7-9-2024

Exploring Teacher Practices Used to Support Black Students in Two Early College High School Programs

Raquel Hairston
Walden University

Walden University

College of Education and Human Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Raquel Hairston

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee
Dr. Felicia Blacher-Wilson, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty
Dr. Heather Caldwell, Committee Member, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2024

Abstract

Exploring Teacher Practices Used to Support Black Students in Two Early College High School Programs

By

Raquel Hairston

MA, Ed Argosy University, 2005

BA, Stillman College, 1995

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

June 2024

Abstract

Early college high schools (ECHS) have contributed to the increased number of Black students earning associate degrees. However, data show that students considered college and career-ready upon entering the ECHS/dual enrollment program are underperforming in college classes, hindering their acceptance into higher education institutions and bachelor's degree attainment. This qualitative exploratory study aimed to understand the academic and social practices teachers used to support Black students in college classes and to see if additional resources were needed. Tinto's student integration theory examined the connection between social and academic integration and student retention. Data were collected through semistructured interviews with seven ECHS/dual enrollment teachers with varying subject area expertise. Interview data were transcribed, coded, and analyzed using the NVivo software. Findings suggest that participants provide various academic and social supports to help Black students in college classes. Participants also understand that building strong relationships and creating positive classroom environments enhance student engagement, leading to positive learning outcomes. Participants' responses indicated a need for professional development in college readiness indicators, explicitly focusing on understanding cognitive strategies, academic behaviors, and contextual skills and awareness. Therefore, based on the research findings, a 3-day professional development workshop was created. Positive social change might occur if Black student success in college classes is improved, thereby increasing Black students' GPA in college classes, leading to bachelor's degree attainment.

Exploring Teacher Practices Used to Support Black Students in Two Early College High School Programs

By

Raquel Hairston

MA, Ed Argosy University, 2005

BA, Stillman College, 1995

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

July 2024

Dedication

As I complete this project study, I want to begin by giving glory and honor to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I dedicate this project to my beloved mother, Everlena Hairston, who tragically passed away in a car accident a few years ago. Though you left us too soon, your spirit remains a beacon of love and inspiration. I also want to thank my father Roy Hairston for his unwavering support and love throughout my life. In addition, I take a moment to express my love and dedication to my beloved children and grandchildren. You have brought me endless joy and have been a constant source of inspiration throughout my academic journey. I dedicate this project study to you, hoping it will serve as an example of the importance of perseverance, hard work, and dedication. May it inspire you to pursue your dreams and never give up on the things that you are passionate about. I hope that my work will contribute to creating a better world for future generations, including yourselves. I have no doubt that you will continue to make positive changes in the world and leave your mark on history. Always remember that I love and believe in you.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the following people without whom this project study would not have been possible:

First and foremost, I would like to extend my sincerest appreciation to my committee chair, Dr. Felicia Blacher-Wilson, for her unwavering support, guidance, and encouragement throughout my doctoral journey. Her expert advice, feedback, and insight were valuable and helped shape the direction of this research. I would also like to thank Dr. Heather Caldwell for valuable feedback, comments, and suggestions, which have significantly enhanced the quality of this project study.

To my family, I am forever grateful for their unwavering support, understanding, and patience. Their love and encouragement gave me the strength to overcome the challenges that I faced along the way.

To my friends and colleagues, I thank you for your support, encouragement, and invaluable conversations that have enriched my thinking and helped me stay motivated throughout this journey.

I would like to express my gratitude to the participants of this study, whose time, effort, and willingness to share their experiences have made this research possible.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Section 1: The Problem

The Local Problem

The problem to be investigated in this study is that despite offering resources and support, Black students leave the ECHS program with a lower GPA than they entered, hindering their acceptance into higher education institutions. Black student college retention continues to challenge higher education institutions (Adams et al., 2020; Parnes et al., 2020; Phillips & Snodgrass, 2021). While the United States Census Bureau (2022) reported that the percentage of students earning college degrees increased for all subgroups from 2009 to 2019, the percentage rate for Black and Hispanic students with college degrees is still substantially lower than their White counterparts. To address the challenges of degree completion and college preparedness for economically disadvantaged and historically underrepresented students, the ECHS initiative – funded by four major charitable organizations including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation, the Kellogg Foundation, and the Ford Foundation – provides a chance for students to gain 60 college credits or more at no cost (Webb & Gerwin, 2014). More importantly, ECHS aims to prepare underrepresented students for postsecondary success by preparing them for advanced coursework opportunities with hopes of leading to postsecondary degree completion.

Researchers have noted positive outcomes of the ECHS model and agree that students graduating from ECHS high schools with their high school diploma and associate degree are more inclined to pursue higher education (Burns et al., 2018; Duncheon, 2020; Jett & Rinn, 2020; Moreno et al., 2021). Further research has also

shown that underrepresented student populations who complete undergraduate coursework and high school simultaneously show increased matriculation and success in postsecondary institutions (Moreno et al., 2021, 2022). However, minority students still lag and are not enrolled in accelerated learning programs equal to White and Asian student groups (US Civil Rights Data Collection, 2015-2016), and those enrolled experience less success (Chatterji et al., 2021; Duncheon, 2020). In addition, there needs to be more literature on how well the educational experiences of the ECHS program serve students when they graduate (Edmunds et al., 2020).

Rationale

The administrators and counselors provide academic and social support to 11th and 12th-grade students in the two collegiate high school models under study. The high schools under study offer two programs: The first is the pre-collegiate program that requires incoming 10th-grade students to have an unweighted grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 and meet the minimum scores on the Post Secondary Educational Readiness Test (PERT) of 92 in Reading, 92 in Writing, and 100 in Mathematics. The 10th-grade students are taught on the collegiate high school campus by high school teachers but may begin college courses in the second semester of their 10th-grade year. The second program is the Collegiate Program, which supports 11th and 12th-grade students taking college classes on campus. To enter 11th grade, students must have a GPA of 3.0 or above and make qualifying scores on the PERT Placement test of 106 in Reading, 103 in Writing, and 114 in Mathematics.

Evidence from local school data reveals that although Black students enter 11th grade with a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher and qualifying scores on the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT), they exit the program as seniors with a GPA average lower than 3.0, hindering their ability to be accepted into higher education institutions. The table below shows historical GPA data for students exiting the program for collegiate high schools under study (Local School District, 2023).

Table 1

High School and College Comparison Grade Point Average by Student Population for the 2019-2020 Graduating Seniors for High School #1

Ethnicity	Average High School GPA for students Entering ECHS Grade 11	Average College GPA Exiting as 12th graders from ECHS Program 2019-2020
Black	3.3%	2.6%
Asian	3.7%	3.7%
Hispanic	3.6%	3.6%
Multiracial	3.5%	3.3%
White	3.5%	3.2%

Table 2

High School and College Comparison Grade Point Average by Student Population for the Graduating Seniors for the 2020-2021 High School #1

Ethnicity	Average High School GPA for students Entering ECHS Grade 11	Average College GPA Exiting as 12th graders from ECHS Program 2020-2021
Black	3.1%	2.8%
Asian	3.7%	3.6%
Hispanic	3.6%	3.3%
Multiracial	3.7%	3.0%
White	3.5%	3.4%

Table 3

High School and College Comparison Grade Point Average by Student Population for the Graduating Seniors for the 2021-2022 High School #1

Ethnicity	Average High School GPA for students Entering ECHS Grade 11	Average College GPA Exiting as 12th graders from ECHS Program 2021-2022
Black	3.2%	2.6%
Asian	3.7%	3.4%
Hispanic	3.6%	3.3%
Multiracial	3.5%	3.0%
White	3.5%	3.2%

Table 4

College Grade Point Average by Student Population for High School # 2

Ethnicity	Average GPA 2020-2021
Black	3.2%
Asian	3.9%
Hispanic	3.4%
Multiracial	2.9%
White	3.2%

Note: Study Site # 2 opened in 2019-2020 and did not have seniors.

Studies highlighting the positive impact of ECHS programs have found that students' early academic experiences influenced their later success in college classes. Black students were less prepared to handle the higher academic standards of 4-year universities (Moreno et al., 2021; Zhang, 2019). In addition, a Moreno et al. (2022) study found that higher grade point average influenced ECHS students' decision to pursue additional postsecondary degree attainment. Examining data from five ECHS high schools in a suburban Texas district, this study also found that students who gained college credit in high school had a greater chance of postsecondary matriculation.

Two ECHS initiatives address college and career preparedness, as well as degree attainment. The ECHS's understudy has consistently demonstrated degree completion, with study site number one averaging a 100% graduation rate and 92% AA graduation rate for the past 6 years and study site number two averaging a 100% high school graduation rate and 92.5% AA graduation rate for the past two years.

Table 5

High School and Associate in Arts graduation rate for the past seven years for College High School #1

Class	Total Number of Graduates	High School Graduation Rate	Associate in Arts Graduation Rate
2023	89	100%	97%
2022	74	100%	92%
2021	74	100%	83%
2020	85	100%	95%
2019	91	100%	94%
2018	80	100%	95%
2017	80	100%	95%

Table 6

High School and Associate in Arts graduation rate for the past three years for College High School #2

Class	Total Numbers of Graduates	High School Graduation Rate	Associate in Arts Graduation Rate
2023	69	100%	96%
2022	75	100%	93%
2021	20	100%	92%

Note: Study Site # 2 opened in 2019-2020 and did not have seniors.

While many Black students in the ECHS programs exited with an associate's degree, the lower-than-competitive college GPA made being accepted into higher education institutions more challenging. The state university system matrix shows that the middle 50% of students admitted to the 12 state university systems between the

summer and fall of 2021 had a GPA of 3.23 to 4.7. (Florida SUS Counselor Guide 2022-2023). In addition, an ECHS administrator noted patterns in the underperformance of Black students in college classes and recommended a closer examination of ECHS practices related to Black student success. (School Administrator, personal communication, October 20, 2021).

Furthermore, an ECHS teacher acknowledged differences in teacher expectations for Black student performance within the ECHS programs. (A teacher, personal communication, December 7, 2021). Since the two ECHS Programs have been high-performing, the need to highlight or investigate current policies and practices has not been evident (Osta & Vasquez, n.d.). Therefore, this study aimed to understand the academic and social practices teachers use to support Black students in college classes and to understand if Black students need more resources to be successful in college classes.

Definition of Terms

Academic Performance: Academic achievement refers to the performance outcomes of specific goals in instructional environments (Steinmayr et al., 2014).

Black: The US Census Bureau defines Black or African American as individuals originating from any of the Black racial groups of Africa. (United States Census Bureau, 2022).

Dual enrollment/Concurrent enrollment: Academic programs created for students to graduate from high school with a high school diploma and college credit (Education Commission of the States, 2020).

College Readiness: Students are ready for college when they no longer need remedial coursework and complete entry-level college courses for a 2-year or 4-year degree program. (Florida Department of Education (n.d.).

Early College High Schools (ECHS): Concurrent enrollment high school programs merge high school and college to save the time and money spent on postsecondary education (Edmunds et al., 2020).

Grade Point Average (GPA): A grade point average represents achievement quality over time. GPAs are used as qualifying indicators for entrance to academic programs and institutions. (Hamshire et al., 2017).

Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT): An adaptive computer test that measures a student's preparedness for undergraduate studies. Test results determine placement in college courses (Florida Department of Education, n.d.).

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it could help administrators identify how to enhance support for Black students in college classes so they can exit the program with a competitive grade point average, creating more opportunities for them to transfer to higher educational institutions. Education has long been viewed as a means of achieving upward social and economic mobility. This concept suggests that individuals who attain postsecondary education have greater chances to move up the economic ladder and thus achieve greater financial stability and success. According to a report from the US Small Business Administration, people with postsecondary education are more likely to start businesses than those without degrees (US Small Business Administration, 2020). Higher

levels of education also provide individuals with higher job security. People with advanced degrees have more stable employment than those without and are more likely to find new employment quickly in case of job loss (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019).

Despite increased access to higher education in recent decades, Black students face unequal access to high-quality education and experience persistent achievement gaps, unlike other peer groups (Rivera et al., 2019; Strayhorn, 2009; Utt & Tochluck, 2020). Research supports the positive impacts of the ECHS model on high school and college performance. It shows that early college high school students had a greater chance of earning an associate degree two years post-high school (Edmunds et al., 2017, 2020). However, despite the positive outcomes, more is needed to know how well the students were prepared to pursue additional postsecondary education (Duncheon, 2020; Edmunds et al., 2020). Hence, it is important to examine teachers' practices to understand better how resources and support are provided to Black students and what additional supports can be added to improve academic performance in college classes.

Research Questions

The study aimed to understand teachers' practices used to support Black students' performance in college classes. Information gathered from this study could help teachers identify and implement best practices to help increase the academic achievement of Black students in college classes. A basic qualitative research design was used to address two research questions.

- RQ1: What social and academic practices do teachers use to support Black students' academic performance in two ECHS programs?
- RQ2: What additional resources do teachers need to support Black students in college classes?

By exploring teachers' practices to support Black students, I can better understand the support needed to ensure their social and academic success. Qualitative research was the best design for this research since I was trying to understand teachers' feelings and beliefs about the practices they employ to support Black learners. Creswell and Creswell (2017) asserted that qualitative researchers seek to understand the participants' perspective and experiences with the phenomenon and follow an inductive approach to inquiry. This study's target number of participants was eight ECHS teachers with varying years of experience and subject area expertise in two schools within one district.

Review of the Literature

The Conceptual Framework

Tinto's (1993) student integration theory provides a framework to guide the research study as it addresses the connection between social and academic integration and student retention. Therefore, this framework will explore teachers' practices to support Black students in two Early College High School (ECHS) Programs. Davis et al. (2019) found that social and academic integration is paramount to creating a sense of connectedness and is crucial for Black students. Similarly, (Korpershoek et al., 2020; Smith & Tinto, 2022; Tinto, 2015) found that the perception of student belonging increases student engagement and their commitment to the school. Student engagement

increases even more when teachers create a culture of care where learners feel accepted and affirmed. The ECHS model is positioned to create environments for historically underserved students by providing early social and academic experiences that can positively impact a student's decisions to pursue postsecondary education.

Researchers have sought to understand student persistence in higher education for decades, and various student retention models have shed light on the variables contributing to student endurance. Building on the influences of Durkheim's Suicide Model and Spady's Model of the Dropout Process (MDP), Vincent Tinto's (1975) student integration theory is highly recognized and most often cited by researchers (Bean, 1981; Metz, 2002). Tinto's original model, Conceptual Schema for Dropout (CSD), was developed in collaboration with Cullen in 1973. Since then, subsequent researchers have used Tinto's (1975) student retention model as a foundational study. Tinto's framework suggests that several factors influence a student's persistence to degree completion, including the students' family dynamics, individual student qualities like self-efficacy and self-commitment, and prior schooling. Tinto further proposed that a student's ability to integrate into the academic system of an institution, resulting in goal commitment, is determined by grade performance and intellectual development. Students who successfully reach their goals are more likely to persist. Furthermore, social connections developed by peer, group, and faculty interaction play a crucial role in social integration leading to increased institutional commitment (Tinto, 1975).

Tinto's theoretical framework has been applied to numerous studies, and evidence supports that when institutional frameworks include academic and social integration,

students perform better (Munro, 1981; Nora & Matonak, 1990; Pascarella & Terenzini,1980). Chrysikos et al. (2017) examined the leading cause of low retention rates for 901 first-year undergraduate students in a higher education institution in the United Kingdom. The authors used the structural equation modeling technique by combining data from Pascarella and Terenzini's questionnaire and integration scales with student enrollment information to examine behavioral-related retention factors. While the results showed only a slight variance in retention, Chrysikos et al.'s (2017) findings support previous studies on the student retention model and acknowledge that Tinto's student integration framework provides a lens to analyze student persistence.

Although Tinto's (1975) seminal work has served as a model for many researchers, it has also been the subject of criticism for the lack of generalizability to diverse student populations, 2-year colleges, and other institution types. Tierney and Kobrak (1992) proposed that Tinto's model implicitly suggests that students entering college from historically underserved student populations must disassociate with their communities and cultures and assimilate into the institutional norms. In addition, Tierney (1999) argued that Tinto's (1975) did not consider the history of racial oppression and discrimination faced by Black, Hispanic, and Native American students. In 1993, Tinto amended his framework to include other institution types and the experiences of diverse student populations (French, 2017). Researchers continued investigating additional variables to better understand student retention and examined several sociological, psychological, and economic models. The student retention focus expanded to include

environmental and institutional factors influencing student enrollment decisions (Tinto, 2006).

A grade point average is one of the most important considerations in college admissions. A high grade point average increases the chances of acceptance into a higher education institution. More recently, Fincham et al. (2021) conducted a quantitative study at an Australian university to examine Tinto's retention model predictions regarding how students' academic outcomes influence dropout decisions. Using key predictors of Tinto's model of student persistence and academic outcomes, the authors analyzed 30 years of undergraduate and postgraduate enrollment data from 1989-2018 across the College of Business, Health Sciences, and Information Technology and Engineering at a research university. In line with Tinto's theory, the authors found that student interactions within the school community or social network could be used to predict their final grade point average and identify students who would eventually drop out. Students with strong social connections with peers and faculty show increased potential for greater academic success, which leads to higher grade point averages.

To support this point, Nikolaidis et al. (2022) noted that students with lower GPAs are less likely to persist to degree completion. In their research on attrition in higher education, Nikolaidis et al. (2022) argued that institutions must collaborate with students to understand their academic needs and the resources and tools needed to support their learning. This study confirmed prior research highlighting the importance of the students' voice in these conversations. Furthermore, in viewing student attrition from the student perspective, Tinto (2015) noted that institutional action does influence the

students' goals and motivation, and that by engaging student self-efficacy and creating cultural connections in the curriculum development process, institutions can contribute to student persistence to completion.

Since the early days of research, significant strides have been made in promoting student retention, and research has consistently shown that student engagement is enhanced through positive experiences in and out of the classroom setting. For example, Smith and Tinto (2022) found that how students interpreted their early engagement experiences with faculty and peers impacted their perceptions of belonging, contributed to a lack of student persistence, and influenced their desire to persist. The authors recommended further research to explore how the campus structure of institutional policies and practices results in opportunities for student success (Smith & Tinto, 2022).

Review of the Broader Problem

To locate scholarly literature and to ensure the topic is grounded in the literature, I searched several of the following databases: Walden University's Library Databases, SAGE Publications, Taylor and Francis, APA Thesaurus of Psychological Index Terms, Google Scholar, ProQuest Thesis and Dissertations, Education Source, ERIC, SocINDEX, and EBSCO Host Academics Complete. The search that included peer-reviewed articles since 2020 yielded limited studies except for seminal works; so, I expanded the criteria to include peer-reviewed articles published since 2015. The search criteria included the following words and phrases: *dual enrollment/early college model high schools, concurrent enrollment, early admission, minority students, African American/Black, students, academic success, underachievement, college classes,*

additional support, accelerated learner, grade point average, achievement gap, learning gap, opportunity gap, college readiness, postsecondary education, academic performance, academic achievement, academic supports, social supports, retention rates, college preparedness, college readiness indicators, and *college preparation.* In addition, the reference list of the peer-reviewed articles provided additional literature insights. This literature review is organized around the following topics: (1) the history of educational reform efforts leading to the ECHS program, (2) outcomes and success of the ECHS program, (3) academic and social supports, (4) Black student outcomes, and (5) ECHS impacts on postsecondary outcomes.

History of Educational Reform Efforts Leading to ECHS Programs

Many reform efforts have sought to address equity in educational opportunities for several decades. Many of these efforts stemmed from social, cultural, and political factors that dominated the educational landscape. For example, in 1994, The Brown v. Board of Education of 1954 ended racial segregation in public schools. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, which banned discrimination in education, made significant strides in educational opportunities for Black students.

Additional educational strides were a direct result of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, signed into law by President George W. Bush. The deal, receiving support from democrats and republicans, emphasized standards mastery and holding schools responsible for all learners, with a heavy focus on improving poor-performing schools. The four overarching goals of NCLB were to hold schools accountable in ensuring all students learned at high levels, promote evidence-based practices, provide high-quality

instruction, increase accelerated learning opportunities, and increase educational choice options (The White House, 2004).

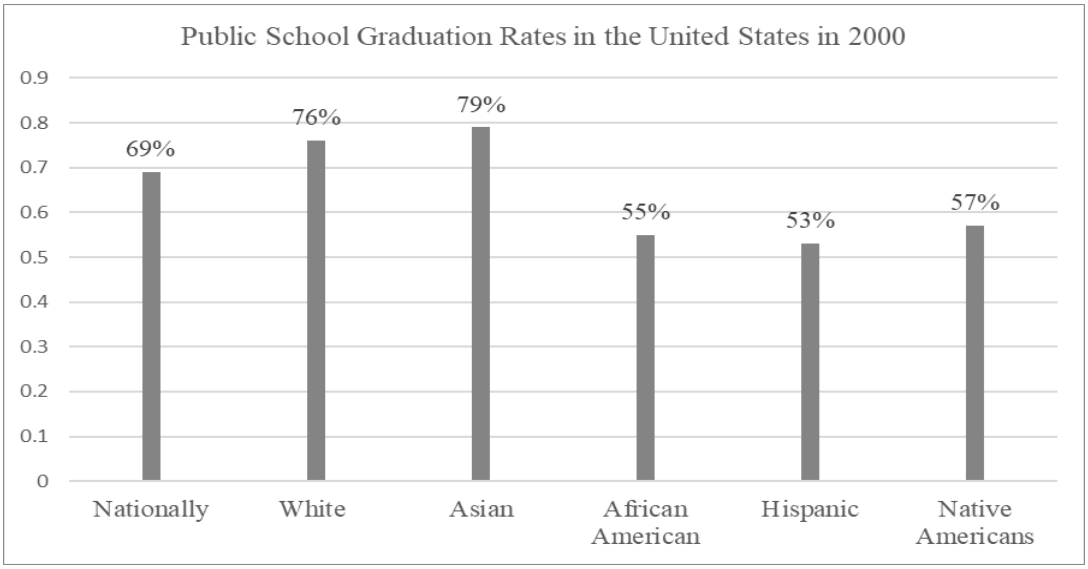
According to President Bush, NCLB addressed the low expectations and lack of accountability for minority student group performance. The law required schools to set yearly goals for each racial and ethnic subgroup and students with special needs (Chicago Tribune, 2007). Although there were many drawbacks to NCLB, it did contain some significant advantages by requiring schools to report student performance by race and class, and it highlighted longstanding inequalities and brought attention to the needs of students least served in many schools (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Secondly, the law emphasized the right of every student to be taught by a highly qualified teacher and called for increasing accountability measures for teachers and students. Black students attending urban schools are often disadvantaged because many urban schools need help finding qualified teachers to fill positions. Jacob (2007) found that urban districts suffer from teacher turnover, teacher shortages, and less qualified teaching staff than suburban districts. Teacher turnover and retention are strong predictors of poor student performance. In addition, research shows that student learning is increased when teachers have a strong command of their subject matter.

The broad goal of NCLB was a high-quality education for all students. This reform initiative marked a turning point in the US education system as it paved the way for other educational reform efforts and innovative school design. Moreover, since NCLB, school accountability measures that collect and report student achievement data have become standard practice. (US Department of Education, 2006). Notably, the need

for high school reform echoed loudly as growing dissatisfaction with the large traditional high school structure produced overworked teachers, overcrowded classrooms, and struggling learners (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Moreover, the stagnation of US high school graduation rates and the workforce skill gap caused additional concerns for policymakers, researchers, and other stakeholders. According to Murnane (2013), the US high school graduation rate ranked number one among nineteen countries in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) but had fallen to thirteenth place by 2000. The figure below shows public school graduation rates for the class of 2000 by ethnicity.

Figure 1

US Graduation Rates in the year 2000



Note: Adapted from the 2002 Public School Graduation Rates in the US, Manhattan Institute (https://manhattan.institute/article/public-school-graduation-rates-in-the-united-states).

Given these points, significant reforms of the large, traditional high schools began. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and other billionaire philanthropic groups supplied the funding districts needed to design innovative learning spaces. Fueled by philanthropic support, educational reform expanded to include small schools of choice and charter schools. Building on the accountability measure of NCLB, in 2015, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). This new educational law transferred much of the educational authority back to states and local education agencies. It allowed states to self-select goals from a myriad of options provided by the Federal Government. (Sharp, 2016). ESSA also provided grants to local education agencies to improve the performance of low-performing schools.

Moreover, ESSA included additional provisions focusing on educational equity for disadvantaged student populations, as well as college and career readiness. As a result, states were required to submit a state report outlining their plan to meet the ESSA provisions. Florida identified four broad goals to satisfy ESSA requirements and its amendments. The plan focused on all students and emphasized high academic standards, college and career readiness, support for school improvement, and accountability measures for student outcomes (Florida Department of Education, 2018). Moreover, ESSA included provisions that promote early college high schools as college and career readiness pathways (Song & Zeiser, 2019). This move paved the way for high academic standards, quality career training programs, and other services that gave students the skills and knowledge needed to transition to college or the workforce.

The first early college high school began in 1966 when Bard College at Simon's Rock admitted students after 10th and 11th grade (Warner, 2022). However, in 2002, the model became widespread with the Bill and Melinda Gates Early College High School Initiative (ECHSI) aimed at targeting historically underrepresented, low-income, and first-generation college students. Since its inception, early college high schools have distinguished themselves as a viable path to college and career readiness for underrepresented groups. According to Jobs for the Future (2018), North Carolina and Texas lead the way in the ECHS movement and although variations of the ECHS model exist, there are more than 280 across the country.

In summary, the ECHS initiative stemmed from educational reform efforts to address disparities in high school graduation rates college access, enrollment, and degree completion for historically underrepresented student groups, economically disadvantaged and first-generation students. Although research shows the ECHS model supports an increase 2-year degree attainment for Black students (Edmunds et al., 2017, 2020; Hutchins, et al., 2019; Moreno et al., 2021; Song et al., 2021), a recent report by the National Student Clearinghouse shows a 13% decline in college enrollment among first-time Black college students at community colleges (Anthony et al., 2021). In addition, state and national trends show significant gaps between the associate and bachelor's completion rates. Moreover, Black students earned only 9.7% of the two million degrees earned between 2019-2020 (Postsecondary National Policy Institute, 2023). While education reform efforts like the ECHS model have improved graduation rates and degree attainment among Black students, research shows that Black students still face

institutional challenges and barriers. Banks and Dohy (2019) emphasized the need for institutions to examine programmatic deficits and work to remove structural barriers inhibiting student success.

Early College High School Program Outcomes and Successes

A growing body of research on the ECHS model supports a positive effect on all students' high school completion rates, postsecondary access, and degree attainment (Adams et al., 2020; Berger et al., 2013, 2014; Britton et al., 2022; Duncheon, 2020; Edmunds et al., 2017, 2020; Moreno et al., 2021; Song et al., 2021). Moreover, studies by (Berger et al., 2013, 2014; Edmunds et al., 2017; Haxton et al., 2016) found in a comparative study between ECHS students and non-ECHS students found that 80.7 % of ECHS enrolled in college compared to 70.7% of non-ECHS-students. In addition, the study found ECHS students were more likely to persist to degree completion with 23.7% of ECHS students compared to 2.1% of non-EHCS students graduating within six years of entering the 9th grade (Haxton et al., 2016; Song et al., 2021). The success of the ECHS model can be attributed to the five core principles, which were refined in 2008 through the collaborative partnership agreement and oversight of Jobs for the Future (Berger et al., 2009; Jobs for the Future, 2021).

Table 7

Five Core Principles of the Early College High School Model

Core Principles	Description
1	Courses of Study Leading to Degrees/Certificates with Labor Market Value: Courses of study are designed so that all students can earn at least 12 college credits and up to an associate degree within a 4-5 year graduation timeline.
2	Robust Postsecondary Partnerships: K-12 and higher education representatives collaborate in ECHS design, decision-making, and continuous improvement, with a clear understanding of each party's scope of responsibility and commitment to resource sharing.
3	Industry Partnerships: Advisory Boards, and Work-Based Learning: Industry partners play an active role in informing curricula and commit to offering a continuum of work-based learning to prepare graduates to meet current and future labor market needs.
4	Access and Equity: The school's design, recruitment plan, and admission process reflect a commitment to removing access barriers, closing equity gaps, and providing opportunities for all students to achieve college readiness and success.
5	Comprehensive System of Support: The school and its higher education partner have a comprehensive plan for building the skills for college success and differentiating support to meet all students' academic and social emotional needs (Jobs for the Future (JFF), 2021).

Note: Five core principles of the ECHS Model. Adapted from "Early College Week" by Jobs for the Future 2021. https://archive.jff.org/events/early-college-week/.

Early college high schools have a proven history of increasing the college success rate for all students. In a comparative study of 157 early college high schools Berger et al. (2009) found that ECHS students outperformed comparative students in the same district. Similarly, a study examining the longer-term impact of the ECHS two to four years post high school graduation by Berger et al. (2013) found that students attending an ECHS program had increased chances of enrolling in postsecondary education compared to non-ECHS students with 80% of early college students enrolling compared to 71% non-ECHS students. The study used a randomized experimental design to compare students selected to attend ECHS and those not selected. They sampled ten early college high schools in North Carolina between 2005 and 2011. In addition, Berger et al. (2013) found that 22%

of ECHS earned an associate degree compared to 1% of control students, and 45% earned a postsecondary degree within six years compared to 34% of control students.

In a follow up study Song and Zeiser (2019) found that six years post-high school graduation, ECHS students still outperformed other comparative student groups. This study found that 7% more early college high school students had enrolled in college, with 84% of ECHS students, compared to 77% of control students, and that by year 10, 65.8% of early college students had enrolled in 2-year colleges compared to 46.8% of control students. Moreover, Song and Zeiser (2019) confirmed previous research (Berger et al. 2013, 2014; Edmunds et al., 2017; Vargas, J., & Quiara, J., 2010; Moreno et al. 2021) that supports earning college credit while in high school is a consistent predictor of degree completion outcomes. Moreover, research suggests that academic preparation for college-level coursework influences student outcomes.

Academic and Social Support

The ECHS model is designed to enhance the success of historically underrepresented students who take college classes in high school. Foundational elements of this model include providing students with academic and social support to increase academic success. In addition to tutoring and other academic supports, students receive instruction in study skills, note taking, and time management (Edmunds et al., 2020). Students participate in seminars and other workshops designed to help navigate the college application process, including completing financial aid, registering for the SAT/ACT, and applying for scholarships. Moreover, students are also offered academic advising support on college-level course completion and college transfer credits.

Another foundational element of the ECHS model is the small school size. ECHS schools typically range from 240 to 300 students. Evidence from qualitative case studies show smaller learning communities positively impact student academic achievement and retention (Adams et al., 2020; Smith & Tinto, 2022; Tinto, 1997; Vargas & Quiara, 2010; Vargas, 2019). Additional benefits of the small school model included stronger peer-to-peer connections and student-to-teacher relationships. These close connections can create strong involvement and integration into campus life, improving student outcomes. Negative experiences related to student belongings can adversely impact students' ability to connect and engage in goal completion (Allen et al., 2018; Patterson Silver Wolf et al., (2021). Additional research shows that small schools can provide personalized learning experiences that enable staff to recognize and remediate gaps when students are not progressing toward goal completion (Vargas, 2019). Considering these factors, the U.S. Department of Education establish grant programs that allowed local education agencies to establish small learning communities (SLCs). Furthermore, students not meeting proficiency are provided extra time and resources to progress towards successful course completion. Social support structures include mentorship opportunities, advising, and social engagement activities like clubs, dances, and other high school events. Academic and social support are necessary for the success of all students but essential for Black students (Britton & DeMatthews; 2022; Duncheon, 2018; Saenz & Combs, 2015). This is especially important considering the completion gap that continues to exist in higher education. Institutions prioritizing

academic and social support for underrepresented populations contribute to greater academic outcomes.

Black Student Outcomes

As evidenced by available research, the innovative approach of ECHS models has undeniably provided historically underrepresented students a chance to earn college credit while still in high school (Adams et al., 2020; Britton et al., 2022; Zhang, 2019) While generally, the research on ECHS supports positive associations between high school and postsecondary education Duncheon (2020) found that outcomes for underrepresented students have been inconsistent. Duncheon examined the social construction of five ECHS programs across eight Texas school districts. Using qualitative methods, the author interviewed principals and teachers to understand the target population's admission practices, processes, and structures. Findings from this study show that the school created policies and practices favored academically minded students and affluent students compared to the district and that principals and teachers may implicitly or explicitly develop systems to undermine equity goals. Duncheon proposed further research to understand which students are served in ECHS programs and further research to investigate how ECHS reform can advance degree completion while prioritizing equity.

In a previous study, Taylor (2015) examined the impact of community college credit policies in Illinois and suggested that ECHS policies are designed to favor non-minority students. The sample consisted of 41,727 students who completed high school in Illinois in the Spring of 2023. Findings from this study reveal that while dual enrollment

programs can positively impact all students, the effect size for economically disadvantaged and students of color was much less, suggesting existing policies benefit students from more affluent backgrounds. Despite the success of the ECHS model, Cowan and Goldhaber (2015) found that some dual-enrollment programs may adversely impact lower-achieving students and increase the chances of students becoming disengaged resulting in a lack of persistence. They emphasized the need for intensive and tailored support for students not progressing (Cowan & Goldhaber, 2015). Schools must be willing to implement systemic evidenced-based interventions to eliminate learning disparities.

Another study by Adams et al. (2020) Black male perspectives of their experiences at an Early College High School and found that Black male students benefited from early college access, free tuition, and college preparation provided by ECHS programs. The authors suggested that the institutional norms established within the ECHS model increased student motivation (Adams et al., 2020). Although the results of this study cannot be generalized to a larger population due to the small size of eight students, this study raises important questions about the cultural norms, values, and practices embedded within the ECHS model and the need for further research into how those values and practices support student learning in college classes.

ECHS programs are praised for increasing access and opportunity in postsecondary education for all students, particularly minority student groups. However, there needs to be more research on the practices and support that lead to student persistence in postsecondary institutions. According to data from The National Student

Clearinghouse Research Center (2018), the graduation rate for Black students at 4-year public institutions was 45% in 2018, compared to 63% for white students and at 4-year private institutions, the graduation rate for black students was 52%, compared to 68% for white students. Edmunds et al. (2020) recommended more research to examine whether the truncated high school and college experience adequately prepared students for the rigors of higher education.

Target resources and support must be provided to improve the academic outcomes for Black students in college classes. Despite the resources and support offered in the ECHS models under study, Black students are leaving with a lower than competitive GPA therefore, making it less likely for them to continue postsecondary education. Therefore, exploring the academic and social practices used to promote postsecondary success is crucial. The evidence suggests there is a need to examine institutional procedures and practices and the perspective of staff is key to understanding the success of current academic and social systems used to support student success.

Implications

The underperformance of marginalized student groups is a longstanding issue that has plagued the education system for decades. Despite numerous efforts to improve educational outcomes, significant disparities still exist in academic achievement between marginalized and non-marginalized students (O'Day & Smith, 2016). Some studies show teacher bias as a critical factor that impacts student performance (Morgan, 2021). Teacher bias can impact Black student performance by creating a hostile classroom environment. If a teacher holds negative stereotypes about Black students, they may be less likely to

provide the support and encouragement necessary for these students to thrive. Additional research shows teachers sometimes have low expectations of students of color and believe they do not belong in accelerated programs (Ford et al., 2021). Many white teachers, while well-meaning, lack the understanding of how their racial identity and beliefs shows up in a learning space and the impact it has on their teaching practices. Significant research has identified that establishing cultural connections enhance the learning experience and increase student engagement leading to academic success (Gay, 2001; Hammond, Z., 2015; Thomas & Berry, 2019). Since the performance data at the early college high schools under study suggests a performance gap for Black students, teachers should consider implementing culturally responsive teacher practices Culturally responsive teaching practices promote all students' social, emotional, and academic development. Moreover, school contextual variables such as school norms, relationship dynamics, curriculum, pedagogical practices, and the attitudes and beliefs of the staff all play a key role in student success.

By gaining insight into the practices used to support Black students in ECHS programs, I hope to inform district and school policies promoting positive social change. The results of this study could be used to help administrators better understand the impact of the ECHS model on Black students' post-graduation academic success. It is important to examine teachers' practices to understand how resources and support are provided to Black students and what support structures can be added to improve academic performance in college classes. Research supports the positive impacts of the ECHS model and shows that early college high school students were more likely to receive an

associate degree within six years of entering high school (Edmunds et al., 2020; Song et al., 2021; Song & Zeiser, 2019). However, despite the positive outcomes, little is known about how well the students were prepared to pursue additional postsecondary education (Duncheon, 2020; Edmunds et al., 2020). Increased success in college courses by Black students creates additional opportunities for postsecondary access and 4-year degree attainment. It has been shown that college educated individuals earn more money over their lifetime than non-college individuals.

Summary

Section 1 outlines the problem that will be addressed in this qualitative study namely that Black students are entering the ECHS program college and career ready as defined by having a minimum grade point average of 3.0 and qualifying scores on the PERT but are leaving the program with a less that competitive GPA, making it difficult for them to be accepted into higher education institutions. The focus of the study is exploring academic and social practices teachers use to support Black students in college classes and to understand what additional resources are needed to support Black students in college classes. Research shows that African American students face significant barriers to achieving economic mobility through education. Despite increased access to higher education in recent decades, African American students continue to face unequal access to high-quality education and experience persistent achievement gaps compared to their white peers (Comeaux et al., 2020; Gardner-Neblett et al., 2023). In summary, understanding teacher practices used to support Black students in the ECHS program is essential to postsecondary matriculation and 4 year-degree attainment. The benefits of a

postsecondary degree cannot be understated. Therefore, closing performance gaps in college classes must be a priority. Section one of this study explained the implications of the study and to whom the study would benefit. Section two includes the methodology, design, and data analysis of the study

Section 2: The Methodology

Research Design and Approach

This study aimed to understand teachers' practices used to support Black students' performance in college classes. A basic qualitative research design guided this study and was used to address the research questions.

- RQ1: What social and academic practices do teachers use to support Black students' academic performance in two ECHS programs?
- RQ2: What additional resources do teachers need to support Black students in college classes?

Qualitative researchers study people in their natural settings, attempting to understand the meaning people derive from a situation or circumstance. Qualitative research aims to understand a problem or inquiry through observation and description, whereas quantitative research seeks to prove or disprove a hypothesis or theory (Burkholder et al., 2020). The quantitative research approach to inquiry would not be an appropriate choice for this study because I was not trying to test or prove a theory. Furthermore, Creswell and Creswell (2017) asserted that qualitative researchers seek to make meaning of the phenomenon from the view of the teachers and follow an inductive approach to inquiry. Likewise, Burkholder et al. (2020) found that the qualitative approach supports the researcher's ability to assign meaning based on interaction with the situation and inquiry of teachers. Using qualitative inquiry, I explored teachers' perceptions and obtained detailed descriptions of the social and academic practices they used to support Black students in college classes and identified additional

resources needed to support Black students in college classes. A significant benefit of individual interviews is that they enabled me to understand the teachers' experiences and how their experiences and perspectives differed from those of other teachers.

Moreover, individual interviews allowed me to look within and across experiences to understand meaning, similarities, and differences (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Qualitative approaches to inquiry include many research designs such as case studies, phenomenology, basic qualitative research, ethnography, and grounded theory (Burkholder et al., 2020; Patton, 2015; Ravitch & Carl, 2021). I chose a basic qualitative research design because other approaches to the inquiry did not support my research design. I will explain further in the following subsections.

Basic Qualitative Research

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) defined a basic qualitative study as a generic, interpretive study. Grounded in constructionist epistemology, qualitative researchers want to explore the meaning people attach to their experiences. Susilo et al. (2021) asserted that researchers assign meetings from data collected through observations and interviews. In this regard, I used a basic qualitative approach to explore the perspectives of ECHS or dual enrollment teachers on the social and academic practices they use to support Black students in college classes.

Other qualitative research designs are more prescriptive and must follow specific methodological requirements. According to Burkholder et al. (2020), case study research involves an in-depth analysis of a particular event, situation, organization, or social unit in a real-life context. Case studies seek to examine information-rich cases by collecting

data through interviews, document analysis, observations, and surveys to explore information-rich cases. I did not choose a case approach for my study.

Researchers use a phenomenological research design to examine Teachers' shared experiences and how they experience a phenomenon. (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Researchers who use this methodology typically rely on in-depth interviews, observation, and other techniques to collect data that capture the essence of teachers' experiences. This analysis aimed to comprehensively understand teachers' experiences by identifying patterns and themes revealed in the data. This study did not explore the lived experiences of Black students in the ECHS program; therefore, I did not select a phenomenological research method.

Ethnography is a qualitative research methodology that seeks to understand and describe a particular group of people's culture, behavior, and social interactions through in-depth observation and participation in daily activities (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Ethnographers typically spend extended periods with the group they are studying, immersing themselves in their culture and community to understand their experiences and perspectives better. This approach can be beneficial for exploring complex social issues and understanding how people experience a phenomenon and interpret those experiences (Babbie, 2017; Burkholder et al., 2020; Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Thomas, 2017). Therefore, the design of an ethnographic research approach would not address the research questions for this study and would, therefore, not be appropriate.

According to Burkholder et al. (2020), a researcher uses a grounded theory design to discover a theory or generate ideas to understand a specific social phenomenon. This

methodology systematically gathers and analyzes the theory generated (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). Furthermore, according to Noble and Mitchell (2016), the researcher seeks to understand group behaviors, dynamics, and social relations. Therefore, I selected a basic qualitative study because I hoped to understand a problem of practice in my school setting.

Participants

Criteria for Selection Participant

Participant selection is a significant part of qualitative research. It involves identifying and recruiting individuals or groups willing and able to provide rich and detailed information about the studied topic (Patton, 2015). One common approach to participant selection in qualitative research is purposive sampling. Purposive sampling involves randomly selecting individuals or groups with specific characteristics or experiences relevant to the research question. I used a purposeful sample to select teachers from early college high schools or dual enrollment programs in a Southeastern State. Participants for this study were selected because they either teach in an early college high school or dual enrollment program setting. The participants varied in age and gender and had at least 2 years of experience with the ECHS or dual enrollment program to allow for a greater diversity of perspectives.

Number of Participants

This basic qualitative design used purposive sampling to solicit the perspectives of seven participants from ECHS or DE programs. The sample size of seven participants helped me focus on an in-depth exploration of the topic. Moreover, multiple perspectives

helped me understand the situation from various positions and viewpoints. Rubin and Rubin (2012) suggested that multiple perspectives help ensure the accuracy and credibility of the information. For my planned research design, I recruited seven ECHS/dual enrollment teachers for individual interviews to reach saturation. Saturation occurs when no new themes or information appear in the data. Mason (2010) asserted that qualitative studies generally use smaller samples as more data do not necessarily mean more information**.**

Procedures for Gaining Access to Participants

The collegiate high schools are charter high schools operated by a local state college situated on a college campus. Therefore, I sought approval for this study through the Walden Institution Review Board (IRB) and the local state college. Upon approval, I invited participants to participate in the study by sending a recruitment email to the principal at each campus, requesting that they send it to the prospective participants. The principals of each campus served as gatekeepers, allowing participants to decide freely without any perceptions of undue influence since I had previously worked with some of these teachers. The email explained the study and the nature of voluntary consent. When participants agreed, I met individually to explain the study and discuss the consent process. In the meeting, I reviewed the consent process in greater detail. Since only three teachers from the original two schools consented to participate in the study, I expanded the recruitment selection process. I completed the IRB Change for Request in Procedures form. I received approval to include teachers from other collegiate high schools or dual enrollment programs and college faculty who teach early college high school students. I

expanded my recruitment search using snowball sampling and posted flyers on social media. Interviews were conducted face-to-face and via Microsoft Teams. I used the same study guide with each participant.

Researcher Participant Relationship

As a researcher, I aimed to understand how the participants think, feel, and experience; to do that, I established trust (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). I adopted a relational approach to ensure the worth and dignity of each participant. In addition, a relationship approach allowed me to reflect on my interactions with the participants. The study sites were in the same district as my current school, and since I was at a previous ECHS campus, some teachers who elected to participate were known to me. However, I did not supervise any prospective participants. I was respectful and worked to cultivate relationships in a meaningful way. Rubin and Rubin (2012) found that responsive interviewing helps to build trust when researchers show empathy and ask questions in a non-threatening manner. Therefore, I adopted a reflexive inquiry stance and remained willing to learn with and from the participants.

Protection of Participants' Rights

Researchers must make several important considerations to ensure participants' protection. First, participants must be informed of the risks and benefits associated with the study. Therefore, during the informed consent process, I provided clear guidelines and expectations for participants by explaining the nature of the study and reiterated their ability to withdraw at any time, as communicated in the informed consent letter. According to Burkholder et al. (2020), researchers must inform participants during the

consent process about what degree of privacy they can expect and how the study will protect their privacy. I addressed privacy by protecting participants' information anonymously and confidently. I did not share personally identifiable information about the participants or link participants and responses.

Moreover, the study data were kept confidential, and I protected the participants' identity and site by using numeric identifiers, such as Participant 1, Participant 2, or Participant 3. Interview transcriptions were be stored in a password-protected computer file for 5 years. Hard-copy interview guides have been converted to electronic documents and stored. All handwritten notes and other documents were destroyed. I followed the fundamental ethical principles and guidelines for the protection of human subjects as outlined in The Belmont Report (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979). I protected participants from harm by being respectful, adopting a question style free of coercive language, and taking a non-judgmental stance to participant responses.

Data Collection

I collected data from participants for this study using semistructured interviews. I interviewed participants face-to-face or via Microsoft Teams using an interview protocol that includes pre-determined interview questions with plans to ask follow-up or probing questions. Semistructured interviews helped me better understand each participant's perspective on the phenomenon, and I explored various beliefs as they arose during the interview. While the main questions provided the general structure of the interview, I used several word probes throughout the interview process to gain a deeper

understanding of the participant's experiences. Rubin and Rubin (2012) found that researchers use various probing techniques to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon. Probing techniques include attention, steering, confirmation, and clarification probes. The first probe I used was the attention probe. I used verbal and non-verbal cues to indicate that I listened intently to their responses. I used facial expressions and body gestures to encourage the participants to speak freely. In addition, I used confirmation probes by repeating the participant responses to ensure I understood correctly.

Data Collection Instrument

The primary data collection instrument was the interview. I interviewed seven teachers from ECHS, dual enrollment programs, and college faculty with 2 or more years of experience. The participants all taught early college high school students and were asked the same questions during the interview. I used purposive sampling by recruiting teachers with expertise in answering the research questions. Before the interview started, I explained the interview protocol to the participants, informing them of what to expect before, during, and after the interview. I established rapport and trust by explaining the scope of the study and setting clear expectations. I collected large amounts of data about the participants' attitudes and perceptions of the phenomenon using in-depth interviews. A significant benefit of individual interviews is that they enabled me to understand the participants' experiences and compare their experiences and perspectives to those of other participants. I used open-ended and probing questions to extend the discussion, so participants felt free to share additional ideas and thoughts about their experiences. Open-

ended questions created opportunities for the conversation to be more organic and conversational, allowing more authentic responses. I demonstrated the attributes of careful planning by being prepared with the interview guide that contained pre-planned questioning strategies, recording equipment, and a set schedule.

Sufficiency of Data Collection

For qualitative studies, data quality can depend on how the researcher organizes and tracks the data. Patton (2015) found that data quality depends on the researcher's ability to establish rigor through the quality and credibility of the data analysis. I used a spreadsheet to record the participants' numeric identifiers and the interview's date, time, and location. With the consent of the participants who chose audio interviews, I recorded the interviews through Outlook Teams but with the camera feature disabled. A visual image of the participant was not necessary. I also used the transcription feature of Microsoft Teams to transcribe the audio. After each interview was transcribed, I reviewed the audio file against the transcribed notes to ensure accuracy and transferred the data to a Word document for easy retrieval. Participants were asked to review their transcription to ensure accurate content and meaning. In addition, I reviewed the handwritten notes, highlights, and follow-up thoughts in the margins. Using the NVivo software, I created files for each interview and exported the interview to the individual files. The sufficiency of my data collection, as determined by saturation, occurred when no new themes or information was revealed in the data.

Data Processes

I gathered data from participants during the interview using semi-structured interview questions. I use Microsoft Teams to digitally record and transcribe the interviews and I took detailed notes throughout the interview. Rubin & Rubin (2012) emphasized the benefits of real-time recording and deemed transcripts more reliable than handwritten notes. Therefore, digitally recording the interviews ensured rigorous data collection. After conducting the interviews, I reviewed the handwritten notes and used a reflective journal to capture my thinking and highlighted areas requiring additional follow-up. Next, I reviewed the audio file against the transcript to ensure complete and accurate details of the questions and answers. Then, I exported the transcript file directly to the NVivo files previously created for each interview. As I engaged with the data, I continued to use a reflective journal to analyze new insights, understandings, questions, and struggles.

Systems for Keeping Track of Data

Qualitative interviews yield enormous amounts of data, so I systematically organized, sorted, and tracked the data. Using NVivo software, I organized data by interviews, codes, cases, and notes. I created folders within the files to sort data for easy retrieval. After importing the data into NVivo, I used the drag-and-drop features of the software to code each interview file based on the theoretical framework. I used the code features of the software to develop categories and subcategories, looking for concepts, themes, and patterns within the data. Throughout this process, I kept a journal to record additional thoughts, emerging understandings, and insights for subsequent coding cycles.

Procedures for Gaining Access to Participants

I adhered to the following guidelines to gain access to the participants. First, I received permission from Walden's IRB and the local state college through the partnership agreement letter. Next, I emailed a recruitment email to the principals of each ECHS program, asking them to email teachers who fit the eligibility criteria. The email comprehensively explained the study and the voluntary nature of participation. When participants agreed, I met individually to explain the study and discuss the informed consent process. Only three teachers from the ECHS programs under study agreed to participate. Therefore, with the permission of IRB, I expanded the study to include teachers from other Collegiate High Schools, dual enrollment teachers, and college faculty. My recruitment procedures included posting flyers on my social media sites, and the Walden Facebook groups, and offering a small gift card incentive. I used the same interview guide and asked the same questions. In addition, I used the snowball sampling approach for recruitment by asking friends and colleagues to share my research request within their personal networks.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher's worldview is a vital part of the researcher's approach to inquiry. Therefore, researchers need to understand their positionality. My study collected data from teachers about the social and academic practices they used to support Black students in early college high schools or dual enrollment programs. However, as a former principal at one of the collegiate high schools under study, my role could have presented an unintended bias (Babbie, 2017). I no longer have authority over the prospective

participants, as I transferred to a new collegiate high school. However, to help mitigate any potential issues, I used the informed consent process to discuss privacy expectations with participants. According to Burkholder et al. (2020), researchers may use anonymity and confidentiality to protect participants' personal information. Confidentiality refers to not sharing personally identifying information about the participants, and anonymity refers to the inability to link the participants and responses. I did not use demographic details in the final results because one could deduce who participated based on that information. Moreover, I did not present tables with ranges based on years of experience that could easily be deduced based on that information. Finally, I adhered to ethical guidelines and maintained proper boundaries before, during, and after the research.

In qualitative research, researchers have an ethical responsibility to examine their biases and assumptions (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). I used identity and positionality memos and reflexive journaling to further control for bias. Throughout the study, I monitored my subjectivity and exercised awareness of my own thoughts. Reflexivity calls for the researcher to exercise awareness and consistent monitoring of their subjectivity (Burkholder et al., 2020; Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Working with thought partners and other stakeholders ensured the research remained as objective as possible. I documented the process with research logs and reflective journaling as new data and understandings emerged. Moreover, I applied the quality considerations of credibility, transferability, and dependability, which I explain further in the next section.

Data Analysis

Data analysis involves transcribing raw data into meaningful patterns, themes, and insights that help answer a study's research questions. Ravitch and Carl (2021) explained that the process includes three phases: organizing and managing the data, engaging with the data, and writing the data expression. For my study, data was collected through interviews with 7 teachers using open-ended questions. After gaining participant permission, I recorded and transcribed the interviews using Microsoft Teams. After each interview, I used researcher memos to engage in structured reflexivity by capturing my thoughts, questions, new insights, and challenges (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Data analysis is an ongoing and iterative (nonlinear) process in qualitative research. Therefore, I repeatedly revisited the data, reviewed codes, generated new codes, and defined and renamed themes.

Data Coding

I used the NVivo computer program to ensure privacy and confidentiality and password-protect all the files on my computer. After Teams transcribed the data, I compared audio files with the transcription to ensure 100% accuracy. Next, I exported the transcripts into NVivo for coding. After transcribing the data in NVivo, I compared the written and audio files with member checking to ensure 100% accuracy. As Merriam and Tisdell (2016) suggested, member checks involve having participants review the transcripts and examine data as themes emerge to validate findings. After reviewing the transcripts for accuracy, I used NVivo software to sort the data into codes. Coding is a data reduction method researchers use to collect, categorize, and thematically sort data

(Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Coding aims to identify themes, concepts, events, and examples. As codes and categories are developed, themes emerge to provide context by expounding on the data set aligned with the phenomena. I developed the initial codes based on the research questions, conceptual framework, and literature review and then developed code subcategories through the data analysis.

Evidence of Quality

There are many considerations for standards of quality in qualitative research. Guba (1981) found that the trustworthiness of qualitative research should be viewed through the lens of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. Considering these aspects of quality assurance techniques, I enhanced the rigor and credibility of my study by showing that I was open to participant feedback and willing to make changes where necessary. To ensure my research findings represent the participants' experiences and perspectives, I utilized several quality assurance techniques.

The first technique I used was member checking. Member checks are an essential aspect of credibility and are a valuable technique used to enhance the credibility of the study. Burkholder et al., (2020) asserted that member checking is an essential standard of quality that should be used to provide evidence of rigor. Credibility evaluates how the data collection is associated with the research question and carefully describes the process of analyzing the findings. I participated in member checking by returning ideas to the participants to ensure a consistent and accurate description of the participants' perspectives. This process allowed the participants to validate their original responses, make clarifications or add additional comments.

Another technique that I used to enhance quality was peer debriefing. Burkholder et al. (2020) recommended that researchers involve a qualified colleague, unconnected to the study, to engage in continuous discussions throughout the study. Specifically, I engaged two peer reviewers with expertise in qualitative and mixed-methods research design. In meeting with the peer reviewers, I presented an overview of the research design, data collection methods, data analysis techniques, and preliminary research findings. Through this process, the peer reviewers brought a fresh perspective to the study, challenged my assumptions, and added insights that I had not previously considered. Since the researcher's worldview plays an essential role in all aspects of the research, researchers must intentionally examine their biases and assumptions. To mitigate bias, I engaged in several approaches: criticality, reflexivity, and collaboration.

Throughout the study, I engaged in reflexivity, noting my bias and role in the research process. I adopted a critical stance to my approach and engaged in the ongoing process of self-reflection throughout the study. I used researcher memos, field notes, and reflection journals to help me understand the meaning I associated with data and the assumptions that underlie my data collection and analysis. Guba (1981) noted that confirmability involves researchers considering their positionality and predispositions. He advised researchers to practice reflexivity, data triangulation, and peer collaboration to mitigate subjectivity in research. I embraced collaboration through peer debriefing.

Moreover, multiple participant perspectives can sometimes create contradictions in the data and lead to discrepant cases. Discrepant cases appear when the participant's experiences or perspectives differ from the direction of most of the evidence. Guba and

Lincoln (1994) asserted that weak divergent cases may strengthen the emerging data analysis. In this study, I found no conflicting interpretations or themes. Shenton (2004) argued that researchers must revisit and consider cases that contradict or challenge the initial categories. I was committed to exploring and revisiting the data to confirm the ideas related to the findings.

Data Analysis

Data analysis in qualitative research is an inductive process that begins with data collection (Merriam & Grenier, 2019). My research focused on Tinto's Model of Student Retention by exploring academic and social practices teachers used to support Black students in ECHS Programs. Following IRB's approval, I completed an application for research through the partner organization and received approval. Upon receiving approval from both IRB and the partner organization, I emailed principals of the other two collegiate high schools. I asked them to email the research request to teachers who fit the eligibility criteria. The email contained an overview of the study, the voluntary nature, the recruitment flyer, and the informed consent. Teachers were asked to email me directly if they wished to participate in the study.

After receiving electronic consent from three teachers, I contacted them to schedule the interview based on their preferences. I interviewed three participants face to face and four participants via Microsoft Teams recording audio only. Since only three teachers from the original two schools consented to participate in the study, I expanded the recruitment selection process. Therefore, I completed the IRB Change for Request in Procedures Form and received approval to include teachers from other collegiate high

schools, dual enrollment programs, and faculty who teach dual enrollment students. I expanded my recruitment message beyond these two schools with snowball sampling and by placing a flyer in Walden's Facebook group and my LinkedIn page. I also asked friends, relatives, and colleagues to share the flyer within their personal network. The snowball sampling method yielded an additional four participants. I followed the interview guide and asked open-ended questions to gather in-depth, rich information. Each interview lasted approximately 30 to 35 minutes. Before I began the interview, I reiterated the informed consent process, emphasizing the voluntary nature of the study and the confidentiality agreement.

Process for Generating, Gathering and Recording Data

I collected the data through in-depth semi-structured interviews with each participant. Before interviewing each participant, I assigned each participant a numeric identifier and created personal files in NVivo. The interviews were recorded and transcribed via Microsoft Teams audio. I also made notes and comments by hand on the interview view guide during the interview process. I used the handwritten notes and comments to ask probing questions. Researchers use probing questions to add depth to urge the participants to give further details about their experience with the phenomenon. After each interview, I familiarized myself with the data by reviewing the transcription against the audio file to ensure accurate transcription. I reformatted the interview into a Word document for easy data retrieval. In addition, I practiced reflexivity by recording my thoughts, reflections, and additional questions in a research journal. Next, I imported each interview transcript into the personal file folders already created in NVivo.

Findings from the Problem and Research Questions

After importing the files, I re-read each transcript to immerse myself in the data. Following the reading each transcript several times, I began the first coding cycle by labeling and organizing the interview transcripts into codes that described the content of a specific text based on the two research questions noted below.

- RQ1: What social and academic practices do teachers use to support Black students' academic performance in two ECHS programs?
- RQ2: What additional resources do teachers need to support Black students in college classes?

Organizing and managing the data required a methodical process. First, based on the two research questions, I created short phrases to condense the data into priori codes. As I reviewed each transcript, I highlighted text and added it to each unit of analysis for further review.

Patterns, Relationships and Themes

I continued to examine each transcript for items related to the research questions, noting phases and concepts on which the participant placed particular emphasis. After coding each transcript, I reviewed and revised the codes based on additional analysis. As I categorized the data and worked through each transcript, I engaged in thematic analysis to identify patterns and connections between participant responses and their connection to the research question. Next, I reviewed the codes, looking for relationships that formed the emergence of six themes.

- provide a variety of academic support,

- build relationships for academic success,
- create opportunities for social connections,
- develop a social support system,
- differing thoughts on teacher training, and
- increase academic readiness skills.

Table 8

Research Questions, Codes, and Themes

Research Questions	Codes	Themes
RQ1: What social and academic practices do teachers use to support Black students' academic performance in two ECHS programs?	Academic Supports: Tutoring, teaching strategies, mentoring, organizational strategies, peer to peer mentoring, being available, strong relationships Social Supports Referral to counseling, extracurricular opportunities, clubs and group connections, build relationships, individual supports, safe learning environment	Provide a variety of academic supports Build relationships for academic success Create opportunities for social connections Develop a social support system
RQ2: What additional resources do teachers need to support Black students in college classes?	Training on differentiation instruction, diversity training, helping students with contextual awareness, helping students increase basic skills and communication, strategies to help students increase background knowledge	Different thoughts on teacher training Increase academic and non-academic readiness skills

Findings and Themes for RQ1

RQ1: What social and academic practices do teachers use to support Black students' academic performance in two ECHS programs?

Theme 1: Participants expressed the importance of providing a variety of academic supports.

Findings from this research study confirm that teachers provide a variety of academic supports to increase student achievement. Tao et al. (2022) found that classroom environments supported by high-impact strategies can improve student learning outcomes and close student performance gaps. Supportive class environments are especially significant for Black students simultaneously enrolled in high school and college classes. Participant 5 stated, "The best way to support a student is through the classroom and the classroom interaction, and a lot of it has to do with the teaching strategies." Participant 6 said, "Demonstrate that you want to meet them where they're at and create a safe space for them to onboard content has to do with style, and I know that that's hard to measure, but I think empathy and mutual respect, those kinds of things." Participant 7 also emphasized the importance of meeting students where they are by chunking the lessons into manageable segments and offering scaffolded supports like modeling, activating prior knowledge, and building vocabulary. Participant 7 said, "I adjust the content to make it more relatable and interesting to everyone in the class." Participants described various educational approaches they use to deliver instruction, emphasizing the desire to help students learn to think critically and develop success habits. Hines et al. (2023) suggested teachers adopt the Multitiered Systems of Support

(MTSS) framework to differentiate supports to meet individual learning needs. MTSS is a three-tiered prevention and intervention framework designed to support student success and integrates the collaboration between teachers, psychologists, counselors, and behavior interventionists for successful implementation.

Another academic support reported by teachers is peer-to-peer tutoring. Participants 2, 3, and 7 reported uses of peer-to-peer to optimize learning. Participant 2 noted that students often get intimidated when visiting a college or private tutor, so it is much easier to connect with classmates. Participant 2 continued to say, “Having that peer-to-peer tutoring kind of takes away the stress of feeling like they don’t know something, and so they’re then able to talk to someone, to their peer, and their peer can talk to them any way that they better understand.”

Participants 3 and 6 emphasized the importance of being proactive in helping students connect with tutoring services. Participant 3 said, “We are very proactive about that and currently offer tutoring through club officers. Like we do not just back off, we keep encouraging the students to take advantage of high school or college tutoring opportunities.” Teacher 6’s strategy is to be proactive by publishing tutoring hours, emailing students that were at risk, and proactively pulling them at the first sign of struggle.” Participant 7 pointed out that peer-to-peer tutoring relationships begin as more academic support but often turn to mentoring because of the trust created between the mentor and mentee. Pairing high-performing students with low-performing students to reinforce concepts previously taught can be mutually beneficial.

As the teachers described, organizational strategies are another equally important academic support crucial for high school and college success. Such strategies include learning how to use note-taking skills, manage their time, and set goals. Indeed, participants 1, 2, and 4 emphasized it by saying that is their first course of action when supporting students. Teacher 1 reported, “My first go-to is show me your system of organization and time management, and most of the time they do, they simply do not have one. “Participant 1 went on to say, “So, I helped them structure that, and then the next thing is, let me see your notes. How are you at taking notes? What is your favorite type of notes to take? And if they are like, I do not take notes, then I know to start there.” Similar to participant 1, participants 2 and 4 shared the importance of helping students develop skills and strategies to be successful in college classes as a top priority. Many tools and resources have proven tips and strategies for improving study habits, note-taking, and time-management skills.

Theme 2 : Participants emphasized that building relationships was a key element to student success.

Participants said they were cultivating positive relationships through mentoring to help students accomplish goals. The American Psychological Association defines a mentor as a skilled individual committed to the growth and development of a mentee. Participants 5 and 6 asserted that connecting with students provided an avenue for personal development and helped improve student self-efficacy. Participant 6 shared, “I think just more, more engagement, more connection, better content choices, like one-on-

one conferences, are really important to me." Participant 5 stated, "So I speak to them from the heart, and I try to be the mentor they need me to be."

Participant 4 shared that Black students are often inspired by hearing stories of how others have overcome challenges. Participant 4 said, "I just talked to them now and shared my personal story … yeah, it took me a long time to get through… It took me 20 years to get my bachelor's degree. You know I did it, and it's hard work, but in the end, it's worth it." Participant 3 reported that teachers often go out of their way to be more like mentors because they understand that is their role.

The benefits of strong teacher-student relationships are demonstrated in a healthy learning culture. According to Dr. James Comer, a professor of Child Psychiatry at Yale University, "no significant learning occurs without a significant relationship." Overwhelmingly, 7 out of the 6 participants communicated the correlation between student engagement and student-teacher relationships. Participant 1 stated that they prioritized building strong relationships with all students but emphasized Black students may need it more. Participant 1 shared, "I do what I can to build a stronger connection with those students because I have noticed that if Black students don't feel comfortable, if they don't feel heard if they don't feel valued, then those are all barriers to them. Participant 1 further stated, "The first thing is the relationship…so I spend an enormous amount of time building relationships and getting them to trust me." Strong teacher-student relationships have been shown to improve student engagement markedly. Research shows that teachers who demonstrate genuine care and concern for student's academic and social development experience greater student engagement (Amerstorfer &

Munster-Kistner, 2021; Hattie, 2003 & Noddings, 2012). Many of the participants spoke about creating classroom environments that acknowledged student differences.

Participant 7 said, “I think each classroom has to build trust through relationships…and so I think the first strategy is to know your students and make sure your students know you.” Participant 5 reiterated that sentiment and added that building trust creates a sense of safety. Participant 5 stated, “So the strategies, I think, are creating safe spaces inside the classroom and creating the actual course.” Furthermore, participant 5 highlighted meeting students where they are helping students feel seen and valued. As previously noted, participant 5 shared that empathy and mutual respect are critical elements of a safe learning environment. Participant 5 reported, “You must demonstrate that you want to meet them where they’re at and create a safe space for them to onboard content, and that is a lot has to do with style, and I know that that’s hard to measure, but I think empathy and mutual respect, those kinds of things.”

Another critical element the participants listed as essential for sustaining positive relationships with students is being available to assist. Teacher 3 reported that mentoring relationships with students often extend beyond graduation and shared a story about supporting a former student after the student transitioned to another university. Participant 3 reported, “She is literally texting me because I had her number saved…. but we were connected.” Participants 5 and 6 emphasized the importance of being available to students outside traditional office hours. Participant 5 stated, “If you really want to know, besides the community engagement piece of fellowship, probably the best thing I could ever do for a student is give them my cell phone number.” Participant 5 said, “They

want to know I'm on the other end, and they text me at 9:30 at night, they text me in the morning to say I'm worried about this. Can you just go on to my courses quickly and look? Hey, my grandmother died, and I don't know who to call, so the best support I can ever give them is access to me."

Participant 6 reported that reviewing a student's schedule made it apparent that the student would need to be accommodated at "weird times." Participant 6 shared, "I recognized that her complexity with that was difficult, and I had to create greater access points to me when she couldn't make it to class or couldn't make it to a more convenient time of office hours…I just had to offer the office hours when it worked for her." Participant 6 recognized that students have a lot of responsibilities outside of the classroom and shared that "I'll meet a student anywhere, anytime, any day, weekends, evenings." Participants 5 and 6's remarks about students having access to them beyond the traditional workday were not echoed by the other participants indicating different opinions.

Theme 3 : Participants expressed the importance of creating opportunities for social connections.

Social connectedness is defined as feeling a sense of belonging to a group. Pavey et al. (2011) identified relatedness as one of the three basic psychological needs. Tinto (2015) posited that a student's sense of belongingness can influence their self-efficacy or belief in their own ability to succeed. Participant 1 indicated that it is important to provide opportunities for students to exchange experiences and ideas with other students. Participant 1 reported, "So umm, plugging them into clubs. I am making connections

with classmates. Uh. Or facilitating connections with classmates, things that are of this nature, giving them an outlet to interact with one another in a low-stakes environment where there is also something fun happening." Participant 3 affirmed sponsoring clubs and other activities provides an even greater way to connect with students outside the classroom. Participant 3 pointed out that being club advisors and connecting with students on passion projects also helps to enhance student-teacher relationships. Participant 6 reiterated those sentiments by sharing, "We've got a very, very good cyber security club, and the students that are in there are having fun…and there, you know, they're learning and in connecting and getting extra content, but they're also just enjoying hanging out and talking about it."

In addition, Participant 6 points out that students' social connectedness and participation in extracurricular activities can empower them to be more successful in the classroom. Participant 1 asserted that Black students needed to connect with other students. Participant 1 reported," So, the Black kids have found one another, like the book…Why are all the black kids sitting together in the cafeteria like the black kids have found one another, and they give each other support." While all the participants acknowledged the importance of helping students develop social connections, participant 1 argued that developing social connections can positively influence the identity development of Black students.

Theme 4 : Participants shared the importance of creating social support systems.

The participants also expressed they that connected students to counseling and other support services. Participant 4 reported, "We have our counseling and support

services and other support services… So, for instance, I had a student who was going through panic attacks, so I sent her there." Participant 3 reported that teachers should be mindful of mental health needs and other barriers that may prevent student success. Participant 3 highlighted, "So just making sure I understand how to be the channel for mental health services and then also just more of the mechanics like the personal computer loaner is a big one with me making sure the students have access to the Internet and hands on a good machine…many of these students need additional resources because of the inequalities." The participants' comments raise important questions about how teachers are trained to recognize and support students in dealing with stressors and personal crises.

Findings and Themes for RQ2

RQ2: What additional resources do teachers need to support Black students in college classes?

Theme 5: Teachers had differing thoughts on teacher training.

Participants expressed differing thoughts on providing additional training to teachers. Participant 1 shared that she believed students transitioning to college may not receive differentiated learning support. Participant 1 empathized, **"**But as I am learning more about my school and context, many professors are not equipped to handle that….You know, and I'm sure they're very nice people, but differentiation is not their strong suit." Various opinions exist about the need for more implicit bias training. Participants 1, 4, and 7 disagreed that teachers needed further diversity training. Participant 1 believed that "the last thing teachers need is another course on diversity

training." Contrastingly, participant 4 shared that not all teachers truly understand the different learning needs of diverse student populations and believed that training would be beneficial. Participant 4 said, "The more you're aware of your biases, the more you can be better at working with diverse groups." In the same vein, participant 7 stated that maybe just like the awareness or training it needs, it needs to considered... I think a lot of training is still focused on color blindness, but I think we need to be, you know, more aware of equity instead of equality."

Participants 5 and 6 also affirmed their focus on colorblindness and treating all students equally regardless of race or ethnicity. Colorblindness ideology emphasizes treating individuals equally regardless of race, culture, or ethnicity. Meanwhile, participant 2 believed that teacher training should focus on supporting Black students' social and emotional development. Participant 2 stressed, "Teachers need an understanding of the social/emotional component that comes with them being a Black high school/college student and prior assessment scores/grades, so we understand their knowledgebase." Teachers' perception of diversity training is mixed. While some believe that teachers should be required to attend diversity and inclusion training, others believe it should be voluntary. The inconsistent message by educators has resulted in a broad range of views on instructing diverse learners.

Theme 6: Teachers perceived that Black students need more support in developing non-academic readiness skills.

All participants agreed that many Black students lacked the prerequisite skills needed to succeed in dual enrollment programs. These factors included: (a) understanding

the difference between high school and college, (b) soft skills, (c) needing to be more prepared for the rigors of college courses. Participant 2 indicated that getting students to understand the difference between high school and college courses was instrumental to their success. Participant 2 explained that "I take their syllabus for their courses, and I go through, and I chunk it so that way they understand what it is that they are expected to turn in and the create an assignment timeline, I always make it due for them earlier than it is due." Participant 4 shared that students thought there were soft assignment deadlines and believed they could submit work well beyond the deadline. While Participant 1 agreed with Participants 2 and 4 on helping students understand specific course requirements using the syllabus, participant 6 believes the problem is much larger.

Participant 6 shared, "I think it's just that the students and their families are underestimating what it takes to take college classes at their age." Participant 6 continued, "I think it's just raising awareness of the workload that's coming at them and connecting them with additional support resources." The combined responses of participants 2, 4, and 6 indicate that students and parents need more knowledge about expectations in college. Participant 1 emphasized statements consistent with the responses of Participant 6 by sharing that many Black students could not communicate in oral and written mediums at the expected level of performance. Participant 1 shared, "I think if we could help them with communication and help them with basic email skills and navigating online programs," they would experience more success." Participant 1 went on to say, "Maybe those soft skills on how to communicate…what a college class looks like, and how it's graded would be the first thing." Participant 6 noted the

importance of addressing software compatibility issues when students bring their own devices. Participant 6 suggested, “have the students come in with their devices and make sure that their courseware is ready and compatible with the network, so they have everything that they have to do with it for that semester’s work.”

Participants expressed concern about Black students being academically prepared for the challenging college coursework and believed that many of the students had skill deficits. Bryant (2015) found that gaps in the high school educational experience leave students without access to high-level quality instruction that would prepare them for the rigors of higher education. Participants 2 and 4 shared concerns about students’ understanding of algebraic concepts and found that many Black students lacked the background knowledge to succeed in higher-level courses. Participant 2 shared that if they do not come with that background knowledge of, you know, being able to do algebra or being able to do pre-algebra. They’re not being as successful in developmental math or college algebra as their counterparts from those strong backgrounds. As Participant 4 explained, adequate preparation means students have the skills and resources needed to perform in college classes and believe that the college orientations were not enough. Participant 4 stated, “I will say most of the time I find they’re not ready, that they don’t have those resources available or the mindset of this is what I need to do….and we’re coming and saying you have to meet these deadlines, you need to do this work and they are not getting work complete.” Participant 4 continued to emphasize that students did not understand the difference between high school and college and believed it should happen before entering a college classroom setting.

Although participants 5, 6, and 7 echoed the beliefs of students being ill-prepared, their focus was on academic skills gaps. Participant 5 emphasized that students lack the skills needed for entry-level general education courses. Participant 5 said, “They are not being taught the critical thinking and writing skills that allow them to enter an entry-level Gen. Ed class.” Similarly, participant 7 believed that earlier access to advanced coursework could place students in a better position to be successful. Participant 5 asserted that bringing more Black students into advanced tracks early, like even elementary school with more reading and writing instruction on a higher level right away and through middle school when they funnel kids into the tracked programs now.” All participants reported that students’ success in college classes hinges primarily on student preparation for college-level coursework.

Discrepant Cases

No discrepant cases appeared in the data analysis. None of the participants’ experiences or perspectives differed from the direction of most of the evidence. Although the participant evidence led to similar codes and patterns, I was committed to investigating all data sets to uncover explanations. I would have discussed the discrepant case with participants had they been found.

Evidence of Quality

In this study, I interviewed seven teachers with experience teaching early college high school students and found no conflicting interpretations or themes. In addition, to ensure rigorous study, I adhered to the four quality standards of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, Merriam & Grenier, (2019). I

interviewed seven teachers who had the same duty of teaching early college high school students. However, they each brought a unique perspective as they varied in their years of experience and represented six content areas.

Credibility evaluates the data collection process for the research question and describes how the researcher analyzes the data to produce the findings. I established credibility by providing a detailed description of how I analyzed my data and believed the data collected to reflect the participant's experiences. Moreover, I engaged in reflexivity throughout the research process. Dependability, as defined by Guba (1981), refers to the stability of the data over time, the alignment of research design and methods, and the ability of the researcher to describe how the data methods support the research questions. I used a qualitative method composed of in-depth interviews to address the two research questions for this study.

Transferability refers to applying the research findings to a broader context and other settings. Guba (1981) claimed that ways to achieve transferability include providing a detailed description of the data and context often referred to as a thick description. To establish transferability, I provided details on the site, participant selection, and method used to collect the data. In addition, I used quotes from the original transcripts to support the research findings. Therefore, researchers could transfer this study to other contexts and situations. Establishing credibility includes triangulation and memberships, presenting thick descriptions, negative cases, and peer debriefing.

Member checks, another essential aspect of credibility, helped to validate my study. I participated in member checking by returning ideas to the participants for data

verification. I gave each member a draft of the codes, themes, and findings to verify my interpretations, allowing them to discuss the study in detail.

Finally, I engaged in peer debriefing by inviting others to review my research. Participating in peer debriefing with two colleagues broadened my perspective and allowed me to be more open-minded. To ensure a more rigorous study, I established credibility through presenting a thick description of the data, reviewed all cases, conducted member checks and participated in peer debriefing.

Summary

A basic qualitative study explored the academic and social practices teachers used to support Black students in early college or dual enrollment programs. I collected data through semi-structured interviews. Interviews from the seven participants formed the thematic descriptions of the participant's perceptions, resulting in the emergence of six themes :

- provide a variety of academic support,
- build relationships for academic success,
- create opportunities for social connections,
- develop a social support system,
- differing thoughts on teacher training, and
- increase academic readiness skills.

These academic supports were (a) organizational strategies, (b) various teaching strategies, and (c) peer-to-peer tutoring. The second theme that participants emphasized was building relationships for academic success. These factors included (a) mentoring,

(b) building trust, and (c) being available. The third theme that participants expressed is creating opportunities for social connections. The 4th theme was developing a social support system. These factors include providing (a) clubs and extracurricular engagement activities and (a) referral to counseling and mental health services. The 4th theme had participants with differing thoughts on teacher professional development related to differentiation of instruction and diversity or equity training. The last theme was that participants shared concerns about the academic readiness skills of Black learners. These factors included (a) understanding the difference between high school and college, (b) soft skills and (c) needing to be more prepared for the rigors of the course.

Findings from this research align with the conceptual framework, literature review, and the two research questions. Tinto's (1993) theoretical framework posited that institution systems colleges use to integrate students socially and academically influence their academic performance and desire to persist toward goal completion. Research supports that student engagement increases even more when teachers create a culture of care where learners feel accepted and affirmed. Davis et al. (2019) found that social and academic integration is paramount to creating a sense of connectedness and is crucial for Black students. Similarly, (Korpershoek et al., 2020; Smith & Tinto, 2022; Tinto, 2015) found that the perception of student belonging increases student engagement and their commitment to the school. Furthermore, Smith and Tinto (2022) strongly argued that how students interpreted their early engagement experiences with faculty and peers impacted their perceptions of belonging, contributed to a lack of student persistence, and influenced their desire to persist. Several studies also confirm that the academic

preparation students receive for college-level coursework influences student outcomes (Adams et al., 2020; Edmunds et al.,2020; Smith & Tinto, 2022; Tinto, 1997; Vargas & Quiara, 2010; Vargas, 2019).

As the aforementioned studies show, data support positive outcomes when they are socially and academically integrated, but some studies note challenges for Black learners. Duncheon (2020) found that outcomes for underrepresented students have been inconsistent. Findings from this study reveal that while early college high schools and dual enrollment programs can positively impact all students, the effect size for economically disadvantaged and students of color was much less, suggesting existing policies benefit students from more affluent backgrounds. Similarly, Cowan and Goldhaber (2015) found that some dual-enrollment programs may adversely impact lower-achieving students and increase the chances of students becoming disengaged, resulting in a lack of persistence. They emphasized the need for intensive and tailored support for students who need to progress (Cowan & Goldhaber, 2015). All participants recognized the need for individualized academic support but acknowledged that students could benefit from early skill development in study skills, note-taking, and time management to enhance student learning.

In closing, while participants reported that they created classroom learning systems conducive to the highest student achievement, they also reported that Black students need additional support for the rigors of college coursework. The participants stated that a more proactive approach is needed to help students develop the skills, behaviors, mindsets and strategies necessary for college success before they enter the

college classroom. Furthermore, participants expressed that students need an understanding of different expectations between college and the high school experience and reported difficulty in building those resources into their course curriculum. They also believed that students should develop college readiness skills before acceptance to college. Conley (2010) defined college readiness as cognitive strategies, content knowledge, academic behaviors, contextual skills, and awareness.

This study was based on the perspectives of seven participants, using semi-structured interviews, and explored the academic and social practices used to support Black students in college classes. Findings from this study have implications for improving teacher success and supporting Black students in developing key elements of college readiness. Therefore, a 3-day professional development was developed to increase teacher capacity to support student success.

Section 2 of this study includes the methodology, design, and data analysis of the study. Section 3 provides an introduction to the 3-day profession development plan, the rationale, review of the literature, project description, evaluation and implications.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

Promoting student success in higher education continues to be the focus of colleges and universities. Since the early work of Tinto (1975, 1993), study after study has shown that academic engagement is enhanced through social and academic integration. A student's desire to persist can depend on how well they respond to academic and social support. This project study explored the academic and social practices teachers used to support Black students in college classes and identified additional resources teachers need to support Black students. The data indicated that teachers provided academic and social support for Black students but also acknowledged a need for extra support in helping students demonstrate college readiness skills with academic and non-academic factors. Based on the research findings and in collaboration with my committee, I provided a 3-day professional development project titled "Keys to College Success 101" (see Appendix A) with teachers as the intended audience.

The professional development project aims to provide teachers with a framework for helping students develop cognitive strategies, academic behaviors, contextual skills, and awareness needed to succeed before entering the college classroom. Green et al. (2023) found that most definitions of college readiness often relate to academic measures such as scores on exams and placement tests. Other scholars argue that educators should consider noncognitive factors equally (Conley, 2007, 2010; Lombardi et al., 2017). The 3-day professional development will assist teachers in addressing the noncognitive behaviors that influence student learning.

Rationale

This study aimed to explore the academic and social practices teachers used to support Black students in college classes. I conducted semistructured interviews with seven early college high school teachers and dual enrollment students to explore their experiences. The study focused on answering two research questions:

- RQ1: What social and academic practices do teachers use to support Black students' academic performance in two ECHS programs?
- RQ2: What additional resources do teachers need to support Black students in college classes?

As has been demonstrated in the data, teachers at early college high schools and of dual enrollment students demonstrated a need to support students with noncognitive skills and behaviors needed to be successful in college classes. With this in mind, I designed a 3-day professional development workshop for teachers focusing on student academic behaviors, cognitive strategies, and contextual skills and awareness. The professional development workshop will focus on presenting the current study's findings and providing evidence-based research practices on college readiness for high school students and implications for classroom teaching. The workshop will be delivered during teacher in-service training at the beginning of the year. Day one of the in-service training will provide teachers with an overview of college and career readiness measures, including cognitive and noncognitive factors. Day two will include academic behaviors such as study skills and an introduction to the SQ3R five-step method of reading, reciting, and reviewing. Finally, day three will focus on contextual skills and awareness,

such as providing support for teachers to help students develop a mindset for learning by understanding college culture and expectations, navigating the college software platform, the textbook ordering process, and effective communications.

Review of the Literature

This literature review focused on locating current research regarding defining college and career readiness, non-cognitive skills that support student success, and best practices used to support teacher professional development. To find scholarly literature and to ensure the topic is grounded in the research, I searched the following databases: Walden University's Library Databases, SAGE Publications, Taylor and Francis, and Google Scholar. The search included peer-reviewed articles since 2022. The search criteria included the following words and phrases: *adult learning practices, professional development standards, teacher professional learning, professional development for teachers, andragogy, designing teacher professional development, college, and career readiness, Black student college readiness indicators,* cognitive *strategies, non-cognitive behaviors, academic behaviors, non-academic behaviors, study skills, organizational skills, college expectations, contextual skills and awareness, college readiness measures, SQ3R method,* and *college preparatory.* In addition, I found additional literature within the reference list of peer-reviewed articles. This literature review is organized around the following topics:

- Defining college and career readiness.
- Non-cognitive skills that support student success.
- Best practices used to support teacher professional development.

Defining College and Career Readiness

The focus of college and career readiness for high school students continues to be a topic of much discussion among policy makers. In 2015, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), ushering a renewed focus on college and career readiness for states and local education agencies and paved the way for high academic standards, quality career training programs, and other services that gave students the skills and knowledge needed to transition to college or the workforce. While states have not reached a consensus on the definition of college and career readiness, most agree that students must possess the knowledge, skills, and behaviors necessary for success in rigorous college courses without the need for remedial courses.

Although Conley (2007, 2010, 2012) argued that college and career readiness fell into four key dimensions: vital cognitive strategies, critical content knowledge, essential learning skills and techniques, and fundamental transition knowledge and skills, The National Association of Colleges and Employers (2018) posited the list of competencies should include critical thinking and problem-solving, oral and written communications, teamwork and collaboration, digital technology, leadership, professionalism and work ethic, career management, and global and intercultural fluency, suggesting that educators consider additional variables. Early college and career readiness research failed to focus on students competing in a worldwide economy. For this reason, Green et al. (2023) suggested expanding the definition of college and career readiness to include a more diverse skillset that would satisfy the demands of a global economy.

The literature on academic factors that define college and career readiness at the high school level include exam scores, placement tests, class rank percentile, grade point average, and performance in college preparatory courses (Green et al., 2023; Lindstrom et al., 2022). Although researchers have highlighted the importance of college and career readiness, many students enter college ill-prepared and are then enrolled in remedial coursework. Lindstrom et al. (2022) and Majors (2019) found that underserved students had limited access and exposure to advanced preparatory courses. In the same vein, The American College Testing Association (2018) found college readiness levels for Black students, first-generation, and students from low-socioeconomic backgrounds were lower than for White and Asian students.

Considering these facts, Deil-Amen and DeLuca (2010) argued that the college and career frameworks must be culturally responsive to the needs of underserved students and their families. Culturally responsive approaches promote a sense of belonging and support all learners' social, emotional, and academic development. Significant research has identified that using culturally responsive principles enhances the learning experience and increases student engagement leading to academic success (Gay, 2001; Hammond, Z., 2015; Lindstrom et al., 2022; Thomas & Berry, 2019). The data from this study indicated that teachers acknowledged a need for additional support in helping Black students in ECHS or dual enrollment programs demonstrate college readiness skills with academic and non-academic factors. Since ECHS and dual enrollment programs aim to prepare underrepresented students for postsecondary success by preparing them for advanced coursework opportunities with hopes of leading to postsecondary degree

completion, they are positioned to create environments for historically underserved students by providing college and career readiness training to support academic and non-academic skills.

Non-Academic Skills That Support Student Success

The seminal work of David Conley on college and career readiness has been widely accepted and cited by researchers, educators, and policymakers. Conley's (2010) college and career readiness model defined the four key facets to measure college students' preparedness for postsecondary coursework. While many scholars rely primarily on cognitive measures to determine college readiness, Conley (2010) and Farrrington (2012) made a convincing case when they argued that academic factors alone do not adequately assess student readiness. Research demonstrates the importance of crucial content knowledge in academic disciplines, as demonstrated by high test scores and grade point averages.

The collective findings of (Conley 2010, 2012; Farrington et al., 2012; Morningstar et. al, 2015) suggest that behavioral attributes play a significant role in academic achievement. While Conley (2010) defined academic behavior to include study skills, note-taking, and peer collaboration, Farrington et al. (2012) concluded that behavioral attributes should encompass mindset beliefs like self-efficacy and a sense of belonging. More recently, Morningstar et al. (2015) proposed a framework incorporating academic and nonacademic domains, including social skills, critical thinking, academic mindset, and transition knowledge. The data from this study underscore the need for

teachers to receive support to integrate these domains into their teaching practices effectively.

Table 9

Conley's 4-keys to College and Career Readiness Components

Keys	Description
Key Cognitive Strategies	The thinking skills students need to learn material at a deeper level and to make connections among subjects
Key Content Knowledge	The big ideas and organizing concepts of the academic disciplines that help organize all the detailed information and nomenclature that constitute the subject area, along with the attitudes students have toward learning content in each subject area.
Academic Behaviors	The student ownership of learning that connects motivation, goal setting, self-regulation, metacognition, and persistence combined with specific techniques such as study skills, note taking, and technology capabilities
Contextual Skills and Awareness	The aspiration to attend college, the ability to choose the right college and to apply and secure necessary resources, an understanding of the expectations and norms of postsecondary education, and the capacity to advocate for oneself in a complex institutional context (McCallum & Pellegrino, 2017).

Note: 4 Key Characteristics of College and Career Readiness Model \Model. Adapted from "A Complete Definition of College and Career Readiness by David T Conley, PhD. https://www.rmhs.us/uploads/1/4/5/4/145415380/conley-college-readiness-definition-2012.pdf

McCallum and Pellegrino (2017) argued that non-academic measures should be included in state accountability systems and that schools should provide psychosocial skills. This concept reinforces the beliefs of Conley (2007, 2010), Farrington et al. (2012), and Morningstar et al. (2015) that emphasize the importance of intentional efforts to teach non-academic skills and behaviors. The environment of the ECHS can enhance college-going culture by more explicitly embedding the key non-academic factors within the educational framework. Data from this study reveal that academic and social supports are provided; however, participants believed that to be successful in college-level coursework, students need specific instruction on non-academic factors such as

note-taking, study skills, time management, contextual skills, and awareness of formalized ways.

Effective study techniques are essential to the success of high school students. The SQ3R method, developed by Francis Robinson in 1946, is one of the most widely used strategies to help students study, read, and comprehend complex texts. This 5-step method includes the following:

- Survey by skimming the chapter, looking over section headings, charts, and graphs;
- Question the text;
- Read the section and take notes as you read;
- Recite the main points in your own words; and
- Review the text and notes again.

In his research on the effects of SQ3R on students' reading comprehension, Cataraja (2022) studied sixty students randomly assigned to pretest and posttest groups and found that the SQ3R had a statistically significance difference in the reading comprehension of the control group and recommended SQ3R method as an effective study strategy to increase reading comprehension.

Time management, another critical skill needed for high school student success, is an essential factor for high school students taking college high school and college courses simultaneously. Wilson et al. (2021) analyzed the impact of time-management training on students' academic performance in a recent study on the effects of implementing time-management workshops. They found that the experimental group of first-year students

performed better than the control group. The authors studied the course failure rates and showed that of the 280 subjects taken in 2019, the control group failed 28 subjects compared to eight from the experimental group, indicating that explicitly teaching time management courses can positively affect academic performance.

McCallum and Pellegrino (2017) argued that non-academic measures should be included in state accountability systems and that schools should provide psychosocial skills. This concept reinforces the beliefs of Conley (2007, 2010), Farrington et al. (2012), and Morningstar et al. (2015), who emphasize the importance of intentional efforts to teach non-academic skills and behaviors. The environment of the ECHS can enhance college-going culture by more explicitly embedding the key non-academic factors within the educational framework. Data from this study reveal that academic and social supports are provided; however, participants believed that to be successful in college-level coursework, students need specific instruction on non-academic factors such as note-taking, study skills, time management, contextual skills, and awareness of formalized ways.

Professional Development

The adult learning theory, also known as andragogy, states that adults must actively participate in their learning. Researchers agree that effective teacher professional development is essential for improving student learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Kilag & Sasan, 2023; Martin & Mulvihill, 2023; Sims et al., 2023). With this in mind, the professional learning association Learning Forward (2022) identified eleven professional learning standards embedded within three broad categories. These standards for

professional learning are supported by decades of research and explain the content and processes needed for high-quality instruction.

Initially developed in 1990 and revised in 2011, the professional learning standards mirror the findings of Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) at the Learning Policy Institute that found that professional learning should emphasize seven key elements: (1) content-focused, (2) incorporates active learning and adult learning theory, (4) is collaborative and job-embedded and models effective practices,(5) includes coaching and expert support, (6) provide opportunities for feedback and reflection, (7) is of sustained duration. The six elements Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) outlined are embedded within the three categories and standards suggested by Learning Forward.

Table 10

Learning Forward Categories and standards for Professional Learning

Category	Standards
Rigorous Content for Each Learner	Equity Practices
	Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction
	Professional Expertise
Transformational Process	Equity Drivers
	Evidence
	Learning Designs
	Implementation
Conditions for Success	Equity Foundations
	Culture of Collaborative Inquiry
	Leadership
	Resources

Note: Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning Retrieved from https://standards.learningforward.org/

Equity Practices

Equity in education means that every student is given the academic and social support needed to succeed. Ashford-Hanserd et al. (2020) found that in the seventy years since the *1954* Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka *Supreme Court decision.*, Black students still experience inequity in access, participation, and outcomes. Recent research supports the need for educators to understand and appreciate student differences to ensure equitable opportunities for every student (Gay, 2001; Hammond, Z., 2015; Martin & Mulvihill, 2023; Thomas & Berry, 2019). While teachers in this study had differing thoughts on equity training, they all believed that teachers should be responsive to students' individual needs and cultivate positive relationships.

Learning Forward (2022) emphasized positive student-teacher relationships and underscored the need for teachers to strengthen their capacity to individualize learning based on individual student needs and to create trusting relationships with students, families, and other stakeholders. Teachers are more likely to increase student achievement when they affirm and celebrate ethnic-racial differences. Therefore, educators are responsible for advancing equity initiatives that motivate and inspire student learning. When teacher professional development includes opportunities for teachers to engage in practices that promote positive ethnic-racial identity and asset-based pedagogies, student achievement has shown to increase.

Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction

Research on curriculum, assessment, and instruction suggests that a guaranteed, viable curriculum is the most significant lever to increase student achievement (Marzano,

2003). Similarly, Learning Forward (2022) posited that the curriculum materials aligned assessments, scope and sequence, and lesson design are the master plan for achieving the desired objective of student standards mastery. Research clarifies the importance of educators selecting high-quality curricula and instructional materials aligned to content standards to advance student learning. Short and Hirsh (2020) determined that teachers need time to develop their subject knowledge and to become fluent in the curriculum scope and sequence of learning. As a result, professional development must be tailored to the unique needs of teachers, recognizing individual levels of teacher expertise. It should also focus on helping teachers align curriculum materials with instructional actions and assessments to ensure a coherently aligned instructional system.

Professional Expertise

Research also recognized the importance of teachers deepening their subject area expertise and content knowledge. According to Learning Forward (2022) professional expertise standards, teachers should develop discipline-specific expertise. One aspect of developing expertise is job-embedded professional development within the classroom context. Darling-Hammond et al., (2017) found that teachers who participated in The Science Teachers Learning from Lesson Analysis (STELLA) had students demonstrate more success than comparison students. Teachers who participated in the STELLA Program received training and support in science content and pedagogy using video-based lessons. Effective professional development is essential to improve teaching and learning.

Equity Drivers

Learning Forward (2022) also recognized the importance of prioritizing equity drivers in professional learning. The equity drivers' standards highlight positive student outcomes when professional learning considers how equity practices impact teaching and learning. Similarly, the Biden and Harris administration released Executive Order 14091 advocating educational equity. Executive Order 14091 is a call to action requesting governmental agencies to "intentionally address the disparities in educational opportunity and access faced by underserved students, families, and communities (p.2).

The Equity Action Plan suggests five strategies designed to improve education outcomes for all learners. The strategies are (1) Improve college access, affordability, and degree completion for underserved students to increase economic mobility, (2) Implement Maintenance of Equity requirements to ensure historically underserved students have equitable resources for learning recovery, (3) Address inequities faced by justice-impacted individuals by expanding access to postsecondary learning opportunities that improve outcomes for communities and reduce recidivism rates, (4) Advance equity in and through career and technical education and (5) Increase mental health resources with an emphasis on underserved communities, from the historic legislation and funding provided by the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (United States Department of Education Equity Action Plan Update, 2023). Teachers should examine systemic practices that disenfranchise learners at the federal, state, and local levels. Furthermore, through equity-focused professional learning, teachers learn to identify classroom practices, policies, and procedures that adversely impact learners.

Evidence

Learning Forward (2022) defines *evidence* as the collection of data (qualitative or quantitative) used to inform decision-making. Professional development that embeds evidence to support a change in instructional practices is foundational to school improvement. Teachers often use formative and summative data to inform instructional practices. The research on professional learning supports using evidence to make decisions about policies, goals, and resources. Several studies have highlighted that using evidence to inform practices can improve student achievement. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) found that teachers who used multiple data sources to improve instructional practices saw increased student assessment scores. However, Booher et al. (2020) found that teachers need help identifying evidence-based research practices to inform those practices. Professional learning that supports teachers in identifying evidence-based practices is essential in supporting student learning.

Learning Designs

Learning Forward (2022) found that professional learning is most effective when educators understand relevant learning theories and the intended outcomes for the training and set learning goals based on student and teacher data and school improvement initiatives. The learning design standard recognizes that teachers vary in knowledge, skills, and pedagogy and, therefore, have different training needs. Therefore, professional learning must be adapted to meet the needs of the varying levels of teacher expertise. Siraj et al. (2019) found that teachers benefited from different professional development approaches and content strategies, similar to students. Other learning design

considerations include using evidence-based models and cross-department collaboration to guide teacher learning. Similarly, Bergmark (2023) found that teacher professional learning is enhanced through teacher interaction, collaboration, and opportunities to create and share meaning gained from experiences.

Implementation

Learning Forward (2022) emphasized that implementing professional learning must be sustainable. Historical professional development models have been ineffective and include single-day workshops and lectures. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), professional development that translates to improved teacher practices must be sustained. The implementation standards highlight that professional development must be purposefully planned and implemented over time in phases. Existing research also reaffirmed that sustained professional development often includes some form of coaching, collaboration, examination of student work, and reflective journaling. (Bergmark 2023; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Martin & Mulvihill, 2023; Sims et al., 2023). Meaningful professional development that leads to stronger teacher and student learning must be implemented in stages. Another critical element of implementation is managing change. Instructional leaders need to understand the steps involved in managing change within an organization; therefore, developing a robust plan, including detailed steps and stages of implementation, is crucial. This structured approach helps visualize the path from the current state to the desired future state, increasing the chances of buy-in from teachers and other stakeholders.

Equity Foundations

The equity foundation standard underscores the responsibility of leadership to create conditions and structures that promote equitable outcomes for teachers and students. Extant literature supports a positive correlation between equity-focused leadership practices and school improvement. Leithwood (2021) found that equity-focused leaders intentionally examined institution policies and procedures. Furthermore, the equity foundation standard calls on educators to dismantle barriers to equity by embracing culturally responsive approaches (Learning Forward, 2022). Culturally responsive approaches recognize and embrace racial, ethnic, linguistic, and gender differences. Ladson- Billings's (1995) seminal work argued that Black students should not have to disassociate from their cultural identities and communities to experience academic success. Just as teachers are expected to embrace culturally responsive teaching approaches, designers of professional development should embrace the racial, ethnic, and cultural characteristics of teachers and provide them with the resources and support they need to be successful. Other elements of establishing an equitable foundation include creating a culture of transparency and trust among stakeholders where they are free to share without fear of judgment.

Culture of Collaborative Inquiry

Learning Forward (2022) posited that a culture of collaborative inquiry is defined as a collaborative culture where teachers share responsibility for the continuous improvement of self and student achievement. An inquiry-based collaborative culture should be centered on high-quality professional development that creates opportunities

for teachers to discuss and exchange ideas. Schools must design collaborative structures in the schedule to allow space and time for teachers to discuss evidenced-based teaching practices and examine student performance data. Martin and Mulvihill (2023) indicated that school collaborative structures include large groups, small groups, and one-on-one. Additional collaborative structures include vertical and horizontal groups, grade-level-specific, and cross-content collaboration groups. Cross-dimensional collaboration reinforces equity initiatives and further promotes equitable outcomes for all learners. Bergmark (2023) argued that learning happens in a community where teachers can exchange ideas and share experiences.

Leadership

Instructional leadership plays a vital role in a teacher's professional development. The leadership standard emphasizes the leader's responsibility to create conditions that support a positive learning environment centered on high expectations, goal setting, progress monitoring, and cultivating student success. According to Learning Forward (2022), professional development leaders should engage in professional learning communities with teachers and leaders from other systems. School leadership should engage professional staff members in conversations and seek opportunities to leverage collective expertise. Bellibas et al. (2022) found principal instructional leadership to be a significant predictor of teacher collaboration. The leadership model must actively commit to ongoing improvement in student achievement, creating opportunities for teachers to analyze data, coordinate actions, and monitor student achievement in professional learning communities. Ma and Marion (2021) found a correlation between instructional

leadership and teacher self-efficacy. Furthermore, Ma and Marion (2021) suggested that teacher self-efficacy is enhanced when leaders create a culture of openness and collaboration. Using a collaborative and data-driven approach, school leaders must foster a culture of continuous improvement for administrators, teachers, and students.

Resources

School funding formulas vary from state to state, which creates inequitable access to educational resources for many underserved students. Darling-Hammond (2015) found that achievement and graduation rates increase when states and districts invest more money into funding educational initiatives for low-income communities. The resource standard for Learning Forward (2022) highlights the responsibility of educators at the district level to distribute resources equitably and local school leaders to use those resources to improve student outcomes. Developing a robust school improvement plan that connects resources to the students who need them most should be the priority of all school leaders. Another key priority for the resource standard is for districts to ensure schools have the resources necessary to implement high-quality, evidence-based professional development. Often, districts are limited in funds and have to prioritize needs like student safety and student nutrition above teacher professional development. Nelson and Bohannon (2019) found that barriers to professional development include cost and time. Time is one of the most precious resources instructional leaders can give to teachers and is increasingly essential to the success of students and staff. Instructional leaders are encouraged to build systems and structures that support professional development, allowing teachers to dedicate time to learning.

Project Description

3-Day Professional Development Workshop

This study explored the academic and social practices teachers used to support Black students in college classes. Building on the evidence from this study, I developed a 3-day professional development session for early college high school and dual enrollment teachers. I will deliver the workshop during in-service training at the beginning of the school year and the start of the second and third quarters. The participants reported that they needed professional development to help students develop cognitive strategies, academic behaviors, contextual skills, and awareness to be successful before entering the college classroom. The first session will include an overview of David Conley's College Readiness Framework and activities to identify critical evidence-based research actions aligning with each college readiness component. The second session will consist of developing a pre-and post-test for students to self-assess their college readiness and create a shared understanding of the implementation process and timeline and min-lesson plans on non-academic skills. The third session will review the previous sessions, provide a time to review the pre-and post-test data, participate in reflective learning activities, and plan continuous professional learning on college readiness best practices.

Needed Resources and Existing Resources

Resources for professional development include an ample meeting space on the high school campus. Additional needs include a computer, LCD, projector, teacher laptops, internet access, markers, sticky notes, large poster pad paper, highlighters, and light refreshments. These resources are available in the resource room. I am familiar with

the audio-visual equipment necessary for facilitation; however, I will schedule a run-through with the technology coordinator to prepare in advance before the workshop. I will arrive early on the workshop day to prepare the seating arrangements and adjust the temperature if necessary.

Potential Barriers and Potential Solutions to Barriers

The professional development workshop will occur during teacher in-service training during teacher contracted hours. Therefore, barriers to professional development are limited. I will complete a facility request to reserve the room for the workshop day. Another potential barrier is the need for internet connections on the workshop day. I will coordinate with technology coordinators during the workshop in case of technology issues.

Implementation and Timeline

This professional development will be implemented in a 3-day session (Appendix A) held at the beginning of the year during in-service training after the second and after the third grading quarters. The calendar allows for a non-student professional development day at the beginning of each grading quarter. Session one will begin with an overview of this study's findings and will take place during teacher in-service training. Session one will present the training objectives and will outline three significant findings from the data: identifying critical characteristics of college and career readiness; identifying evidence-based practices for academic and non-academic factors; and implementation of evidence-based practices

The workshop's first session will be during teacher in-service in late August. It will include a presentation of the findings of this research study and other seminal works on college and career readiness indicators for academic and non-academic factors. First, teachers will take a pre-assessment to access prior knowledge on college and career readiness indicators. Next, teachers will read and annotate articles on college and career readiness indicators, including Conley's 4 Keys to College Readiness. Participants will be asked to annotate the article reading, highlighting and underlining key pieces of the text. In addition, they will be encouraged to write comments and questions in the text margins. After reading the article, the participants will be paired with a shoulder partner to collaborate with the text and exchange ideas. Lastly, participants will participate in a whole-class discussion that will allow them to discuss the content further to deepen their understanding. In closing, participants will be given a post-assessment to assess their learning toward the desired objective of the training.

The second session will occur after the first grading quarter on another teacher in-service training in late October. It will include identifying evidence-based practices to strengthen students' academic and non-academic skills. The outcome of this session will be for teachers to complete a lesson plan on a non-academic skill or strategy that has been proven to enhance student learning. Participants will read peer-reviewed articles with a focus on finding two evidence-based strategies to improve academic and non-academic skills development. Learning Forward (2022) suggested that evidence be used in all stages of professional learning. Teachers will also understand the non-academic factors, which strongly predict college and career readiness, and the importance of explicitly

teaching skills and strategies. Participants will be placed in small groups to collaborate and share their findings with the large group. Participants will be asked to list their examples of the two evidence-based strategies for each college readiness indicator and post them on the wall in 4 corners of the classroom on a large poster paper. Next, participants will engage in a gallery walk technique by visiting the 4 corners and adding to the other group discussion. During this session, participants will be split into two collaborative communities and asked to develop a lesson plan on the SQ3R method, an evidence-based strategy designed to improve notetaking, study skills, and reading comprehension. At the end of the second quarter, participants will be asked to apply what they have learned and deliver the SQ3R method lesson in their first-period class. Participants will be asked to track student progress through formative and summative assessments during the second and third grading quarters.

The third session will occur at the end of the third grading period and will be a time for feedback, reflection, and analysis of student assessment data. Moreover, the third session will be linked to individual teacher needs and used to develop a plan for continuous growth. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) found that teacher professional development is most effective when continued over time.

Roles and Responsibilities of Student and Others

My role as the professional development facilitator is to develop, plan, and implement the professional development workshop. I will lead the discussions using open-ended questions that maximize participant engagement. For the professional development workshop, I will develop goals that are smart, measurable, attainable,

realistic, and timely (SMART) to ensure the training outcomes are achieved. Participants will be expected to attend and participate in every session. In the first session, participants will participate in the development of group norms that will serve as a guide for group interaction, communication, and collaboration. Levi and Askay (2021) found that establishing team norms helps enhance group interactions and leads to more productive outcomes. All participants will be expected to participate in professional development actively.

Project Evaluation Plan

The primary goal of this project study was to understand the social and academic practices teachers used to support Black students in college classes. An analysis of participant interview data provided insight into the academic and social supports teachers use to support Black students in college classes but also found a need for explicit training in helping students develop academic and non-academic college and career readiness skills. Therefore, this professional learning workshop is designed to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills needed to teach these skills explicitly. Educators evaluate professional learning to see if the training achieved the intended outcomes. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2019) recommended five levels of professional development that should guide an evaluation and suggested that assessments focus on a few specific questions and outcomes.

Table 11

CDC's Learning Levels of Professional Development Evaluation

Level	Definition
Implementation	Examine the process of professional development implementation, such as following the curriculum, providing adequate time for the training, and providing follow-up.
Reaction	Examines the participants' responses to or perception of the professional development event or activity.
Learning	Examines the effect of professional development on knowledge and skills.
Behavior	Examines the effect of professional development on behavior and effectiveness to change behaviors. Applies to individuals (i.e. teaching practices) and organizations (i.e. policies).
Impact	Examines the effect of professional development on the goals and on the long-term outcomes, such as improved student health.

Note: CDC's Learning Levels of Professional Development Evaluation. Adapted Measuring Implementation to Impact: A guide to Evaluating Professional Development. https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/tths/19452_cdc_guide_eval_prodev_508.pdf

Participants will be given a summative assessment questionnaire at the end of each session aligned with the levels of professional development evaluation. Offering a summative assessment at the end of each session will help measure the knowledge and skills gained at the end. I will collect additional evaluation data through formative assessments such as quick writing, journaling, and observation of learning behavior. I will analyze the evaluation data to determine program effectiveness and the next steps for implementation. The formative assessment will inform my practices during professional learning and allow me to provide ongoing feedback to improve in real time. Morris et al. (2021) conducted a systemic review of 28 cases that examined the effects of formative assessment and feedback on university students' academic performance and found that formative assessment and feedback support higher learning outcomes in higher

education. I chose summative assessments because they effectively measure learning outcomes and will allow me to assess professional learning sessions.

Stakeholders

Stakeholders in this professional learning workshop will include early college high school teachers, dual enrollment teachers, and early college high school administrators. The goal of this professional learning will impact instructional practices, leading to improved college and career readiness in non-academic behaviors that support academic performance. All teachers will be expected to adhere to group norms and collaborate during the workshop. Successful implementation of recommendations based on a literature review and analysis of data could lead to improvements in student outcomes for all learners, especially Black students, as data analysis showed a clear deficit in non-academic skills.

Project Implications

Implications for Social Change

This project was created to address the underperformance of black students in college classes. The data from this study demonstrates a need for teachers to receive support in explicitly integrating non-academic skills into their teaching practices. The goal of this project is to help teachers:

1. Identify critical characteristics of college and career readiness.
2. Identify evidence-based practices for academic and non-academic factors.
3. Implement evidence-based practices.

Since the ECHS initiative was created to address the challenges of degree completion and college preparedness for economically disadvantaged and historically underrepresented students, this project has implications for social change. The degree completion rate for Black students continues to be a challenge. Anthony et al. (2021) found a 13% decline in college enrollment among first-time Black college students at community colleges. Moreover, state and national trends show significant gaps between the associate and bachelor's completion rates.

Through this project, teachers may gain the skills and knowledge about non-academic factors impacting student academic performance, resulting in increased success for students. Students will benefit from explicit instruction in non-academic behaviors needed to support success in college classes. Increasing the success rate of Black students in college classes may lead to more students matriculating to 4-year universities, resulting in positive social change. Therefore, I created this project to meet the needs of early college high school and dual enrollment teachers.

Local Stakeholders

I created this project to meet the needs of early college high school and dual enrollment teachers. The results of the data analysis revealed that teachers wanted explicit training in supporting students with college and career readiness skills. Through this project, teachers will understand evidence-based strategies to support students in developing the non-academic behaviors needed for academic success. The early college high schools under study are situated within a local college community. More than 40% of local college students report they come from low-income families. Many reside within

the county's top 10 poverty zip codes. Bryant (2015) found that although Black students enroll in rigorous courses, many need academic strengthening and support before they can be ready for college-level courses. In a previous study, Strayhorn (2009) found that Black college students' success can be impeded by not having the knowledge and skills for college-level work. Therefore, through this project, teachers will understand evidence-based strategies to support students in developing non-academic behaviors. With the increase in Black students being successful in college classes and pursuing college degrees, it can be assumed that they will have a more significant economic impact within their community.

Larger Context

Educational institutions are a microcosm of society, and they play a pivotal role in advocating for change and have an even greater responsibility to promote equitable outcomes for all learners. This professional development plan has the potential to expand beyond the early college high schools and local community college. This project could potentially serve as a model for other early college high schools in supporting student college and career readiness success for academic and non-academic skills. The research and findings could be shared within the early college high school and dual enrollment communities.

Section 3 of this study includes an introduction to the proposed project 3-day profession development plan, the rationale, review of the literature, project description, evaluation and implications. Section 4 provides strengths and limitations,

recommendations for alternative approaches, my journey as a scholar, and implications for future research.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Project Strengths and Limitations

I developed a professional development project for early college and dual enrollment teachers. The findings showed that teachers needed to increase their understanding of college and career readiness skills, specifically focusing on non-academic factors that support academic achievement. One strength of this project is that it provided teachers with relevant, job-embedded professional learning experiences and the opportunity to research evidence-based strategies. For example, teachers are asked to identify evidence-based strategies that support helping students develop non-academic skills and create a lesson plan to implement those strategies.

Based on the professional learning standards suggested by Learning Forward (2022), this project focused on providing teachers with the skills and knowledge to improve student learning. Another strength of this project is that it was designed for adult learning. The adult learning theory states that adults must actively participate in their learning. Knowles and Associates (1984) found that adult professional learning activities must be relevant, draw on the participant's needs and interests, and allow participants to collaborate with problem-based learning approaches. Moreover, the project incorporates active learning, allows teachers to share their experiences, and is sustained throughout the academic year in three phases.

Limitations of this project may include time constraints and participant's attitudes toward in-service professional development. This professional development workshop will be implemented in phases throughout the school year and will consist of

opportunities for teachers to collaborate and share implementation results. During in-service days, teachers often prefer to work independently in their classroom, working on classroom set-up, bulletin boards, and lesson planning. In addition, Eroglu and Kaya (2021) found that barriers to professional development include negative teacher attitudes, professional development offered at an inconvenient time, and professional development that needs more content focus. I will mitigate these barriers by setting the workshop's purpose and sticking to the workshop agenda and schedule. In addition, I will model a growth mindset and incorporate learning activities to keep participants engaged and motivated.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

I provided a 3-day professional development project titled “Keys to College Success 101” to develop early college and dual enrollment teachers’ understanding of college and career readiness indicators. The professional development project aims to provide teachers with a framework for helping students develop cognitive strategies, academic behaviors, contextual skills, and awareness needed to succeed before entering the college classroom. An alternative approach to my project could be self-paced online course modules. The COVID-19 pandemic contributed to a shift in professional development and created avenues for online learning. Bragg et al. (2021) found that online professional learning that was content-focused and fostered peer engagement showed greater participant satisfaction. Digital learning platforms are increasingly popular and can be individualized to meet specific learning needs. Another alternative to the 3-day professional development workshop would be to conduct the professional

development on 3 consecutive days instead of throughout the school year. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) found that one-time professional development workshops are less effective in improving teacher practices. Effective teacher professional development can contribute significantly to teacher professional growth by equipping teachers with the knowledge, skills, and expertise needed to build teacher capacity for student learning.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change

Scholarship

I have always considered myself a lifelong learner. I often refer to myself as the lead learner in the building. Pursuing my doctorate in Educational Leadership and Administration has re-ignited in me a quest to learn more. As a scholar-practitioner, I combined my educational experience with evidence-based research on making meaningful connections to my learning. Throughout this process, I gained skills in intensive research, analysis, and problem-solving and the ability to analyze and synthesize complex texts. Through Walden's Library databases, I learned how to research, identify, and collect multiple data sources applicable to a given problem. Moreover, through peer-reviewed scholarly journals, I also gained respect and appreciation for the work of other scholars.

Academic writing requires research and analysis to support a field of study. Thinking of myself as a scholar, I felt insecure and lacked confidence, and becoming a scholarly writer seemed very intimidating. However, through this process, I maintained a growth mindset and learned to apply scholarly voice rules. I came to know myself as a reader and writer. In every stage of this journey, I have learned something, from research

alignment with the problem and purpose statement to understanding methodological research designs and data collection and analysis. I have increased my capacity as a learner and educational leader.

Project Development

Building on the evidence from this study, I developed a 3-day professional development session for early college high school and dual enrollment teachers. The participants reported a need to understand college and career readiness indicators to help Black students succeed in college classes. In developing this project, I researched the adult learning theory and found the most effective adult learning principles. In addition, I learned that professional learning standards or critical design elements should guide effective teacher professional development. During the literature review, I enhanced my knowledge of designing, implementing, evaluating, and sustaining high-quality professional learning.

Moreover, this professional growth journey allowed me to improve my existing skills and add new knowledge and skills. For example, I learned about Guskey's five levels of professional development evaluation. Evaluating the impact of professionals can provide valuable insight into learning outcomes and help improve the quality of future professional learning. Finally, this research highlighted my responsibility as an instructional leader to create the optimal conditions for teacher learning. Developing a robust professional development plan that connects resources and support to the teachers who need them most should be the priority of all school leaders.

Leadership and Change

I began my career as an educator to be an agent of change committed to challenging the status quo. Understanding that as an educational leader, I have a moral obligation to challenge structural norms to ensure every student is provided equitable opportunities to reach his or her highest potential. Planning this 3-day professional development workshop has increased my capacity as an instructional leader by equipping me with the knowledge, skills, and expertise to implement the professional development workshop with fidelity. Moreover, combining the characteristics of transformational leadership with this newfound skillset may lead to a change in teachers' classroom practices.

Analysis of Self as a Scholar

The journey to becoming a scholar has been challenging, and just as students must develop non-academic behaviors to support academic achievement, I had to create non-academic behaviors to help my achievement. Working a full-time job and being a part of a doctoral program came with many challenges. As a result, I was forced to develop new self-management skills and work habits to manage my personal and professional life. For example, I created a schedule to manage my time best and found ways to increase self-motivation and better manage stress. This doctoral study has helped me improve my practices by centering my focus on finding peer-reviewed articles that support evidence-based research practices. I also learned about myself as a learner and found effective study strategies to master complex concepts. Throughout this project, I shared my new learning with two colleagues, and they have now enrolled in a doctoral program.

Analysis of Self as a Practitioner

As school leaders, principals are expected to play critical roles in establishing and improving educational programs and services. The knowledge and skills gained in developing this project have encouraged me to work feverishly and purposefully to provide structures that support teacher growth and student learning. With this newfound knowledge of professional education, I am confident in developing, implementing, and sustaining high-impact professional learning. This doctoral journey has taught me to be tenacious in pursuing my goals.

Analysis of Self as a Project Developer

During this work, I have gained confidence in my ability as a project developer. When developing the professional development workshop, I used the High-Quality Professional Learning (PL) Indicator Checklist outlined in Florida's Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Project Manual. This checklist outlined the key domains of planning, leadership support, establishing a readiness to learn, delivery, and evaluation (Appendix B).

Reflection on the Importance of the Work

A plethora of research has noted the positive outcomes of the ECHS model in preparing Black students for postsecondary enrollment and degree completion (Adams et al., 2020; Berger et al., 2013, 2014; Britton et al., 2022; Duncheon, 2020; Edmunds et al., 2017, 2020; Jobs for the Future, 2021; Moreno et al., 2021; Song et al., 2021). These studies confirm that Black students can perform in higher education with the right support. Yet, despite increased access to higher education in recent decades, Black

students face unequal access to high-quality education and experience persistent achievement gaps, unlike other peer groups (Rivera et al., 2019; Strayhorn, 2009; Utt & Tochluck, 2020). This doctoral work is essential because it focuses on building teacher capacity to support Black students in developing non-academic behaviors to support academic success in college classes. I interviewed seven early college high school and dual enrollment teachers to better understand their perspectives and experiences. This study found that participants embedded academic and social support systems in their classroom structures. However, Black students need additional support for the rigors of college. The project development as part of this study provides specific evidenced-based strategies teachers can use to help students develop the skills and strategies necessary for college success before they enter the college classroom. As an instructional leader and novice researcher, I have increased my knowledge and expertise in supporting teachers in this area.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

Despite increased access to higher education in recent decades, Black students face unequal access to high-quality education and experience persistent achievement gaps, unlike other peer groups (Rivera et al., 2019; Strayhorn, 2009; Utt & Tochluck, 2020). Research on Black student completion and degree attainment has shown that Black students do not graduate at the same rate compared to other student groups. The U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (2023) found that since the Fall of 2010, Black student enrollment into 4-year universities decreased by 23%.

This was an exploratory study in which seven early college and dual enrollment teachers were purposively sampled. This project study was essential because it will help teachers identify how to enhance support for Black students in college classes so they can exit the program with a competitive grade point average, creating more opportunities for them to transfer to higher educational institutions. Research shows that higher levels of education also provide individuals with more job security. People with advanced degrees have more stable employment than those without and are more likely to find new employment quickly in case of job loss (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). Noncognitive skills are essential to student college and career success. Savitz-Romer and Rowan-Kenyon (2020) found that noncognitive skills in higher education are often placed with student affairs professionals rather than in the classroom setting. Moreover, they found that higher education institutions primarily focus on at-risk first-year students using indicators like GPA, retention, and degree completion. As a result, future research may explore the impact of explicitly teaching noncognitive skills in a classroom context.

Conclusion

This basic exploratory study aimed to understand teachers' academic and social practices used to support Black students in college classes. Findings from this study confirm that teachers provide various academic and social support to support Black learners' success. The data indicated that teachers provided academic and social support for Black students but also acknowledged a need for extra support in helping students demonstrate college readiness skills with academic and non-academic skills. Based on the data and research findings, I provided a 3-day professional development project titled

"Keys to College Success 101." The professional development workshop may increase teacher capacity by helping them to explicitly embed non-academic behaviors into the classroom setting, thereby better preparing students for the rigors of college coursework.

References

Adams, T. R., Williams, B., Lewis, C.W. (2020). “That’s the point of going:” A qualitative inquiry into the experiences of Black males at an early college high school. *Journal of Advanced Academics, 31*(1),14–34. https:/ doi.org/10.1177/1932202X19860210

American College Testing Association. (2018). *The condition of college and career readiness*. https://www.act.org/researchpolicy/ college-career-readiness-report-2018/

Allen, K., Kern, M., Vella-Brodrick, D., & Hattie, J. (2018). What schools need to know about fostering school belonging: A meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology Review, 30*(1), 1–34. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-016-9389-8

Amerstorfer, C., & Frelin von Munster-Kistner, C. (2021). Student perceptions of academic engagement and student-teacher relationships in problem-based learning. *Frontiers in Psychology*, (12) 713057, 1–18. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.713057

Anthony Jr., M., Nichols, A., N., & Del Pilar, W. (2021). *Raising undergraduate degree attainment among black women and men takes on new urgency amid the pandemic.* The Education Trust. https://edtrust.org/resource/national-and-state-degree-attainment-for-black-women-and-men/

Ashford-Hanserd, S., Springer, S. B., Hayton, M., & Williams, K. E. (2020). Shadows of Plessy v. Ferguson: The dichotomy of progress toward educational equity since 1954. *The Journal of Negro Education, 89*(4), 410–422.

https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/shadows-plessy-v-fergusondichotomy-progress/docview/2655177449/se-2?accountid=14872

Babbie, E. (2017). *The basics of social research* (7th ed). Cengage Learning.

Banks, T., & Dohy, J. (2019). Mitigating barriers to persistence: A review of efforts to improve retention and graduation rates for students of color in higher education. *Higher Education Studies, 9*(1),118–131. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1203738

Barkley, E. F., & Major, C., H. (2020). Student engagement techniques: A handbook for college faculty (2nd ed.). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Bean, J. P. (1981, April 13-17). *A synthesis of theoretical model of student attrition*. [Paper Presentation]. The American Education Research Association: Los Angeles, California, United States

Bellibas, M.S., Polatcan, M., Kilinc, A, C. (2022). Linking instructional leadership to teacher practices: The mediating effect of shared practice and agency in learning effectiveness. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 50*(5), 812–831, https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143220945706

Bergmark, U. (2023). Teachers' professional learning when building a research- based education: context-specific, collaborative and teacher-driven professional development, Professional Development in Education, *49*(2), 210–224, https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2020.1827011

Berger, A. R., Cole, S., Duffy, H., Edwards, S., Knudson, J., Kurki, A., & Nielsen, N. (2009). *Six years and counting: The ECHSI matures. Fifth annual early college high school initiative evaluation synthesis report.* American Institutes for

Research and SRI International. http://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/ECHSI_Eval_Report_2009_081 309_0.pdf

Berger, A., Turk-Bicakci, L., Garet, M., Song, M., Haxton, C., Zeiser, K., Hoshen, G., Ford, J., Stephan, J., & Knudson, J. (2013). *Early college, continued success: Early college high school initiative impact study*. American Institutes for Research. https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/ECHSI_Impact_Study_Report_Final1_0.pdf.

Berger, A., Turk-Bicakci, L., Garet, M., Knudson, J., Hoshen, G. (2014*). Early college, continued success: Early college high school initiative impact study*. American Institutes for Research. https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/ECHSI_Impact_Study_Report_Final1_0.pdf.

Booher, L., Nadelson, L.S., & Nadelson, S.G. (2020). What about research and evidence? Teachers' perceptions and uses of educational research to inform STEM teaching. *The Journal of Educational Research, 113*(3), 213–225. https://doi.org/10.1080/00220671.2020.1782811

Bragg, L. A., Walsh, C., Heyeres, M. (2021). Successful design and delivery of online professional development for teachers: A systematic review of the literature, *Computers & Education* 166, 104158. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2021.104158

Britton, T., Symns, M., & Paul, V. (2022). Early birds: An exploration of early college initiative high schools in New York City and college persistence. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory and Practice, 24(2*) 548–574.

https://doi.org/10.1177/1521025120924782.

Bryant, R., T. (2015, February). College Preparation for African American Students: Gaps in the high school educational experience. CLASP Policy Solutions. https://www.clasp.org/sites/default/files/public/resources-and-publications/publication-1/College-readiness2-2.pdf

Burkholder, G. J., Cox, K. A., Crawford, L. M., & Hitchcock, J. H. (Eds.). (2020). Research designs and methods: An applied guide for the scholar-practitioner. Sage

Burns, K., Ellegood, W., Bracy, B., Bracy, J., Duncan, M., Sweeney, D.,C. III (2018). Early college credit programs positively impact student success. *Journal of Advanced Academics, 30*(1), 27-49. https:// doi.org/10.117/1932203X18801274

Cataraja, G. D. (2022). Effect of SQ3R on students' reading comprehension. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research, 3* (4), 548–555. https://doi.org/10.11594/ijmaber.03.04.07

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2019). Measuring Implementation to Impact: A Guide to Evaluating Professional Development. Retrieved May 28, 2024 from https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/tths/19452_cdc_guide_eval_prodev_508.pdf

Chatterji, R., Campbell, N, Quirk, A. (2021). Closing advanced coursework equity gaps for all students. Center for American Progress. Retrieved from https://www.americanprogress.org/article/closing-advanced-coursework-equity-gaps-students/

Chrysikos, A., Ahmed, E., & Ward, R. (2017). Analysis of Tinto's student integration theory in first-year undergraduate computing students of a UK higher education institution. *International Journal of Comparative Education and Development, 19*(23), 97-121. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCED-10-2016-001

Chicago Tribune. (2007). No child left behind. https://www.chicagotribune.com/os-xpm-2007-07-19-swbox19-story.html

Comeaux, E., Chapman, T. K., & Contreras, F. (2020). The college access and choice processes of high-achieving African American students: A critical race theory analysis. *American Educational Research Journal, 57*(1), 411-439, https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831219853223

Conley, D. T., & Venezia, A. (2003). High school transitions: State of the art and views of the Future. [Policy Brief]. Educational Research Association. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED477194.pdf

Conley, D. T. (2007). Toward a more comprehensive conception of college readiness. Eugene, OR: Educational Conley, D. T. (2009, Spring). Rethinking College Readiness. Update on Research and Leadership, 20(2). Champaign, IL: Office of Community College Research and Leadership, University of Illinois.

Conley, D. T. (2010). College and career ready: Helping all students succeed beyond high school. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Conley, D.T. (2012). A complete definition of college and career readiness. *Educational Policy Improvement Center*. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED537876

Cowan, J., & Goldhaber, D. (2015). How much of a "running start" do dual enrollment

programs provide students? *The Review of Higher Education, 38*(3) 425-469. https://doi.org/10.1353/rhe.2015.0018

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J.D. (2017). Research Design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approach. Sage Publications

Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2017). *Effective Teacher Professional Development*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute. https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/teacher-prof-dev.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). Evaluating "No Child Left Behind" https://edpolicy.stanford.edu/library/publications

Davis, G. M., Hanzsek-Brill, M. B., Petzold, M. C., & Robinson, D. H. (2019). Students' sense of belonging: The development of a predictive retention model. *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, 19(*1), 117-127. https:/ doi.org/10.14434/josotl.v19i1.26787

Deil-Amen, R., & DeLuca, S. (2010). The underserved third: How our educational structures populate an educational underclass. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 15*(1), 27–50. https://doi.org/10.1080/10824661003634948

Duncheon, J. C., & DeMatthews, D. (2018). Early college high school principals: Preparing historically underrepresented students for college success. *NASSP Bulletin, 102*(4), 269-290. https://doi.org.10.1177/0192636518812703

Duncheon, J. C. (2020). "We are exposed to that college environment": Exploring the socialization of early college high school students. *Community College Review, 48*(2), 173–191. https:/ doi.org/10.1177%2F0091552119898880

Edmunds, J., Unlu, F., Glennie, E., Berstein, L. F., Furley, J., & Arshavsky, N. (2017). Smoothing the transition to postsecondary education: The impact of the early college model. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness, 10(*2), 297-325. https://doi.org/10.1080/19345747.2016.1191574

Edmunds, J., Unu, F., Furey, J., Glennie, E., & Arshavsky, N. (2020). What happens when you combine high school and college: The impact of the early college model of postsecondary performance and completion. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 42*(2), 257–278. https:/ doi.org/10.3102/0162373720912249

Education Commission of the States. (2020). Dual enrollment access. (Policy Snapshot). http:// ww.ecs.org

Eroglu, M., & Kaya, V., D. (2021). Professional development barriers of teachers: qualitative research. *International Journal of Curriculum and Instruction, 13*(2), 1896-1922. https://ijci.wcci-international.org

Farrington, C. A., Roderick, M., Allensworth, E., Nagaoka, J., Keyes, T. S., Johnson, D. W., & Beechum, N. O. (2012). *Teaching adolescents to become learners. The role of noncognitive factors in shaping school performance: A critical literature review*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research.

Fincham, E., Rozembercski, B., Kovanovic, V., Joksimovic, S., Jovanovic, J., & Gasevic, D. (2021). Persistence and performance in co-enrollment network embeddings: An empirical validation of Tinto's student integration model. *IEEE Transactions on Learning Technologies, 14(*1), 106-120. https:/

doi.org/10.1109/TLT.2021.3059362

Florida SUS Counselor Guide 2022-2023. https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Counselor_Guide_SUS-Matrix-2022.pdf

Florida Department of Education (n.d.). Florida College System: College and career readiness. Tallahassee, FL. https://ccrscenter.org/ccrs-landscape/state-profile/florida

Florida Department of Education. (2018). Every student succeeds act (ESSA) state plan. https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/14196/urlt/FL-ESSA-StatePlan.pdf

Ford, D. Y., Wright, B. L., & Tyson, C. A. (2021). Lance and other gifted and talented students of color matter: Five models and theories to guide early childhood educators in advancing equity. *Gifted Child Today, 44*(1), 48-56. https:/ doi.org/10.1177/1076217520940754

French, A. (2017). Toward new conceptual model: Integrating the social change model of leadership development and Tinto's model of student persistence. *Journal of Leadership Education,16(*3), 97-117.https://doi.org/10.12806/V16/I3/T4

Gardner-Neblett, N., Iruka, I., & Humphries, M. (2023). Dismantling the Black-White Achievement Gap Paradigm: Why and how we need to focus instead on systemic change. *Journal of Education, 203*(2), 433-441. https://doi.org/10.1177/00220574211031958

Gay, G. (2001). Preparing for culturally responsive teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education, 53*(2), 106–116, https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487102053002003

Green, S., Sanczyk, A., Chambers, C., Mraz, M., Polly, D. (2023). College and career

readiness: A literature synthesis. *Journal of Education, 203*(1), 222-229. https://doi.org/10.1177/00220574211002209

Guba, E. G. (1981). Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries. *Educational Communication and Technology, 29(*2), 75-91. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02766777

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. *Handbook of qualitative research.* Sage Publications Inc

Hammond, Z. L. (2015). *Culturally responsive teaching and the brain*. Corwin Press.

Hamshire, C., Barrett, N., Langan, M., Harris, E., & Wibberley, C. (2017). Student perceptions of their learning experiences: A repeat regional survey of healthcare students. *Nurse Education Today*, 49, 168-173. https:/ doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2016.11.019

Hattie, J.A.C. (2003, October). Teachers make a difference: What is the research evidence? Paper presented at the Building Teacher Quality: What does the research tell us ACER Research Conference, Melbourne, Australia. Retrieved from http://research.acer.edu.au/research_conference_2003/4/

Haxton, C., Song, M., Zeiser, K., Berger, A., Turk-Bicakci, L., Garet, M., Knudson, J., & Hoshen, G. (2016). Longitudinal findings from the early college high school initiative impact study. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 38*(2), 410-430. https://doi.org/10.3102/0162373716642861

Hines, E. M., Mayes, R. D., Harris, P. C., & Vega, D. (2023). Using a culturally

responsive MTSS approach to prepare Black males for postsecondary opportunities. *School Psychology Review*, *52*(3), 357–371. https://doi.org/10.1080/2372966X.2021.2018917

Hutchins, B. C., Arshavsky, N., & Edmunds, J.A. (2019). Why some early college high school students do not transition to a 4-year college: An exploration of perceived barriers and schooling experiences on students' transition plans. *Psychology in the Schools, 56*(7), 1117-1138. https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.22257

Jacob, B. (2007). The challenges of staffing urban schools with effective teachers. *The Future of Children, 17*(1), 129-153, https://www.jstor.org/stable/4150023

Jett, N., & Rinn, A. N. (2020). Student experiences and outcomes of early college. A systematic review. *Roeper Review, 42*(2), 80-84. https://doi.org/10.1080/02783193.2020.1728801

Jobs for the Future (2018). *Early College*. https://archive.jff.org/what-we-do/impact-stories/early-college/

Jobs for the Future (2021). *Early college high school initiative core principals.* https://archive.jff.org/events/early-college-week/

Kilag, O., & Sasan, J. M. (2023). Unpacking the role of instructional leadership in teacher professional development. *Advanced Qualitative Research, (1)*1, 63-73. https://doi.org/10.31098/aqr.v1i1.1380

Knowles, M., and Associates (1984). Andragogy in action: Applying modern principles of adult learning. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kobrak, P. (1992). Black student retention in predominately White regional universities:

The politics of faculty involvement. *The Journal of Negro Education, 61*(4), 509-530. https:/ doi.org/10.2307/2295368

Korpershoek, H., Canrinus, E. T., Fokkens-Bruinsma, M., & de Boer, H. (2020). The relationships between school belongings and students' motivational, social-emotional, behavioral, and academic outcomes in secondary education: a meta-analytic review. *Research Papers in Education, 35*(5) *641-680.* https:/ doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2019.1615116

Lindstrom., L., Linda, J., Beno, C., Gee, K., Hirano., K. (2022). Career and readiness for underserved youth: Educator and youth perspectives. *Youth & Society, 84*(2), 221-239. https://doi:10.1177/0044118X20977004

Lombardi A., Freeman, J., Rifenbark, G. (2017). Modeling college and career readiness for adolescents with and without disabilities: A bifactor approach. *Exceptional Children, 84*(2), 159-176. https://doi.org/10.1177/0014402917731557

Parnes, M., Kanchewa, S., Markes, A., & Scwartz, S. (2020). Closing the achievement gap: Impacts and process to help-seeking intervention. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 67*, 1-12 https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2020.101121

Patton, M. (2015). Purposeful sampling and case selection: Overview of strategies and options. In *Qualitative research and evaluation methods. (4th ed).* Sage Publications.

Phillips, T. J., & Snodgrass, L. L. (2021). Examining individualism in college student retention theory and practice: Transitioning from student integration to

institutional adjustment. *Journal of College Orientation, Transition, and Retention, 28*(1), 1-15, https://doi.org/10.24926/jcotr.v28i1.3607

Postsecondary National Policy Institute. (2023). https://pnpi.org/factsheets/black-students/

Ladson-Billing, G. (1997).Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal, 32*(3) 465-491. http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0002-8312%28199523%2932%3A3%3C465%3ATATOCR%3E2.0.CO%3B2-4

Leithwood, K. A., (2021). A review of evidence about equitable school leadership. *Educational Sciences, 11*(377), 2-49. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11080377

Learning Forward (2022). Standards for professional learning. Learning forward: The professional learning association. https://learningforward.org/standards- for professional learning/

Levi, D., & Askay, D.A. (2021). Group dynamics for teams. (6th ed.). Sage Publications

Ma, X., Marion, R. (2021). Exploring how instructional leadership affects teacher efficacy: A multilevel analysis. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 49*(1), 188-207, https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143219888742

Majors, A. (2019). College readiness: A critical race theory perspective. *The High School Journal, 102*(3), 183–188. https://doi.org/10.1353/hsj.2019.0005

Martin, L., & Mulvihill, T. (2023).Voices in Education: Successful professional

development for educators: What does it look like and who should be involved?, The Teacher Educator, 58(1), 1-14, https://doi.org/10.1080/08878730.2023.2145716

Marzano, R. (2003). What works in schools: Translating research into action.(1st ed.). Association for Supervision and Curriculum

Mason, M. (2010). Sample size and saturation in Ph.D. studies using qualitative interviews. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 11*(3), 1-19. https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-11.3.1428.

McCallum, J., Pellegrino, J.W. (2017). Preparing students for college and Careers (1st ed.). Routledge

McGrath, C., Palmgren, P., & Liljedahl, M. (*2018*). Twelve tips for conducting qualitative research interviews, *Medical Teacher, 41*(9), 1002-1006, https://doi.org/10.1080/0142159X.2018.1497149

Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation (4th ed.). Jossey Bass

Merriam, S. B., & Grenier, R.S. (2019). Qualitative research in practice (2nd ed.). Jossey Bass

Metz, G. W. (2002, October 16-19). *Challenges and Changes to Tinto's Persistence Theory.* The Mid-Western Educational Research Association: Columbus, Ohio, US https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED202444.pdf

Morgan, H. (2021). Restorative justice and the school-to-prison pipeline: A review of existing literature. *Education Sciences, 11*(159), 1-10,

https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11040159

Moreno, M., McKinney, L., Burridge, A., Rangel Snodgrass, V., & Carales, V., D. (2021). Access for whom? The impact of dual enrollment on college matriculation among underserved student populations in Texas. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice,45(3),* 244-272. https:/ doi.org/10.1080/10668926.2019.1688734

Moreno, M., McKinney, L., Rangel, V., Burridge, A. S., & Carales, V., D. (2022). The impact of academic momentum on postsecondary matriculation among early college high school. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice, 47*(4), *307-326*, https://doi.org/10.1080/10668926.2022.2035852

Morningstar, M. E., Lombardi, A., Fowler, C.H & Test, D.W. (2015). A college and career readiness framework for secondary students with disabilities. *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals 1-13, https://doi.org/10.1177/2165143415589926*

Morris, R., Perry, T., Wardle, L. (2021). Formative assessment and feedback for learning in higher education: *A systemic review. Review of Education,* 9:e3292, 1-26, https://doi.org/10.1002/rev3.3292

Munro, B. H. (1981). Dropout from higher education: Path analysis of a national sample. *American Education Research, 18(*2), 133–141. https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312018002133

Murnane, R. (2013). U.S. high school graduation rates: Patterns and explanations. *Journal of Economic Literature, 51*(2), 370-422.

https://doi.org/10.1257/jel.51.2.370‘

National Association of Colleges and Employers. (2018). *Are college graduates ‘‘career ready’’?* NACE Center for Career Development and Talent Acquisitions. https://naceweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/career-readiness-defined/

National Center for Education Statistics. (2019). *College Majors and Careers: Job relatedness and compensation of 1992-1993 and 207-08 bachelor’s degree recipients 4 years after graduation.* https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2018163

National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, Bethesda, MD. & National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, Bethesda, MD. (1978). *The Belmont Report Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research*. [Washington, D.C.]: Distributed by ERIC Clearinghouse, https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED183582

National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. (2018). *Persistence & retention.* https://nscresearchcenter.org/snapshotreport33-first-year-persistence-and-retention/

Noble, H., & Mitchell, G. (2016). What is grounded theory? *BMJ Journals Evidence-Based Nursing, 19(*2), 35-36, http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/eb-2016-102306

Nikolaidis, P., Dhiman, G., & Khan, S. (2022). Predicting student attrition in higher education through the determinants of learning progress: A structural equation modelling approach. *Journal of Sustainability, 14* (20), 1-20.

https://doi.org/10.3390/su142013584

Noddings, N. (2012). The caring relation in teaching, *Oxford Review of Education, 38*(6), 771-781, http://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2012.745047\

Nora, A., A., & Matonak, A. (1990). Testing qualitative indicators of precollege factors in Tinto's attrition model: A community college student population. *Journal Review of Higher Education, 13(*3), 337–355, https://do.org/10.1353/rhe.1990.0021

O'Day, J. A., & Smith, M. S. (2016). Quality and equality in American education: systemic problems, systemic solutions. In the dynamics of opportunity in America 297–358). Springe International Publishing https://www.carnegiefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/ODay-Smith_Systemic_reform.pdf

Osta, K., & Vasquez, H. (n.d.). Implicit bias and structural inequity. https://www.nationalequityproject.org/frameworks/implicit-bias-structuralracialization

Pascarella, E., T.,& Terenzini, P.T. (1980). Predicting freshman persistence and voluntary dropout decisions from a theoretical model, *Journal of Higher Education, 51(*1),60–75, https://doi.org/1080/00221546.1980.11780030

Patterson Silver Wolf, D. A., Tayor, F., Maguin, E., Asher Blackdeer, A. (2021) You are college material- you belong: An underrepresented minority student retention intervention without deception. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice, 23(*3), 507-522, https://doi.org/10.1177/1521025119848749

Pavey, L., Greitemeyer, T., Sparks, P. (2011). Highlighting relatedness promotes prosocial motives and behavior. *National Library of Medicine, 37*(7), 904-917, https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167211405994

Ravitch, S. M., & Carl, N. M. (2021). Qualitative research: Bridging the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological (2nd ed.) Sage Publications.

Rivera, L. E., Kotok, S., & Ashby, N. (2019). Access to dual enrollment in the United States: Implications for equity and stratification. *Texas Education Review*, *7*(2), 14-29. http:// x.doi.org/10.26153/tsw/2282

Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2012). Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.

Saenz, K., & Combs, J. P. (2015). Experiences, perceived challenges, and supports systems of early college high school students. *Administrative Issues Journal*, *5*(1), 107-117, https://doi.org/10.5929/2015.5.1.5

Savitz-Romer, M., Rowen-Kenyon, H.T. (2020). Noncognitive skills, college success, and career readiness: What matters and to whom? *Institute of Education Sciences, 25*(1), 4-13, https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1253372

Saldaña, J. (2021). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

Shenton, A. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information*, *22*(2), 63-75, http://dx.doi.org/10.3233/EFI-2004-22201

Short, J., & Hirsh, S. (2020, November). *The elements: Transforming teaching through*

curriculum-based professional learning. Carnegie Corporation of New York. carnegie.org/elements

Sims, S., Fletcher-Wood, H., O'Mara-Eves, A., Cottingham, S., Stansfield, C., Goodrich, J., Van Herwegen, J., & Anders, J. (2023). Effective teacher professional development: New theory and a meta-analytic test. *Review of Educational Research*, 1-22. https://*doi.org/org/10.3102/00346543231217480*

Siraj, I., Kingston, D., & Neilsen-Hewett, C. (2019). The role of professional development in improving quality and supporting child outcomes in early education and care. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Research in Early Childhood Education*, 13, 49-68. https://doi.org/10.17206/apjrece.2019.13.2.49

Song, M., & Zeiser, K. (2019). *Early college, continued success: Longer team impact of early college high schools.* American Institutes of Research for Research. https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/Early-College-Continued-Success-Longer-Term-Impact-of-ECHS-September-2019.pdf

Song, M., Zeiser, K., Atchison, D., & Brodiak de los Reyes, I. (2021). Early college, continued success: Longer-term impact of early college high schools. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness, 14*(1), 116-142, https://doi.org/10.1080/19345747.2020.1862374

Steinmayr, R., Meibner, A., Weidinger, A., & Wirthwein, R. (2014). Academic achievement. *Academic Achievement-Education-Oxford Bibliographies,* 10.1093/obo/9780199756810-0108

Strayhorn, T. L. (2009). The burden of proof: A quantitative study of high-achieving

black collegians. *Journal of African American Studies,13*(4), 375–387. https:/ DOE.10.007/s12111-008-9059-0

Susilo A., Ramalu, S. S., Mohd, S., Razimi, A. (2021). Generic qualitative research in management studies. *Jurnal Riset Akuntansi Dan Bisnis, 7(*1), 1-13. https://DOE.10.38204/jrak.vil.523

Tao, Y., Meng, Y., Gao, Z., & Yang, X. (2022). Perceived teacher support, student engagement, and academic achievement: a meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology, (42)*4, 401-420. https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2022.2033168

Taylor, J. (2015). Accelerating pathways to college: The (In) equitable effects on community college enrollment dual credit. *Community College Review, 43(*4), 255-379. https://doi/org/10.1177/0091552115504880

The White House (2004). Fact Sheet: No child left behind is making a difference for American's children. https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2004/05/20040511-2.html

Thomas, C. A., & Berry, R. Q. (2019). A qualitative metasynthesis of culturally relevant pedagogy & culturally responsive teaching: Unpacking mathematics teaching practices. *Journal of Mathematics Education, 10*(1), 1-30. https:/ doi.org/10.7916/jmetc.v10i1.1668

Thomas, G. (2017). How to do your research project: A guide for students (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Tierney, W. G. (1992). An anthropological analysis of student participation in college. *Journal of Higher Education, 63*(6), 603-618. https:/ doi.org/10.2307/1982046

Tierney, W. G. (1999). Models of Minority College-Going and Retention: Cultural Integrity versus Cultural Suicide. *The Journal of Negro Education, 68*(1), 80-91. https:/ doi.org/10.2307/2668211

Tinto, V. (1975). Dropout from higher education: A theoretical synthesis of recent research. *Review of Educational Research, 45(1)*, 89-125. https://doi.org/10.2307/1170024

Tinto, V. (1993). Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition. University of Chicago Press.

Tinto, V. (2006). Research and practice of student retention: What next? *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice, 8(*1), 1-19. https://doi.org/10.2190/4YNU-4TMB-22DJ-AN4W

Tinto, V. (2015). Through the eyes of students. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice, 0*(0), 1-16. https://doi.org/0.1177/1521025115621917

Sharp, L., A. (2016.). ESEA Reauthorization: An overview of every student success act. *Texas Journal of Literacy Education, 4*(1), 9-13, https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1110854

Smith, R., & Tinto, V. (2022). Unraveling student engagement: Exploring its relational and longitudinal character. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice, 1-16*, https://doi.org/10.1177/15210251221098172

Strauss A., Corbin, J. (1994). Grounded theory methodology: An overview. In: Denzin NK, Lincoln YS, eds. Handbook of qualitative research. Sage Publications,

Utt, J., & Tochluck, S. (2020). White teacher, know thyself: improving anti-racist praxis through racial identity development. (2020). *Urban Education, 55(*1), 125-152. https://doi.org/pdf/10.1177/0042085916648741

United States Census Bureau (2022). About the topic of race. https://www.census.gov/topics/population/race/about.html

United States Census Bureau (2023). American community survey. https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/about.html

United States Department of Education (2015-2016). Civil rights data collection https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/crdc-2015-16.html

United States Department of Education (2006). Improving data quality for title 1 standards, assessment, and accountability reporting. https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/standardsassessment/nclbdataguidance.pdf

United States Department of Education (2023). Education equity action plan update. https://www2.ed.gov/documents/equity/2023-equity-plan.pdf

US Small Business Administration (2020). Small Business Owner Facts https://advocacy.sba.gov/category/research/facts-about-small-businesses/small-business-owner-facts/

Vargas, J. (November 2019). *Early college: Dual enrollment practices for underserved youth* [Paper Presentation]. National Summit on Education Reform, San Diego, CA, United States.

Vargas, J., & Quiara, J. (2010). *Policies paved the way: Early college innovation in North Carolina. Jobs for the Future. https://archive.jff.org/resources/policies-*

paved-wayearly-college-innovation-north-carolina/

Walden University, LLC. (2016p). Template [Handout]. Baltimore, MD: Author. Handout Walden University, LLC. (2016q) The 5WH of methodology [Handout]. Baltimore, MD: Author

Warner, A. (2022, October 11). Early college programs: What to know. *US News.com.* https://www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools/articles/early-college-programs-what-to-know

Webb, M., & Gerwin, C. (2014). *Early college expansion: Propelling students to postsecondary success at a school near you. Jobs for the Future. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED559689.pdf*

Wilson, R., Joiner, K., & Abbasi, A. (2021). Improving students' performance with time management skills. *Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice, 18*(4). https://doi.org/10.53761/1.18.4.16

Zhang, Y. L. (2019). Early academic momentum: Factors contributing to community college transfer students' STEM degree attainment. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory and Practice, 23(*4), 873–902. https:/ doi.org/10.1177/1521025119881130

Appendix A: The Project

"Keys to College Success 101"

Academic and Non-Academic Skills to Support College Readiness

Purpose	The purpose for this 3-day professional development is to develop early college high school and dual enrollment teachers' capacity to explicitly teach non-academic skills in the classroom context.
Target Audience	All early college high school and dual enrollment participants in this study. The other early college high school principals will be invited to attend.
Objective	Participants will demonstrate knowledge of college and career readiness skills and how to support students with developing nonacademic skills needed for academic success.
Goal	By the end of day one, teachers will have a deeper understanding of college and career readiness skills. By the end of the day two, teachers will have a deeper understanding of evidenced-based non-academic skills used to support academic achievement, develop a pre-post college readiness assessment and create lessons for implementing a study and note-taking method. By the end of day three, teachers will give time for data analysis, feedback, and reflection.
Evaluation	Participants will complete a KWL to assess prior knowledge. The facilitator will collect additional evaluation data through formative assessments such as quick writing, journaling, and observation of learning behavior throughout the workshop. Participants will be given a summative assessment at the end of each 3-day session.

Appendix B: High Quality Professional Learning (PL) Indicator Checklist

High Quality Professional Learning (PL) Indicator Checklist

PL Provider(s): _____

Topics/Areas of Focus: _____

Date(s): _____ Location(s): _____

Observer/Coach (if applicable): _____

The *High Quality Professional Learning (PL) Indicator Checklist* is comprised of evidence-based indicators reflective of high quality professional learning. The purpose of this tool is to facilitate the design, delivery, and evaluation of high-quality professional learning experiences for educators at the state, district, school, and small-group levels. For more information on how to use this tool, please see the *High Quality Professional Learning Checklist Companion Guide.*

Instructions: For each indicator listed below, please check the corresponding "Present" box if it was evident during the professional learning experience, and provide a brief description of the indicator's "Evidence" during the process. Leave it blank if the indicator was absent though applicable for the professional learning experience. Check "NA" if the indicator was not appropriate for this particular situation, and briefly describe why its application was inappropriate or otherwise unnecessary under "Evidence." Finally, provide any relevant summary and reflection information following each domain.

Words or phrases in **bold** are defined in the *Glossary of Terms*, an asterisk (*) indicates items that are further clarified or expanded upon in the *High Quality Professional Learning Checklist Companion Guide.*

Planning: *The Planning domain outlines elements to consider when conceptualizing and preparing for professional learning activities prior to implementing a training, technical assistance, or coaching support session, or an ongoing series of such activities.*	Present?	N/A
The professional learning provider… **1a. Determines clearly articulated goals and objectives, and identifies one or more of the following as a purpose for PL:** o **Challenging Attitudes/Beliefs** o **Building Knowledge/Awareness** o **Developing Skills** o **Transforming Practice**	☐	☐
1b. If the intent is "Developing Skills," identifies which of the following area(s) will be targeted: o **Acquisition** o **Fluency** o **Generalization** o **Adaptation**	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		

2. Outlines the scope and sequence of PL (e.g., schedule of trainings, modules, coaching sessions)	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
3. Ensures all goals, objectives, agendas, materials, tools, and other PL resources are prepared and available to participants in advance	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
4. *Assesses needs of primary audience to ensure connection of content to participants' needs and context (e.g., community, school, district, state)	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
5. Aligns PL with district/school standards and plans, as well as national and Florida-specific professional practice standards and statutes (including the following, as appropriate): *Plans* • MTSS/Systems Change Plans • Yearly Implementation PBIS Plans • Best Practices for Inclusive Education (BPIE) • District Improvement & Assistance Plans (DIAP) • School Improvement Plans (SIP) *Standards* • National Learning Forward Standards • FL State Standards • FL PD Protocol Standards • Florida Educator Accomplished Practices (FEAPs) • FL Principal Leadership Standards (FPLS) • Relevant Student Support Services Standards	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
6. Incorporates pre-event activities (e.g., readings, online webinars, modules, guiding questions) to build foundational knowledge and skills required during day-of activities	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
7. *Plans for the summative and formative evaluation of PL outcomes	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
Planning Domain Summary & Reflections:		

Leadership Support: *The Leadership domain outlines elements to consider when collaborating with state-, district-, and school-level leadership to collaboratively build capacity, advocate, and create support systems for continued professional learning among targeted stakeholders.*	Present?	N/A
The professional learning provider… 8. Works with district/school leadership to ensure sufficient time for participants to collaboratively reflect, follow-up, discuss barriers, and share strategies in implementing new information	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		

9. Works with district/school leadership to develop an atmosphere of support for practice that is non-threatening, allowing for experimentation and risk-taking	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
10. Assists district/school leadership in prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources (human, fiscal, material, technology, time) to support PL efforts of participants	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
11. Identifies and collaborates with targeted participants to transfer leadership for and ownership of the professional learning plan utilizing a **gradual release of responsibility model** over time	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
12. Collaborates with district/school leadership to model and encourage the use of practices and procedures that align with the district's vision, goals, policies, and regulations	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
Leadership Domain Summary & Reflections:		

Establishing Readiness to Learn: *The Establishing Readiness to Learn domain outlines elements to consider at the beginning of a training, technical assistance, or coaching session to engage and prepare participants for the professional learning experience, prior to delivery of main content.*	Present?	N/A
The professional learning provider… 13. Reviews PL agenda, norms, materials, logistics, and handouts at the beginning of the event	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
14. Reviews pre-event activities and materials, as appropriate	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
15. *Frames PL purpose, goals, content, and material within context of systems change and prior PL activities	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
16. Conveys how components of the PL are relevant to participants' current assignments/responsibilities	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
17. Emphasizes that the overarching goal of PL is to improve student outcomes	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
18. Creates a positive, safe environment for participants to collaborate, take learning risks, and be open to feedback	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		

19. Surveys participants' professional learning needs, goals, and motivation to learn prior to engaging in delivery of content (e.g., guiding questions, review of pre-event materials, skill assessments, beliefs surveys, discussions)	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
Establishing Readiness to Learn Domain Summary & Reflections:		

Delivery: *The Delivery domain outlines elements to consider when providing professional learning to participants to ensure the content and activities are theoretically sound, evidence-based, and adhere to best-practices in adult learning techniques.*	Present?	N/A
Learning Designs		
The professional learning provider…		
20. Uses an evidence-based **transfer of training** approach appropriate for desired outcome (i.e., knowledge/awareness, attitudes/beliefs, skills, practice)	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
21. Utilizes a combination of traditional (face-to-face) and **technology-mediated instruction**	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
22. Develops content that is linguistically and **culturally sensitive** to participants' diverse needs	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
23. Adapts delivery of content based on formative information gathered from participants' performance and demonstrations of learning	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
24. Implements a variety of learning and engagement activities (e.g., icebreakers, games, brainstorming, discussion, case study, lecture, role-play, simulation, audiovisual aids, etc.)	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
25. Flexibly adapts agenda to meet time constraints and ongoing participants' needs (i.e., ensuring most important content is addressed before closing)	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
Engagement		
26. Supports and encourages participants' individual processing as well as active collaboration	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
27. Provides opportunities for participants to engage in critical thinking (fully engaging participants as active learners, questioners, and problem-solvers)	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		

28. Includes opportunities for participants to leave with plans of action, as appropriate	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
Transfer of Training		
Theory		
29. Includes the empirical research foundation and rationale (e.g., citations, verbal references to literature, key researchers) necessary for an understanding of the concepts behind a skill, strategy, and/or knowledge piece	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
Demonstration		
30. Exhibits the use or applicability of material, knowledge, skill and/or practice by providing examples, demonstrations, and/or illustrations in the PL situation, in situations that simulate the workplace, and/or mediated through video and other technology (e.g., role-plays, videos, simulations, etc.)	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
Practice		
31. Provides practice of the skill in **simulated conditions**	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
Feedback		
32. Provides immediate **feedback** on implementation quality and fidelity of new content	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
Job-Embedded Coaching/Follow-Up		
33. Supports and encourages participants to apply new knowledge and skills in the workplace and implement evidence-based practices	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
34. Provides regular and ongoing dissemination of information through a wide variety of formal and informal communication techniques (e.g., newsletters, meetings, daily discussions, conversations among staff)	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
35. Materials/resources/tools are continuously available and accessible to support additional learning (e.g., practice opportunities, rubrics, innovation configurations)	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
36. Utilizes evidence-based **job-embedded** follow-up strategies to provide ongoing instructional support to sustain PL	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
Delivery Domain Summary & Reflections:		

Evaluation: *The Evaluation domain includes elements to consider when collecting, analyzing, and utilizing data to monitor the quality and effectiveness of stakeholder professional learning, and to inform the improvement of practices over time.*	Present?	N/A
The professional learning provider… 37. Evaluation is aligned with purpose of PL	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
38. *Develops and implements an evaluation plan utilizing a wide variety of strategies and tools to gather information from all participants	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
39. Utilizes a continuous process of collecting and analyzing data	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
40. Assesses participants' acquisition of knowledge, skills, practices, and/or beliefs/dispositions	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
41. Analyzes evaluation data to determine ongoing PL needs, effectiveness, and redesign	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
42. Reflects on own strengths and weaknesses, and modifies activities accordingly (e.g., revises training methods, alters feedback methods, attends conferences and other PL events to enhance own delivery of PL)	☐	☐
Evidence/Example:		
Evaluation Domain Summary & Reflections:		

Adapted From: Noonan, P., Langham, A., & Gaumer Erickson, A. (2013). Observation Checklist for High-Quality Professional Development in Education. Center for Research on Learning, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas.

Additional References:

Brown, M. B. (2008). Best Practices in Designing and Delivering Training Programs. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), *Best Practices in School Psychology V* (2029-2040). Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Comas, P. C., & Barufaldi, J. P. (2011). The Effective Research-Based Characteristics of Professional Development. *Journal of Science Teacher Education, 22*, 255-272.

Garet, M. S., Porter, A. C., Desimone, L., Birman, B. F., Yun, K. S. (2001). What makes professional development effective? Results from a national sample of teachers. *American Education Research Journal, 38*, 915-945.

Guskey, T. R. (2002). Professional development and teacher change. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice, 8*, 381-391.

Haslam, M. B. (2010). *Teacher professional development evaluation guide.* Policy Studies Associates, Washington, D.C.

Joyce, B. & Showers, B. (2002). *Student achievement through staff development.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Learning Forward. (2011). *Standards for Professional Learning.* Oxford, OH.

Professional Development PowerPoint

Slide 1

Keys to College Success 101

Academic and Non-Academic Skills needed for academic success

Slide 2

Welcome and Introductions

Day One

Participants will be welcomed and asked to sign in.
Participants will be asked to grab markers and a piece of card stock to make a name tent sign. Participants will also be given a sticky note to answer the questions. “In 10 words or less, please define college and career readiness”

Slide 3

Group Norms

- Begin and end on time.
- Refrain from sidebar conversations
- Ask questions for clarifications to avoid making assumptions
- All voices count. All opinions matter
- Use electronics respectfully.
- Lean into uncomfortable conversations.
- Balance your participation- speak and listen to others.
- Be prepared and come ready to engage.

9:05
Explain the purpose of meeting norms and ask participants if they would like to add, edit, or delete any norms. Make sure participants agree with meeting norms. Discuss the importance of everyone speaking their truth. Meeting norms are also listed on the board so they can be seen throughout the meeting.

Slide 4

Agenda

- Welcome
- Norms
- Goals
- College and Career Readiness Overview: the research and theories on past, present and future skills.
- Academic skills and Non-academic skills

- Gallery Walk and Table Talk
- End of Session 1 - Evaluation

Slide 5
Session Goals

- By the end of day one, teachers will have a deeper understanding of college and career readiness skills.
- By the end of the day two, teachers will have a deeper understanding of evidenced-based non-academic skills used to support academic achievement and create lessons for explicitly teaching study kills.
- By the end of day three, teachers will have time for data analysis, feedback, and reflection.

Slide 6
Objectives

- Understand research on college and career ready skills.
- Increase your knowledge of academic and non-academic skills necessary for student success.
- Increase your awareness of tools used for social and academic support.
- Understand the importance of explicitly teaching the skills in the classroom context.

Slide 7
College and career wordle graphic

Slide 8
College and Career Readiness KWL

K	**W**	**L**
What do you already know about the academic and non-academic skills students need to be successful in college classes?	What questions do you need answered about specific academic and non-academic skills?	What were your key learnings and insights from today?

9:30- 9:45
Participants will complete the KWL individually and share with a shoulder partner at each table. Each table will take a sticky note of "What they already know" to add to the group KWL chart posted in the room. The facilitator will call on a volunteer to read it aloud.

Participants will be asked to write questions they have about academic and non-academic readiness. Each table will take a sticky note of "What questions do you

need answered" to add to the group KWL chart posted in the room. The facilitator will call on a volunteer to read it aloud.

The information in the teachers' KWL charts will be used to plan and adjust for session two.

Slide 9
Education to graduate to career graphic
How are we preparing students to be successful with the rigor of college coursework? What high impact skills are we missing?
9:45 – 10:00
Think-Pair-Share

Slide 10
Break

Slide 11
College and Career Readiness Research
Read and annotate:
"A Complete Definition of College and Career Readiness", *David T Conley, PhD*

Slide 12
Concept Map
10:45 – 11:45
Collaboration: After participants read independent study, they will be placed in 4 groups. Tables will be assigned based on the four key characteristics. Key Cognitive Strategies, Key Content Knowledge, Key Transition Knowledge and Skills and Key Learning Skills and Techniques.

Each group will create a visual representation of the key characteristic with a concept map on poster paper. The concept map will show the key characteristics and relations between college and career readiness concepts. Each group will present their concept map to the whole group.

Slide 12
Lunch Break
Back by 12:45 pm

Slide 12
Self-Reflection
My takeaway learnings
How will I apply my learnings
12:45- 1:00
Participants will be asked to reflect on key takeaways from the morning session.

Slide 15
Data Findings
Exploring Teacher Practices Used to Support Black Students in Two Early College High School Programs
1:00 - 2:00
Share data that lead to the research study.

Slide 16
Data Table
High School and College Comparison Grade Point Average by Student Population for the 2019-2020 Graduating Seniors for High School #1

Slide 17
Data Table
High School and College Comparison Grade Point Average by Student Population for the Graduating Seniors for the 2020-2021 High School #1

Slide 18
Data Table
High School and College Comparison Grade Point Average by Student Population for the Graduating Seniors for the 2021-2022 High School #1

Slide 19
Data Table
College Grade Point Average by Student Population for High School # 2
Activity
Think- Pair – Share
What does the data show us about high school and college GPA?
What are your thoughts on the GPA decline for Black students?

Slide 20
Project

- *Exploring Teacher Practices Used to Support Black Students in Two Early College High School Programs*
    - The purpose of the study was to explore academic and social practices teachers use to support Black students in two ECHS Programs and to determine if additional resources are needed to support Black students in college classes.
    - The evidence shows that for the last 3 years. Black students enter the 11th grade program with an average GPA of 3.2 but leave the program their senior year with an average GPA of 2.6. This impacts their ability to be accepted into other higher education institutions.

Slide 21
Project Continue

- RQ1: What social and academic practices do teachers use to support Black students' academic performance in two ECHS programs?

- RQ2: What additional resources do teachers need to support Black students in college classes?
- Purposive Sampling-Interviewed early college high school, dual enrollment teachers and college faculty
- Vincent Tinto's Student Integration Theory.

Slide 22

Findings

Themes

- provide a variety of academic support,
- build relationships for academic success,
- create opportunities for social connections,
- develop a social support system,
- differing thoughts on teacher training, and
- ***increase academic readiness skills.***

Increase Academic Readiness

- Soft Skills
- Communication
- Understanding the difference between high school and college
- Study Skills
- Needed to be more prepared for the rigorous course work
- Self-Advocacy

Slide 23

Explore Board

1:45 – 2:30

With built in afternoon break

Participants will be given an Explore Board handout sheet that contains seven multimedia text sets. They will be asked to select explore at least 3 items from the explore board to help participants learn more about college and career readiness success factors. Participants will be given 40 minutes.

Slide 24

Mingle, Pair, Share

2:30 – 3:15

Collaboration Activity:

This activity is designed to get participants up and moving and encourage them to interact with all their colleagues.

- Participants mix around the room silently as music plays in the background. When the music stops, each teacher will find a partner close to them.
- Each participant will be given three minutes to share one item they learned from the explore board then the partners will switch roles.
- This will be repeated three times providing time for each participant to share all three items they reviewed.

Slide 25
Exit Ticket
Close out the session by asking for questions and final thoughts.
Thank the participants for their time and ask them to complete the summative assessment by scanning the QR code.

Slide 26

Keys to College Success 101

Academic and Non-Academic Skills needed for academic success

Slide 27

Welcome

Day Two

Participants will be welcomed and asked to sign in.
Participants will be asked to grab markers and a piece of card stock to make a name tent sign. Participants will also be given a sticky note to answer the questions. “In 10 words or less, please define college and career readiness”

Slide 28

Group Norms

- Begin and end on time.
- Refrain from sidebar conversations.
- Ask questions for clarification to help avoid making assumptions.
- All voices count. All opinions matter.
- Use electronics respectfully.
- Lean into uncomfortable conversations.
- Balance your participation-speak and listen to others.
- Be prepared and come ready to engage.

Review the meeting norms and ask participants if they would like to add, edit, or delete any norms. Make sure participants agree with meeting norms. Discuss the importance of everyone of everyone speaking their truth. Meeting norms are also listed on the board so they can be seen throughout the meeting.

Slide 29
Agenda

- Welcome
- Norms
- Goals
- Develop student college and career self-assessment pre and posttest.
- Create mini lessons on non-academic skills.
- Collaboration
- End of Session 2 - Evaluation

Slide 30

Session Goals

- By the end of day one, participants will have a deeper understanding of college and career readiness skills.
- By the end of the day two, participants will have a deeper understanding of evidenced-based non-academic skills used to support academic achievement, develop student pre-post assessment and create lessons for explicitly teaching study skills.
- By the end of day three, participants will have time for data analysis, feedback, and reflection.

Slide 31

Objectives

- Understand research on college and career ready skills.
- Identify specific evidence based academic and nonacademic skills.
- Create pre-post college and career assessment survey for students
- Develop mini lessons to explicitly teach non-academic skills.

Slide 32

College and Career Readiness KWL

9:30- 9:45

Ask teachers to retrieve their KWL from session one to reflect on key learning. Participants will be revisiting questions they have about academic and non-academic readiness. The questions from session one in the KWL charts were used to plan support key learnings for session three.

K	**W**	**L**
What do you already know about the academic and non-academic skills students need to be successful in college classes?	**What questions do you need answered about specific academic and non-academic skills?**	What were your key learnings and insights from today?

Slide 33

College Readiness Assessment

9:45 – 10:45

Collaboration: Teacher will be placed in four groups.

Tables will be assigned based on the four key characteristics. Key Cognitive Strategies, Key Content Knowledge, Key Transition Knowledge and Skills and Key Learning Skills and Techniques and asked to create 10 College and Career pre-assessment questions for each category.

Participants will write the questions on chart paper and hand around the room. Participants will walk around the room and place a check mark beside their top five selections for each category.

Slide 34
Break

Slide 35
Teachable Skills for Academic Success
11:00 – 12:15
Research specific teachable skills for academic success.
Teachers will be placed in a different key characteristic group to research articles. Participants will be asked to find two-peer reviewed research articles on how to support students with non-cognitive skill development.
Participants will search for evidenced-based strategies to support students in the 4 key characteristics.

Slide 36
Lunch Break
Back by 1:15 pm

Slide 37
Mini-Lesson Framework
1:15 – 2:30
With built in comfort break
Collaborate to create mini – lessons for each category. Using the mini-lesson framework, participants will be paired with a shoulder partner to create mini-lessons for two skills in each characteristic.

Participants will be asked to teach the lessons, reflect on the lesson and share their experience during session three.

Slide 38
Implementation
2:30 – 3:00
Activity
Participants will share mini-lesson plans and discuss as a whole group and create a min-lesson implantation plan- that consists of who, what, when and how.

Participants will also revisit the student college and career pre-assessment to ensure it aligns with domains of the mini lesson.

Slide 39
Exit Ticket
3:00 – 3:30
Close out the session 2 by asking for questions and final thoughts and reflective journaling on key takeaways.
Thank the participants for their time and ask them to complete the summative assessment by scanning the QR code.

Slide 39
Exit Ticket

Slide 40
Day Three
Welcome
Participants will be welcomed and asked to sign in.
Participants will be asked to grab markers and a piece of card stock to make a name tent sign.

Remind participants where bathrooms and refreshments are located.

Slide 41

Keys to College Success 101
Academic and Non-Academic Skills needed for academic success

Slide 42

Group Norms

- Begin and end on time. from sidebar conversations.
- Ask questions for clarification to help avoid making assumptions.
- All voices count. All opinions matter.
- Ask questions for clarification to help avoid making assumptions.
- Use electronics respectfully.
- Lean into uncomfortable conversations.
- Begin and end on time.
- Refrain from sidebar conversations
- Balance your participation- speak and listen to others.
- Be prepared and come ready to engage.

Participants will be welcomed and asked to sign in.
Participants will be asked to grab markers and a piece of card stock to make a name tent sign.

Remind participants where bathrooms and refreshments are located.

Slide 43
Agenda
- Welcome
- Norms
- Goals
- Develop student college and career self-assessment pre and posttest.
- Create mini lessons on non-academic skills.

- Collaboration

End of Session 2 - Evaluation

Slide 44

Session Goals

- By the end of day one, participants will have a deeper understanding of college and career readiness skills.
- By the end of the day two, participants will have a deeper understanding of evidenced-based non-academic skills used to support academic achievement, develop student pre-post assessment and create lessons for explicitly teaching study skills.
- By the end of day three, participants will have time for data analysis, feedback, and reflection.

Slide 45

Objectives

- Understand research on college and career ready skills.
- Identify specific evidence based academic and nonacademic skills.
- Create pre-post college and career assessment survey for students
- Develop mini lessons to explicitly teach non-academic skills.

Slide 46

College and Career Readiness KWL

K	**W**	**L**
What do you already know about the academic and non-academic skills students need to be successful in college classes?	What questions do you need answered about specific academic and non-academic skills?	**What were your key learnings and insights from today?**

Slide 47

Pre and Post Assessment

Table Talk

9:45 – 10:15

Participants will share at their tables the pre-and post-college readiness assessment results looking for similarities and trends in the data from classroom to classroom.

What did you notice in the pre-assessment college readiness data?

What did you notice after implementation of the mini lessons?

When you analyzed results, were there outliers cases?

Has there been a change in student outcomes because of the mini lesson?

Slide 48
Break

Slide 49
Pre-Post Test Average Scores
10:30 – 12:00
Collaborative Activity
Participants will be placed back in groups and asked to create a visual representation (table, chart or graph) of their average pre-and post-college readiness assessment results to share with the whole group.
After the presentation, participants will post their charts around the room.

Slide 50
Lunch Break
Back by 1:00 PM

Slide 51
Gallery Walk
1:00 – 2:00
Participants will be asked to conduct a gallery walk of the pre-post assessment data. Using a sticky, they will leave a comment beside each presentation noting questions, comments or additional insights.

When complete, participants will stand back by their data and read/respond to sticky notes during whole group. The whole group discussion will continue to analyze the post assessment data and discuss the effectiveness of the mini lessons.

Slide 52
2:00 – 2:20
Journal Reflection and built in break.
My takeaway learnings
How will I apply my learnings

Slide 53
2:20 – 3:15
Collaboration: Activity
Create a plan to develop and implement more mini lessons for the 4th quarter of the school year.

Slide 54
3:15 – 3:30
Close out the session 3 by asking for questions and final thoughts on key takeaways.
Thank the participants for their time and ask them to complete the summative assessment by scanning the QR code.

Keys to College Success 101

Summative Assesment

* Required

1. Please select a session to provide feedback. *

- ○ Session 1
- ○ Session 2
- ○ Session 3

2. Did the course facilitator provide the resources, materials, and technology necessary for participant engagement? *

- ○ Strongly Agree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Neutral

3. Were the pacing, sequencing of content coverage, and transitions appropriate? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Neutral

4. Did this professional learning build upon your existing knowledge and skills? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral

5. Was this professional learning engaging and included components of active learning? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Neutral

6. Did the session include opportunities to reflect on and monitor your learning? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Neutral

7. Did professional learning promote respectful interactions that challenge and engage all students within the learning environment? *

- ○ Strongly Agree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Neutral

8. Did the facilitator establish a climate of trust and teamwork by being fair, caring, respectful, and enthusiastic? *

- ○ Strongly Agree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Neutral

9. What part of the professional learning did you enjoy the most? *

10. What part of the professional learning need to be improved? *

11. What remaining questions do you still have? *

12. What is your biggest key learnings from this professional development and how will you implement it in your classroom? *

"Keys to College Success 101"

Academic and Non-Academic Skills to Support College Readiness

3-Session Professional Development

Day 1

Time	**Activity**
8:30-9:00	Sign-in, name tents
9:00-9:15	Welcome, Introductions
9:15-9:30	Meeting Norms, Agenda, Goals, Objectives
9:30-9:45	KWL Chart; participants complete the "K" on *What I Already Know* to assess prior knowledge.
9:45- 10:00	Table Talk- Think-Pair-Share. How are we preparing students to be successful with the rigor of college coursework? What high impact skills are we missing? What else can we consider in supporting students? (Share with whole group.)
10:00-10:15	Break
10:15-10:45	Participants will read and annotate '*A Complete Definition of College and Career Readiness*" by David T. Conley, PhD.
10:45-11:45	Participants will be placed in 4 groups. Tables will be assigned based on the 4 characteristics. Each group will create a visual representation of the key characteristic with a concept map on poster paper. The concept map will show the key characteristics and relations between college and career readiness concepts. Each group will present their concept map to the whole group.

11:45-12:45	Lunch on your own
12:45-1:00	Journaling/Reflection: Participants will be asked to reflect on key takeaways from the morning session
1:00-1:45	Share data that leads to research study and findings. (Slides 15-22)
1:45-2:30	Explore Board; Participants will be given an Explore Board handout sheet that contains seven multimedia text sets. They will be asked to select explore at least 3 items from the explore board to help participants learn more about college and career readiness success factors.
2:30-3:15	Mingle, Pair, Shair: This activity is designed to get teachers up and moving and encourage them to interact with all their colleagues. Participants mix around the room silently as music plays in the background. When the music stops, each participant will find a partner close to them. Each participant will be given 3 minutes to share one item they learned from the explore board then the partners will switch roles. This will be repeated 3 times providing time for each participant to share all three items they reviewed.
3:15-3:30	Close the session by asking for questions and final thoughts. Thank the participants for their time and ask them to complete the summative assessment by scanning the QR code.

Day 1 Handouts

College and Career Readiness KWL Chart

K	W	L
What do you already know about the academic and non-academic skills students need to be successful in college classes?	What questions do you need answered about specific academic and non-academic skills?	What were your key learnings and insights from today?

Day 1 Handout

Self- Reflection

	My takeaways/learnings	How will I apply my learnings?
Day 1		
Day 2		
Day 3		

Day 1 Handout

Explore Board

Watch:

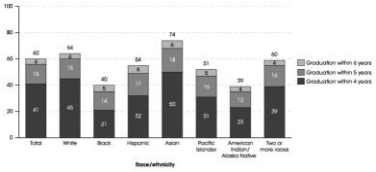
4 Keys to College and Career Readiness: Dr. David T. Conley

Click Here!

Increase economic opportunity and Civic Engagement by preparing students to succeed.

Examine trends in education of racial and Ethnic Groups:

CLICK HERE!



Why GPA is SUPER important in 9th 10th grades

Select the link to learn more!

Learn 4 ways to build students' noncognitive skills:

Teaching Strategies

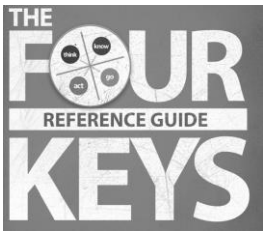
Check out this short video on fostering factors for student success

The University of Chicago Consortium on School Research

Are noncognitive factors fixed?

Check out the 4 Keys Reference Guide

Click Here!



Read more about noncognitive skill development

What Matters and to Whom?

FIGURE 1. Taxonomy of noncognitive skill development.

Gmail [redacted]

Use of Dr. Conley's article from 2012

1 message

[redacted] Wed, May 29, 2024 at 11:10 AM

Raquel,

Please accept this email as explicit permission to use Dr. Conley's article, "A Complete Definition of College and Career Readiness" from 2012 for the purpose outlined in your request.

I have also attached a copy of a research paper we created for IB on academic resiliency as well as a piece we did on the need for a shared vision for readiness (that is holistic) that may support the work you are doing!

Good luck and thank you for reaching out!

2 attachments

Academic-Resilience-Policy-Paper (15).pdf
3589K

Inflexion_Anchors_Summary_and_Report (1).pdf
9167K

Day 1 Handout

Conley, D.T. (2012). *A complete definition of college and career readiness. Eugene, OR:* Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC).

In many circles, efforts are under way to develop definitions of college readiness, career readiness, or both. This brief contains a definition that is the culmination of 18 years of study and research on this topic. Major work conducted by the author and his colleagues that contributes to this definition includes a proficiency-based college admissions system developed for the Oregon University System, a national study on college readiness standards sponsored by the Association of American Universities, multiple analyses of entry-level college courses sponsored by the College Board and others, college and career readiness standards developed under the sponsorship of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and subsequent studies of their validity relative to college and careers, a study of career preparation programs sponsored by the National Assessment Governing Board, and two major studies sponsored by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation on the alignment of the Common Core State Standards to college and career readiness.

Additionally, the Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC) works on a continuing basis with secondary and postsecondary faculty to help them improve student readiness for college and postsecondary success. What is learned from practice is incorporated into tools, techniques, and strategies to help all students become ready for college and careers. All of this information from practice contributes to this definition. This definition, then, is based on both empirical evidence gathered via multiple research studies and on-the-ground interactions with practitioners attempting to improve programs that affect a wide range of students, particularly those who would be first in family to attend college. Postsecondary, in this definition, refers to any formal setting in which an individual pursues additional instruction beyond high school. This might include two- or four-year degree programs, certificate or licensure programs, apprenticeships, or training programs in the military. Furthermore, this definition differs from indices or "cut scores" that use a single cut score alone or in combination with another element, such as high school grade point average, to predict college success. This definition is designed to be actionable. It describes what students should know and be able to do in general terms that can then be defined and addressed with increasing detail and measured in a variety of ways using appropriately complex measures.

A Definition of College and Career Readiness

A student who is ready for college and career can qualify for and succeed in entry-level, credit- bearing college courses leading to a baccalaureate or certificate, or career pathway-oriented training programs without the need for remedial or

developmental coursework. However, not every student requires the same proficiency in all areas. A student's interests and post-high school aspirations influence the precise knowledge and skill profiles necessary to be ready for postsecondary studies. Therefore, a single cut score on a test given to high school students does not take into account this individualization of the match between knowledge and skills on the one hand, and aspirations on the other. A secondary program of instruction should be designed to equip all students with sufficient knowledge and skill as identified in the following section. The measure of success should be student success in their chosen field of postsecondary education or post-high school training. Measuring this requires a more specialized and adapted assessment strategy than can be achieved with a single cut score on a single test.

The Four Keys to College and Career Readiness

College and career readiness consists of four "keys." Students are ready to the degree to which they have mastered all four. They consist of the following:

Key Cognitive Strategies

Key Cognitive Strategies are the ways of thinking that are necessary for college-level work. They include formulating hypotheses and developing problem-solving strategies, identifying sources and collecting information, analyzing and evaluating findings or conflicting viewpoints, organizing and constructing work products in a variety of formats, and monitoring and confirming the precision and accuracy of all work produced.

Key Content Knowledge

Key Content Knowledge refers to key foundational content and "big ideas" from core subjects that all students must know well, and an understanding of the structure of knowledge in core subject areas, which enables students to gain insight into and retain what they are learning. Also included in this Key are the technical knowledge and skills associated with career aspirations, the ways in which students interact with content knowledge, its perceived value to them and the effort they are willing to expend to learn necessary content, and their explanations of why they succeed or fail in mastering this knowledge.

Key Learning Skills and Techniques

Key Learning Skills and Techniques consist of two broad categories: student ownership of learning, which includes goal setting, persistence, self-awareness, motivation, progress monitoring, help seeking, and self-efficacy; and specific learning techniques, such as time management, study skills, strategic reading, memorization techniques, collaborative learning, technology skills, and self- monitoring.

Key Transition Knowledge and Skills

Key Transition Knowledge and Skills are necessary to navigate successfully the transition to life beyond high school. This information is often

privileged knowledge that is not equally accessible to all students. Least likely to have this information are students from families and communities historically under-represented in higher education or certain career pathways, This key includes, among other things, knowing which courses to take in high school in order to be admitted to an appropriate postsecondary program, understanding financial aid options and procedures, being focused on a career pathway or major, understanding college-level and workforce norms and expectations, and knowing how to be a self-advocate within the institutional framework of postsecondary programs.

How Are the Four Keys Expressed in Academic Performance?

- Students who are on the path to college and career readiness can do many of the following:
- read a range of types of material, with an
- emphasis on informational texts
- interpret tables, graphs, charts, and pictures as
- they relate to content contained in text
- demonstrate fluency in several modes of writing, most notably expository and descriptive, and not just narrative or opinion
- show quantitative literacy based on an understanding of measurement and number systems and their application through the level of foundational concepts of algebra and geometry
- be able to locate, organize, understand, and interpret a wide range of types of data through a series of methods that include basic statistics and other means for displaying data
- understand the scientific method and possess insight into the big ideas and organization of knowledge in the sciences
- possess awareness of how social systems operate and how they are studied, how history is studied, and some of the major trends and organizers used to describe history
- engage in career planning through career exploration and the development of career management skills
- demonstrate some proficiency in a second language and show awareness that languages reflect cultures
- have experiences in and appreciation of creative, and expressive arts

What Is This Definition of Both College and Career Readiness?

Being college ready and being career ready are similar, but not necessarily the same. Analyses of college courses required for degrees and certificates find that the learning skills and foundational knowledge associated with college success

overlap considerably those necessary for success in certificate and training programs that lead to careers. Given this overlap, it serves little useful purpose to separate students into two distinct groups in high school (one bound for college, the other for work). More and more jobs require some amount of post-high school training, and, in any event, all workers are going to need to be adaptive learners throughout their careers to cope with changes to their jobs and the way they work. All students aspire to enter the workforce eventually and, to do so, all will need a set of similar foundational thinking skills, content knowledge, and learning strategies if they are to succeed in their careers and be productive members of society.

However, some potentially notable differences can be found between college readiness and career readiness. College readiness generally means the ability to complete a wide range of general education courses, while career readiness refers to readiness for courses specific to an occupational area or certificate. And while the foundational content knowledge is similar in all cases, the precise skill profile associated with success in a career course pathway may be more focused than that required for a bachelor's degree. This means that secondary schools can prepare all students in a common core of foundational academic knowledge and skill while also acknowledging the strengths of students who have passions and interests in particular career pathway areas. Additionally, many of the attitudinal characteristics necessary for success in the workplace are also vital or taken as a given in postsecondary studies. These include ethical conduct, ownership of one's behavior, initiative, resilience, collaborative teamwork, motivation, and self-regulation skills.

What Isn't in the Definition?

It's possible to identify other important factors not addressed by the definition, such as positive citizenship, parental support and peer group influence, and, perhaps most importantly, student financial capability to attend college. These factors and others are indeed important, but schools cannot necessarily teach or influence them as directly as they can the Four Keys. It is important for schools to help students become good citizens, access financial resources, gain parental support, and develop peer networks that support postsecondary readiness. But the areas in need of most direct attention and generally under the most direct control by schools are those enumerated in the Four Keys to College and Career Readiness.

Keys to College Success 101"

Academic and Non-Academic Skills to Support College Readiness

3-Session Professional Development

Day 2

Time	**Activity**
8:30-9:00	Sign-in, name tents
9:00-9:15	Welcome, Introductions
9:15-9:30	Meeting Norms, Agenda, Goals, Objectives
9:30-9:45	KWL Chart; participants complete the "W" on *What Questions do I need answered?*
9:45- 10:45	Collaboration Activity. Participants will be placed in 4 groups. Tables will be assigned based on the 4 key characteristics and asked to create 10 College and Career pre-assessment questions for each category. Participants will write the questions on chart paper and place them around the room. Participants will walk around the room and place a check mark beside their top five selections for each category. These questions will be used to generate the student college and career pre/post assessment.
10:45-11:00	Break
11:00-12:15	Participants will be placed in a different key characteristic group to research articles. Participants will be asked to find two-peer reviewed research articles on how to support students with non-cognitive skill development. Participants will search for evidenced-based strategies to support students in the 4 key characteristics.

12:15-1:15	Lunch on your own
1:15-2:30	Collaborate to create mini – lessons for each category. Using the mini-lesson framework, participants will be paired with a shoulder partner to create mini-lessons for two skills in each characteristic. Participants will be asked to teach the lessons, reflect on the lesson and share their experience during session 3.
2:30-3:00	Participants will share mini-lesson plans, discuss as a whole group, and create a min-lesson implantation plan that consists of who, what, when and how. Participants will also revisit the student college and career pre-assessment to ensure it aligns with domains of the mini lesson.
3:00-3:30	Journaling/Reflection: Participants will be asked to reflect on key takeaways from the session. Close out the session by asking for questions and final thoughts. Thank the participants for their time and ask them to complete the summative assessment by scanning the QR code.

Day 2 Handout

Mini-Lesson Framework

Teaching Objective	
Skill/Strategy	
Visual Aides	

Lesson Components	Component Description	Lesson Description
Explain	Explain the skill or strategy to students. Talk about how to use it and when to apply it.	
Model	Model how to use the skill or strategy.	
Guide	Guide and support students as they practice using the skill or strategy.	
Independent Practice	Give time for students to practice the skill or strategy on their own. Monitor and informally assess as they practice the skill or strategy.	

"Keys to College Success 101"

Academic and Non-Academic Skills to Support College Readiness

3-Session Professional Development

Day 3

Time	**Activity**
8:30-9:00	Sign-in, name tents
9:00-9:15	Welcome, Introductions
9:15-9:30	Meeting Norms, Agenda, Goals, Objectives
9:30-9:45	KWL Chart; participants complete the "L" on *What were Key Learnings and insights from Day 1 and Day 2.*
9:45- 10:15	Participants will share at their tables the pre-and post-college readiness assessment results looking for similarities and trends in the data from classroom to classroom. What did you notice in the pre-assessment college readiness data? What did you notice after implementation of the mini lessons? When you analyzed results, were there outliers cases? Has there been a change in student outcomes because of the mini lesson?
10:15-10:30	Break
10:30-12:00	Collaborative Activity; Participants will be placed back in groups and asked to create a visual representation (table, chart or graph) of their average pre-and post-college readiness assessment results to share with the whole group. After the presentation, participants will post their charts around the room.

12:00-1:00	Lunch on your own
1:00-2:00	Participants will be asked to conduct a gallery walk of the pre-post assessment data. Using a sticky, they will leave a comment beside each presentation noting questions, comments or additional insights. When complete, participants will stand back by their data and read/respond to sticky notes during whole group. The whole group discussion will continue to analyze the post assessment data and discuss the effectiveness of the mini lessons.
2:00-2:20	Journaling/Reflection with built in comfort break
2:20-3:15	Collaboration: Create a plan to develop and implement more mini lessons for the 4th quarter of the school year.
3:15-3:30	Close out the session by asking for questions and final thoughts. Thank the participants for their time and ask them to complete the summative assessment by scanning the QR code.