would you rate your son or daughter's confidence level in regards to their ability to perform well in the classroom?



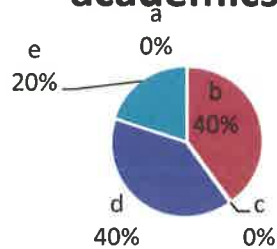
How would you describe the relationships your son or daughter has with their teachers overall?



Do you believe they have a specific teacher or teachers that they have a strong positive connection?



What is your opinion of the school's effort level to help your son or daughter with their academics?



Parent Surveys

Student A

1) How do you feel your son or daughter is performing in their classes at school?

- a) very well b) well c) adequate d) not well e) poorly

2) If you answered D or E for question 1, why do you feel as though they are not performing well?

- a) content is too difficult b) academic skills (note-taking, studying) are lacking
c) lack of motivation and/or effort d) Other

3) How would you rate your son or daughter's confidence level in regards to their ability to perform well in the classroom?

- a) high b) adequate c) low

4) How would you describe the relationships your son or daughter has with their teachers overall?

- a) great b) good c) ok – not good or bad d) not good e) poor

5) Do you believe they have a specific teacher or teachers that they have a strong positive connection?

- a) yes b) no

6) What is your opinion of the school's effort level to help your son or daughter with their academics?

- a) great b) good c) ok – not good or bad d) not good e) poor

Parent Surveys

Student B

1) How do you feel your son or daughter is performing in their classes at school?

- a) very well b) well c) adequate d) not well e) poorly

2) If you answered D or E for question 1, why do you feel as though they are not performing well?

- a) content is too difficult b) academic skills (note-taking, studying) are lacking

- c) lack of motivation and/or effort d) Other

3) How would you rate your son or daughter's confidence level in regards to their ability to perform well in the classroom?

- a) high b) adequate c) low

4) How would you describe the relationships your son or daughter has with their teachers overall?

- a) great b) good c) ok - not good or bad d) not good e) poor

5) Do you believe they have a specific teacher or teachers that they have a strong positive connection?

- a) yes b) no

6) What is your opinion of the school's effort level to help your son or daughter with their academics?

- a) great b) good c) ok - not good or bad d) not good e) poor

Parent Surveys

Student C

1) How do you feel your son or daughter is performing in their classes at school?

- a) very well b) well c) adequate d) not well e) poorly

2) If you answered D or E for question 1, why do you feel as though they are not performing well?

- a) content is too difficult b) academic skills (note-taking, studying) are lacking
c) lack of motivation and/or effort d) Other

3) How would you rate your son or daughter's confidence level in regards to their ability to perform well in the classroom?

- a) high b) adequate c) low

4) How would you describe the relationships your son or daughter has with their teachers overall?

- a) great b) good c) ok – not good or bad d) not good e) poor

5) Do you believe they have a specific teacher or teachers that they have a strong positive connection?

- a) yes b) no

6) What is your opinion of the school's effort level to help your son or daughter with their academics?

- a) great b) good c) ok – not good or bad d) not good e) poor

Parent Surveys

Student D

1) How do you feel your son or daughter is performing in their classes at school?

- a) very well b) well c) adequate d) not well e) poorly

2) If you answered D or E for question 1, why do you feel as though they are not performing well?

- a) content is too difficult b) academic skills (note-taking, studying) are lacking
c) lack of motivation and/or effort d) Other

3) How would you rate your son or daughter's confidence level in regards to their ability to perform well in the classroom?

- a) high b) adequate c) low

4) How would you describe the relationships your son or daughter has with their teachers overall?

- a) great b) good c) ok – not good or bad d) not good e) poor

5) Do you believe they have a specific teacher or teachers that they have a strong positive connection?

- a) yes b) no

6) What is your opinion of the school's effort level to help your son or daughter with their academics?

- a) great b) good c) ok – not good or bad d) not good e) poor

Parent Surveys

Student E

1) How do you feel your son or daughter is performing in their classes at school?

- a) very well b) well c) adequate d) not well e) poorly

2) If you answered D or E for question 1, why do you feel as though they are not performing well?

- a) content is too difficult b) academic skills (note-taking, studying) are lacking
c) lack of motivation and/or effort d) Other

3) How would you rate your son or daughter's confidence level in regards to their ability to perform well in the classroom?

- a) high b) adequate c) low

4) How would you describe the relationships your son or daughter has with their teachers overall?

- a) great b) good c) ok – not good or bad d) not good e) poor

5) Do you believe they have a specific teacher or teachers that they have a strong positive connection?

- a) yes b) no

6) What is your opinion of the school's effort level to help your son or daughter with their academics?

- a) great b) good c) ok – not good or bad d) not good e) poor

APPENDIX F

Student Interview: Questions and Results

Student Interview Questions

1) What are your thoughts on the meetings you took part in with your Global Studies and Economics teacher during Fall Semester?

2) Do you feel as though this process was helpful for you?

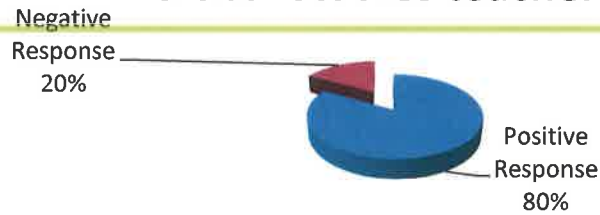
3) If it was helpful what did you like most about it?

4) If was not helpful could you describe why?

5) Did you feel a stronger connection to school at the end of this semester than you did before the semester started?

6) Any other thoughts or comments on this process you took part in?

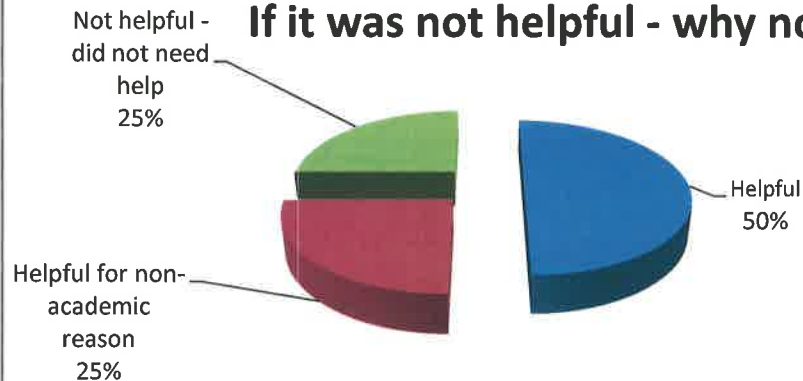
What are your thoughts on the meetings you took part in with your Global Studies teacher?



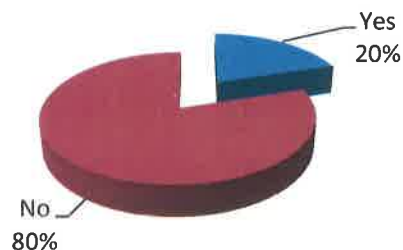
Do you feel as though this process was helpful for you?



If it was helpful - why? If it was not helpful - why not?



Did you feel a stronger connection to school at the end of this semester than you did before the semester started?



Student Interview Questions – Student A

1) What are your thoughts on the meetings you took part in with your Global Studies and Economics teacher during Fall Semester?

I enjoyed speaking with him and just talking instead of getting lectured about my homework not being in.

2) Do you feel as though this process was helpful for you?

Yes.

3) If it was helpful what did you like most about it?

Tips for my social studies class and how to talk to teachers.

4) If was not helpful could you describe why?

5) Did you feel a stronger connection to school at the end of this semester than you did before the semester started?

Not really.

6) Any other thoughts or comments on this process you took part in?

I looked forward to my meetings.

Student Interview Questions – Student B

1) What are your thoughts on the meetings you took part in with your Global Studies and Economics teacher during Fall Semester?

They were fine.

2) Do you feel as though this process was helpful for you?

Yes.

3) If it was helpful what did you like most about it?

It helped me know what assignments I was missing. Didn't mind talking about other things outside of school.

4) If was not helpful could you describe why?

5) Did you feel a stronger connection to school at the end of this semester than you did before the semester started?

No.

6) Any other thoughts or comments on this process you took part in?

Student Interview Questions – Student C

1) What are your thoughts on the meetings you took part in with your Global Studies and Economics teacher during Fall Semester?

I didn't like them

2) Do you feel as though this process was helpful for you?

No.

3) If it was helpful what did you like most about it?

4) If was not helpful could you describe why?

I didn't need any help.

5) Did you feel a stronger connection to school at the end of this semester than you did before the semester started?

No.

6) Any other thoughts or comments on this process you took part in?

Student Interview Questions – Student D

1) What are your thoughts on the meetings you took part in with your Global Studies and Economics teacher during Fall Semester?

They were useful for me to get a grasp on what needed to be done in my classes.

2) Do you feel as though this process was helpful for you?

Yes.

3) If it was helpful what did you like most about it?

It helped to know MacLeod and to have someone to talk with.

4) If was not helpful could you describe why?

5) Did you feel a stronger connection to school at the end of this semester than you did before the semester started?

Yes.

6) Any other thoughts or comments on this process you took part in?

I am excited to have MacLeod again next year.

Student Interview Questions – Student E

1) What are your thoughts on the meetings you took part in with your Global Studies and Economics teacher during Fall Semester?

OK

2) Do you feel as though this process was helpful for you?

Yes.

3) If it was helpful what did you like most about it?

It got me out of class.

4) If was not helpful could you describe why?

5) Did you feel a stronger connection to school at the end of this semester than you did before the semester started?

No.

6) Any other thoughts or comments on this process you took part in?

APPENDIX G

Teacher Interview: Questions and Results

Student A – Teacher Interviews

I am working on finishing up my masters right through Hamline right now. Part of this process is for me to meet with students who are struggling in school that I have in class or will have in class next semester. I am to journal how these meetings go and record their grades throughout. Student A is one of the students I am meeting with. If you could do me a huge favor and answer the questions below, I would be very appreciative. All that is needed is just a few words for each question. If you want to know any more about my research project, feel free to come chat with me about it.

- 1) What are your thoughts on Student A level of effort in your classroom?
- 2) What are your thoughts on Student A level of confidence with academics in your classroom?
- 3) What are your thoughts on Student A level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom?
- 4) What are your thoughts on Student A level of understanding content in your classroom?

THANK YOU

- 1) What are your thoughts on Cole's level of effort in your classroom?

Low to almost no effort

- 2) What are your thoughts on Cole's level of confidence with academics in your classroom?

He is not a very confident student

- 3) What are your thoughts on Cole's level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom?

When he does do work, it does not seem to be on pace with his grade level

- 4) What are your thoughts on Cole's level of understanding content in your classroom?

It is hard to tell. Most of the content I would say that he does not get it, but every so often he will surprise me and really show understanding.

- 1) What are your thoughts on Cole's level of effort in your classroom?

Low

- 2) What are your thoughts on Cole's level of confidence with academics in your classroom?

Low

- 3) What are your thoughts on Cole's level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom?

Low

- 4) What are your thoughts on Cole's level of understanding content in your classroom? level of effort in your classroom?

I think he could understand content if he were paying attention, but more often than not he is only paying attention to the friend who sits across the room.

- 1) What are your thoughts on Cole's level of effort in your classroom?

Not much effort put forth by Cole

2) What are your thoughts on Cole's level of confidence with academics in your classroom?
He seems confident that he will get all of his late work done

3) What are your thoughts on Cole's level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom?
Handwriting is very messy, to the point where he cannot read his own notes. I'm not sure of his other skills since his effort is so low.

4) What are your thoughts on Cole's level of understanding content in your classroom? level of effort in your classroom?
Everyone once in awhile he will 'get' something we are talking about, so I believe that if he was really trying that he could have some success.

Student B – Teacher Interviews

Hey everyone,

I am working on finishing up my masters right through Hamline right now. Part of this process is for me to meet with students who are struggling in school that I have in class or will have in class next semester. I am to journal how these meetings go and record their grades throughout. Student B is one of the students I am meeting with. If you could do me a huge favor and answer the questions below, I would be very appreciative. All that is needed is just a few words for each question. If you want to know any more about my research project, feel free to come chat with me about it.

- 1) What are your thoughts on Student B level of effort in your classroom?
- 2) What are your thoughts on Student B level of confidence with academics in your classroom?
- 3) What are your thoughts on Student B level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom?
- 4) What are your thoughts on Student B level of understanding content in your classroom?

THANK YOU

- 1) What are your thoughts on Joe's level of effort in your classroom?
-generally pretty low
 - 2) What are your thoughts on Joe's level of confidence with academics in your classroom?
-he's not very confident, usually just gives up or doesn't try
 - 3) What are your thoughts on Joe's level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom?
-he's usually not very engaged, rarely studies
 - 4) What are your thoughts on Joe's level of understanding content in your classroom?
-it's a TOPS class so a little different, no real content per se
-
- 1) What are your thoughts on Joe's level of effort in your classroom? very erratic. if he put 100% effort into his work all the time he would exceed expectations in all categories of his artwork and performance.
 - 2) What are your thoughts on Joe's level of confidence with academics in your classroom? joe knows he can draw well so i feel he has a high level of confidence in that aspect. in other aspects, social, etc i see him down and sluggish at times.
 - 3) What are your thoughts on Joe's level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom? written work from joe is lacking. when he does turn some in it is very vague and minimal.
 - 4) What are your thoughts on Joe's level of understanding content in your classroom? he understands art, he loves it, it is one of his passions. he is a very talented artist!!!!

For Digital Art:

1. very low (during photo unit he would often try to leave class and not return) but seems to be a bit better in the past week.
2. He acts confident but I think it is lower.
3. Not much academic effort but, again, this week he has come in twice during TOPS to complete an assignment.
4. With such low effort we do talk regularly and he'll say he understands what he needs to do, but this is always a concern of mine since not all students like to admit they just don't get it.

1) What are your thoughts on Joe's level of effort in your classroom?

Fairly low level effort. If he has someone sitting beside him that wants him to succeed, his effort is better.

> 2) What are your thoughts on Joe's level of confidence with academics in your classroom?

I would guess he has a very low level of confidence, but that is a guess.

> 3) What are your thoughts on Joe's level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom?

Low level skills for note taking and studying.

He often draws pictures when we take notes and do classwork. I don't think he studies unless someone is in top of him.

> 4) What are your thoughts on Joe's level of understanding content in your classroom?

Very low level understanding. He needs to study and pay attention more than most to make up for his lack of background skills. He does less than most, probably as a method of self defense.

1) I think his effort is just below average. He could do more.

2) His confidence is not very high with academics in my class, it is something that I have been trying to build in him so far this year.

3) Very low. He has a hard time staying organized and paying attention to anything when there is external stimuli.

4) In Algebra 1 I would say his understanding is right around C- or D+ level. With the right motivation, effort, and confidence there is no reason Joe couldn't be at a B-level of understanding algebra 1 concepts.

Student C – Teacher Interviews

Hey everyone,

I am working on finishing up my masters right through Hamline right now. Part of this process is for me to meet with students who are struggling in school that I have in class or will have in class next semester. I am to journal how these meetings go and record their grades throughout. Student C is one of the students I am meeting with. If you could do me a huge favor and answer the questions below, I would be very appreciative. All that is needed is just a few words for each question. If you want to know any more about my research project, feel free to come chat with me about it.

- 1) What are your thoughts on Student C level of effort in your classroom?
- 2) What are your thoughts on Student C level of confidence with academics in your classroom?
- 3) What are your thoughts on Student C level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom?
- 4) What are your thoughts on Student C level of understanding content in your classroom?

THANK YOU

- 1) What are your thoughts on Student C level of effort in your classroom?

Ella is a very bright student who is not putting forth much effort in class.

- 2) What are your thoughts on Student C level of confidence with academics in your classroom?

She has a high level of confidence with her ability to comprehend knowledge. She has shown that she can do well sometimes with minimal efforts.

- 3) What are your thoughts on Student C level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom?

Ella has a high level of skill. If there was effort there, she would be doing very well.

- 4) What are your thoughts on Student C level of understanding content in your classroom?

She understands content without many issues.

- 1) What are your thoughts on Student C level of effort in your classroom?

Not much effort put forth by Ella

- 2) What are your thoughts on Student C level of confidence with academics in your classroom?

High level of confidence

- 3) What are your thoughts on Student C level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom?

High level of skills

- 4) What are your thoughts on Student C level of understanding content in your classroom?

Ella understands concepts - as she does well on tests - but she does not turn in her daily work.

- 1) What are your thoughts on Student C level of effort in your classroom?

Generally very low. She is concerned about her cell phone and her friends in class quite a bit though.

- 2) What are your thoughts on Student C level of confidence with academics in your classroom?

She is a confident student, confident to a fault. She believes that no matter regardless of what her current grade is at or how much make up work she has that she will get it done and get a good grade.

3) What are your thoughts on Student C level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom?
She seems to be very bright with a lot of academic skills. Her notes are neat and well organized, and her reading level is high.

4) What are your thoughts on Student C level of understanding content in your classroom?
Ella certainly understands the content of most anything we have done in class....that is if she paid attention to any of it!

1) What are your thoughts on Student C level of effort in your classroom?
She has shown flashes of good effort mixed in with big chunks of time with little to no effort.

2) What are your thoughts on Student C level of confidence with academics in your classroom?
She is a confident student.

3) What are your thoughts on Student C level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom?
Ella is bright and her skills are strong. She can slack in class and get things done on her own. Unfortunately, she has been neglecting getting things done on her own (as well as in class) lately.

4) What are your thoughts on Student C level of understanding content in your classroom?
When she is 'locked in' she really gets it. There have been many discussions about her cell phone, she can't seem to stay off it.

1) What are your thoughts on Student C level of effort in your classroom?
She has shown flashes of good effort mixed in with big chunks of time with little to no effort.

2) What are your thoughts on Student C level of confidence with academics in your classroom?
She is a confident student.

3) What are your thoughts on Student C level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom?
Ella is bright and her skills are strong. She can slack in class and get things done on her own. Unfortunately, she has been neglecting getting things done on her own (as well as in class) lately.

4) What are your thoughts on Student C level of understanding content in your classroom?
When she is 'locked in' she really gets it. There have been many discussions about her cell phone, she can't seem to stay off it.

1) What are your thoughts on Student C level of effort in your classroom?
Fair to low

2) What are your thoughts on Student C level of confidence with academics in your classroom?
I think she is a bright student who can succeed in this class

3) What are your thoughts on Student C level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom?
She hasn't been turning in work lately, and we're only a month in, but the written work I have seen is strong

4) What are your thoughts on Student C level of understanding content in your classroom?
She has a strong understanding of written and grammar

Student D – Teacher Interviews

Hey everyone,

I am working on finishing up my masters right through Hamline right now. Part of this process is for me to meet with students who are struggling in school that I have in class or will have in class next semester. I am to journal how these meetings go and record their grades throughout. Student D is one of the students I am meeting with. If you could do me a huge favor and answer the questions below, I would be very appreciative. All that is needed is just a few words for each question. If you want to know any more about my research project, feel free to come chat with me about it.

- 1) What are your thoughts on Student D level of effort in your classroom?
- 2) What are your thoughts on Student D level of confidence with academics in your classroom?
- 3) What are your thoughts on Student D level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom?
- 4) What are your thoughts on Student D level of understanding content in your classroom?

THANK YOU

- 1) What are your thoughts on Student D level of effort in your classroom?

Student D has seemingly been acting out by not doing work and disrupting class. He also has his girlfriend in class, which doesn't help things.

- 2) What are your thoughts on Student D level of confidence with academics in your classroom?

He has a high level of confidence, which he should since he is very smart, but he has not realized how much his current actions could hurt his grade.

- 3) What are your thoughts on Student D level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom?

Student D is naturally smart, but you can tell that he has gotten by on that in the past. Student D believes that he does not need to study or take notes.

- 4) What are your thoughts on Student D level of understanding content in your classroom?

I think he grasps some of the big concepts better than most in my class. He will ask or answer a question every once in a while that shows a level of understanding that most of the students do not. The flip side of that is that he will also not get some basic information since he was not paying attention or did not study – that is hurting him.

- 1) What are your thoughts on Student D level of effort in your classroom?

It could be better, but he is doing decently.

- 2) What are your thoughts on Student D level of confidence with academics in your classroom?

He has a lot of confidence in the content.

- 3) What are your thoughts on Student D level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom?

Student D seems to have a high level of academic skills.

- 4) What are your thoughts on Student D level of understanding content in your classroom?

Student D understands the content in class.

Hey everyone,

I am working on finishing up my masters right through Hamline right now. Part of this process is for me to meet with students who are struggling in school that I have in class or will have in class next semester. I am to journal how these meetings go and record their grades throughout. Student E is one of the students I am meeting with. If you could do me a huge favor and answer the questions below, I would be very appreciative. All that is needed is just a few words for each question. If you want to know any more about my research project, feel free to come chat with me about it.

- 1) What are your thoughts on Student E level of effort in your classroom?
- 2) What are your thoughts on Student E level of confidence with academics in your classroom?
- 3) What are your thoughts on Student E level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom?
- 4) What are your thoughts on Student E level of understanding content in your classroom?

THANK YOU

- 1) What are your thoughts on Student E level of effort in your classroom?

Non-existent. I believe he is purposely attempted to fail this class or to get as low of a percentage as possible.

- 2) What are your thoughts on Student E level of confidence with academics in your classroom?

He has a lot of confidence, which is unwarranted.

- 3) What are your thoughts on Student E level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom?

Very low skills. From the little I have seen Student E is not on level with his peers.

- 4) What are your thoughts on Student E level of understanding content in your classroom?

I believe it is over his head, and instead of working harder to understand the content Student E has tried to play 'cool' and not do anything in an attempt to 'save face.'

- 1) What are your thoughts on Student E level of effort in your classroom?

Student E does not do anything in my class. He actually seems to work hard to not do anything.

- 2) What are your thoughts on Student E level of confidence with academics in your classroom?

Student E feels like he can "turn it on" and start doing well, but it has not happened yet. He does not get, or care, how much work he already would have to do to catch up.

- 3) What are your thoughts on Student E level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom?

From the small amounts I have seen they are very low. I think Student E is bright and have offered help before or after school, but he has not come. I think he could grasp some of these skills and content if he really wanted to.

- 4) What are your thoughts on Student E level of understanding content in your classroom?

He gets some of the main concepts just from hearing us talk about it – I think he is smart in that regard. His daily work and effort on any activity in class are what lacks.

1) What are your thoughts on Student E level of effort in your classroom?
Generally not much effort there.

2) What are your thoughts on Student E level of confidence with academics in your classroom?
Student E thinks he understands a lot of the material, and he might, but he has not shown it

3) What are your thoughts on Student E level academic skills (note taking, studying) in your classroom?
Has not shown those skills yet, and it is still pretty early for me to tell that

4) What are your thoughts on Student E level of understanding content in your classroom?
He gets some of the stuff we are talking about, but does not get most of it. He takes in what he hears us talk about during lectures and thinks that is good enough.

APPENDIX H

Student Final Grades

Student Final Grades

2015-16 Fall Semester Grades as of 9/23/15

English F ----->

Social Studies B- ----->

Math F ----->

Science D- ----->

Elective F ----->

Elective D ----->

Elective B- ----->

2015-16 Fall Semester Final Grades

English D-

Social Studies C+

Math D-

Science D-

Elective F

Elective D

Elective B-

Student Final Grades

2015-16 Fall Semester Grades as of 9/23/15

English F ----->

Social Studies D+ ----->

Math D ----->

Science D- ----->

Elective F ----->

Elective B- ----->

Elective C+ ----->

2015-16 Fall Semester Final Grades

English F

Social Studies C-

Math D+

Science D-

Elective F

Elective B

Elective B-

Student C

Student Final Grades

2015-16 Fall Semester Grades as of 9/23/15

English B- ----->

Social Studies D ----->

Math C ----->

Science F ----->

Elective F ----->

Elective B+ ----->

Elective A ----->

2015-16 Fall Semester Final Grades

English B-

Social Studies C+

Math C

Science C

Elective D

Elective B+

Elective A-

Student D

Student Final Grades

2015-16 Fall Semester Grades as of 9/23/15

2015-16 Fall Semester Final Grades

English C- ----->

English C-

Social Studies C ----->

Social Studies C

Math D ----->

Math D

Science D+ ----->

Science D+

Elective B ----->

Elective B

Elective F ----->

Elective F

Elective F ----->

Elective F

Student E

Student Final Grades

2015-16 Fall Semester Grades as of 9/23/15

English F ----->

Social Studies F ----->

Math F ----->

Science F ----->

Elective F ----->

Elective B ----->

Elective F ----->

2015-16 Fall Semester Final Grades

English F

Social Studies F

Math F

Science F

Elective F

Elective F

Elective F

APPENDIX I

Human Subjects Committee Application



MacLeod, Travis W. <tmacleod01@hamline.edu>

HSC Approval

1 message

Speranza-Reeder, Mary <msperanzareeder01@hamline.edu>

Wed, Jul 29, 2015 at 12:54 PM

To: "Travis W. MacLeod" <tmacleod01@hamline.edu>, "Susan L. Manikowski" <smanikowski01@hamline.edu>

To: Travis MacLeod
From: Barbara Swanson
Date: 7-29-15
Re: HSC Approval

On behalf of the Human Subjects Committee, we are pleased to inform you that your application has been unconditionally approved and that you are now able to collect data related to your capstone. Please accept our best wishes for the successful completion of your project.

Barbara Swanson, EdD
Chair, HSC Committee
School of Education
Hamline University
bswanson@hamline.edu
(651) 523-2813



Mary Speranza-Reeder
Program Administrator
School of Education
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Data from form "IRB Proposal: All Researchers except HSE" was received on 6/8/2015 2:34:47 PM.

For all researchers except for HSE

Field	Value
Title of Proposal	THE EFFECTS OF INDIVIDUALIZED TEACHER MEETINGS ON STRUGGLING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
Investigator	Travis MacLeod
Telephone	<u>6129782558</u>
Investigator email	<u>twoulfemac@gmail.com</u>
Department chair	Mary Sperenza-Reeder
Department chair telephone	<u>6129782558</u>
Department chair email	<u>msperanzareeder01@hamline.edu</u>
Purpose of Study	To find out what, if any, benefits happen when struggling students are assigned to a teacher advisor.
Eligible for expedited review	true
Other institutions	N/A
Participants	Through their past academic performances.
At-risk participants	I will be meeting with 9th grade students to see if I can help them academically.
Research procedures	My research question is: How will regularly scheduled teacher meetings affect high school students in my social studies classes who are struggling with academics? This project comes from my desire to find additional supports for students in our school who struggle, but do not get the accommodations or modifications that an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or a Section 504 Plan can offer. To answer this question I will be using a mixed-methods approach of research, involving the use of interviews, surveys, observations, and data interpretation. This research method will be used on students, parents, and staff members from the school I currently work at. I intend to start this action research at the beginning of the 2015-

Field	Value
	<p>16 school year. Once schedules are finalized, in August of 2015, I will find out which students meet the requirements of 'struggling' for my study. I will use our data warehouse program to look up previous grades and make the list of my students. Once this is completed I will start in with the permission process. Permission for the study needs to come from three different sources, administration at the school, the eligible students, and the parents of the students. This permission will be requested in the form of a letter to all three parties. The first step in this process is to secure the permission from the school principal and district superintendant. The letter addressed to each person will describe the proposed study and who would be involved. Letters to the students and parents would be similar in that they will be describing the study, what school I am associated with, and what will happen with the results. Teachers will also be asked for their permission, they will have the same permission letter as the parents. Interviews, surveys, and observations will be done with the participating students, fellow teachers of these students, and their parents. Individual meetings with the students will happen at least 1 time a week during prep hours, before school, or after school. The goal of these meetings is to form a positive relationship that will help their academics. This process will go from the beginning of the school year until the end of 1st semester in January of 2016.</p>
Negative effects resources	n/a
Feedback	Families of students involved will receive results of their individual student.