PEER TUTORS: A PROJECT TO IMPROVE INCLUSIVE PRACTICES AT AN URBAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

A Project

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by

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Graduate and Professional Studies in Education
Abstract

of

PEER TUTORS: A PROJECT TO IMPROVE INCLUSIVE PRACTICES AT AN URBAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

by

RaeAnne Rebecca Piccirilli

The way special education services are currently provided and organized is a major limitation to inclusive education. Further, teachers have diminished resources and yet the same responsibility to ensure access to the curriculum for a more diverse body of students. It takes a re-organization of how supports and services are provided (Sailor & Roger, 2005). Teachers in inclusive settings are striving to find and use a variety of strategies to support the learning of all students. One such strategy is peer tutoring. The purpose of this project was to create a series of lessons to teach children in grades 3 through 6 how to be respectful and effective tutors. A secondary purpose was to increase the academic and social skills of both the tutors and tutees involved.

_______________________, Committee Chair
Kathleen Gee, Ph. D.

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Date
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Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION
Background of the Problem

Today, inclusion for students with significant disabilities is considered best practice because it gives students access to the general education curriculum and learning activities in the context of their typically developing peers (McDonnell & Hunt, 2014). However, there are many barriers to quality inclusive education that schools and teachers face. The way special education services are currently provided and organized creates barriers to inclusive education. Further, teachers have diminished resources and yet the responsibility to ensure access to the curriculum for a more diverse body of students. For inclusive schooling to work, it takes a re-organization of how supports and services are provided (Sailor & Roger, 2005). Facilitating services and reorganizing the way individual supports are provided for students requires money for training that many school districts do not have. Inadequate funding can hinder ongoing support and professional development that is needed to keep both specialists and teachers updated on the best practices of inclusive schooling. This can lead to professionals developing negative attitudes towards inclusive practices, further delaying it (Fuchs, 2010).

In an effort to provide supports for students and teachers in inclusive classrooms, paraeducators are sometimes assigned to individual students who lack the social and educational skills to participate in the classroom independently. However, paraeducators are not always the best solution for providing a free and appropriate education for students with disabilities (Giangreco & Broer, 2007). Research shows that an individually
assigned paraeducator may contribute to students having less interaction with peers and less engagement in the curriculum (Carter, Sisco, Melekoglu, & Kurkowski, 2007). Rather, there are other strategies that can facilitate successful inclusive classrooms (Bond & Castagnera, 2006). Project based learning, cooperative learning, peer tutoring, and peer coaching are all approaches that can support not only students with disabilities but all students. A peer-tutoring program can benefit both the tutor and the tutee socially and educationally (Carter, Clark, Cushing, & Kennedy, 2005).

Research Problem

The research problem in this project was finding strategies that will support inclusive classrooms and successful academic and social growth for all students. One such strategy is peer tutoring. This project was focused on determining effective peer tutoring strategies from the literature and applying them to an elementary inclusive school.

Purpose of Project

The purpose of this project was to create a series of lessons to teach children in grades 3 through 6 how to be respectful and effective tutors. A secondary purpose was to increase the academic and social skills of both the tutors and tutees involved.

Theoretical Framework

To many researchers and families, inclusive education is a civil rights issue (Thomas, 2013). Individuals with disabilities deserve equal access and the same opportunities to quality education as people without disabilities. The intent of the original law was that access would be attained with the passing of the Education for All
Handicapped Children Act in 1975. It was revised in 1990, 1997, and 2004 and renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA. While it was not the authors’ intent, the original Act resulted in segregated classrooms, which do not always produce a quality education, as there is not a specified, rigorous curriculum in place, especially for students with moderate to severe disabilities. In addition, research has shown that even with a rigorous curriculum in place, the context of where that instruction is delivered does matter (Ryndak, Ward, Alper, Storch, & Montgomery, 2010). IDEA placed more emphasis on access to general education classrooms and curriculum. This act is the legal foundation for inclusive practices. The law states that each student must be educated in the least restrictive environment. The least restrictive environment in education is considered the general educational classroom. Students with disabilities can receive access to the general education curriculum with individualized and appropriate supports, accommodations, and/or modifications.

Peer tutoring can be linked to cognitive developmental and sociocultural theories. Peers are a dynamic resource for teachers because they are able to approach academic material in a different way. Peer tutoring pairs are organized with one student that is more competent and able to scaffold academic material to be approachable and easier to learn for their partner. This can be linked to Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory of development (1978) in which he described how learning occurs in the zone of proximal development - the difference between what a student can do on their own and what they can do when supported by peers that have more advanced skills. Peer tutoring is
interactive and provides conditions for social and cognitive development to occur through conflict and challenge reflecting Piaget’s cognitive development theory (Topping, 2005).

Research demonstrates that peer tutors are able to learn by teaching. Cognitive restructuring happens when a learner takes new information and connects it to previously learned information and restructures or adds to their cognitive knowledge base. Peer tutoring is a successful way to achieve this. Students are able to understand material better as they explain it to someone else (Maheady & Gard, 2010). The tutor is able to provide a cognitive model of proficiency for their partner. “However, the cognitive demands upon the [peer tutor] in terms of monitoring learner performance and detecting, diagnosing, correcting, and otherwise managing misconceptions and errors are even greater- and herein lies much of the cognitive exercise and benefit for the [peer tutor],” (Topping, 2005, p. 637).

Peer tutoring benefits both tutors and tutees socially and academically. The communication that happens between peer tutor and tutee helps with their cognitive and their social development. They must listen, explain, question, clarify, summarize, and/or simplify when working together. Partners may not have completely understood a concept until talking about it out loud. Affect is another piece that, theoretically, makes peer tutoring so effective. Peer partners can form a trusting relationship that helps the tutee to be open about their misunderstanding of concepts, which can lead to quicker intervention from their tutor. The pair may also develop a shared accountability that keeps them motivated and on task (Topping, 2005).
Definition of Terms

*Inclusive Education*

Inclusive education rejects the use of special schools or classrooms to separate students with disabilities from students without disabilities. Students receive special education services in the least restrictive environment, the general education classroom, respecting their social, civil, and educational rights. All students in an inclusive school, with and without disabilities, receive supports as needed for them to succeed. Instruction takes place mostly in the general education classroom, but may also occur in small groups in other locations in the school such as a learning center, library, or other commonly used areas (Halvorsen & Neary, 2008).

*Least Restrictive Environment*

The Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is the requirement in federal law that students with disabilities receive their education, to the maximum extent appropriate, with nondisabled peers and that special education students are not removed from regular classes unless, even with supplemental aids and services, education in regular classes cannot be achieved satisfactorily. [20 United States Code (U.S.C.) Sec. 1412(a)(5)(A); 34 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) Sec. 300.114.]

*Peer Tutors*

A peer tutor is anyone who is of a similar status as the person being tutored. In this case, it’s a student in elementary school tutoring another student from the same elementary school.

*Cross-Age Peer Tutoring*
In cross-age peer tutoring, the tutor is older than the tutee.

*Same-Age Peer Tutoring*

Same-age peer tutoring is where peers of the same age/grade are paired together.

*Classwide Peer Tutoring (CWPT)*

CWPT is a teaching strategy based on reciprocal peer tutoring where the entire classroom of students is actively engaged in the process of learning and practicing basic academic skills simultaneously in a systematic way.

**Assumptions**

Inclusive education has challenges, but is best practice for special education services. The least restrictive environment is the general education classroom. Students with disabilities can access general education classrooms and curriculum through appropriate supports and services. Utilizing peers as tutors is a strategy that can improve inclusive practices along with additional support strategies such as: social skills curriculum, school-wide positive behavior supports, collaboration of service providers, co-teaching, paraeducators, and administrators, social emotional learning, class meetings, project based learning, rigorous academic instruction with appropriate accommodations and modifications needed, and dedicated teachers.

**Justification**

This project was designed to benefit and support the inclusive practices at one elementary school. In addition, the training materials and organization of the program will continue to be used throughout the school after the project’s initial implementation.

**Limitations**
The biggest limitation is that the project was implemented at one school with a small number of students. The organizational design may need to be completely different in another school.
Chapter 2
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Inclusive practices can be both rewarding and challenging. One of the challenges educators face is having appropriate support for all students throughout their day to ensure engagement in academic and social activities. In some school districts, there is a tendency to assume that each child will need an individual para-educator to support them in the general education classroom. However, research has shown that individually assigned paraeducators are not the most effective support for students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms, and may cause learned helplessness, isolation, and a reduction of self-determination (Giangreco, Edelman, & Broer, 2003). Furthermore, with the financial conditions schools face today, it is not sustainable or realistic for school districts to have paraeducators assigned to every individual student with an IEP. Instead, re-thinking how instruction is delivered for all the students in a classroom, and how special education professionals and paraprofessionals are used most effectively in a school are key components to inclusive education (Sailor & Roger, 2005). In addition, educators have begun to look at the most natural supports for students with disabilities as an alternative strategy: their peers. It has been found that peer supports for students with disabilities within inclusive classrooms are effective for many reasons including: increased social interactions, communication, positive attitudes towards school, access to general education curriculum, and increased literacy skills (Carter et. al., 2005;
Social Interaction

Carter and Hughes (2005) conducted a study to identify which interventions were the most effective to promote and increase social interactions among students with severe disabilities by analyzing a variety of research studies. One of the interventions they examined was peer support. They found there were several studies that showed that this intervention was effective in increasing social interaction across a range of participants with varying levels of academic, social, and communication ability.

Many other studies have shown an increase in social interaction once peer supports were put into place as an intervention. One such study by Carter, Moss, Hoffman, Chung, and Sisco (2011) investigated not only whether social interactions increased with the introduction of peer support arrangements, but also how peer supports compared to support provided by paraprofessionals, and the perceptions students and educators had about peer supports in an inclusive high school. They found that all students with disabilities in their study showed an instant and significant increase in social interaction behavior when peer supports were introduced. Furthermore, there were fewer interactions with paraprofessionals and their academic engagement remained similar across conditions. Interviews were conducted post-intervention to investigate perceptions of peer supports as an intervention. The students with disabilities, their peer supports, and participating educators all reported positive experiences and recognized clear social validity with the peer support arrangements. Not only do peer supports
increase social interactions, they are also seen as a more socially acceptable strategy to all parties involved.

Similarly, a study by O’Rourke and Houghton (2008) considered the perceptions of sixty secondary school-aged students with mild disabilities of what support interventions were most effective for them in general education classrooms. They used the Student Perceptions of Classroom Support Scale (SPCS) to measure academic and social support mechanisms in the following areas: curricular support, instructional support, physical support, and peer support. It was found that students rated social or peer supports, such as working in a group collaboratively, as most effective in making friends or facilitating social interactions in regular classrooms.

Another study investigated not only whether social interactions increased when peer supports were introduced, but also analyzed the types of social interactions that occurred during the peer supported arrangements and whether there was a relationship between high social interaction and academic engagement (Carter, Sisco, Melekoglu, & Kurkowski, 2007). The researchers found that social interactions of all kinds increased when working with peer supports rather than paraeducators. Further, they found that peer supports did not interfere with academic engagement and in fact increased the occurrence of task-related interactions among students. Thus, not only do peer supports offer social validity, an alternative to individually assigned paraeducators, and increased social interaction, but it also increases engagement in academic activities.

*Communication*
Communication is imperative to social interaction and participation in general education activities. However, many students with disabilities are difficult to understand, have a hard time communicating with others, or simply do not talk. It is important to find the best strategies to facilitate and maintain communication between students with disabilities and their typically developing peers in order to sustain friendships and academic relationships.

One way of improving communication between students with disabilities and their peers are the use of peer supports. Kalyva and Avramidis (2005) examined the peer support strategy of “circle of friends” to increase social communication between students with autism and their typically developing peers. The circle of friends’ strategy aims to create a place where the student with autism can be in a supportive environment with socially competent peers, facilitate a context where the teacher can focus on social interactions, help peers understand their classmate and autism in general, and tackle problems that arise in a respectful and creative manor. The researchers found there was a considerable increase of successful social responses and initiations from the students with disabilities who received the circle of friends’ intervention versus those who did not receive the intervention. Further, there was also a significant decrease of failed communication responses and initiations from the students with disabilities who received the circle of friends’ intervention versus those who did not. Their research indicated that another type of peer support was effective in providing successful intervention results for students with disabilities who were included in general education settings.
A separate study investigated specifically the conversational turns between peers supports and target students. This study wanted to see if conversational turns increased if peer supports were taught to persist and/or ask for clarification if they did not understand the target student’s vocal output (Weiner, 2005). The researcher had groups of peers trained in three different ways to compare and analyze results. One peer group was trained directly to ask for clarification, one peer group was taught to understand what an unintelligible response was, and one peer group was simply the control group. Weiner found that peers that were directly trained to ask for clarification were most effective in maintaining more conversational turns with their peers who had disabilities. They had a higher amount of repair requests and were more persistent in asking for clarification from target peers. Also, during these peer support conditions, the target students improved their repair responses and conversational turns increased across all recorded sessions. This provides further evidence that peer supports that are trained are the most effective intervention.

Improved Attitudes and School Appropriate Behaviors

Social interaction and communication are two very important life skills that students need to practice, learn, and maintain in school to help them acquire a good life outside of school. However, it’s also important to use strategies that increase our students’ ability to learn. This will ultimately help them be successful in school, which will further broaden their opportunities for a high quality of life. Peer tutoring has been proven to be a strategy that helps in both social and academic arenas.
It’s unfortunate, but true, that many students with disabilities have negative feelings towards academic activities. This is simply because it’s harder for them to learn in a traditional way. A study by Davenport, Arnold, and Lassmann (2004) investigated the attitudinal impact that cross-age peer tutoring had on fifth graders with learning disabilities and the kindergarteners they tutored. They found that although the fifth graders attitudes towards reading did not improve, their self-confidence and attitudes towards themselves made tremendous growth. Helping others made them feel good about themselves. Alternatively, they found that the kindergarteners’ attitudes towards reading were more positive after the cross-age peer-tutoring program was introduced. They loved reading with their big buddies. Fostering a love for reading at a young age can help students be more successful throughout school.

Another study investigated peer tutoring as a prevention strategy for students at risk for emotional and behavioral disorders (Kamps, Kravits, Stolze, & Swaggart, 1999). Alongside a positive behavior management program and social skills training, peer tutoring was found to contribute to improvement in on-task behaviors, appropriate requests for attention, and positive peer interactions and play during recess. They also reported a decrease in aggression, disruptions in the classroom, and out of seat behaviors. On-task and aggressive behaviors both can severely hinder one’s academic progress. Further, it was found that a multi-level approach is needed when working with students with severe behavioral issues. In other words, peer tutoring is not the only approach to be used to ensure all these positive changes. Specifically, environmental variables, such as engaging instruction, teacher consistency, a positive environment, and applying
management systems all worked together to help this program be so successful.

Similarly, another study (Lo & Cartledge, 2004) found that when a group oriented contingency reward program was in place for class-wide peer tutoring there were fewer off-task behaviors.

The influence of peer tutoring and the training that goes with it has shown positive results, both quantitatively and qualitatively, when students are working in cooperative groups. With the onset of common core state standards that heavily rely on student feedback and collaboration with one another, these findings are especially relevant. Nath and Ross (2001) found that training enhanced student communication skills. Students that received the peer tutor training were specifically more likely to: disagree constructively, ask questions to one another, explain the process of finding the answer, listen, provide feedback, prompt each other, respond to questions asked by teammates, show respect, stay on task, and accept help from teammates. This proves that peer tutor training can help students be better classmates overall.

Access and Engagement in Curriculum

For educators, an important outcome of any intervention is access to and engagement in academic instruction and activities. This is a challenge for all students with disabilities as they have many barriers to learning. Many studies have investigated peer supports as a way for students to gain better access to and engage in general education curriculum.

One such study looked at the effect that peer supports had on interaction behaviors in inclusive physical education classes (Klavina & Block, 2008). Not only did
the researchers study the amount of social interactions, but also physical and instructional interaction behaviors across two conditions; trained peer supports and voluntary peer support to see which was more effective. It was found that regardless of the condition, the students with disabilities increased their engagement in the activities when peer supports were introduced. However, it was proven that the trained peer supports produced more interactions, especially instructional interaction behavior, than voluntary peer support. Thus, trained peer supports were proven more effective for all types of interaction behaviors and most notably, engagement in instruction.

Peer supports are not just for school-aged students or classrooms alone. This intervention can also be effective in integrated childcare settings. Robertson, Green, Alper, Schloss, and Kohler (2003) conducted a study in such a setting to investigate the effects of peer tutors on preschool-aged students with disabilities. Researchers facilitated two “peer trainers” to assist the target peers in daily activities. They found that the target students’ engagement and on-task behavior, interactive play, and appropriate participation in circle/story time immediately and significantly improved with the introduction of peer-mediated support. Therefore, this intervention is successful in facilitating participation from students with disabilities in preschool.

Other studies looked into what types of peer support arrangements would be most effective for access to the general education curriculum. One such study looked into whether the number of peer supports made a difference in social and academic outcomes for students with severe disabilities (Carter, Clark, Cushing, & Kennedy, 2005). They set students up with either one or two peer supports throughout their day. These researchers
found that the students with disabilities had better access to the general education curriculum and had more social interactions when working with two peer supports rather than just one. The belief is that the peer tutors involved were better able to tackle the job collaboratively. They helped each other maintain consistency and held each other accountable. This study also looked into how these interventions impacted the typically developing students that were providing the peer support. The peer tutors were found to have the same positive result when there was another peer there helping to support the student with severe disabilities. So not only do multiple peer support arrangements help students with disabilities, but also the peer tutors involved.

Another type of peer support strategy, classwide peer tutoring (CWPT), was examined by Mortweet, Utley, Walker, Dawson, Delquadri, Reddy, Greenwood, Hamilton, and Ledford (1999). The authors wanted to see if this intervention was effective in increasing spelling test scores and academic behavior when compared to teacher-led instruction. This intervention strategy requires both students in a peer tutoring pair to take turns being tutor and tutee. It was found that classwide peer tutoring was an effective intervention for increasing spelling test scores and academic engagement for both students with disabilities and their peer supports. This strategy also has a lot of social validity because everyone is helping everyone and no one is stigmatized. There is little room for students with disabilities to be singled out as the only students that need help or to be tutored when there is a reciprocal helping relationship happening throughout the whole classroom.

*Improved Literacy Skills*
Additional research has shown that peer tutoring can be a strategy that can help improve literacy skills for all students involved. One such study (Wright & Cleary, 2006) investigated the impact of cross-age peer tutoring on reading fluency, specifically. They not only used cross-age peer tutoring, but the reading intervention of listening-while-reading to see if tutor and tutee’s reading fluency would increase. Reading fluency is a foundational reading skill that improves reading comprehension. The idea was that the tutors would get fluency practice and increase scores by actively reading and the tutee’s reading fluency would increase by following along to their tutor’s reading aloud to them. As a result, it was found that the fluency rate increased for both tutors and tutees. The tutor’s reading fluency increased most significantly, by about five words a week. The tutee’s reading fluency scores increase by about one word a week. Thus further providing evidence that peer tutoring and listening-while-reading are effective strategies for increasing fluency scores for all students involved.

Similarly, Davenport et al., (2004) established that both the tutors and tutees in their study found success in improving their reading achievement. They wanted to establish that peer tutoring increased their participant’s sight word recognition and reading comprehension. Although both the tutors and tutees improved in both areas, the tutees had the most significant improvement in word recognition and reading comprehension after peer tutoring was introduced.

Total Class Peer Tutoring is another peer tutoring approach that allows for all students in the class to participate in peer tutoring. A study by Kourea, Cartledge, and Musti-Rao, (2007) investigated the effects on students’ sight word acquisition and
maintenance using total class peer tutoring. Teachers agreed (in a survey given in this study) that sight words are a critical skill when learning how to read. It was found that all students not only learned more sight words during total class peer tutoring, but also increased their reading fluency and comprehension scores. Additionally, most were able to maintain the words they acquired. Most notably, the student in class with a learning disability made the greatest improvement in her reading skills.

Spelling is a literacy skill that helps students’ writing skills, but also helps them to understand and apply decoding skills. Hashimoto, Utley, Greenwood, and Pitchlyn, (2007) examined the effects of classwide peer tutoring on the spelling skills of urban third grade elementary students. Their study aimed to find the effectiveness of classwide peer tutoring as a spelling intervention for generalization and retention of spelling words. Their research indicated that classwide peer tutoring was more effective than teacher-led instruction in weekly pre/post tests, mastery, and generalization to sentences, but not in retention of the spelling words. The effect size, the amount of students that were successful, was large signifying that classwide peer tutoring is an effective instructional strategy for students acquiring weekly spelling words. They believe that the generalization scores were lower simply because mastery tests were perhaps a better measure of spelling words. Maheady (1991) also found that when teachers were trained to implement class-wide peer tutoring for spelling instruction, their students spelling test scores increased immediately. Further, teachers reported that they were satisfied with their student’s academic progress.
A study by Oddo, Barnett, Hawkins, and Musti-Rao (2010) added to the validity of peer tutoring as an effective strategy for improving literacy skills when used in conjunction of the evidence- based strategy of repeated reading. They wanted to investigate the effects of mixed-ability, peer- mediated small groups using the strategy of repeat reading. Specifically, they examined the effect on students’ reading fluency and comprehension scores. They found immediate improvement when the reading program was introduced in the students’ reading fluency scores. Reading comprehension improved overall as well, but only two students made significant improvement. The program was most successful after four weeks. The whole class showed improvement in fluency and comprehension after four weeks, but their comprehension scores decreased in week eight. Most of the students’ scores maintained after week four, but just did not show additional growth at week eight. After a survey was given to the students, it was clear that the program had social validity as well. 82% of the students reported liking the program, 93% said they liked reading more now after the introduction of the program, and 96% believe it made them better readers.

Reading comprehension is perhaps the most important literacy skill as it is most essential for learning, understanding, and participating in life and work outside of school. Van Keer and Verhaeghe (2005) examined the effects of reading comprehension strategies instruction and peer tutoring on second and fifth graders’ reading comprehension and self-efficacy achievement. They compared the comprehension achievement of students who received teacher-led whole class strategy instruction by itself to whole class instruction with reciprocal same-age peer tutoring, to whole class
instruction with cross-age peer tutoring to a control group. They found significant effects on the reading comprehension scores for both second and fifth graders and self-efficacy related thoughts achievement for fifth graders. For second graders, it made no difference in comprehension gains whether they were practicing under teacher-led whole class instruction or a well-prepared cross-age peer tutor. They made the same success, regardless and in fact, poor readers made just as much growth as high achievers. However, in second grade, students participating in reciprocal same-age peer tutoring did not make significant gains in comprehension. Fifth graders, however, made gains across all interventions. They were similarly effective for both poor and high reading achievers. Perhaps most notably, the cross-age condition produced the greatest gains in self-efficacy and the most long-term comprehension gains for the fifth graders.

*Other Peer Tutoring Benefits*

Peer tutoring can be used in a variety of settings with positive outcomes. A study by Menesses and Gresham (2009) directly compared the outcomes of reciprocal and nonreciprocal peer tutoring to determine which approach would result in greater academic gains in math. They had three groups of students: students in reciprocal peer tutoring pairs, in nonreciprocal peer tutoring pairs, and a control group. The reciprocal peer tutoring pairs took turns being the tutor and tutee. The nonreciprocal paired a high achieving student as the tutor with a low achieving student as the tutee. The students in the peer tutoring pairs made significant progress in math compared to the students in the control group. When they compared the two types of peer tutor pairs, they found that although the students in the reciprocal peer tutoring had slightly higher scores, the two
groups of students being tutored did not show a significant difference in their academic gains. Thus, they concluded that reciprocal and nonreciprocal peer tutoring is comparable in value and that peer tutoring is a successful program for increasing student success in math.

Another study (Lo & Cartledge, 2004) compared a total class peer tutoring program with a group oriented contingency against a total class peer tutoring program without a group oriented contingency. A group-oriented contingency meant that the students involved were only rewarded if the whole group was doing what was expected during their total class peer tutoring time. Lo and Cartledge examined whether there was a difference in academic performance on social studies quizzes and/or on students off task behavior. The researchers found that it did not matter if there was a group contingency for the academic piece. If the students were rewarded during the total class peer-tutoring program, there were improvements in their social study quiz scores. A majority of the students also showed fewer off-task behaviors. However, it was found there were fewer off task behaviors when there was a group-orientated contingency.

One reason peer tutoring may not be used in the classroom more often is lack of training for general and special education teachers. Some teachers may worry they don’t have adequate resources or training needed to implement an effective program. One study (Maheady, 1991) examined the approximate time needed to train teachers on effective classwide peer tutoring systems and what they would need to implement it in their classrooms. He also looked into the academic gains students made when their teachers utilized the program and the social validity of the program for both students and
teachers. It was found that teachers can be trained to use classwide peer tutoring in the classroom in as little as 90 minutes. Teachers were then able to continue to use the program in their classrooms throughout the year across different subject areas with the same level of accuracy that they did after they were first trained in facilitating the program. The authors stated that not only was the classwide peer tutoring strategy quickly learned, it was also easy to maintain. The students in trained teachers’ classrooms found greater success academically and reported liking the classwide peer tutoring strategy. Teachers also reported that they liked the strategy, were happy with the academic outcomes, and believed they would use classwide peer tutoring in their classrooms again. The authors indicated that their study showed that classwide peer tutoring not only had social validity and improved academic scores, but it was also easily learned and then maintained with just a short 90-minute training.

Summary

There are many different types of peer support strategies that have been proven as effective interventions to increase social interactions, communication, behavior, academic engagement, access to curriculum, and overall success for students with and without disabilities. In addition, researchers found that students, parents, and educators alike agree that this intervention is the most natural for students in general education classrooms (Bond & Castagnera, 2006). Authors have indicated that it has notable social validity and is considered to be a best practice for inclusive classrooms.

More research is needed to specify which peer support strategies are most effective in different conditions. Many of the studies were conducted in secondary
school settings. Determining which peer support strategies are most effective in preschool versus elementary versus middle and high school settings would be informative and important for implementation of research findings. Another area for further research would be teachers’ perspective on training of (or lack thereof) peer supports. It would be interesting to investigate whether trained teachers would have a higher success rate of facilitating effective peer support arrangements and if their perspectives and knowledge of peer supports determine whether they use the intervention or not.
Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Setting and Participants

This project was piloted at Leataata Floyd Elementary School, a kindergarten through sixth grade school. About 85% of the student population is African American and the second highest ethnicity present is from the Marshall Islands. All students live right across the street from the school in a government-assisted housing development. The school has 100% free and reduced breakfast and lunch to accommodate the student’s families’ low-income status. The school is located in an urban area of Sacramento. For many years this school fell into the lowest 10% of academic performance out of all schools in California. Additionally, they had the highest amount of suspensions and lowest percentage of attendance in the entire Sacramento City School District. Five years ago, through the Superintendent’s priority school initiative, the administration was able to hand pick a group of teachers who were dedicated to inspiring and engaging the minds of this wonderful group of students. Through inclusive practices, the implementation of school-wide positive behavior support, an emphasis on social and emotional learning, and equity, the suspension rates were reduced, attendance was increased and the academic performance continues to improve as indicated on the most recent School Quality Review (SQR) as reported by experts from the district. The faculty and staff continue to strive for academic rigor, community involvement, and student engagement. This project was designed to support the school’s inclusive practices and to contribute to academic achievement and student engagement.
There are approximately 300 students in attendance. The age of the peer tutor participants ranged from age 5 to 12. Three peer tutors were chosen from fifth and sixth grade classrooms and three peer tutees were chosen from kindergarten and first grade to pilot the program.

*Tutors and Tutees*

It was decided collaboratively that at this school, it would be most beneficial for all students to create a cross-age, school wide peer-tutoring program. However, it was also decided that we start off slow and pilot the program with only three peer tutoring pairs. Three intermediate students, students in third through sixth grade, were matched to tutor three younger students, those in kindergarten through second grade. In order to choose the best candidates for the job, all students were considered to participate in the program, not from just one or two select classes. Additionally, it was agreed that this program was intended to become a school-wide practice and an intervention option. This was an evidence-based decision to meet the unique and diverse needs of the school and to ensure all students involved in the program saw benefits (Van Keer & Verhaeghe, 2005). The peer-tutoring program was designed to act specifically as a reading intervention for peer tutees. For the peer tutors, it was agreed that this would be a positive intervention for three different reasons. First, based on the research, it could have the effect of extending and enriching the understanding of concepts for students that were already proficient/advanced in their own grade level. Secondly, it could help with social/emotional and interpersonal skills for students that struggled socially. And finally,
it could build confidence and solidify basic concepts for students who were struggling academically.

Collaboratively, it was decided that a student that was being considered as a candidate to receive peer tutoring must be able to work with others, accept help from peers, and respond to positive reinforcement. The focus of the intervention for the peer tutee was in the area of basic reading skills. Depending on the student, this was practice with letter identification and/or sound, sight word recognition, and/or reading fluency.

Preparation and Program Components

Research for the current project started in the fall of 2012. The author conducted a review of the literature on peer tutoring. A general idea of how a school-wide peer tutor program at Leataata Floyd would work began to develop. These ideas were further solidified after collaboration with colleagues and administration. It was decided that the program would be a cross-age peer-tutoring program to not only help with academic success, but to encourage leadership, engagement, and pride.

The program that was designed followed the six components of a good peer tutor program outlined in Creative and Collaborative Learning (Thousand, Villa, & Nevin, 2002). The six components are: Identification, Recruitment, Training, Supervision, Reinforcement, and Evaluation.

In the summer before school started, a presentation was given to all staff at Leataata Floyd to inform them of the new peer-tutoring program (Appendix A). They were given background information about peer-tutoring structures, components of the program, training topics, and expectations for the peer tutor and tutees (Appendix B).
Teachers were encouraged to provide feedback, ask questions, and generate potential candidates for the program.

A peer tutor-training curriculum which was originally meant for high school students, developed by Thousand et. al., (2002) was modified for elementary school students (Appendix C). Lessons were created before the program started in November of 2013 and were modified as needed as the program was in progress. A total of twelve lessons were developed.

**Identification**

At first, teachers at the school’s summer training identified many students as good candidates to be involved in the program. Later, three tutors and three tutees were chosen collaboratively at the school’s SEL (Social Emotional Learning)/Inclusion team meeting to pilot the program and help the team verify success and identify areas for improvement. It was decided that after the initial launch, students were to be identified for the peer-tutoring program through a SST (student success team) meeting, an IEP meeting, or by recommendation of a parent, teacher, or other staff member.

**Recruitment**

Three peer tutors were selected to represent the three different ways the program could act as intervention for the tutors. The team wanted to determine which type was most effective for both the tutor and tutee for future use of the program. Peer tutor A was selected to help improve their interpersonal and social skills. He had a history of not getting along with classmates, was often teased, but was able to form positive relationships with adults and younger students. Peer tutor B was selected to enrich and
extend knowledge. She was proficient in all academic areas and loved helping her teacher in class. Peer tutor C was selected to build confidence and solidify basic reading concepts, as his academic performance was low. Potential peer tutors were introduced to the program, their responsibilities, and the expectations of the program to see if they are interested in participating. All three students were very excited and motivated to start working as peer tutors for younger students. A phone call home was made to attain permission from the parents and answer any questions about the program. A permission slip was also sent home to attain written permission (Appendix D). Once permission was attained from all three, the peer tutors began training.

Once the training of peer tutors was underway, staff continued to discuss potential peer tutees at the SEL/Inclusion team meetings. The team wanted to ensure the peer tutees would benefit academically, but also work well with their peer tutor. Once initial decisions for the peer tutees were made, they were asked first if they wanted to participate. All agreed and seemed excited to work with an older peer on their academics. Verbal and written permission was attained from parents for peer tutees to participate in the program as well (Appendix D).

Training of Tutors

Once permission to participate in the program was attained from all three potential peer tutor’s parents, one special education teacher met with them twice a week for approximately 30 minutes for four weeks utilizing the modified peer-tutor training curriculum (Appendix C). This curriculum aimed to teach the students how to be kind, respected, and effective peer tutors before they started working with their tutees. The
training topics included: peer tutor roles and responsibilities, inclusion, celebrating human diversity, providing support to peers, learning and teaching, relationships/communication, and reflection and action planning.

After the first four weeks of training, peer tutors were paired with their tutees. As part of the tutor training, peer-tutoring partners worked together to build a positive relationship first to ensure a happy partnership. The peer tutors then practiced direct instruction of the targeted reading skill, reinforcement and encouragement, and the correction procedure with their peer tutee and their trainer. This time was important to ensure that they were using their reinforcement strategies appropriately, teaching the material correctly, and that the tutor/tutee pair was well matched. Peer tutor B was able to work with their peer tutee independently quicker than the other two. Peer tutor A and C needed more support in providing appropriate reinforcement and encouragement and practicing the correction procedure. This extra training took place in the trainer’s classroom, the learning center.

After the trainer determined the peer tutors were trained completely, they were able to go into their peer tutee’s classroom and work with them there with minimal supervision. Once they began working with their peer tutee independently, they continued to meet with their trainer one time a week to discuss successes, challenges, and problem solve together.

Supervision

The amount and type of supervision needed was based on the needs of both the peer tutor and tutee. One peer tutoring pair was able to work together in the classroom
with just the supervision of the general education teacher. The other two pairs needed more intensive support from the special education teacher or paraprofessionals. Intensive support included facilitating cooperation, teaching appropriate correction and reinforcement strategies, and ensuring academic rigor. This support was faded as the pairs became more independent.

*Reinforcement*

Reinforcement was different for the peer tutors and tutees. Each peer tutor had a behavior chart that was explicitly linked to the peer tutor expectations. Individually, during training, they decided on one goal they felt they needed to work on in each of the three areas of the “Panther Way”: Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Hardworking (Appendix E). Peer tutors were able to earn up to two points for each goal. Their supervisor gave them points at the end of their tutoring session. The points earned were recorded in chart (Appendix E) and the points were used to receive a privilege that related to their peer tutee or supervisor to help further build a positive relationship (Appendix E). For example, once the peer tutor earned 20 points total, he or she was able to earn the privilege of eating lunch with their peer tutee or supervisor. The peer tutors had several responsibilities in attaining their reinforcement. They were required to check in with their trainer to receive their behavior/incentive card, gather needed materials for their tutees, check out with their supervisor to receive their points, and check out with their trainer to chart their points and receive any rewards they might have earned.

Tutees, however, received more immediate and frequent reinforcement from their peer tutor while they were working through use of a simple star chart (Appendix E). Peer
tutors were trained to start their session by establishing what the peer tutor wanted to work for. They were also trained to give a star to their tutee for correct answers and work ethic. After the tutee filled up their star chart, they were able to earn a fun activity, sticker, or small tangible prize from their peer tutor then start the process over again. Tutees received verbal and visual reinforcement every time their tutor gave them a star and bigger reinforcement once they filled in their start chart. Tutees filled in their star charts an average of two to three times a tutoring session.

Evaluation

Peer tutors and tutees were also evaluated differently. The peer tutors were evaluated based on how they worked with their tutees. This was shown through the behavior chart that was filled in by their supervisor or trainer. Peer tutees were evaluated on the academic skill that was being taught by their peer tutor. A pre-test of reading skills was given before the start of peer tutoring. The reading skills that were the focus for peer tutoring were sight words, fluency, and letter names and sounds. These skills were easy for tutors to teach and manage. A post-test was given to students after the conclusion of peer tutoring to determine academic growth.

Peer Tutor Program

Once peer tutors were trained, they were matched with a younger peer tutee. Peer tutoring pairs worked in the tutee’s classroom on a basic reading skill that they needed to improve on. They worked together on Tuesdays and Thursdays for 30 minutes at the end of the school day for two months before the tutees then graduated from the program. Peer tutors were responsible for coming to peer tutoring on time, getting their incentive
chart, gathering needed materials, managing behavior and academic rigor for their peer
tutees, and checking in and out with their supervisor/trainer and their tutee’s teacher.
Chapter 4

PEER TUTOR TRAINING CURRICULUM

Results

*Peer Tutors*

The three peer tutors were very excited and motivated to participate in the program. Two of the peer tutors took a little longer than expected to train, but eventually were able to work with their tutees independently in their tutee’s classroom. Tutor B and tutor C were able to achieve all points possible for their behavior incentives on a regular basis. The responsibility they struggled with the most was being on time for their tutoring session. Tutor A had the hardest time remembering to come to peer tutoring and had the most variability in his scores. However, all peer tutors were able to show they were hard working and had respect for their tutee, their tutees’ classroom, and teacher on a regular basis as shown in table 1. Another area that proved difficult for both tutors and tutees was attendance. The breaks you see in table 1 reflect the peer tutor’s absences.

Peer tutor B was the most successful in all areas. She maintained the highest scores and missed the least amount of tutoring sessions. Peer tutor C had success working with his peer, but was often late to his tutoring sessions. Peer tutor A needed the most support and guidance working with his peer tutor. Eventually, he became disinterested in the program after two months and no longer wished to be a part of the program. It was at this time that we decided to treat this program as an intervention and end it after eight weeks.
Table 1. Peer Tutor Results

Peer Tutees

A pre-test was given to peer tutees in November of 2013. Peer tutoring started in December of 2013. A posttest was given to students in February of 2014. All students that participated in the peer-tutoring program improved significantly on their targeted reading skill. There was no significant difference or correlation in academic success of the peer tutees as compared to their peer tutor’s success and attendance.

Table 2 shows the progress the peer tutee working with peer tutor A made on letter names and sounds. This peer tutee knew 27 out of 52 upper and lower case letter names in November. By February, she knew 47 out of 52 upper and lower case letters.
She knew only 2 out of 52 letter sounds before peer tutoring was introduced. When she graduated from the program, she was able to identify 30 of the correct letter sounds.

Table 2. Peer Tutee A Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LETTER NAMES</th>
<th>LETTER SOUNDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BEFORE PEER TUTORING</td>
<td>AFTER PEER TUTORING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows the progress the peer tutee working with peer tutor B made on sight words and fluency. In November of 2013, this student was able to identify 18 sight words and was reading 3 correct words a minute (CWPM). By the time she graduated from the peer-tutoring program, she knew 32 sight words and was reading at a rate of 13 CWPM.
Table 3. Peer Tutee B Results

Table 4 shows the progress the peer tutee working with peer tutor C made on sight words and fluency. In November of 2013, he was able to identify 19 sight words and was reading at a rate of 15 CWPM. After peer tutoring, he was able to identify 34 sight words and read at a rate of 21 CWPM.
Table 4. Peer Tutee C Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SIGHT WORDS</th>
<th>FLUENCY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BEFORE PEER TUTORING</td>
<td>AFTER PEER TUTORING</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommendations

During the pilot of the program, it was found that the most effective peer tutor was peer tutor B, the tutor that was proficient in all academic areas and chosen to enrich and extend her knowledge. The peer tutor that was the least effective was peer tutor A, the tutor chosen to work on his social skills. Peer tutor C was effective, but often forgot to come to his tutoring session. It is recommended for future use of the program, that if the main focus for the peer tutor is social skills; ensure he or she have extra support embedded in his or her program.

After the pilot of the program, seven more peer tutors were identified and recommended to be a part of peer tutoring. They were trained and paired, but it became clear to the author that there needed to be a more precise timeline for training and
working with their tutees. It was also difficult to ensure quality peer tutoring intervention with just one person in charge of their supervision and training. Many of the peer tutors needed support with delivery of instruction, staying on task, and proper reinforcement of their tutee. It is recommended that in the future, a school year timeline for training and intervention be put in place before peer tutoring begins. It is also recommended that school staff is scheduled to help facilitate the peer tutoring pairs. This is especially important for implementing the program school-wide.

This peer tutoring training curriculum can be used for schools that are interested in cross-age peer tutoring to support academic achievement, student engagement, and social emotional learning. It can be a cost effective solution for schools that have minimal funds and students that are struggling in academic areas. Additionally, elements of the curriculum can be used as extra practice or supplemental material in conjunction with social emotional learning and social skills training.

It was found that the student that was chosen based on their proficient status to be a peer tutor did the best. However, there were academic, social, and behavioral benefits for all students involved. It seemed the peer tutors interest in and enthusiasm for the program was more of a predictor of who participated most effectively. A supervision schedule would have been helpful once students were independently working with their tutees. It would be advised that one be developed and shared with peer tutors so they came to expect to be observed. Perhaps an observation form and/or discussion would also be helpful as well.
It would be interesting to see what, if any, academic gains were made by the peer tutors. If they were working on fluency with their peer tutee, did their fluency also increase? Did their understanding of reading concepts such as decoding increase because they were required to teach it to a younger student? Would it be beneficial for peer tutors to be paired with students that need help in the same areas that they require extra support in or would it be more helpful if they were already proficient in that area? These are all areas of interest to consider.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this project served as an effective strategy for several students in the area of reading. Peer tutoring is a natural support for students with and without disabilities and can serve as an intervention for both peer tutors and tutees. The benefits of peer tutoring are numerous for inclusive education and for students in both social and academic areas.
Appendix A

TEACHER TRAINING POWER POINT
Collaborative learning

- School-Wide Structures that are already in place
  - Class meetings, culturally responsive strategies (think-pair-share, numbered heads together, etc.)

- Collaborative Grouping is done within your classroom in a cooperative small group
  - Some common attributes: small-group learning, positive interdependence, individual accountability and responsibility.

- Peer tutors
  - Variations include: with-in class, between class, school wide
  - Same age or cross age
Components of Effective Partner Learning

1. Identification
2. Recruitment
3. Training
4. Supervision
5. Evaluation
6. Reinforcement

Peer Tutors at Leataataa Floyd

**Identification**
- For tutors & tutees
  - Tutees: may need help with a set of skills or to participate
  - Tutors: may need to develop interpersonal skills, build confidence, or extend/enrich skills
- May be identified at SST, IEP, or by a parent, teacher, or other staff member.

**Recruitment**
- Involves considering:
  1. The source of student participants
  2. Method of informing participants
  3. The skills (both technical and interpersonal) students need or will acquire with participation.
Peer Tutors at Leataata Floyd

**TRAINING**

- This is the heart of our partner learning program.
  - Who will conduct the training, where will the training occur, number and length of the training
  - Training will occur before and during actual peer tutoring

- Topics will include:
  - Peer tutor roles and responsibilities
  - Inclusion
  - Celebrating human diversity
  - Providing support to peers
  - Learning and teaching
  - Relationships/communication
  - Reflection and action planning

---

Peer Tutors at Leataata Floyd

**Supervision**

- Who is responsible for supervision?
- How often does it need to occur?
- What should be the intensity of the interaction between the supervisor and the partners?

**Evaluation/ Reinforcement**

- Tutors will be evaluated and rewarded with a chart to be filled in by their supervisor (tied to tutor expectations)
- Tutees will be evaluated by their supervisor, but rewarded by their tutor (tied to tutee expectations)
  - Tutor will be trained how to reinforce their tutee
Tutor Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peer Tutor</th>
<th>Be Responsible</th>
<th>Be Respectful</th>
<th>Be Hardworking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be on time to your tutoring assignment</td>
<td>Use only positive and encouraging words towards your tutee.</td>
<td>Begin tutor work immediately.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow your tutee’s classroom procedures</td>
<td>Actively listen to all adults in the room.</td>
<td>Keep you and your tutee on task during work times.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get and put away any needed materials appropriately</td>
<td>Allow others to work without interruption.</td>
<td>Keep your voice at an appropriate level.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluation/ Reinforcement Tool

**Anthony, Peer Tutor**

I am a peer tutor, a model student, and try my best to always follow the panther way!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My goal:</th>
<th>Be Responsible</th>
<th>Be Respectful</th>
<th>Be Hardworking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I got to work on time</td>
<td>I used positive encouragement</td>
<td>I kept my tutee and myself on task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 1 0</td>
<td>2 1 0</td>
<td>2 1 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Date: Teacher Signature:
Identification/ Recruitment

- What qualities do you think makes a good tutor?
- What qualities make a good tutee?
- Potential participants
Appendix B

PEER TUTOR/TUTEE EXPECTATIONS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peer Tutor</th>
<th>Be Hardworking</th>
<th>Be Respectful</th>
<th>Be Responsible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Begin tutor work immediately.</td>
<td>Keep your tutee and yourself on task during work times.</td>
<td>Keep your voice at an appropriate level.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use only positive and encouraging words towards your tutee.</td>
<td>Actively listen to all adults in the room.</td>
<td>Allow others to work without interruption.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be on time to your tutoring assignment.</td>
<td>Follow your tutee’s classroom procedures.</td>
<td>Get and put away any needed materials appropriately.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peer Tutee</strong></td>
<td><strong>Be Responsible</strong></td>
<td><strong>Be Respectful</strong></td>
<td><strong>Be Hardworking</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Follow your tutor</td>
<td>Say and do only</td>
<td>Begin tutor work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to the appropriate</td>
<td>kind things to</td>
<td>immediately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>place.</td>
<td>your tutor.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Follow your</td>
<td>Actively listen</td>
<td>Stay on task and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>classroom procedures.</td>
<td>to your tutor.</td>
<td>try your best with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use materials</td>
<td>Allow others to</td>
<td>your tutor during</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>appropriately.</td>
<td>work without</td>
<td>work times.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>interruption.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Keep your voice at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>an appropriate level.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*Peer Tutee* is a role that involves being responsible, respectful, and hardworking during tutor sessions.
Appendix C

PEER TUTOR TRAINING CURRICULUM
## Lesson 1- Do’s and Don’ts

### Purpose
Peer tutors will be able to identify positive practices when working with their peer tutees, reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses, and set one goal for themselves in response to reading the “Do/Don’t List” for peer tutors. This lesson can be used to:
- Describe specific strategies for peer tutors around positive reinforcement, respectful communication and collaboration, and responsibility
- Help peer tutors recognize their own strengths and weaknesses
- Help peer tutors set goals for themselves as a peer tutor
- Introduce “Panther Way” expectations for peer tutors

### Activity
- “Reflections” graphic organizer is passed out. Students will reflect on what they are most excited about for peer tutoring.
- Distribute the “Do/Don’t List” to peer tutors. Use whip around to have peer tutors read from each column. Students may ask questions/raise concerns. Teacher may elaborate on any (examples vs. non examples) and connect to the Panther Way Expectations.
- Students will star 3 Do’s that they think they will be/are already good at and circle 3 Don’ts that they would like to focus on.
- Students will fill in their biggest strength (from the three they selected) and the one weakness they would like to work on (from the three selected).
- The Panther Way Peer Tutor expectations are reviewed. Student’s incentive charts are filled in to match the three areas they would like to work on. This should be done collaboratively (with the students).
- Students will also write in their weekly goal on their incentive card to practice what they are expected to do when they are working with their peer tutees.
- Finally, students will fill in how they will make a difference on their Reflections worksheet and share their responses as a group.

### Materials
- “Reflections” graphic organizer
- “Do/Don’t List"
- Peer Tutor “Panther Way” expectations
- Peer Tutor incentive chart
Successful Peer Tutoring
Considerations for Providing Support

As a peer tutor, you are expected to provide support to younger student’s in their classroom. There are lots of things to think about and you probably have many questions about your responsibilities. Here is a list of positive ways to work with your tutee and some things you should avoid doing. All of your hard work, positivity, and commitment are important to our school and is very much appreciated!!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Do...</strong></th>
<th><strong>Don’t...</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus on what your tutee likes and is good at.</td>
<td>Focus on what your tutee cannot do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treat all students and adults with respect.</td>
<td>Be disrespectful to any adults or students in the class. You are a leader!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help students talk to and make friends with others in their class when appropriate.</td>
<td>Talk to or engage others at an inappropriate time (like when the teacher is talking)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask for help from your supervisor whenever you need it.</td>
<td>Be afraid to ask for help- raise a quiet hand if the teacher seems busy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be flexible!</td>
<td>Unwilling to change or do something different than what you planned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stay reliable and accountable to your teachers and the student you’re supporting.</td>
<td>Ever leave the classroom without your teacher’s permission or show up late.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support independence. Always help students do what they need to get done.</td>
<td>Do the student’s work for them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep you and your tutee on task. Inform your supervisor if you need help with the student’s behavior.</td>
<td>Get off task or discuss the student’s behavior with other students’; respect the student’s right to privacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gather, use, and put away any needed materials appropriately.</td>
<td>Forget or leave out any needed materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begin tutor work immediately and come to the class prepared.</td>
<td>Wait for someone else to tell you what to do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep your voice at an appropriate level.</td>
<td>Yell or talk really loud.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reinforce your tutee using positive, encouraging words when they are doing what they are asked.</td>
<td>Ever use unkind words or boss your tutee around.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reflections

The part of Peer Tutoring I am most excited about is.....

Do’s & Don’ts

I'm good at:

My goal is:

How I will make a difference as a peer tutor:
### Lesson 2- Include Values

**Purpose**
Peer tutors will be able to understand and apply values of inclusivity. This lesson can be used:
- As an intro activity for peer tutors or as a team building activity within the classroom.
- As a review or continuing activity for students who are in collaborative groups or work with others.

**Activity**
- Students take turns reading each line of the INCLUDE poster.
- Teacher facilitates a discussion around diversity, collaboration, unity, etc. Make connections to our school.
- Read *Frederick* by Leo Lionni and lead a verbal discussion:
  - Pg. 8 discussion: Explain how you would feel if Fredrick was a part of your team and was not working.
  - Pg. 14 Describe how you might be feeling now...
  - Pg. 20 How are the mice feeling right now. Was there ever a time when you felt this way?
  - Pg. 27 Explain how you feel about Fredrick's contribution now.
- Now going through our INCLUDE poster and reading this book about different ways people can contribute to a project... Take your paper and pencil and Analyze how this may apply to your life. Describe a time when you misjudged someone.
- Students can share out their reflections with the group.

**Materials**
- INCLUDE poster
- Paper, pencil for reflection
- *Fredrick* by Leo Lionni
INCLUDÉ

INclude: all students learn together

N eed: All students need/want to belong!

C ollaboration: Students work together!

L ove: Have love for yourself and others!

U nity: Together we are better!

D iversity: Respect and celebrate our differences!

E ducation: All students have the right to an education!
Lesson 4 - INCLUDE Values Inspiration book

**Purpose**
Peer tutors will explore and relate to values of inclusion. This lesson can be used
- As an intro to the concept of inclusive education.
- To provide an opportunity to make personal connections.

**Activity**
- Review INCLUDE poster - have each student read one line
- Deepen the understanding of each value through a variety of activities. Then have students write, draw or represent questions in the book.
  - I- Include: Read a statement of inclusion. Have students represent through words, pictures or symbols what that means to them in the book
  - N- Need: Have peer tutors show - What do you need to feel you belong?
  - C-Collaboration: Read Swimmy by Leo Lionni. Have students represent a time when they worked with others that were different than them to solve a problem.
  - L-Love: write or draw one thing you love about yourself.
  - U-Unity: Show “50 nifty US” from school house rock and explain history about how the 13 original colonies united together to become independent from England. We’ve since become 50 individual, different states but we all work together - united- and are better, the best country in the world, because of it.
  - D- Diversity: Write/draw/represent how you or your family is unique!
  - E- Education: Talk about human rights/discrimination. Show the list of “who is not in our school” Write one type of student that is not represented at our school. Discuss feelings around them not being here.

**Materials**
- INCLUDE poster laminated on construction paper (as a book cover)
- 8 pages for the book to be written and drawn in
- Each page should already have each INCLUDE value written in.
- Swimmy by Leo Leonni
- You tube access for 50 nifty United States
- “Who is not in our school?” List
**Lesson 5- Discrimination/ Right to education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Purpose</strong></th>
<th><strong>Activity</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peer tutors will explore and relate to discrimination. This lesson can be used as:</td>
<td>Explain that there are many different kinds of discrimination that are in our world today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* As an intro to the concept of inclusive education.</td>
<td>1. Stereotypes: present the following statements- a) I don’t like students who wear red because they always misbehave. b) I don’t like some students who wear red because they misbehave. c) Students who wear red misbehave a lot. Discuss which is the stereotype (3) which is the prejudice (1) and which is a statement of opinion (2) point out how all three statements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* An introduction to different types of discrimination that they may be exposed to.</td>
<td>2. Color &amp; Race: you’ve heard this most likely as racism. Which is the belief that there are human groups with particular characteristics that make them inferior to others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* To provide an opportunity to make personal connections.</td>
<td>3. Minority Group: the group of people that are not the majority.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Materials</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Include Values book</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* “Who is not in our school?” List</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Education is a human right
- Have students write one type of student who is not in our school on the Education page of the include values book.
- Have them each think about and discuss: Why don’t these children attend
dis·crim·i·na·tion
noun
1. the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things, esp. on the grounds of race, age, or sex.
"victims of racial discrimination"
synonyms: prejudice, bias, bigotry, intolerance, narrow-mindedness, unfairness, inequity, favoritism, one-sidedness, partisanship;More

our school? Should they? Why or why not?
**Lesson 6 & 7- Direct Instruction** *(plus reinforcement and correction procedure)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peer tutors will learn how to teach their peer tutee through direct instruction. They will also learn how to reinforce wanted outcomes and correct unwanted outcomes.</td>
<td>• Today, we are going to learn how we are going to work with our peer tutors!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• We will use a strategy called direct instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Direct instruction means that you will be teaching a specific academic skill explicit and constantly. (very clear, and the same every time)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• You will start working with 5-10 letters, words, etc. and teaching your peer tutor their names, sounds, words with what is called a 0 second delay. Which means you will ask the questions “What letter?” and have the answer for them right away “say, A” without giving them any time to say the wrong answer. You will continue to increase the second delay until they have “mastered” the skill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• You will know they have mastered a skill when they get the right answer 90% of the time for two straight days. (so if you had them tell you “what letter?” ten times, they would have to get the correct answer at least nine times in two consecutive days that you work with them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In order to achieve mastery, peer tutees have to be rewarded for getting the right answer! If you are on a 0 second delay, you are giving them a verbal or tangible reward every time. After that, you are only giving a reward when your tutee gets the right answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• So what happens if they don’t say anything or say the wrong answer? When they don’t say anything after the second delay, you will prompt them by</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Materials**

- Materials they will use with their peer tutees such as alphabet letters or sight words.
- Materials they will use with their peer tutees for reinforcement such as stickers and incentive charts
- Data sheets if needed
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>saying “Say ()”</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• If they say the wrong answer, you will take them through a correction procedure. You will first tell them the right answer, then you will ask your question again and prompt the right answer. And finally, you will distract them, then ask your question one last time and wait to the correct response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If the response is wrong again, you are going to ask the question one last time, prompt the right answer and reward for them saying the right answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students will take turns practicing with each other how to give direct instruction, reward for the right answer, prompt, and correct wrong answers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Lesson 8- Peer Tutor/Tuttee Match

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Purpose</strong></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To see which peer tutors pair best with each peer tutee</td>
<td>Today, we are going to work individually with each peer tutee. Each of you will get a chance to work with each peer tutee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Each peer tutee will come in individually and work with either sight words or letters with each peer tutor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>When they earn their prize, the peer tutee will play a game with all the peer tutors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Analyze each interaction to see who the peer tutee seems the most comfortable with. Some may be comfortable with all, but others may be only comfortable with one tutor. Make sure you pair the students that seem most uncomfortable first.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Materials</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>• Materials they will use with their peer tutees such as alphabet letters or sight words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Materials they will use with their peer tutees for reinforcement such as stickers and incentive charts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fun game options for several students to play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Data sheets if needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 9- Peer Tutor/Tutee Relationship building

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To build a positive and trusting relationship between peer tutor and tutee.</td>
<td>Now that you are paired with your peers, it is time to get to know each other better! I’m going to give you a question and I want our tutors to ask the younger peers the question first, then I want the younger peer to ask the same question back to their tutor. Some common questions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common &quot;getting to know you&quot; questions</td>
<td>✓ What’s your favorite color?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fun, interactive games</td>
<td>✓ Do you have any pets?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ How many brothers/sisters do you have?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ What’s your favorite ice cream flavor?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ What’s your favorite sports team?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ What’s your favorite subject in school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ask one of the tutors to share the answer of their tutee, and a tutee to share the answer of their tutor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Next, tutors may ask any question that you would like to your tutees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>And tutees may ask any questions to their tutor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Next, the pairs will have some time to try some different games together. Chutes and Ladders, Trouble, Hi Ho Cherrio, Headbandz, etc are all good options for them to have some fun together!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Materials
- Common “getting to know you” questions
- Fun, interactive games
**Lesson 10 - Peer Tutor/Tutee work together**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To build a productive, positive, and trusting relationship between peer tutor and tutee.</td>
<td>Remind and show both peer tutors and tutees their expectations when working with each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Remind peer tutors of direct instruction, reward, and correction procedure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Clear directions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Setting up what tutees are working for (sticker, games, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Big reward for correct answers!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ 0.3,5 second prompt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Wrong answer? Follow these steps:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Tell them the right answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Ask question again and prompt right answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Distract (touch head)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Ask question again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hand out appropriate material for individual peer partners. Have them practice giving direct instruction, rewards, and going through the correction procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>When their peer tutees fill in their “star chart” have peer tutors practice giving the reward (stickers) or playing games using their sand timers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work with each peer partnership individually for at least 5 minutes as they work together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Give constructive directions when appropriate to both peer tutors and tutees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Materials**

- Tutor materials such as flash cards, fluency passages, etc.
- Reward “star card”
- Rewards (stickers)
- Fun, interactive games

**Activity**

- Remind peer tutors of direct instruction, reward, and correction procedure.
  - Clear directions
  - Setting up what tutees are working for (sticker, games, etc.)
  - Big reward for correct answers!
  - 0.3,5 second prompt
  - Wrong answer? Follow these steps:
    1. Tell them the right answer
    2. Ask question again and prompt right answer
    3. Distract (touch head)
    4. Ask question again
- Hand out appropriate material for individual peer partners. Have them practice giving direct instruction, rewards, and going through the correction procedure.
- When their peer tutees fill in their “star chart” have peer tutors practice giving the reward (stickers) or playing games using their sand timers.
- Work with each peer partnership individually for at least 5 minutes as they work together.
- Give constructive directions when appropriate to both peer tutors and tutees.
## Lesson 11 - Peer Tutor Caddies & Reflection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To create a workable caddie and reflect on the first week of peer tutoring.</td>
<td>Tutors will reflect on how their first few days working with their tutor went. If comfortable, have tutors share their successes and challenges.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - Small caddy for each peer tutor  
- Tutor materials depending on tutee need i.e. flash cards, fluency passages, etc.  
- Reward “star card”  
- Rewards (stickers)  
- Fun, interactive games  
- Reflection sheet (attached) | - Depending on tutee need tutors will gather flash cards, fluency passages, sight words, etc.  
- Star chart, dry erase pen, eraser  
- Correction procedure reminder  
- Stickers and other small tangible rewards  
- Games |
Reflections

One success I had was:

One success my tutee had was:

A challenge I faced:

I liked/ enjoyed/ felt good about....
### Lesson 12 - 75 Ways to Say Good Job

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To make peer tutors aware of many different ways to verbally reinforce their tutees</td>
<td>Tutors will take turns reading through all the different ways to say “Good Job”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Then, they will star three they would like to try with their peer tutee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finally, tutors will add to the list and write their ideas onto the chart.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“75 Different Ways to Say Good Job” paper</td>
<td>Tutors will take turns reading through all the different ways to say “Good Job”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pencil</td>
<td>Then, they will star three they would like to try with their peer tutee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finally, tutors will add to the list and write their ideas onto the chart.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
75 Different Ways to Say “Good Job”

PeerTutors

$ You've got it made.
You're on the right track now!
You are very good at that.
I'm happy to see you working like that.
You're doing a good job.
That's the best you've ever done.
I knew you could do it.
Now you've figured it out.
Now you have it!
GREAT!
You make it look easy.
That's the right way to do it.
You're getting better every day.
SENSATIONAL!
That's the way to do it.
Best yet.
PERFECT!
TERRIFIC!

Much better!
You've just about mastered that!
OUTSTANDING!
You did that very well.
FANTASTIC!
You're really improving.
SUPERB!
Keep it up!
You've got that down pat!
TREMENDOUS!
Good thinking!
I'm very proud of you.
I think you've got it now.
You figured that out fast.
That's really nice.
CLEVER!
That's great!
Way to go.
Now you have the hang of it!

You've done a great job.
Congratulations, you got it right
That's GOOD!
GOOD WORK!
I'm proud of the way you worked today.
You're really working hard today.
You've just about got it.
THAT'S IT!
Congratulations!
You are doing that much better today.
You're learning fast.
Good for you.
Couldn't have done it better myself.
You did it that time!
That's the way!
SUPER DUPER!
You haven't missed a thing.
Keep up the good work.
### 75 Different Ways to Say “Good Job”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PeerTutors</th>
<th>PeerTutors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nothing can stop you now!</td>
<td>You outdid yourself today!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXCELLENT!</td>
<td>SPLENDID!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINE!</td>
<td>Good going!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wonderful!</td>
<td>MARVELOUS!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That's better than ever.</td>
<td>Good job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I appreciate your hard work.</td>
<td>Well, look at you go!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Now that's what I call a fine job!</td>
<td>DYNAMITE!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You must have been practicing!</td>
<td>Nice Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You're doing beautifully.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right on!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You're doing fine.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are really learning a lot.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D

PERMISSION SLIP
Dear Parent/Guardian:

This letter follows our earlier conversation regarding your student’s involvement in Leataata Floyd’s Peer Support Program. We are excited to begin this intervention to support your child in being a role model for younger students and to continue to be responsible, respectful, and hardworking at school.

Here’s how the Peer Support Program works:

1. Peer Tutors will check-in on Tuesday and Friday mornings in Room 205 with Mrs. Pizzicelli. They will set goals for themselves in working with their peers and collect any needed supplies.
2. Several days a week, the peer tutors will go into their peer’s classroom to work with them one-on-one (with supervision from the staff member).
3. The peer tutor will give reinforcement to the peer and then receive reinforcement/guidance from the supervisor.
4. The peer tutor will be able to earn privileges with their peer’s teacher.

Your child will be in the program for a minimum of nine weeks, with periodic review and training to ensure success. During this time, students will accumulate points to earn various privileges. At home, you may set up a similar reward system for meeting daily goals and teaching goals set together.

We look forward to working together to make this a positive experience for your child. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Thank you,
Rae Anne Pizzicelli
Education Specialist
Peer Support Program Coordinator
Phone: (916) 264-1475
Email: raeanne.barrett@scusd.edu

Please return the permission slip below!

Permission to Participate in Leataata Floyd’s Peer Support Program!

Student: ________________________________

[ ] I give consent for my child to participate in the Peer Support Program!

[ ] Do not give consent for my child to participate in the Peer Support Program!

Parent/Signature: _______________________

Contact Info: ____________________________
Appendix E

REINFORCEMENT
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anthony, Peer Tutor</th>
<th>I am a peer tutor, a model student, and try my best to always follow the panther way!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My goal: Is to keep my peer tutee on task and follow the panther way.</td>
<td>Be Responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Be on time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2= WOW</td>
<td>1=Okay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 1 0</td>
<td>2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>Teacher Signature:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leah, Peer Tutor</th>
<th>I am a peer tutor, a model student, and try my best to always follow the panther way!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My goal: To help my tutee interact with their learning and to make new friends.</td>
<td>Be Responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Get and put away needed materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2= WOW</td>
<td>1=Okay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 1 0</td>
<td>2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>Teacher Signature:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kiony, Peer Tutor</th>
<th>I am a peer tutor, a model student, and try my best to always follow the panther way!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My goal: Reinforce my tutee by using different encouraging words.</td>
<td>Be Responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Be on time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2= WOW</td>
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## Peer Tutor Student Monitoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student:</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
<th>Respectful</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Hardworking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>Peer-Tutor Privileges</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eat Lunch with your Participating supervisor</td>
<td>Receive a Positive Note Home from Teacher or Principal</td>
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<td>Dine at a Special Table during Lunch with your tutee</td>
<td>Help in your tutee’s Classroom during Recess</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 Minutes of Computer/iPad Time w/ Peer tutee</td>
<td>Be your supervisor’s assistant</td>
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<td>10 minutes to play a Game with your tutee</td>
<td>Pick a prize for yourself and your tutee to earn</td>
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"STAR CHART"

I am an AWESOME student!

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I can earn: ______________________
References


