2016

Teachers' Perceptions of the Use of Small-Group Tutorial

Karen Y. Johnson
Walden University

Walden University

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Karen Johnson

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. Myron Pope, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty

Dr. Peter Kiriakidis, Committee Member, Education Faculty

Dr. John Hendricks, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer

Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University

2016

Abstract

Teachers' Perceptions of the Use of Small-Group Tutorial

by

Karen Y. Moaton Johnson

MS, Jackson State University, 1996

BS, Alcorn State University, 1991

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

February 2016

Abstract

This study addressed the implementation of the tutorial program currently in use at an urban school district in Mississippi. Because successful completion of assessments is a graduation requirement, the study site implemented the tutorial program to help at-risk students improve their academic outcomes on state-mandated assessments in Biology I, United States History, English II, Algebra I. The purpose of this study, guided by Bloom's theory of mastery learning, was to examine the perceptions of the teachers who served as tutors in the program. Using the narrative inquiry method, the research focused on the implementation of the tutorial program, the perceived impact of the program on the academic achievement of at-risk students and what changes would benefit the program. Interviews were conducted with a purposive sample of 10 tutors. Data were collected using open-ended questions in semi-structured interviews that were transcribed and coded. Emergent themes indicated the program needed more administrative support, better parental notification, and better communication between tutors. While the results suggested that the program was beneficial for at-risk students, recommendations were made to further improve the program's delivery through the development of an executive report to school administration and an evaluation report to stakeholders. Suggested modifications included designating a specific time for tutors collaboration and administrators taking a more active role during the implementation of the program. Modifications made to the existing tutorial program could lead to positive social change by increasing the academic success on both the state-mandated examinations and in academic classes, thus leading to increasing the graduation rates of at-risk students.

Teachers' Perceptions of the Use of Small-Group Tutorial

by

Karen Y. Moaton Johnson

MS, Jackson State University, 1996

BS, Alcorn State University, 1991

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

February 2016

Table of Contents

Section 1: The Problem....1

Introduction....1

Definition of the Problem 1

Rationale 3

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level 3

Evidence of the Problem on a Global Level 4

Definitions....5

Review of the Literature 7

Implications....27

Section 2: The Methodology....28

Introduction....28

Research Questions....28

Research Methodology....29

Sources of Data....30

Validity....31

Reliability....32

Data Collection Procedures....33

Data Analysis Procedures....35

Ethical Considerations....36

Summary……..……37

Section 3: The Project……..……38

Introduction…….…….……..38

Description and Goals…….…….…….38

Rationale …….……..39

Review of Literature…….…….40

Discussion of Findings…….……..54

Implications……58

Summary……59

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions……59

Introduction……...…59

Project Strengths……60

Recommendation for the Remediation of Limitations……...62

Scholarship……65

Project Development and Evaluation……66

Leadership and Change……..67

Analysis of Self as a Scholar……69

Analysis of Self as a Practitioner……...70

Implications, Applications and Directions for Future Research....……71

Conclusion……74

References……..75

Appendix A……...93

Appendix B ……...94

Appendix C ……....105

Appendix D……...…...122

Introduction

The Problem

A tutorial program was mandated at the research site, which was created to help low achieving students improve their academic outcomes on state-mandated assessments in Biology I, English II, United States History and Algebra I. This study examined the perceptions of teachers regarding remediation services and the methods used to develop the tutorial program. Recommendations for the local school leaders included strategies to improve the tutorial program as a part of the school's goal of improving academic achievement on state-mandated examinations. Throughout this section, the problem is defined and justification for this study explained.

Definition of the Problem

District exams for a Mississippi school district are created to model state mandated examinations and are used to assess the student's potential achievement on those state exams. The state exams are given in Mississippi subject area testing program (SATP) classes: Biology I, United States History, English II, and Algebra I. The issue noted by the subject area teachers was the student performance of the standardized district examinations. According to guidelines set by consensus among the staff, a score of 70 on the district assessment is considered the equivalent of proficient on the state examination. A disproportionate number of students tested scored below 70 on the test given at the end of the first 9 weeks, leading to concerns about student retention of the academic content. Because of the 9 week timeframe constructed by the district, teachers were limited to the amount of in-class help they could provide. Teachers are required to

follow the district mandated pacing guide (Jackson Public Schools, 2012). The pacing guide listed the objectives that had to be covered and the amount of time spent on each one, culminating with the district exam at the end of the 9-week term. (JPS, 2012). In order to prepare the students for the exam, teachers had to ensure coverage of all the objectives. For the struggling student, however, there is no time during class to slow the pace and ensure understanding without falling behind on the other objectives.

The program was used as additional tutorial to help students be successful on the Subject Area Test in Biology I, English II, United States History, and Algebra I. The tutoring sessions take place during a special block of time set aside during the school day. Students who are assigned the tutorial report to their designated tutorial site while other students report to their regular class where they participate in ACT preparation activities or silent, sustained reading. The sessions are 30 minutes long and meet twice a week. The groups consist of between 10 to 12 students per tutor.

The subject area teachers select students for the tutorial program. The criterion used is based on two factors. Students who score below 70 on the first term district test score and have a below 70 overall class average are assigned to attend tutorial. Students can also request to be included in tutorial if they desire. Parents are notified when their child is chosen for tutorial and have to opportunity to opt out if they do not wish for their child to participate. Teachers are chosen to tutor based on their academic certification. All tutors are teachers of and have certifications in the subject areas of science, math, social studies, and English. They are also familiar with the curriculum in place at the school. They are not paid an additional stipend for working as tutors.

The project focuses on the teachers' perceptions of the methods used to assess a student's current knowledge and implementation of a tutorial program to provide the assistance. The information collected will be used for an extended period to provide academic assistance to future groups of students.

Rationale

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

Because of the mandates enacted by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), schools are required to provide supplemental educational services to at-risk students. The school developed a small group tutorial program to address the needs of the at-risk students and to meet the requirements of NCLB. The major issue the subject area teachers noted was the number for students who were not successful when taking the district-mandated exams. Because the data collected from the district exams is used as a correlation point to determine the possible achievement on the state-mandated exams, this was a cause for concern.

Questions have arisen from the teachers who serve as tutors on the effectiveness of the tutorial program and what steps can be taken to ensure uniform implementation of the program. The participant school created a tutoring program to help students improve on the objectives on which they tested below 70%. However, teachers are not sure if the program is effectively helping the students achieve academic gains. The components of the programs were created collectively within the individual departments with no

consistent format developed between all subjects. Because of this inconsistency, there was not a standard available for the teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

Revisions with the program were created through several meetings with the teachers. The purpose of the meetings was to establish the goals and objectives of the program. They developed an established format for each subject by determining the activities that were to take place, what materials would be needed, and the possible short- and long-term outcomes. With the new revisions, a consistent set of standards were created for all teachers to implement. These standards incorporated the use of Bloom's (1968) theory of Master Learning. With the use of this method, teachers would use learning units for the objectives. With the use of formative assessment, teachers can create lessons based on the objectives the students needed to master. After applying corrective actions to help the students with their difficulties, the teacher would then reassess the student to see if further work would be needed or if the student could move on to the next objective. There are concerns among teachers about the effectiveness of the new methods. There is also concern whether additional changes should be made to better meet the needs of the students who are participating in the tutorial program.

Evidence of the Problem on a Global Level

Schools and school districts are accountable for student success on state-mandated exams. Based on the current accountability model, school classification is comprised of two separate components, an achievement model and a growth model. Using two types of student level information – results from the statewide assessments and data on school

completion, schools determines the schools' accountability ranking. Based on their accountability ranking, schools ratings range from A, the highest possible rating, B, C, D, or F, the lowest rating. In order to receive the A, B, or C rating, the majority of the students have to score proficient or higher on standardized testing. (Mississippi Department of Education, 2014).

The schools also have to meet growth, measured through the advancement of predicted student levels from the previous year's testing and the number of students who successfully receive their high school diploma. In order to receive their high school diploma, students have to pass the Subject Area examinations as well as complete 24 academic credits. Students who fail the exams can retake the exams until they successfully pass the exam (Mississippi Department of Education, 2014). Students who do not pass subsequent retests cannot receive a diploma until they successfully pass all four exams even if they meet all of the required academic credits (Mississippi Department of Education, 2014).

Definitions of Terms

Adequate yearly progress (AYP): According to the U.S. Department of Education (2005), AYP is defined as the amount of yearly improvement each Title I school and district is expected to make in order to enable at-risk students to meet high performance levels expected of all children.

At-risk students: According to the Glossary of Education Reform (2014), at-risk students are defined as students or groups of students who are considered to have a higher probability of failing academically or dropping out of school. It is used to classify

students who face circumstances that could jeopardize their ability to complete school. These circumstances can include homelessness, incarceration, teenage pregnancy, serious health issues, domestic violence, or migrant worker transiency.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB): The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) is a United States Act of Congress that is a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which included Title I, the government's aid program for disadvantaged students. NCLB supports standards based on the premise that setting high standards and establishing measurable goals can improve individual outcomes in education. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2005), the Act requires states to develop assessments in basic skills. To receive federal school funding, States must give these assessments to all students at select grade levels. The Act does not assert a national achievement standard. Each individual state develops its own standards. NCLB expanded the federal role in public education through annual testing, annual academic progress, report cards, teacher qualifications, and funding changes.

Subject Area Testing Program (SATP): According to the Mississippi Department of Education (2014), The Mississippi Student Achievement Improvement Act (1999) states that standards for high school graduation has to include assessments that measure the student's mastery of academic skills. To meet this guideline, the Mississippi Department of Education developed academic assessments in the subjects of Biology, Algebra I, U.S. History and English II.

Supplemental Education: According the U.S. Department of Education (2005), Supplemental Educational Services (SES) is a component of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. With the reauthorization of ESEA under NCLB, schools that did not make adequate yearly progress (AYP) are required to provide extra academic assistance for eligible children.

Significance

Many of the academic problems faced by at-risk students are a result of a lack of time available for in-class assistance. The creation of small tutorial provides a method of assisting students who have been identified as needing additional help. This work examined the perceptions of the tutorial program by the teachers who are involved with the program. It also discussed methods that are in place to help improve the program and what could be done to develop it into a consistent program that can be used for an extended period.

Guiding Research Question

The guiding research question for this study is the teachers' perceptions of the in-house tutorial program that is currently being used in the participant school. In order to examine this question thoroughly, the views of the participants were obtained through interviews. These views included their perception of the implementation of the program. It also examined the perceived impact of the program and what changes the teachers felt could be made to improve the program.

Review of Literature

Theoretical Framework

The theory of mastery learning was the theoretical basis of this research. Bloom's (1971) mastery learning focuses on having students master each unit before moving on to the next, more advanced unit. According to Guskey (2007), the use of mastery learning can help diminish the achievement gap between varying groups of students. As noted by Block (1975), mastery learning does not focus on specific content but particular learning objectives. Several researchers (Anderson, 2000; Guskey & Gates, 1986) noted that mastery learning could lead to higher academic achievement among students. Bloom (1968) recognized that when tutors worked with students and mistakes are made, feedback is given in the form of pointing out the error. The correction is then followed up with explanation and clarification to assist the student with understanding (Bloom, 1968).

Bloom (1968) created an instructional plan using the feedback/correction process, calling it Mastery Learning. Using this process, teachers organized material into learning units. Following initial instruction, teachers then used a formative assessment to ascertain the student's level of understanding (Bloom, 1968). Based on this data, the teacher can identify which objectives the student has mastered and what objectives can use additional instruction. After additional instruction, a second formative assessment was given to the student that, according to Bloom (1968), served two purposes: (1) it verifies if the corrective actions were successful in assisting the student with their academic difficulties. (2) It offers students a second chance to learn the material and provides motivation to do better. Bloom (1968) also suggested that students who performed well on the first assessment be given activities that provided enrichment activities to continue their

learning progress that included special projects, reports, problem solving tasks, or academic games.

Bloom (1968) believed that using this process would allow all students access to a more appropriate quality of instruction than they would receive traditionally. Noting that this could reduce disparities in student achievement by ensuring true learning and mastering of learning units, Bloom (1971b) noted that there would still be variations in student abilities but in recognizing those individual differences, teachers could alter instruction to meet diverse learning needs.

Mastery learning can be implemented using several methods. It involved direct teacher instruction, cooperative groups, or independent learning. (Bloom, 1968). Mastery learning is also effective in one-to-one tutorials or small group tutorials. Objectives are well defined and placed in organized units. As a student progressed, they were allowed to continue progressing while students who need additional assistance received it through direct teacher interaction (Bloom, 1968). Tests used to assess the students were formative, diagnostic tests.(Bloom, 1968). The data gathered from the tests are used to guide further instruction. Guskey (2007) noted that teachers also provide constructive and specific feedback on their work as well as given corrective activities if they have not mastered the objective. These activities can include additional time to complete assignment or individualized instruction, as noted by Guskey (2007).

Review of Literature

Tutoring was once designated for students from more economically or more astute backgrounds as a primary means of education.(Scantlebury and Murphy, 2009).

According to Gordon, Morgan, Ponticell, and O'Malley (2004), tutoring was once the most prevalent form of education, especially for wealthy families and those who lived in rural locations. Gordon et al. (2004) noted that tutoring was especially prominent in the southern United States because plantations were geographically widespread, which hindered the development of a public school system. Wealthy parents could afford tutors to teach their children reading and writing but the boys were taught mathematics and art while the female students were schooled in penmanship and foreign languages. According to Clinton (1982), Southern plantation owners ensured a proper education for their daughters by using tutors because education was a valuable dowry in marriage. For further education, Powell (1998) noted many well off parents would send their boys to private prep schools to prepare for additional studies in professions such as law or medicine.

Gardner, Nobel, Hessler, Yawn, and Heron (2007) noted tutoring was informal and done on an as-needed basis well into the 20th century. Tutoring was done either with a teacher or in a peer tutor setting and typically unmonitored, according to Gardner et al. (2007), and while it provided temporary assistance, there was no way to assess if the tutoring had truly been successful. According to Vinovskis (1987), early studies examined the effects of tutoring on academic performance. As noted by Vinovskis (1987), the data were usually collected at the end of the term and while there were pretest/posttest evaluations, there was no real time data available to make corrections during the process of tutoring.

In today's educational system, tutoring is used to target at-risk students who are in need of additional assistance. (Ugo, 2010). The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was created to reauthorize the two previous educational acts – The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) and The Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA) of 1974.(U.S. Department of Education, 2005). It also expanded on the standards implemented in the Improving America's Schools Act (IASA) of 1994. ESEA was designed to ensure equal access to education for all students, especially minority and low-income students. (U.S. Department of Education, 2005). ESEA also led to the creation of the Title I program. EEOA was later created to ensure disabled students also received equal access to education. According to Zimmer et al (2007), IASA reauthorized ESEA by focusing on teacher quality and improving learning advancements for all students. While there had been previous reauthorizations under other presidents, the creation of NCLB was the first to mandate, according to Peterson and West (2003) that schools had to show measurable improvement with academic performance or face sanctioned consequences.

As public education became more prevalent, tutoring methods were incorporated into the educational curriculum. According to Gordon et al (2004), teachers were expected to conduct individualized classroom instruction within the confines of the classroom. Because tutoring was designed as a one-on-one experience, students were not able to fully benefit from the use of tutoring strategies within the regular classroom.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965

President Lyndon Johnson created the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, P.L. 89-10; 79 Stat. 27 (1965) (ESEA) in 1965 with the main purpose to fund primary and secondary education. Funding was allocated through the creation of Title I. The primary focus of Title I was funding to schools and school districts with a high number of low-income students. Title I, according to Carmichael (1997), also provides funding for dropout prevention, school improvement, and intervention programs.

In addition, ESEA was designed to provide supplementary education centers with matching grant funds. The act also encouraged government support in local education. It also advocated support for libraries, and programs for teacher performance improvement. In addition, grants for gifted programs, art programs, physical education, and mental health care were provided under ESEA. Another major component of the program was providing bilingual education for immigrant children as well as ensuring educational equality for Hawaiian, Alaskan, and Native American students. (Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 1965)

According to Peterson and West (2003), there have been several reauthorizations of ESEA. The latest reauthorization was in 2001 under NCLB, which expanded Title I into two categories. The first was a school-wide program. This allowed schools to have the flexibility with dispensing resources. The second was targeted assistance. Targeted assistance allowed schools to focus on students who are failing or at risk of failing. NCLB also shifted the original focus of ESEA. NCLB required accountability from the teachers and students. The measures of accountability include:

- Mandated standardized yearly exams to measure student progress.

- Schools are required to publish an annual report that documents achievement and demographic data.
- Schools are accountable for failure to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and must implement approved corrective actions.
- If schools fail to meet AYP for three consecutive years after being identified for school improvement, those schools are required to plan restructuring actions. (Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 1965)

The Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA)

The federal lawsuit of Lau v Nichols 414 U.S. 563 (1974) sparked the creation of the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA). Because of Lau v Nichols (1974), the United States Supreme Court ruled that states have to provide all students with limited English proficiency with special programs to ensure equal access to education. Special programs included instruction in English or in their native language. The court also ruled that providing identical facilities, textbooks, curriculum, or teachers did not constitute equal access.

Congress enacted the EEOA as an amendment to ESEA in 1974. The act stated that no state could deliberately deny students equal access to education based on race, sex, color, or national origin. It also prohibited deliberate employment discrimination of faculty and staff, and transferring students to or from another school if it increases segregation. It also required states to take action to overcome language barriers in instructional programs that interfere with equal participation by all students. A unique aspect of the EEOA was

the provision that allowed individuals who feel they had been denied equal education opportunities to file federal civil suits. The act also allows the United States Attorney General to file suits on an individual's behalf. (Equal Educational Opportunities Act, 1974)

There have been several challenges regarding enforcement of EEOA. Prominent lawsuits include Casteneda v Pickard, 648 F.2d 989 (1981) and Flores v Arizona, 516 F.3d 1140 (1992). In the case of Casteneda v Pickard (1981), the courts created a three-step test to assess if schools have denied non-English speaking students the opportunity and access to an equal education. The three steps are:

- A curriculum recognized by experts in the field
- The programs or methods used effectively to convey the curriculum.
- The program successfully overcomes language barriers. (Casteneda v Pickard, 1981)

In Flores v Arizona (1992), the court ruled that schools failed to provide adequate funding or enough teachers to meet the guidelines dictated by EEOA. The court ruled the district had to supply sufficient resources for implementation to meet the guidelines. In subsequent rulings of this case (2002 and 2009), the court still ruled that the EEOA guidelines are still in violation. Due to the implementation of NCLB, schools districts are required to provide funding for not only in-class instruction but also for supplemental educational programs for disadvantaged students in order to meet the requirements of equal educational opportunities.

Improving America's Schools Act of 1994

President Bill Clinton's reauthorization of ESEA implemented the Improving America's Schools Act, P.L. 103-382; 108 Stat. 3518 (1994) (IASA). IASA focused on allocating resources to education improvement and providing the framework for comprehensive, standards based education reform. With a focus on curriculum, instruction, leadership, accountability and school improvement, IASA is the basis for the current version of NCLB. (Improving America's Schools Act, 1994)

A focus of IASA is funding for professional development and training to help teachers meet the needs of diverse student population. It also includes promoting of high quality instruction for non-English speaking students by providing grants to upgrade services to the student population, including teacher training and classroom materials. IASA also encouraged programs to provide school wide programs to address student achievement. IASA allowed high poverty schools the opportunity to use resources from Title I to create instructional and remediation programs for all students enrolled in the school. (Improving America's Schools Act, 1994)

The No Child Left Behind Act and Title I Funding

With the passage of The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), focus has moved from the progress of individual student to the performance of student cohort groups. Hanushek and Raymond (2005) noted that the achievement gap widened between minority students and white students with the introduction of standardized testing. Amrein and Berliner (2002) found that standardized testing often led to increased dropout rates after students failed to pass the tests on multiple attempts.

The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act through NCLB legislation provided low achieving students the opportunity to receive assistance through additional academic instruction. Instruction is provided through participation in tutorial programs. Funding for tutorial programs is provided under NCLB through the Title I program and is free for students. According to Hoff (2007), districts are required to spend 20 percent of their Title I funding to provide tutoring for students who meet eligibility requirements. Eligibility is based on schools having 35 percent of the students considered low-income. According to Zimmer, Gill, Razquin, and Lockwood (2007) and the Department of Education (2014), data are collected from the number of students who are eligible for the free and reduced lunch program, and the number of students who are considered living in poverty based on collected census data. In addition, it includes the number of students who are eligible to receive Medicaid or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

In order to continue to receive funding, schools have to meet adequate yearly progress (AYP) based on their student population. Schools that receive Title I funding and do not meet AYP for three consecutive years are required to provide tutoring for all students who desire it. According to Deke, Dragoset, Bogan, Gill, and Sekina (2012), if Title I funds are insufficient for all students to receive tutorial services, the U.S. Department of Education allows priority to be given to the lowest achieving students. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2005), supplemental education services has been defined as academic instruction outside of traditional classroom instruction used to help increase students who need improvement increase their academic achievement.

These programs can include tutoring as long as it is not a part of the regular scheduled class time.

Response to Intervention

According to Beyer and Houston (1989), schools have to identify the needs within the school. Beyer and Houston (1989) noted this includes determining what materials are necessary for working with at-risk students. One of the first priorities is to identify those students who are considered "at-risk." Foegen (2001) noted by using curriculum based measurements such as samples of students' work and assessments, teachers should be able to identify individual students who are struggling with classroom instruction. Response to intervention (RTI) initiatives were designed to help identify those students who were struggling with general education requirements and to provide assistance before they failed. According to the University of California (2011), the U.S. Department of Education created the National Center on Response to Intervention in order to provide support for the implementation of RTI interventions. There are four basic components of response to intervention:

- RTI is a school-wide, multi-level instructional and behavioral system for preventing school failure.
- Screening
- Progress monitoring

- Data-based decision making for instruction, movement within the multi-level system and disability identification in accordance to state law. (University of California, 2011. p. 1).

Using the Response to Intervention (RTI) model, progress is monitored through ongoing assessments, data collection, and data analysis. Friedman (2010) recognized that RTI can be used as a first level method of assisting at-risk students but the program is not without its faults. Martinez and Young (2011) noted some of the issues with the implementation of tutoring under RTI included failing to identifying measurable goals for students and developing a reliable method for consistent progress monitoring and data collection before the interventions begin.

Students who are targeted through RTI are often placed in small group tutorial programs. Under the RTI model, Friedman (2010) noted tutors meet with the student groups for 20 to 40 minutes, three days a week for a period of 10 to 14 weeks. Slavin (1999) noted that a time frame of no more than 90 minutes was sufficient time in order to allow effective evaluation of student progress. According to Cicek (2012), small groups are used to group students with matching skills and abilities, allowing instructors to focus instruction. Rothman and Henderson (2011) also noted that a small setting provided the opportunity for individual instruction and gave the students the opportunity to interact closely with the tutor. During this time, students are regularly assessed to monitor progress and academic performance. Data collected from the assessments are analyzed to determine if adequate student progress is being made. Leroux et al (2011) identified that students who

participate in RTI interventions do benefit but students who are considered the most "at-risk" may not always perform at expected grade levels.

Opinions on the effectiveness of small-group tutorial

Several studies differ in their opinions on the effectiveness of small group tutorial. Several researchers noted students who participated in small group tutorial programs showed gains in academic achievement (Ernest, Johnson, & Kelly-Riley, 2011; Springer, Pepper, & Ghosh- Dastidar, 2009). As noted by Springer, Pepper and Ghosh-Dastidar (2009), students showed significant gains in test scores compared to those students who did not participate in tutoring programs. Tutoring allows in-depth coverage of objectives the student is having difficulties with during class time.

According to Kerns (2011), standardized testing does not address the inequalities that might exist and can affect the student's learning ability or environment. These inequalities can include race, social class, and gender. Brownnell et al. (2006) noted that economic standing affects student outcomes. Students who live in higher socioeconomic communities tend to do better than students who do not. Roos et al. (2006) cited the fact that students from lower economic standing are more likely to be behind in grade level, have failed one or more standardized tests previously, or will drop out of school without graduating. According to Gabriel (2005), tutoring programs can be used to target specific skills and objectives that can help students to be more success on standardized tests.

According to Steinberg (2011), borderline or failing students are typically targeted because any gains would provide improved school benefits. Under NCLB, a component of the school rating system is growth. In order to meet the growth standard, all students have

to show measureable achievement from one school year to the next. The information used to measure student growth is collected from state assessment. Hetzel, Newcomb, and Fuller (2009) noted both students and the school's growth status improved. The students who participated in the small group tutorials, according to Hetzel, Newcomb, and Fuller (2009) cited grade improvement, better understanding of the subject material and feeling more confident in asking questions and in their academic abilities after participating in the tutorial program.

Small group tutorial has been shown to have a positive effect on student achievement and improvement. Reinheimer and McKenzie (2011) asserted that students who participate in tutoring not only improve academically but also are more likely to graduate. They also noted students who participated in tutoring improved in self-motivation and academic skills. Studies on tutoring have also shown tutoring can have positive academic affects on students. Effective tutoring helps to develop skills that last beyond the initial tutoring participation and can be used by the students indefinitely. According to Landis, Altman, and Cavin (2007), students who become more academically confident are more likely to continue to strive for academic achievement due to the development of effective study skills and increased self-motivation. Burns, Senesac, and Silberglitt (2008) asserted participating in the tutorial process leads to more engagement in the learning process and when students have access to immediate feedback, students are more likely to have academic success.

An issue cited by many opponents to tutoring programs is the lack of consistency and oversight. Trejos (2004) noted school districts are required to spend up to 20 percent

of their Title I money on offering tutoring programs for at-risk students. According to Meitroat and Burnette (2012), federal Title I funds were wasted in programs created through the use of outside vendors. Many of the programs failed to document students who quit or prove that students who had enrolled actually participated in any tutorial programs. This inconsistency led to many districts to apply for the NCLB waivers that would allow them to drop tutorial programming as a requirement of supplemental education.

Tutorial Program Development

Many districts have decided to use the Title I funds to develop their own in-house tutorial programs. In order for the tutorial programs to be successful, Munoz, Chang, and Ross (2012) noted there are several necessary steps the need to be in place. Common characteristics of tutorial programs include:

1. Developing a structure that allows small group and one on one tutorial,
2. Comprehensive tutor training, and
3. Consistent monitoring of the program.

Several researchers found when those three elements are in place; tutoring programs were most effective and led to increases in student achievement. (Morris, Tyner, & Perney, 2000; Slavin, Lake, Davis, & Madden, 2011). For existing programs, several strategies can be used to improve them. Gordon (2009) developed several recommendations that can be used in educational settings to implement or improve tutorial programs.

1. Observe students during the sessions to help develop individual strategies for the students.

2. Provide structure and documentation for programs. This can be used to develop a specialized program to fit the needs of the site. It will also help tutors keep track of covered competencies and evaluate student progress as they move through the program. In addition, it provides a written diagnosis of the students over the course of their participation and allows the tutor to provide prompt feedback.

3. Use experienced teachers as tutors. These teachers understand the population and what can be used to help move the students up, academically. These teachers are also familiar with what curriculum used in the school and the necessary material needed to develop the tutorial program.

4. Choose a site that is easily accessible to all participants. Attendance is vital to the success of tutorial programs. According to Shanahan (1998), low attendance or transportation issues affect many tutorial programs. Building a tutorial program into the school day can eliminate those problems.

5. Utilize peer tutors. Gordon (2009) noted allowing peers to assist in tutoring can have a positive impact on student achievement. Peer tutoring can be used to reinforce lessons learned during the tutoring sessions, provide alternative problem solving methods and help build the self-esteem of the peer tutor and the tutee.

Evaluations of tutorial programs have shown that the programs can be successful in raising student achievement. According to Ling and Moore (2008), several outcomes were cited including improved academic achievement, increased high school graduation

rates and more students developing an increased sense of self. A mandate of NCLB (2002) requires once a tutorial program have been designed and implemented, steps have to be taken to measure its effectiveness. This ensures the program is running properly and the evaluation can also be used to identify problems and make corrections.

According to Rincones-Gomez (2009), evaluation is defined as the judgment of values with criteria that can be examined and defended. Program evaluation examines students' progress and is used to determine if the program is successful, if there needs to be improvements made or if the program should be restructured. There are five important steps to use in evaluating intervention programs.

1. Give a description of the intervention. Programs should have clearly defined goals and objectives. The population they plan to serve should also be identified and the length of the program should be clear. Program designers should determine what will be needed for implementation, what activities will take place during the program sessions, what are the possible results of the activities and the expected short-term and long-term outcomes.
2. Designers should create evaluation questions to identify the focus of the evaluation. Rincones-Gomez (2009) suggested the evaluation should be done as a formative evaluation at the beginning of the program to obtain feedback on the implementation of the program and to make necessary adjustments. As the program progresses, evaluations should become summative. Summative evaluations would provide information on the progress of the program and

allow directors to determine if the program should be continued, enlarged, or stopped.

3. An evaluation plan should be developed to decide what should be included in the evaluation, make decisions on the allocation of resources, establish timelines and identifies roles and responsibilities of people involved with the program.
4. Monitor the execution of the evaluation. According to Rincones-Gomez (2009), a team member should be responsible for keeping track of the evaluations. This also helps regulate the use of the resources and detect any changes that may need to take place during the course of the program.
5. Once the evaluations are complete, team members should meet to discuss the collected data. The findings should be shared to examine the implications of program and what can be done to improve it, if needed.

According to Barley and Wegner (2010), communication is vital to the success of the program. As a part of NCLB (2004), parents have to be notified of the availability of tutoring programs. Saulny (2006) noted that schools have to make major efforts to inform parents about programs. Notifications can include letters sent home, phone calls, flyers and open house meetings. It was also noted (Barley & Wegner, 2010; Heinrich, Meyer & Whitten, 2013) that parent participation is important to the success of the programs. Powell (1997) noted when parents are an active part of the tutoring program, more students participated on a regular basis.

When implementing the tutorial programs, tutors have to ensure their instruction correlates with the instruction the students receives in class. According to Deeney (2008), there are six steps tutors can be trained to used to ensure they are working in conjunction with the classroom instruction.

1. Gather information. Tutors should be aware of the type of instruction taking place in the classroom. They should also get feedback from the parents and teachers to document their observations of the student's progress. Pre-assessments should take place to evaluate how the students are functioning academically.
2. Tutors should use the information gathers to design a tutorial plan to coordinate and supplement the student's classroom instruction
3. The tutor should develop an instructional plan. According to Deeney (2008), the goal of this plan is to help the student improve their academic performance.
4. The tutor has to document the student's progress. This includes making notes of any relevant issues related to their academic growth. The tutor should also maintain communication with the teacher of the student and address any improvements or concerns.
5. Tutors should continue to chart progress through informal observations. The data should be used to track the students' progress.

Rothman and Henderson (2011) recognized that when tutors work to build relationships with the students, it helps to increase the student's achievement as well. By demonstrating concern, students' increasing engagement with the program leads to improved attendance and academic performance. Klem and Connell (2006) noted that

tutors who were knowledgeable of the curriculum and worked to develop relationships with the students were able to create a bond that was beneficial to the students.

There are benefits for students who participate in tutorial programs. According to Ling and Moore (2008), providing additional academic support can positively influence student progress. Huang and Dietel (2011) noted that developing an in-house tutorial program could be more successful than using an outside provider. By ensuring that the program was tied into the curriculum and held on a regular schedule, students will begin to show improvement.

Students who participate in tutorial programs not only gain improved academic performance but according to Gordon, Morgan, Ponticell, and O'Malley (2004), students also develop a more positive attitude towards education. Ling and Moore (2008) noted at-risk students who participated in tutoring programs had a higher rate of completing high school and attending post-secondary institutions than at-risk students who did not receive additional academic assistance.

Several factors are important to the success of a tutorial program. Time spent in tutoring was a factor. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2004), tutoring that lasts between thirty to sixty minutes per session and met at least three times a week would show positive gains. Shanahan (1998) also noted that the tutoring sessions had to be based on quality instruction. Well-trained tutors and relevant materials are necessary to provide relevant tutorial instruction that works in conjunction with the classroom instruction. Fuchs et al. (2008) noted that classroom instruction combined with aligned tutoring can increase the student's understanding of the material.

An established selection criterion should be used to determine who is in the most need of tutorial services. Teachers identify at-risk identify students based on classroom performance and other factors. A main objective, however, is ensuring students attend and participate in the tutorial program. Rothman and Henderson (2011) noted that a main reason behind programs failing is poor attendance. Hock, Pulvers, Deshler, and Schumaker (2001) noted that students who regularly attend tutorial sessions show academic gains compared to students who were not enrolled in a tutoring program. Positive encouragement from parents and teachers can be used to motivate students to attend sessions.

Implications

Tutoring programs can be a useful tool to help at-risk students to achieve positive academic gains. In order for the program to work, several factors have to be taken into account. These factors include but are not limited to tutor training, program implementation, and communication with parents, on-going evaluation and motivation. While there are some implications that tutorial programs do not provide academic benefits, many studies have shown that there are measurable gains. Students who participate in tutoring programs show academic as well as social improvements.

The study at the participant school will be used to examine the implementation of the in-house tutorial program. The teachers' perceptions of the program will be examined. The findings will be used to make decisions on improving or changing the program.

There are some limitations to this study at this site. Because this will be an evaluation of the participant school's tutorial program, the methods used to implement and conduct the program might not be effective at another school site. The results may vary from year to year because different students are enrolled in the tutorial program with varying abilities. The evaluation may have to be revisited because the participant school's district is moving from a state developed curriculum to the Common Core State Standards Curriculum. The Common Core Curriculum involves different subjects and affects more students. This change can possibly lead to a revamping of the implementation of the tutorial program currently in use. Using the qualitative methods approach, the evaluation will use information from the program on the methods used to implement the program, the training methods used with the tutors and the ongoing evaluations of the program.

Section 2: Methodology

Introduction

A case study design was used to examine the tutorial program used at the participant school. Qualitative data was collected using interviews with participating teachers, in order to gain insight on their perceptions of the program. Information was shared detailing the research design method used, setting, population and the instrumentation used. The necessary procedures used to conduct this research and analyze the collected data are also detailed.

Research Questions

The following question guided this study:

RQ1: What are the teachers' perceptions of the in-house tutorial program currently in use?

In order to address this main question, several sub questions were implemented:

SQ1: How do participants perceive the implementation of the tutorial program?

SQ2: What is the perceived impact of the small group tutorial program on the academic achievement of at-risk students?

SQ3: What, if any, changes need to be made in order to improve the programs?

Research Methodology

The use of qualitative methods has several benefits for this program evaluation. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005), qualitative research is used to investigate how and why decisions are made in addition to what, where, or when. Creswell (2008) noted the participants' perspective is vital in the use of qualitative inquiry. The data was collected from the teachers who not only assist in the development of the program but also work within the program as tutors providing a unique perspective. The source of the data came from interviews by the teachers who serve as tutors in the program. The use of interviews allowed for an increased depth of analysis and provided a variety of responses that highlighted the perceptions of the in-house tutorial program. Creswell (2008) also recognized using the information collected from the participants could be used to advocate change and improve the conditions for participants.

The central focus of the study was the implementation of the in-school tutorial program and the perceived impact the program was having on the success of at-risk students. The use of the case study, according to Creswell (2008), allowed the researcher

to gain an in-depth understanding of the current situation as experienced by those who make up the study population. Because of the nature of case studies, the researcher can conduct intensive investigations in one specific location or with one specific group. Creswell (2008) noted the use of the case study method also allows the researcher to identify themes. Hancock and Algozzine (2006) noted that the use of case studies allows for studies of programs or other special interest topics.

There are several specific types of case studies: exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive. According to Yin (2003), the use of an explanatory case study can be used to study the motivations of a person, group or event in order to discover the cultural themes or behaviors of the group. Shepard and Greene (2003) noted that a case study could be prospective, highlighting established criteria and could include cases that reflect that criteria or retrospective, which is taking historical records and using them to determine the cases to be included in the study. This methodology was conducted through the use of surveys composed of open ended questions and member checks to assist in clarifying points retrieved from the survey data.

Sources of Data

Qualitative data was obtained through interviews with teachers of the tutorial program. According to Creswell (2009), in qualitative research studies, the researcher serves as the human instrument of data collection. Data sources included individual responses to individual interviews. The collected data provided an explanatory case study of the participating school's tutorial program and the teachers' perception of the program. The collected data was used to suggest changes, if needed, to the program.

According to Yin (2003), interviews are an integral source of data in a case study. Because case studies highlight the human perspective, Yin (2003) noted this was the reason why interviews were so important. The use of interviews allows participants to express their feelings openly and react to their environment. Interviews are focused on the topic of the case study, allowing the researcher to collect targeted information. Interviews can also collect information on the culture's beliefs and motives.

Creswell (2003) noted there were five qualitative methods of inquiry: narrative, phenomenology, biography, ethnography, and grounded theory. For this study, the ethnographic design was the most closely aligned. Using the ethnographic design allowed the researcher to focus on the actual experiences of the participants. Incorporating this approach highlighted the motivations of the participants in order to create a balanced portrayal of the in-house tutorial program. As noted by Creswell (1998), an ethnographical study examines and interprets the shared beliefs and patterns of a shared culture group. One method of ethnographic research is the use of the case study. While falling under the design of ethnography, the case study approach allows an in-depth study of an activity or event.

Validity

To establish validity, open-ended questions were used. A three member expert panel consisting of a high school counselor with 14 years of experience as well as experience as a School Testing Coordinator, a teacher with 10 years of experience, and an associate university professor who also worked for 7 years teaching in a public high school completed a preliminary evaluation of the interview questions. The panel received

an introduction to the study and an overview of the instrument used to evaluate the interview questions.

After reviewing the interview questions, reassessment was conducted as needed; modifications were made to the instrument as appropriate, based upon the panel's feedback. This reassessment ensured accurate representation of the participants' ideas, (Merriam, 1998). The questions adapted by the panel helped to ensure their validity by ensuring the questions were not leading and were open ended to allow freedom of expression from the participants. The survey participants were informed of the reasons behind the research and the possible benefits of the research. This knowledge helped to promote honest responses from the participants.

In addition to the panel's feedback, I conducted two pilot interviews to help establish the estimated interview time and to determine if the questions as formatted are yielding substantial responses.

Reliability

According to Yin (2009), ensuring reliability reduces the biases and possible errors during a study. Rudner (1993) noted several factors that result in incorrect data ambiguous questions, non-standard test administration, and the risk of misinterpreted questions or participants guessing.

In order to establish reliability for this study, I employed several methods. The first method was taping the interviews with the participants. It allowed me to give their full attention to the participants and allowed for later data analysis. The second method to establish reliability was to create transcripts of the recorded interviews. The transcripts

allowed the participants to review, edit, or clarify responses to ensure the information was accurate and allow correct researcher interpretation. According to Creswell (2008), member checking is when the researcher asks the participants to review the interview transcripts for accuracy. The use of member checking also allows participants to add additional information, clarify points of view, or possibly delete information. Creswell (2008) noted, however, it is best to conduct member checks with interpreted data that presents themes and patterns rather than using raw transcripts to avoid confusion.

Letters of informed consent and interview data were stored in a secured, locked database located in the researcher's office. The database contained narratives with all identifying information removed, including the names of the participants, the school, and the school district. Interviews were kept confidential to ensure reliability. Participants do not know the identities of the other individuals who participated. Participants were requested to not discuss the interview questions or their responses to those questions. Collected data was complied and vetted for accuracy. Any discrepancies were reviewed and addressed. When the study was concluded, all letters and data associated with the study were destroyed.

Data Collection Procedures

Permission was requested from the principal of the participant school reflecting the researcher's interest in examining the teachers' perception of the in-house tutorial program. Permission was secured from the Superintendent of High Schools for the school district soliciting the approval of the study and a request for cooperation was also solicited. The principal of the participant school provided written permission.

The participant school has 87 teachers, 35 of which work as tutors in the in-house tutorial program. All 35 teachers were invited to participate in the interview process. The first 10 respondents were selected to participate. Any identifying information was removed from the study records to protect the case study location and the identity of the participants. Instead, participants were numerically identified to maintain records. All participants took part in the individual interviews consisting of open-ended questions created by the researcher. The expert panel, to ensure validity and reliability, previously reviewed the open-ended questions.

All interviews were conducted in a secure location, allowing for privacy and comfort for the participants. Recording all interviews allowed the researcher to give the participants their undivided attention. Taping the interviews allowed the researcher to retain accurate records of the interviews and was later used to accurately analyze the data. The data was then stored at a secure, locked location until it was analyzed.

The questions allowed the researcher to evaluate the teachers' perception of the in-house tutorial program. The projected 35-minute interview script, consisting of 10 questions, was given to each participant right before the interview to allow for the most honest response. As open-ended questions, I used prompts when necessary to encourage further detailed responses from participants. Each session was recorded and transcripts were created from the recordings. Additionally, member checks were used to evaluate for accuracy of the data.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data collected was processed and analyzed using technique referred to as narrative inquiry. According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000), narrative inquiry uses items such as notes, letters, interviews, or life experiences to analyze and understand how people interpret their life experiences. The first step requires the researcher to analyze the collected data from individual interviews. Creswell (2008) noted that examining the data and using it to develop themes and answer major research questions is of great importance to the integrity of the research. The data from interviews revealed (a) the teachers' perception of the in house tutorial program and (b) practices that could be used to improve the program and its implementation.

The second step to be taken by the researcher was to categorize the study data. The collected data was categorized for emergent themes. Data interpretation was the last step taken with the collected data. Narratives were created from the data collected during the interviews. The use of narratives allowed the researcher to provide a connection with the data provided and identify issues that presented themselves during the program evaluation.

While referring back to the original purpose of the program evaluation, the researcher also has to refer to possible alternate explanations. The research questions allow the data to be analyzed in correlation to the original hypothesis. The narratives created from the collected data from the interviews were stored electronically. According to Fink (2000), storing data electronically serves several purposes. It allows data to be easily accessible for study. Fink (2000) noted that it allows the researcher to disseminate the data when requested or to impose restrictions on the data if deemed necessary. The

study results provided an insight on the teachers' perspective of the in-house tutorial program and if teachers felt its current implementation was beneficial to the at-risk students it was created to serve.

Ethical Considerations

Following the university's policy on standards of ethical standards, the researcher will adhere to the prescribed standards. No instructional time of the participants will be interrupted in order to collect the data. All collected data will be in its original collected form and accurately documented and stored in a secure, off-site location with all identifying information removed to protect the identities of the participants. While the participants are colleagues at the participant school where the researcher is currently employed, I am not a direct supervisor of any of the voluntary participants.

According to Hancock and Algozzine (2006), researchers have to ensure that all legal and ethical requirements are met to protect the participants. The researcher is responsible for making sure that the participants come to no harm and have given their informed consent to participate in the study. The researcher also has to protect the privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality of the participants. There is an expectation of objective data interpretation when presenting the findings. By ensuring these requirements, trust is built between the researcher and the participants. Building this trust encourages participants to speak openly and honestly, allowing the researcher to gain accurate information and build a clear picture of the situation that is being studied.

The purpose of the interview and the intended use of the data were explained to the participants before conducting the interview. Letters of informed consent were issued

to the participants detailing the benefits of the research and the steps that would be taken to insure their privacy. The participants were informed that their individual responses would not be shared with administration or anyone in authoritative positions with the exception of individual comments, which were transcribed verbatim. With the use of verbatim comments, all identifying information was removed to protect the identity of the participant. In addition, all participants were advised the study was strictly voluntary and they could leave the study at any time during the course of the study. The school site and the school district also granted approval once the study was approved by the University's IRB. The approval number for this study was 03-23-15-0082928.

Summary

With the use of test data becoming an important catalyst in the education field, it is imperative to provide those students who are the most at risk opportunities to be successful. The implementation of an in-house tutorial program is beneficial in helping those students, provided the program is implemented effectively. Holliday (2012) noted that tutoring has become an effective method of working with at-risk students. However, to understand the perceived effectiveness of the program, Elfers, Pleki, and Knapp (2006) noted that information has to be obtained from those who work directly at the site in order to understand their daily practices. In the following section, I will present the findings of this project and its implications.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

The program evaluation of the in-house tutorial program was designed and implemented to gather the perceptions of the teachers who serve as tutors for the current program. The stakeholders of the tutorial program can use the collected feedback to make improvements to meet the academic needs of the participants. Ten tutors were interviewed about their perceptions of the program. The tutors were teachers who taught Biology I, Algebra I, United States History, and English II. The researcher developed the interview questions (Appendix A) to gather information about the tutors' perceptions of the tutorial program at the participating school. Data analysis yielded five major themes analyzed by stakeholders.

Description and Goals

Stakeholders use program evaluation to determine how the program can be improved to better meet the needs of the participants. (Patton, 2008). Students who use the program are at-risk students. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2009), stakeholder is identified as anyone who has an invested interest in the success and welfare of a school and the students. Stakeholders include school staff, district staff, and school boards.

For this study, the stakeholders are the teachers who serve as tutors and the school administrators who assist with coordinating the tutorial program. According to Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle (2010), the findings and recommendations of the tutorial program

are typically disseminated through the use of an executive summary. Prepared by the researcher, this report outlines the findings of the program. It also discusses how the findings correspond with the objectives of the program.

The program evaluation can contain detailed and numerous findings. According to Spaulding (2008), the use of data analysis allows different aspects of the program to be explored during the course of the evaluation. In the case of this evaluation, five themes emerged from the data analysis: (a) the motivation of students who participate in tutorial sessions, (b) benefits of tutoring for students, (c) remediation and intervention strategies, (d) methods to improve the tutorial program, and (e) parent involvement.

Rationale

There are many different characteristics found in tutorial programs and the effect they can have on student achievement. The interview questions were developed to ascertain the teachers' perceptions of the current tutorial program and its ability to provide quality instruction to at-risk students. With the permission of the school's administration, this evaluation was conducted in order to help improve the program.

Patton (2008) stated that stakeholders require correct information that allows them to make informed decisions regarding the direction of the program. In this academic setting, the stakeholders were the teachers who serve as tutors in the program and the school administrators. To help facilitate this decision making, an executive summary was prepared to outline the research findings and to make recommendations for improving the

program based on peer-reviewed and seminal literature. The following section is a review of the literature pertaining to the emergent themes.

Review of Literature

After the analysis of the interview transcripts, five themes emerged as prevalent in the discussion of the teachers. The themes included: (a) the motivation of students who participate in tutorial sessions, (b) benefits of tutoring students, (c) remediation and intervention strategies, (d) methods to improve the tutorial program, and (e) parental involvement.

The Motivation of Students who participate in Tutorial Sessions

The first emergent theme from the participants' interview data was the motivation for students to participate in tutorial sessions. In this particular setting, teachers identify students for tutoring by recommending those at-risk for failing the class and possibly failing the district examination. Several factors could contribute to a student's classification of at-risk. According to Johnson (2000), students' academic achievement and test scores can be affected by negative peer pressure. In classroom situations, several interviewees noted that students would often not participate in class discussions and, as Johnson (2000) noted as well, would deliberately do poorly in class to avoid teasing for being academically successful. According to Viadero (2009), students who fail the district or state exam often suffer from detrimental effects both academically and

socially. In this school setting, the detrimental effects include failure to graduate, repeating the test, and repeating the class.

According to Bachman (2013), many students feel they do not need tutoring because of their own misperceptions of their academic achievement. One tutor noted during the interview, "Students would wait until they were almost irreversibly failing to start attending tutoring." In order to change the student's perception of tutoring, Bachman (2013) noted that tutors should make tutoring a positive experience for students. According to Gordon et al (2004), the following three motivational factors can improve a student's tutoring experience:

- Provide a place for tutoring that is an easy proximity for the student.
- A supportive learning community
- Individual perseverance

Participating in tutoring, as noted by Gordon et al (2004), cannot only change the students' attitudes about learning, but also can improve their personal motivation levels as well as individual classroom performance. Gordon (2009) indicated that tutoring helps to reinforce concepts, supports problem solving, and encourages students to develop different approaches to learning. Gordon (2009) noted that using positive feedback during tutorial sessions increases the positive self-image of the students as well as improves their motivation and their sense of empowerment in their education.

Other behaviors can also influence the motivations of students. Noble, Roberts, and Sawyer (2006) noted that how the students perceived themselves had an influence on their academic achievement as well. Students who were more negatively focused felt luck had more of a role in their academic success and failure was the result of an outside influence. Positively focused students, Nobel et al. (2006) noted, were self-regulated and were able to incorporate certain behaviors, such as studying or research, to reach certain outcomes. A tutor noted during the interview that "students who were already academically successful attended tutoring for remediation and to ensure their understanding of the course material." According to Akey (2006), students who were placed in supportive environments such as programs that assist with academic difficulties and make efforts to personalize instruction are more likely to be successful in academic work. Lambert and McCombs (1998) also noted that achievable goals and standards motivate students to be more successful.

Jenson (2009) noted that poverty is a big factor that affects the academic performance of students especially in terms of attendance and motivation. Students who live in poverty situations, according to Jenson (2009), are more likely to also suffer from depression and live in highly stressful situations, which can negatively affect classroom performance. Studies have shown that students raised in low-income households have access to fewer educational resources, poor nutrition and healthcare. (Department of Education, 2000: Sparks, 2011; Viadero, 2000). Other factors that can affect the academic performance of students, according to Education Week (2011), include not

having high quality teachers, attending a high poverty school, and being a member of a racial minority group.

Under the tenets of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (2001), the goal is to close the gaps that affect student's academic achievement. One of the interventions cited in NCLB is tutoring. Since the implementation of NCLB, gains have been made in academic achievement and the graduation rate of at-risk students, according to Gordon et al(2004). These gains were achieved using programs, such as tutoring, to help close reading and mathematics gaps. (NCES, 2009). States are also required to work to close the achievement gaps through providing high-quality teachers to poor schools as well as encouraging students to participate in more rigorous programs, such as honors classes or Advanced Placement classes. (Department of Education, 2000).

Benefits of Tutoring for Students

A second emergent theme was academic benefits for at-risk students participating in tutoring. All the interviewees felt that tutoring had a positive impact on student achievement. Many also cited students who participated in tutoring faced fewer distractions than in the classroom setting. The goal of tutoring is to help students improve their academic skills and help them to be successful. As a result of the lack of one-on-one instructional time in the regular classroom, tutoring has been used as a method to meet the needs of those at-risk students who need additional assistance. As noted by Leal, Barnhart and Frederiksen (2008), tutoring is ideal because it can be customized to meet

the needs of individual students. Using this customization, tutors can design instruction based on the academic progress of the student. Several tutors noted that having the additional one to one time with the students gave them the opportunity to focus more on the needs of the individual student. In addition to academic gains, according to Powell (1997), students who participate in tutorial programs can develop the ability to solve problems in new ways. This happens as they are exposed to meaningful patterns of learning and examination of their learning styles. According to Klem and Connell (2004), the more students are engaged in their learning, the more likely they are to earn higher grades and be more successful in school. Klem and Connell (2004) noted that this improvement happens regardless of the socioeconomic status of the students.

Several researchers have cited positive impacts tutoring has on a student's academic achievement (Fashola, 1998; Lauer, Akiba, Wilkerson, Apthrop, Snow, & Martin-Glenn, 2006). There have been several noted benefits for participating in tutoring. According to Walker and Educational Partnerships (2010), these benefits include:

- Academic gains
- Better school attendance
- Development of improved study skills
- Improved self-confidence and self -esteem

Gordon et al. (2004) noted that as students gained mastery in the subject of study, tutors were able to advance the students to new skills. Using this method, described by

Bloom (1994), allows students to progress at their own pace giving tutors the opportunity to select appropriate methods for individual students such as personalizing instruction. This method, according to Gordon et al. (2004) allowed students to make significant academic gains. Students also make positive, self-image gains as their academic progress improves, as noted by Klem and Connell (2004). Tutors can also use this opportunity to teach study skills for use outside of the classroom as well as test taking skills. The student can use both sets of skills long after they stop attending tutorial sessions.

Students benefit academically through receiving immediate clarification and feedback, according to Elbaum, Vaughn, Tejero Hughes and Watson Moody. (2000). As noted by Bloom (1994), students who participated in tutoring had a tendency to outperform students who did not participate in tutoring. Riggs and Greenberg (2004) cited additional benefits for at-risk students such as more positive relationships with teachers and the creation of a caring, nurturing environment. The building of these positive relationships allows students who may be uncomfortable expressing themselves in front of classmates the opportunity to ask questions without fear of ridicule. This development of the positive relationship, according to Riggs and Greenburg (2004), is connected to positive academic and social outcomes. Several of the interviewees noted developments such as “improved confidence” and “more in-class participation” from students who have consistently attended tutoring.

Intervention and Reinforcement Strategies

The third theme was remediation and intervention strategies. The majority of the interviewees noted methods they used within their tutoring sessions to assist the students. Some of the methods included the use of scaffolding, K-W-L charts, and computer based activities. Guskey (2007) noted that in order to help students obtain mastery in particular objectives, instruction has to focus on methods that encourage higher learning goals. These goals include problem solving, creative expression, and deductive reasoning. In order for this to take place, students have to become active learners in their education. Petress (2008) noted that an active learner develops as the learner takes a dynamic and energetic role in his or her own education.

Several researchers have endorsed the use of scaffolding as a method to promote the integration and understanding of concepts (Gallagher et al., 1995; Gallagher, 1997). Using scaffolding during tutorial sessions, the tutor questions the students to assess their understanding and provides feedback on their progress. According to Simons and Klein (2006), scaffolding provides support for the students when they have a specific need and allows them to obtain clarity while retaining focus on the concept. Reinhart, Duncan, and Chinn (2014) noted that students who use scaffolding show growth in their higher order reasoning skills. Simons et al. (2004) noted that scaffolding is more beneficial for students who are already higher achieving. However, used as a support to the tutor during the learning process, scaffolding can be used with at-risk students to help build problem-solving skills

The use of K-W-L charts at the beginning of the tutorial program is beneficial to the tutor and the student. Created by Donna Ogle (1986), K-W-L is an acronym for 'already know, want to know and what I learned'. Initially used as a reading tool, K-W-L charts are adaptable to any subject. Carr and Ogle (1986) noted that using the charts helps students to become active learners. Not only do students have to reflect on what they already know about the lesson, but are also required to examine what they learned at the completion of the lesson. The K and W are completed before the lesson starts to assess the prior knowledge of the student. By asking the student what they already know, the student recalls any information they may already know on the topic. Completing the W has the student to discuss what is interesting to them about the topic or to address any misunderstandings that may exist in their understanding about the topic. Having this knowledge allows the tutor to create lessons and activities that focus on the content while providing an enjoyable experience for the student. At the end of the lesson, according to Ogle (1986), the student completion of the L can be used as a formative assessment.

The district where the participant school is located has purchased access to several educational programs geared for students to work independently and allowing the tutors to monitor their progress. The ones most often used in tutoring sessions are Study Island, USA Test Prep and Penda. Study Island, created in 2000 by the Edmentum Company, is a web-based product that helps students' master academic standards. (Edmentum Company, 2015). Study Island is customizable to state specific and grade level standards.

Tutors track student progress and assess how well they are performing on certain objectives. Students are given individual log in access and can work from home as well.

Another program used is Penda. Created by Penda Learning, it is a web-based product specifically designed for math and science. Content is aligned to the district curriculum and can track the students' progress as they work on set benchmarks. (Penda Learning, 2015). Tutors receive a weekly email via the program that detail the student's progress on each objective and allows the tutor to adjust instruction based on the needs of the individual student. The reports include the previous week's work. Monthly, tutors receive information on how much work has been completed and how much material each student has mastered. Tutors are not able to create their own content within the program.

The third program is USA Testprep. Created by USA Testprep, Inc in 1998, this web-based program is a review product for subject area assessments. USA Testprep is customizable for district and state standards. (USA Testprep, INC, 2015). Students who use this program are given individual login information. Students can work from the school or at home on the test review material. Tutors have to log in to view student progress, monitor activity and track objectives that may need additional remediation. Tutors also have the ability to create customizable review activities specifically for their students within the program.

Methods to Improve the Tutorial Program

The focus of the in-house tutorial program was to improve the academic achievement of at-risk students. In order to do this, the tutorial program should become more student-centered. According to Smart, Witt, and Scott (2012), developing a student-centered focused, where the lessons are built on the prior knowledge of the student, allows the tutor to provide instruction that fills in the gaps in knowledge and gives students the chance to work in small groups in order to learn from each other.

Using Bloom's Theory of Mastery Learning, tutors used pre-assessments to establish the prior knowledge of the students. According to Guskey (2007), pre-assessments can be done using a variety of methods, including short surveys, quizzes, or oral questions. Leyton (1983) noted that using the pre-assessment method to review missing or misunderstood concepts were more likely to show mastery on summary examinations. With the use of the tenets found in Mastery Learning, students are provided correctives to guide them as they begin tutoring. Bloom (1976) identified correctives as any activity that provides guidance to student to address their learning problems

Once the needs of the students have been identified, the focus becomes ensuring the students are receiving and retaining the information. Cubukcu (2012) noted the use of student-centered teaching allows students to improve critical thinking skills as well as problem solving skills, both necessary to improve academic achievement and to obtain gains during district testing. According to Chegenizadeh and Nikraz (2013), student-centered learning encourages students to become proactive in their learning as well as

enhances their motivation. The incorporation of Bloom's theory of Mastery Learning would allow teachers to address diverse learning styles within a tutorial group. Gibbs (1995) also emphasized that incorporating the students' prior knowledge solicits activity and ownership from the learner.

Student-centered learning is used by peer tutors to support educational learning. According to Walker (2007), peer tutors are students, selected by teachers, who are successful in the subject and are able to work collaboratively with their classmates. Walker (2007) noted that peer tutors could contextualize terms to help their tutees understand the material on a more age or socially appropriate level. Gordon (2009) noted that the use of peer tutor can help increase student mastery, motivation, and give tutees a sense of empowerment.

The tutors brought forward issues with the lack of school administrative leadership presence within the program. Many of the tutors noted that with the exception of the initial start, the administration did not provide any guidance on how the program was implemented. Tutors felt "abandoned" by the administration and "disconnected" from each other. To build a solid tutorial program, the U.S. Department of Education (2004) noted that administration has to encourage collaboration with the administrative staff and the tutors as well as developing protocols for communication between tutors. Administrators, according to the U.S. Department of Education (2004), are responsible for developing the tutorial plan to be used within the school. Administrators are also

responsible for continually reviewing results and working to improve the tutorial process as needed.

Many of the interviewees felt the tutorial program needed more structure. Several tutors noted that without the interaction between tutors, creating a structured plan that could be used by the current tutors and used to train new tutors as they begin to work in the program was difficult. Key actions recommended by the U.S. Department of Education (2004) to add structure to a tutorial program include:

- Develop a detailed student learning plan
- Share data with tutors and insure the students goals are aligned with the district goals
- Use regular progress reports to inform teachers and parents
- Monitor implementation and adjust the efforts based on formative assessment feedback.

In providing this structure, tutors have a foundation to build a successful program. Gordon (2009) noted that administrators should visit other successful tutorial programs and examine their methods as well as research best practices and field studies. Having a structured program can help tutors to develop a more personalized approach to each student and avoiding the rote memorization that could take place if the tutoring is done generically. Gordon (2009) also noted that have a structured program allows the tutor to note any other significant learning issues that the student might present.

Parental Involvement

The next theme addressed was parental involvement. The acknowledgement of the necessity of parental involvement was first noted with the passage of the Improving America's Schools Act in 1994. According to Kugler (2009), schools were required to implement methods to involve parents in order to be incompliance with Title 1 regulations. The authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 2002 was the first to give specifics on what constituted parental involvement and the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) further established the role of parental involvement. This involvement, according to the U.S. Department of Education (2004b), noted several things:

- Parents have an important role in their child's learning
- Parents are encouraged to participate in their child's school and their education.
- Parents are considered full partners in the education of their child and when appropriate, can be involved on curriculum advisory committees as well as assist with some decisions making activities.

Parental involvement can have an impact on student achievement, especially on children from poorer homes. According to Rogers (2006), the tutors noted those parents who were actively involved with making sure their child attended tutoring but they also noted many parents failed to take an active role in their child's participation in tutoring. The main reason, as noted by the interviewees was the fact that "many parents do not

know that tutoring is offered at the school." Announcements are made to the student population but parents are seldom notified unless they specifically ask for information on tutorials.

Under NCLB, ensuring parents are aware of supplemental education options is vital to ensuring parents understand what is available to assist their child to achieve academic success. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2004b), there are several steps in place to facilitate parent notification. They are:

- Clear communication – Parents should be aware of the availability of tutoring for their child. This can be done via mail but can also be done on the school's website, if the school has one, or sending home informative flyers through the students.
- Use schools to help spread the word – This can be done through having open house meetings or during PTA meetings. This would allow parents to meet the teachers who will be serving as tutors and to ask questions about the program.

According to Gordon and Louis (2009), having parents involved can influence the achievement of the students significantly. The school, however, plays an important role in determining the levels of parental involvement in school. Schools can provide parents with their expectations and maintain an open line of communication regarding the progress of the children. According to Garcia and Thornton (2014), by encouraging

parents to advocate, monitor and support their children, the opportunity for the child's success increases. Many of the interviewees advocated this thought. They noted "when the parents are active, the children tend to do better." The interviewees noted that parents "encouraged their children to attend tutoring on a regular basis". Because attendance was a concern that the teachers addressed, they noted that having parental support helped to improve attendance, which helped improve the academic achievement of the student.

Discussion of Findings

While the tutors felt the in-house tutorial program has a great benefit to the students who participated in it, the tutors indicated there were some conditions that could use improvement. In order to implement this program successfully, several measures are recommended based on the interpretation of the data. These recommended measures were:

- More administrative involvement
- Effective parental notifications
- Communication between tutors

Administrative Involvement

In the collected data, many of the interviewees felt there was a lack of administrative involvement in the tutorial program. Several noted once the tutors were selected, they were left to "figure out" how to set up the program. According to Chipman

and Roy (2006), administrators should ensure that the goals of the program are meeting the goals of the school and the school district. Many of the tutors noted that administrators left them "to their own devices" and there was no follow up on the implementation. Working with the team of tutors, the administrators should help develop the vision of the program and have an open communication policy to allow tutors to approach with their concerns or suggestions. Administrators should also meet with parents to share the mission and the goals of the tutorial program and ensure the tutors are working to meet the needs of the students.

Administrators are also responsible for ensuring resources are available for the use of the tutorial program. Tutors noted having to "find materials for the students to use" and "purchasing their own supplies". Regular meetings with the tutors can allow the opportunity to know what resources they are in need of and work to obtain these resources. Hopkins (2008) noted that administrators have to be visible and aware of what is going on in the tutorial program. Administrators have to be willing to trust those who are in charge of the tutorial program. Hopkins (2008) noted that developing a trustworthy relationship with tutors, parents and community members helps to set the standard necessary to help the program be successful.

Effective Parent Notification

In the collected data, many of the interviewees indicated that students often don't attend tutorial because "many parents are not aware it is offered". The tutors also noted,

"even if the students are informed at school, the parents are still unaware because the students don't tell them". According to NCLB (2001), the use of parent notification helps to encourage parents to be move involved and active in their child's education. It also helps to improve communication between the schools and the parents. To improve participation rates and to help insure parents are being informed about the program, there are several recommended methods. The participant school already holds a parent orientation before the start of school for parents of ninth graders. The majority of ninth grade students populate two of the subject area classes, Biology I and Algebra I. Providing information on tutoring to parents who attend the orientation would allow the parents to ask questions about the program and have the information in case their child needs it.

Another method of informing parent about tutoring, especially those who are parents of 10^{th} and 11^{th} grade students enrolled in English II or U.S. History is via email. When parents enroll students for school, the email address is collected and is a part of the parent contact records. The participant school also has a website that is updated regularly with information for students and parents. Including tutoring information along with the contact information of the tutorial coordinator would allow parents to access details about the tutorial program. Because this is an urban school district, some parents may not always have internet access. Using regular mail is also a viable option to reach all parents, especially those who do not have internet access. Parents of students who have been identified by their teachers as needing tutoring can also be contacted through phone

calls. Teachers have access to student contact information including mailing addresses and contact numbers. The participant school also holds PTA meetings throughout the school year and these meetings should serve as opportunities to share information with parents.

Communication between Tutors

According to the collected data, interviewees discussed the lack of communication between them. The interviewees spoke of feeling "isolated" and "abandoned". Phillips and Hughes (2012) noted that teachers are not often provided with opportunities to work together. Collaboration can help teachers find the best ways to find the best practices to implement in the tutorial program. The interviewees noted that they often "met with teachers who tutored the same subject but not with other tutors" to discuss the program. According to Johnson (2011), collaboration can work to build professional relationships through formal and informal meetings. Informal meetings can consist of observations of tutoring methods and sharing of ideas without being in a group setting.

Administrators can work to ensure formal collaboration meetings between tutors. The interviews felt "having a regular meeting time would be beneficial to the program". Establishing a set schedule and agenda can used to help address student needs. Saxena (2013) noted that it was important for tutors to meet weekly, with monthly meeting scheduled the administration to collaborate on interventions used for students. According

to Block (2014), collaboration can provide clear expectations. Administrators can use this time to work with tutors to assess the goals of the program and define any changes that may need to be made to make the tutorial program more effective. Tutors can also use this time to discuss student progress, share best practices, and learn new strategies that can be implemented in the individual tutorial sessions.

Implications

Because of this research, the data supported the perception that the tutorial program is beneficial to help at-risk students make academic gains. The challenges revealed through the interpretation of the data showed the need for a unified program that benefits the students, tutors, school stakeholders as well as community stakeholders. The participants in this program demonstrated their main goal was to ensure that at-risk students received the help they needed to make academic gains as well as be successful on the district, and subject area exams.

The use of this tutorial program has potential local and widespread implications. With a unified implementation, this tutorial program can be utilized for consecutive years with different groups of students at this particular school site. Tutors also will have the ability to make customizations to meet the needs of a particular student during a tutorial session. Having a unified implementation allows educators in different locations to utilize this program and make adaptations to fit their particular needs.

Summary

In conclusion, the purpose of this study was to examine the teachers' perception of the tutorial program currently being used at the participant school. To collect the data, teachers completed a 10 question open-ended interview. The data was then analyzed to discover common themes among the interview answers. The five themes were the motivation of students who participated in tutorial sessions, the benefits of tutoring for students, intervention and reinforcement strategies, methods to improve the tutorial program, and parental involvement. Discussion and literature review was used to examine and support each theme.

The results of the study show while the program was somewhat effective, the teachers who were interviewed felt there were many things were inconsistent with the program. The teachers agree that the program can be a useful tool to help at-risk students achieve academic gains but changes did need to be made in order for the program to be more effective.

Section 4 will provide reflections on the study, which will include limitations, self-discovery and directions for future research.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Introduction

This section offers an overview the purpose of the study, a review of its strengths and limitations, as well as the study's conclusions, implications, and recommendations. The purpose of this study was to explore the teachers' perception of the tutoring program being used at the participant school. Tutoring was being offered to at-risk students in an

effort to help improve their academic achievement on district examinations. The tutors who worked in the program were interviewed to understand if the implementation of the program was beneficial to the students who participated. The data collected identified the strengths and limitations of the tutorial program and served as the basis for recommendations for the tutorial program to increase benefits to the students who are currently participating as well as for future enrollees. The data showed that the tutors felt that participation in the tutoring program was beneficial and with modifications, this program could be successful. The data findings correlated with literature available on the benefits of tutoring.

Project Strengths

During the course of the program evaluation, all participants in the interviews felt the program provided the academic benefits for the students who participated in the program. According to Ugo (2010), students who consistently attend tutorial sessions show improved retention and academic success. Researchers have noted that tutoring is an effective model of instruction and should be regarded as an instructional standard. (Graesser, Bowers, and Hackser, 1997; Hock et al., 1999; Lepper et al., 1997). It was noted by Noel-Levitz (2006) that tutoring is the most common methods used to address low retention rates in at-risk students.

The literature supported the importance of tutoring for at-risk students. (Nelson-Royes & Reglin, 2011). Research on the effectiveness of tutoring has increased over the

years, as demonstrated in many studies noted in the literature review. For example, Ling and Moore (2008) noted that tutoring programs were able to provide a positive influence on the academic progress of students. Gordon et al. (2004) acknowledged that students who participated in tutoring gained a more positive attitude towards their academic education. Rothman and Henderson (2011) documented that students who participated in tutoring were more successful than those students who did not attend tutorial sessions.

Educational literature and the experience of the teachers who serve as tutors in the tutorial program show that tutoring can have a positive effect on the academic achievement of at-risk students. The use of tutors who are familiar with the curriculum was an important component as well. Huang and Dietel (2011) noted that ensuring the tutorial program corresponded with the curriculum and was held on a regular schedule was vital to showing student improvement. Collected data supported the tutors in feeling their familiarity with the district expectations was an attribute to the success of reaching the at-risk student.

Several limitations were disclosed in the completed study. The findings of this study may be limited because was located in one school setting and involved a limited number of interview participants. There is no data available to demonstrate if this tutoring program was more effective that other tutorial programs. The nature of the study, time, and limited resources did not permit measuring the impact of the tutorial program. The study did not examine particular components of the curriculum involved nor did it fully explore the individual practices of the teachers during the tutorial sessions.

Recommendations for Remediation of Limitations

The results of this study suggest that the in-house tutorial program was a promising program to help at-risk students obtain academic achievement. These findings are in agreement with literature on the perceptions of the benefits of tutorial programs. With the federal mandates currently in place, school administrators, teachers, and parents should be aware of the resulting information. This information could be used to help develop tutoring programs not only within the participant school, but it can be used in other school settings with modifications. The outcome of the study will be disseminated to the participating school's administrator with the hopes of continued support of their in-house program. With the permission of the administration, tutors and parents will also be informed also of the outcome of the study via written notification. The study will be published via Proquest UMI and I plan to use my findings to further develop the program and present to other school settings.

Recommendation 1 - Expand notifications

The tutors noted that many students did not attend tutorial sessions because many parents were unaware of the availability. The tutors noted that many parents did not ask about the program until during parent-teacher conference meetings, which are held during the second 9-week term of school. XYZ School has several opportunities during the school year for parent notification. The expanded notifications are as follows:

- During ninth grade orientation. Ninth grade orientation will held before the start of school. Tutoring information should be available for the parents to pick up as well as discussed by administration during the opening remarks. The goals of the program should be discussed so parents are aware that tutorial will be offered should their child need it during the school year.
- During the second 9 week term - A district wide parent-teacher conference is scheduled at the beginning of the second 9 week term. Students received their first term report cards at this time and it gives parents the opportunity to meet with their child's teacher. Tutoring information should be provided for parents who request it. A sign-up area can also be available so parents can sign their child up before leaving the school campus.
- During the course of the school year – Students will be identified by their teachers throughout the school year if they are in need of tutoring, Parents should be notified via mail, email and/or telephone. Contact information is available through the district online student information system that is accessible to all teachers. Documentation should be retained to show the efforts to contact parents

Recommendation 2 - Administration Involvement

Another issue bought forth by the data was the perceived lack of administrative support. Many tutors noted that they felt the administrators expected them "solve all concerns amongst themselves" and several noted that administrators were "unclear about

their expectations" for the tutorial program. Several recommendations can be enacted to alleviate this issue. They are as follows:

- At the beginning of the school year, meet with the tutors to outline expectations and address concerns. As one tutor noted, "If we had a plan in the beginning, it would be easier to prepare for the students."
- During ninth grade orientation, Parent-Teacher Conference day and PTA meetings, the administrators should be available, along with the tutors to speak with parents about tutoring participation and to answer any questions the parents might want addressed.
- Meet with tutors monthly to follow up on tutoring sessions and to address any concerns the tutors may have with a participant or the material being used in the tutoring sessions.
- Collect documentation from tutors and other teachers to show parental contact/attempted contact regarding tutoring. Documents should be kept in a secure location in case it might be needed during a parent conference.
- At the end of the school year, the administration should meet with tutors to discuss what was successful with the program. This would be a good time to begin planning for the next school year, revising unsuccessful strategies and planning what could be added to the successful strategies to strengthen them.

Recommendation 3 - Communication between Tutors

The tutors expressed that they did not have opportunities to communicate with each other. Many of the respondents noted that they felt "isolated from their colleagues" and indicated they felt as if there were no options for "if I, as a tutor, needed help or guidance" or "if I just wanted time to collaborate with the other tutors". There are several recommendations to help address the concern. They are as follows:

- Ensure tutors have a designated time to meet formally with each other to discuss academic progress and implementation of tutorial strategies. This time could be scheduled for after school so there are no time constraints on how long they want to convene.
- At the beginning of the school year, if possible, try to allow tutors to have common planning periods. This would allow for informal meeting between tutors, either as a large group or in a one on one setting. Because of the time limit with using a planning period, this would be impractical for a formal meeting.

Scholarship

Implementing this project study has allowed me to see the potential impact of this tutorial program beyond its local site. Literature supported the use of tutoring for at-risk students as a method of improving for academic achievement. It also showed the need for a structured program. I believe, with further research, this tutoring program could have a positive impact on student learning and academic success, not only as shown at this site but in other sites as well. Through the examination and

presentation of the resulting data, I have come to understand the role that scholarship plays in contributing new resources to help advance the field of education. This advancement is vital because the field is constantly changing and growing. To remain an effective educator, one must stay current on issues that affect the profession. This means working to transform education through teaching, developing curriculum and working with others to disseminate information and positively transform a culture by maximizing the use of available resources.

Project Development and Evaluation

According to Rainey, Sheehan and Maloney (2010), the goal of project evaluation is to examine the effectiveness of a project and to assess if the program is meeting the projected goals. The evaluation of the tutorial program began as a means to understand if the current program was meeting the needs of at-risk students based on the perceptions of the teachers who served as tutors in the program. In developing and evaluation this project, several important insights became apparent. It was important to understand what the need the project serves. According to Altschald and Witkin (2000), this includes defining the focus, identifying the participants and stakeholders; and designing the method for data analysis. There has to be a purpose for the project. According to Bennett and Rockwell (2004), it is important to define the objectives for the project. Having these objectives allow for measurable outcomes. Having measurable outcomes, as noted by Bennett and Rockwell (2004), allows participants to determine if the program is

successful or if modifications are needed. The objectives also give the researcher and stakeholders a guideline, if needed, to make any necessary changes.

Project evaluation is necessary to provide documented evidence as the foundation for any decision making. According to Patton (2002), project evaluations determine what is successful with a project and what can be done to make improvements. Information collected during a project evaluation can determine if the objectives of the program are being met. It is important to determine the correct data collection instrument. Determining the correct instrument is dependent on the information the researcher intends to collect. For this project study, interviews were used to collect the data. According to Hancock and Algozzine (2006), interviews allow the researcher to understand the experiences of those being interviewed. It also allows for follow up meetings for clarity and provides the opportunity to gain in depth information.

These insights were vital in developing a project evaluation that met the needs of the chosen site. These insights can also be used on future project development and evaluations as a reliable means to make decisions to increase the effectiveness of the study.

Leadership and Change

Leadership is important to the culture of a school. According to Bolkan (2009), schools with strong leaders had more committed teachers, higher student achievement and improved school community. In order to be an effective school leader, administrators

have to be willing to embrace innovation to compete with the constantly changing environment. One of the main roles of an administrator, according to Fullan (2002), is to serve as the instructional leader within the school community. This includes focusing on student improvement as well as maintaining a professional community and ensuring the development of teachers as leaders within the classroom. During the course of this study, it was apparent that having the support of the school's leadership was important to the teachers who served as tutors. The tutors wanted the administrators to be more involved, not only with the implementation of the tutorial program but throughout the entire process.

Student achievement is a major part of being an effective leader. According to Fullan (2002), effective leaders work to make a positive impact on the achievement on their students. Working with the tutors to implement the tutorial program can benefit at risk students by providing a solid foundation that can carry over to other classes and extend beyond their time in tutoring sessions. That should not be their only focus, however. An effective leader also understands that developing other leaders within the school is important as well. Fullan (2005) noted that the goal of an effective leader is to prepare the school sustain and advance reform by providing opportunities for teachers to gain new insight, invite questions or disagreements and work to build relationships with the school community and the community stakeholders. With this particular program, granting the tutors autonomy to make decisions, individually and collectively, could help improve the implementation of the tutoring program.

Change is inevitable in the field of education. Research has supported the fact that administrators have to focus on student achievement as well as work to develop relationships with teachers, parents, and the outside community. (Fullan, 2005; Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Lindsey, Roberts, & Campbell Jones, 2005; National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1989, 2001). Administrators have to recognize their role as change agent. Burdette and Schertzer (2005) noted that it becomes necessary to lead by empowerment instead of trying to control the actions of teachers. Effective administrators also have to mirror the values and beliefs of the school community to encourage others to follow their leadership. Developing strong relationships with all the stakeholders demonstrates that the leader is invested in the school community and willing to lead the school to its goals.

Analysis of Self as a Scholar

When starting this study, my personal belief was that tutoring was beneficial for students. The conduction of this study changed my perception of tutoring as well as the field of education. Undergoing the process of study allowed me to see the social change impact that I could make not only on my school community but on the larger educational community as well. Examining the perceptions of the tutors who worked with the tutoring program provided the opportunity to examine my own perceptions about tutoring. There were several insights I felt that has transformed my worldview of education and the perception of myself.

One of the first transformations is growth of my critical thinking skills. Participating in this doctoral program and in the process of conducting this study has heightened my problem analysis skills. It has also brought forth an awareness of social justice and an understanding that decisions that I make in my field can have an impact on others. Another transformation was a growth in my writing and research skills. This growth has shown me my potential in promoting myself professionally as well as making an impact on school-based programs daily. As a result, I have grown to be more reflective and learned to examine the views of the stakeholders as well as my own views.

Analysis of Self as Practitioner

In my growth as a practitioner, my viewpoint had always been from my position as an instructor. Participating in this program has influence my growth in becoming a school leader, not only as an instructor but eventually, in an administrative position. According to DuFour (2002), one of the major changes a practitioner has to make is taking their focus from just teaching to ensuring that the students are learning. During this process, I have learned there has to be specific and measurable goals that focus on student learning. Becoming a practitioner means focusing on the outcome of the measures being put in place for the benefit of the students.

An important part factor in my growth as a practitioner was the realization that I should be taking responsibility for developing solutions to problems. Sacks (2013) noted that teachers are often closer to the problem and by working collaboratively, can come up

with solutions that are more effective. As a practitioner, it is important to embrace all ideas. Becoming a practitioner mean not only gaining knowledge but also working to share that knowledge with others. According to Herbert (2010), being a scholar and a practitioner are not separate entities. Practitioners have to transfer the knowledge gained and utilize it in daily practice.

Implications, Applications and Directions for Future Research

This study was conducted in one urban high school in Mississippi. Because of this, a similar qualitative study conducted in other high school settings is recommended. In the future, a more extensive study, involving a mixed method approach would be needed. This study only examined the perceptions of the tutors who worked with the program. A further study could be used to not only examine the perceptions of the tutors but also to use the collected test data to see if there is a significant growth in the academic achievement of the at-risk students who participate in the program from start to finish.

The tutors felt the program was beneficial to the students but there needed to be better parental notification, more administrative involvement and more opportunities for tutors to work together in order to develop a more cohesive program. Additional research would be needed to understand how this particular program could be implemented in other school settings. A qualitative study could be done in other school settings to see what the needs in that setting would be regarding tutoring, allowing a unique program to be designed for that particular site to produce the expected benefits.

The exact practices used by the tutors were not investigated because this study only examined their perceptions of the program. The data did not examine if the methods used by the individual tutors are effective with helping at-risks students make academic gains. For this reason, I recommend that further assessment be done on the practices of the individual tutors to evaluate if the practices are achieving success for the at-risk students. Done properly, tutorial programs can provide beneficial outcomes on academic achievement and on standardized examinations.

The findings of this study have implications for many practical applications and positive social change. The underlying reason for conducting this study was to examine the perceptions of tutors who participated in the in-house tutorial program. The tutors felt the program was positive and with modifications could be beneficial to more students. As demonstrated in the literature, tutoring has the potential to help at-risk student achieve academic success.

The main purpose of this study was to examine if tutoring is beneficial in helping at-risk students make academic gains. Teachers, administrators, and parents are seeking ways to help increase the academic success and graduation rate of at-risk high school students. Students would benefit from participating in small group tutoring to help supplement the academic coursework the student does in class. If students can achieve academic gains, they are more likely to pass the required standardized exams successfully as well as go on to complete high school.

I hope that educators and other potential stakeholders can see the benefit of developing an in-house tutorial program. Having teachers who are already familiar with the curriculum and the students is beneficial to helping students make academic gains. Education has been long noted as an instrument of social change and is still recognized as one today. Education has the added benefit of bringing about social change by helping students improve their academic outlook. This improvement brings social change as the students realize they are capable of doing well in school and develop an increased desire to learn. Students become empowered in their education and motivated to do better.

Having students become empowered in their education, according to Denti (2012), leads to students developing more self-esteem and confidence. They become more committed to their learning, willing to try new ideas and attempt activities that are more complex. Project Tomorrow (2011) noted that as students take more responsibility, they become more engaged in their educational outcomes. Erwin (2004) suggested one method to help empower students in their education is using the K-W-L charts. The student has the opportunity to share and incorporate the prior knowledge into the new lesson. It also allows some control of the direction of the lesson based on what the student wants to learn, capturing the student's interest and motivating their learning. Powell (1997) noted that tutoring empowers students encouraging them to become more organized and more willing to ask for assistance in a normal class setting. Empowerment leads to a more confident student who becomes a better academic student.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the teacher's perception of the tutorial program currently being used at XYZ School as obtained by interviews with the teachers who served as tutors in the program. Data analysis revealed that the program was well received by the tutors but had several issues that could hinder the work that needed to be done. The findings underscored the need for more administrative involvement, better parent notification and developing a means for tutors to have more time to work together. Implementing the recommendations would allow the program to develop to its full potential and provide academic assistance to at-risk students.

References

Akey, T. M. (2006). School Context, Student Attitudes and Behavior, and Academic Achievement: An Exploratory Analysis. *Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation* . Retrieved from http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED489760.

Altschuld, J .W . & Witkin, B .R . (2000). *From needs assessment to action: Transforming needs into solution strategies.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing, Inc.

Amrein, A.L., & Berliner, D.C., (2002a). High-stakes testing, uncertainty, and student learning. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 10(8). Retrieved from https://doaj.org/article/b78d713a97d64c86a7325c09f53a61f.

Anderson, J. R. (2000). *Learning and memory: An integrated approach (2nd Ed.).* New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.

At-Risk Definition (2014). *Glossary of Education Reform*. Retrieved from http://edglossary.org/at-risk.

Aud, S., Hussar, W., Kena, G., Bianco, K., Frohlich, L., Kemp, J., & Tahan, K. (2011). The condition of education 2011. (NCES Report 2011-033). *National Center for Education Statistics*. Retrieved from http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED520003.

Bachman, R. M. (2013). Shifts in attitudes: A qualitative exploration of student attitudes towards efforts of remediation. *Research & Teaching In Developmental*

Education, 29(2), 14-29. Retrieved from http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ehh&AN=87740097&site=eds-live&scope=site.

Barley, Z.A., & Wegner, S. (2010). An examination of the provision of supplemental educational services in nine rural schools. *Journal of Research in Rural Education*, 25(5), 1-13. Retrieved from http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ehh&AN=70142476&site=eds-live&scope=site.

Bennett, C. & Rockwell, K. (2004). Targeting Outcomes of Programs (TOP): A hierarchy for targeting outcomes and evaluating their achievement. Retrieved from: http://citnews.unl.edu/TOP/index.html.

Block, J. (February 10, 2014). Nurturing Collaboration: 5 strategies. *Edutopia*. Retrieved from: http://www.edutopia.org/blog/nurturing-collaboration-5-strategies-joshua-block

Block, J. H. (1974). *Schools, society, and mastery learning.* New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Bloom, B. S., Chicago Univ., I. E., & Regional Educational Laboratory for the Carolins and Virginia, D. N. (1968). Learning for mastery, instruction and curriculum. *Regional Educational Laboratory for the Carolinas and Virginia, Topical Papers*

and Reprints, Number 1. Evaluation Comment. Retrived from http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED053419

Bloom, B.S. (1971b). *Individual differences in school achievement: A vanishing point.* Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa International.

Bolkan, S. (2009). Transformational leadership in the classroom: Fostering student learning, student participation, and teacher credibility. *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, *36*(4), 296-306. Retrieved from http://www.projectinnovation.biz/jip_2006.html.

Brownell, M., Ross, N., Fransoo, R., Roos, L., Guevremont, A., MacWilliam, L., Yallop, L., & Levin, B. (2006). Is the class half empty? A population based perspective on socioeconomic status and educational outcomes. *IRPP Choices, 12*(5) 1-30. Retrived from http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2026965

Burdette, M., & Schertzer, K. (2005). Cultivating leaders from within. *Educational Leadership*, *62*(8), 40–42. Retrieved from http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ725927&scope=site.

Clandinin, D.J., & Connelly, F.M. (2000). Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Clinton, C. (1982). Equally their due: The education of the planter daughter in the early republic, *Journal of the Early Republic, 2*(1), 39-60. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/3122534.

Chegenizadeh, A., & Nikraz, H. (2013). Feedbacks on student centered class. .*International Proceedings of Economics Development and Research*, *60*, 110. Retrieved from http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/docview/1519057694?accountid=14872.

Creswell, J.W. (2003) *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches.* Thousand Oaks, CA.:Sage

Creswell, J.W. (2008). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Carr, E., & Ogle, D. (1986). KWL plus: A strategy comprehension and summarization. *Journal of Reading*, 30, 626-631. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/40031872

Chipman, M., & Roy, N. (2006). The Peer Tutoring Literacy Program™: Achieving reading fluency and developing self-esteem in elementary school students. *The ACIE Newsletter*, *10*(1), 1-8. Retrieved from http://www.carla.umn.edu/immersion/acie/vol10/bridge_nov06.pdf

Deeney, T.A. (2008). Coordinating supplemental reading instruction. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, *43*(4), 218-225. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1177/1053451207310344

Deke, J., Dragoset, L., Bogen, K., Gill, B., & National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance.(2012). Impacts of Title I supplemental educational services on student achievement. NCEE 2012-4053. *National Center For Education Evaluation And Regional Assistance*. Retrieved from http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED532016.

Denti, L. (2012). Proactive classroom management, K–8. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Denzin, N & Lincoln, Y. (2005). *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research (3rd ed).* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

DuFour, R. (2002). The learning centered principal. *Educational Leadership*. Retrieved from: http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/may02/vol59/num08/The_Learning-Centered_Principal.aspx

Elfers, A., Plecki, M., & Knapp, M. (2006). Teacher mobility: Looking more closely at the movers within a state system. *PJE. Peabody Journal of Education, 81(3),* 94-127. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/S15327930pje8103_4

Ernest, A., Johnson, P., & Kelly-Riley, D. (2011). Assessing rhetorically: Evidence of student progress in small-group writing tutorials. *Learning Assistance Review*, *16*(2), 23-40. Retrieved from http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=EJ960453

Erwin, J. (2004). The classroom of choice. Retrieved from: http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/104020/chapters/Power-in-the-Classroom@-Creating-the-Environment.aspx

Fink, A.S. (2000). The role of the researcher in the qualitative research process: A potiental barrier to archiving qualitative data. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 1(3) 1-15.

Fuchs, L., Fuchs, D., Craddock, C, Hollenbeck, K., Hamlett, C., & Schatschneider, C., (2008). Effects of small-group tutoring with and without validated classroom instruction on at-risk students' math problem solving: Are two tiers of prevention better than one? *Journal of Educational Psychology,* 100(3), 491-509. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1037/0022-0663.100.3.491.

Fullan, M. (2005). Leadership & sustainability. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Fullan, M. (2002). The change leader. *Educational Leadership*, 8, 16-21. Retrieved from: http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/may02/vol59/num08/The-Change-Leader.aspx

Gabriel, J.G. (2005). *How to thrive as a teacher leader*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Garcia, L. & Thornton, O. (2014). The enduring importance of parental involvement. National Education Association. Retrieved from:

http://neatoday.org/2014/11/18/the-enduring-importance-of-parental-involvement-2/

Gardner III, R., Nobel, M.M., Hessler, T., Yawn, C.D., & Heron, T.E. (2007). Tutoring system innovations: Past Practices to future prototypes. *Intervention in school & Clinic, 43*(2), 71-81. Retrieved from http://eds.a.ebscohost.com.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=09b23359-33fb-4d65-8185-67b037d7db15%40sessionmgr4001&vid=32&hid=4111

Gordon, E.E. (2009). 5 ways to improve tutoring programs. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *90*(6), 440-445. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/docview/218484968?accountid=14872.

Gordon, E.E., Morgan, R., Ponticell, J., & O'Malley, C. (2004). Tutoring solutions for No Child Left Behind: Research, practice, and policy implications. *NASSP Bulletin, 88*(638*).* 59-68. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1177/019263650408863805

Graesser, A. C., Bowers, C., & Hacker, D. J. (1997). An anatomy of naturalistic tutoring. In K. Hogan & M. Pressley (Eds.), *Scaffolding student learning: Instructional approaches and issues* (pp. 145–183). Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books.

Guskey, T. R. (2007). Closing achievement gaps: Revisiting Benjamin S. Bloom's "Learning for Mastery". *Journal of Advanced Academics, 19,* 8-31. Retrieved

from http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=EJ786608.

Guskey, T. R. & Gates, S. (1986). Synthesis of research on the effects of mastery learning in elementary and secondary classrooms. *Educational Leadership, 43,* 73-80. Retrieved from http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ehh&AN=8522479&site=ehost-live

Hancock, D. & Algozzine, B. (2006). *Doing case study research: A practical guide for beginning researchers.* New York and London: Teachers College Press.

Hanushek, E.A., & Raymond, M.E. (2005). Does school accountability lead to improved student performance? *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, *24*(2), 297-327. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/3326211.

Heinrich, C.J., Meyer, R.H., & Whitten, G. (2010). Supplemental education services under No Child Left Behind: Who signs up, and what do they gain? *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 32*(2), 273-298. Retrieved from http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED508259.

Hock, M., Deshler, D., & Schumaker, J. (1999). Tutoring programs for academically underprepared college students: A review of the literature. *Journal of College Reading and Learning*, *29*(2), 101–122. Retrieved from http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ585416&site=ehost-live.

Hock, M., Pulvers, K., Deshler, D. & Schumaker, J. (2001). The effects of an after-school tutorial program on the academic performance of at-risk students and students with LD. *Remedial and Special Education*, *22*(3), 172-186. Retrieved from http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ627968&site=ehost-live.

Hoff, D. J. (October 8,2007). Provision on Tutoring Raises Renewal Issues. *Education Week*, *27*(7), 1. Retrieved from http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2007/10/10/07nclb.h27.html.

Holliday, T. (2012). Evaluating the effectiveness of tutoring: An easier way. *Learning Assistance Review (TLAR), 17*(2), 21-32. Retrieved from http://www.nclca.org/tlar.html.

Hopkins, G. (February 8, 2008). Principals identify top ten leadership traits. *Education World.* Retrieved from: http://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/admin/admin190.shtml

Huang, D., & Dietel, R. (2011) *Making afterschool programs better*. (CRESST Policy Brief). Los Angeles, CA: University of California.

Jackson Public School. (2012) *District pacing guide*. Retrieved from http://portal.jackson.k12.ms.us/home/teacher/curriculumdocuments/forms/alltems

Jackson Public School (2012) *Secondary Curriculum Guide.* Retrieved from http://www.jackson.k12.ms.us/departments/curriculum/publications/curriculum_guide.pdf

Jensen, E. (2009). Teaching with poverty in mind. *Alexandria, VA: ASCD*.

Johnson, B. (2011). Making the most out of teacher collaboration. *Edutopia.* Retrieved from: http://www.edutopia.org/blog/teacher-collaboration-strategies-ben-johnson

Johnson, K. A. (2000). The peer effect on academic achievement among public elementary school students. A Report of the Heritage Center for Data Analysis. Retrieved from http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED442916.

Klem, A.M. & Connell, J.P. (2004). Relationships matter: Linking teacher support to student engagement and achievement. *Journal of School Health*, 74, 262-273. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1111/j.1746-1561.2004.tb08283.x

Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2002). The leadership challenge. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Lambert, N., and McCombs, B. (eds.). 1998. How students learn: Reforming schools through learner-centered education. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Lauer, P.A., Akiba, M., Wilkerson, S. B., Apthrop, H. S., Snow, D., & Martin-Glenn, M. L. (2006). Out of school time programs: A meta-analysis of effects for at-risk students. *Review of Educational Research*, *76*(2), 275-313. Retrieved from

http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ers&AN=89164349&site=eds-live&scope=site

Leal, D., Barnhart, J. F., & Frederiksen, L. (2008). More than tutoring: Preparing quality teachers while helping at-risk students.*Ohio Reading Teacher*, *39*(1), 45-55. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/docview/209606588?accountid=14872

Lepper, M. R., Drake, M. F., & O'Donnell-Johnson, T. (1997). Scaffolding techniques of expert human tutors. In K. Hogan & M. Pressley (Eds.), *Scaffolding student learning: Instructional approaches and issues* (pp. 109–144), Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books.

Lindsey, R. B., Roberts, L. M., & Campbell Jones, F. (2005). The culturally proficient school: An implementation guide for school leaders. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press

Ling, T. & Moore, K. (2008). What works for education: Lessons from experimental evaluations of programs and social interventions to enhance educational outcomes. (Fact Sheet #2008-21). Washington, DC: Child Trends. Retrieved from http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Child_Trends-2008_05_28_FS_WWEducation.pdf.

Meitrodt, J. & Burnette, D. (2012, Jun 17). A costly lesson on tutoring programs. *Star Tribune*. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/docview/1021051199?accountid=14872.

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mississippi Department of Education. (2014). 2012-2013 Accountability results. Retrieved from http://reports.mde.k12.ms.us/report/Lettergrade.aspx.

Morris, D., Tyner, B., & Perney, J. (2000). Early steps: Replicating the effects of a first-grade reading intervention program. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 92(4), 681-693. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1037/0022-0663.92.4.681.

Munoz, M., Chang, F., Ross, S. (2012). No child left behind and tutoring in reading and mathematics: Impact of supplemental educational services on large-scale assessment. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 17:3*, 186-200. Retrieved from http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED528807

.National Association of Secondary School Principals (1989). Organizing for learning: Toward the 21st century. Reston, VA: Author

Noble, J. P., Roberts, W. L., & Sawyer, R. L. (2006). Student Achievement, Behavior, Perceptions, and Other Factors Affecting ACT Scores. ACT Research Report Series, 2006-1. *ACT, Inc.* Retrieved from http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED510477

Noel-Levitz, Inc. (2006). *Student success in developmental math: Strategies to overcome*

a primary barrier to retention. Retrieved from https://www.noellevitz.com/NR/rdonlyres/B4148B72-C135-4AD4-A04C-2F66821C872C/0/ENABLEMATH_paper_0706indd.pdf

Ogle, D. M.. (1986). K-W-L: A Teaching Model That Develops Active Reading of Expository Text. *The Reading Teacher*, *39*(6), 564–570. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/20199156

Patton, M.Q. (2002). Qualitative research and evaluation methods. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

Peterson, P.E., & West, M.R. (2006). Is your child's school effective? Don't rely on NCLB to tell you. *Education Next*, (4), 74. Retrieved from http://www.hoover.org/publications/ednext/3826496.html.

Petress, K. (2008). What is meant by "Active Learning?". *Education*, 128(4), 566-569. Retrieved from http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ehh&AN=32708989&site=ehost-live.

Phillips, V. & Hughes, R. (2012). Teacher collaboration: The essential common-core ingredient. *Education Week*. Retrieved from: http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2012/12/05/13hughes.h32.html

Powell, M.A. (1997). Academic tutoring and mentoring: A literature review. *California Research Bureau:* California State Library. 7-59.

Project Tomorrow. (2011). The new 3 e's of education: Enabled, engaged, empowered. Retrieved from: http://www.tomorrow.org/speakup/pdfs/SU10_3EofEducation(Students).pdf.

Rainey, K., Sheehan, D., Maloney, C., & Texas Center for Educational Research.. (2010). Students training for academic readiness (STAR): Year three evaluation report. *Texas Center for Educational Research.* Retrieved from http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED535999.

Rincones-Gómez, R. (2009). Evaluating student success interventions: Principles and practices of student success. *Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count*. 1-10. Retrieved from http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED532377.

Rinehart, R. W., Duncan, ,. G., & Chinn, C. A. (2014). A scaffolding suite to support evidence-based modeling and argumentation. *Science Scope*, 38(4), 70-77. Retrived from http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ehh&AN=99625207&site=ehost-live.

Roos, N., Brownell, M., Guevremont, R., Levin, B., MacWilliams, L., & Roos, L.(2006). The complete story: A population based perspective on school performance and educational testing. *Canadian Journal of Education, 29(3),* 684-705. Retrieved

from http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=EJ756118

Rothman, T. & Henderson, M. (2011). Do school-based tutoring programs significantly improve students' performance on standardized tests? *RMLE Online: Research in Middle Level Education, 34(6),* 1-10. Retrieved from http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=EJ925246.

Sacks, A. (2013). The problem-solving power of teachers. Educational Leadership. Retrieved from: http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/oct13/vol71/num02/The_Problem-Solving_Power_of_Teachers.aspx

Saulny, S. (2006). U.S. gives charter schools a big push in New Orleans. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2006/06/13/us/13charter.html.

Saxena, S. (2013). How can we promote teacher collaboration? *EdTechReview*. Retrieved from: http://edtechreview.in/trends-insights/insights/844-how-can-we-promote-teacher-collaboration

Scantlebury, K., & Murphy, C. (2009). Maria Edgeworth: nineteenth century Irish female pioneer of science education. *Irish Educational Studies*, 28(1), 103-113. doi:10.1080/03323310802597374

Shanahan, Timothy (1998). "On the effectiveness and limitations of tutoring in reading." *In Review of Research in Education* 23, ed. P David Pearson and Ashgar Iran-Nejad. Washington, D.C.: American Educational Research Association.

Shepard, J. & Greene, R. (2003). *Sociology and you*. Ohio: Glencoe McGraw-Hill.

Slavin, R. (1999). How can funding equity ensure enhanced achievement? *Journal of Educational Finance, 24*, 519-528. Retrieved from http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ehh&AN=21415574&site=ehost-live.

Slavin, R.E., Lake, C., Davis, S., & Madden, N.A. (2011). Effective programs for struggling readers: A best evidence synthesis. *Educational Research Review*, 6(1), 1-26. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2010.07.002.

Sparks, S. D. (2011). Study finds gaps remain large for Hispanic students. *Education Week.* Retrieved from: http://www.edweek.org/ew/issues/achievement-gap/

Springer, M.G., Pepper, M.J., & Ghosh-Dastidar, B. (2009). Supplemental education services and student test score gains: Evidence from a large, urban school district. Paper presented at the *NCLB Emerging Findings Research Conference* at the Urban Institute, Washington, DC on August 12, 2009.

Trejos, N. (2004, Sep 21). Schools venture into tutoring: Area districts starting to compete with private programs. *The Washington Post.* Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/docview/409704615?accountid=14872

Ugo, A. N. (2010). *The relationship between tutoring and student success* (Order No. 3411965). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (635431963). Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/docview/635431963?accountid=14872

U.S. Department of Education. (2005). Supplemental educational services non-regulatory guidance. Washington DC. Retrieved from www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/suppscsguid.doc.

Viadero, D. (2000). Lags in minority achievement defy traditional explanations. Education Week. Retrieved from: http://www.edweek.org/ew/issues/achievement-gap/

Viadero, D. (2009). Scholars Probe Diverse Effects of Exit Exams. *Education Week*, *28*(30), 1-10. Retrieved from http://www.edweek.org/ew/toc/2009/04/29/index.html.

Vinovskis, M. "Family and schooling in colonial and nineteenth-century America," *Journal of Family History,* Jan 1987, Vol. 12 Issue 1-3. Retrived from doi: 10.1177/036319908701200102.

Walker, E. N. (2007). The structure and culture of developing a mathematics tutoring collaborative in an urban high school. *The High School Journal, 91(1*), 57-67. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/docview/220222102?accountid=14872

Walker, K., & Education Partnerships, I. (. (2010). Saturday Schools and Tutoring as Interventions. Research Brief. Education Partnerships, Inc. Retrieved

from http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED538285.

Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research design and methods* (3rd ed). London: Sage.

Yin, R.K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (4th ed). Thousand Oaks, CA:Sage.

Zimmer, R., Gill, B., Razquin, B., Lockwood, J. & Department of Education, W.C. (2007). State and local implementation of the "No Child Left Behind Act". Volume I – Title I school choice, supplemental education services and student achievement. A report from the National Longitudinal Study of "No Child Left Behind" (NLS-NCLB). *US Department of Education.* Retrieved from http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED497259

Appendix A

Interview Questions

For statistical purposes

- Subject taught
- Number of years as a teacher
- Number of students per tutorial session
- Length of time for each session
- Number of tutorial meetings per week

1. Discuss your experiences working as a tutor in the current tutorial program.
2. Describe the teaching strategies you have found to be successful in your tutorial sessions.
3. What do you feel are the positive aspects of the current program?
4. What, if any, do you feel are the negative aspects of the current program?
5. What are your thoughts on the overall impact of the current in house program on student achievement?
6. How are the concepts of mastery learning (unit organization, feedback methods, and corrective instruction) utilized during your tutorial sessions?
7. Do you feel the methods used to select students for the program are effective? Why or why not?
8. What are the methods used to assess the current knowledge of the students before tutoring sessions began?
9. How is data from formative assessments used to provide corrective instruction?

10. What type of enrichment activities are incorporated into the tutorial sessions for students who have mastered the material and do not need corrective instruction for a particular objective?

Appendix B

Transcribed Interview with Tutors

All interviewees were given a letter and number to protect their names and identities as indicated in the

Question one - Discuss your experiences working as a tutor in the current tutorial program.

A1 – As a tutor, I have encountered a myriad of students, some of which are excited about being more prepared for the state required assessment and others that are not as concerned about their performance.

B1 - Tutoring allows for more personalized instruction. It also allows for the teacher to clear up misunderstandings for the students.

C1 - Tutoring has been a great intervention for struggling students. It allows those students who need one on one support, the opportunity to comprehend the concepts better.

D1 - I find that the students that show up have a desire to learn the information but are too lazy to put forth the effort that is required to be a successful student. A lot of the problems they have is from a lack of studying or reviewing the material outside of the classroom environment.

E1 - It is often as a result of students who fail to pay proper attention in class. Generally, though they are able to understand better.

F1 - In my experience, the current tutorial program is a great way to reach the students that might be overlooked in the classroom. Students tend to be more focused and attentive.

G1 - The students are encouraged to arrive at tutoring prepared, not only should they have supplies but have an idea of what they would like to focus on during our tutoring session. My perspective is that tutoring should be student centered and student led in that it should be a focused individualized effort to improve the students understanding of the course content.

H1 – I work in the school program and I independently offer tutoring and make up sessions on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays after school until 5:00. I guess our

program for classes that are not SATP is to make up your own and do it yourself. My experience is that the students do not want to come to tutoring until it is far too late to make a difference in their grades.

I1 – I feel the program is a very good help for those students who need remediation. Students seem to really get a lot out of the sessions.

J1 – I like the fact that I can plan what I want and do what I want. The big issue is that students hardly ever come until the last minute. They do not exhibit any sense of urgency and don't seem to care. Also, it's difficult to tutor history if the students have not read over the material. Sometimes, I find myself teaching and reteaching and reteaching some more.

Question two – Describe the teaching strategy you have found to be successful in your tutoring sessions.

A1 – I have found identifying concepts using test questions and having students explain why they know the remaining answers are correct have proved to be successful.

B1 - I use annotation of test questions, and eliminating answer choices. I also have the student reviewing main points of key objectives.

C1 - Visual learning is very effective, for it gives students the ability to visually see what each step is to solve those mathematical problems. I try to include all three different learning modalities so that I can reach all students' learning levels.

D1 - Visual aids appear to offer the best results. Anything that doesn't require the students to read usually gets past the lazy barrier.

E1 - I use one on one interaction with the students. Use of extra resources made available during class to use and then they use them during class.

F1 - Flash cards and other visual aids act as great remedial strategies to the students. I have found group stations and inquiry-based assignments most effective.

G1 - Successful strategies include listening to student's needs, pushing the students to pin point their own short falls. Once we have reviewed their self-assessment I am able to address their specific learning need. The students general understand the concepts better and they tend to grasp the information more quickly one on one.

H1 – I work one on one with each student and work through practices with him or her. After I have retaught the lesson, I give them an assignment to complete there with me. I usually let this assignment replace one of their low daily grades.

I1 – I mostly used primary source analysis and political cartoon analysis.

J1 – Small groups work best. However, this is only when the student has taken the time to familiarize him/herself with the material. I use electronic games that can be played on the Promethean Board and have hands on activities that help with vocabulary and reading comprehension.

Question three – What do you feel are the positive aspects of the current program?

A1 – The program focused on the lower 25 percent of students who would otherwise be in danger of failing the state assessment. I also feel that the tutorial timing is a positive aspect because many students cannot stay after school due to transportation restriction so setting aside time during the school day is beneficial.

B1 - It is always great to help a student clear up misunderstandings. Is can help increase test scores.

C1 - The positive aspects are the students' confidence level. In my opinion, all students want to learn! They just need the right environment conducive to learn.

D1 - Students can receive help from any teacher in the department, not just their actual class instructor.

E1 - Students have less disruptions and distractions that allow them to focus and glean in ways they can't during regular instructional time. They need to learn how to be better prepared to participate and listen in class.

F1 - Most students that come to tutorials really have a desire to get better. These students are very well behaved and are focused on the task. With smaller groups, instruction can be given based on each student's particular needs.

G1 - That it is free and open to all students. Students have the leeway to come when they need it and work on specific problems.

H1 – It's hard to say what the positive aspects of our current program since I do not communicate with other teachers about it. For me personally, it's the extra attention the students get when they come to tutoring.

I1 – It gives students who normally wouldn't ask questions in a large class setting the opportunity to ask those questions.

J1 – There is a huge lack of incentive for both students and teachers to do it. Most students who attend don't need it and those who need it, never show up. In addition, teachers are not compensated for the extra time. Therefore, if he or she has a varied perspective on teaching and learning, then he/she will less likely facilitate tutoring.

Question four – What, if any, do you feel are the negative aspects of the current program?

A1 – I think that there should be a more focused review based on the concepts that the student has not mastered. This would require more data regarding the mastery of individual concepts. Parents should be made aware of tutoring. When I talk to some of my parents about the progress of their child, they were unaware of tutoring being available.

B1 - The extra hours without compensation can wear on teacher. The extra planning can take up a lot of free time as well. There should be a better way to inform parents. Even if the students are informed at school, the parents are still unaware because the students don't tell them.

C1 - The negative aspects are the large groups of students to tutor. It is very difficult for an educator to reach all students, when the groups are very large. Administrators don't seem concerned about the program. It seems like we are abandoned to do the program in any manner we choose.

D1 – I think it would benefit from more administrator involvement. Parents should be more involved as well.

E1 - Sometimes it can serve as reinforcement for students not to handle their responsibilities because they know they can come to tutorial. Almost as if we "owe" them. There is really no administrator or parent involvement in the program. It's very isolating when you feel you are the only one who is involved in your program.

F1 - One negative aspect of the program is that most of the students that need the tutoring the most fail to utilize the program. The students that usually come are students that are in no immediate danger of failing. Another aspect is the fact that we are not working as team with other tutors. We don't meet or discuss what takes place in other sessions.

G1 - Students do not come and possibly, because it is free they do not value the opportunity that they have to gain free assistance.

H1 – Our school definitely needs a structured tutorial program beyond SATP and credit recovery. It's like we have cells of tutorial programs but none or intertwined and the teachers don't interact about it. On the other hand, if they do, I'm not invited to the table. It seems that administrators just allow each individual tutor to manage their own program.

I1 – I feel that the program needs more structure. We are left to our own devices and seldom meet with each other or administrators.

J1 – There is not a set value on remediation and students do not have any interest in being tutored. We also don't meet as a team. I meet with the teachers who teach my subject but not all the tutors ever meet as a group.

Question five – What are your thoughts on the overall impact of the current in-house program on student achievement?

A1 – I have found that it benefits those students who have bought into the idea of utilizing the skills taught to make the difference between passing or failing the state assessment.

B1 - It can be very effective but only if the student continues tutorials and studies. Just one tutorial session alone will not change anything.

C1 - I think the tutoring is efficient when it is consistent. It needs to be consistent on the student's attendance and the teachers' instruction.

D1 - I really believe that this school has a great system in place for those students that have the desire to succeed.

E1 - Tutorials are great resources when used properly. Students have to truly put forth maximum effort to get the best out of it. Teachers may be able to help more intimately or try a strategy that may not be successful during whole group instruction.

F1 - The program is efficient and gives the participants a great chance of moving into a higher level of understanding.

G1 - I do believe that tutoring makes a great difference. I believe it makes a difference to student understanding and ultimately achievement. I do think we sometimes help the

students too much do not encourage them to think through their issues themselves and may make tutoring a handicap where we drill and kill and the students do are not held responsible for their own education.

H1 – All I can speak for is mine. If my failing students come to tutorial regularly, they generally pass the class.

I1 – I believe the program has a positive effect on student achievement. It they come on a regular basis, it shows in their class work and their grades. We need consistent parental involvement in the program. It would really help encourage the students to come to tutoring.

J1 - It needs to be revamped… it needs more structure and the administration needs to take more ownership of it, instead of leaving it to the teachers who care…or are only under SATP. The students, who have attended tutorial faithfully/regularly, have shown improvement and have performed well on their standardized tests…but our of 300 people, what good is it when there are only five going to tutoring?

Question six – How are the concepts of mastery learning (unit organization, feedback methods, and corrective instruction) utilized during your tutorial sessions?

A1 – The students are generally organized according to a very broad concept that has not been mastered. We utilize feedback methods during the tutorial class as a tool of identifying errors in thought.

B1 - We use previous test results and quizzes to determine the needs of the student. We also use the same data to determine growth.

C1 - I group my students based on their current learning level. These levels are differentiated from basic, proficient, and to advanced.

D1 - Corrective instruction is a big part of my tutorials. I try to focus in on many of my students' bad study habits and correct them before trying to introduce new material. A lot of time, that is where the problem lies.

E1 - Students are asked to be prepared with materials and then asked what parts are they lacking understanding. If the assignment is incomplete, they have a more focused environment and to receive remediation.

F1 - These concepts are used to identify weaknesses, provide scaffolding, and to assess the student at the end of the session.

G1 - Once students have completed the assignments we move on to discuss work completed in class to assess the student level of mastery and areas of weakness in this mostly one on one setting.

H1 – My method is to be kind of like a mother/child situation where the child is sitting at the kitchen table doing their homework and the mother questions and oversees the overall progress.

I1 – We go by different themes that we have to cover for the test.

J1 – We tend to do things more by units than objectives. Our objectives are so broad, teaching themes is more productive. History is a story and we learn it best by hands-on activities, including primary source documents. We focus on vocabulary and reading comprehension. The tutorials are more of a conversation supported with hands-on resources. I meet the students where they are and address the questions they have.

Question seven – Do you feel the methods used to select students for the program are effective? Why or why not?

A1 – The choice to tutor only the bottom 25% was strategic, in the fact that it addressed our largest area of concern. I felt like our choice of students got better during the second year because the students who were in the bottom 25% because of consistent disciplinary actions were filtered out. This decision allowed the tutorial classes to become more efficient.

B1 - They are data proven methods. They have increased test scores in the past but it requires dedication from the student.

C1 - I think it is effective, for we make sure to choose those students who are definitely low and needs that one on one instruction.

D1 - The method is mostly data driven. As the old saying goes, “Numbers never lie.” Test scores have been tracked and analyzed by each department to identify those students in need of extra help

E1 - They are effective because it identifies students who are in true need of support. It is ineffective because it allows those who are lackadaisical and irresponsible to have a “fall back” for when their laziness falls through and are in academic danger.

F1 - Yes. Students are targeted based on test scores and behavior. This method ensures that the students who need the tutorial and student that will take the tutoring serious are help.

G1 - No, because some students should be required to come to tutoring it should not be a choice for them.

H1 – Most of my students are selected based on grades in classes. I do have students that attend voluntarily as well.

I1 – Yes. I have seen improved test scores from the students who participate in tutoring. Identifying those in need of help early in the school year is beneficial to improving the academic work of the students.

J1 – Tutoring is mostly voluntary But mandatory remediation during the school day involves choosing students who are to be retested or who have tested low in other areas. Their teachers also deem these students at-risk. While tutoring is not 100% proof against failing, the fact is that any exposure is better than no exposure. We're a data driven school and so if a student is deemed at risk, it is based on aggregate data sources.

Question eight – What are the methods used to assess the current knowledge of the students before tutoring sessions began?

A1 - Many times, each tutorial class starts with a 4-7 minute multiple-choice practice set of problems that would be used for discussion during the class session. The end of the tutorial session involved a 5-question assessment on similar concepts to make sure that the students retained the information.

B1 - We use several companies, USA Test Prep and Penda that mirrors the state test to create test and quizzes.

C1 - After each concept is taught, students have to pass a comprehensive exam and must pass with at least 80 %.

D1 - Pre-tests, unit tests, quizzes, bell ringers

E1 - Students' test scores, academic grades, performance assessments and projects. Sometimes teachers can notice when their students need support and make the contact with the student/parent to get them to tutorials. Often, students also make the requests themselves.

F1 - Common assessment and district benchmarks are used to identify students' weaknesses and strengths.

G1 - Test scores are one of the main methods uses to determine if a student needs tutoring assistance.

H1 – I can use previous assessments of my students to determine where they are and what needs correction.

I1 – I use data from the paper-based test to determine the themes the student is having the most problems. I also incorporate computer activities and hands on work.

J1 – I tend to ask the students what they want to know more about and what their areas of struggle in class are. Most are forward with their needs, but I tend to learn what I need to know after having them to read and during our discussion. Sometimes I use KWL charts.

Question nine – How is data from formative assessments used to provide corrective instruction?

A1 – The data from formative assessments was used to determine what specific objectives the students lacked mastery. This was used more often in tutorial sessions that are held be each teacher more so then with the tutorial sessions. In the tutorial sessions, general objectives are covered for all the students present, however, in teacher tutorial classes held after school, the data from formative assessment was used more often on a student-by-student basis.

B1 - Test questions are broken down by competency and objective so we know exactly what must be covered.

C1 - The data informs the educator on which concepts the students did not fully comprehend. This gives the educator the opportunity to re-teach those concepts.

D1 - After every common assessment, we as a department hold a data meeting to analyze the results and decide on the best course of action going forward.

E1 - It determines standards/objectives that students may not have mastered and need a certain amount of remediation to strengthen.

F1 - Once the data has been analyzed, corrective instruction is based on objectives with low mastery. This helps us identify potential misconceptions.

G1 - The areas that students score lowest are the areas that are the initial focus of the tutoring session.

H1 – I can answer this from the point of view of my SATP tutorial classes that are hidden under the guise of technical writing and Mississippi writers. I give them assessments and look to see what questions they have missed. Looking at the results of the retesting scores from the last retest, they, on average, get about seven of those 26 reading comprehension correct. I plan to focus ONLY on reading comprehension until the next test, hoping they will get 3-5 more correct which will allow most of them to pass.

I1 – We use the data to identify where the students are struggling. This allows me to customize the sessions in order to give the child the most help.

J1 – We, as a department, meet regularly and discuss overall performance. We then take those units/themes/objectives and decide how and when to retest them. The more exposure to these assessments, the better the students tend to perform at the end of the year.

Question ten – What type of enrichment activities are incorporated into the tutorial sessions for students who have mastered the material and do not need corrective instruction for a particular objective?

A1 – As students continue to attend sessions, enrichment is gained through in-depth questioning during the tutorial class to make sure students are able to justify in multiple ways why their answers are correct.

B1 - We include interactive online games, labs, and puzzles for those who just want extra practice.

C1 - Students, who successfully complete the advanced assignments, will complete hands on tasks that is very comprehensive. The tasks are utilized to make sure students understand each standard thoroughly.

D1 - I love to use either the Penda Learning or USATestPrep websites. A lot of times I will challenge my students in tutorials and make the environment fun but competitive. Students love having to compete for some reason.

E1 - Teachers are able to access sites/videos through the internet, they may be able to locate extra worksheets through websites to enhance the tutorial experience. Pretty much, they look for other innovative methods where they may be able to help the student.

F1 - Peer tutoring provides a great enrichment activity for students who have mastered a particular objective.

G1 - Test review and peer tutoring.

H1 – I do not have students in my tutorial that need enrichment. All of mine are remediation

I1 – I use more primary source data, political cartoon analysis and peer interactions. I also use internet sites as enrichment.

J1 – I have a series of technological activities that the kids find to be quite entertaining. There is jeopardy, and more competitive games that quiz the students on their knowledge. When we do these activities, I let them own the process. They tend to teach and reteach each other because someone always knows something that someone else doesn't.

Appendix C

Teachers' Perception of the Use of Small Group Tutorial

Formative Evaluation Report for Local Stakeholder Use

Karen M. Johnson

Slide 1

Purpose

The school offers tutorial for students who are in danger of failing one or more Subject Area Testing Preparation Classes (SATP).

These classes are biology I, English II, United States history and algebra I.

This program study exams the perceptions of the teachers who work as tutors with the program to evaluate what, if any changes need to be made to the current program.

Slide 2

Overview

Students who are enrolled in SATP classes are required to take a district-mandated examination at the end of each 9-week term.

The district examinations are used to assess the students' potential achievement on the state examination in the spring.

A score of 70 was established by teacher consensus as the equivalent of proficient on the state examination.

Slide 3

Background

The tutorial program was developed when teachers noted a disproportionate number of students scored below 70 on the first 9-week district examination.

Students are selected to participate in the tutorial program if they scored below 70 on the 1st term district exam and have a below 70 overall class average.

All tutors are teachers of and have certifications in the subject areas of science, math, social studies, and English.

Slide 4

Research Questions

What are the teachers' perceptions of the in-house currently in use?

In order to address these main questions, several sub-questions were implemented:

- How do participants perceive the implementation of the tutorial program?
- What is the perceived impact of the small group tutorial program on the academic achievement of at risk students?
- What, if any, changes need to be made in order to improve the program?

Slide 5

Research Design and Approach

Ethnographical Case Study Design – Evaluation of the in-house tutorial program from the perspective of the tutors.

Tutors who worked in the program were invited to provide their personal observations of the program.

10 tutors responded to the invitation.

Data was collected using face-to-face interview with open-ended questions.

Slide 6

Research Design and Approach

Formative Assessment – Perception of the program

- Benefits of the program
- Areas that need improvement
- Recommended methods to improve the program
- Stakeholders – tutors and the school administrators – need access to the findings in order to make informed decisions on:
    - Program goals

- Program modifications

Slide 7

Research Design and Approach

- **Program evaluation**
  - Collect data based on interviews
  - Analyze data based on responses from interviewees
- **Focus Findings and Recommendations on:**
  - Benefits of the program
  - Recommended changes

Slide 8

Research Findings and Recommendations

Discuss your experiences working as a tutor in the current tutorial program.

- More personalized instruction
- Good intervention for struggling students
- Students tend to be more focused and attentive
- Students are too lazy to put forth the effort in class and often don't study outside of the classroom
- Tutoring is a great way to reach students who may be overlooked in the classroom

Slide 9

Research Findings and Recommendations

Discuss your experiences working as a tutor in the current tutorial program. (cont.)

- Tutoring should be student centered and student led to focus on the needs of the individual student.
- Students usually wait until it's almost too late to come to tutoring
- The program is good for students who need remediation.
- I like the fact I can plan what I want and do what I want. The bigger issue is students wait until the last minute to come.

- Students are able to understand better but it would help if they paid proper attention in class.

Slide 10

Research Findings and Recommendations

Describe the teaching strategy you have found to be successful in your tutoring sessions.

- Identifying concepts using test questions
- Annotation and review
- Visual learning with mathematical practice
- Visual aids such as flashcards
- One on one interaction
- Flash cards
- Student self-assessment
- Primary source analysis and political cartoon analysis
- Small groups and electronic games

Slide 11

Research Findings and Recommendations

What do you feel are the positive aspects of the current program?

- The program is focused on the bottom 25 percent who are in danger of failing. Timing the tutoring during school eliminates problems with transportation.
- It's great to help students who need it and to clear up misconceptions.
- It helps to improve the confidence level of students by providing to right environment conducive to learning.
- Students can receive help from any teacher, not just their actual instructor.
- Students have less disruptions and distraction that allow them to focus.

Slide 12

Research Findings and Recommendations

What do you feel are the positive aspects of the current program? (cont.)

- Students are well behaved and focused
- It's free and open to all students.
- Students get the extra attention they need that often cannot happen in class.
- Give students who wouldn't' ask questions in class an opportunity to ask those questions.
- Teachers are not compensated for the extra time. The students who truly need it don't participate like they should.

Slide 13

Research Findings and Recommendations

What, if any, do you feel are the negative aspects of the current program?

- It should be more focused on concepts not mastered. Parents should be more aware of tutorial being available.
- Extra time and planning can be wearing on a teacher. There should be a better way to inform parents.
- Administrators don't seem concerned about the program. It feels like we are abandoned to do the program in any manner we choose.
- I think if would benefit from more administrator involvement. Parents should be more involved as well.
- There is no administrator or parent involvement. Sometimes, the program can serve as reinforcement for students to not handle their responsibilities because they know they can come to tutorial.

Slide 14

Research Findings and Recommendations

What, if any, do you feel are the negative aspects of the current program? (cont.)

- The students that need the tutoring the most fail to utilize the program. We are not working as a team with other tutors. We don't meet or discuss what takes place in other sessions.
- Students do not value the program because it is free.
- Our school needs a structured program. We have cells of programs but none are intertwined and the teachers don't interact.

- I feel the program needs more structure. We are left to our own devices and seldom meet with each other or administrators.
- There is no set value in remediation and students don't have an interest. We don't meet as a team.

Slide 15

Research Findings and Recommendations

What are your thoughts on the overall impact of the current in-house program on student achievement?

- I have found that it benefits those students who have bought into the idea of utilizing the skills taught to make the difference between passing or failing the state assessment.
- It can be very effective but only if the student continues tutorials and studies. Just one tutorial session alone will not change anything.
- I think the tutoring is efficient when it is consistent. It needs to be consistent on the student's attendance and the teachers' instruction.
- I really believe that this school has a great system in place for those students that have the desire to succeed.
- Tutorials are great resources when used properly. Students have to truly put forth maximum effort to get the best out of it. Teachers may be able to help more intimately or try a strategy that may not be successful during whole group instruction.

Slide 16

Research Findings and Recommendations

What are your thoughts on the overall impact of the current in-house program on student achievement? (cont.)

- The program is efficient and gives the participants a great chance of moving into a higher level of understanding.
- I do believe that tutoring makes a great difference. I believe it makes a difference to student understanding and ultimately achievement. I do think we sometimes help the students too much do not encourage them to think through their issues themselves and may make tutoring a handicap where we "drill and kill" and the students do are not held responsible for their own education.

- All I can speak for is mine. If my failing students come to tutorial regularly, they generally pass the class.
- I believe the program has a positive effect on student achievement. It they come on a regular basis, it shows in their class work and their grades. We need consistent parental involvement in the program It would really help encourage the students to come to tutoring.
- It needs to be revamped… it needs more structure and the administration needs to take more ownership of it, instead of leaving it to the teachers who care…or are only under SATP. The students, who have attended tutorial faithfully/regularly, have shown improvement and have performed well on their standardized tests…but out of 300 people, what good is it when there are only five going to tutoring?

Slide 17

Research Findings and Recommendations

How are the concepts of mastery learning (unit organization, feedback methods, and corrective instruction) utilized during your tutorial sessions?

- The students are generally organized according to a very broad concept that has not been mastered. We utilize feedback methods during the tutorial class as a tool of identifying errors in thought.
- We use previous test results and quizzes to determine the needs of the student. We also use the same data to determine growth.
- I group my students based on their current learning level. These levels are differentiated from basic, proficient, and advanced.

Slide 18

Research Findings and Recommendations

How are the concepts of mastery learning (unit organization, feedback methods, and corrective instruction) utilized during your tutorial sessions? (cont.)

- Corrective instruction is a big part of my tutorials. I try to focus in on many of my students' bad study habits and correct them before trying to introduce new material. A lot of time, that is where the problem lies.

- Students are asked to be prepared with materials and then asked what parts are they lacking understanding. If the assignment is incomplete, they have a more focused environment and to receive remediation.
- These concepts are used to identify weaknesses, provide scaffolding, and to assess the student at the end of the session.

Slide 19

Research Findings and Recommendations

How are the concepts of mastery learning (unit organization, feedback methods, and corrective instruction) utilized during your tutorial sessions? (cont.)

- Once students have completed the assignments we move on to discuss work completed in class to assess the student level of mastery and areas of weakness in this mostly one on one setting.
- My method is to be kind of like a mother/child situation where the child is sitting at the kitchen table doing their homework and the mother questions and oversees the overall progress.
- We go by different themes that we have to cover for the test.
- We tend to do things more by units than objectives. Our objectives are so broad, teaching themes is more productive. History is a story and we learn it best by hands-on activities, including primary source documents. We focus on vocabulary and reading comprehension. The tutorials are more of a conversation supported with hands-on resources. I meet the students where they are and address the questions they have.

Slide 20

Research Findings and Recommendations

Do you feel the methods used to select students for the program are effective? Why or why not?

- The choice to tutor only the bottom 25% was strategic, in the fact that it addressed our largest area of concern. I felt like our choice of students got better during the second year because the students who were in the bottom 25% because of consistent disciplinary actions were filtered out. This decision allowed the tutorial classes to become more efficient.

- They are data proven methods. They have increased test scores in the past but it requires dedication from the student.
- I think it is effective, for we make sure to choose those students who are definitely low and needs that one on one instruction.
- The method is mostly data driven. As the old saying goes, "Numbers never lie." Test scores have been tracked and analyzed by each department to identify those students in need of extra help
- They are effective because it identifies students who are in true need of support. It is ineffective because it allows those who are lackadaisical and irresponsible to have a "fall back" for when their laziness falls through and are in academic danger.

Slide 21

Research Findings and Recommendations

Do you feel the methods used to select students for the program are effective? Why or why not? (cont.)

- Yes. Students are targeted based on test scores and behavior. This method ensures that the students who need the tutorial and student that will take the tutoring serious are help.
- No, because some students should be required to come to tutoring it should not be a choice for them.
- Most of my students are selected based on grades in classes. I do have students that attend voluntarily as well.
- Yes. I have seen improved test scores from the students who participate in tutoring. Identifying those in need of help early in the school year is beneficial to improving the academic work of the students.
- Tutoring is mostly voluntary. However, mandatory remediation during the school day involves choosing students who are to be retested or who have tested low in other areas. Their teachers also deem these students at-risk. While tutoring is not 100% proof against failing, the fact is that any exposure is better than no exposure. We're a data driven school and so if a student is deemed at risk, it is based on aggregate data sources.

Slide 22

Research Findings and Recommendations

What are the methods used to assess the current knowledge of the students before tutoring sessions began?

- Many times, each tutorial class starts with a 4-7 minute multiple-choice practice set of problems that would be used for discussion during the class session. The end of the tutorial session involved a 5-question assessment on similar concepts to make sure that the students retained the information.
- We use several companies, USA Test Prep and Penda that mirrors the state test to create test and quizzes.
- After each concept is taught, students have to pass a comprehensive exam and must pass with at least 80 %.
- Pre-tests, unit tests, quizzes, bell ringers
- Students' test scores, academic grades, performance assessments and projects. Sometimes teachers can notice when their students need support and make the contact with the student/parent to get them to tutorials. Often, students also make the requests themselves.

Slide 23

Research Findings and Recommendations

What are the methods used to assess the current knowledge of the students before tutoring sessions began? (cont.)

- Common assessment and district benchmarks are used to identify students' weaknesses and strengths.
- Test scores are one of the main methods uses to determine if a student needs tutoring assistance.
- I can use previous assessments of my students to determine where they are and what needs correction.
- I use data from the paper-based test to determine the themes the student is having the most problems. I also incorporate computer activities and hands on work.
- I tend to ask the students what they want to know more about and what their areas of struggle in class are. Most are forward with their needs, but I tend to learn what I need to know after having them to read and during our discussion. Sometimes I use KWL charts.

Slide 24

Research Findings and Recommendations

How is data from formative assessments used to provide corrective instruction?

- The data from formative assessments was used to determine what specific objectives the students lacked mastery This was used more often in tutorial sessions that are held be each teacher more so then with the tutorial sessions. In the tutorial sessions, general objectives are covered for all the students present, however, in teacher tutorial classes held after school, the data from formative assessment was used more often on a student-by-student basis.
- Test questions are broken down by competency and objective so we know exactly what must be covered.
- The data informs the educator on which concepts the students did not fully comprehend. This gives the educator the opportunity to re-teach those concepts.
- After every common assessment, we as a department hold a data meeting to analyze the results and decide on the best course of action going forward.
- It determines standards/objectives that students may not have mastered and need a certain amount of remediation to strengthen.

Slide 25

Research Findings and Recommendations

How is data from formative assessments used to provide corrective instruction? (cont.)

- Once the data has been analyzed, corrective instruction is based on objectives with low mastery. This helps us identify potential misconceptions.
- The areas that students score lowest are the areas that are the initial focus of the tutoring session.
- I can answer this from the point of view of my SATP tutorial classes that are hidden under the guise of technical writing and Mississippi writers. I give them assessments and look to see what questions they have missed. Looking at the results of the retesting scores from the last retest, they, on average, get about seven of those 26 reading comprehension correct. I plan to focus

ONLY on reading comprehension until the next test, hoping they will get 3-5 more correct which will allow most of them to pass.

- We use the data to identify where the students are struggling. This allows me to customize the sessions in order to give the child the most help.
- We, as a department, meet regularly and discuss overall performance. We then take those units/themes/objectives and decide how and when to retest them. The more exposure to these assessments, the better the students tend to perform at the end of the year.

Slide 26

Research Findings and Recommendations

What type of enrichment activities are incorporated into the tutorial sessions for students who have mastered the material and do not need corrective instruction for a particular objective?

- As students continue to attend sessions, enrichment is gained through in-depth questioning during the tutorial class to make sure students are able to justify in multiple ways why their answers are correct.
- We include interactive online games, labs, and puzzles for those who just want extra practice.
- Students, who successfully complete the advanced assignments, will complete hands on tasks that is very comprehensive. The tasks are utilized to make sure students understand each standard thoroughly.
- I love to use either the Penda Learning or USATestPrep websites. A lot of times I will challenge my students in tutorials and make the environment fun but competitive. Students love having to compete for some reason.
- Teachers are able to access sites/videos through the internet. They may be able to locate extra worksheets through websites to enhance the tutorial experience. Pretty much, they look for other innovative methods where they may be able to help the student.

Slide 27

Research Findings and Recommendations

What type of enrichment activities are incorporated into the tutorial sessions for students who have mastered the material and do not need corrective instruction for a particular objective?

- Peer tutoring provides a great enrichment activity for students who have mastered a particular objective.
- Test review and peer tutoring.
- I do not have students in my tutorial that need enrichment. All of mine are remediation
- I use more primary source data, political cartoon analysis and peer interactions. I also use internet sites as enrichment.
- I have a series of technological activities that the kids find to be quite entertaining. There is jeopardy, and more competitive games that quiz the students on their knowledge. When we do these activities, I let them own the process. They tend to teach and reteach each other because someone always knows something that someone else doesn't.

Slide 28

Research Findings and Recommendations

Summary of Findings

While the tutors felt the in-house tutorial program has a great benefit to the students who participated in it, the tutors indicated there were some conditions that could use improvement. In order to implement this program successfully, several measures are recommended based on the interpretation of the data. These recommended measures were:

- More administrative involvement
- Effective parental notifications
- Communication between tutors

Slide 29

Research Findings and Recommendations

Summary of Findings (1)

Administrative Involvement

Many tutors noted that they felt the administrators expected them "solve all concerns amongst themselves" and several noted that administrators were "unclear about their expectations" for the tutorial program. Several recommendations can be enacted to alleviate this issue. They are as follows:

- During 9th grade orientation, Parent-Teacher Conference day and PTA meetings, the administrators should be available, along with the tutors to speak with parents about tutoring participation and to answer any questions the parents might want addressed.
- Meet with tutors monthly to follow up on tutoring sessions and to address any concerns the tutors may have with a participant or the material being used in the tutoring sessions.

Slide 30

Research Findings and Recommendations

Summary of Findings (1) (cont.)

Administrative Involvement

- Collect documentation from tutors and other teachers to show parental contact/attempted contact regarding tutoring. Documents should be kept in a secure location in case it might be needed during a parent conference.
- At the end of the school year, the administration should meet with tutors to discuss what was successful with the program. This would be a good time to begin planning for the next school year, revising unsuccessful strategies and planning what could be added to the successful strategies to strengthen them.

Slide 31

Research Findings and Recommendations

Summary of Findings (2)

Effective Parent Notification

The tutors noted that many students did not attend tutorial sessions because many parents were unaware of the availability. The tutors noted that many parents didn't ask about the program until "during parent-teacher conference meeting", which is held during the second 9-week term of school.

Several recommendations can be used to improve communication between the parents and the schools as well as encourage parents to be involved in their child's education.

Slide 32

Research Findings and Recommendations

Summary of Findings (2)

Effective Parent Notification

- During ninth grade orientation. Ninth grade orientation will held before the start of school. Tutoring information should be available for the parents to pick up as well as discussed by administration during the opening remarks. Discuss the goals of the program for parents to be aware that tutorial will be offered should their child need it during the school year.
- During the second 9 weeks term - A district wide parent-teacher conference is scheduled at the beginning of the second 9 weeks term. Students received their first term report cards and will be provided the opportunity to meet with their child's teacher. Tutoring information should be provided for parents who request it. A sign-up area can also be available so parents can sign their child up before leaving the school campus.
- During the course of the school year – Students will be identified throughout the school year, by their teachers, if they are in need of tutoring, Parents should be notified via mail, email and/or telephone. Contact information is available through the district online student information system that is accessible to all teachers. Documentation should be retained to show the efforts to contact parents

Slide 33

Research Findings and Recommendations

Summary of Findings (3)

Communication between Tutors

The tutors expressed that they didn't have opportunities to communicate with each other. Many of the respondents noted that they felt "isolated from their colleagues" and indicated they felt as if there were no options for "if I, as a tutor, needed help or guidance" or "if I just wanted time to collaborate with the other tutors".

There are several recommendations to help address the concern. They are as follows:

- Ensure tutors have a designated time to meet formally with each other to discuss academic progress and implementation of tutorial strategies.
- At the beginning of the school year, if possible, try to allow tutors to have common planning periods. This would allow for informal meeting between tutors, either as a large group or in a one on one setting.

Slide 34

Research Findings and Recommendations

Timeline

Early August – Administrators meet with tutors to set guidelines and protocols for program. This is also the time to try to schedule common planning time during the school day for tutors. This time will allow tutors to collaborate with each other on a regular basis.

Mid-August (start of school) – During 9th grade orientation, administrators and tutors should meet with parents to introduce the program. Detail how students are chosen and highlight the benefits of the program.

September – Progress reports are issued to students. Teachers should begin identifying students who are struggling in SATP classes. Parent notifications should also begin via phone and/or mail.

October – 1st term report cards are released on the district-wide Parent Conference Day. Teachers of students who have been identified as in need of tutoring should provide those parents with the tutoring information. Tutorial sign ups should also be placed in a central location near the front of the school for parents to sign their child up if they wish.

Slide 35

Research Findings and Recommendations

Timeline

Several processes should be ongoing throughout the course of the school year.

Students should continue to be identified for tutoring.

Parent notifications should continue to be attempted and documented. All documentation should be maintained in a secure location in the event of a parent conference.

Monthly – Meetings between tutors and administration should be held to follow up on tutoring sessions and to address any concerns the tutor may have with a participant or the material being used in the tutoring session.

Each 9-week term – Meetings between stakeholders and research should talk place to discuss any concerns regarding implementation.

End of the year – Administrators and tutors should meet to discuss what was successful with the program. his is also an ideal time to begin revising the plan for the next school year, removing unsuccessful strategies and planning what could be added to the successful strategies to strengthen them.

Slide 36

Conclusion

- The tutors felt the program was beneficial to students but there needed to be better parental notification, more administrative involvement, and more opportunities for tutors to work collaboratively.
- Students benefit from participating in tutoring by achieving academic gains. These gains result in:
    - Students passing standardized state tests successfully.
    - Students completing high school.
    - Increased self-esteem and confidence

Implementing the recommendations would allow the program to develop its full potential and provide academic assistance to at risk students.

Appendix D

Follow Up Interview Questions

Note – These questions are tentative and are subject to change based on the evaluation of feedback and observations made during the course of the follow up meetings.

1. Do you feel that administrative involvement in the tutorial program has improved? Please explain why or why not.
2. What methods have you observed employed by administrators to make the recommendations noted in the executive summary?
3. How have administrators worked to ensure tutors have a designated meeting time?
4. How often are you able to meet collaboratively with your fellow tutors?
5. How does having this time for meetings with each other affect your personal tutorial sessions?
6. Do you feel parent participation has improved in the tutorial program? Why or why not?
7. What methods are being implemented school-wide to reach more parents and informing them about the tutorial program?
8. What methods have you implemented to reach the parents of your students who are in need of tutorial?
9. How have the suggested modifications affected the tutorial program as a whole?
10. What, if any, additional modifications might need to be implemented to meet the needs of the students who participate in the program?